



LIFE R4ever Kent Water Pollution Workshop 10

Title: *Protecting a local river: with LIFE R4ever Kent and the Clean River Kent Campaign*

Eddington Centre Kendal, Thursday, April 23, 7 pm - 9 pm

Partner organisations: Clean River Kent Campaign: a coalition of communities living along the river Kent in Cumbria established in Autumn 2021. For further information: www.cleanriverkentcampaign.co.uk. Natural Kendal is a network of local voluntary groups, organisations and individuals who want to support nature recovery in Kendal [About - Natural Kendal](#)

Event promotion/summary: Isobel Stoddart and Joe Rigby will talk about their work to understand sources of pollution in the River Kent. Isobel Stoddart, Chair of the Clean River Kent Campaign (CRKC), will talk about their work to understand sources of pollution in the River Kent and drive efforts to improve the water quality for people and wildlife. She will take a look at recent and future plans for CRKC's citizen science programme, their campaigning activities and initiatives to encourage local engagement and raise awareness of the issues facing the River Kent, as well as its unique ecology.

Joe Rigby, Catchment Management Advisor, R4ever Kent. Will also be talking about 'Reducing pollution and enhancing habitats in the River Kent Special Area of Conservation,' and sharing the results of a year-long study examining water pollution and its impact on the River Kent Special Area of Conservation.

Tea, coffee and refreshments, courtesy of Natural Kendal, will be served and we would suggest a donation of £3 per person on the evening.

Post event summary: Final Water Pollution Workshop reporting on the results of the yearlong water quality study trialling the new passive phosphate monitoring technique using 'DGT devices' and exploring what measures could be taken, and where, to reduce pollution as a result.

The workshop was held in collaboration with the Clean River Kent Campaign at the Eddington Centre, Kendal. Hosted by Natural Kendal's as part of a series of evening



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talks on local nature recovery. In attendance were 40 residents, a mix of water pollution campaigners, farmers and other small landowners.

Catchment Management Advisor Joe Rigby presented the results of the yearlong study, carried out across the northern reaches of the River Kent SAC. The study trialled Diffuse Gradients in Thin Films (DGT) devices alongside traditional grab sampling, allowing comparison between time-weighted average concentrations and instantaneous measurements. DGT samplers were deployed for three-week periods, providing a more integrated picture of nutrient levels under varying flow and weather conditions.

Results showed a clear spatial pattern in phosphate-P concentrations. Several sites — including Dubbs Beck, Scroggs Bridge, Low Bridge (Kentmere), Low House (Longsleddale) and Sprint Mill — consistently met the $<5 \mu\text{g P/L}$ target required for Freshwater Pearl Mussel conservation. Other locations, such as Bowston Weir, Thursgill Beck, Spital Fields, and Patton Bridge, displayed slightly elevated levels ($5\text{--}15 \mu\text{g P/L}$). More concerning were Gowan upstream of Staveley, Lambrigg Beck, and Flodder Beck, which showed elevated DGT and grab sample concentrations, aligning with Environment Agency modelling that had already identified these tributaries as potentially failing to meet Common Standards Monitoring Guidance (CSMG) thresholds.

The study also revealed important insights into pollution sources. In the River Gowan, phosphate concentrations rose with rainfall, indicating strong influence from diffuse sources such as agricultural runoff or the combined effect of septic tanks. In contrast, the River Kent at Bowston showed elevated concentrations that did not correlate strongly with rainfall, suggesting a mix of diffuse inputs from the Gowan and point-source pollution, such as that from Staveley Waste Water Treatment Works. The River Mint sub-catchment recorded the highest phosphate levels overall, reflecting combined impacts from both diffuse and, particularly on Lambrigg Beck downstream of Grayrigg, point sources of pollution. These findings highlight priority areas for targeted nutrient reduction measures and reinforce the need for catchment-wide collaboration to meet ecological targets.



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The logo features a circular emblem on the left containing a stylized fish, a flower, and a leaf. To the right of the emblem, the word "Life" is written in a cursive script, followed by "R4EVER KENT" in a bold, sans-serif font.

Life R4EVER KENT



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