## EIA Quality Mark Case Study

### Beer Wall: Winner of Prestigious ‘Green Apple’ Award

*Image of Beer Wall and surrounding landscape.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issues:</th>
<th>Purpose of the project:</th>
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<td>The iconic images of flooded roads and isolated villages define our memories of the winter 2013/14 flooding in Somerset. This scheme to install 4 large culverts under the A372 to accommodate the Sowy River and neighbouring Langacre Rhyne (the local word for a drainage watercourse) was one of the resulting political imperatives, for its importance to the future resilience of the communities.</td>
<td>The Beer Bank scheme was carried out for Somerset County Council by its contractor, Skanska, and working in partnership with the Environment Agency on behalf of the Somerset Rivers Authority. The site sits within an area very heavily designated for nature conservation, which Jess was confident we could accommodate; her intention was a design which integrated benefits to nature and people.</td>
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Jess Ager’s contribution to secure ‘sustainable outcomes was more significant because of the need to act. “We couldn't risk delays, so I spoke to Natural England very early on to discuss types of outcomes that would result in an acceptable project. I deliberately focussed on productive dialogue, and not to become mired in a discussion around site specific constraints which, to be honest, we are familiar with having completed so many schemes in this environment.”

### Description of the project:

Jess’s prior experience as an aquatic ecologist helped her to visualise the modifications that could be integrated into the design.

A double decker otter and eel pass, platforms for disabled anglers, abundant habitat for planting rare water parsnip, all achieved with zero waste to landfill.

*What did the otter say when it got to the road culverts at Beer Wall? “We can’t go over it. We can’t go under it. Otter ledge, we can go through it!”* The design (image below) to enable passage of otters top-deck and eels bottom-deck also meets previous concerns about maintenance H&S.
### Lessons learnt:

The EA was working on behalf of the Somerset Rivers Authority. Jess was motivated to meet the aspirations of the stakeholders. “There is always a way if we apply enough ingenuity. If someone says ‘no’ to something it doesn’t have to be the end of that idea. I rework it to eliminate the negatives, by understanding the issues from their perspective”.

Jess’s dedicated desire to satisfy all stakeholder needs, and her tenacious commitment to the challenges, resulted in the creative solutions ticking all the corporate boxes.

Beer Wall has also been nominated for 2 Build Environment Awards in the Chartered Institute of Building Constructing Excellence South West finals.

### Contact details

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