

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update –16/3/26

March 2026

- **14 March 2026: [29th International Day of Action for Rivers on March 14, 2026](#):** From our friends at International Rivers: "The International Day of Action for Rivers is a time to come together in solidarity with rivers and the communities that protect and defend them. By taking action on behalf of rivers, we affirm that we have the power to protect rivers and ensure that communities have access to clean, free-flowing water and the right to participate in decisions directly affecting rivers, and ultimately, their lives. The theme of this year's International Day of Action for Rivers is 'Protect Rivers, Protect People'."
- **14 March 2026: [Webinar \(April 7\): Restoring Free-Flowing Rivers by Removing Obsolete Barriers](#):** Also from International Rivers: "Across the world, rivers have been fragmented by thousands of dams and barriers built over the past century. Many of these structures are now aging, obsolete, or increasingly risky under changing climate conditions. As their environmental, economic, and safety costs become clearer, a global movement is emerging to restore rivers by removing outdated infrastructure. This webinar brings together a global coalition of experts, practitioners, and advocates working at the forefront of river restoration. From Europe and the United States to Africa and Indigenous territories in North America, speakers will share lessons from dam removal projects, policy reforms, and community-led initiatives that are transforming how societies rethink water infrastructure." Register now if you're interested in watching the live feed.
- **14 March 2026: [Singing to Source on the River Thames!](#):** On Saturday March 14th, Oxford river lovers are celebrating their local waterways with an imaginative cultural event called Singing to Source. "Inspired by our ancestors, who held water as sacred and protected the headwaters of their drinking water both practically and through ritual, they "honour the

sources of the rivers of the Thames Headwaters, at the Thames, Churn, Cherwell, Evenlode, Ock, Ray, Windrush, and Boundary Brook" with walks, offerings, and singing.

- 14 March 2026: [Run for the Rivers: John's fundraiser for Wild About The Erme River](#): Run for the Rivers is John Mildmay-White's 10-day, 600 km charity solo run from the mouth of the River Erme in South Devon to London, following a chain of river catchments all the way to the Thames. At the time of writing, John has raised an amazing £20,779, but that's only just over two thirds of his target. Please chip in a bit more to help the Wild About The Erme River (WATER) campaign if you can.
- 13 March 2026: [Worldview: 'Blackwater' lakes and rivers in the Congo Basin are now emitting ancient carbon into the atmosphere](#): Carbon that has been buried in the Congo Basin's peatlands for millennia is now seeping into lakes and rivers. Why this is happening remains unclear, but researchers warn that tropical peatlands could be nearing a frightening new tipping point.
- 13 March 2026: [Building ponds for natural flood management on the Ribble](#): Work has officially begun at Blacksnape in Darwen, where Ribble Rivers Trust has started creating a series of new ponds to help with Natural Flood Management. While reducing flood risk is a key aim, the project will also create valuable new habitats for wildlife, helping to boost biodiversity in the area.
- 12 March 2026: [How 'conservation walkovers' help us protect and restore freshwaters](#): In freshwater conservation, there's often a lot of planning and work to do before the practical work can get started on the ground. Freshwater Habitats Trust's Sian Vincent shares what 'conservation walkovers' involve and how they have helped identify opportunities for nature recovery in the River Irton Catchment.
- 12 March 2026: [Lancashire gardeners offered free planters to stop floods](#): Back in the '90s, power companies gave away millions of lightbulbs to save building new power plants. Could we tackle river problems the same way? In a sign of things to come, United Utilities is offering gardeners in one village free water-retaining planters to slow surface-water drainage and reduce flooding; more widely applied, could schemes like this help to reduce storm sewage overflows?
- 12 March 2026: [Access Isn't About Conflict - It's About Connection](#): From Paddle Cymru: "If you spend enough time on Welsh rivers, you'll hear the

same stories. A paddler who felt unwelcome. An angler whose peaceful moment was disturbed. A swimmer who didn't feel seen. A landowner unsure who has the right to be where. For years, access conversations in Wales have been framed around conflict, who can go where, when, and why. But that framing misses the heart of the matter entirely. Because access isn't really about permission: it's about respectful shared use".

- 12 March 2026: [Over £900,000 funding secured for ambitious project to restore and protect two Powys rivers](#): The investment through the Nature Networks Fund, which is being delivered by the Heritage Fund, on behalf of the Welsh Government, will enable Radnorshire Wildlife Trust to protect and enhance two of the county's most important rivers (parts of the River Ithon/Afon Ieithon, a major left-bank tributary of the River Wye near Llandrindod Wells and the River Marteg/Afon Marteg in Rhayader).
- 12 March 2026: [Tribunal to rule whether farmer's data on 'harmful' pesticides can be released to WildFish](#): WildFish appeared at a tribunal hearing (HSE v ICO and WildFish) on 12 March to fight for access to information on harmful plant protection products (PPPs) used by farmers. PPPs include chemicals such as insecticides, weedkillers and fungicides which wash into rivers and streams when it rains. These chemicals wreak havoc with aquatic invertebrates, the base of the food chain, and impact fish.
- 12 March 2026: [New film: "All Rivers Spill Their Stories to the Sea"](#): When a plague of poisoned crabs washes ashore across the North East coast of England, livelihoods are at risk and fisherman are sounding the alarm. Based on a true story, British filmmaker Jeanie Finlay's documentary, All Rivers Spill Their Stories to the Sea, offers a new slant on water pollution through the eyes of veteran fisherman Stan Rennie.
- 11 March 2026: [Salmon fishing banned from Hampshire's River Test](#): Salmon fishing on a section of the River Test (a world-class chalk-stream angling spot) has been banned for the first time. A week after the fishing season officially opened, the Test's managers decided to suspend it for the year after evidence was brought forward showing that fish were at "critically low levels".
- 11 March 2026: [Glastonbury celebrates the River Brue... and tackles its pollution](#): A free community event in Glastonbury this week brought residents together to celebrate the River Brue while raising awareness of the environmental challenges facing local waterways. Living Brue Day

featured a programme of talks (by speakers including Paul Powesland), discussions and creative activities focused on protecting rivers and wetlands across the Somerset Levels.

- 11 March 2026: [RSPB: Don't let nature-friendly farming stall](#): When it comes to fixing our rivers, tackling agricultural pollution is at least as important as fixing sewage, if not more so, but, being "diffuse" rather than "point-source", it's clearly a much tougher nut to crack. Vital to the effort is a growing push to nature-friendly farming.
- 11 March 2026: [Flea-treatments and sheep-dips at damaging levels in Welsh rivers](#): Pesticides used in pet flea-treatments occur widely in Welsh rivers and were detected in over three quarters of river water samples, according to new research by Cardiff University and Natural Resources Wales.
- 10 March 2026: [Government risks breaking the law over plans to weaken nature protections](#): This week The Wildlife Trusts wait to hear whether the Government will weaken some of nature's strongest protections, including slashing the habitats regulations and rules affecting national parks. Matt Browne, head of public affairs at The Wildlife Trusts, says: "It will prove catastrophic if Government bows to industry lobbyists and ploughs ahead with the proposals to downgrade nature laws at a time when our natural world is already in crisis. This would shatter the Government's election promise to save nature, and risk breaking trade commitments and international law".
- 8 March 2026: [Campaigners push to better protect chalk streams](#): Imerys Minerals (formerly English China Clays) has been "fined" £430,000 (technically, agreed to an "enforcement undertaking" as an alternative to prosecution) for a series of pollution episodes across Cornwall over a two-year period. More happily, the "fine" is destined for the West Country Rivers Trust for a series of river improvement projects.
- 6 March 2026: [Pumped-up poo protest over water pollution](#): A group of 14 large, inflatable poo "emojis" have found their way to the banks of the Rye Dyke in Buckinghamshire this week in a protest against Thames Water's request for leniency over pollution rules. The campaign group, We Own It, said the plan was part of a deal to settle billions of pounds worth of Thames Water's debts, and wants the company to be brought into public ownership instead.

- 6 March 2026: [Archaeological work begins on land for Lower Thames Crossing](#): A team of 50 archaeologists has been excavating at Coalhouse Fort in East Tilbury in advance of construction of the highly controversial £10 billion road project.
- 4 March 2026: [SAS: 2026 Plastic Pollution Policy Wins for UK Waters \(so far\)!](#): How about some good news for a change? SAS review some of the progress made on plastic pollution this year, including the Welsh Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and the Scottish ban on plastic wet wipes.
- 4 March 2026: [Nationalisation Means Nationalisation](#): In a pair of recent blog posts, Philip Greenwood of Waterways Protection articulates his argument that "Nationalisation means nationalisation, not Special Administration": while placing failing water companies into special administration "buys time", it does not amount to "true nationalisation" and, Greenwood argues, it's vitally important not to mix the two things up.
- 20 February 2026: [Send in the Drones: how Digital Imaging Technology Supports River Restoration](#): Drones certainly aren't getting a good press at the moment, but here's a more positive application, described by Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust: "We use drone surveys to support a wide range of river and catchment restoration work, including Natural Flood Management (NFM), fish passage barrier removal, and the remediation of pollution from historic metal mining. Drone technology saves time and money, improves accuracy, and enables more effective long-term monitoring. It also helps us communicate project outcomes to partners, funders, stakeholders and the public. In some cases modelling software allows us to virtually test different restoration scenarios before any work takes place".

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Sound Rivers Project Manager: Westcountry Rivers Trust](#) (10 April 2026)
- [Lead Communicator: Friends of the River Wye](#) (10 April 2026)
- [Ranunculus Project Lead - Wye & Usk: Friends of River Wye](#) (10 April 2026)
- [Citizen Science Volunteer Coordinator and Science Communicator: Friends of the River Wye](#) (10 April 2026)
- [Farming Learning and Engagement Officer: West Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (8 April 2026)
- [Warden - Norfolk Broads Reserves \(Wet Grasslands and Woodlands\): RSPB](#) (5 April 2026)
- [Seagrass Project Officer: Wester Ross Fisheries Trust](#) (31 March 2026)
- [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)
- [Campaigns Manager: Surfers Against Sewage](#) (22 March 2026)
- [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)
- [Dartmoor Headwaters Manager: Dartmoor National Park Authority](#) (15 March 2026)
- [Chief Executive Officer: Eden Rivers Trust](#) (15 March 2026)
- [Senior Project Manager: Major Projects \(Saltmarsh\)/Severn Estuary: WWT](#) (12 March 2026)

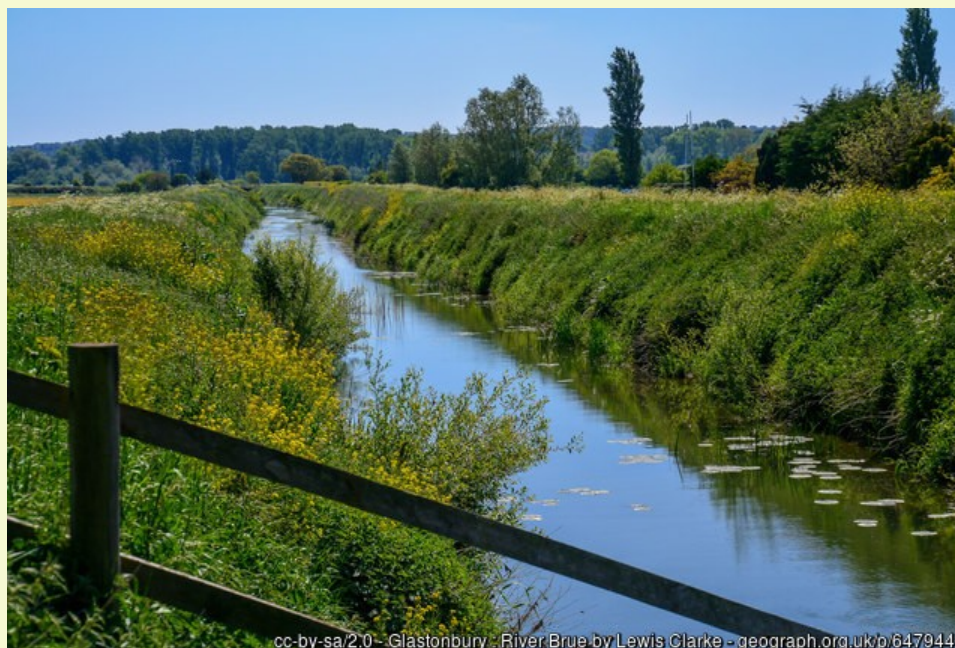
Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Trustee \(accounting skills\): Aire Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Education Officer: Wessex Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Learning and Engagement Volunteer: West Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Trustee Director: The Open Spaces Society](#) (17 May 2026)
- [Paddle England Assembly \(12 members\)](#) (20 April 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 Brue, Glastonbury – Celebrated at this week's local community "Living Brue" event Photo © [Lewis Clarke](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

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