



South East Rivers Trust

State Of Our Rivers 2024 Catchment Crib sheet

We have compiled a list of pointers about your local river catchment. Consider including these when contacting your elected representative as part of the Rivers Trust's State Of Our Rivers 2024 campaign.

Ratings of High, Good, Moderate, Bad and Poor come from the Water Framework Directive (WFD) classifications. You can find more detail about your specific area of river on the [State Of Our Rivers](#) Report Storymap.

Wandle

Current status: The South East Rivers Trust knows the Wandle well, as it is where our work began. The Carshalton branch is classified as Bad, while the rest of the river network, from Croydon to the Thames, is classed as Moderate. The amount of water available in the river at certain times doesn't support normal ecological functioning and particularly impacts fish populations. On chemicals, the Croydon branch has significant phosphates issues, among other problems. There are also several large barriers to fish passage.

Has the situation got worse? Our Co-CEO Dr Bella Davies [told the London Assembly last summer](#) that one section of the Wandle used to be classed as Good, but had been downgraded, which left no London rivers classed as Good. This drop in classification illustrates the need for continuous, long-term investment in improvements in freshwater ecosystems.

Beverley Brook

Current status: The Beverley Brook is classified as Moderate, however biological elements are classified overall as Bad.

Has the situation got worse? Most classifications remained unchanged between the 2019 and 2022 WFD surveys. However, dissolved oxygen deteriorated from High to Good. Important to note is that there were significantly fewer samples taken during the 2022 survey and as such results may not reflect the waterbody status accurately, emphasising the need for consistent monitoring. Phosphates are a problem, which is indicative of the impact of treated final effluent (the majority of flow is from sewage treatment works). Ecology is failing for fish. There are several large obstacles preventing movement of fish populations at the downstream section of the river.

Cuckmere & Pevensey Levels

Current status: The Combe Haven to the east of the catchment is classified as Poor, while the Pevensey Haven in the middle of the catchment is classified as Moderate.

Has the situation got worse? The Ashbourne and Hugletts Streams are the only waterbodies to have improved in ecological status between the 2019 and 2022 WFD cycles, from Poor to Moderate.

Darent & Cray

Current status: The Upper Darent's ecological status was classed as Moderate in 2019. The middle and lower Darent were Poor. The Cray and Shuttle were Moderate.

Has the situation got worse? [Government data](#) suggests "low confidence" that they can attain the target of Good by 2027.

Dour

Current status: Moderate, Bad or Poor classifications dominate these swathes of Kent. There are two main waterbodies. In 2022 one was classed as Moderate and the other Bad.

Has the situation got worse? The 2022 classifications did not change from 2019.

Hogsmill

Current status: The Hogsmill and its tributaries remain classified as Moderate, following the 2022 WFD survey.

Has the situation got worse? While mostly remaining unchanged, some classifications showed slight improvements. Ammonia and dissolved oxygen classifications improved from good to high and the fish classification improved from Poor to Moderate.

Loddon

Current status: The worst tributary in the catchment is the Twyford Brook, classified as Bad, but a lot of the upper catchment chalk streams are still classified as Poor. The Barkham Brook and the Emm Brook towards the downstream end of the catchment are classified as Moderate.

Has the situation got worse? The latest WFD review showed areas of the Loddon improving and some declining but of huge note is that of the 10 changes, fewer sample points were used in 2022 than when previously analysed in 2019. This shows the need for increased and consistent monitoring.

Mole

Current status: The River Mole catchment is divided into two: the Upper Mole and its tributaries, and the Lower Mole and Rythe. In the Upper Mole sub-catchment, all of the 10 designated waterbodies were classified as Moderate or Poor in 2022, reflecting the status quo of the 2019 survey results. Of the 14 designated waterbodies in the Lower Mole sub-catchment, eight were designated as Moderate, four were designated as Poor, and a further two were not surveyed.

Has the situation got worse? No waterbody that was surveyed in both 2019 and 2022 changed its overall ecological classification. Unfortunately, the only waterbody in the catchment classified as

Good in 2019 (Queen Elizabeth 2 Storage Reservoir) was not classified in 2022. This underlines the need for properly funded, consistent monitoring.

Medway

Current status: A part of coastal river at Gravesend is classed Good but the rest of the catchment is mostly Moderate, with stretches of Poor or Bad.

Has the situation got worse? The Environment Agency expresses [“low confidence” in reaching 31 targets to positively improve the status of sections of river by 2027.](#)

North Kent

Current status: The North Kent catchment has one waterbody measured by the Water Framework Directive, the White Drain. Its 2022 classification was Poor.

Has the situation got worse? The river’s classification was also rated Poor in 2019.

Rother

Current status: In 2022 classifications just five water bodies were classed as Good in the catchment, with 25 at Moderate and four at Bad.

Has the situation got worse? In 2019 there had been eight at Good and seven at Poor, with 26 at Moderate. With fewer classed Good, the situation has declined.

Stour

Current status: The River Catchment was rated Moderate in 2022.

Has the situation got worse? The assessment was unchanged from 2019

Wey

Current status: The Wey catchment contains 42 designated waterbodies. Of these, three (Chertsey Bourne, Hollywater and Deadwater at Bordon, plus the Stratford Brook) were classified as Good in 2022, with 16 classified as Moderate. The remaining water bodies were classified as Poor, Bad, or did not receive assessment in 2022.

Has the situation got worse? The change in classification of the Wey catchment is a mixed picture. Most waterbodies that received assessment in both years did not change overall ecological classification. However, the Stratford Brook and Chertsey Bourne did increase classification from Moderate in 2019 to Good in 2022. Conversely, the Caker Stream deteriorated from Moderate to Bad, a drop of two categories.