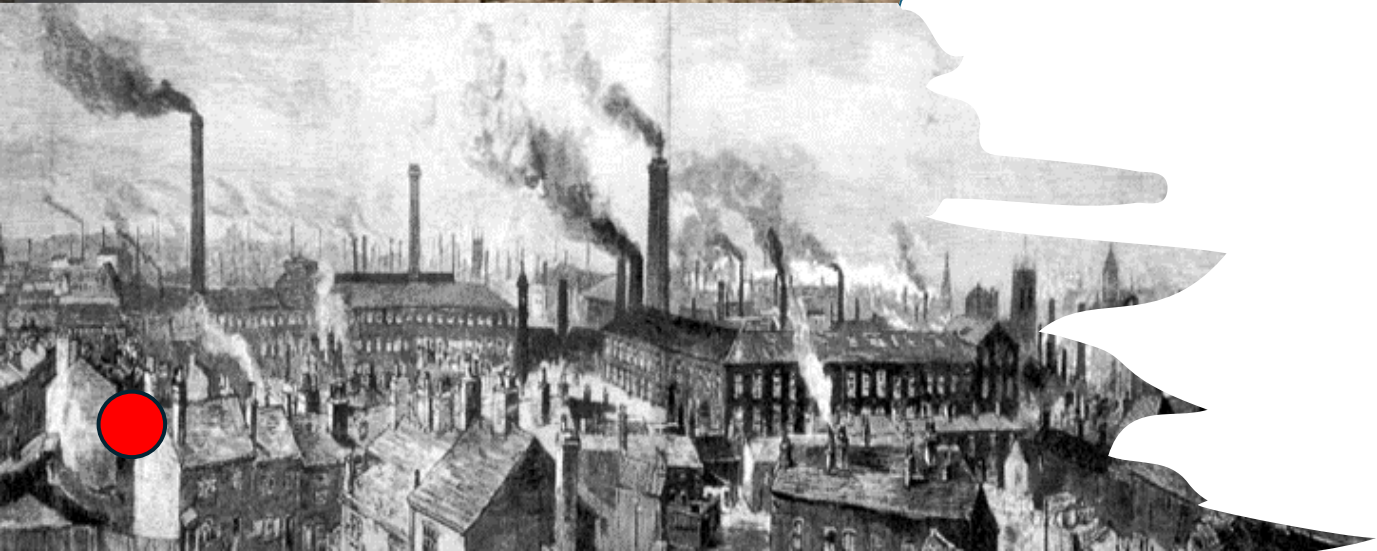




Great Yorkshire Rivers

Andy Sadler
25 November 2025





An Industrial Legacy

- **Pollution**
- **Weirs**
 - **Barriers to movement**
 - **Disrupts river processes**
- **Some Yorkshire rivers fishless**

Tackling the Legacy

1st modern fish passes early 90s

**Initially individual organisations
(or 2) addressing 1 site**

**EA Prioritisation, but often
Opportunistic (funding)**



Growing Ambition – Strategic approach to whole rivers



News story

Salmon found in River Don at Sheffield

An adult salmon has been found in the River Don at Salmon Pastures confirming the species' return to Sheffield city centre after an absence of 150 years.

From: [Environment Agency](#)

Published 18 January 2019



Fisheries officer Jerome Masters with the salmon at the River Don in Sheffield

Lady's Bridge



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Salmon breed in river for first time in 200 years



DON CATCHMENT RIVERSTRUST



>120 barriers in Yorkshire addressed since 2009

Another ~100 have collapsed

So – Job done?!



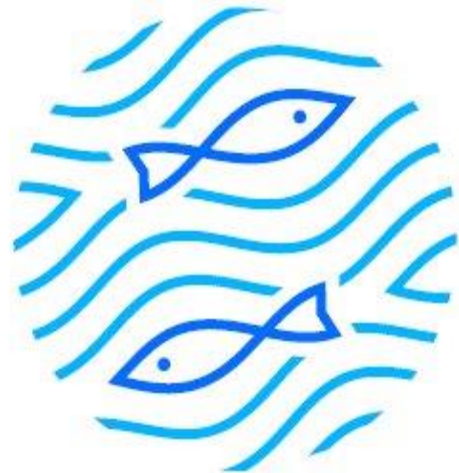
NO! >2000 remain

Need to build on successes and increase our ambition





2022 - GYR was spawned!



**Great
Yorkshire
Rivers**

‘By 2043 this leading and innovative partnership approach will have addressed all artificial barriers negatively impacting fish populations in Yorkshire, allowing recovery of our native fish species; helping rivers and their communities to thrive.’

Sustainable, healthy fish populations, wider ecological and community benefits

Build capacity and capability in partner and delivery organisations

Promotion and advocacy of the successes, benefits, and learning

GYR Vision

Establishing GYR



GYR Projects since 2022

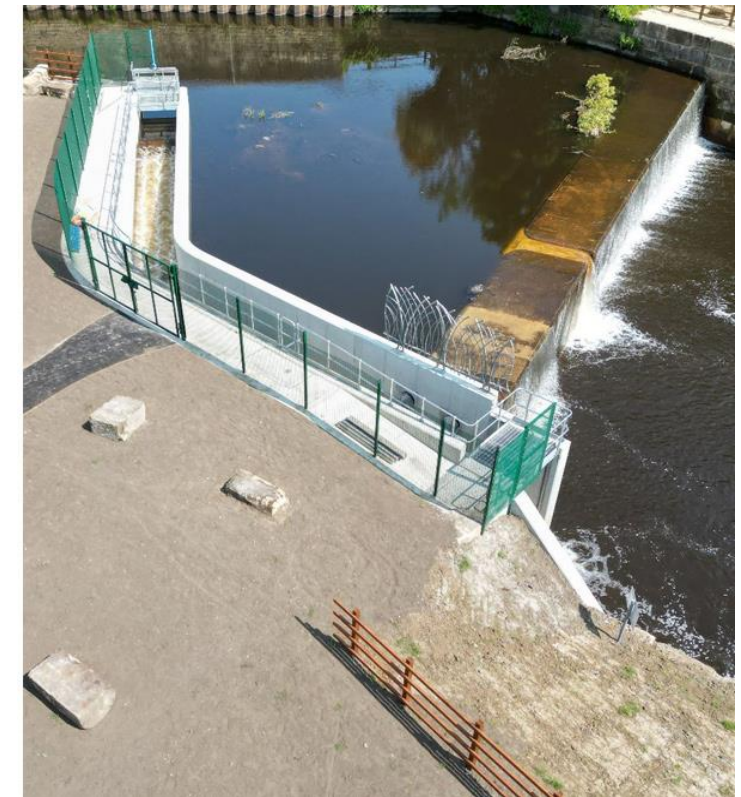
Hirst Mill, River Aire -
Rock ramp extension



Black Brook, River Calder – weir removal



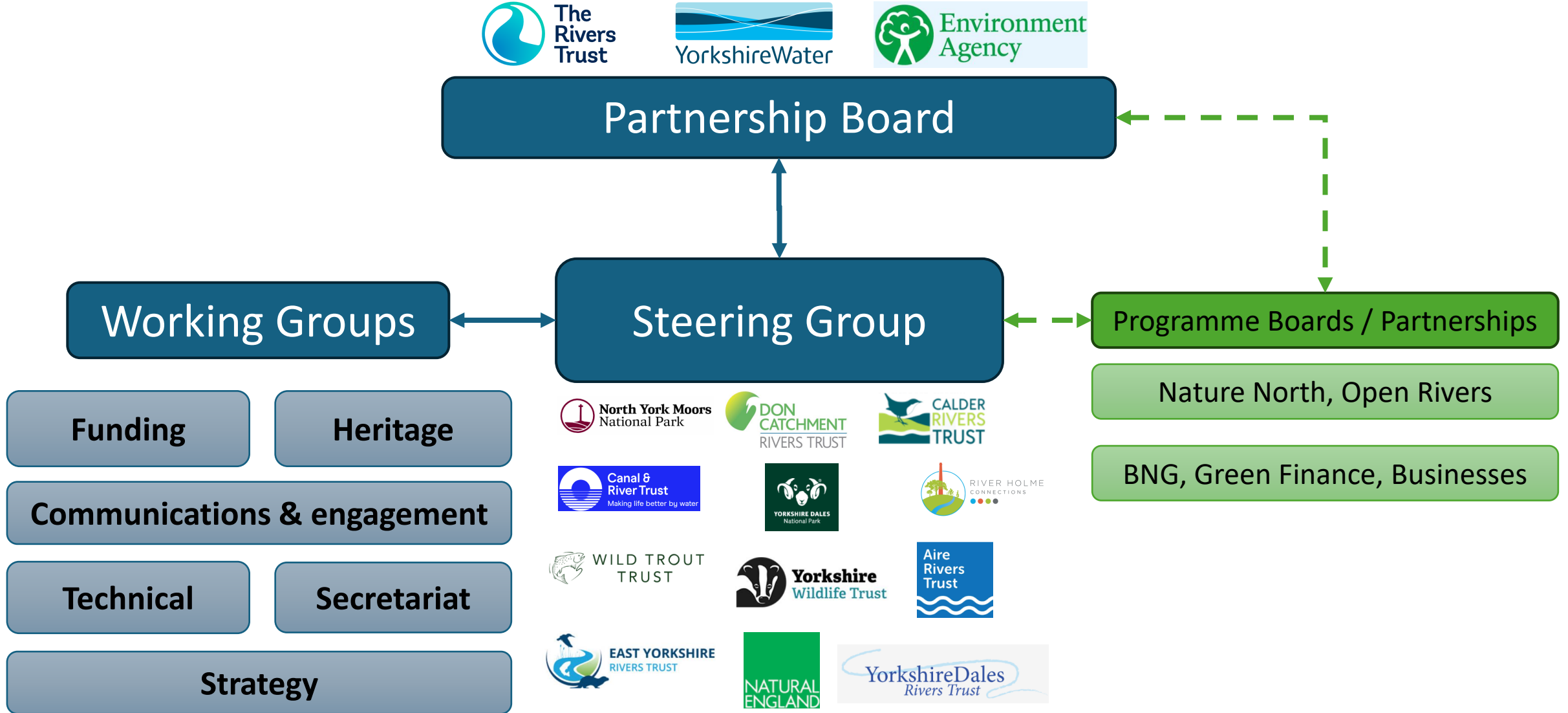
Niagara Weir, River Don -
Larinier fish pass



Meadowgate, River Rother - perturbation boulder pass



GYR Governance



Why is GYR novel?

£11.4 million for non-Water Co. assets

Provides core funding, local partners lever match-funding £10.3 million

Uses NERC Act as a driver for core-funding

Prioritises building capacity –
Enabling Fund to each partner

What have we achieved so far...

GYR Branding



1st GYR Barrier Assessment & Removal Workshop

- 18 Delegates from 10 GYR Partner organisations
- 5 Speakers incl. consultants, contractors, modellers, trust reps



GYR Webpage

www.greatyorkshirerivers.org



Welcome to our temporary website. Here you will find information about the project, our partners and how to get in touch. We look forward to keeping you informed on upcoming developments including our new website that is coming soon.



An overview of the project



In 2022, the Great Yorkshire Rivers Partnership of Yorkshire Water, The Rivers Trust and Environment Agency formally came into being following many years of informally working together on addressing over 100 barriers to fish in Yorkshire rivers. The ambition was to fix Yorkshire's rivers of all significant barriers by 2043. This could be by installing a fish pass, but ideally it would be to remove the structure entirely as this brings the most benefit, including:

- Allowing all fish species to pass up and downstream
- Beginning to restore natural river processes
- Bringing improvements in water quality
- Improving habitat quality that supports sustainable fish populations and the wildlife that is reliant upon them
- Supporting and promotes biodiversity increase

All in all, removal is the best option for nature and creates a better place for people to enjoy!

"By 2043 this leading and innovative partnership approach will have addressed all artificial barriers negatively impacting fish populations in Yorkshire, allowing recovery of our native fish species; helping rivers and their communities to thrive."

Working in Partnership

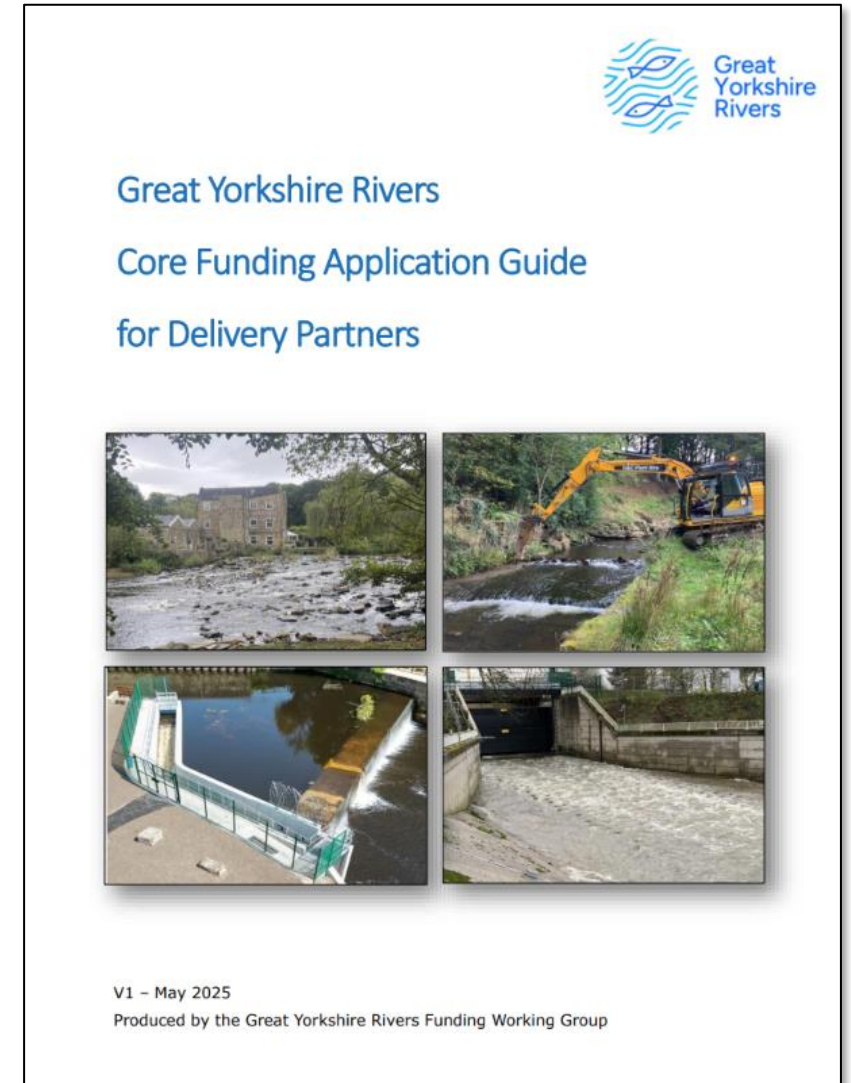


...Full GYR Website due
December 2023

What have we achieved so far...

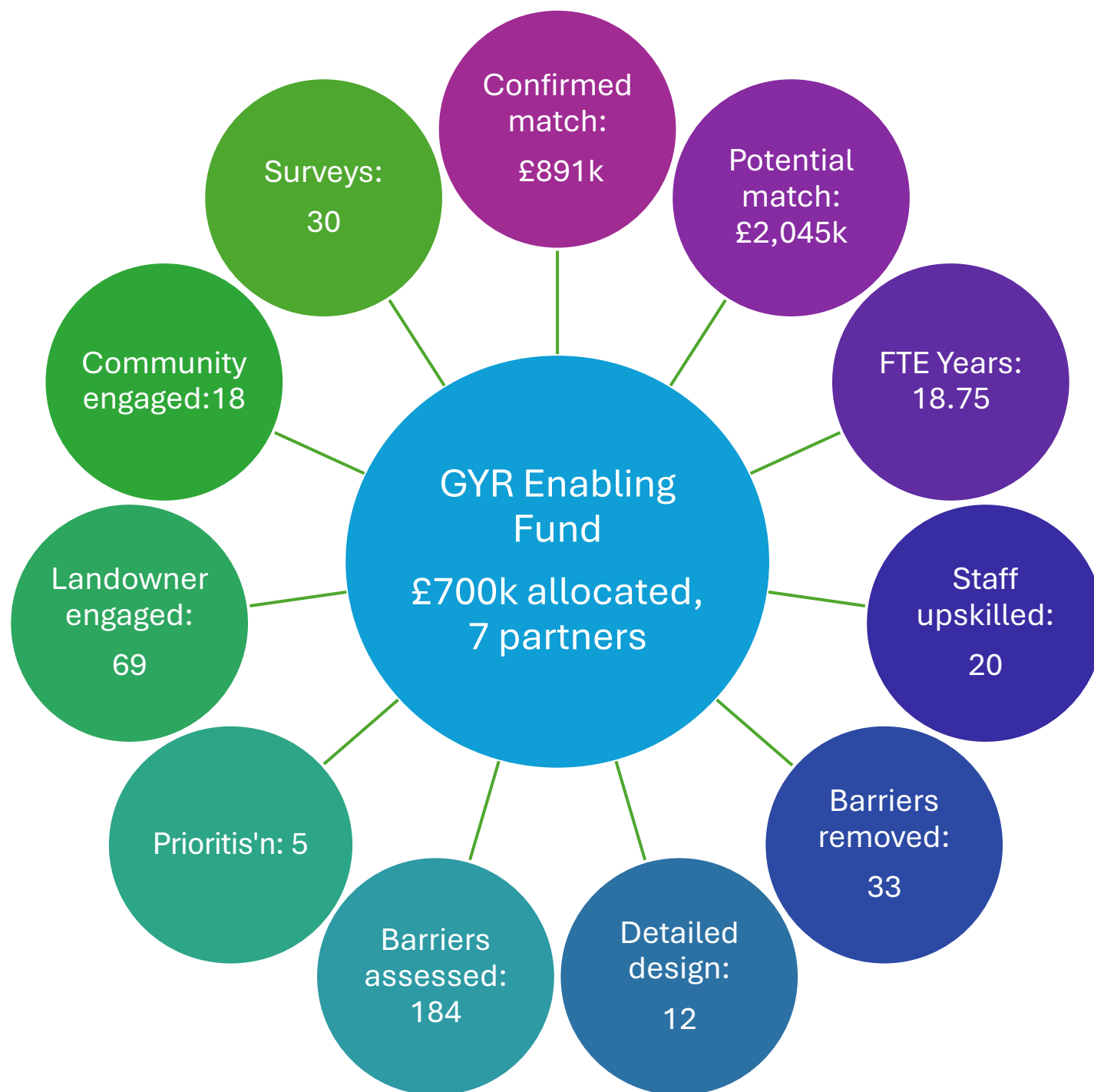
GYR Funding - Application process & assessment criteria

- Enabling Fund:
 - Assist partners to bring in dedicated resource
 - Funds to undertake work difficult to get match for e.g. feasibility; walkover surveys; landowner/community engagement; training
- Core Fund:
 - Outline designs
 - Detailed Designs
 - Construction



Great Yorkshire Rivers
Core Funding Application Guide
for Delivery Partners

V1 - May 2025
Produced by the Great Yorkshire Rivers Funding Working Group



What have we achieved so far...

2 barriers removed!

- North York Moors National Park
- Staithe Beck



11/27/2025

- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust/Derwent Catchment Partnership
- Staindale Beck



Before



After

What have we achieved so far...

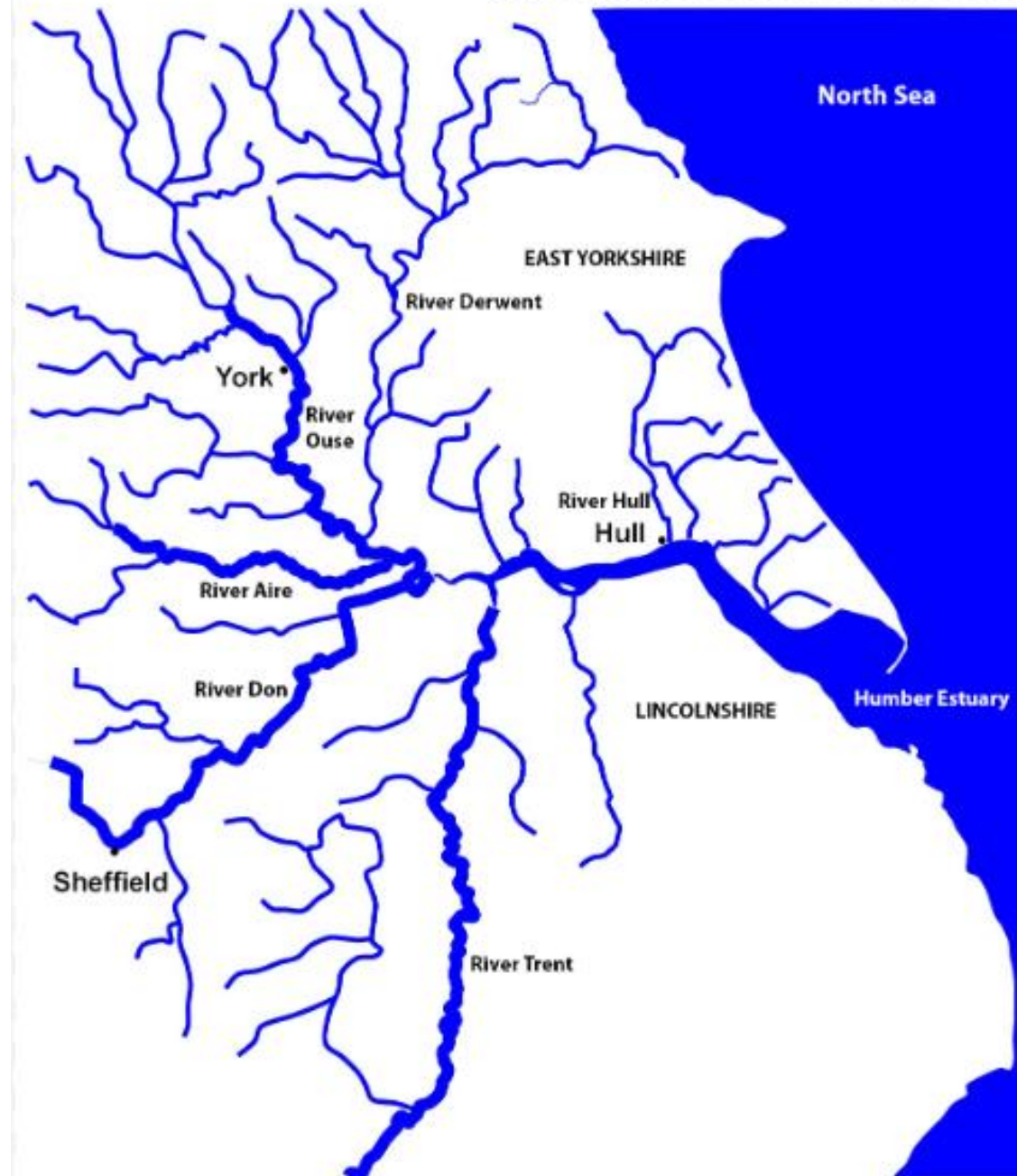
- Staindale Beck removal



GYR and the Humber

- Gateway to Yorkshire's rivers for migratory fish species
- Lamprey a named feature of both the Humber Estuary SAC and Yorkshire Derwent SAC
- Eels are critically endangered
- Smelt are rare
- Burbot and Sturgeon now extinct

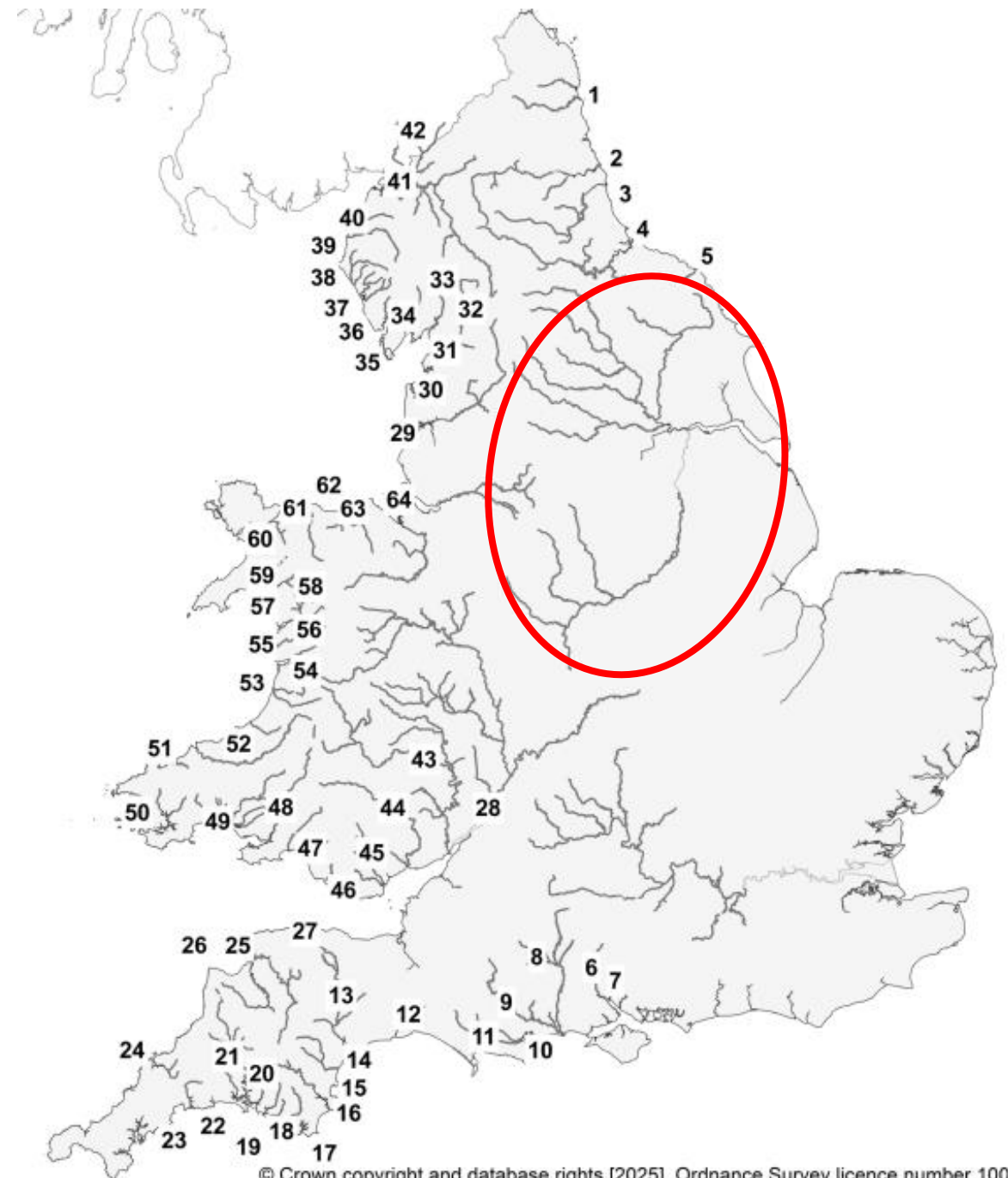
Map of Humber Estuary and its rivers



GYR and the Humber

- Salmon numbers critically low nationally with 88% of England's principal salmon rivers are classified as 'at risk' or 'probably at risk'
- No rivers within the Humber catchment are listed as a 'Principal Salmon River'

'historically they had provided annual rod catches averaging ~50 or more salmon around the time of the development of Salmon Action Plans (~1996)'



What next for GYR...

Great Yorkshire Rivers project Timeline:

2009-2021
100+ weirs in Yorkshire
addressed by partners

2022-2024
GYR formalised, 20 weirs
addressed, 20+ in progress

2025-2030
£11.4m funding
confirmed,
to match with £10.3m to
deliver 509km of river
opened up

2030+
Build on GYR
momentum and capacity to
deliver Vision of
approx 2000 artificial
barriers negatively
impacting fish populations.



Thank you!



Great
Yorkshire
Rivers



The
Rivers
Trust



YorkshireWater



Environment
Agency