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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Threats to the River

Pollution: Ranked the 5th most polluted river in England (2021); high levels of sewage, agricultural, and pharmaceutical pollution.

Ecological Decline: White-clawed crayfish, lamprey, eel, otters, water voles and Atlantic salmon at risk.

Habitat Loss: Deforestation, river modification (straightening, concreting, dredging), and the loss of natural floodplains.

Climate Change: More frequent flooding, droughts, and extreme weather events exacerbate the situation.

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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

The River Charter

ENDING SEWAGE POLLUTION BY:

- Identifying and publicising local sewage pollution problem areas and causes
- Agreeing local targets for ending sewage pollution
- Taking action to stop sewage reaching freshwater and coastal habitats, by working at catchment level with water companies, businesses, and regulatory agencies to reduce storm overflows through nature-based solutions

PREVENTING AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION BY:

- Using the local authority planning system to stop agricultural pollutants reaching freshwater and coastal habitats, by banning construction of new intensive livestock production units in sensitive river catchments
- Restricting use of pesticides and fertilisers on council owned land and developing a pesticide use reduction strategy with relevant stakeholders

MINIMISING POLLUTION FROM NEW DEVELOPMENTS BY:

- Adopting and implementing Natural England guidance on nutrient neutrality and using that guidance to oppose developments in sensitive catchments that do not have a nutrient mitigation scheme in place
- Adopting best practice guidelines for sustainable drainage systems and working with relevant sewerage undertakers to ensure that their duties under the Water Industry Act are fully delivered
- Working with developers to promote effective nature-based solutions.

PREVENTING HARMFUL CHEMICALS AT SOURCE BY:

- Developing and delivering guidance and education to businesses and households on how to safely dispose of chemical products in order to minimise / end harmful chemical, domestic, industrial, and plastic waste reaching freshwater and coastal habitats
- Reviewing the Council's own use of chemicals and ensuring that best practice is followed in all operations

SECURING WATER SUPPLY FOR ALL BY:

- Ensuring that all new planning applications recognise and incorporate mechanisms to address the increasing water supply pressure, minimise water use, cut water waste, and adopt rainwater collection and other technologies where appropriate
- Carrying out and publicising an annual review of water waste and leakage
- Supporting businesses and residents in using water efficiently to allow sufficient resources for people, rivers, and wildlife

BRINGING NATURE BACK FROM THE BRINK FOR RIVERS AND PEOPLE BY:

- Identifying special habitats and prioritising pollution reduction activities in these areas
- Ensuring Local Nature Recovery Strategies include catchment partnerships
- Reconnecting rivers to their floodplains, removing barriers and physical modifications
- Establishing wetlands and natural river buffers to catch pollution and providing corridors for wildlife to connect and recover
- Ensuring and increasing public access to clean waterways

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Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Gathering Data

Outfall Safari: Identify pollution sources.
Water Opacity & Colour Surveys: Monitor visual water quality.
Stone Turning: Record species presence and biodiversity indicators.
Freshwater Watch: Water quality

Open-Source Data Map: Publicly accessible map of collected pollution and health data to support restoration and policy actions

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Derbyshire
Wildlife Trust
trent
rivers
trust
Saving the Derwent:
What can we do?

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