

Newsletter

Promoting and protecting heritage and wildlife



Winter 2026 no 135

From the Chair

I trust that most of us have enjoyed the Christmas and New Year celebrations and coped with the snow and icy conditions at the beginning of January. It was quite treacherous walking in the valley for a few days. At least we can now look forward to the days getting longer and we even have the first snowdrops showing.

Just before Christmas I had the pleasure of helping plant the replacement willow tree in front of the Rivelin Café. You will recall that the original was blown down last year and its very large stump remains in place.

It was quite tall and the hole required a lot of digging! Christine was delighted to talk to a lady who remembered watching the original tree being planted in the mid-1950s. RVCG has committed to watering it, starting in Spring. Bizarrely, I left Rivelin Valley after the planting and drove down to Cambridgeshire to visit friends. After 2½ hrs I passed by the exact nursery the tree had come from.

As usual the committee have been very busy with meetings. Most significant was a meeting with the Waterway Strategy Group, where the main topic was the Great Yorkshire Rivers proposal to improve fish passage by



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removal or modification of all weirs in South Yorkshire. (I've mentioned this before.) Several groups put forward strong arguments about preserving our historical heritage and we will be part of a subgroup taking this issue forward.

Continuing the water theme, I reported in the last newsletter that we had met a Waterway Wildlife Recovery representative about removal of invasive Mink. They have talked with the Ecology team at the Council about laying traps on the Rivelin. We await further news.

I am still waiting for the Environment Agency to send us more information about the results of chemical tests following the burst water main late last year.

The Exolum works, to excavate and check a pipeline near Rails Road, seem to have been completed without disruption, and they contributed funds towards the Willow tree replacement.

I am still learning about various stakeholder involvements with the River, so was pleased to get a positive response from a representative of the River Health Team at Yorkshire Water. We will meet in February and receive an update on their involvement and plans for the valley. Also Yorkshire Water do give grants for Biodiversity projects, and we are hoping we can at least look into pursuing that sort of funding.

That brings me onto a project we have been asked to participate in with Sheffield University which will not commence until this coming

September and will involve collecting samples from various points along the river to test for antimicrobial resistance resulting from pollution I am sure they will be looking at other rivers too. We may join their steering group. I think the water quality in the Rivelin is generally good. I assume if any of the plunge pool users were ill after a dip, we would hear about it!

At the moment we seem to be attracting a lot of interest from university groups. Sue and I will meet a group of Fine Art students from Hallam University in early March. They hope to create works stimulated by exploring the valley and its flora and fauna. That could include, films, performances, prints, drawings and sculptures created in studio.

In February we will meet with Landscape Architect students who will be undertaking a 'Dynamic Landscape' project with an imaginary brief to design a new accessible education centre and trail along the valley. That could be quite interesting as it's something we have talked about at Committee.

In January, Graham, Sue and I met with the newly appointed Woodlands Manager from the Council (Vanessa Lyons). We walked the entire length of the valley from Malin Bridge to Rails Road and were very impressed with her interest in the many issues we discussed. It was another opportunity to highlight the problems of the footpath between the S bend and Hind Wheel, and what seems to be an urgent requirement to do some work at Wolf Wheel where the dam wall has disappeared and threatens to breach into the river below. That would be a disaster in terms of access along the Nature Trail.

On the planning front, the Council has served an enforcement order on the owners of Same Hill Farm, which they are appealing against.

I have been in touch with the owners of the land opposite the Holly Bush which has been prepared for use as a dog field. They asked for advice on how they could enhance the site for wildlife. I received a positive response in terms of setting up nest boxes, log piles for insects and wildflower sowing.

We were disappointed that Rachel Wileman our events organiser has decided to stand down from the committee. She has other pressing priorities at the moment but will continue to help RVCG out when she can. Our thanks go to her for her enthusiasm, ideas, and contribution so far. This means we have a VACANCY for EVENTS ORGANISER. If you would like to get involved please let me or one of the committee know.

Similarly we have a long-standing vacancy for Secretary.

Neil Porter

Forthcoming Open Meetings at Stephen Hill Methodist Church, 7:30pm

Thurs 12th Feb "*Portland Works*" with speaker Paul Iseard - from The (world?) Famous Sheffield Shop will be giving a potted and entertaining history of Portland Works: past, present, and future. The cutlery works' main claim to fame is that it was the first to produce stainless-steel cutlery and is now home to over 30 small businesses.

Thurs 12th Mar "*The Last of the Little Mesters*" with speaker Peter Machan (postponed from September). Peter brings his fascination with the surviving heritage of the Sheffield cutlery industry. He has charted and researched the traditional craftspeople and their premises over the last 40 years. His talk is based on the rise, decline and survival of the Sheffield metal trades.

Advance notice of AGM

The RVCG Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 16th of April at 7:30pm. Hopefully it will be followed by a Pie and Peas Supper. AGM Papers and full details will be sent out soon.

Environment Weeks – dates for your diary

This year Environment Weeks will run from Saturday 2nd May to Saturday 14th June. This is one week later than in 2025 in order to incorporate both World Environment Day (5th June) and the Great Big Green Week, which runs 6–14th of June. Look out for local walks and events.

<https://www.sheffieldenvironment.org/>

Membership Renewal

2026 Membership is now due. The simplest payment method is via our website at <http://rivelinvalley.org.uk/join.php>. (If any details have changed since last year, please also tell me at rvcg.members@btinternet.com.) If you prefer to pay by cash or cheque, a membership form can be downloaded from the website. Cost remains the same at £3 per household.

If you have any queries about your membership, you can email me at rvcg.members@btinternet.com.

Graham Roe, Membership Officer

Wildlife Reflections

I have noticed that during this January, many apple trees seem to still be laden with apples. Usually, apples are dropped in late autumn / early winter when intermittent freezing and stormy weather would normally dislodge them. I have several neighbours with apple trees still loaded with apples which raises the question, does anybody eat apples anymore?



Apple Tree in January

Apple pies, apple crumble or just raw apple is just mouth-watering. Fresh apple juice is also absolutely delicious although the crushing and squeezing of apples can require special equipment. Apple juice can be further processed and turned into cider. A skinned apple cut into segments, is very tempting for children to nibble whereas a whole apple may be less attractive. When I was a child, I used to get an apple and an orange in my stocking at Christmas, but I don't think children would be too impressed with that these days. We have an astonishing number of people using food banks these days, and yet we have tons of apples going begging. Children sometimes gave the teacher an apple although I'm not sure what a teacher would make of it these days. Also remember 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away' coined back in 1932 apparently probably to reflect the goodness in an apple.

Apples provide fibre, vitamin C, potassium and vitamin K. A medium apple provides 2-4% of the RDI for manganese, copper, and the vitamins A, E, B1, B2, and B6. With vitamins A and C, apples do provide some powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory, immune-supporting properties which can help the body fight infection. Due to the fibre present, mostly in the skin, apples have also been linked to a healthy heart by helping to lower cholesterol. So let's rejuvenate our interest in the apple which certainly has a place in a healthy diet.

Just watching *Winter Watch* on TV and they have just highlighted that disease amongst birds is quite critical with some species being seriously depleted like the greenfinch. Experts suspect that disease is being spread more readily at bird feeding stations which unnaturally attracts lots of different bird species together. Other species that rarely visit bird

feeding stations appear to be less affected by disease. The RSPB has already withdrawn bird tables from sale and recommend the regular cleaning of feeders. This afternoon, my garden was bristling with various species of tit, blackbird, woodpigeon and Jay and the feeders were almost empty. So, I washed out my feeders and refilled them in preparation for the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch this weekend.

I keep my birdseed in a plastic bucket but alas the mice seem to have discovered it!

Graham Appleby



The result of hungry mice

Comment

There were so many apples in 2025, that picking and using them all has been a problem for everyone. We have been eating the huge harvest of our small 'Sunset' apple tree non-stop since early September and supplying the few friends without a tree. We store them in an old chest of drawers in the garage to stop the mice getting in. We are now starting on the harvest from an espalier 'Elstar' tree which we did not pick until mid-December when the fruit were still firmly attached. Another result of climate change perhaps.

We keep our bird food in a metal bin bought in a charity shop, having suffered from plastic bins being gnawed in the past. However, having watched the *Winter Watch* report I am doubtful about the use of bird feeders, although it's great to watch the birds through the windows.

Christine Roe

**RVCG would like to thank
Valleyside Garden Centre for
their continued support.**

October Task Day

The October task day was organised at Frank Wheel car park off Rivelin Valley Road and was well attended. Normally rainwater on Rivelin Valley Road finds its way into gulleys which drain into the valley, but should those gulleys become blocked, then the water will find an alternative route. This is often into car parks and down footpaths, sometimes washing them away. Frank Wheel car park is only big enough for a couple of cars and a track wide enough for a vehicle winds its way down into the Valley. Storm Babet in Oct 2023 caused severe damage here, washing away the car park surface and cutting a deep groove down the track. This was made good by the RVCG task team on a previous task day when we relayed tons of grit. However, since then, further storms have repeated the same damage here and at Nether Cut below the S Bend (Glen Bridge). To prevent revisits to repair the same footpaths repeatedly, I devised a storm water trap which is basically two large parallel sleepers covered in strong mesh creating a deep gulley and laid across the top of the path to divert the water away. This proved quite successful at Nether Cut and so we have repeated it at Frank Wheel. Photos by Graham Appleby unless otherwise stated.



*Ten tons of sandstone reduced to ... a car park!
(Photo: Scott Berg)*



*Water diversion installed and footpath and car park restored
(Photo: Scott Berg)*



Frank goit clearance



Trimming overhanging trees



The final few looking very pleased with their work

November Task Day

The November task day was held at Havelock Dam (Walkley Bank Tilt) on a bright sunny day and with an excellent turnout of 24 volunteers. This dam suffers from lots of growth of vegetation, brambles and small trees around its perimeter and so most volunteers were put to work on that. We also cut back the adjacent shrubs and overhanging trees to allow wide clear passage for its visitors. Two of the volunteers also opened up the footpath leading into the park from Hollins Lane. There was also a sprinkling of graffiti at Havelock and up in the park which a couple of volunteers cleaned up. All photos by Graham Appleby unless otherwise stated.



The Task Team volunteers gather at Havelock Dam



Volunteers begin clearing the vegetation



A passing falconer with 'Bramble' stopped to talk to passersby

We also had a blockage to the head goit of Mousehole forge at its weir on the Rivelin so a group of us attempted to remove it. However, this was less than straight forward as it was a large block of bricks that were cemented together which was extremely cumbersome and heavy. The location was also in fast running water above the weir and so we had to take extreme care so that no-one was in danger of getting washed away. Using ropes and levers and with a bit of grit and determination, we eventually managed to move the block away from the goit. It just proves how powerful water can be in moving such an awkward heavy item. No idea where it came from?



Volunteers struggle to free up the blocked goit at Mousehole Weir



Being the last task day of 2025, the volunteers were treated to a warm cup of mulled wine and a mince pie

2025 has been quite a successful year of task team work in the Rivelin Valley. We still have lots to do and fortunately we have a plentiful supply of willing volunteers ready to turn out whatever the weather. The Sheffield City Council are quite astonished by your enthusiasm and determination to achieve quite complex projects as I am too. As you know I am concerned that the whole of the RVCG task team organisation is hanging by a thread and as I enter my 7th decade I will be wanting to slow down a little and spend more time travelling while I can and I would dearly love to train one or more persons to do what I do. I'll leave you to think about that and it just leaves me to thank you all for your dedication, hard work and support.

Graham Appleby

Open Meeting November 13th, 2025 The Sheffield Swift Network

Flora Blackwater and Chet Cunago from Sheffield Swift Network gave us a talk about one of nature's most extraordinary birds – the swift. We learnt that these aerial acrobats have been gracing our skies for 49 million years, virtually unchanged since prehistoric times. Truly, they are 'flying dinosaurs,' perfectly adapted for life on the wing. They eat, drink, sleep, and even mate in flight – only landing to raise their young.

But despite their ancient resilience, swifts are now in critical decline. Populations have plummeted by 66% in just 25 years, and they are now on the UK Red List of endangered species. Why? The answer lies in the way we build. Swifts evolved to nest in cavities in our homes and buildings, but modern construction and renovations seal up or do not provide these vital spaces. Add to this the increasing impact of more extreme weather caused by climate change, and the picture is bleak.

Flora and Chet's message was clear: we are designing extinction into our urban landscapes. Yet, there is hope – Installing artificial nests increases swift populations, so it starts with us. The Sheffield Swift Network is campaigning for the widespread installation of swift bricks in new builds and retrofitting bricks and boxes where possible. These simple, affordable solutions provide permanent nesting sites and could reverse the decline if adopted at scale. The goal? 250,000 swift bricks in the UK within five years.



Photo: BTO

What Can You Do?

- Provide a home: Install a swift brick or box – they last decades for site-faithful birds.
- Unleash your soffits: If you have soffits blocking old nest sites, consider adding a soffit box or drilling access holes.
- Protect existing nests: Never disturb active nests (it's illegal), and plan ahead before roof repairs.
- Help us find colonies: Survey your street and report sightings via the Swift Mapper app.

This summary was provided by Flora Blackwater.

Joan Buckland, our Recorder, adds the following comments.

Swifts are one of my favourite birds, so it was a treat to listen to two very lively ladies from the Sheffield Swift Network talking on the subject. They are obviously very passionate about Swifts and gave a very interesting talk.

We can protect existing nests which can be used up to 15 years. We can put up with a little mess to save these birds. Swifts are colonial birds and like to nest near each other. Can we make the Crosspool area a place where Swifts thrive again? Artificial nests do increase populations. Get in touch with the Sheffield Swift Network if you would like to help these iconic birds and we may once again hear their joyful 'screaming', announcing summer has arrived.

Open Meeting January 15th, 2026 Moorlands and Grouse Shooting

Bob Berzins talked about how grouse shooting affects communities.

Some people like to shoot red grouse and pay up to £4000 a day for the privilege. The government gives huge subsidies to private estates to help manage the land for the benefit of the population but in fact this often only seems to benefit the grouse shooting fraternity.

In nature, 3 to 4 grouse per km² is about average but by manipulation 300 to 400 per km² are maintained for the pleasure of the sport. Around 25% of Sheffield is moorland. Publicly owned moors are in the South with the grouse shooting moors in the North. Blanket bog has around 2m of peat storing millions of tons of carbon, and dying vegetation adds to this each year. Grouse moorlands are poorly managed, and manmade drainage washes the peat into local rivers increasing water bills because of filtering to create drinking water. The extra drainage also exacerbates water run-off during storms increasing flow into rivers and adds to the severe flooding. There is no model currently for moorland flood management such as the planting of trees etc.

The natural state of moorland is generally very wet with the water table at the surface supporting sphagnum moss, heather and cotton grass. Grouse moors aim for an unnatural monoculture of heather as this is what the



grouse eat. These grouse shooting moors have suffered 200 years of mismanagement. The moors are kept very dry keeping the water table below ground and when peat dries it oxidises and produces CO₂. Dry moors encourage heather but little else.

Conservationists often visit these moors to block and fill in the drainage channels but within a short time they are reinstated. Also, in the autumn rotational heather burning is used to burn off the older heather growth and encourage new shoots beneficial for grouse. This dries out the moorland further creating a monoculture. The Labour Government promised to ban all heather burning but there is only a burning ban on blanket bogs and a full ban is needed. Also, the smoke produced is unregulated and can affect the health of local residents for example the burning of heather on the Duke of Rutland's estate at Redmires is close to the city of Sheffield.

Shallow burning is also extremely damaging to thin layers of peat such as at Redmires which was measured at between 8 and 11cm. Cool burning would be less destructive, burning just the tops of the heather but often burning is too intense destroying all plant life and drying out the soil. An alternative to burning is the use of tractors to trim off the heather tops which allows survival of other vegetation and is practised on most blanket bog. Also, millions have been spent on restoring moorland with the planting of sphagnum plugs for diversity but there is no restoration on the shallow peat.

Moorland has been infested with the heather beetle recently. The hot summers and monoculture of the grouse moors exacerbate the problem.

Gamekeepers often use snares for predator control and animals caught often have an agonising death. The Labour government promises to ban the use of snares. There is also the continued killing of birds of prey such as the hen harrier. (Local MP Olivia Blake is a champion of the species.) Prosecutions are relatively few but 75% of those prosecuted have connections with shooting.

Gamekeepers also leave medicated grit which contains a worming agent called flubendazole for the grouse. Yorkshire Water currently do not test for this chemical in our water supply.

Bob Berzins then took questions from the floor. There was an excellent turn out considering the meeting was rearranged from the week before and it was a cold wet evening.

Please note that the details of this talk are not necessarily the views shared by the RVCG and its membership.

Graham Appleby

A personal view of the underwater life of Rivelin, March through to October 2025

Well it's been a bit of a roller-coaster for the last year, lots of rain until March/April time and then nowt. Endless blue skies, rivers on their bones, with drought orders and hosepipe bans, but nature is pretty resilient and that includes under the surface activities as well.

I still manage a few hours fly fishing now and again. If this valley was in North Yorkshire and a little more private you would need a king's ransom to fish it! I've wet a fly on 2 occasions this year, both in the same location, both early on in the year. The first session of approx 2 hours produced 6 trout to the net and dropped off 8. The next time all fish went to the net for a total of 18 trout, all were returned safely. They were of average size about 6 ounce each, which is average for the Rivelin and the amount that been encountered for the last 20 or so years. The fish were healthy and no disease visible, one had what look like heron damage to its flank.

How can we check the rivers health by surveys and observation? Let's look at surveys first. Members may know there are a number of sites along the Rivelin where invertebrate surveys are conducted and also chemical analyses.

A little history of the two schemes. Both are run by different organisations. The invertebrate count is run by the River Monitoring Initiative and is usually called ARMI. The A is historical as it was anglers that came up with the idea. The water quality scheme is based on an idea again by an angler and is run by the Angling Trust (fishers union and insurance). This measures chemicals in the water course at regular intervals and in varying conditions.

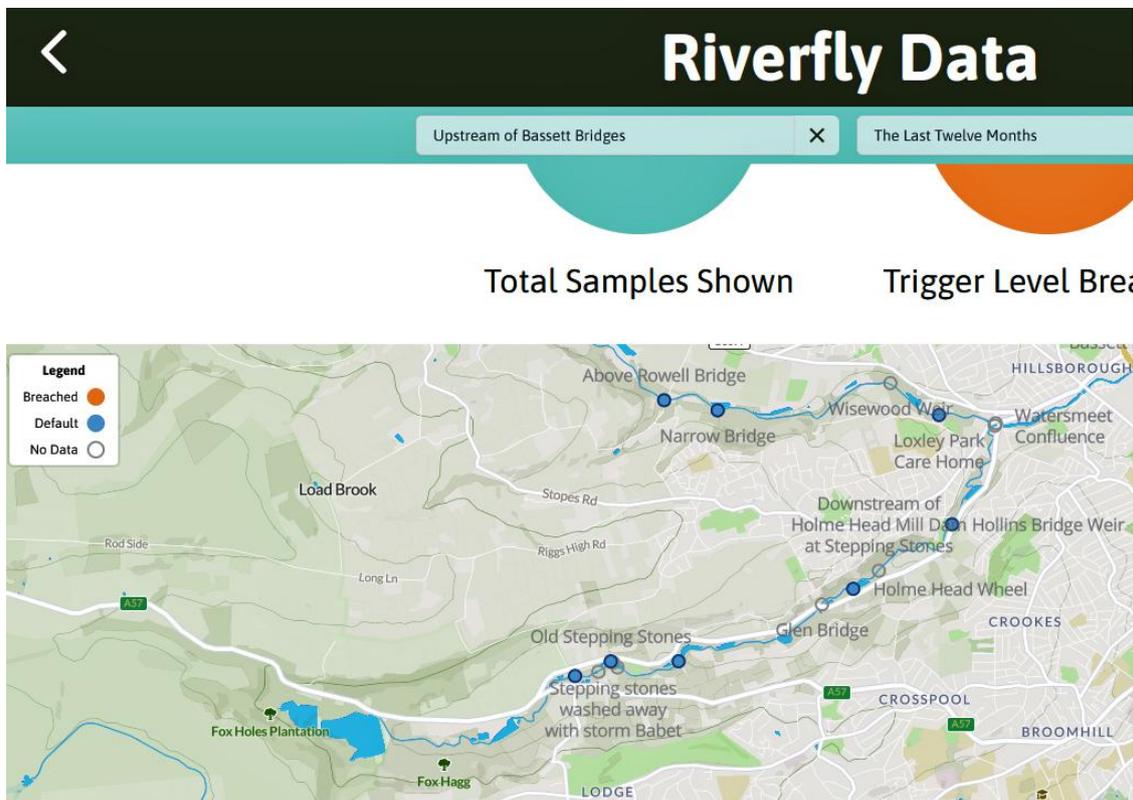
I'm not going through all the data and charts, however they are readily available at [River fly Data \(https://riverflydata.org/\)](https://riverflydata.org/) or for the water quality at [Epicollect5 - Water Quality Monitoring Network \(https://five.epicollect.net/project/sheffield-river-rangers-p.\)](https://five.epicollect.net/project/sheffield-river-rangers-p.).

The ARMI is administered on the Rivelin by the Don Catchment Rivers Trust (DCRT) and undertaken by Sheffield River Ranger volunteers (including several members of RVCG). DCRT advised the group to survey only from March through to October. October onwards is when the river is closed to fishing for trout. The Rivelin is the only river within Sheffield that is classed by the Environment Agency as having a good ecological record; it also records its invertebrates as being high. This is great, it is one of the best spate rivers I have done surveys on.

There are 7 survey sites registered on the Rivelin, ranging from the confluence of the

Loxley to the old stepping stones opposite the old hospital. Each one of the survey sites has differing characteristics: some of the topographical features encourage one kind of invertebrate and another a different kind, so it's a big picture, also the time of year. This is why each survey site is given a 'pollution trigger point' and not all the river is the same. Some have a trigger point of 7 whilst others have say 5 (the lower the trigger point the more polluted

the area). Some sites have not been surveyed, others have been done very diligently. To get a proper picture all need to be recorded at least once a month, that is why volunteers are always needed (hint, hint) The number of surveys was approx 19; no breaches were recorded and the invertebrate count was good on all sites, but more surveys are needed to give better understanding of pollution and health of the river.



Screen shot from the Riverfly data website showing sampling sites on the Rivelin (Jan 2026)

The water quality was recorded 67 times on the Rivelin since it was started in Oct 2024 which was very good and according to data all checks were within the EA parameters as being satisfactory.

Lots of people phone me and ask about or give information on what is happening up the valley. These include bird watchers, anglers, photographers or just walkers, so I usually base my understanding on what they say and include surveys. Here are things that have been noticed.

For a few years now the blue winged olive river flies (*Serratella ignita*) are changing habits when emerging and getting later in the day, sometimes after dark. This may cause a problem for insect eating birds in the future. Cased caddis flies have more micro plastics on their cases than before; will this cause a problem for the dipper ?

The previous year a lot of rain fell and Large Dark Olive River flies (*Baëtis rhodani*) lay their eggs on partially submerged rocks. Because of the rain some of the rocks were a

long way from the river. The numbers of this species did fall during this year's spring hatch and I suspect it was from the previous year's rain. Everything has a knock-on effect.

The river has struggled this year as have all others, but it's come through it, whether for the better I don't know. Maybe stress will cause a spawning problem for the fish in 2026, time will tell. Early loss of leaves may cause a dip in invertebrates next year, time will tell. Most of the invertebrates counted this season will have been the product of the previous year's mating.

The water authorities have a lot to answer for, but they are not the only ones polluting rivers. We are, our habits, our lifestyle, in some cases complete ignorance of what a river needs to thrive. If we are to be able to register pollution early and if we are to understand the changing climate and what problems it may bring with it, we need more sampling sites and an understanding of the data.

John Blewitt

How we can protect the Rivelin

The Environment Agency has expressed its dissatisfaction with the water industry and the damage it is causing to the water environment. This underlines the important role organisations such as the RVCG can play in environmental protection and enhancement.

We can all contribute by holding polluters to account and encouraging continuous improvement in working practices and strategic planning, with the aim of reducing environmental harm. One of the most visible impacts, and one that has received significant media attention following the Environment Agency's recent comments, is the increase in sewage storm overflow events from water company assets. Storm overflows occur when excess flows in the sewerage network that would otherwise overwhelm wastewater treatment works, back up through manholes, or flood homes. In these situations, sewage is allowed to discharge, largely untreated, directly into watercourses. The frequency of these events has increased for several reasons, including urban development without corresponding sewerage upgrades, compounded by climate change and rainfall patterns that were not anticipated when the system was originally designed.

This is where recreational users who enjoy the river and valley can make a real difference. By reporting issues, you can help the regulator better understand the problem, and, crucially, provide evidence of the visible environmental impacts these overflows are having. You don't need to get your feet wet or your hands dirty by taking part in Riverfly monitoring (although I would encourage anyone looking for a monthly excuse to get outdoors from March to November to contact Sally Hyslop at the Don Catchment Rivers Trust to find out more). What I would urge everyone to do is take a few minutes during your time by the river to report anything that doesn't feel right.

This could include:

- Strange or discoloured discharges
- Collapsing riverbanks
- Wildlife in distress (for example, fish gasping for air)

By doing this, you help the regulator build an evidence-based picture that allows action to be taken to address poor environmental performance.

Remember the three key steps:

Stop - to take a moment to phone the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60 or report online through the '*Report an environmental problem*' service? This service is now live on GOV.UK website, and can be found by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-water-pollution> .

Report - exactly what you see

Ask - for a reference number, known as a NIRS (National Incident Reporting System)

The NIRS number is important. Not asking for one is a bit like trying to claim for a stolen item without reporting the theft – as far as the system is concerned, it never happened! Finally, if you can spare a few extra minutes, please consider logging the incident on the Sheffield River Rangers pollution database/app ((<https://five.epicollect.net/project/sheffield-river-rangers-p>). This is hosted on the Epicollect platform, which allows citizen sciences and grassroots groups to collect and manage data, displaying it clearly on maps and tables that the public can access. It helps us maintain our own records and reduces the need to rely on lengthy Freedom of Information or Environmental Information Requests.

Remember: Stop and phone. Report what you see. Ask for a reference number. (And, if possible, please upload the incident to the Sheffield River Rangers Epicollect system).

Jacqueline Diaz-Nieto

You can contact River Rangers on Facebook or Instagram "@Sheffieldriverrangers"

Data on raw sewage spills into English rivers (including Rivelin)

At the end of March 2025, the Environment Agency released the annual summary of combined sewer overflow (CSO) spill data from water companies in England for 2024. Sad to see that raw sewage spilled in England's rivers for an all-time high of over 3.6 million hours. The Rivers Trust technical team analysed the data for these CSOs in England, extracting key statistics and trends, and have published an overview of the findings.

<https://theriverstrust.org/about-us/news/2024-sewage-spill-cso-data>

To identify and look at the data for CSOs you are interested in, you can check the "Near real-time alerts" tab of the Sewage Map and see whether a spill is currently occurring or when it most recently discharged and for how long.

<https://theriverstrust.org/key-issues/sewage-in-rivers> [May not work on some browsers]

The four combined sewer overflows to look out for in Rivelin are: Rochester Road Sewage Pumping Station on the Blackbrook, just below Redmires Road at Lodge Moor; Glen Bridge Combined Sewer overflow on the Stannington side of the river, just upstream of Glen Bridge (S-bend); Rivelin Valley 3 CSO beside Holme Head weir and Stannington Road/No 2 CSO just across the Stannington Road from Lidl at Malin Bridge.

Sue Shaw



Map of Combined Sewer Overflow outfalls in Rivelin

Summary of reported sewage spills at the four Rivelin sites

Data from The Rivers Trust and Yorkshire Water

Site/Year	1. Black Brook		2. Glen Bridge		3. Holme Head		4. Stannington Road	
	No of spills	Duration (hours)	No of spills	Duration (hours)	No of spills	Duration (hours)	No of spills	Duration (hours)
2019	–	–	–	–	126	1664	–	–
2020	14	88	–	–	76	342	76	99
2021	13	30	–	–	64	272	70	84
2022	13	63	–	–	65	184	–	–
2023	21	77	52	161	91	365	82	131
2024	13	46	50	153	60	244	53	92

The 2025 data are currently being processed and should be published at the end of March. The Holme Head and Stannington Road CSOs are due to be upgraded by Yorkshire Water under the Asset Management Period 8 (AMP 8) programme (2025–2030) – this is the UK water industry's investment cycle, regulated by Ofwat. This means that a solution will be implemented at both of these CSO's to reduce discharges, in line with the Environment Act target of less than 10 per year.

Exploring the water conduit from Redmires to Crookes

Perhaps like me, some of you have been on one of the popular tours led by local Sheffield historian Calvin Payne (Hidden Sheffield Walks) around Lodge Moor (or elsewhere) looking at different aspects of the area's history including some interesting remnants that can still be seen. Recently, Calvin teamed up with 'Wobbly Runner Exploring' on a walk following the course of the water conduit from Redmires lower reservoir to the Hadfield reservoir in Crookes (near the Grindstone pub). The resulting fascinating video, which mixes maps and aerial photographs, drone imagery and commentary, can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55YGJ69uHtg>

This conduit was built in the 1830s to carry drinking water from the reservoirs nearly five miles down towards Hadfield Dam in Crookes. It was used until 1909. Often hidden or overlooked, this watercourse played a crucial role in supporting the city's rapid industrial and population growth, yet very few people today know it even existed. Much of the route is still accessible as it passes through Redmires, Lodge Moor, Fulwood, Carsick, Ranmoor, Crosspool and Crookes.

Sue Shaw

The Recorder – Winter 2025/26

The weather in December was mostly a mixture of rain, mist and the occasional sunny day with frost on Boxing Day. On the 9th of January we awoke to about 5cm of snow, so I managed to make my annual snowman. It only lasted three days before the rain came. The forecast is for cold weather so plenty of time to build another one. There are signs of Spring in nature. Buds are appearing on trees and shrubs; hellebores and snowdrops are in flower and daffodils are in bud. On Christmas Day the following were in flower in my garden – Primrose, Everlasting Wallflower, Creeping Bell Flower, one small blue Early Iris, Hebe, Rose, Lungwort and Wild Strawberry.



Photo: RHS

Keep a look out for the beautiful displays of Celandine down the valley which appear in late February. Birds will be looking for nesting sites. Mark Bateman has a camera in the nest box in his garden in Stannington and the Blue Tits are already investigating it. Now is the time to clean out your nest boxes in case any nasty pests are lurking in them.

How did you do on your RSPB Birdwatch count? Saturday the 24th January was the best day weatherwise and I saw 8 Sparrows, 2 Magpies, 4 Crows, 2 Starlings, 1 Coal Tit, 1 Blue Tit, 1 Robin, 1 Dunnock and 1 male Black Bird. I was surprised to see a very bushy Fox – must be expecting a bad winter - at the top of the garden also. No Scandinavian immigrants in my garden yet, but Roger Kite had one Redwing in his garden in early January.

During this horrible, cold, misty, wet weather, it is a good time to plan for your garden. Are you going to have a wild garden or a neat structured one. Either way plant lots of flowers to attract insects and bring a smile to your face. Bear in mind that 2025 was the third hottest year on record, only beaten by 2023 and 2024, so aim for some resilient planting!

Sightings: -

Gillian Drinkwater S10 – 18.10.25 – two very long V-shaped skeins and one huge straight skein of calling Canada Geese, flying high above

Watt Lane and going North-west. Later saw another skein of about 40 geese flying North-west. 16.12.25, 2.30pm – about 30 geese flying North -east, very high.

Bob Townrow S10 – 26.10.25 – 4 Earthstar fungus growing in garden.

Jack Nuttgens S6 – 10.12.25 – saw 2 Dippers, 2 Kingfishers (could have been the same ones flying up and down the river), 1 Heron, 2 Goldcrests, several Wrens, Mandarin and Mallard.

Joan Buckland S10 – 30.10.25, – 2 small flocks of Geese, flying high, going South; 6.11.25 9.45am – about 60 noisy geese flying North-west; 20.12.25 – 8 Long-tailed Tits; 28.12.25, 1.10pm – Male Sparrowhawk on garden arch; 24.12.25 – Fox calling in night. 5.1.26 - saw 5+ Lapwings in field west of Rails Road; 9.1.26 - Heard male Tawny Owl; 11.1.26 – large flock of Canada Geese in same fields; 13.1.26 and 15.1.26 – Song Thrush; 16.1.26 – Goldcrest.

Joan Buckland

Sheffield Heritage Fair, Millennium Gallery, 24-25th January 2026

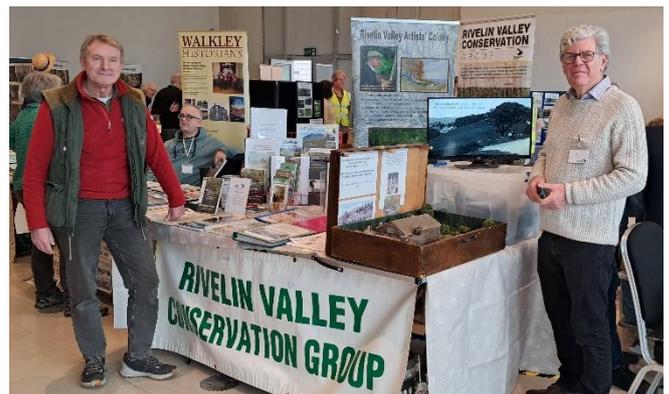


Photo: Sue Shaw

Here is a photo of our stall at the recent Heritage Fair. Many local heritage organisations from the Sheffield area gathered for this annual weekend event.

There were lots of visitors, who were interested in Rivelin's history of water powered mills. Our video of the past, compiled from our postcard collection, and the working model of Nether Cut Mill were popular.

Christine Roe



Salix sepulcralis 'Chrysocoma'
This is what the sapling we planted should grow into