

# UK Rivers Network

## Weekly News Update – 12/10/26

### October 2026

- 10 October 2026: [Celebrating World Migratory Bird Day this October!](#): World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated worldwide, twice a year, in May and October. These mark the twice-yearly movements of millions of birds, as they move between their breeding and wintering grounds in spring and autumn. RSPB explains why this is such a milestone in the UK, where about half of all our bird species migrate.
- 10 October 2026: [Free festival invites Norwich to discover the city's rivers this October half term](#): A brand-new festival, "Where the River Meets Us", will bring six days of activities to riverside and neighbourhood locations across Norwich from Monday 26 to Saturday 31 October. The programme invites residents to experience the city's rivers in new ways, from wildlife walks, following live music along the riverbank and discovering archive films beside the Wensum, to looking for bats, joining family storytelling and contributing to a community poem.
- 10 October 2026: [River Severn sewage spills will take years to tackle](#): Reducing the number of sewage discharges into the River Severn will take time, say water company bosses. Meanwhile, local councillors are demanding action on a problem that's happening far too often.
- 9 October 2026: [Government's "reckless" Environmental Delivery Plan risks more sewage in rivers, warns WildFish](#): Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs) are a new proposed scheme by the government to help developers "tackle" pollution when building new homes. Under the EDPs, developers effectively pay money into a Natural England kitty, which can then fund environmental protection projects. The government calls the plans, drafted by Natural England under the Nature Restoration Fund, a "win-win approach to housebuilding and nature restoration", which can deliver healthier wetlands and waterways alongside new housing developments. But WildFish is concerned that the EDP scheme sets up a worrying pay-to-pollute system, one where developers can simply pay a

fee to push through or speed up their development plans. The scheme will result in current environmental protections being lifted, such as developments around rivers where nutrients are a problem, after cash is paid by developers.

- 9 October 2026: [Wildlife Trusts also take aim at EDP](#): Matthew Browne, head of public affairs at The Wildlife Trusts, said: "In a time of stark nature loss, The Planning and Infrastructure Act's approach to environmental protection - substitution rather than an avoidance of harm – could set us on a dangerous path towards further environmental decline. With developers now required to show weaker, more generalised 'overall improvements', the Act has opened the door to environmental harm being allegedly cancelled out by wider benefits. As a result, this first Starmer-legacy Environmental Delivery Plan (EDP) risks being just as we and others warned: specific and significant harms being traded for general, speculative benefits.
- 9 October 2026: [Three new faces for the Great Yorkshire Rivers project](#): Great Yorkshire Rivers (GYR) has made three full-time appointments to help the organisation in the delivery of its mission to to remove artificial barriers that prevent fish moving freely through Yorkshire's rivers and reaching important breeding habitats.
- 9 October 2026: [Two-year project to install eel screens begins](#): An £11.8m project to install screens to help eels safely navigate a river has begun. The screens will be placed at Barrasford raw pumping station on the River North Tyne in Northumberland over the next two years and are designed to prevent European eels from entering the station workings.
- 9 October 2026: [\[£££\] Feargal Sharkey, patron saint of rivers](#): Patrick Galbraith celebrates the one-man clean-river campaign in this month's Critic (requires subscription).
- 9 October 2026: [Water companies take at least £1.4 billion from industrial waste in six years](#): Companies reported nearly £340 million in the latest year alone for accepting industrial wastewater, but the true figure is likely to be higher because one water company (South West Water) refused to disclose their trade-effluent revenues on commercial-sensitivity grounds. Water companies have reported at least £1.4 billion in trade-effluent revenue over the past six years, including £336 million in 2025/26, according to a major investigation by Watershed Investigations and River Action, first reported in The Guardian.
- 8 October 2026: [SAS: Sewage spills not recorded on time, report claims](#): Campaigners claim South West Water failed to report more than 3,000 sewage discharges within the legally required time of an hour, in the first

half of this year. In its annual report into water quality Surfers Against Sewage said the water firm's sewage spills during dry weather last more than 12,000 hours.

- 8 October 2026: [Mercury has long sickened and killed. Could the tide finally be turning?](#): Toxic mercury continues to pop up in everything from cosmetics to fluorescent lights and is widely used in small-scale gold mining. But that is changing thanks to a landmark international agreement: the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The pact, which celebrates its 13th year on October 10, has placed controls on the supply, trade and use of mercury, helping to protect people and the planet from its harmful effects. More than 153 nations are now party to the agreement, which its backers say represents an important example of international cooperation amid rising international tensions.
- 8 October 2026: [PaddleUK announce new 2026 strategy](#): Places and blue spaces matter, paddling should be easier to access and navigate, strong communities make paddling happen, and coaching and leading should work better for people: these are just some of the areas PaddleUK will be focusing on following feedback from members of the paddling community.
- 8 October 2026: [Wildlife populations have declined - but many animals still aren't being counted](#): Edinburgh University and CEH ecologists explain the difficulty in figuring out what's happening to the world's biodiversity.
- 8 October 2026: [Words with Andrew McDermid: River Water Quality Champion at Forest of Dean District Council](#): A campaigning councillor explains his work fighting for water: "Our rivers, streams and wetlands are among the Forest's most precious habitats; protecting them is an investment in the future health, prosperity and resilience of our communities".
- 7 October 2026: [High pollution levels found in Bristol rivers and streams](#): Drought conditions led to higher than usual levels of pollution in rivers and streams in the Fishponds area during tests carried out this summer. A survey by "citizen scientists" for the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust found high levels of phosphates and nitrates in the River Frome and other waterways in the area.
- 7 October 2026: [Friends of the River Dart launch Household River Care Manual](#): Brand new this week, a simple guide that helps households reduce their impact on rivers: "The manual goes room by room, from the kitchen and bathroom to drains, the garden and the dog, with the evidence behind every action. There is a page for homes that aren't on

mains drainage, with advice on septic tanks. If you only have a few minutes, start with ten things you can do this weekend: a fat jar by the cooker, a bin in the bathroom, old medicines back to the pharmacy. You can print a one-page fridge sheet or download the whole manual as a PDF". It's a great idea we hope other groups will copy.

- 7 October 2026: [Toxic 'forever chemical' linked to reproductive harm found in almost all rivers and groundwater tested in England](#): A highly persistent 'forever chemical' linked to reproductive harm has been found in virtually all rivers and groundwater tested in England, according to Environment Agency data obtained through Freedom of Information by investigative journalists from Unearthed and Watershed.
- 6 October 2026: [New report finds UK off track to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030](#): Ahead of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's COP17, The Wildlife Trusts warn urgent action is needed to get the UK's nature commitments back on track. The UK is off track to meet its global commitments to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, according to a new report from The Wildlife Trusts published today. The report, Route Map to Recovery— Fixing Nature in the UK, warns that continued delay risks both environmental recovery and national security and that urgent action is needed to close the gap between ambition and delivery on the ground..
- 6 October 2026: [UK oil refinery broke toxic pollution limits dozens of times, documents reveal](#): One of the UK's biggest oil refineries spilled pollution into local rivers and the Mersey Estuary on dozens of occasions in 2023 and 2024, BBC News reported this week.
- 5 October 2026: [New projects to save threatened freshwater species](#): Some of England's rarest freshwater plants and invertebrates will benefit from major new research and conservation projects funded through the Species Recovery Programme by Freshwater Habitats Trust.
- 5 October 2026: [Cambridge: 100 years of the Fen Causeway](#): A fascinating history of one of Cambridge's major river crossings was published by Bruce Huett of the Cam Valley Forum this week.
- 5 October 2026: [Worldview: New map exposes dire state of American rivers as only six percent are healthy amid climate emergency](#): A new four-year analysis mapping 5.2 million miles of U.S. rivers shows only six percent are healthy, while three-quarters could lose biodiversity due to climate change, prompting efforts to protect and restore vulnerable waterways.
- 3 October 2026: [Photographer seeks... river collaborations](#): We had a message this week from documentary photography student Natalie Scurlock who's working on a project to document the effects of pollution

on rivers and seas, and the groups working to tackle the problem. Natalie is interested in documenting upcoming campaigning events, including pollution testing and reporting sessions. If you might be interested in collaborating, you'll find more details on the Instagram page @natcapturess - or drop us an email and we'll pass it on.

- 1 October 2026: [Exploring the Black history of the Thames](#): From Thames21: "To understand our present, it is important to look to the past. With this in mind, we want to use the opportunity to highlight the often unexplored relationship between Black people and the River Thames. There is evidence that people of African ancestry lived and worked in Britain as far back as Roman times. In AD 43, the Romans invaded Britain, and around AD 47 they established Londinium, present day London, on the banks of the River Thames".
- 1 October 2026: [Sussex community quiz raises £414 for local rivers](#): Water-testing citizen scientists from Western Sussex Rivers Trust held a successful fundraiser last month.
- 1 October 2026: [Natural flood management success at Gatwick](#): NFM is often quite modest, but here's news of a much bigger project being coordinated by South East Rivers Trust (SERT) as part of the Gatwick Airport Natural Flood Management project.
- 1 October 2026: [New Project White Hart website brings chalk streams to life](#): Project White Hart is a multi-river restoration project led by the Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership, hosted by the Wessex Rivers Trust and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, in partnership with the Atlantic Salmon Trust. It's just published a brand new, interactive website bringing the story of England's chalk stream salmon to life.

[More news...](#)

## Events in October

### October 2026

- 15 October 2026: [What's polluting the River Char and what can we do about it?](#): Practical talks with local experts and Friends of Hardown Hill. James Hargreaves Hall, Morcombelake, Dorset DT6 6EA, 7pm.
- 16 October 2026: [Ceilidh for Clean Water](#): Meole Brace School, Shrewsbury, 7-11pm. A benefit event for Up Sewage Creek and Shrewsbury Green Party.
- Saturday 24 October to Sunday 1 November: [WWT Super Natural](#): This enchanting seasonal half-term event, running for one week only from

invites families to discover the wonders, wildlife and folklore of wetlands through hands-on activities and outdoor adventures.

- Monday 26 October to Saturday 31 October: [Where the River Meets Us](#): From wildlife walks and riverside photography to storytelling, music, film, creative workshops and community activities, Where the River Meets Us offers plenty of ways to explore Norwich's rivers.
- 30-31 October: [Tweed River Festival](#), Melrose.
- Throughout October: [Thames 21 events](#): Hands-on London activities this month include " "Oxleas Woods - Slowing the Flow " (1/10, 21/10, 22/10), "Back in Beck (river restoration)" (7/10, 8/10, "Dollis Brook Revival" (13/10, 14/10), and more.
- Throughout October: [Don Catchment Rivers Trust events](#): Lots of hands-on practical/restoration/conservation activities.

[More events...](#)

## Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

### Jobs

- [Environmental Team Leader: River Stewardship Company](#) (15 November 2026)
- [Farm Advisor: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (8 November 2026)
- [Transforming the Wensum Project Manager: Norfolk Wildlife Trust](#) (2 November 2026)
- [Catchment Manager - Ure: Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust](#) (2 November 2026)
- [Freelance Opportunities: River Learning and Engagement Officer: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (30 October 2026)
- [Environmental Education Officer: Tees Rivers Trust](#) (30 October 2026)
- [Project Officers: Tees Rivers Trust](#) (30 October 2026)
- [Radnorshire Rivers Intern: Radnorshire Wildlife Trust](#) (26 October 2026)
- [Project Manager for East Cleveland Catchment: Tees Valley Wildlife Trust](#) (25 October 2026)
- [Project Assistant: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (25 October 2026)
- [Environmental Advisor: Southern Water](#) (23 October 2026)
- [River Restoration Lead: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust](#) (20 October 2026)
- [Smarter Water Catchment Programme Manager: River Thames Conservation Trust](#) (19 October 2026)

- [Fisheries Specialist: South East Rivers Trust](#) (18 October 2026)
- [Farm adviser: South East Rivers Trust](#) (18 October 2026)
- [Executive Support Officer: Norfolk Rivers Trust](#) (17 October 2026)
- [Farm and Community Engagement Officer \(River Irfon\): Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (16 October 2026)
- [Habitats and Species Officer \(River Irfon\):: Freshwater Habitats Trust](#) (16 October 2026)
- [Habitat Creation Officer: Cheshire Wildlife Trust](#) (13 October 2026)
- [Environmental Advisor: Mining Remediation Authority](#) (11 October 2026)
- [Conservation Officer: Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust](#) (12 October 2026)
- [Chair: Tidal Dee Catchment Partnership](#) (12 October 2026)
- [Engagement Officer \(London\): Thames21](#) (9 October 2026)

### Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Independent Chairperson: Paddle Cymru](#) (23 October)
- [Trustee: The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire](#) (16 October)
- [Trustees: Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust](#) (10 October)
- [Trustees: Severn Rivers Trust](#) (10 October)
- [Volunteer crayfish surveyor \(North Yorkshire\): Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- [Trustee \(accounting skills\): Aire Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Trustee \(legal\): Bristol Avon Rivers Trust](#) (N/A)
- [Volunteer Educational Activities Assistant: WWT Martin Mere](#) (Burscough, Lancashire, N/A)
- [Trustees × 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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