

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update – 7/9/26

September 2026

- 4 September 2026: [Help Clean River Action's campaign to protect the River Soar](#): Over in Leicester, Clean River Action have launched their "River Soar Protection Letter" this week to demand transparency, accountability, and improved public reporting on sewage pollution. It passed 500 signatures in just 24 hours from local residents, river users, parents, students, anglers, and community groups. If you have a connection with, or interest in, the Soar, do please add your voice to the campaign and send off a letter.
- 4 September 2026: [Revealed: how companies 'secretly' use billions of litres of public water in drought-hit England](#): The Guardian reports: "Less than 1% of businesses in England use more water than the daily needs of 10 million people, as millions of households face hosepipe bans and three-quarters of the country is in drought".
- 4 September 2026: [More than 50 Scottish rivers polluted by toxic pet chemicals](#): Hurrah, the pet treatment issue has reached "tipping point". This week, we learned that: "Toxic chemicals used to kill fleas on hundreds of thousands of pets have contaminated more than 50 rivers across Scotland at levels that could harm wildlife, according to the Scottish Government's green watchdog. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) has found concentrations of two common flea treatment chemicals up to 25 times higher than those considered safe. Rivers that have been polluted include the Clyde, the Forth, the Almond, the Tweed, the Ayr and the Annan".
- 3 September 2026: [Wye Water Summit to tackle drought pressures on Welsh farms and rivers](#): The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) Cymru is organising The Wye Water Summit on 1 October 2026 on the Royal Welsh Showground in Builth Wells. Following a summer of drought, this forum provides a unique opportunity to discuss the consequences of

the recent prolonged hot weather and how to build resilience for the future.

- 3 September 2026: [Sewage discharges cause 'toxic cocktail' in Cotswold rivers](#): Ash Smith of WASP is back in the news this week, telling BBC News that sewage dumping in Oxfordshire waterways over the bank holiday weekend has caused a "toxic and dangerous" bacterial "cocktail". (While we're name-checking Ash, don't forget that the parliamentary [debate](#) on river pollution he successfully petitioned for is coming up on 14 September.)
- 3 September 2026: ['Our homes are on the line': Flood campaigners take on six-day canoe journey down the River Severn](#): A group of campaigners are canoeing and kayaking the River Severn to raise awareness of the impact of flooding. Starting at Llanidloes in mid Wales on 1 September, the Severn Together flotilla will end its voyage in Bridgnorth, in Shropshire on 6 September.
- 3 September 2026: [SAS: Water firms accused of dumping sewage in rivers and seas over 43,000 hours over summer](#): The Mirror tells us "PM Andy Burnham is facing calls to tackle a "glaring public health crisis" as Surfers Against Sewage reveals it received 636 sickness reports from people who said they became ill after swimming in the nation's rivers, lakes and seas this summer".
- 3 September 2026: [Why the world can't agree how to tackle drought](#): Susan Ann Samuel, Postdoctoral Researcher in International Climate Politics, University of Leeds, looks at what happened when delegates from 196 nations met at a recent COP in Mongolia to discuss how best to tackle drought and desertification.
- 3 September 2026: [FBA: A new strategic vision for the Lake District's freshwaters](#): The Freshwater Biological Association looks at the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA)'s ambitious new "Partnership Plan 2026-2031", with help from Cath Johnson, LDNPA's Natural Environment Advisor.
- 3 September 2026: [Flood models need to behave like real rivers](#): Global flood maps could be improved by dropping a decades-old assumption that all rivers behave the same way, according to new research. Most global flood models assume a river fills to the top of its banks about once every two years. But a major international study published in August 2026 has found this does not hold everywhere. Rivers in the tropics reach these "bankfull" conditions far more often than rivers in arid regions. Professor Hannah Cloke, Regius Professor of Meteorology and Climate Science at the University of Reading and a co-author of the study, said: "Real rivers

are not interchangeable pipes. If we want better flood maps, our models have to represent the river that is actually carrying the water."

- 2 September 2026: [Jenny Jones: "Thames Water, I refuse to pay the sewage charge in my bill while you pollute Britain's rivers and coastlines"](#): The veteran Green Party politician explains why she decided to stop paying the sewage element of her Thames Water bill.
- 2 September 2026: [Rainwater or Wastewater? The Importance of Outfall Surveys](#): With growing concern around sewage pollution in UK rivers, identifying misconnected drains and polluted surface water outfalls has become increasingly important in protecting local waterways and wildlife. Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust explain how they set about doing detailed surveys of combined sewer outfalls (CSOs). A dirty job, perhaps, but it's great that someone's doing it!
- 2 September 2026: [From roof to resource: How farms are turning rainfall into resilience](#): West Cumbria Rivers Trust Farming Officer Tash Pearson has been working with farmers in the northwest of the county on the Waver Wampool Farming Futures project. Now in its third year, the project's main aim is to bring food businesses and processors together to support the adoption of sustainable farm practices, such as rainwater harvesting, which improve our water quality and help to futureproof farm businesses.
- 1 September 2026: [Chickening out? 20 leading organisations demand evidence for poultry expansion](#): More than 20 leading environmental, animal welfare, food and farming organisations have written to Environment Secretary Dame Angela Eagle urging the Government to reject further expansion of industrial poultry farming and use its forthcoming Poultry Sector Growth Plan to transform how poultry is produced in England. The coalition, led by River Action UK, is calling for a Regenerative Poultry Sector Growth Plan supporting profitable British farming while moving away from intensive, high-density poultry production. The organisations are asking that the Government publish its analysis demonstrating the need for more poultry production before endorsing further growth, warning that expansion could undermine efforts to restore nature, improve water quality, reduce air pollution and strengthen long-term food security.
- 1 September 2026: [BUSTED! Dry weather sewage discharges soar as water companies face scrutiny](#): Environment Agency whistleblower Robert Forrester tells the Guardian: "The huge increase in a much drier year appears to show that water companies have quotas of sewage to dump

and will do whatever the weather, and whatever the risk to the public and the environment. Making money is the primary focus".

- 1 September 2026: [Freshwater Habitats Trust get to the roots of invasive balsam on the Ock catchment](#): Local people are being invited to help Oxfordshire's freshwater wildlife by joining a new volunteer programme to map invasive non-native plants. Volunteers will focus on Himalayan Balsam, which has now been found along significant stretches of the rivers Thames and Ock, and many of their tributaries.
- 1 September 2026: [India celebrates Lake District river rewiggling](#): The grass is always greener... and our rivers look more wiggly from the other side of the world. This week, The Times of India published an interesting article celebrating the highly successful rewiggling of Swindale Beck, near Haweswater, in 2016.
- 1 September 2026: [Cam Valley Bourn Brook Balsam bashing, part 4!](#): Cam Valley Forum have an update on their long-running campaign to remove balsam plants and stop them reseeding.
- 1 September 2026: [Community spotlight: Meet the Friends of the Derwent](#): Trent Rivers Trust have a great little article this week introducing Derbyshire's Friends of the Derwent, what they do, and how they have been celebrating their river through The Derwent Pilgrimage.

August 2026

- 31 August 2026: [Sea trout and salmon numbers declining in rivers](#): Fish counters monitoring the number of sea trout and salmon swimming up rivers in the north-east of England have been recording low numbers and are often not operational. The Environment Agency (EA) has counters at the Tees, Wear and Tyne rivers and the Tyne is the only river in England where the salmon stock is classified as not at risk. The tracker in the River Wear has not been operational since the beginning of 2025 and a faulty counter in the River Tyne has meant readings for all but one month this year have been estimates.
- 31 August 2026: [Water safety sessions launched after drownings](#): At last, some sensible action to tackle the problem of open-water safety by addressing the growing lack of swimming skills. Coventry Sports Foundation has teamed up with charity CV Life for the sessions at The Wave in Coventry that are designed to educate children on the difference between swimming in a still warm pool and cold open water.
- 30 August 2026: [Suffolk farmer fears river crowds are drowning wildlife](#): As we reported last week, farmer Daniel Bunting is stepping up the pressure

on what he describes as anti-social paddlers using the River Stour near his land.

- 26 August 2026: [MCS positive ocean news: August '26 edition](#): Another batch of uplifting news from the Marine Conservation Society, including mooring systems to protect vital seagrass meadows, a ban on gannet hunting, the return of bluefin tuna after a 60-year absence, and much more.

[More news...](#)

Events in September

- September 2026: [Love Your Countryside Month](#): Celebrate all things country with rural champions CPRE.
- Sunday 6- Saturday 12 September: [The Big River Watch](#): From The Rivers Trust: "Twice a year, we call on everyone to spend 15 minutes observing their local river, answering a few questions about what you can see (from wildlife and water colour to signs of pollution) using the free Big River Watch survey app. All of this data helps us to get a clearer picture of river health across the UK and Ireland, identify issues and support our fight for cleaner waters. So far over 9,000 people have taken part in a Big River Watch
- Saturday 26 September 2026: [Melksham River and Food Festival](#): The Melksham Food and River Festival is a vibrant, free community event held annually on the last weekend in August at King George V Playing Field and along the River Avon. Organised by the Festival Committee with support from the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club, the festival celebrates local culture, community spirit, and riverside heritage.
- Until 7 September 2026: [Being a River](#): a series of five creative workshops exploring art, place, colour and connection in and around the riverside environment of Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- 12 September 2026: [Get Outdoors, Get Active, Give Back: River Colne Volunteer Day](#): Residents are being invited to step into nature, learn new skills and make a real difference to one of Watford's most valuable natural habitats at a special River Colne Volunteer Day this September. Groundwork East is calling on outdoor enthusiasts, nature lovers and community-minded residents to join a fun and rewarding afternoon of conservation activities at Oxhey Park in Watford on Saturday 12 September from 12:30pm to 4:30pm.

- Various events until 27 September 2026: [CARP Bewdley River Festival 2026](#): The Bewdley River Festival runs from 7 June to World Rivers Day on 27 September, a summer-long programme put on by Communities Against River Pollution, the local citizen science group working for a cleaner, healthier River Severn.
- Throughout September: [Thames 21 events](#): Hands-on London activities this month include "Action for Silk Stream: River Action Day " (24/9) and "Oxleas Woods – Slowing the Flow " (29/9 until 1/10), and more.
- Until 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.
- September 2026 (TBC): [Great Stour Riverfest](#): Lots of things to see and do on the Great Stour in Canterbury.
- Friday 18-Sunday 27 September 2026: [MCS Great British Beach Clean](#): Every September thousands of people across the UK head to the coast to take part in the Great British Beach Clean. Find out how you can get involved and how it helps.
- Sunday 27 September 2026: [World Rivers Day 2026](#): Lots of events planned worldwide.

[More events...](#)

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- [Project Officer: Dee Trust](#) (30 September 2026)
- [Project Delivery Officer: Tyne Rivers Trust](#) (30 September 2026)
- [Ebdon Farm Site Manager: Avon Wildlife Trust](#) (22 September 2026)
- [Communications and Campaigns Officer: The Rivers Trust](#) (14 September 2026)
- [General Manager: WWT \(Slimbridge\)](#) (14 September 2026)
- [Head of Internal Services: Calder Rivers Trust](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Water Resources Partnership Manager: South East Rivers Trust](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Dartmoor Headwaters Officer: Dartmoor National Park Authority](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Head of Projects: Calder Rivers Trust](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Assistant Manager \(England\): Buglife](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Senior Project Manager: Calder Rivers Trust](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Water Resources Partnership Manager: South East Rivers Trust](#) (13 September 2026)
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- [Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne Catchment Partnership Officer: Thames21](#) (13 September 2026)
- [Admin Officer: Trent Rivers Trust](#) (9 September 2026)
- [Water Team Senior Project Manager: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust](#) (8 September 2026)
- [Marketing and Communications Officer: Aire Rivers Trust](#) (8 September 2026)
- [Salmon Conservation Biologist: Atlantic Salmon Trust](#) (7 September 2026)
- [Head of Philanthropy and Partnerships: Tyne Rivers Trust](#) (6 September 2026)
- [Systems Officer: Tyne Rivers Trust](#) (6 September 2026)
- [Project Officer: Tees Rivers Trust](#) (6 September 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Trustees: Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust](#) (10 October)
- [Trustees \(x2-3\): ClientEarth](#) (15 September)
- [Volunteer crayfish surveyor \(North Yorkshire\): Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- [Trustee \(accounting skills\): Aire Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Volunteer Educational Activities Assistant: WWT Martin Mere](#) (Burscough, Lancashire, N/A)
- [Trustees x 2: Costwolds Rivers Trust](#) (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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