COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Restoring Our Fens: Have Your Say

A community consultation on the future of our Fens. Come see the plans, share your feedback, and help shape what happens next.

WHEN & WHERE

Wednesday 22 July

David Attenborough Building

YOUTH SESSION

10:00am

Presentation and Habitat Helpers Handbook activity

AFTERNOON SESSION

1:00pm

Collective walkthrough of the community petition

Young people will work through the presentation and a hands-on Habitat Helpers Handbook activity. Everyone is welcome to join the afternoon session to go through the community petition together and give feedback before it's finalised.

EVERYONE WELCOME

No booking needed. Come for ten minutes or stay for the whole session.

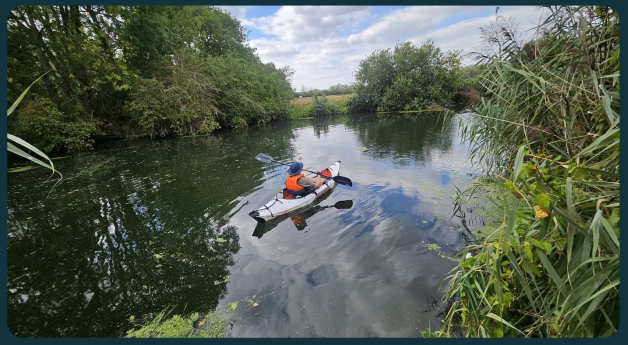
THE CASE, IN ONE LINE

Hard engineering alone is being asked to hold back a problem it **cannot stop**, but nature can help carry the load.

OPEN TO SEE HOW →

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Sign the petition** for nature based defences alongside existing engineering.
- **Come and talk to us** about how soft engineering protects homes, farmland and wildlife.
- **Spread the word** to neighbours, schools and local groups.



Kayaking the River Cam through the Fens

OUR FENS
OUR WATER
OUR FUTURE

The Fens were *made* by people. Now they need us again.

A landscape held together by pumps and banks, and why working **with** the water may be its best defence.

A post driven flush with the ground at Holme Fen in the 1850s now stands roughly four metres clear. That gap is the land we have lost.

SOURCE: NATURAL ENGLAND, GREAT FEN

THE GROUND IS DISAPPEARING

A sinking landscape, kept dry by machines

The Fens are drained farmland lying below the rivers and sea around them. Every dry field is the result of constant pumping, but that same drainage is destroying the soil it sits on.

~4 m

of peat lost at Holme Fen since the 1850s, now around 2.75 m below sea level, the lowest point in Britain.

NATURAL ENGLAND, GREAT FEN

~9 mm

of further peat shrinkage every year. Slowed, but not stopped.

NATURAL ENGLAND

50%

of Cambridgeshire already lies below sea level, held back only by banks and pumps.

UKCEH

The Holme Fen post — measuring the sunken land

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY

Working with the water

No one is asking for the pumps to be switched off. Soft engineering adds nature's defences alongside the infrastructure we depend on.

01 Hold and slow floodwater

Re wetted fen acts like a sponge, storing heavy rainfall and releasing it slowly to protect towns and farmland downstream.

02 Protect peat and carbon

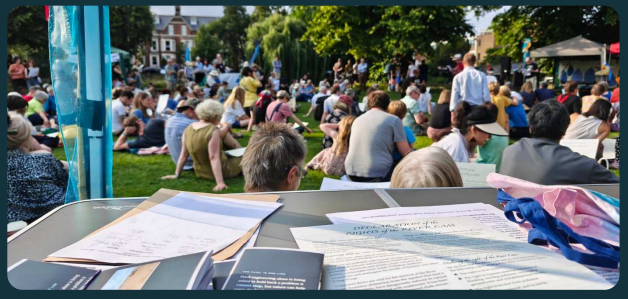
Great Fen restoration is estimated to keep around 325,000 tonnes of CO_2 out of the air each year while preserving the soil.

03 Ease the load on pumps

Natural storage takes pressure off ageing, costly infrastructure, making the system more resilient, not redundant.

04 Bring back wildlife

Healthy fen supports rare species, cleans water, and gives communities places to value.



Declaring the Rights of the River, our first community event

OUR SHARED STAKE

The Fens feed the country

This landscape produces well over a third of England's fresh vegetables. Protecting its water is not a luxury, it is how we keep it working, for farming, for nature and for the people who live here.

>1/3

of England's fresh vegetables are grown in the Fens, among the most productive farmland in Britain.

NFU, UKCEH

>1%

of all UK greenhouse gas emissions come from drained lowland peat, the highest per hectare of any land use.

UKCEH

About this project

Part of a student led initiative through UWC Atlantic's Systems Transformation Pathway. Our Fenland project runs school workshops and brings scientists, drainage boards, councillors, farmers and young people together to feed recommendations into Fens 2100+ and local flood reports.

We work with our drainage boards, not against them, asking that nature based defences sit alongside the engineering we rely on. Turn over and add your name.