Glynde Reach - A Year in Observation 2025 - 2026

Citizen Science Programme Report



Produced by Love our Ouse with material collated, researched and gathered in collaboration with the community testers

October 2026

Love our Ouse CIC
loveourouse.org
info@loveourouse.org

Executive Summary

Project Overview

Glynde Reach was identified by Love our Ouse as an ideal opportunity to develop a community-led citizen science programme, bringing local people together to better understand the health of their local waterway and help inform positive action. The Reach is the worst-rated waterbody in the River Ouse catchment, with a history of modification, restricted flow and pressures from pollution, nutrient loading and infrastructure.

The project set out to establish a regular water testing methodology, monitor river health across key locations, identify areas of concern and potential causes, and increase community education, agency and connection. Five testing sites were established across Glynde Reach, with local residents undertaking regular water quality and Riverfly monitoring over the year, supported by ecological guidance and Love our Ouse coordination.

Key Findings

The year of observation has reinforced the poor ecological condition of Glynde Reach. Whilst readings varied between sites and throughout the seasons, the overall Water Framework Directive classification remains **Poor**, reflecting the 'one out, all out' principle.

Key findings included:

- **Poor water quality:** Elevated phosphate, ammonia and nitrate readings were recorded at various sites, with evidence of pollution detection in 7 of 12 samples at Moor Lane.
- **Low dissolved oxygen:** Particularly pronounced at all sites, where levels deteriorated significantly during warmer, drier months, falling to around 18–24% during the summer.
- **Seasonal pressures:** High temperatures, low water levels, sluggish flow, prolific duckweed and algae were recurring observations, creating challenging conditions for aquatic life.
- **Pollution incidents:** Testers identified significant changes at Harrisons Lane in April and May, resulting in reports to the Environment Agency. Subsequent investigation confirmed an unusual biological growth and a short-lived water quality event, although a single pollution source could not be established.
- **Barriers to biodiversity:** The Beddingham pumping station and associated infrastructure present significant challenges to natural fish migration, particularly for critically endangered European eels.

The findings highlight the complex and interconnected pressures affecting the Reach, with climate, land use, wastewater infrastructure and historic river modification all playing a part.

Outcomes and Impact

The project has achieved far more than the collection of water quality data. It has created a stronger connection between local people and their river, providing practical opportunities to learn, contribute and have a voice.

Over the year, the project achieved:

- **370 volunteer hours**, equivalent to 53 days and an estimated £7,400 of voluntary contribution.
- **200 people directly engaged**, with a further 800 people reached indirectly through wider activities and communications.

- Increased local participation in testing, environmental learning and practical action for nature.
- Support for the Ouse Charter of Rights from both Ringmer Parish Council and Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council, bringing river rights into local governance.
- Wider engagement through schools and young people, local history, art, podcasts, exhibitions and public presentation events. Around 60–70 people attended the September presentations, with 10 expressing interest in joining the testing programme.

The project has helped bridge the gap between statutory and local stakeholders, connecting communities, environmental organisations, local authorities, artists and individuals.

Key Learnings and Next Steps

The first year has demonstrated the power of regular observation in building knowledge, confidence, connection and care. Combining expert ecological guidance with local knowledge and enriching community engagement activities has proved particularly effective.

It has also highlighted that river issues are extremely complex, accountability can be difficult to establish and official reporting channels can be frustrating. One year is not enough to build a comprehensive evidence base, and improvements are needed to data analysis, reporting and testing methodology, including the integration of pH testing.

There is a clear appetite and commitment to continue. The next phase will seek funding to extend monitoring for a minimum of two further years, improve data collection and reporting, align with catchment-wide monitoring and explore opportunities to expand testing to Ripe and Laughton. The longer-term ambition is to build local ownership and capacity, with Love our Ouse gradually stepping back from coordination.

This has been a hugely rewarding and worthwhile project. A great start, but very much the beginning. Through continued observation, learning and collective action, we can help move Glynde Reach from an undervalued waterway towards becoming a cherished, healthier river with an active and influential voice.



Introduction

Rivers are essential to all life. We all depend on our rivers to provide clean water for drinking and sanitation, fertile soil, and for life but rivers also support an extensive diversity of species and ecosystems and play a vital role in the functioning of the Earth's continuous water cycle.

In common with most other rivers in the UK, the Ouse faces severe pressures from climate change, unsustainable consumption patterns, diffuse and point source pollution, invasive species, failing and inappropriate infrastructure and unsympathetic development.

We must work together with a common vision, faster, at a landscape scale, in delivering action to address these threats. However, in the face of this complexity and the magnitude of these issues communities often feel disempowered with limited knowledge, skills and opportunities to make a significant contribution to their regeneration.

About Love our Ouse

Love our Ouse is a community based initiative to link people to celebrate, learn and upscale positive action for the Sussex River Ouse from source to sea. We believe the Ouse has the right to support a rich biodiversity and a thriving riverside community.

Love our Ouse is about being inclusive and connecting all sorts of people; residents, community groups, recreational users, landowners, farmers and everything in between! We engage in strong partnership working with key stakeholders such as local authorities, environmental organisations and regulators. We benefit existing organisation's positive work by increasing engagement and support as well as create increased accountability for those with statutory duties.

Love our Ouse has conducted **over 90 activities**, engaging over **6000 people** directly since 2022. This includes **918 voluntary days** in total which has been recognised in a nomination for the prestigious Kings Award for Voluntary Service.

Love our Ouse Strategy 2025 - 30

They are held up as a flagship organisation in how to develop and implement rights of rivers approaches both in the UK and in Europe through leading the development of the first Charter of River Rights to be formally supported by a local authority (Lewes District Council) in the country. Since then 9 local councils (and counting) have formally supported the Charter with local organisations, businesses and individuals invited to pledge their support.

The Ouse's rights

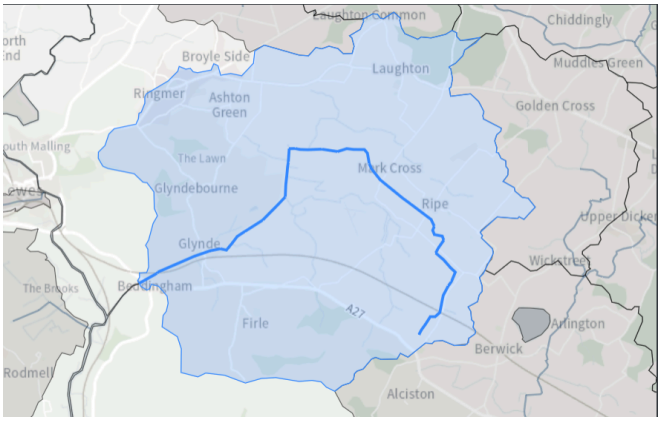
The River Ouse should possess the following fundamental rights as set forth in this Charter, which arise from its very existence:

1. The right to exist in its natural state
2. The right to flow
3. The right to perform essential natural functions within the river catchment
4. The right to feed and be fed from sustainable aquifers
5. The right to be free from pollution
6. The right to native biodiversity
7. The right to regeneration and restoration
8. The right to an active and influential voice

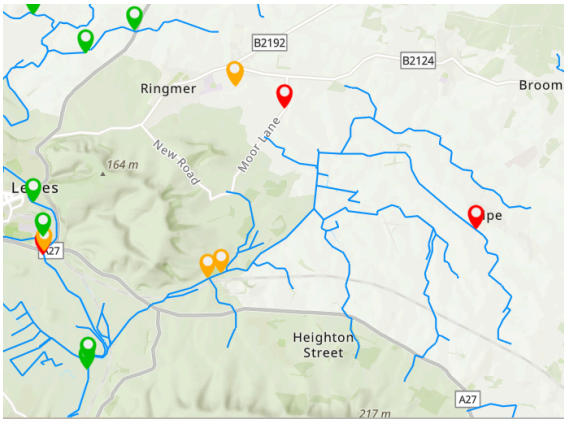
Why Glynde Reach?

Glynde Reach was identified as our first potential waterway to monitor following a catchment wide community testing day held in April 2025 as part of the Earthwatch Waterblitz. Love our Ouse have been looking to develop a citizen science testing programme and Glynde Reach met a number of key criteria.

- Poor Ecological Status - consistently fails under the Environment Agency Water Framework Directive
- It is not covered by other regular testing
- It has a potentially manageable size for testing across its length
- There is limited local awareness or community action for the river
- There was the opportunity to raise the profile and help inform positive action



Environment Agency Catchment map



Waterblitz results map for Glynde Reach

About Glynde Reach

Glynde reach drains some 57km2 of land, and in the upper reaches, incorporates part of Ringmer in the west, and Ripe in the east, and flows through Glynde village in its middle reaches. It joins the river Ouse downstream of Lewes below the A27. Over the years the river has been modified and moved, and a large sluice added to the downstream end which prevents the tidal water flowing upstream.

The catchment area is very low lying and flow is impounded by the weir and other structures along its length. This combined with the frequent tidal movement (which reduces outflow) means that it can be very slow moving. This lack of flow means that the river can suffer from the effects of eutrophication (where water temperatures increase and oxygen in the water decreases - particularly in areas of high nutrient load in the water) which is harmful to fish and other aquatic species. It also allows algae and other plants to increase which also work to reduce oxygen levels.

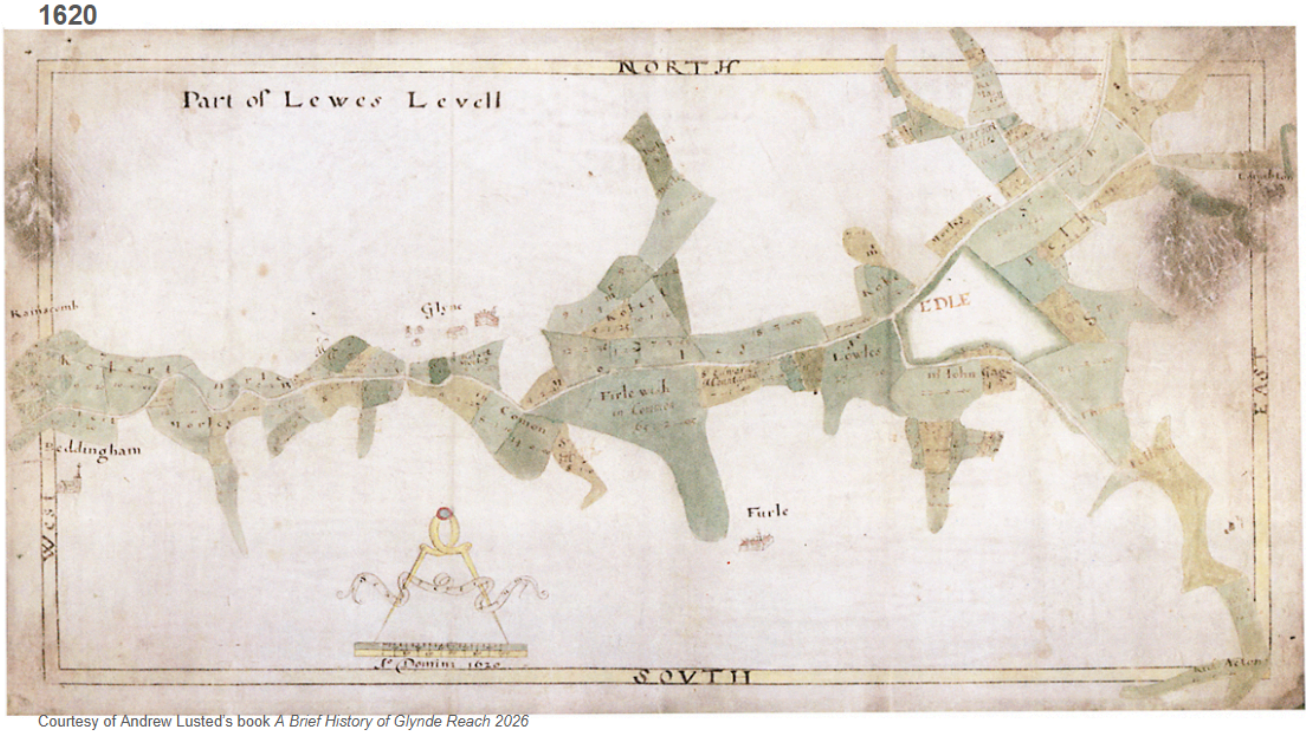
Currently there is a proliferation of duck weed which is covering large areas of water, leading to increased shade and lowering oxygen. High levels of nutrients from various sources including waste water treatment, farming and domestic properties are driving issues. In terms of the assessment under the Water Framework Directive Glynde Reach is the worst rated waterbody in the River Ouse catchment, failing for fish (due to structures preventing up and down stream fish passage), in-river vegetation (macrophytes) and phosphate (see link to the Environment Agency data below).

Read more at the Environment Agency Water Framework Directive data for Glynde Reach:

https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB107041012510

Historical insights

1620



Courtesy of Andrew Lusted's book *A Brief History of Glynde Reach 2026*

1472 Le Rucce
Earliest name

1620 Earliest map

1766 - River altered
Richard Trevor, owner of Glynde Estate, straightens and deepens the Reach. Barges use the river and wharves

The Reach flows over its banks flooding fields and brooks with brackish water.The river is tidal.

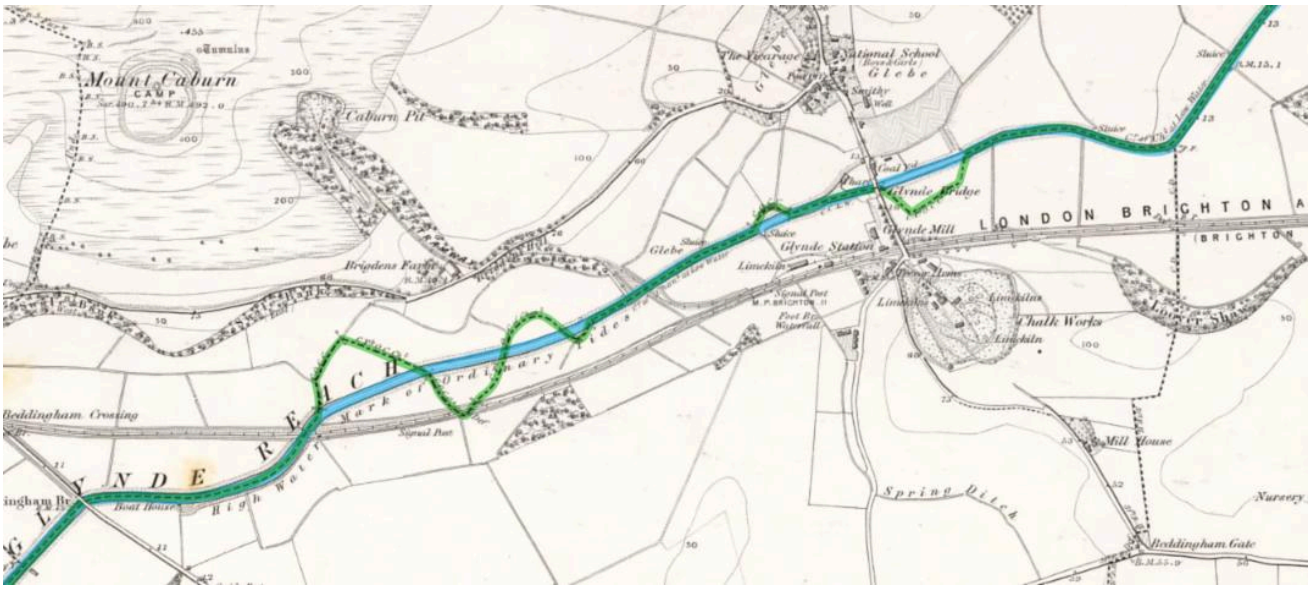
1846 - Railway built.
Wharves on both banks of Glynde Reach near Glynde Bridge were expanded to unload coal from barges

1970s The pumping station is built at Beddingham to 'improve land drainage' changing the tidal flow

Angling club fishes the river for freshwater fish

Nature is changed - become heavily modified and restricted flow. Native fish changed for coarse fish species

1874



Courtesy of Andrew Lusted's book *A Brief History of Glynde Reach 2026*

Project Objectives

The project aimed to meet the following Love our Ouse strategic objective as set out in our Strategy 2025-30:

Objective 1: By 2030 increase community care, love, knowledge responsibility, appreciation of, and action for, the Ouse

1.1 Outcome: By 2030 we will have increased community awareness of the ecology, culture and heritage of Ouse and issues affecting it

and

1.3 Outcome: by 2030 we will have increased number of people engaging in practical action for the wellbeing of the Ouse

Objective 2: By 2030, the Charter for the River Ouse is being implemented and upheld by all communities and key stakeholders within the catchment.

2.1 Outcome: Communities and stakeholders are supporting, upholding and celebrating the charter

2.2 Outcome: more stakeholders have the capacity to implement the charter and use it to strengthen positive outcomes for the Ouse.

2.4 Outcome: increased number of nature-centric laws, policies, charters and other governance mechanisms for rivers in the UK

Project Overview

We aimed to:

- ➢ Establish a citizen science testing methodology across key perimeters that monitor river health
- ➢ Regular testing with readings across the Reach for 1 year minimum
- ➢ Drill down into issue locations and potential causes
- ➢ Help inform future action
- ➢ Increase community education, agency & connection
- ➢ Uphold the rivers rights

Budget £5700

Funders

We are grateful to the following for funding support:

Community Pitch grant scheme
Ringmer Art Collective
Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council
Ouse Angling Preservation Society

Partners & Supporters

We are grateful to the following for invaluable project support:

Ecologist Sandra Manning-Jones

Community Testers

Local residents from Glynde and Ringmer were interested in signing up as a result of undertaking our River Ecology 101 training course, testing as part of the Earthwatch Waterblitz and having concerns about local negative impacts on the state of the river on their doorstep and a desire to learn more. They had also undertaken Riverfly Training with the Ouse and Adur River's Trust.

Linda Grange
Mark Hosken
Claire Chapman
Lucy Newman
Emma Kiersey

Natasha Padbury - Project Manager





Testing sites

5 sites were chosen to cover the length of the waterways that make up Glynde Reach. Specification of sites to include:

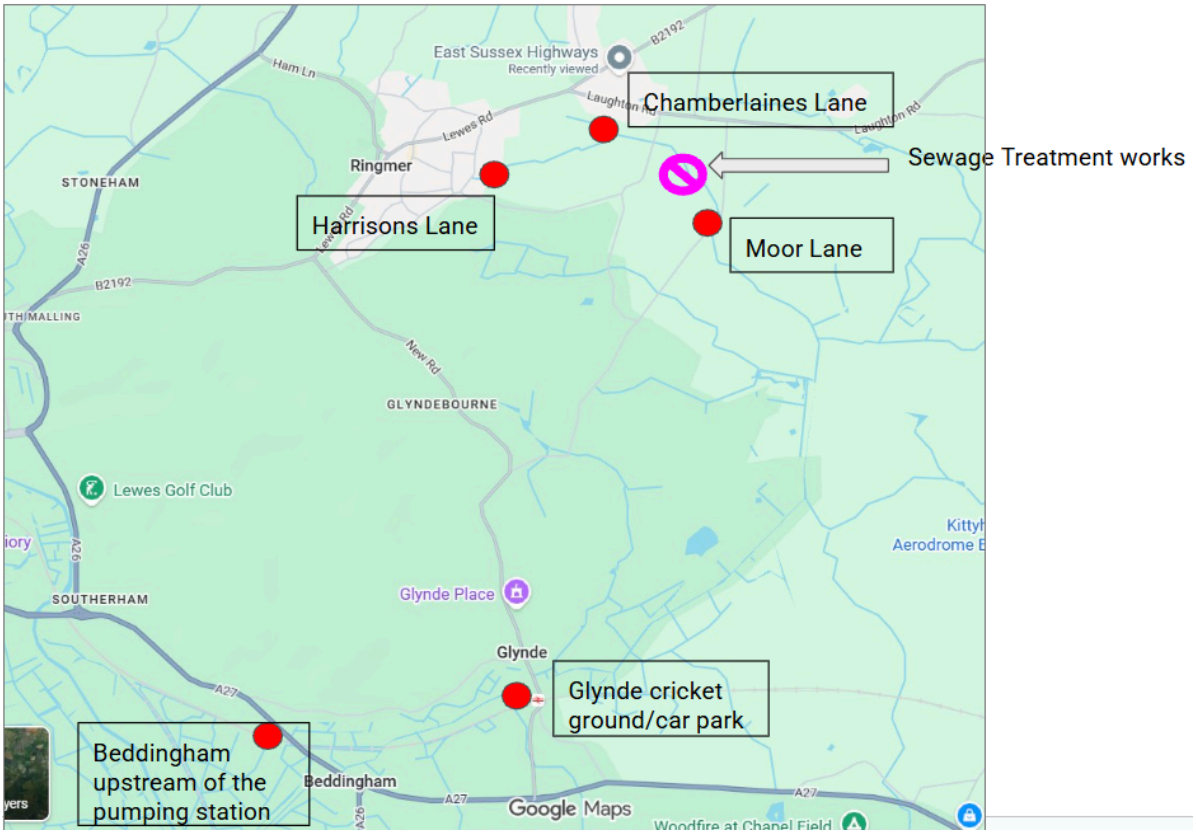
- Up and downstream of the sewage treatment works in Ringmer
- Waterways through urban settings
- Waterways through agricultural settings

All sites were publicly accessible and permission granted on private land.

We were not able to seek a suitable site/s or have capacity to cover testing in Ripe/ Laughton.

Site references

Site number	Location name	What 3 words reference
Site 1	Harrisons Lane	///outsmart.dumps.restore
Site 2	Chamberlaines Lane Ringmer	/// reactions.helps.smokes
Site 3	Moor Lane Ringmer	/// below.regrowth.graph
Site 4	Glynde cricket ground car park	/// front.goals.nightcap
Site 5	Beddingham bridge (under A27)	///fancy.crows.downfield



Testing Methodology

Water Framework Directive (WFD) Classification
The WFD uses four classes for ecological status:
High → Good → Moderate → Poor
Classification is based on a “one out, all out” principle: the lowest scoring element determines the overall status. This is worth noting as whilst our data varies between the classifications the overall classification for Glynde Reach is poor.

Testing sites classified as
Lowland < 80 metres
High Alkalinity > 50mg/L CaCO3

Key testing parameters include:

- Phosphate
- Nitrates and nitrites
- Ammonia

} ➡ Agriculture Sewage Industry

- Dissolved Oxygen
- Temperature

} ➡ Warm water = less oxygen for fish to breathe

Report Oxygen levels to EA lower than 50%

Fish stressed at 18-20°C + mortalities st 22-25°C

- Riverfly Monitoring

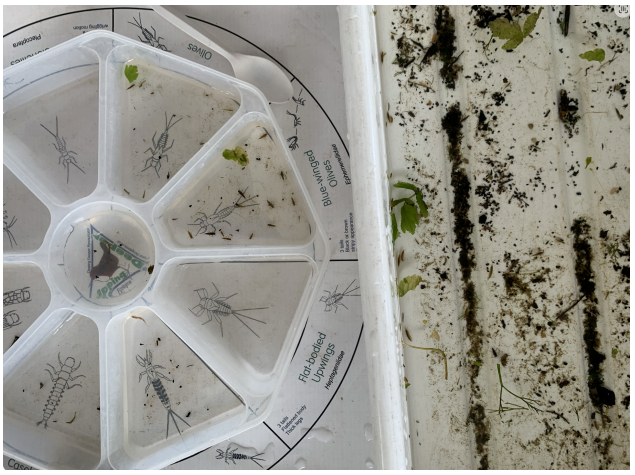
} ➡ Health indicator = eight key groups of invertebrates

Weather/other conditions

Observational

- Rapid River visual survey
- Photo documenting
- Species identification
- Duckweed Cover
- Historical/cultural/creative





Reporting guidance

Environment Agency - Supporting Citizen Science
Technical Advisory Framework
Version 1. March 2025
LINK

Testing observations and results highlights per site

Harrisons Lane - Ringmer



This testing site is next to the local primary school, near a residential area, and new housing developments upstream of the Ringmer Sewage Works.

Water flows into the stream from pipes running under the road and built up areas beyond. There is unrestricted access to the stream with littering and fly tipping being an ongoing problem. The stream below the site is overgrown and obstructed with fallen trees and other vegetation. There is a long history of children playing here.

In April and May there was a distinct change observed and it was clear testers had witnessed the effects of a significant pollution incident which led to multiple reports being filed to the Environment Agency hotline number 0800 80 70 60.

2/5/26 reporting water pollution reference 02501529
Water course blockage reference 02501530

Significant changes

- Flow decreases
- Spike in Phosphates & Ammonia
- Temperature increase to 19.4°C in Sept
- Visible pollution debris
- Littering increase
- Riverfly = low limited counts

April notes by testers:

'There is a significant change in the condition of the site. Lower water levels and strong indication of deposits in the water and debris. The test results also show a significant elevation in phosphate, ammonia and nitrite + reduced dissolved oxygen levels. There is a great deal of fallen wood and brushwood blocking the stream. There is a small number of stickle backs in one of the isolated pools in the fallen trees. These results are concerning especially as the site is frequented by youngsters and school children who are playing in and around the water and the muddy stream banks. It is possible this could be a health hazard should our observation prove correct and sewage sewage, farm or industrial waste is present. With this in mind I would hope a site assessment can be carried out with some urgency to establish that there is no health hazard or otherwise. Lots of litter.'

Poor



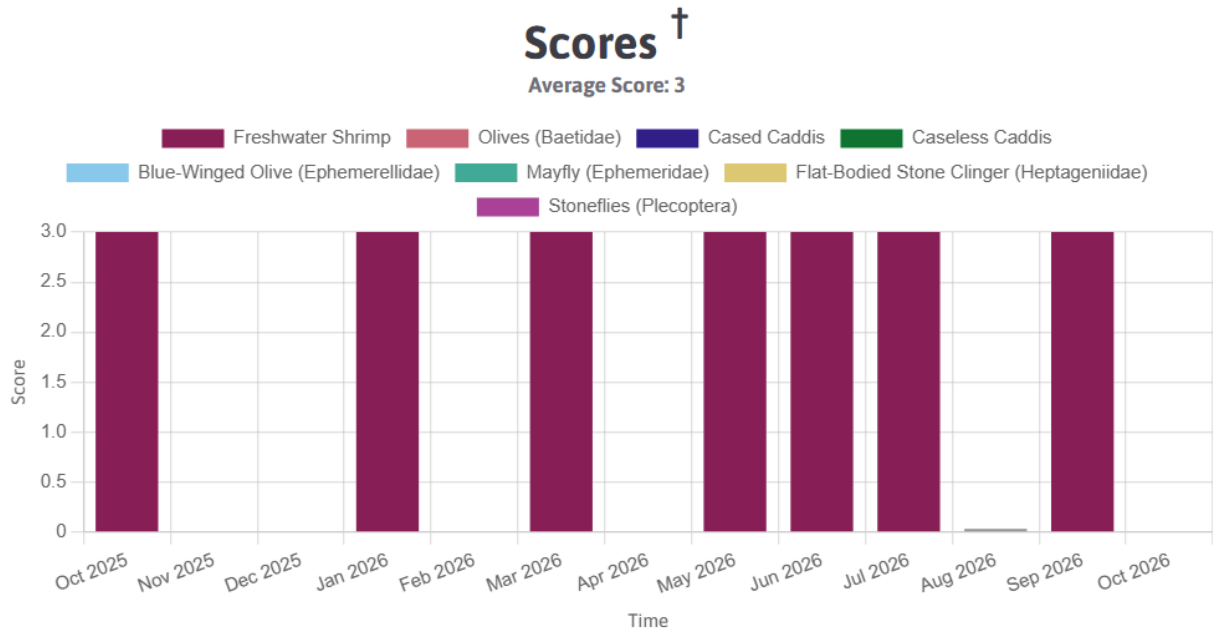
Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust took a water sample in May and June for analysis and results came back identifying the white film *'as being consistent with an undesirable river biofilm (URB), sometimes referred to as "sewage fungus". This type of biofilm can develop when environmental conditions allow naturally occurring microorganisms to grow rapidly.'* and *'The investigation confirms that an unusual biological growth was present when it was reported, and that water quality conditions during that event were different from those seen one month later. The results indicate that this was a short-lived water quality event, but they do not identify a single source for either the biofilm or the faecal contamination. Rivers are influenced by many factors, including weather, river flows and inputs from a range of sectors, including agriculture, wastewater infrastructure, private drainage and surface water runoff. The evidence from a single sampling event cannot distinguish between these potential sources.'*

Read the full report HERE.

River Right/s Triggered:
1.The right to exist in its natural state
5. The right to be free from pollution

Riverfly test results

Site reference GRR1
https://riverflydata.org/?where=t-ouseandadurriverstrust



The testers found a small population of stickle backs, and river fly monitoring produced one single baby stickle back. River fly testing is not producing significant results, just low populations of shrimps. One in eight categories found.

One elver was spotted in September much to the tester's delight.



Chamberlaines Lane - Ringmer



This site is north of the sewage treatment works and quality and quantity varies largely due to natural seasonal changes. This is observed across temperature and dissolved oxygen readings.

General variation in water quality between:

High	Good	Moderate

May - spike across Ammonia and Phosphates

Moderate

May - August a steep dissolved oxygen drop

Poor

Consistent pattern of low dissolved oxygen which gets worse as the temperature of the water increases and the stream dries up and the flow gets sluggish. Only really acceptable levels for about two months around January. Testers started really noticing this from about May onwards and this summer saw three significant heatwaves.

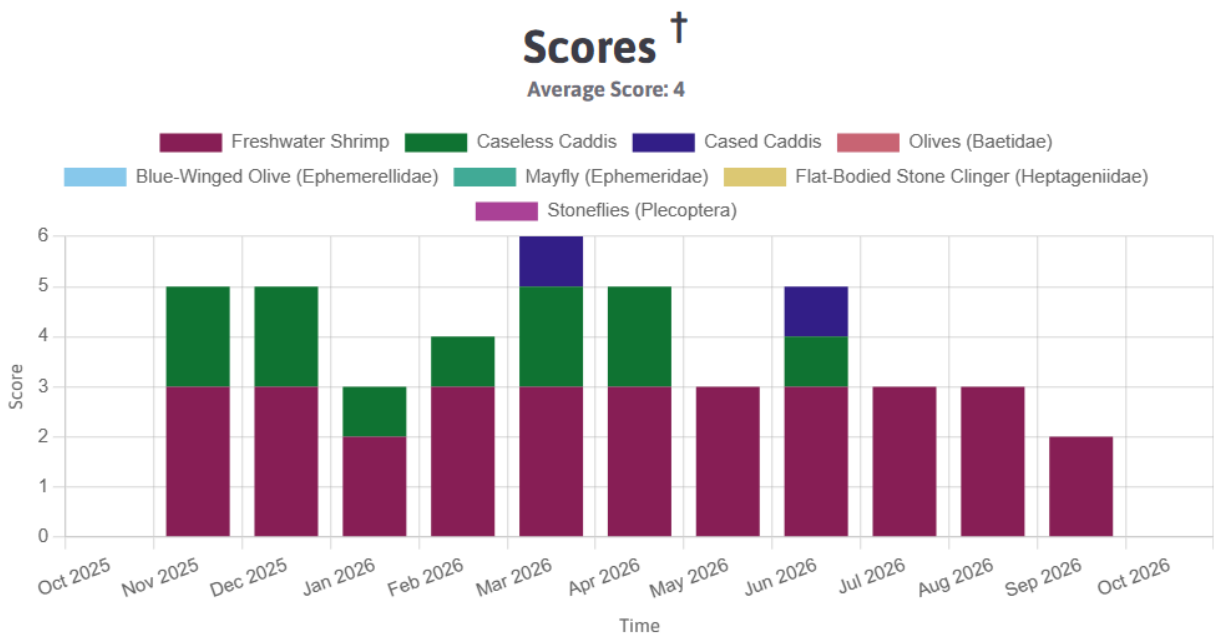
Multiple reports being filed to the Environment Agency hotline number 0800 80 70 60 due to Dissolved Oxygen levels going below 50% and poor phosphate levels.

14th May: reference 02506567
15th June: reference 02517373
6th July 2026: reference 02526176

River Right/s Triggered:
1.The right to exist in its natural state
5. The right to be free from pollution
6. The right to native biodiversity

Riverfly test results

Site reference GRR2
https://riverflydata.org/?where=t-ouseandadurriverstrust



Species across three of eight categories were observed. It was the most abundant across the Riverfly sites. In addition to the riverfly species the testers spotted a healthy array of other species through the year including a Water Scorpion, frog, two Eels, Wrens, Blue Tits, Chiff Chaffs, Blackcap, Magpies, Pheasant, Goldfinch, Whitethroat, Green Woodpecker, Blue tit, Collard Dove and Seagull.





Moor Lane - Ringmer



The stream flows through open farmland to Moor Lane from Neaves Lane. This testing site is downstream of the Ringmer Sewage Works at a road bridge and is very much a stream, wider and fuller in flow. Much of the water flow is likely generated by water from the sewage works. The banks are overgrown with nettles, docks, willow herb hemlock and black thorn. With normal flow rates and weather conditions the stream is about 30cm deep with a soft silty bottom and the water is tea coloured . Flow rates vary from gentle to very fast at times of high rainfall.

Testing results vary between

Good | Moderate

And occasionally

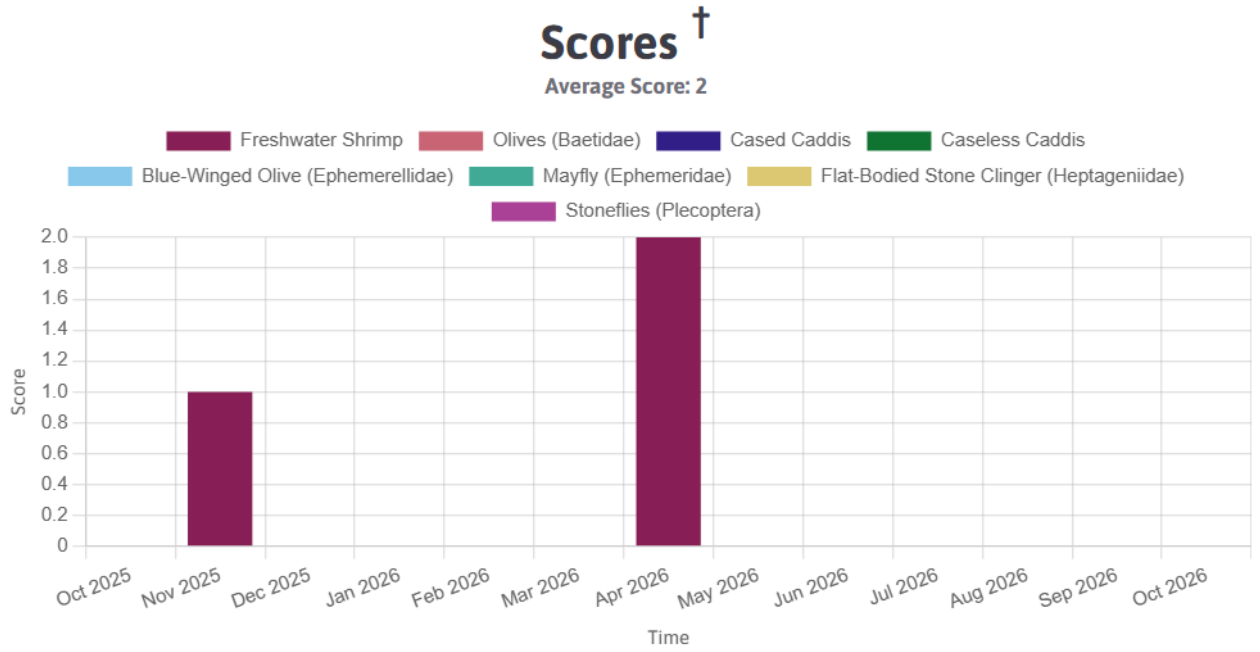
Poor

Lots of fluctuation which was not particularly seasonal.
7/12 samples likely to have detected sewage or slurry
7/12 samples high concentration Nitrates

River Right/s Triggered:
3. The right to be free from pollution
4. The right to native biodiversity

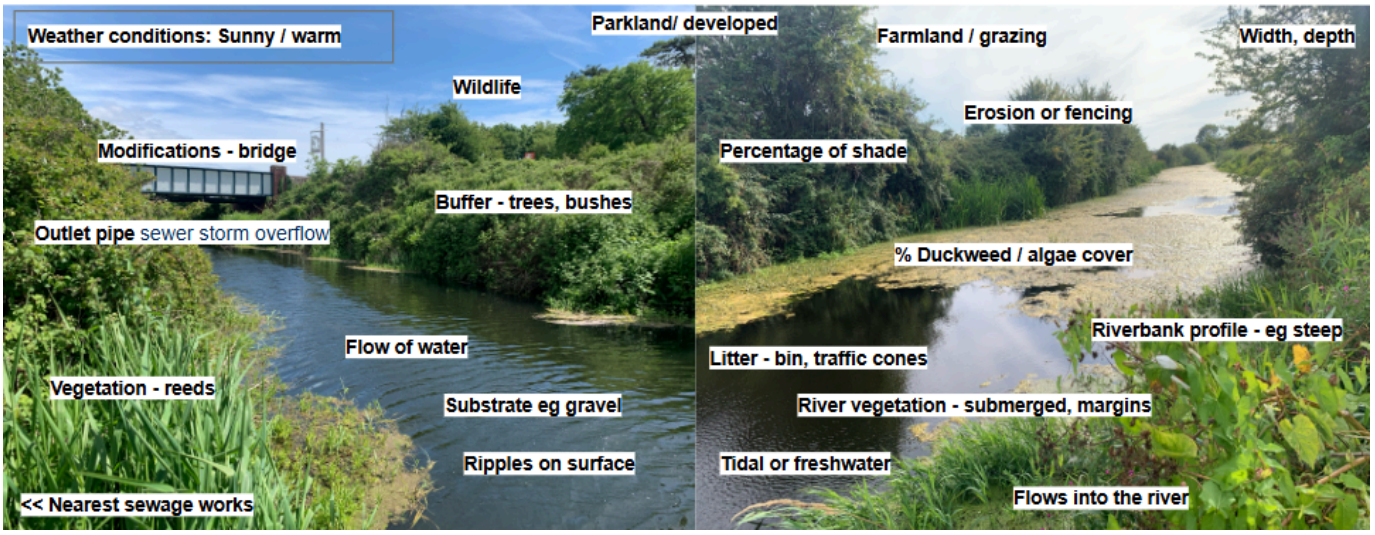
Riverfly test results

Site reference GRR2
https://riverflydata.org/?where=t-ouseandadurriverstrust



Summer vegetation surrounding the stream made it difficult to riverfly. One in eight categories observed - only seven shrimps were found.

Glynde Cricket ground car park



Rapid river visual survey labelling

November to February - brown water colour observed likely due to rainy conditions causing muddy field to run off and coincided with spill alerts.

18 - 22°C temperature summer months
⅔ Dissolved oxygen readings 33 - 55%

Moderate Poor

There is prolific Duckweed and Algae in spring/summer.

Littering is spotted regularly in summer.

There are lots of small fish spotted regularly. Local anglers confirmed that young fish are growing and recovering from the significant documented climate events of 2022 (100,000 fish kill count) where a

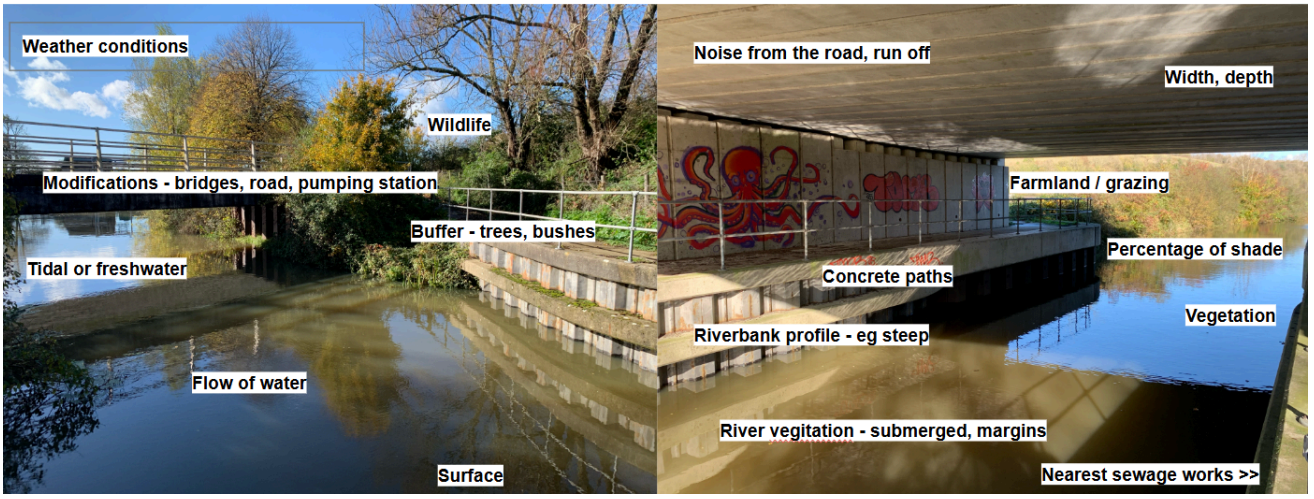
sustained period of hot weather, high amounts of surface weed, low water pressure, thunderstorms and heavy rain has crashed oxygen levels in the river between Glynde and Beddingham.

River Right/s Triggered:
1. The right to exist in its natural state
2. The right to flow
3. The right to be free from pollution





Beddingham bridge



Rapid river visual survey labelling

The Beddingham site is situated under the bridge where the A27 traffic flows. It is the last site before the Reach meets the Beddingham sluice pumping station. From there the Reach makes its way to meet and merge with the Ouse..

Testing results were broadly similar to the Glynde car park site.

During a visit arranged with Environment Agency representatives led by Charles Bacchas, Fisheries Technical Specialist we were shown around the pumping station and the eel ladder which is currently out of use. We were able to see both sides of the river - in the tidal stretch we saw a shoal of Mullet and Sea Trout near the sluice gate.

We learnt about the Eel's incredible life cycle, migratory journey, and significant challenges they face. The European Eel is a priority species in the East Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. East Sussex eel stocks have fallen by over 90% in the last 50 years. In the OSPAR Status Assessment: *in the current assessment period (2010 to 2021), other pressures (dams, turbines, habitat loss, pollution, poaching, diseases and*

pathogens, climate change, etc.) still pose a significant threat to the species. The European eel remains Critically Endangered in the latest (2020) IUCN Red List assessment.

The pumping station acts as a barrier which controls and limits the tidal flow up and downstream.
It poses a significant barrier to the natural migratory route for fish and passing through the pump can and is fatal.

Testers found it a really fascinating and educational session. It raised many questions about the effectiveness of the system, the need for the pumping station and its function. Could a feasibility study be undertaken to consider removing the pumping station altogether? What positive functions does the pumping station serve to the local landscape and infrastructure? Are these still relevant? What would be the impact to course fish? Cost is likely to be a significant factor in any, or lack of, remedial changes in light of Environment Agency reasons for it being unlikely to enable the Reach to become Good Ecological Status as being 'Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens'.

River Right/s Triggered:
1. The right to exist in its natural state,
2. The right to flow
3. The right to perform essential natural functions within the river catchment
6. The right to native biodiversity
7. The right to regeneration and restoration




Wider community engagement



Community members assisting the testers

The project has been able to incorporate wider community engagement far beyond the reach of the initial scope.

and incorporating history, culture, governance/policy level developments and creativity. These include:

Testing

- ➢ Local residents of Glynde have assisted monthly testing and Ringmer residents have started to join their local testers too
- ➢ Educational session on 9th July with 6 x 15 - 18yrs Railway Land Wildlife Trust work experience students and Sarah Stirk Photographer (artistic project Waterborne around river pollution) to learn about the project and assist with testing at Glynde Reach Car Park site

History

- ➢ Local historian Andrew Lusted created a Brief History of Glynde Reach pamphlet, with printing support costs from the project with sale proceeds being invested in Glynde community open air swimming pool

Parish Council Rights of River Motions

- ➢ Both Ringmer Parish Council and Glynde and Beddingham Parish Councils formally supported the Ouse Charter of Rights representing a significant step to bringing water within the local governance and helping strengthen catchment wide endorsement

River Right/s Triggered:

8. The right to an active and influential voice

Ringmer Parish Council agenda and minutes

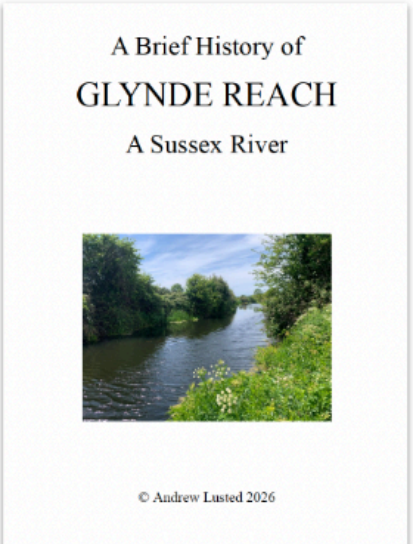
"Ringmer Parish council are pleased to join the growing number of local councils adopting the Charter of Rights for the River Ouse. As a council, we recognise that our waterways are under severe pressure from climate change and inadequate infrastructure and must be safeguarded for future generations. Surface water flooding, inadequate reservoirs, and unacceptably high levels of sewage discharge from existing and proposed developments are major concerns, affecting the health of our water systems and the ecosystems they support."

Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council agenda

Chair of Glynde & Beddingham Parish Council, Paolo De Paolis comments:
"Glynde Reach is woven into the history and identity of our parish, it divides and unites the villages of Glynde and Beddingham. By endorsing the River Ouse Charter of Rights, we are making a statement that our rivers matter. We hope that, together with many other local councils, our support will help strengthen the voice calling for rivers to be better protected and restored for future generations."







Creativity

- ➢ Talk as part of Lucy Newman's MUD themed Artwave exhibition in Glynde
- ➢ Podcast Episode on the Tonal audio project exploring water issues nationally by artist and nature advocate Feral Practice recorded with Director Matthew Bird riverside at Glynde Reach, a lower Ouse tributary. Click here to listen!
- ➢ Inspiration workshop with the Ringmer Art Collective. Love our Ouse spoke all about the River Ouse and the challenges it faces, the life it supports, River Rights Charter and insights into the Glynde Reach tributary. Artist Ruthie Martin led them through a series of creative explorations to spark ideas for possible approaches and different mediums and materials that could be used for their own artworks and get their creative juices flowing for their 'Conversations with Water' themed Artwave exhibition
- ➢ Stall/ River themed photo booth as part of the Glynde annual Flower Show event








Presentation events - September 2026

We held two free public events to share our project findings to date on 8th September evening at The Reading Room in Glynde and on 20th September at Gote Barn, Ringmer as part of the Ringmer Art Collective's Artwave which included a Conversations with Water themed exhibition created out of the creative workshop earlier in the year and billed as part of the Riverlution Festival programme.

The special gallery of works included a podcast with the Ouse being interviewed, song, quilting, painting and more. We had a good turn out to the talks at approx 60 - 70 people, it was a powerful culmination of a year of observation for the testers and the attending people were very engaged and asked lots of questions. 10 people expressed interest in being involved in the testing.



Community tester project feedback

Emma Kiersey

I had been feeling quite down because of hearing about the pollution in our rivers, and the sewage dumps, when my friend told me about the riverblitz. We took part in that and it made me feel like I was doing something to help instead of helplessly seeing what was happening. I then got a taste for citizen science, so we decided to get involved in riverfly counting and then in turn with our water testing project.

I love our little patch of river, I didn't really think before about how such a small stream would have an impact on the river itself and how it is all so interconnected. We have people come and join in with us to see how it works and sometimes have passersby interested in learning about what we are doing and also able to give us useful information, so it very much feels like a community project, and taking part in Riverlution made it feel even more so.

Spending time in nature when we do our testing is wonderful, realising how much of it is around our stream, and how it all works together is fascinating. I have learned a lot about how even small things we do as humans affect nature , and it made me interested in finding out more. I did a dive into the timeline of the Ouse and how we have affected it over the years which was really interesting , and im loving the River Rights Charter – it brings hope and I feel like what I am doing is making a difference, making me feel like we I have power instead of feeling powerless and just watching what is happening.

Mark Hosken

Our years testing did provide a very important set of data highlighting the very poor condition of the water with higher levels of pollutants than is acceptable and also the impoverished condition of the water course.

With the proposed house building planned for Ringmer it is even more important to continue with the testing and possibly improve the process and increase the number of markers to test including pH.

It has been educational to take part in the Glynde Reach project. I am proud to have had the opportunity to make a difference and to work with like minded people on such an important project. Long may it continue.

Claire Chapman

A year of visiting Chamberlaines Lane in Ringmer has changed my perception and relationship with local waterways.

It's a humble little stream really but spending time there is always enjoyable and I love to watch the changes that occur through the seasons. It's been good for my wellbeing to feel I'm helping nature even though it has been sad to see how climate changes in the summer threaten the life of the river. I now have some appreciation of the pressures on our water system, in this area. On a personal level I'm more thoughtful about what we tip into our drains at home now. I can see a connection.

I'm heartened by the number of people who stop and ask what we are doing. I think people care. We are all linked to this river.

I'm looking forward to another year of testing and anticipate more learning, more surprises and (hopefully) more cased caddis flies.

Lucy Newman

Always drawn to the theme of water, I had been lucky to attend the 101 River Ecology training, the Riverfly training and the Voices of the River with Tate. I tested the river in Glynde village by the car park and in the more built up Beddingham site, near the pumping station and busy main road.
Before the project, I found it overwhelming to know what to do to help 'stop climate change' and to support nature. So to take part in an empowering citizens science project was a chance to do something practical for the river, especially in the context of our threatened waterways.
It was a pleasure to spend time by the river and improve my observation and knowledge in new locations across seasons. We learnt how to use the kit and submit data effectively. When I showed a group of teenagers how to use the kit, I felt I had cracked it.

Over the year, I connected with the testers, local ecologists and even a Water Ranger in Canada. The project stimulated a lot of help and interest in the village and far beyond.
Apart from data collection, there is an emotional part of the project too. On an ideally clean river, we used gloves, anti-bac and safety goggles to protect against sewage and other pollution. Sometimes we observed hardly any river flies, rubbish and coverage of weeds with pond like slow moving water.

We also explored the historical use of the Reach, its many stakeholders, how it is affected by past and current human intervention and pressures and the changing weather. I met with a local who had farmed by the Reach before when it was tidal and worked with an archivist on a pamphlet.
My hope is that the project can continue to expand our perception of the Reach from a 'drainage ditch' to a cherished, live river.

Linda Grange

I started looking at the impact of developments in Ringmer on Glynde Reach independently but in discussion with another volunteer found out about the Love Our Ouse and OART volunteer projects which I was keen to join. It is critical that we are able to collect data about the state of our rivers and water courses in order to provide evidence on current and potential cumulative impacts from speculative developments and other health and safety issues. Being involved in these worthwhile projects has been a steep learning curve in my understanding about the natural ecology, its dependency on Glynde Reach and wider environment and the risks to its future. Meeting other volunteers, who give up so much of their time, sharing experiences and learning from them has been so rewarding. This is only the beginning

though and we need to continue to monitor and provide more data and evidence as part of a long-term programme to assess any adverse impacts and look at any potential mitigations.



Key Learnings, Outcomes and Next Steps

Summary of engagement

Volunteer hours (conservative) 370 hours / 53 days / £7400 equivalent value

Total number of people directly engaged 200
Total number of people indirectly engaged 800 minimum spanning listeners of 2 x podcasts, Parish Council Rights engagement, history pamphlet readers, art exhibition attendance

Learnings

- Kits were more expensive than originally anticipated leading to further fundraising being required. However robust, high end kit components were chosen worthy of the investment
- River issues are extremely complex
- All rights are being infringed at various times
- Raises more questions than answers - but we're asking them!
- Accountability & responsibility is difficult to pin down
- Reporting via official channels is frustrating especially when you are told not to expect to hear back from investigations involving your incident reports
- Power of regular observation builds deep connection and education
- Need to consolidate and find a better method of data analysis and reporting so testers can interpret readings on testing days and feed into a more automated portal that generates the results for us.
- Great start but much more comprehensive data over a longer period of time would be beneficial. A year is not enough time to build a good data set
- PH testing needs to be integrated
- Coordination needed to design and regularly support testers exceeded expectations by approximately 30 - 40%. As a first year in developing a testing model it was somewhat unknown what it would require. However level of engagement with the wider community was not anticipated and opportunities welcomed and maximised
- A broad programme spanning disciplines is an effective way to engage communities on water related topics
- Combination of expert ecological guidance, enriching community engagement activities and local

knowledge of testers/local residents was very powerful
- It was a hugely rewarding and worthwhile project for all involved

Outcomes

The project has achieved:

- Deeper and broader community participation and increased awareness
- Regular testing has provided intense learning experience and created deep connection and care for the testers local waterway
- Increased number of people engaged in local climate and nature projects
- Activities enabled local people to voice their concerns and ask questions
- Helped bridge the gap between statutory and local stakeholders and every day people – linking bottom up with top down. The project brought together local authorities, those with statutory duties, community groups and individuals, artists, ecologists, activists and environmental/educational services
- Influenced and helped to support systematic change through Parish Council support of the Ouse Charter, increasing awareness, giving the river a voice - an active and influential voice in decisions that affect it putting nature-centric governance in our democratic forums

Next Steps

Love our Ouse have given the testers permission to continue testing while the next phase is scoped and they are very keen to continue as are others in the Glynde and Ringmer communities. The proposal is for Love our Ouse to continue to coordinate the project with a view to phasing out support and giving full 'ownership' to the local resident community

- Fundraise to review and continue the project for minimum 2 more years
- Review data analysis and reporting with Ripple Effect Project with Friends of the River Medway and Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust
- Consider how to align with catchment wide data collection for continuity
- Consider aligning with Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust River Trust chosen testing kits and/or data portal
- Consider widening scope to include at least one Ripe/Laughton site for more comprehensive coverage of the Reach
- Incorporate practical means for more people to get involved in the testing and increase number of tests per month

Thanks

We are very grateful for everyone who has been involved in the project to date making it so rich, challenging and rewarding. It has been a pleasure to work with, learn and connect through this undervalued and precious waterway. Thank you to Glynde Reach for being the thread that has linked us all together. Long may it continue.



Tidal stretch from Beddingham towards the Ouse

Appendices

Site by site raw data sets

Glynde Reach	**Testing site no. 1**				Harrisons Lane Ringmer			**Reference**	///outsmart.dumps.restore
Date / time	**Surveyor**	**Water Temp**	**Phosphate**	**Ammonia**	**Dissolved Oxygen**	**Nitrates**	**Nitrites**	**Weather (and preceding if relevant)**	**Notes (species of note, other observations or things of note or concern)**
7/12/2025 12:15	Emma, Linda, Mark	12.4	0	0.74	90.3	0.5	0	Wet windy and cloudy. Very wet in preceding period 40mm+	The child's car seat is still there, see photo, do you report it or I?
08/02/2026 . 11:00	Linda, Mark	10	0.58	0.2	80.9	2	0	Overcast, damp and cool. Previous week, very wet at times, flood conditions	Water clear and fast flowing. some whitish soft looking tissue paper like residue on the bed of the stream. should be looked inro
11/03/2026 10:30	Linda, Mark	10.8	0.25	0.39	83.7	2	0.15	Broken Cloud and sunny intervals heavy showers in previous with fluctuating water levels	

17/04/2026 11:45	Linda, Mark	13.5	2.39	4.07	57.3	0	0.3	Broken Cloud and sunny intervals Dry weather in previous 2 weeks	There is a significant change in the condition of the site. lower water levels and strong indication of deposits in the water and debris. The test results also show a significant elevation in phosphate, ammonia and nitrite + reduced dissolved oxygen levels. There is a great deal of fallen wood and brushwood blocking the stream. There is a small number of stickle backs in one of the isolated pools in the fallen trees. These results are concerning especially as the site is frequented by youngsters and school children who are playing in and around the water and the muddy stream banks. It is possible this could be a health hazard should our observation prove correct and sewage, farm or industrial waste is present. With this in mind I would hope a site assessment can be carried out with some urgency to establish that there is no health hazard or otherwise. Lots of litter
01/05/2026 . 10:00	Linda, Mark	12.7	1.23	0.09	68.3	0	0.15	Warm Sunny. long dry spell whole of April	water levels dropping. readings have improved since the 17th April but still elevated. will contact the EA helpline with our concerns. EA contacted by phone 2/5/26 reporting water pollutiom ref 02501529 and also water course blockage ref 02501530
01/05/2026 . 10:15	Linda, Mark	12.7	1.23	0.09	68.3	0	0.15	Warm Sunny. long dry spell whole of April	water levels dropping
15/05/2026 11:30	Linda, Mark	12.9	2.21	4.73	38.4	0	0.15	Cloudy no wind cool	Low water levels and elevated occurence of grey coloured deposits floating in the water and deposits of grey/brown slime on the bottom. Down stream from the culvert the stream has been cleared of much of the fallen trees and debris allowing improved water flow and movement of stockle backs. Still more to be done. at this point in time we do not know who

									carried out the clearence, possibly the EA having reported the stream blockage on 02/05/2026. NOTE THE READINGS ON THE 17/04 AND 15/05 HAVE SIMILAR VALUES AT THE SAME TIME AS ELEVATED LEVELS OF POLLUTION. Jo Owen of the OART has taken samples for analysis.
10/06/2026 11:00	Linda, Mark	14.5	0.27	0	89.8	0.5	0.15	Clear water low water levels	base oxygen test 102.2%. there is a small population of stickle backs, our river fly monitoring produced 1 single baby stickle back. river fly testing is not producing significant results, just low populations of shrimps
23/07/2026 10:00	Linda, Mark	17.5	0.7	0	0	2	0	Clear water low water levels. warm sunny weather low 20's broken cloud. No recorded rain in the last 30 days	very low water levels and little flow rate. A lot of discarded items including bottles, electrical cardboard plastics. signs of use by unknown individuals
13/08/2026 11:00	Linda, Mark	19.5	0.72	0	57	2	0	Very hot dry conditions cloudless sky, 35c following weeks of high temperatures and no rain. Spring water feed almost Zero.	Stickle backs both small and large survive in small pools of water. not much other aquatic life. nothing living found in the river fly test. More littering found, bottles crips packets etc. Main stream still blocked with fallen branches20 meters down from source
03/09/2026 14:00	Linda, Mark	19.4	0.6	0.12	66	2	0	The previous month had below average rainfall, something like 20mm over the period 13/08/20206 and 3/09/2026. Today was breezy clouds and quite humid	The general environment remains dilapidated with the lower section of the site made impassable to humans and wildlife.There is continued littering. the water levels are low and at the pipe outfall there is grey colour to the water. we did find one elver and freshwater shrimps but otherwise the site is impoverished. This is our last planned testing date for this project.
13/10/2026 10:30	Linda, Mark	18	0.43	0.8	77.3	0.5	0.15	Wet drizzly day mild. water levels very low	During the survey the water flow increased considerably, road run off most likely from the continuing rain

Glynde Reach	**Testing site no. 2**				Chamberlaines Lane Ringmer			**Reference**	/// reactions.helps.smokes
Date / time	**Surveyor**	**Water Temp**	**Phosphate**	**Ammonia**	**Dissolved Oxygen as a percentage**	**Nitrates**	**Nitrites**	**Weather (and preceding if relevant)**	**Notes (species of note, other observations or things of note or concern)**
12/10/2025 11 am	Claire, Emma, Mark	13.4c	0.78	0.03	51.3	0.5	0.15	Overcast Dry 14.50c very dry for previous month, very slow flow rate	
9/11/2025 11am	Claire, Emma, Mark Linda	11.0c	0.45	0	57.7	0.5	0.15	sunny 14c broken clouds and showers. Previous period spells of heavy rain	
7/12/20205 10:30 am	Emma, Linda, Mark	11.5c	0.18	0.2	73.9	0.5	0	Wet windy and cloudy. Very wet in preceeding period 40mm+	
18.01.26 Poin…	Emma, Claire	9.3c	0.37	0.08	79.6	0.5	0	Dry day after Storm Goretti (8th Jan) and heavy rain a few days previously. Lots of debris in the river and the water was very silty.	
14.02.26	Emma, Claire	7.5	0.5	0.05	79.1	0.5	0	Sunny following a period of rain	
19.03.26	Emma, Claire	10.2	0.33	0.06	79.1	0.5	0	Sunny and windy	
04/04/26	Emma, Claire	8.6	0.7	0.08	73.1	0.5	0.15	Sunny after a frosty night. Water level in the stream has gone down since last visit and little connnecting stream has dried up.	

10.05.26	Emma, Claire	11.4	1.59	1.39	48.9	0	0.15	Cloudy. Outside air temp about 15 degrees. No rain for at least a week.	EA incident report filed 14th May: 02506567
21.05.26	Emma, Claire	14.3	0.84	0.08	51	0	0	Warm. Rain 2 days ago. River level a bit higher than two weeks ago but not a big change.	
14.06.26	Emma, Claire, Luce	14.4	0.69	0	49.1	0	0	Warm, sunny dry day after a period of rain that ended about 3 days ago.	River levels still fairly low. despite recent rain. River fly testing indicated water is less silty than previously and we found quite a bit of wildlife-a frog, two eels (one really quite big one), about 10 cased and uncased cadiss flies as well as the usual mass of shrimps. Vegitation is lush along the river after the rain. Bird life picked up today includes, wrens, blue tits, chiff chaffs, blackcap, magpies and pheasant. Unfortunately despite the ecology we have found today, we will log a pollution incident tomorrow due to O2 and phosphate levels. EA incident report filed 15th June: 02517373
05.07.26 at 9.30 am	Claire, Emma	16.2	1.22	0.12	24	0	0	Warm, sunny. Two weeks after record breaking heatwave and a week since there has been any rain. Water level in the river is low. Little connecting stream is still dry. Lots of vegetation around the banks including lots of sedge. Birds heard today (according to Merlin)-Goldfinch, Whitethroat, Green Woodpecker, Blue tit, Collard	EA incident report filed 6th July 2026: 02526176

								Dove and Seagull!	
09.08.26 at 10 am	Claire Emma (plus Libby and Theresa)	15.3	1.2	0.08	20.2	0	0	Hot sunny day. Outside temperature about 24 degrees. No useful rain in the area since June so river levels are pretty low and water quite sludgy. River fly count quite low again with only water shrimps in evidence. We did find 2 sticklebacks this time but no cadiss flies (unless they are in the sludge and we cant see them).	
26.08.26 (@6.30 pm)	Claire and Emma (plus Theresa and Jane)	16.7	1.11	0.01	18.5	0	0	Humid dry day with outside temperature about 25 degrees. Generally dry still although there have been a couple of small showers over the last week. Water levels are low in the stream.	
Sept 2026	Claire and Emma	13.5	0.83	0	37	0	0	Air temp approx 21 degrees. Warm, sunny no rain for about a week so stream level possibly lowest we've seen. Water clear but no flow. River fly this month poor count with index of 2.	

Glynde Reach	**Testing site no. 3**				Moor Lane Ringmer			**Reference**	/// below.regrowth.graph
Date / time	**Surveyor**	**Water Temp**	**Phosphate**	**Ammonia**	**Dissolved Oxygen**	**Nitrates**	**Nitrites**	**Weather (and preceding if relevant)**	**Notes (species of note, other observations or things of note or concern)**
12/10/2025 1pm	Claire, Emma	16.2	0.09	1.13	11.6	10??	1	Broken cloud sunny spells very dry conditions	

7/12/2025 11:30am	Emma, Linda, Mark	11.6	0.02	1.2	53.4	0.5	0.3	Wet windy and cloudy. Very wet in preceding period 40mm+	
07/01/2025 12:00	Mark, Linda, Tasha, Lucy	5.5	0.05	2.39	74.9	2	0.3	Cold, clear, sunny	
08/02/2026. 12 noon	Linda and Mark	9.9	0.35	1.04	43.5	0.5	0.3	Cool cloudy and damp. preceding week very wet and flood conditions	Warter, murky and brownish in colour, usual slowish flowing.
03/03/2026. 10.30 am	Lucy and Jo	10.5	0.32	1.5	48.6	0.5	0.3	Sunny , warm,	Too deep and muddly to riverfly test, one plant in the water. some clear water.
11/03/2026 Noon	Linda and Mark	11.5	0.24	0.32	61.9	2	0.15	Broken Cloud and sunny intervals heavy showers in previous with fluctuating water levels	
17/04/2026 12:30	Linda and Mark	15.8	0.53	2.5	55.1	10	1.5	Broken Cloud and sunny intervals Dry weather in previous 2 weeks	
15/05/2026 12:30	Linda and Mark	13.3	0.63	1.85	66.1	5	1	Overcast cool	slow running tea coloured brown
10/06/2026 12:00	Linda and Mark	17.6	0.25	0.61	61.6	5	1.5	Mild, sunshine and very heavy showers. the previous weeks have been below average temperatures spells of rain with some longer intervals of rain	Oxygen base level 108.9%. water slow moving clear / straw coloured

23/07/2026 10:30	Linda and Mark	0	0.28	0.84	0	20	1	Warm sunny weather low 20's broken cloud. no recorded rain in the last 30 days	
13/08/2026 10:30	Linda and Mark	0	0.95	0.22	54.9	10	0.3	Very hot dry conditions cloudless sky, 35c follwing weeks of high temperatue and no rain. Spring water feed almost Zero.	a lot of vegetation, stream largely covered by plant growth. water running low, light tan in colour
03/09/2026 15:00	Linda and Mark	20.7	0.16	0.16	68	20	0.3	The previous month had below average rainfall, something like 20mm over the period 13/08/20206 and 3/09/2026. Today was breezy clouds and quite humid	A lot of the vegetation has been cleared at the road bridge making access easier and better visibility of the stream itself. we noted there was about 30 cm of mud on the bottom of the stream
13/10/2026 11:45	Linda and Mark	17	0.2	1.59	51.9	20	1	drizzel rain and low cloud, mild windy	clear running water, low levels but still better flows than HL

Glynde Reach	**Testing site no. 4**				Glynde Car park			**Reference**	/// front.goals.nightcap
Date / time	**Surveyor**	**Temp**	**Phosphate**	**Ammonia**	**Dissolved Oxygen**	**Nitrates**	**Nitrites**	**Weather (and preceding if relevant)**	**Notes (species of note, other observations or things of note or concern)**
19.10.25 14.55.	Lucy Newman,	13.5 C	0.17	0.1	33	2 (top row)	0.3 (bottom	Heavy rain, then light rain when testing	Duck weed covers surface, almost stil water

	Bob Dixon						row)		
25.11.25 14.00	Lucy Newman, Bob Dixon	7.2 C	0.3	0.08	56	0.5	0	Cold. Sunny. Bright.	Brown water. Robin. Red Kite in sky. "This CSO last stopped discharging at 23/11/2025 19:42, having discharged for 0 hours 19 minutes This CSO discharges into BULLDOG SEWER/ GLYNDE REACH."
21.12.25. 15.30	Lucy Newman , Andrew Lusted	8.6 c	0.24	0.02	49.5	0	0	Light rain, mild for December	Brown water.
01.02.2026	Lucy Newman, Sabrina	8 c	0.56	0.14	55.7	0.5	0	Light rain, water logged fields. mud	Brown water, sewage discharging at Ringmer. one bird.
20.02.26	Lucy Newman, Debbie Quick	10.03 c	0.64	0.14	78.6	0.5	0	Breezy, sun, cold , fresh	Brown wawter, high fast. Beetle in river. Debbie says fishermen haven't fished much as river high and fast recently,
22.03.26. 15.30	Lucy Newman, Linda Fecley	10.4	0.3	0.02	81.6	2	0	overcast, dry, 13 degrees,	3 swans, 2 bits of plastic rubbish, water clear to about a foot from the surface.
04.05.26	Tasha Padbury, Matthew Bird	16.3	0.05	0.15		0.5	0.15	overcast, no wind, dry	question the DO reading
17.05.26. 14.00	Lucy Newman, Johnny Cullen	15.8	0.05	0.27		2	0.15	sunny, windy, warm	water fairly clear, could see see plants underwater about 2 foot down. Alga or other is gathering on the sides of the river. Ripples. Question DO reading - problem solving with supplier
06.06.2026. 17.30	Lucy Newman ,	21	0.41	0.21	53.6	2	0	Hot , sunny, breezy, 24 degrees	Follows the heatwave. still a hot time. duck weed. blanket weed. very small fish. reed

	Lucy Ayckroyd								warbler. low river.
10.07.2026	Lucy Newman, Natasha Padbury, Railway Land work experience students	22.9	0.65	0.04	39.2	0.5	0.3	Hot 27 degrees and climbing, no cloud, small breeze	Lots of small fish shoals swimming. Lots of duckweed cover - approx 60 surface cover. Lots of damselflys and dragonflies.
1.08.2026. 5.30	Lucy Newman, Emily Warren	19.2	1.44	0.14	34.5	0	0	Warm. breezy, dry, no rain for weeks.	goldfinch, lots duckweed cover. blackberries.
31.08.2026. 5.30	Lucy Newman, Tara Gould	18.5	2.09	0.34	18.7	0	0	After heavy rain. Sun, breezy, warm	damselfly, ripples on water from wind, lilly pads. duckweed maybe 60% cover. No sewage discharge. Local chat about human manure on fields.
									During the week, a pontoon and sign found in the water by resident. A bunch of roses. Blackberries

Glynde Reach	**Testing site no.**			Beddingham bridge				**Reference**	///fancy.crows.downfield
Date / time	**Surveyor**	**Temp**	**Phosphate**	**Ammonia**	**Dissolved Oxygen**	**Nitrates**	**Nitrites**	**Weather (and preceding if relevant)**	**Notes (species of note, other observations or things of note or concern)**
02.11.25 12.20	Lucy Newman	12	0.5	0.23	43.9	5 (top row)	0 (bottom	Sunny breezy mild / heavy rain before,	Sewage discharge at Ringmer SRN0581 seen on the River Trust Sewage map. "This

	[Bob Dixon}						row)	windy	CSO last started discharging at 02/11/2025 07:06"
23. 11. 25. 10.45	Lucy Newman , Emily Warren, Jenny Smith	7	0.41	0.19	59.5	0.5	0	Heavy rain the night before. Breeze. Cold. Sun.	Sewage discharge in the afternoon after the test .Jenny saw a kingfisher. Very muddy fields.
21.12.25. 11.30	Lucy Newman, Bob Dixon	8.5	0.4	0.24	55.9	0.5	0	Mild for december	Sewage discharge the day before
7.01.2026	Lucy Newman, Tasha , Plus environmen t agency	3.6	0.2	0.19	61.6	2	0	Cold, sun	
29.02.2026	Lucy Newman, Bob Dixon	11.2	0.46	0.07	71.6	0.5	0	Breezy, sun, cold , fresh	Wavy surface, brown water, seagull.
30.03.2026. 14.30	Lucy Newman, Maggie Wilson	9	0.02	0.08	99.2	2	0	cold, sunny, fresh	dissolved oxygen surprising. testing it 3 times. Windy and cold yesterday
04.05.26	Tasha Padbury, Matthew Bird	16.5	0.02	0.02	167.7?	0.5	0.15	overcast, no wind, dry	Question the DO reading
14.06.2026	Lucy Newman, Bob Dixon (May's slot)	19	0.03	0.05	136.7 ?	0.5	0	Warm, sunny	Could see the water plants and weeds. Lilly pad. Almost see the bottom. Question DO reading - problem solving with supplier

01.08.2026	Lucy Newman , Kim de Paolis	19.7	0.45	0.03	81.9	0.5	0.15	warm, sunny, dry, no rain for weeks. breeze.	Heron, duck, blackberries, elderberries. A lot of duckweed coverage