

Is Latchmore Brook connected with its floodplain..

The Forestry Commission say that it isn't.

1. On the South Today programme on BBC TV screened on 19 May, the Forestry Commission's spokesman Kevin Penfold described "stream restoration".

"It's restoring the whole system, it's about the streams, so they're reconnected with the floodplain, so the water ...readily flows out onto the floodplain taking the energy out of the water ..."

These comments were repeated on Julian Clegg's Breakfast Show on BBC Radio Solent on 24 May; and in the Forestry Commission's Q & A document on their website, one of the principal objectives for the works at Latchmore is given as:

" To restore Latchmore Brook to its original natural meandering course, reconnecting the stream to the floodplain and reducing futher erosion by slowing the flow. "

But the stream is already connected with its floodplain, as the photographs below, taken after heavy overnight rain, show

Latchmore after heavy rain April 25th 2012.



After heavy overnight rain.
Gravel track to Latchmore.



Ogdens car park.



Walking up to Alderhill Inclosure



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Latchmore after heavy rain April 25th 2012.



Debris being carried down stream



Flooding the Old Ant Hills near to where the bomb was discovered



Latchmore after heavy rain April 25th 2012.



Along the track



The stream flooding by the Inclosure .

Back along the track



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2. The Forestry Commission's objective: "*To restore Latchmore Brook to its original natural meandering course...*"

But the stream already does meander.



3. The Forestry Commission's objective: "*Restoring the whole system...*"

Presumably "the whole system" means the miles upstream of Latchmore where the water runs through the Inclosures in deep, straight-sided drains and culverts.

The Forestry Commission's Q & A document states that :

"Stream restoration is still required in parts of Islands Thorns, Amberwood and Alderhill Inclosures..."



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Straight sided drainage in the Alderhill Inclosure



But this restoration is not being planned in the immediate future and work must be carried out upstream first to avoid the danger of contaminating the downstream "restoration."

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4. The Forestry Commission's objective : *“ So the water ... readily flows out onto the floodplain taking the energy out of the water...”*

But the late Colin Tubbs (a very highly-regarded ecologist) cited Latchmore Brook as an example in his definitive book. *The New Forest* , published in 1986. On page 250 he wrote “ Latchmore Brook - flash flooding helps maintain the nutrient status of stream-side lawns “ illustrated with a beautiful photo of Latchmore Brook looking much the same as it does now.

The photograph below shows Latchmore . Flash flooding. 2012



by some Friends of Latchmore.