



Stonbury has returned to the River Severn to complete embankment maintenance for its sixth year, introducing new measures on behalf of the client to significantly reduce carbon emissions.

Contracted by the Environment Agency, Stonbury is pleased to complete essential maintenance on 70 kilometres of flood embankments along the River Severn. The main scope of the programme, which runs all summer, is to remove wrack and reduce vegetation overgrowth to protect embankments and prevent flooding.

This year, various carbon reduction principles – set out by the client - were introduced to the landowners with the overall aim of eventually making the project carbon neutral. This included, working from a new eco-welfare van, which has solar panels on the roof and multiple power storage batteries that can power the van when the engine is off, significantly reducing carbon emissions. In addition, the eco-welfare van can be run on HVO fuel for further carbon savings.

The client also proposed new options to avoid the burning of wrack washed up on the riverbanks over winter, this was discussed with landowners and for each stretch, the team negotiated with stakeholders to allow for making habitat piles out of biodegradable wood debris at agreed locations. Other options included wood chipping and transferral to a wood recycling facility. Plastic is removed and recycled.

In addition to wrack clearance, the team complete asset condition inspections on the embankments, identifying and reporting any observed features that may damage their performance as flood defence assets.

The grass banks are then mown in two sessions during mid-summer and early autumn along the west and east banks. Stonbury's mowing contractors are also exploring further ways to drive down carbon emissions, these include running their two newest Reform mowers, that can potentially be run on HVO and Aspen diesel following re-mapping the engines and reducing whole body vibration at the same time.