



Tideway

# RECONNECTING LONDON WITH THE RIVER THAMES DELIVERING A LASTING LEGACY

## ENCOURAGING FISH HABITATS

Tideway has collaborated with key stakeholders to create a new aquatic habitat in the mouth of the River Wandle.

The six-month scheme will breathe new life into the Wandle at the point it meets the River Thames and restore a wildlife habitat of roughly a hectare. This habitat has the potential to become a spawning area and nursery for young fish, ensuring a positive environmental legacy.

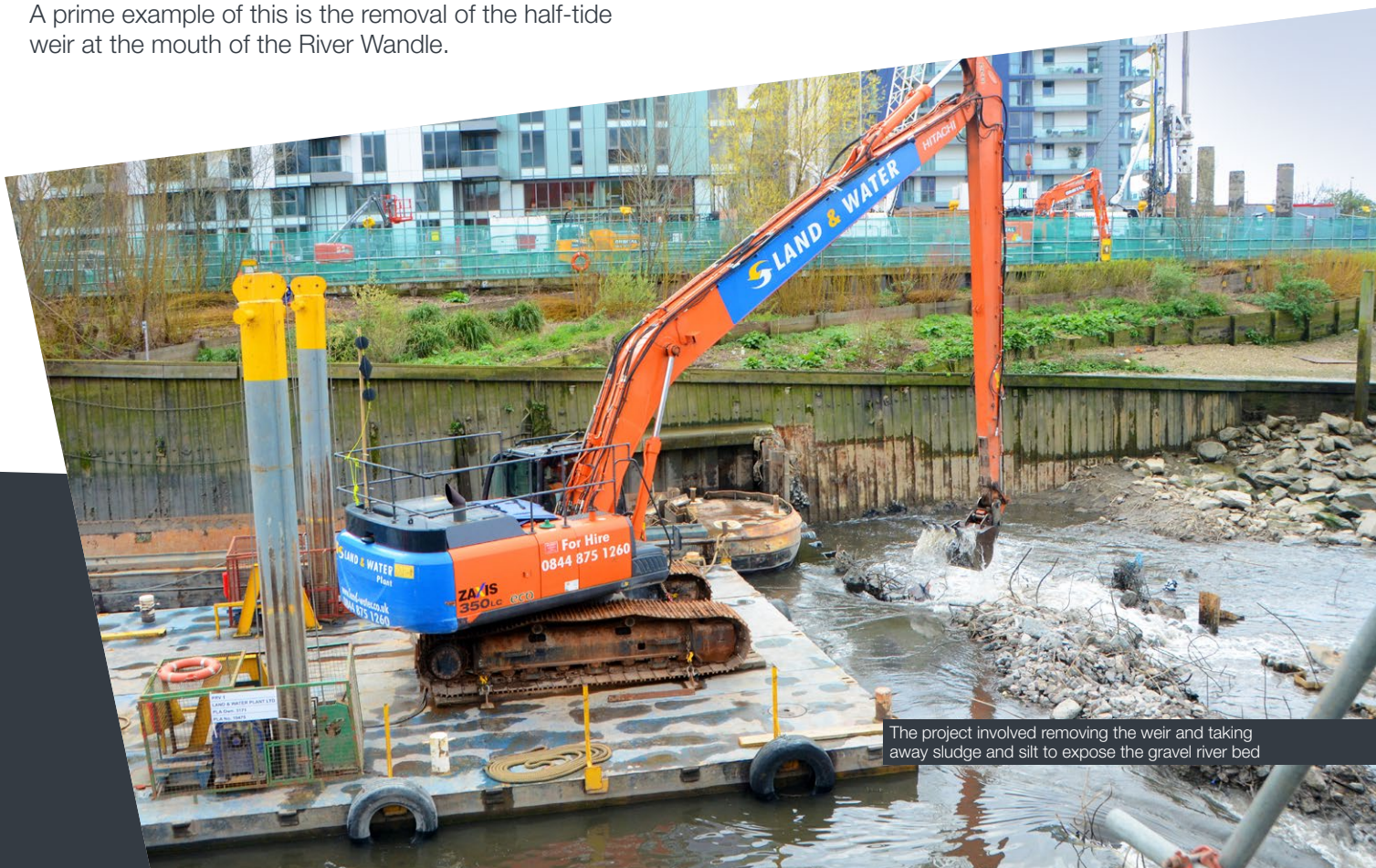
However, this is not just a story of an environmental improvement scheme—it is about careful and extensive stakeholder engagement.

Any major infrastructure project is likely to have an impact on the natural environment, either through the use of resources; temporary disturbance during construction; or the permanent reduction of land. However, with considerate planning and extensive stakeholder engagement, it is possible to reduce that impact and, in some cases, create a net benefit.

A prime example of this is the removal of the half-tide weir at the mouth of the River Wandle.

The half tide weir was built in the late 1980s as part of the Wandle Mouth Regeneration, part of a marina development that never happened. The weir has been redundant since its construction and contaminated silt accumulated immediately upstream of the weir. Aquatic ecology suffered as a result of the weir's installation.

It is important to note that this scheme did not form part of the project's contractual obligations within Tideway's Development Consent Order (DCO). However, through extensive discussions with our stakeholders, this project was adopted as a 'habitat compensation scheme', which led to the withdrawal of the Environment Agency's objection to the DCO regarding permanent loss of foreshore habitat.



The project involved removing the weir and taking away sludge and silt to expose the gravel river bed



The scheme was funded by the Tideway project but was planned and delivered through collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including the London Borough of Wandsworth (which owns the weir), the Environment Agency, the Marine Management Organisation and the Port of London Authority. After planning between all the parties, the scheme began in 2016 and will be complete in May 2017.

The removal has improved water flows and taking away the sludge and silt to expose the gravel river bed has helped to restore a natural wildlife habitat.

It is now officially designated as a site with importance for nature conservation. This classification emphasises that the scheme, which complements a number of other habitat creation projects proposed on the lower Wandle, will deliver long-term environmental benefits.

This initiative forms part of a wider ecology strategy for Tideway, including a study into the refuge of migrating juvenile fish and our support for increasing public awareness of aquatic ecology in the tidal Thames.

Wandsworth's Environment Spokesman, Cllr Jonathan Cook, described the scheme's legacy value when it was completed in March. He said: "This is a significant step forward in efforts to improve water quality in the Wandle delta.

"Removing all the sludge and silt that has built up over the years and removing this redundant old weir will allow the water to flow much more freely and hopefully restore a thriving habitat for fish and other aquatic wildlife. It will also encourage a much wider range of plant life to flourish in the river again."

For more information about Tideway

08000 30 80 80 | [www.tideway.london](http://www.tideway.london) | [helpdesk@tideway.london](mailto:helpdesk@tideway.london)

For our language interpretation service call: 08000 30 80 80

For information in Braille or large print call: 08000 30 80 80