

Sustainable Water

Burnside, Main Street

This is Town Beck. It is one of Addingham's four main becks. It runs down through the village and is joined by Back Beck in the Garth and flows through Church Field entering the River Wharfe at Low Mill.

It is often hidden from view along the side of Main St. by extensive culverting underneath roads, houses and other buildings. Here at Burnside is one of the few places along Main St where the beck can be easily observed. There is a diverse community of beckside plants on the far bank, including hemp agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) and kingcups (*Caltha palustris*).



The green box houses a River Level Recorder one of many along the Wharfe and its tributaries. They provide the Environment Agency with a continuous record of changes in water level along the river. The data are available online in real time. See the data for Addingham Town Beck here: <https://riverlevels.uk/river-wharfe-addingham-addingham-town-beck#.YGyTZWRKi70>. The data are used by the EA to model flood risk enabling flood alerts to the general public to be issued in advance of flooding occurring.

Although the water usually looks clear, water quality in the beck at this point and through the village is poor. It suffers from both nutrient and sediment pollution. Upstream above the village runoff from agricultural land carries nutrients and sediment into the beck and within the built-up area of the village itself nutrient rich dirty water is discharged into the beck through surface water drains servicing homes, gardens and road surfaces.



The nutrient rich condition of the water is clearly indicated by the amount of filamentous algae growing on the surfaces of the submerged stones. Invasive signal crayfish are also seen here from time to time.



Habitat for wildlife upstream and downstream of this part of the beck is restricted by the artificial nature of the channel bounded by high-sided built walls. There is limited space for bankside vegetation. Nevertheless, brown trout can sometimes be seen in the pool below the weir and grey wagtails nest nearby in most years.