

# UK Rivers Network

## UK Rivers Network: Weekly News Update –19/1/26

### January 2026

- ➔ 16 January 2026: [Public confidence in the state of Britain's rivers has hit a historic low: UK Water Partnership.](#): Trust in the management of our water environment is at a historic low, according to a new report from the UK Water Partnership written by Adrian Rees from ARC, Jim Marshall from AECOM and Lauren McMillan from Northumbria University.
- ➔ 16 January 2026: [Butt Boxes: How a simple solution changed behaviours:](#) Keep Britain Tidy argue that their portable ashtray "isn't just reducing litter - it's helping change attitudes and norms, encouraging a wide range of people who smoke to think 'don't litter', even beyond cigarette butts".
- ➔ 16 January 2026: [The return of greywater!:](#) Architects and designers have recycled ancient practice of collecting rainwater to make buildings ecologically friendly, according to a report from The Guardian in China.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [River Action has a new legal eagle:](#) Christian Fuller, the new legal coordinator at River Action, introduces himself and explains the work he'll be doing for the group.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [How River Severn floodplain could become a wildlife haven:](#) A stretch of the River Severn could be restored as a wildlife haven over the next 20 years. The Eelscapes project would allow endangered European eels and other vulnerable wildlife to thrive again in the Severn Vale in Gloucestershire.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [Bewick's swan, Galina, spotted in the UK for the first time after 20 years!:](#) The arrival of a 20-year-old Bewick's swan at WWT Slimbridge shows how protected wetlands across Europe are helping migratory birds adapt to climate change.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [Counting swans this weekend:](#) Volunteer birders across the UK and Ireland will be among those taking part in the six-yearly international swan census this weekend, counting numbers of the countries' two wintering species, whooper and Bewick's swans.

- ➔ 15 January 2026: [Worldview: Why we fail to save our rivers](#): Tuhin Wadud, the Director of Riverine People and a Professor in the Department of Bengali at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, looks at the difficulties in getting people to appreciate and value rivers, with lessons from Bangladesh.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [Thousands of fish released to revive River Nene](#): A long-term fish conservation project combining restocking with habitat improvement is under way along the River Nene in Peterborough.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: ['I'm both humbled and heartened' - National rivers guardian from Ludlow recognised by King with OBE](#): Jonathan White, who grew up near Ludlow and now divides his time between Shropshire and Buckinghamshire, was named in the 2026 New Year's Honours List, receiving an OBE for his services to river conservation, most recently, through the Severn Rivers Trust and The Rivers Trust.
- ➔ 15 January 2026: [Abingdon Reservoir consultation extended after online glitch](#): People who want to share fuller views on a proposed reservoir have been given more time to comment after a technical glitch. Thames Water's South East Strategic Reservoir Option, near Abingdon in Oxfordshire, would be filled in the winter with water from the River Thames and supply 15 million people.
- ➔ 14 January 2026: [Worldview: The Vast Majority of US Rivers Lack Any Protections from Human Activities, New Research Finds](#): The U.S. boasts more than 4 million miles of rivers, peppered with laws and regulations to protect access to drinking water and essential habitat for fish and wildlife. But in the first comprehensive review of river protection, research co-led by the University of Washington shows that the existing regulations account for less than 20% of total river length and vary widely by region.
- ➔ 13 January 2026: ['England's canals are not valued by government'](#): England's canals are not valued enough by the government and need more funding support, the chair of a waterways trust says. Michael Limbrey has spoken out after the collapse of the Llangollen canal in Shropshire that left narrowboat owners stranded, just before Christmas.
- ➔ 13 January 2026: [Countryfile reignites the debate on access to inland waters](#): Paddle UK's Head of Access and Environment, Ben Seal, made the case for more blue space access on the BBC's Countryfile programme. Along with Paddle UK, representatives from the Blue Tits swimmers, the Outdoor Swimming Society, The Angling Trust and the Countryside Landowners Association gave their views.

- ➔ 10 January 2026: [The race to stop England running out of water, from timed showers to bill hikes](#): Ofwat is launching an educational campaign to nudge us into wiser use of water... but why has it taken them so long?
- ➔ 10 January 2026: [Worldview: 18 of Earth's biggest river deltas - including the Nile and Amazon - are sinking faster than global sea levels are rising](#): In a new study published today in Nature, scientists report that land subsidence caused by humans - through the extraction of groundwater - is the main culprit. It also quantified the relative contributions of specific human drivers: groundwater extraction, sediment starvation and urbanization across these deltas, allowing the researchers to identify the dominant cause of the sinking.
- ➔ 7 January 2026: [Failure of Thames Water inevitable, says MP](#): During a Westminster debate into the future of Thames Water on Tuesday, Layla Moran, Liberal Democrat MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, called the failure of the company "inevitable" and questioned its ability to lead a project to build the proposed Abingdon super reservoir.
- ➔ 1 January 2026: [River cleaner 'could have cried' over rubbish](#): A BBC story from August last year that somehow slipped past the radar: 'A volunteer says he "could have cried" after finding a wheelie bin full of rubbish, along with other waste, dumped in a waterway. Mr Elliot, who is known locally as the Canoe River Cleaner, said he hoped people would learn to "respect" waterways and recognise their beauty.'
- ➔ 1 January 2026: [Celebrating 25 years of the Water Framework Directive](#): For a quarter of a century, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) has been the cornerstone of EU water management. It protects rivers, lakes, groundwater, coastal waters and establishes the principle that clean water is a shared public good. To celebrate this milestone, Friedrich Barth, former team leader for the European Commission, takes us back to the day it was adopted.
- ➔ 1 January 2026: [How global seafood trade is moving 'forever chemicals' from contaminated waters to dinner plates](#): A new study finds consumption patterns and trade matter as much as where fish are caught.

## Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

### Jobs

- [Rivers Officer - Catchment Support: Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust](#) (10 February 2026)
- [Community Engagement Trainee: Eden Rivers Trust](#) (2 February 2026)
- [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)
- [Biodiversity Officer: Environment Agency](#) (18 January 2026)

### Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Trustees: Devon Wildlife Trust](#) (22 February 2026)

### River of the week



**Ferry Meadows Country Park, Peterborough** – where 5,000 skimmer bream are being released to restock the River Nene. Photo © by [Richard Humphrey](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

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