AFON ALYN

The Alyn river rises at the southern tip of the Clwydian Hills and flows through an area of carboniferous limestone, which resulted in the formation of a steep gorge and caves. Limestone also makes the water alkaline, which is uncommon in Wales, and supports woodlands and grasslands with diverse and rare plants as well as a wealth of invertebrates. After Rhydymwym, the geology changes to sandstone, mudstone and siltstone.

ALYN VALLEY WOODS SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

DESIGNATED HABITATS:

Tilio-Acerion forest

One of the largest continuous areas of this forest in Wales, dominated by ash and acer.

It also supports the region's largest population of wayfaring trees.

Rare flora includes: herb Paris, hellebore, toothwort, green-flowered helleborine, spurge laurel







The aim is to achieve favourable conservation status, so that these habitats are able to thrive sustainably.

Currently all these habitats are in Ì unfavourable condition.



RIVER HEALTH

The health of our rivers is assessed using a range of ecological and chemical indicators. Under the Water Framework Directive, a river can be classified as High, Good, Moderate, Poor or Bad. High means close to natural conditions.

Source to Rhydymwyn - Good

Rhydymwyn to the confluence with the Dee- Moderate

Q

Terrig & Cegidog - Good Dolfechlas Brook - Poor

PRESSURES

- Diffuse pollution from diary and beef agriculture
- Sewage discharge, including treated effluent discharged to the river at Mold during low/no flow
- Bank side erosion
- Historic channel modification
- Disconnected floodplains
- Variable flows disrupt sediment transport, fish populations and river flora

RIVER RUNNING DRY

The flow between Loggerheads and Rhydymwyn is very variable. During periods of low rainfall water disappears into swallow holes and caves formed in the underlying limestone, often leaving the river dry.



HISTORIC METAL MINING MADE THE PROBLEM WORSE

While such features are a natural phenomena in limestone areas, historic metal mining made the problem worse by exposing and interconnecting cavities.

Several unsuccessful attempts were made at sealing swallow holes to prevent the mines from getting flooded. A 10-mile long tunnel was then constructed in the late 1800's to drain water from the mines.

To this date, the Milwr tunnel discharges water from the Alyn straight to the Dee estuary.