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# River Sapiston Restoration

Salix River & Wetland Services delivered in partnership a 20-day restoration programme on the River Sapiston. Aimed at improving channel diversity, strengthening ecological resilience, and re-establishing natural connections between the river and its floodplain.



Spanning seven distinct reaches, the works focused on a series of in-channel and riparian enhancements designed to restore natural processes and habitats. Brushwood berms were constructed by regrading the riverbanks and protecting the leading edge with locally sourced brushwood, secured using chestnut stakes supplied by Salix. These berms not only stabilised the channel but also created valuable new habitat for marginal vegetation, improving biodiversity and flow variability across the reach. Alongside this, gravel riffles were installed to enhance spawning grounds and provide refuge for fish species, while selective tree thinning increased light penetration and encouraged stronger vegetation growth along the river margins.

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**Salix**

Salix supplied natural, biodegradable materials including brushwood fascines, coir rolls, and chestnut stakes, helping to ensure all interventions would integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment. Wherever possible, site-won materials were reused to reduce waste and transport emissions, while natural fibre sediment barriers such as silt wattles and Sedimats were installed to protect water quality and prevent sediment mobilisation during construction.



Tree hinging and the reuse of felled wood created in-stream features and hibernacula, further enhancing habitat complexity. In several reaches, bank lowering was undertaken to reconnect the river with its floodplain, allowing water to flow more freely during high rainfall events and supporting the development of wet woodland habitats. All activities were planned carefully around ecological sensitivities, with work scheduled to avoid nesting seasons and overseen by ecological specialists.

The result is a revitalised river system that balances engineering with natural function. By reintroducing structural diversity, improving hydrological connectivity, and promoting native vegetation, the River Sapiston project will deliver lasting ecological and hydrological benefits. The restored reaches now provide diverse habitats that support fish, birds, and invertebrates, while enhancing flood resilience and long-term sustainability for the surrounding landscape.