

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update –9/3/26

March 2026

- 5 March 2026: [\[£££\] Why I want to give Britain's rivers their wiggle back:](#) Wealth-fund manager and green capitalist Rob Gardner plans to "rewiggle" the River Evenlode in the Cotswolds. He believes pension funds and banks could make money by investing their billions in repairing the country's polluted and degraded waterways. It seems a very odd suggestion at a time when many of us would like to rip up the privatized water system entirely, but... who knows?
- 5 March 2026: [National Resources Wales blasted over condition of River Cleddau:](#) National Resources Wales (NRW) has been criticised over shocking levels of pollution in the River Cleddau. At a council meeting on 5 March, Pembrokeshire County Councillors voted unanimously to back the Save the Cleddau petition, signed by over 2,200 individuals, and agreed that concerns about the river should be explored by the council's scrutiny committee.
- 4 March 2026: [FoE: 1 in 5 households lack access to green or blue space:](#) The government has just published new data on access to green and blue spaces in England, which reveals that 20% of people do not live within a 15 minute walk of nature. Such areas include parks, nature reserves, lakes, rivers and canals. Responding from Friends of the Earth, nature campaigner Paul de Zylva, said: "Everyone deserves access to natural spaces that are teeming with life, and the many benefits they bring for the health and wellbeing of our communities and the planet".
- 4 March 2026: [SAS: Should we nationalise water companies in the UK?:](#) Louise Reddy, Sewage Pollution Policy Officer for SAS, crisply summarizes the arguments against privately owned water companies in a helpful blog post this week: "Water companies are currently operating as privatised monopolies. Their primary motive is to make profit and therefore, they will never operate primarily for environmental and public

good. Water companies cannot be regulated to deliver for the public if their key function is to extract profit. A change in ownership won't in of itself end sewage pollution, but with water under democratic control, accountable to the people, we – bill payers, water users, coastal and inland communities alike – will have far greater tools at our disposal to guide the priorities of the industry. Water is not and should never be treated as a commodity. It's a basic human right. Therefore, in the interest of the health of people and planet, it must be owned and managed for the public good".

- 3 March 2026: [University of Stirling and Environment Agency publish new report on phosphorus in English rivers](#): The Environment Agency and the University of Stirling have published a new report on the links between phosphorus concentrations and ecology in English rivers. Phosphorus remains one of the most significant river pollutants. In recent decades, the overall concentration of phosphorous in English rivers has declined, most likely due to the introduction of phosphorus removal technologies at Sewage Treatment Works (STWs), changes to fertiliser use and adoption of best management practices in agriculture.
- 3 March 2026: [Hampshire councillors wake up to 4x4 River Meon threat](#): Following a mass protest by 150 locals earlier this year, Hampshire County Council has been urged to step in and restrict vehicle access through a 200-metre stretch of the River Meon in Droxford, where repeated vehicle crossings are damaging the fragile chalk stream.
- 3 March 2026: [New ponds and wetlands will benefit wildlife and people in mid-Wales](#): Farmers, landowners and communities across mid-Wales are working with Freshwater Habitats Trust to create ponds and wetlands that will bring clean water, richer wildlife and opportunities for people to connect with nature. With its partners, the charity is creating 20 new ponds and three new wetlands across the River Irfon catchment. Due to be completed in March, they will provide high-quality, unpolluted habitat for freshwater plants and animals that are declining across much of the UK.
- 3 March 2026: [Farmer John is on the run to save the Westcountry's rivers](#): A reminder that farmer and campaigner John Mildmay-White is now firmly on-route in his 372-mile, 10-day solo run from South Devon to Westminster to highlight the dramatic decline of the Westcountry's rivers and to raise money to improve them.

- 3 March 2026: [BART: Why rivers matter](#): Another thought-provoking piece from Simon Hunter of Bristol Avon Rivers Trust: "We often talk about rivers in terms of water quality and wildlife, but the health of our rivers is fundamentally connected to some of the biggest societal challenges we face".
- 3 March 2026: [Connecting Limbs: "We built a hotel for fish!" How architects are 'designing for life' on Sheffield's hidden rivers](#): As part of the Connecting Limbs project, which aims to revive an 800-metre stretch of the River Sheaf using techniques that mimic those found in nature, Architecture Masters students at Sheffield Hallam University have been asked to come up with designs to boost biodiversity in the river and along its banks.
- 3 March 2026: [Theatre group tells tales of the River Avon](#): Birmingham-based Stan's Cafe theatre group is appealing for stories about the River Avon through Warwickshire for the latest in a series of performances about great rivers of the world: "It might be swimming in the river, falling in it, boating on it, or you've spotted an otter on it. How has it changed, or stayed the same. Any little memory or stories we'd love to hear".
- 3 March 2026: [Shrewsbury campaigners defeat their bypass](#): The misleadingly named Shrewsbury North West Relief Road was finally cancelled this week - and, with it, an ugly 670-m concrete viaduct across the River Severn floodplain, a dodgy roundabout threatening to pollute a key drinking-water borehole, and assorted other environmental impacts.
- 2 March 2026: [Former River Tweed bosses credited with keeping salmon numbers healthy](#): Jamie Stewart, clerk to the Tweed Commission, has paid tribute to the people who filled his waders in previous decades. He said: "We need to give great credit to those who came before us for opening up the waterways by removing barriers and taking us from being a Tweed mill industry to a Tweed fishing industry."
- 1 March 2026: [WWF-UK and others secure plans from the government to tackle pollution of key rivers in England](#): WWF-UK, Angling Trust and Fish Legal have received 32 plans from the government to tackle diffuse pollution of some of England's best-loved rivers, following a lengthy legal battle launched by the three groups way back in 2015. Here, Jake White and Katrina Walter, WWF's lawyers, explain what they've achieved... and how.

- 1 March 2026: [An\(other\) interview with Chris Hines](#): Fresh on the back of Channel 4's Dirty Business drama, The Spaceship Earth podcast has reissued an hour-long interview with SAS founder Chris Hines, recorded a few years ago, in which he discusses how the group formed in 1990 to tackle sewage pollution in Porthtowan... and beyond.
- 1 March 2026: [Forever chemicals are in our tap water - but there is a £15 solution](#): The I looks at water filters and other simple ways of tackling PFAS chemicals in your drinking water.
- 1 March 2026: [Wales welcomes beavers... at last!](#): The Wildlife Trusts in Wales and Beaver Trust warmly welcome new Welsh Government legislation recognising the Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) as a native species and granting it protected status – a major milestone for restoring the species to the Welsh landscape. This move aligns legislation in Wales with protection legislation elsewhere in Britain and reflects strong public and conservation support for the return of beavers and their ecological benefits.
- **February 2026**
- 27 February 2026: [Sewage spills threatening River Itchen salmon, says MP](#): Danny Chambers, who represents Winchester, said sewage had been "pouring" into the River Itchen, potentially affecting the endangered fish currently laying eggs in the chalk stream.
- 27 February 2026: [SAS: Dirty Business: The real people behind the sewage drama](#): Surfers Against Sewage explore the real lives behind the characters depicted in last week's Channel 4 sewage pollution drama: "From a mother who lost her eight-year-old daughter to a surfer whose life was permanently altered by illness – these are the real people impacted. Their stories reveal the devastating human cost of sewage pollution, the failure of a privatised water system, and why this moment matters".

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Catchment Restoration Officers: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (27 March 2026)
- [Catchment Adviser: South East Water](#) (27 March 2026)
- [River Catchment Project Officer: ARK](#) (26 March 2026)
- [Project Officer - Surrey and South London: Waterlife Recovery Trust](#) (Closing date not given)
- [Project Officer - EU LIFE R4Ever Kent: South Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (18 March 2026)
- [Farm Advisor: South Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (18 March 2026)
- [Scientific Officer: Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority](#) (17 March 2026)
- [Estuary Restoration Officer: Wyre Rivers Trust](#) (16 March 2026)
- [Chief Executive Officer: Eden Rivers Trust](#) (15 March 2026)
- [Senior Project Manager: Major Projects \(Saltmarsh\)/Severn Estuary: WWT](#) (12 March 2026)
- [Advocacy and Parliamentary Affairs Officer: The Rivers Trust](#) (10 March 2026)
- [Project Manager - River Enhancement: Aire Rivers Trust](#) (9 March 2026)
- [Catchment Partnerships Manager: Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust](#) (8 March 2026)
- [Water Quality Officer: Devon County Council](#) (8 March 2026)
- [Water Resources Specialist: Severn Trent Water](#) (8 March 2026)
- [Senior Project Officer \(South London\): South East Rivers Trust](#) (8 March 2026)
- [26-week Internship: Galloway Fisheries Trust](#) (6 March 2026)
- [Catchment Advisor: The Wye and Usk Foundation](#) (6 March 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Trustee Director: The Open Spaces Society](#) (17 May 2026)

Other opportunities

The Rivers Trust has a useful page of [current vacancies](#) with the various trusts, including voluntary posts and openings for trustees.

River of the week



River Meon, Droxford – Will campaigners finally succeed in banning 4x4s and other traffic from trashing the threatened chalk stream? Photo © [John Walton](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

***** Help us grow – please forward to your friends! *****

**Our weekly newsletter is available by email, RSS feed, or download from our website.
Find out more at <https://www.ukrivers.net/subscribe.html>**

Please send your news, events, press releases, campaign alerts, job posts, and anything else you'd like us to circulate to hello@ukrivers.net. UK Rivers Network newsletters are published under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-SA 4.0\) Licence](#), which means they're free to copy, distribute, and remix as you see fit, with credit.