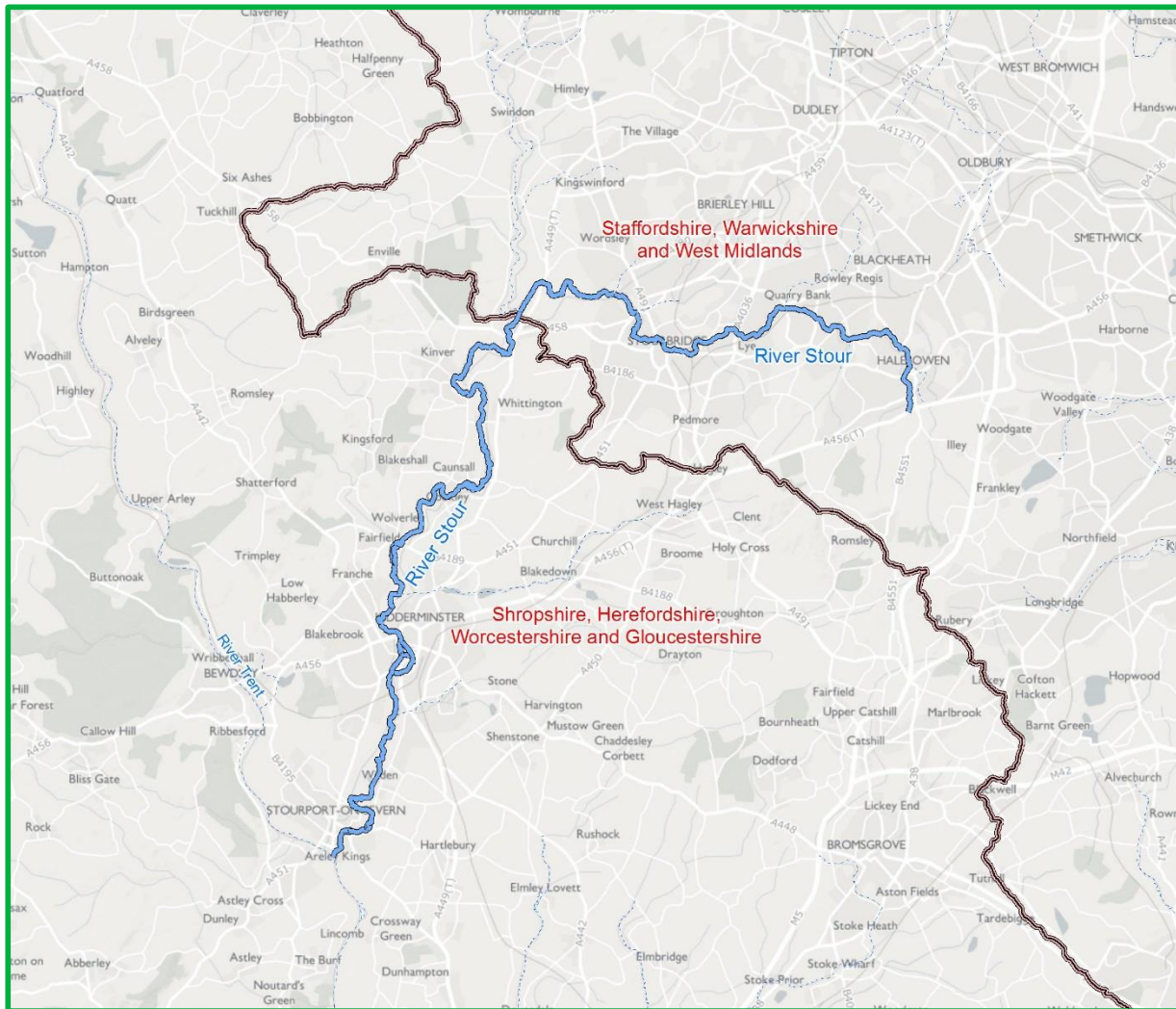


Salmon in the Stour “Headwaters to Confluence”

Dan Johnson
Fisheries, Biodiversity & Geomorphology Programme Manager
25/09/2017

West Midlands Stour



Brief history.....

- Industrial Revolution - reputedly more industry per mile than any other river in the country (upper section affectionately referred to as the Black Country)
- Dammed to form mill pools
- Diverted to operate mills
- Straightened / culverted / impounded
- Considered 'devoid' of wildlife c. 1900
- Seen as a means of conveyance for waste
- In short, about as 'urban' as it gets!

“There’s no fish in ere’ mate!



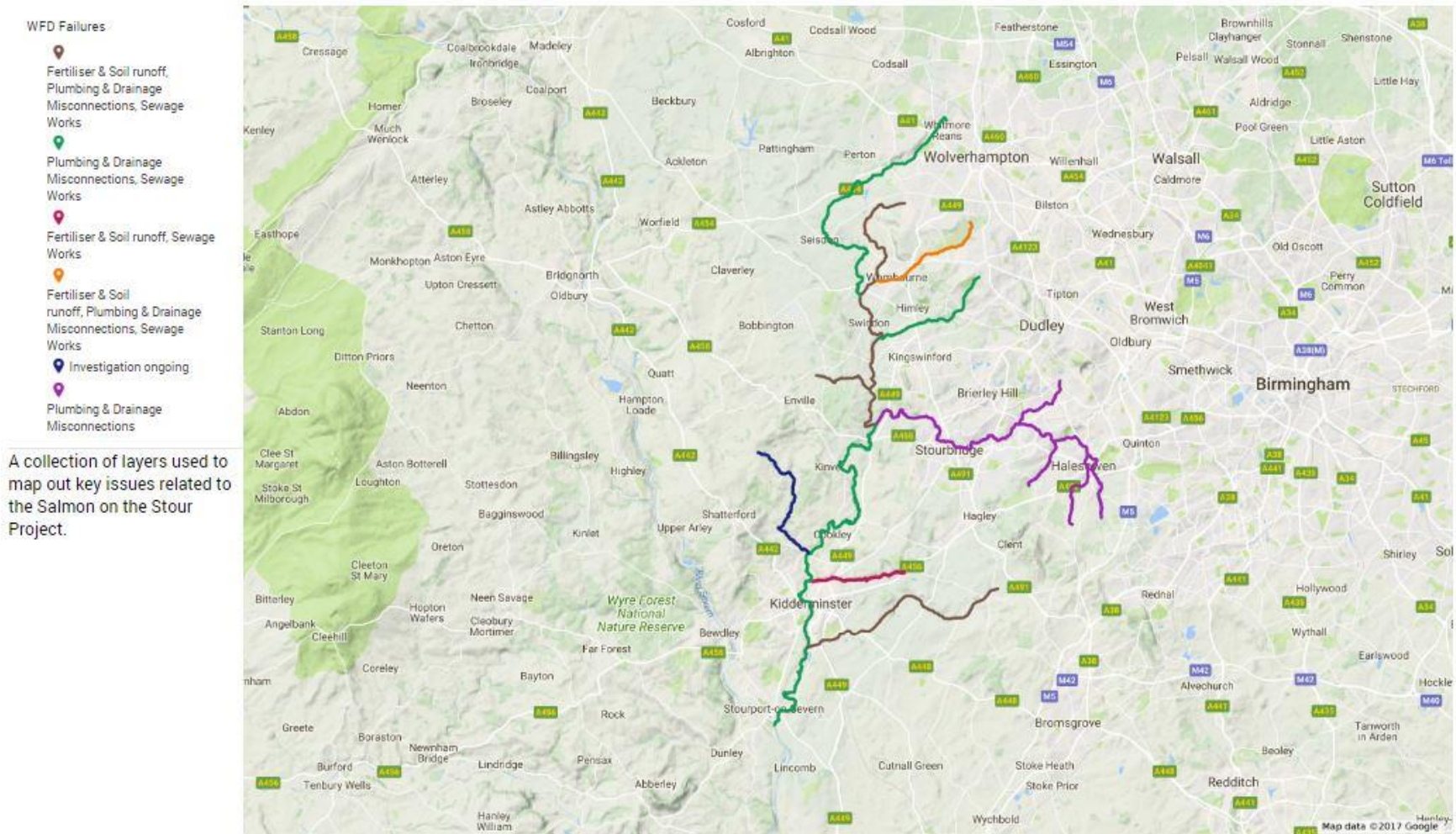
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Main issues



What does the data tell us?

Salmon in the Stour



Justification and why Salmon?

- Fish aren't a reason for failure – presumably failing (lack of site and species data)?
- Key indicator of a healthy ecosystem
- Relatable to non fishy / ecology people
- In short - must be doing something right if they are present!

Salmon, Stour, same sentence....?



Good news....they are already here!

Site	Atlantic salmon	Barbel	Brook lamprey	Brown / sea trout	Perch
Kidderminster SO8250073800					
1991					
2000		2		4	
2002				4	
2003				10	
2004	2	1		6	
2005		3		23	
2008		2		2	
2011				13	
Wilden SO8240072800 (2004) SO8181872352 (2005)					
1991					
2000		2		1	
2002		2		1	
2004	5	1		1	
2005	1	1		4	

Fish Lengths				
132	146			
137	136	121	127	135
134				

Bad news....we can't go home!



So, what's the solution?



Salmon in the Stour
and its tributaries for v
working with commun
opportunities for impr
number of small habit
The project (a partner
Trust for Birmingham
and the Severn Rivers
which includes the Stou
join it along its route.
The project is in the ea
build-up a picture of v
future. Here in the Bla
watercourses includin
well as the Stour itself
In the long-term we w
habitat for threatened
spread of invasive spe
people and celebrate



Sal
An opp



THE
wildlife
TRUSTS
Birmingham &
Black Country



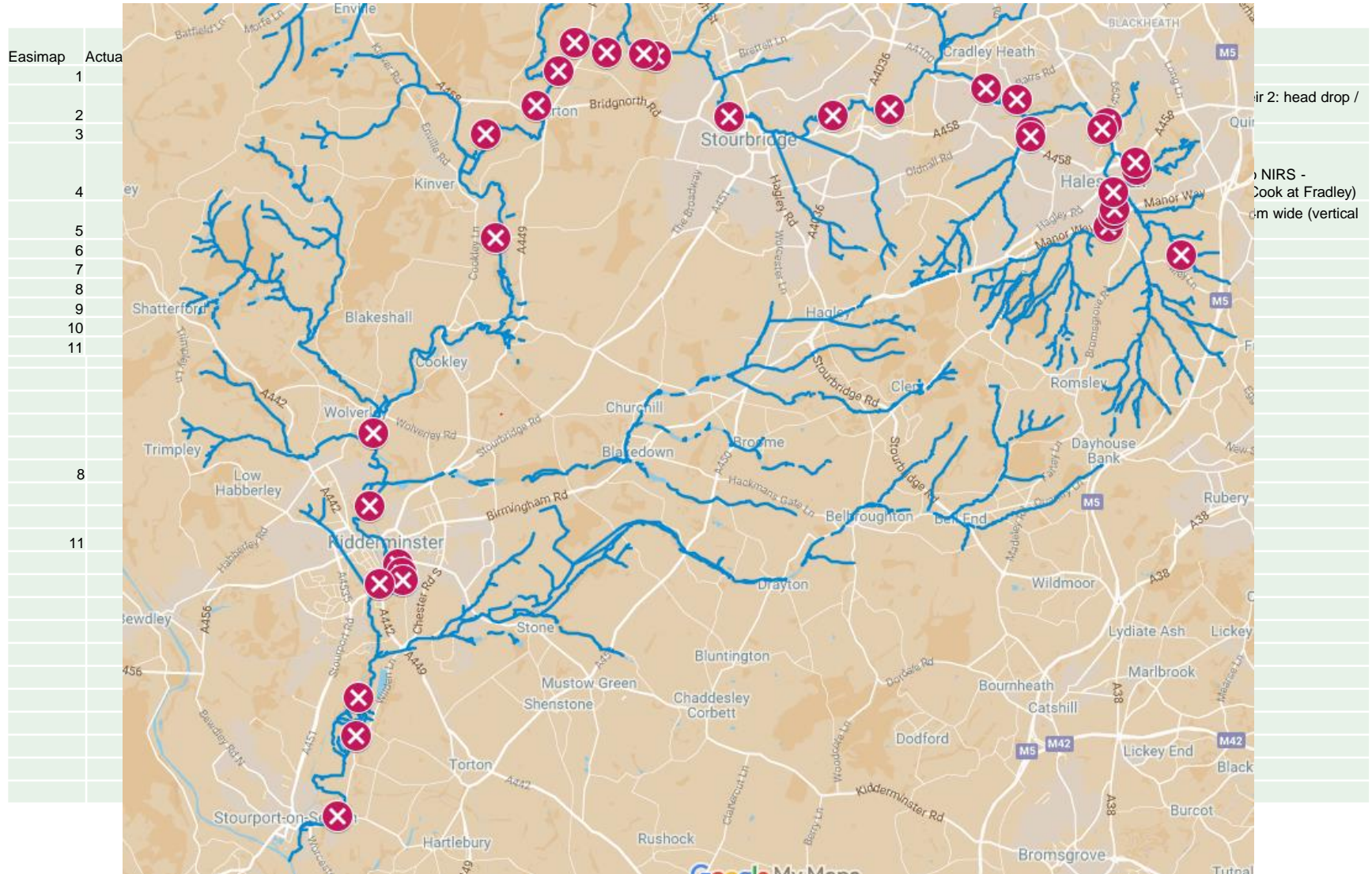
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Today the river
poor habitat
poor access.

What has the partnership delivered?

- 19 sampling sites to gap fill existing water quality knowledge (13 parameters)
- **Barriers to fish migration walkover and landowner mapping**
- Delivery of a “quick win” on the ground
- Secure funding to move the project forward

Do we know everything?



Weirs – preaching to the converted!



Weirs – things to consider

- Ownership
- Funding
- Heritage / Listed status
- Flooding
- Prioritisation – barriers assessment
- Options outside of removal?
- Stakeholder concerns
- Not delivering on the promise of improvement (short term anyway) a difficult message

What is the plan now?

- Formalised a partnership
 - Project manager in post / point of contact
 - Review new data
 - Identify main constraints to Salmon in the Stour approach – ‘showstoppers’
 - Generate a prioritised 4 year activity plan
- **Deliver quick wins – be opportunistic!**
- Identify long term funding opportunities

What is a 4 year activity plan?

- Community / Partner engagement
- Not just about weir removal!
 - Road run off
 - Misconnections
 - Suspect discharges
- Improved habitat connectivity
- Habitat creation / improvement
- Natural flood management
- Citizen science

Quick win – Devils Den weir



Quick win – case study

- Low head weir downstream of EA asset (**0.7km**)
- Upstream of CRT asset (**even closer**)
- Downstream of privately owned bridge (**even closer still**)
- Not listed
- Privately owned
- Reach not actively fished
- Original purpose? i.e. who will come looking for me when its removed?!

What was needed?

- **Landowner permission!**
- **Funding!**
- Stakeholder consultation
- Baseline data!
- Topographical survey / services search
- Desk based heritage assessment
- WFD compliance assessment
- Hydraulic modelling
- Environmental Permit (replacing FRA)
- Low Risk impoundment assessment

Cost and what next.....?

- £12.7k excluding staff time – begs the question; can we tackle the rest for less than £1 million??? (**one element of a much bigger project**)
- Promotion and engagement (who else can work with us?)
- Detailed barriers assessment
- **Engaging water companies / other industry that has an impact on the catchment**
- Identify BIG funding opportunities - FCRM?

Questions?

