

UK Rivers Network

UK Rivers Network: Weekly News Update –12/1/26

January 2026

- ➔ 10 January 2026: [Chip in for the new Kennet boardwalk?](#): ARK, the Rivers Trust for the Kennet and Pang catchment, is fundraising for a new boardwalk at Stonebridge Wild River Reserve, Marlborough: "The boardwalk is a valued community asset, well-loved and well used by local residents of all ages and visitors to the town. It provides a beautiful walk throughout the seasons along the banks of the Kennet (a rare chalk stream). A chance to experience nature first hand, with every chance of seeing species such as kingfisher, water vole and brown trout."
- ➔ 10 January 2026: [Paddle UK makes the case for better access on Countryfile](#): Paddle UK's Head of Access and Environment is set to appear on the BBC's Countryfile programme (11 January) to make the case for more blue space access. Ben Seal was interviewed by presenter and journalist Tom Heap while paddling on the Cromford Canal, Derbyshire, in December.
- ➔ 10 January 2026: [Mole scientists dig into the data](#): River Mole River Watch offers a great example of what you can do with citizen science data on water quality in their new blog post: "December 2025 Water Quality: Floods, Sewage, and Emerging Patterns in the Mole".
- ➔ 9 January 2026: [Binning medicine could do 'untold harm' to river](#): A conservation group has warned that the ways people get rid of medication and household chemicals could be doing "untold harm" to a river in York. Flushing or binning medicine, garden pesticides and cleaning products was causing the waterway to become polluted, the River Foss Society said.
- ➔ 9 January 2026: [Himalayan balsam's damaging impact on rivers revealed in new study](#): University of Stirling led research has revealed the diverse and damaging impact Himalayan balsam has on river ecosystems. A three-year study led by Dr James Hardwick, a Lecturer in Earth Sciences

at the University's Faculty of Natural Sciences, has shown that the invasive species is doing more than just replacing native plants.

- ➔ 9 January 2026: [Environment Agency releases fresh fish into Wiltshire rivers](#): Thousands of fresh fish have been released into rivers to boost fish populations and support the wider environment. The Environment Agency (EA) carried out the seasonal restocking across Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire, releasing 6,750 coarse fish.
- ➔ 9 January 2026: [Science: New River Chemistry Insights May Boost Coastal Ocean Modeling](#): Rivers deliver freshwater, nutrients, and carbon to Earth's oceans, influencing the chemistry of coastal seawater worldwide. Notably, a river's alkalinity and the levels of dissolved inorganic carbon it brings to the sea help to shape regional conditions for marine life, including shellfish and corals. These factors also affect the ability of coastal seawater to absorb carbon dioxide from Earth's atmosphere-- which can have major implications for climate change.
- ➔ 9 January 2026: [River 'restoration' project announced after £500k City Hall grant](#): Enfield Council says the money will be used to return a 3.4km stretch of Salmons Brook "to a more natural state".
- ➔ 9 January 2026: [Science: Safeguarding, strengthening and expanding river protections for nature and people](#): River protection in the United States remains scant, with just over one-tenth of river length in the contiguous states protected at viable levels, often by land-based protection measures that fail to capture the full diversity of the nation's river systems. There is an urgent need for policies that safeguard, strengthen and expand freshwater protections to secure rivers that sustain both people and nature. A new review published in Nature Sustainability this week offers a way forward.
- ➔ 8 January 2026: [Tough new legal duties on water companies to cut pollution](#): According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: "Water companies must now publish annual pollution-cutting plans under tough new powers introduced by the government. Pollution Incident Reduction Plans (PIRPs) were previously voluntary, with only some water companies electing to produce and deliver them. Through powers in the Water (Special Measures) Act, they will now be mandatory and must be made public, creating unprecedented transparency and accountability in the sector".
- ➔ 8 January 2026: [Why Leicestershire is flooding more often - and what could be done](#): A thoughtful exploration from BBC News of why flooding is more of an issue, including input from The Trent Rivers Trust, which

argues for better catchment management, including slowing the flow of water upstream through ditches, bogs and soft ground.

- ➔ 8 January 2026: [Microplastics are making it harder for oceans to absorb greenhouse gases, study warns](#): Researchers say tackling plastic pollution is now part of fight against global warming.
- ➔ 7 January 2026: [A hopeful future for nature and farming](#): Every January, two parallel conferences transform Oxford into the beating heart of the farming debate. The Oxford Farming Conference (OFC), 7-9 January, draws politicians, business leaders, agricultural companies and farmer entrepreneurs, while the Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC), 8-9 January, typically attracts growers, activists, and researchers, championing community action and pioneering green ideas.
- ➔ 7 January 2026: [Everyday ocean heroes: The power of community action](#): Ciara Taylor from the Marine Conservation Society explains the power of the grassroots!
- ➔ 4 January 2026: ['Storm-battered' canals need more volunteers](#): More volunteers are needed to protect the canal network which has been "battered" by storms and floods, a charity has said. The Canal and River Trust has about 750 volunteers across the Yorkshire and North East region – but said it wanted more people to come forward in the new year.
- ➔ 3 January 2026: ['Explosion' of water vole numbers across the East](#): Until recently, the River Colne in Essex had struggled with water vole numbers because of mink, an invasive non-native species introduced to the UK in the 1960s. But a programme to boost numbers by partners including Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) and Waterlife Recovery Trust has seen an "absolute explosion of wildlife and particularly the water voles", said the EWT's Darren Tansley.
- ➔ 3 January 2026: [Construction Site Pollution: The Silent Threat Smothering Our Rivers](#): Simon Hunter, CEO of Bristol Avon Rivers Trust, writes that: "Pollution from construction sites might not make the headlines like oil spills or chemical disasters, but make no mistake: it's a silent killer of river health. Every time heavy rainfall washes sediment, concrete washout, fuels, lubricants, and other contaminants off poorly managed sites and into watercourses, our rivers suffer."
- ➔ 1 January 2026: [A Huge Win for the River Chess](#): Slightly old news from The Chiltern Society, from November, that slipped past our radar: "After two years of campaigning with our partners, we've just been told by the Environment Agency they have officially revoked Affinity Water's licence

to abstract groundwater at Chesham Pumping Station. Abstracting water from the top of a chalk stream has the biggest impact on river flow, often leaving vital stretches dry. Ending this abstraction means more water can stay in the river where it belongs, which helps restore natural flow, protects wildlife, and brings the Chess back to life. Many thanks to everyone who has helped us to fight for this outcome – from local campaigners and the River Chess Association to the Chilterns Chalk Stream Project and other partners across the Chilterns. This is a huge milestone in the journey to protect and revive our chalk streams."

- ➔ 1 January 2026: [Lower Itchen restoration - a proposal for Southampton city](#): Who cares about the Lower Itchen and her potential to be something other than a boat navigation strip or industrial waste dump? Southampton National Park City do: "Together with Friends of the Itchen Estuary supported by the Maritime Volunteer Service, we set about mapping the riverbank to spot opportunities for interventions that would encourage biodiversity."
- ➔ 1 January 2026: [Dibden Bay: Parish council voices 'critical gaps' concerns](#): The worrying resurgence of ABP's Didben Bay port expansion plan has prompted concerns from a local parish council.

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- ➔ [Woodland Creation Officer: Ribble Rivers Trust](#) (28 January 2026)
- ➔ [Evidence Project Officer: Thames21](#) (26 January 2026)
- ➔ [Catchment Partnerships Programme Manager: Thames21](#) (26 January 2026)
- ➔ [Species Recovery Manager: The Freshwater Biological Association](#) (22 January 2026)
- ➔ [Volunteering Leader: Canal and River Trust](#) (21 January 2026)
- ➔ [River Access for All Project Officer: River Waveney Trust](#) (19 January 2026)
- ➔ [Riverfly Partnership - Senior Development Manager](#) (18 January 2026)
- ➔ [Senior Catchment Officer: South East Rivers Trust](#) (18 January 2026)
- ➔ [Catchment Officer: South East Rivers Trust](#) (18 January 2026)
- ➔ [Technical Analyst \(GIS\): The Rivers Trust](#) (16 January 2026)
- ➔ [Trust Development Manager: Great Ouse Rivers Trust](#) (16 January 2026)

- [Development Phase Programme Manager: Thames Rivers Trust](#) (16 January 2026)
- [Communication and Engagement Lead: Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust](#) (14 January 2026)
- [Project Managers: Welsh Dee Trust](#) (12 January 2026)
- [Eden Catchment and Cluster Officer: South East Rivers Trust](#) (11 January 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Non-Executive Independent Directors: Paddle Cymru](#) (16 January 2026)
- [Trustee: Eden Rivers Trust](#) (12 January 2026)

River of the week



Salmons Brook, Enfield – soon to benefit from a £500,000 restoration project by Enfield Council. Photo © by [Christine Matthews](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

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