



Charity Commission Registered No: 1062090

# go for the flow

## August/September 2012

**There is a summer work-party on 11 August, meeting in the foyer of the Cheese and Grain at 10.30am. Please join us!**

### Our Survey

As you may have seen reported in the local press, the committee have been looking at the possibility of applying for funding from the national Catchment Restoration Fund. This fund is specifically for improving water quality over large river catchment areas. One of the things we needed to know for such an application was "How much silt build-up is there on the river bed?". We also needed to measure the depth of the river at various points to get a feel for what could be done to improve the flow as this would increase the environmental quality and visual appeal.

So in May, a merry bunch of helpers (Alan, Andrew, Dorothy Anne, Nick and Mike and Mike's 3 year old daughter) spent a damp but not soaked morning taking soundings between the Library bridge and Welshmill weir. A large inflatable dinghy was provided by Andrew. The men on either bank held a rope across at various points and Dorothy Anne was tasked with using the rope to position the boat and measuring the water depth with a ranging pole. Alan is a member of the Canoe Club who were kind enough to loan a large canoe and it was from this that he kept a wary eye on DA's safety. A cunning plan eh? It did work remarkably well although Dorothy Anne got very wet trousers sitting in a pool of water, not I hasten to add, because of the fearful nature of her task...

Surprisingly, very little silt was detected which is good news for water quality. One of the possibilities for improvement was lowering the height of the weir to improve water flow and keep any contaminated silt moving along but this now seems to be unnecessary. With no need to remove silt, we feel that a major bid from us is now not necessary. However, we shall be discussing joining with the Avon Water Trust who we have been in contact with and would welcome our partnership to extend the influence of their own bid further up-stream along The Frome.

Here is a representation of some of the data on a scale of roughly 1:100. It is a cross-section of the river profile from side to side at each place.

## A representation of the data at the Canoe Club

## A representation of the data close to the weir

## And here is a spreadsheet of the complete data

### Friends of the River Frome River Frome depth of water

All measurements in metres

Water level below top of canoe club concrete slab: 0.4m

Height of weir from river bed at low concrete step: 2.0m approx

Distance of sounding from north bank (m)	5m from weir	At Sustrans Seating	At Jap. Knotweed	Canoe jetty	Between slalom gates 7&8	Button Bridge	Library Bridge
2	1.4	0.9	1.4	0.8	1.0	0.2	0.3
4	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.6	0.7	0.9
6	1.2	1.7	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.2	0.8
8	1.0	1.6	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.7
10	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.8
12	0.8	1.0	0.6				0.3
14	0.7						
16	0.7						
18	0.5						
20	0.4						
22	0.2						

## Himalayan Balsam

This invasive weed is not obvious in town this year. Either the weather has discouraged it or the work we did last summer was very effective or perhaps both. However the occasional clump has been seen so please check and report problems or remove what you can. We may be tackling it at our next regular work-party is 11 August meeting in the foyer of the Cheese and Grain at 10.30am.

## Representing the River

Over the past couple of months members have been attending meetings of various Town Council initiatives as representatives of the river, ensuring that it's need for improvements gets a fair inclusion in any debates. Not that it needs much promoting because improving the look and access to the river is probably one of the few 'town' topics that seem to be popular with all the town's citizens. Certainly the subject of river improvement is a

constant priority in most surveys such as the 'Vision for Frome' consultation in recent years.

Attendance at the 'Citizens Panel' consultation meetings to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the town was one such indication of need and support. Developing a 'river corridor' of paths and access, and improving the visual appeal of the river around the Cattle Market was high on the list of priorities agreed by attendees.

The 'Town Team' is another forum which we have attended as river representatives. This is a group who are working to develop ideas and strategies to improve and strengthen the town's commercial and retail life. Once again, the attractiveness (or otherwise) of the river is seen as playing an important role in the town's ability to attract more visitors and new businesses and all members are keen to improve the appeal of our wonderful river resource.

**News posted on our web-site** - [www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk](http://www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk)

#### **PreFestival Feast**

Four of us turned up to make a remarkably good job of clearing the river banks even without venturing on the slopes above the raging river. The long litter picker removed what appeared to be a stack of polythene bags blown away by the wind. (11/07/12)

#### **A survey of the river bed in town.**

This morning a canoe and an inflatable were at work taking soundings so that discussions on improvement of the river can be based on knowledge of its present state. (29/05/12)

#### **Wildlife in the centre of town**

An otter has been seen and the evidence is on the weir. Chub about a foot long are swimming near the Button Bridge. (29/05/12)

#### **Frome Picnic on Rodden Meadow**

Yesterday nearly a hundred people gathered to enjoy the beauty of Rodden Meadow and the enjoyable music of the Frome Street Bandits. (21/05/12)