

UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update – 19/10/26

October 2026

- 17 October 2026: [River Evenlode 're-naturalisation' in Cotswold flood defence plan](#): The "rewilding" of a section of Oxfordshire river is a proposed solution to frequent flooding, which has seen a "whole valley" become a "sink". A proposal to build a "naturalistic landscape bund", water basins and channels to hold back and store flood water in a field, away from a repeatedly flooded Grade II listed building on the banks of the River Evenlode, has been shared with West Oxfordshire District Council.
- 17 October 2026: [Southern Water shares new water recycling plan](#): Water recycling is a topic we don't hear anywhere enough about. So, yes, bring on the public consultation over Southern Water's proposed new water recycling plant in Ford, West Sussex, about which they say: "The project would allow us to replace water currently taken from the River Rother, helping to protect this precious environment. The project would create a new source of water by taking treated wastewater from Ford Wastewater Treatment Works and putting it through additional advanced purification processes to create highly purified recycled water. This recycled water would then be transferred through a new underground pipeline and safely returned to the River Rother near Hardham". Find out more in a webinar and public-drop in events in early November.
- 16 October 2026: [Anglian Water fined £1.6m for polluting Essex River Brain](#): Anglian Water has been fined £1.6m after repeated sewage pollution of the River Brain over six weeks in 2022. District judge Timothy King heard that Anglian Water's local mismanagement led to a general decline in water quality between April and June 2022. In addition, the company ignored alarms telling them that poorly-treated sewage was being discharged into the river due to the faulty valve. Staff didn't talk to each other about the incidents. The resulting pollution stretched for nearly 14km along the Brain between Braintree and Witham.

- 16 October 2026: [Danny Dyer in floating poo water protest on Thames](#): Yes, giant protest turds, first made popular by Surfers Against Sewage in the 1990s, are back once more! Actor Danny Dyer has delivered a petition to Downing Street calling for water companies to be nationalised after floating a giant poo sculpture down the River Thames on a boat. Dyer and Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP Kevin McKenna sailed along the Thames with the "sculpture" as part of a protest calling for the water industry to be brought into public ownership.
- 16 October 2026: [Top tip for flooding: duct tape keeps out more flood water than sandbags in laboratory tests](#): It's worth keeping the duct tape handy if your home is prone to outside flooding, explain researchers from Hull University this week: "In controlled tests, correctly applied duct tape on the outside of a household door reduced water leakage by 97-98%."
- 16 October 2026: [RSPB: "We're taking action for nature at COP17 to get things back on track"](#): RSPB explains the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its biennial Conference of the Parties (COP). This year is COP17, and it's taking place in Armenia from 19-30 October, with the theme of 'Taking Action for Nature'.
- 16 October 2026: [Project River Soar aims to clear Leicestershire's river of pennywort in five years](#): Amy Cipriano, organiser of Project River Soar, said the group had created the "dream" goal of clearing 30 miles of the river with the help of experts who successfully removed pennywort from a section of the River Stour in Essex.
- 16 October 2026: [Practical Farm Advice That Makes a Difference to Rivers](#): How do we get farmers more involved in cleaning up our rivers? Ribble Rivers Trust explains why the personal approach (a friendly "pinpoint" visit from a farm adviser) can often work wonders.
- 16 October 2026: [Riverfly Parnership: October update](#): What is sewage fungus and why does it matter? In this month's update, you'll also find also important guidance on protecting salmon, trout and bullhead while you're out sampling for flies.
- 15 October 2026: [Severe drought declared in parts of southern England](#): Parts of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, East Sussex and West Sussex are affected by the announcement from the Environment Agency, which followed a review of water resources and drought conditions across England by the National Drought Group. Water supplies have been significantly impacted by high demand following the hottest summer on record.
- 14 October 2026: [Crayfish vs crayfish: Who will win our rivers?](#): In The Sheffield Tribune, David Bocking charts the long (and ongoing) battle

between the alien-invading American signal crayfish and its native rival, the white-clawed crawfish.

- 14 October 2026: [WWT: Nature must be at the heart of our response to flooding](#): To tackle extreme weather, we must work with water, not against it, writes WWT Chief Executive, Sarah Fowler.
- 14 October 2026: [Climate: Why hot El Niño could spell a cold winter for the UK](#): Oxford University climate post-doc Chloe Brimicombe explains the complex connection between far-off El Niño and the risk of colder or wetter weather closer to home.
- 14 October 2026: [Rivers Trust: No improvement in England's river health](#): The Rivers Trust has reported no overall improvement in the health of England's rivers since 2024, with none of the country's 4,000 river stretches achieving good overall health, according to its latest State of Our Rivers Report. The report calls for stronger regulation, action to tackle pollution at source and greater investment in nature-based solutions, following two summers of drought.
- 14 October 2026: [Wildlife Trusts: Every £1 invested in restoring rivers could generate over £7 in benefits](#): Rivers2040, a groundbreaking new vision for rivers in England, released this week by The Wildlife Trusts and partners outlines how nature must be at the heart of plans to restore waterways across England in order to unlock significant economic, environmental and societal benefits.
- 14 October 2026: [Government backs organic with landmark action plan for England](#): "Cleaner" farming means cleaner rivers. The Soil Association has welcomed the government's long-awaited Organic Action Plan for England, describing it as "a major opportunity to grow homegrown organic food and build a more resilient farming system... the plan sets an ambition to increase the proportion of England's farmland managed organically from around 3.4% to 10% by 2036. It is the first English action plan to set a clear ambition for organic land growth".
- 14 October 2026: [Economics: Insurance industry "fudging the numbers in the face of the climate crisis"](#): In The Guardian, a whistleblower explains the "moral hazard" of an industry ill-prepared for major climate change: "Our sector is carrying more risk than we realise. The warming global climate has caused more frequent high-intensity storms, rising sea levels, flooding, wildfires and drought. While the immediate impact of these events is plain to see, the long-term effects will be compounded as insurers withdraw from affected areas, leaving the economy in freefall and people's day-to-day lives in ruins."

- 13 October 2026: [Can productive farming and freshwater conservation work together?](#): Freshwater Habitats Trust publishes an interview with Dr Jenny Bussell, Principal Scientist and Head of Agri-environmental Sciences at Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust's Allerton Project, who explains why a catchment-scale approach and collaborative working with landowners is so important.
- 13 October 2026: [Making River-Friendly Choices for Our Pets](#): More and more river groups are trying to persuade their local communities that cleaner rivers are ultimately our own responsibility. Last week, we had the brilliant new "Household River Care Manual" from Friends of the River Dart. This week, Clean River Kent Campaign are urging locals to "think river" when they use chemical treatments on their pets.
- 12 October 2026: [Drought Reveals a Changing River Mole](#): River Mole River Watch presented their latest update on the Surrey river this week, with some very impressive data analysis: "Our September citizen science testing revealed continuing severe phosphate pollution and some new hotspots. The prolonged summer drought also prompted us to investigate more than 50 years of river flow records, revealing an intriguing finding: the Upper Mole's lowest summer flows appear to have increased, possibly due to rising volumes of treated wastewater".
- 12 October 2026: [Removing barriers and restoring flows with river restoration projects in Cumbria](#): West Cumbria Rivers Trust explains three recent restoration projects where removing barriers and opening up fish passage were the top priority.
- 11 October 2026: [Thames Water claims 86% drop in sewage discharges into Thames](#): Thames Water's first annual Tideway Benefits Report "has revealed significant improvement in river health following the opening of the super sewer in 2025" the company claims in a press release this week. We've not had time to dig into the detail, but we'll be watching closely for reactions and comments from local river groups.
- 11 October 2026: [Champion kayaker complains of human waste in River Trent](#): A British kayaker and nine-time world champion says she is "disgusted" and at "breaking point" over pollution after being surrounded by human faeces on the River Trent.
- 9 October 2026: [The Big River Watch: 2026 Autumn Survey Results](#): For the seventh Big River Watch in just three years, an incredible 1,973 people took part, submitting 1,444 surveys and collectively spending 28 days watching our waterways. The results? Half of surveys spotted pollution, many saw livestock near rivers, silt, and barriers to flow.

- 9 October 2026: [Lake and river lessons: a free resource and tribute to limnologist Bob Wetzel](#): From the Freshwater Biological Association: "For many, over decades, the go-to reference textbook to learn more about inland water ecosystems was 'Limnology' by Robert 'Bob' G. Wetzel. This was first published in 1975, and then updated by Professor Wetzel in 1983 and 2001". A new edition of Bob Wetzel's definitive book has just come out, with lots of free student tutorials.
- 9 October 2026: [Atlantic Salmon monitoring project scoops major award](#): Project Deveron, delivered by the Atlantic Salmon Trust and The Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust, has won the Integrated Monitoring Across Water, Land and Air category at the 2026 Environmental Monitoring and Measurement Achievement awards. The project develops and applies electronic fish detecting systems to monitor juvenile and adult salmon in the River Deveron and provide information for designing management locally and nationally.
- 9 October 2026: [River Wye "Ranunculus Project" kicks off!](#): Friends of the River Wye's new research project investigating, the decline of water crowfoot in the Rivers Wye and Usk, was officially launched at an event in Rhayader this week. Bringing together conservation organisations, researchers and local communities, 'The Ranunculus Project' aims to understand what is happening to this iconic river plant and help inform its recovery.
- 7 October 2026: [From droughts to deluge: listening to what our rivers are telling us](#): Harvey Hamilton-Thorpe of Eden Rivers Trust writes: "Our rivers are reminding us that every field, woodland, wetland and community is connected. If we listen carefully enough, they may also be showing us the way towards a more resilient future..."
- 7 October 2026: [Sussex volunteers remove 867kgs of litter from the River Lavant!](#): Yes, that's very near a tonne of trash busted by the amazing folk at Western Sussex Rivers Trust, whose horrible haul included 281 cans, 227 plastic bottles, 95 glass bottles, 3 shopping trolleys, 1 paddling pool, 20 shotgun cartridges and even a garden sofa.

[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)
- [Chief Operating Officer: The Wye and Usk Foundation](#) (9 November 2026)
- [Working Wetlands Advisory Officer: Devon Wildlife Trust](#) (8 November 2026)
- [Farm Advisor: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust \(BART\)](#) (8 November 2026)
- [Community Engagement Officer: Essex Waterways Navigation Trust](#) (7 November 2026)

- [Transforming the Wensum Project Manager: Norfolk Wildlife Trust](#) (2 November 2026)
- [Catchment Manager - Ure: Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust](#) (2 November 2026)
- [Destination Tweed Education and Engagement Officer \(Maternity cover\): Tweed Forum](#) (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)
- [Advocacy and Communications Manager / Rheolwr Eiriolaeth a Chyfathrebu: Afonydd Cymru](#) (30 October 2026)
- [Water Resources Partnerships Manager: Thames Rivers Trust](#) (29 October 2026)
- [Project Officer: Forth Rivers Trust](#) (28 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 Thame 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)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- [Independent Chairperson: Paddle Cymru](#) (23 October)
- [Trustee: The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire](#) (16 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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