



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

England's Journey to Living Alongside Beavers

Will Stinson, Head of Species Reintroductions &
Planning Policy

species.recovery.reintros@defra.gov.uk



Potted history

- 2014-2019 - River Otter Beaver Trial, Devon
- 2020-2021 – Trial results
- August 2021 – consultation
- Sep 2022 – summary response, management guidance published, enclosure licenses available
- Oct 2022 – legal protection of beavers in England
- March 2023 – wild release criteria completed
- Oct 2023 – EFRA Committee Inquiry into Species Reintroductions
- Feb 2025 – Policy announcement
- Mar 2025 – Beavers released at Purbeck Heaths, Dorset
- Feb 2026 – Beavers released in Cornwall & Exmoor

Our commitment

February 2025 – policy statement

- Licensing the wild release of beavers
- Managing existing wild beaver populations
- Developing a long-term management plan for beavers

Commitments

- Collaboration
- Set out a vision and long-term direction
- Dynamic approach – adapting and learning from experience
- Explore mitigations for unlawful release

Our approach

- Cross-agency working (Defra, NE, EA, FE)
- Learning and adapting over time
- Stakeholder engagement informing decisions
 - National Beaver Forum and sub-groups
 - Long-term management plan workshop process

Our vision

- Beavers as part of everyday landscapes
- People supported to live alongside them
- A system that works over the long term
- A transition underpinned by continued collaboration

Our work so far

- Licensing
- Ongoing releases
- LTMP development

Emerging LTMP themes

- England's approach to living alongside beavers
- Planning for benefits and balancing impacts
- Working together to support co-existence
- Tracking, evaluating and strengthening the evidence base
- Supporting practical responses on the ground



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Q&A



Environment
Agency



Forestry Commission



NATURAL
ENGLAND