



Stonbury completed a comprehensive river survey in the South West of England, to provide the client with a better understanding of the fish populations within a local river.

Fish and habitat surveys play an essential part in monitoring the status of the river environment. The purpose of the surveys is to collect data of fish species composition and abundance to help better understand the fish populations present. The surveys allow habitats to be identified, protected and enhanced for those species.

Before works could begin, all relevant applications and licences were put in place, including an application for authorisation from the Environment Agency, which allowed the use of fishing instruments other than Rod and Line (FR2).

The stretch of river was divided into three reaches and each reach was netted off at both ends to stop fish movement upstream. The operators slowly walked alongside the boat, which was fitted with two electrodes and a cathode.

The fish were caught sequentially and held in the aerated tank before each fish was measured and returned to the water.

The data was recorded and broken down into the location, species of fish, the number caught and the size. Once all sections were complete, the equipment was disassembled, removed from site and disinfected to ensure biosecurity.

The data was evaluated, and recommendations were passed onto the client, as to how they could enhance the surroundings and habitat. The data will remain as a baseline for the specific stretch of river that was surveyed and will help to monitor the environmental conditions in the future.