UK Rivers Network

Weekly News Update – 23/11/26

November 2026

- 20 November 2026: London Gathers for More Than a Fish at the Royal Geographical Society: On the evening of Thursday 19th November, over 130 guests and friends of the Atlantic Salmon Trust gathered at the historic Royal Geographical Society in South Kensington. Hosted by broadcaster and journalist, Ella McSweeney, the evening featured three keynote speakers: Professor Ken Whelan; Author, John Miller; and Research Director Dr Caro Cowan.
- 19 November 2026: Southern Water ordered to pay six figures after seaside sewage release: Southern Water has been sanctioned to pay £525,000 after an underground sewer pipe in Herne Bay burst, forcing sewage up through a pavement and into the sea.
- 19 November 2026: New footbridges installed in Borders to form part of new River Tweed Trail: Two new footbridges have been installed near Tweedsmuir in the Borders as part of the new River Tweed Trail. The 113-mile route is due for completion in 2028 and will run from Moffat near the source of the Tweed, through the Scottish Borders and north Northumberland and on to Berwick-upon-Tweed where the river meets the sea.
- 19 November 2026: Environment Secretary launches £43 million schemes to test farming tech, boost climate resilience and build reservoirs: Farmers will get £43 million to help them slash costs, protect food production and deal with the impacts of drought, Environment Secretary Angela Eagle has announced. The Environment Secretary launched packages of support this week to fix some of the most difficult issues facing rural communities, after a summer of dry weather and wildfire left many growers struggling.
- 19 November 2026: New podcast series follows River Exe from source to sea: A new ten-part podcast has been released which follows the 60-mile trail of the River Exe from source to sea, exploring how the water system

works, the pressures put on it by human practices, and what needs to be done to make sure that we all have a water-resilient future.

- 19 November 2026: Local told his 'shocking' discoveries in Kerry and Cork rivers are not the Irish EPA's issue: When Brendan Danaher met with an ecologist at the banks of the River Feale last month, the casual visit led to a shocking discovery... and the even more shocking news that the Irish EPA was not interested.
- 19 November 2026: Thames 21: Taking action to protect the River Colne from Heathrow expansion: The proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport, including a third runway (3R), would have significant negative impacts on the River Colne and the wider Colne Valley. Thames 21 is calling on Heathrow Airport Ltd and planning authorities to ensure that the River Colne and the wider Colne Valley are properly protected and fully mitigated in its expansion proposals, and on the Government to ensure that the Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement provides strong and effective environmental protections to ensure future generations continue to benefit from this richly biodiverse green belt landscape.
- 19 November 2026: Controversial Abingdon reservoir plan submitted to government: Thames Water has now lodged its planning application for the White Horse Reservoir, near Abingdon in Oxfordshire, with the Planning Inspectorate. The water company said the new reservoir, which could cost £7.5bn to construct, would secure water supply for 15 million people across the south east. But local councils and campaigners have called on the government to throw out the plans, due to concerns including flooding and the impact on wildlife.
- 18 November 2026: How a vital reservoir won't be built for 20 years... in an area under severe drought: And just why do reservoirs take decades to build? Lucie Heath explores the case of Arlington in East Sussex, currently scheduled for completion in... 2057!
- 18 November 2026: Environment Agency fails on waste regulation again: News that apparent Environment Agency failures have left a landowner facing a £3m clean-up bill after 28,500 tonnes of waste were dumped in a quarry will add pressure to reform the toothless watchdog.
- 18 November 2026: Britain's worst bathing site: is treated sewage to blame?: BBC News looks at river bathing sites, notably the River Tone at French Weir Park in Taunton, where people are advised not to swim.
- 18 November 2026: Win for River Test: Southern Water ditches drought order application: Back in August 2026, WildFish spent a day representing the interests of the River Test at the Southern Water Drought Order application hearing. If approved, the drought order would have seen

environmental restrictions removed allowing Southern Water to continue taking water from the River Test with depleted flows for up to a 6 month period. The Water company has now decided to withdraw its application, which is good news for the river.

- 18 November 2026: Curlews, Bitterns and more suffer as governments fail to protect wild birds: From RSPB: "The environment watchdog for England and Northern Ireland has concluded that the governments and their departments responsible for protecting wild birds are failing in their duties. With the UK ranked among the most nature-depleted countries in the world, the findings come as no surprise. We have long called for better protections for wild birds and the habitats that they rely on, and welcome the watchdog's announcement."
- 18 November 2026: B-Lines go from strength to strength as Buglife celebrates 15 years of work for pollinators: Buglife is celebrating 15 years of B-Lines, the pioneering project that develops, maps and inspires action for pollinators. The achievements are set out in the new B-Lines Report, B-Lines: Connecting Landscapes for Wildlife, which illustrates just how far the initiative has come since the first B-Lines were mapped, starting in Yorkshire, in 2011.
- 17 November 2026: A new WWF initiative tackles plastic waste globally: Because cleanup alone is not enough, the $108 million Plastic Reboot initiative (co-led by the UN Environment Programme and WWF and funded by the Global Environment Facility) works across 15 countries to cut plastic at its source, expand reuse, and reshape how packaging is designed, produced, and used. Here are some of the initiative's locally led solutions.
- 17 November 2026: UNEP: Are endocrine-disrupting chemicals doing more harm than we thought?: A class of chemicals found in everyday products, from toys to cosmetics to cookware, may be taking a greater toll on human health and the environment than previously understood, according to a new report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- 17 November 2026: Bradford urban wetlands revived by Aire Rivers Trust and partners: A partnership project between the Environment Agency, Aire Rivers Trust and West Yorkshire Combined Authority to improve water quality, enhance biodiversity, increase fish passage, and reduce downstream flood risk is now in its final stage. The scheme at Pitty Beck wetlands at Allerton in Bradford has included removing a weir and creating a new reedbed wetland and backwater.

- 17 November 2026: Campaigners claim 'regulatory gap' risks poultry farms polluting rivers to High Court: River campaigners are taking on Wales' environmental regulator in the High Court over what they believe is a "regulatory gap" that risks pollution from poultry farms in two rivers. River Action UK has accused Natural Resources Wales (NRW) of not doing enough to assess or address any risk to local rivers and and other water bodies when plans for three farms in Powys were approved last year.
- 17 November 2026: River Action takes Welsh environmental regulator to High Court: And here's River Action's own statement on its Welsh court case.
- 16 November 2026: Experts explore returning beavers to River Waveney: The River Waveney Trust is in conversation with Natural England and other agencies about potentially reintroducing the river-dwelling mammals along the River Waveney.
- 16 November 2026: River Cam Bathing Water quality in the 2026 season : Anne Miller of the Cam Valley Forum presents a detailed analysis of this year's bathing water data, concluding: "Once again, the official Environment Agency tests show that the quality of the Bathing water at Sheep's Green depends very much on how much rain we have".
- 13 November 2026: In a world of anti-environment backlash, Andy Burnham walks a line between popular and green: Renaud Foucart of Lancaster University explains the tricky difficulties of being a popular PM.
- 13 November 2026: Hidden Wildlife Refuges and a Surprising Nitrate Discovery on the River Mole: From River Mole River Watch: "Recent fish and Riverfly surveys are reinforcing our long-term water quality findings, revealing a potentially vital wildlife refuge in the Upper Mole. Meanwhile, our analysis has uncovered a fascinating new pollution pattern: the return of autumn rains appears to have opposite effects on nitrate concentrations, washing nitrate from surrounding land into smaller rural streams while diluting concentrations in the main river".
- 11 November 2026: First oysters reproduce in Dornoch Firth for over 100 years: For the first time in over a century, native oysters have successfully reproduced in Scotland's Dornoch Firth.
- 10 November 2026: Cleaner Pipes, Yet Struggling Rivers: What 25 Years of Data Tells Us About Welsh Rivers: New analysis from Afonydd Cymru looks at 25 years of water quality records from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), covering the period from 2000 to 2025.
- 7 November 2026: The Guarani visit the River Wye: Several British river groups have hosted delegations from overseas recently. This month, three leaders from the Guarani Indigenous People of Brazil met with Friends of

the River Wye and other campaign groups to share their experiences of the impacts of industrial agriculture.
- 5 November 2026: Towards a Loire with Legal Rights: a Bill and Two Public Events to Discuss It: From our old friends at ERN, news that the river rights movement is spreading at pace across Europe... and beyond.

More news...

Events in November

November 2026

- 25 November 2026: Let's Keep Chemicals Out of the River Char: Wednesday 25th November at St Andrew's Hall, Lower Sea Lane, Charmouth 7pm (for a 7.15 start).
- 28 November 2026: Action for the River Kennet: Harvest Mouse Surveying: "Volunteer and help us survey Stonebridge Wild River Reserve for harvest mice". Marlborough, 10am-3pm. Booking needed (contact Anna Forbes, ARK).
- Throughout November: Thames 21 events: Hands-on London activities this month include " "Back in Beck – River Restoration Project" (10/11, 11/11), "Action for Silk Stream – River Action Day" (26/11), and more.
- Throughout November: Don Catchment Rivers Trust events: Lots of hands-on practical/restoration/conservation activities.
- Throughout November: Ribble Rivers Trust events: Tree planting and woodland aftercare at Runley Mill, Settle; Vegetation management at Primrose Lodge.
- Throughout November: Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust (Sussex): Leaky barrier building on Adur tributaries, Chalk stream restoration on the Lewes Winterbourne and Hedge laying in Sompting. Various activites on 11, 13, 20, 23 November. Contact Alistair Whitby at OART for more details.

More events...

Jobs and other opportunities

The closing dates for jobs are in brackets.

Jobs

- Policy and Public Affairs Officer: Open Seas Trust (11 December 2026)
- Corporate Volunteering Manager (Maternity Cover): Thames21 (10 December 2026)
- Communications Intern: Westcountry Rivers Trust (6 December 2026)

- Head of Policy and Influencing: Rewilding Britain (4 December 2026)
- Chalk Stream Flagship Programme Coordinator: Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (1 December 2026)
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- Freshwater Assistant: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (1 December 2026)
- Project Officer: Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust (1 December 2026)
- Farm Advisor - Cheshire: Mersey Rivers Trust (29 November 2026)
- Evidence and Engagement Lead (Hampshire Avon): For the Love of Water (FLOW) CIC (30 November 2026)
- Senior Project Manager (Waterscapes): WWT (29 November 2026)
- River Restoration Project Officer / Senior Project Officer: Norfolk Rivers Trust (22 November 2026)
- Farm Environment Adviser: FWAG South West (23 November 2026)
- Project Manager: Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust (22 November 2026)
- Junior Catchment Restoration Officer (Lower Severn Catchment): Severn Rivers Trust (22 November 2026)
- Junior Catchment Restoration Officer (Upper Teme Catchment): Severn Rivers Trust (22 November 2026)

Trustees and other voluntary posts

- Chairperson: Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal Society (7 January 2027)
- Trustees: Campaign for National Parks (7 December)
- CPRE Avon and Bristol: Honorary Treasurer (30 November)
- 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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