

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update –18/5/26

May 2026

- 16 May 2026: [Get ready for London Rivers Week \(23 May-31 May 2026\)!](#): London Rivers Week (LRW) is a week-long annual campaign inspiring the public to celebrate all of London's rivers and the many projects taking place to protect them. 2026 will be a landmark year, marking the festival's 10th anniversary. The celebrations will highlight a decade of river restoration successes and showcase the achievements of the communities who have helped bring London's waterways to life.
- 16 May 2026: [You feel you've conquered the world': a Thames swimmer on the river's first bathing site in London](#): A great article in The Guardian by Mark Rice-Oxley explains how indefatigable "wild" swimmers have successfully championed the designation of new bathing sites.

- 15 May 2026: ['Don't swim' at 12 of 14 river bathing sites, as more locations announced](#): Lots of new bathing waters have been designated, but almost all of them are currently too filthy to swim in. Still, the whole point, of course, is to start the process.



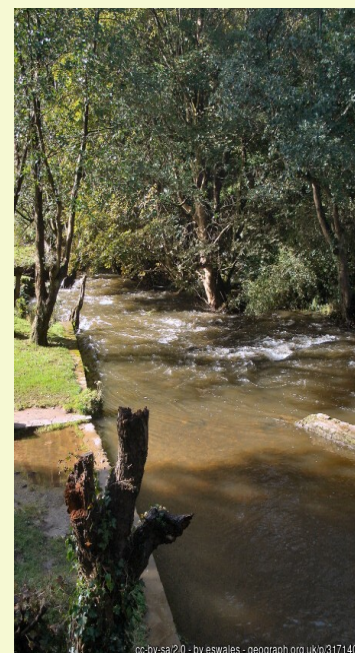
Photo: Pangbourne Meadow, one of the newly designated bathing waters. Photo © [Oscar Taylor](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

- 15 May 2026: [Rivers missing out on stronger sewage testing – because they're too filthy](#): Meanwhile, campaigners claim lots more potential

bathing waters are being overlooked for designation because they are too expensive to clean up.

- 15 May 2026: [River Kenfig 'full of sewage' in what campaigner calls 'worst' pollution incident ever witnessed](#): A river "full of sewage", that is the grim reality along the River Kenfig in Pyle, where wastewater has been captured continually pumping out of an overflow outlet. The founder of a nature charity tells ITV News it is the "single worst pollution incident" he has ever witnessed in the area, with reports indicating the waste is heading directly toward Sker Beach in Porthcawl.

Photo: The Afon Cynffig (River Kenfig), Pyle. Photo © [eswales](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.



- 15 May 2026: [The farmers getting paid to help prevent flooding](#): A £100m project to transform the countryside, boost wildlife and help prevent flooding is now paying farmers for their work for the first time. More than 50 farms are involved in the Evenlode Landscape Recovery Project, restoring three thousand hectares of Cotswold farmland.
- 15 May 2026: [Don't Lose the Ouse: New volunteers hit the river](#): On a beautiful spring day, new volunteers enjoyed a morning of getting to know each other and their mentors during a training day at Harrold Country Park.
- 15 May 2026: [Wood burning is reintroducing lead pollution into the air, US scientists find](#): Imperial College pollution buster Gary Fuller reports on the return of lead... and since air pollution often also becomes water pollution through deposition, that should concern clean water campaigners too.
- 15 May 2026: [Removing Barriers to Fish Passage in the Yorkshire Dales](#): One of the newest members of the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust team, Kate Colledge, explains why it's so important for rivers to run freely once more.
- 15 May 2026: [Thames21 reacts to Defra's River Thames bathing water site news](#): "Congratulations to community group Teddington Bluetits, Simon Griffiths of Outdoor Swimming Magazine, and local resident Rebecca Mole for their dedication and persistence in getting the London bathing

water site proposal for Ham and Kingston over the line. Their hard work and commitment to improving water quality and protecting the River Thames are truly inspiring".

- 14 May 2026: [River Thames in London gets first official bathing spot on Friday](#): The first designated bathing water area on the River Thames in London welcomes swimmers for the official start of the bathing season on Friday as one of 13 new monitored swimming areas across England.
- 14 May 2026: [Yellow Fish Scheme targets hidden pollution entering river](#): A simple yellow fish symbol is being used across Warminster to highlight a hidden problem affecting local rivers. Warminster Town Council and Wessex Water have launched a campaign marking roadside storm drains that flow directly into the river system, warning that anything entering them goes straight into local waterways.
- 14 May 2026: [Greenpeace: Traditional roast dinner sprayed with cocktail of over 100 pesticides](#): That finding has just been published in Greenpeace UK's new report, Our Poisoned Land, which warns that intensive pesticide and fertiliser use is not only posing serious risks to human health, it's also pushing British wildlife and our natural environment to the brink.
- 13 May 2026: [The King's Speech announces the Clean Water Bill](#): From Freshwater Habitats Trust: "The Clean Water Bill (previously referred to as the Water Reform Bill) is the most important policy change affecting freshwater in a generation, and a huge opportunity to get the foundations right for nature recovery. Specifically, Government has the chance to address two persistent failures of the water management framework – exclusion of small waters, and inadequate protection of the best freshwater habitats".
- 13 May 2026: [King's speech: much-needed water industry reforms do not go far enough](#): Alex Ford, Professor of Biology, University of Portsmouth, explains why a major overhaul of water regulation falls short in areas such as addressing the impacts of climate change.
- 13 May 2026: ["Flood the streets for Lough Neagh"](#): From River Action: "As toxic blue-green algae begins returning to Lough Neagh for a fourth consecutive year, people across Ireland are being urged to "flood the streets" on Sunday May 17 for a major March for Lough Neagh demanding urgent environmental action and accountability from Stormont".

Photo: Farr's Bay, Lough Neagh. Photo © [Albert Bridge](#) originally published on [Geograph](#) under a [Creative Commons \(CC-BY-2.0\)](#) licence.

- 13 May 2026: [Places to Paddle: London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Loop](#): If you're a frustrated Londoner lacking places to paddle inland, here's an option from PaddleUK: a 2.5-mile loop around Hackey Wick and the Old River Lee.
- 13 May 2026: [Water Friendly Gardens: Small Changes That Make a Big Difference](#): How we manage our gardens can directly affect the health of our rivers. Charlotte Ireland Pope of the Ribble Rivers Trust offers some top tips for Water Friendly Gardens.
- 13 May 2026: [Norfolk Rivers Trust:Lessons from the field: a strip-tillage review](#): The connection between soil health and river condition is vital. When soil is stable and porous, less sediment and nutrients are washed into nearby watercourses. Practices such as strip-tillage can play a key role in preventing compacted soil from damaging our important river habitats.
- 11 May 2026: [Restoring Rivers Can Slow Flows and Boost Opportunities for Wildlife](#): A major river restoration project in Cumbria has shown that reconnecting rivers to their floodplains can slow the movement of water and improve habitats. Research led by Newcastle University and the National Trust found that restoring a straightened, engineered channel to a more natural form significantly delayed the movement of flood waters downstream.
- 11 May 2026: [CPRE launches urban countryside campaign: 'On the Edge'](#): The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has launched its 'On the Edge' campaign, which will be showcased in the garden of the same name at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2026. Together, they celebrate fragile, often-forgotten countryside on the edges of England's towns and cities – and call for urgent government action to protect it.
- 8 May 2026: [WSRT: DIY Water Harvesting System](#): To celebrate Water Saving Week 2026, local residents Matt and Ruth kindly took the time to show WSRT their homemade water harvesting system, which they have set up in their garden.



- 6 May 2026: [SAS: Water companies must sort out their priorities](#): From Surfers Against Sewage: "We are calling on the Government to assess the costs and the benefits of restructuring the water companies. A simple assessment of the options of what would work best. We think they might even realise that currently, it's the shareholders, not customers who're quids in".
- 6 May 2026: ["No-one wants a chemical linked to cancer in their breakfast" - groups call for action on toxic pesticide residues](#): Campaigners have joined the Soil Association to call for government action to remove glyphosate, a "toxic" pesticide, from everyday foods – just weeks after international scientists declared it can cause cancer.
- 5 May 2026: [Communities urged to lead the charge against invasive Himalayan Balsam](#): Local people are being urged to roll up their sleeves and take the lead in tackling one of the UK's most widespread invasive non-native plants, Himalayan balsam, as part of a long-term, catchment-wide effort to reduce and ultimately eradicate the species across the West Cumbria catchment.
- 28 April 2026: [The exhibition "The Journey of a Grain of Sand" has just opened](#): Our old friends at the European Rivers Network have details of a great new exhibition (viewable online, but sadly only in French!), which "invites you to follow the journey of rocks and grains of sand from the headwaters of the Allier to the Atlantic Ocean."

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Aquatic Species Officer: Lune Rivers Trust](#) (28 June 2026)
- [Project Officer – Woodlands: Lune Rivers Trust](#) (28 June 2026)
- [Aquatic Species Officer: Lune Rivers Trust](#) (28 June 2026)
- [Head of Operations: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (19 June 2026)
- [Senior Project Officer: Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (12 June 2026)
- [Project Officer: Ribble Rivers Trust](#) (8 June 2026)
- [Catchment Conservation Worker: Ribble Rivers Trust](#) (8 June 2026)
- [Senior Catchment Restoration Officer - Upper Teme: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (31 May 2026)
- [Catchment Coordinator: Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust](#) (30 May 2026)
- [River Restoration Manager: Thames21](#) (29 May 2026)

- [Learning and Engagement Manager: Thames Estuary Partnership](#) (Closing date variable)
- [Head of Engagement, Education and Partnerships: Ribble Rivers Trust](#) (25 May 2026)
- [Ecologist: Canal and River Trust](#) (20 May 2026)
- [Species Recovery Officer: Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust](#) (20 May 2026)
- [Community Officer \(Hereford~River City\): Herefordshire Wildlife Trust](#) (19 May 2026)
- [Nature Recovery Officer \(Hereford~River City\): Herefordshire Wildlife Trust](#) (19 May 2026)
- [Catchment Restoration Officer - Upper Severn \(Wales\): Severn Rivers Trust](#) (Unspecified closing date)
- [Project Manager: Mersey Rivers Trust](#) (17 May 2026)
- [Advocacy and Parliamentary Officer: Angling Trust](#) (17 May 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

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

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

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