

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update –6/7/26

July 2026

- 4 July 2026: [!STOP! the invaders with check, clean, dry:](#) We all have to do our bit to stop alien, invasive species taking over our freshwaters. That means paying attention to biosecurity -- and following the "check, clean, dry" approach when you're out-and-about doing practical work. Here's a quick reminder of the official guidance.
- 4 July 2026: [What are invasive non-native species and why are they a problem?:](#) Continuing our "alien" theme, Ribble Rivers Trust has just published a handy guide to invasive non-native species - and why rivers (being dynamic and interconnected) are particularly vulnerable to them.
- 4 July 2026: [Balsam bashing with Ouse and Adur:](#) If you're in Sussex this week and you'd welcome a free workout, how about joining in a balsam bashing session along the River Ouse and the Tickerage Stream, a tributary of the River Uck, courtesy of the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust? Contact Jo at the Trust for further details.
- 4 July 2026: [River Action: We're not backing down in our legal challenge over the Government's failure to publish a Special Administration policy:](#) Why is failing Thames Water not in Special Administration? Exactly what would it take to make the government intervene in running privatized water companies? River Action has been testing questions like these in a legal case it launched a year ago; and, as they explain in a new blog post, they have no intention of giving up without some answers.
- 4 July 2026: [River Great Ouse 'crisis' as fleet of boats set to campaign:](#) A fleet of boats will take to the water in a public campaign calling for urgent investment in the UK's inland waterways. Travelling along the River Great Ouse from St Ives to Bedford, the cruise will take place from July 13 to 18.
- 3 July 2026: [Loch Kemp hydro scheme: wildlife groups warn of impact on Loch Ness:](#) The Guardians energy correspondents found themselves ticked off this week for gleefully championing three controversial new hydro schemes in Scotland that have provoked outrage from

conservationists. According to Brian Shaw, Ness District Salmon Fishery Board Director: "The Loch Kemp scheme will permanently damage the biodiversity of iconic Loch Ness, with the ecological impacts extending beyond to the greatest wildlife spectacle in the Highlands, which occurs at Chanonry Point, where dolphins prey on returning Atlantic salmon within metres of the shore".

- 3 July 2026: [NRW says fresh evidence shows River Wye recovery is achievable with action across the catchment](#): Natural Resources Wales (NRW) says new reports setting out fresh evidence on key aspects of the River Wye's ecology highlight ongoing pressures and clear opportunities to improve the condition of the river.
- 3 July 2026: [WildFish: Why were river barriers created, and do we still need them?](#): Daniel Nixon explores five thousand years of barrier building - and the long legacy of Britain's industrial past.
- 2 July 2026: [Rowing on the River Thames: Staying safe when the water quality is poor](#): Following reports of increasing illegal sewage discharges into the Thames, British Rowing have published a guide on how to stay safe when the water quality is poor.
- 2 July 2026: [Worldview: American Rivers face down PFAS](#): PFAS ("forever chemicals") are attracting ever-more attention in the UK; over in the United States, things are rather more concerning with the Trump administration's decimation of environmental protections, including the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed rollback of drinking water protections for several PFAS chemicals.
- 2 July 2026: [Children 'violently ill' after swimming in River Frome near Bath](#): A large number of people have fallen ill after swimming in a popular bathing spot over the weekend. At least 16 people are known to have experienced vomiting and diarrhoea after swimming at Farleigh Hungerford, on the River Frome, near Bath. The site is operated by Farleigh and District Swimming Club, which days before had deemed the water quality as low risk.
- 2 July 2026: [Future of River Clyde up for consultation as public invited to have say](#): Glaswegians are being invited to share their views on the future of the River Clyde as part of a three-week public consultation to help shape a new masterplan for the river. The public consultation on the Clyde Mission Strategic Masterplan has launched, with residents, businesses and communities encouraged to share their priorities and ideas before the survey closes on July 21.
- 2 July 2026: [Unhappy Somerset residents protest funding cuts](#): The never-ending saga of Somerset flood protection takes another turn this week,

with news that the Environment Agency (EA) has withdrawn maintenance funds from West Somerset rivers just weeks before a Government flood funding settlement is due. Exmoor farmer and Conservative political campaigner James Wright is now urging residents to sign a letter to the Government demanding funding is restored to maintain West Somerset rivers and protect against flooding.

- 1 July 2026: ["Exciting" yellow eel spotted in Coventry](#): A yellow eel spotted for the second time in Coventry is "rare and exciting", says an expert, who is appealing for help from the public to track further local sightings. Alexander Jones, ecology and biodiversity officer at Coventry City Council, saw one in the River Sherbourne in 2024 but was shocked to see a second this year, since the fish used to be one of the most common species locally, but is now one of the rarest.
- 1 July 2026: [Environment Agency publishes its inaugural Agriculture Report](#): According to the Agency, their new report "highlights the majority of farmers take protecting the environment very seriously – with over 19,000 improvement actions completed, targeted at upgrading farm infrastructure and reducing pollution risk, since April 2021. These actions range from fixing a small piece of guttering to the complete replacement of a slurry store". But with agriculture still one of the biggest causes of water pollution, there's a long way to go...
- 1 July 2026: [The power of litter picking](#): An uplifting comment piece in The Guardian this week looked at how one young woman learned a profound life lesson from her grandfather, a devoted community litter picker.
- 1 July 2026: [Eden Rivers Trust aims to remove one million invasive plants](#): Eden Rivers Trust (ERT) has set the goal for its effort to tackle Himalayan balsam in the Eden River catchment in 2026 as part of its ongoing battle against invasive species. With the help of volunteers, 688,000 plants were already removed in May and June through ERTs "Bank the Balsam" volunteer events.
- 1 July 2026: [It's the river's first official swim spot. So why is Thames Water threatening the 'Costa del Ham'?](#): In The Lononder, Jessica Furseth explores the conflicts between sewage recycling and wild swimming in a newly designated bathing water near Teddington Lock.
- 1 July 2026: [Tears and celebrations as River Kent is "rewiggled"](#): A section of the River Kemp, in south Shropshire, had been straightened by landowners in the 1800s, disconnecting it from its natural floodplain and reducing biodiversity. Now water is flowing in the meander again, after it was restored in a project led by Severn Rivers Trust (SRT).

- 1 July 2026: [Paddle Cymru: Paddling for hospice care on Hunters Day](#): On 4 and 5 July 2026, paddlers across the UK will take part in the first Hunters Day, a simple but meaningful paddlesport initiative created to recognise and thank the hospice community.

June 2026

- 29 June 2026: [Granting rivers rights is not enough](#): A new report from the influential Stockholm Water Institute warns that granting legal rights to nature will fail to halt ecological collapse unless backed by governance reforms and local community empowerment. As they put it: "Legal recognition must be treated as a tool for mobilization, not a self-executing solution". According to one of the authors, York's Alison Dyke: "Rights of rivers frameworks hold the potential to transform ecological governance structures, they cannot do so in a vacuum. Governments and civil society must be willing to have fundamental conversations regarding the socioeconomic structures currently driving ecological degradation." It's always good to hear people championing grassroots community involvement - the bedrock principle on which we founded the UK Rivers Network over 25 years ago.
- 26 June 2026: [Soil Association: Why we are reviewing organic salmon](#): The Soil Association has just raised some profound questions over whether Scottish salmon certification can continue: "Organic certification is not a static label, it is a commitment to continual progress, grounded in animal welfare, environmental protection and public trust... We have set out a series of clear tests for the organic sector. These include tackling unacceptable mortality rates, reducing and rapidly eliminating the most harmful treatments, ensuring genuinely high welfare, improving the sustainability of feed, and protecting sensitive marine environments".
- 26 June 2026: [MCS: From heatwaves to healthy seas: the importance of our ocean against climate change](#): Recent record-breaking heat isn't just something we feel on land, it's a signal of what's happening beneath the surface of our seas. As temperatures soared across Europe, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, delivered a stark message in London: "London isn't just calling – it's cooking".
- 17 June 2026: [Anglers challenged to prove Trent's 30 species myth](#): Starting on the first day of coarse fishing season on 16th June, Trent Rivers Trust have been challenging anglers to catch thirty different species on the Trent and its tributaries. The competition, supported by the Angling Trust, is inspired by the Trent's likely naming after the French word for

thirty – "trente". It's a name that emerged in the 17th century in a nod to the 30 species of fish that supposedly inhabited the river. Now in a bid to create a river that can support more fish, the Trust is asking anglers to fish for the facts.

[More news...](#)

Events in July

- 4-5 July: [Hunters Day](#): Paddling around the UK for hospice care.
- Until Sunday 5 July 2026: [Malmesbury River Festival](#): A brand new river festival in Wiltshire!
- 5 July: [Ely Aquafest](#): Raft races and family fun on the River Great Ouse.
- 8-12 July: [Henley Festival](#): A black-tie celebration of music, art, and culture on the banks of the River Thames in Oxfordshire.
- 13-17 July: [Royal Swan Upping](#): The charming, historic annual swan census on the Thames.
- 18-19 July: [Bedford River Festival](#): The ever-popular Bedford River Festival returns for a spectacular weekend of entertainment, activities, and community celebration.
- 25 July: [Maidstone River Festival](#): "We have dressed up boats, raft races, fun and games for all the family. There will be illuminated boats and paddle boarders in the evening and it will all end with a big bang the award-winning Firmin Family Fireworks Spectacular display which will go off from the top of Fremlin Walk in the town centre."
- 25 July: [Linslade Canal Festival](#): This one-day event is all about celebrating canal life, conservation, the countryside, and the charm of traditional rural crafts.
- 25-26 July: [St Neots Regatta](#): A river rowing regatta on the Ouse.
- 25 July-2 August: [Bristol Avon RiverBlitz](#): Community citizen science in the West Country with Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART).
- [Evesham River Festival](#): Cancelled for 2026, but hoping to return in 2027.
- 6 June-27 September: [Rivers4Life Exhibition](#): Join the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust for their Rivers4Life exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes. Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Rivers4Life runs daily from 6 June to 27 September 2026, open 10am–4pm, seven days a week.

[More events...](#)

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Catchment Restoration Project Manager: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (26 July 2026)
- [Senior Waterways and Wetlands Officer: London Wildlife Trust](#) (20 July 2026)
- [River Restoration Operations Manager: Westcountry Rivers Trust](#) (19 July 2026)
- [River Restoration Team Operative: Westcountry Rivers Trust](#) (19 July 2026)
- [River Project Officer: ARK, the Rivers Trust for the Kennet and Pang Catchments](#) (19 July 2026)
- [Engagement Manager: River Action](#) (15 July 2026)
- [Head of Campaigns \(Maternity Cover\): River Action](#) (19 July 2026)
- [Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager: River Action](#) (15 July 2026)
- [Director, Central Team: Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (15 July 2026)
- [Species Recovery Officer, South East and East of England: Buglife](#) (13 July 2026)
- [Public Affairs and Water Policy Officer: The Wildlife Trusts](#) (12 July 2026)
- [Isle of Wight Wetland Officer: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust](#) (12 July 2026)
- [Senior Project Officer - New Forest: Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (8 July 2026)
- [River Catchment Manager: ARK, the Rivers Trust for the Kennet and Pang Catchments](#) (8 July 2026)
- [Farm Environment Adviser: Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West](#) (6 July 2026)
- [Radnorshire Rivers Project Manager: Radnorshire Wildlife Trust](#) (5 July 2026)
- [Communications and Marketing Officer: South East Rivers Trust](#) (5 July 2026)
- [Catchment Restoration Officer - Warwickshire Avon Catchment: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (5 July 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Trustee: National Flood Forum](#) (7 August)
- [Trustee: Somerset Wildlife Trust](#) (20 July)
- [Trustee: The Inland Waterways Association](#) (10 July)

- [Trustee \(accounting skills\): Aire Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Volunteer Educational Activities Assistant: WWT Martin Mere](#) (Burscough, Lancashire, N/A)
- [Learning and Engagement Volunteer: West Cumbria Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)

Other opportunities

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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