

# Blaenau Gwent Wildlife Site/SINC Notification Form

## SITE SUMMARY

WATERCOURSE NAME:

GRID REF (start)  LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA:

GRID REF (finish)

Length (approx.):  DATE OF SURVEY:

## FURTHER SITE INFORMATION

### BROAD SITE DESCRIPTION

The River Ebbw (Fawr) flows 20 miles from its source at Mynydd Llangynidr, via Carno reservoir and links with the Ebbw Fach at Aberbeeg forming the main Ebbw River before joining the Severn Estuary at the mouth of the River Usk.

For the most part the river is flanked extensively by major roads and housing/urban development, as it flows through the urban areas of Carmeltown and Ebbw Vale. Large sections of the watercourse have been modified, with banks artificially strengthened and raised, canalised sections and culverts (esp. below roads). In particular on the site of the former steelworks at Ebbw Vale, a large stretch of the River is much altered and disappears below ground from view for approx. c.1.5km. Near Aberbeeg the river is flanked by steep valley sides supporting the coniferous and mixed woodland of Craig y Deri and Criag Fawr.

Major improvements have taken place in water quality in the last 30 years, following the closure of collieries and then Ebbw Vale steelworks along with improvement work on the Western Valley trunk sewer.

### ADJACENT SINC<sub>s</sub>/WILDLIFE SITES

Does the site already have any designations?  Yes  No

If yes please state designation/s:.....

### Known site history/ current management

There have been major improvements in water quality in the last 30 years, following the closure of collieries and then Ebbw Vale steelworks along with improvement work on the Western Valley trunk sewer.

Are there any LBAP Priority Habitats or Species present?

Habitats	Species
	SAP M5 European Otter

**Official Use Only:** Site selected as a Wildlife Site/SINC? YES  NO  Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state the section(s) of the Wildlife Site Guidelines that this site qualifies under:

**H15) Watercourses**

In line with the *Criteria for the Selection of SINC's in the Mid Valleys Area*, due to its linear nature, importance as a habitat corridor and extensive influence, a blanket linear designation is used for the Selection of the Ebbw River.

The mosaic of features found in rivers and streams can support a diverse range of plants and animals. A wide range of habitats are associated with rivers and streams from the steep fast flowing conditions in the upper reaches of catchment areas, to meanders, shingle beds and sand bars in the mid to lower reaches.

**Primary qualifying features include:**

- Migratory (anadromous species) and resident populations of fish of conservation significance in the Mid Valleys including bullhead & brown trout (**S5 Fish**).

**Supporting reasons for designation include:**

- Probable breeding Otter, plus areas for foraging, laying up and territorial use (**S1 Mammals**).
  - *Including otter records near Beaufort, Cwm and Aberbeeg.*
- In addition sections of the Ebbw supports breeding dipper (**S2 Birds**).
  - *Records distributed along the watercourse.*

N.B. The Ebbw also supports some interesting hybrids and triple hybrids of Monkey flower (T Evans, Monmouthshire flora).