Protect wildlife

You must not:

- disturb certain species or their habitats, including the bed and banks
- disturb birds and their nests
- disturb the spawning or eggs of salmon, trout or other fish
- allow invasive species such as Japanese knotweed from spreading into the wild or onto neighbours' land

Working together we can improve our river for people, wildlife and for future generations to enjoy.

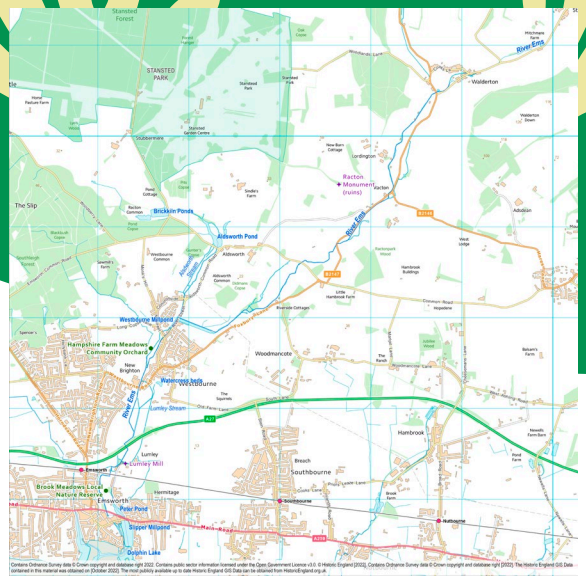
Report an incident

Call the Environment Agency Incident hotline (Telephone: 0800 80 70 60) to report:

- flooding
- blockages which could cause flooding to main rivers
- pollution
- unusual changes in the flow of water
- collapsed or badly damaged banks

Water, The Source of Life...
Needs Our Protection

Banded Damselfly



Would you like to be involved with the River Ems 10 year restoration plan?

We would welcome your comments, concerns and suggestions and if you would like to be included in the River Ems engagement, please can you provide us with your contact details.

Please contact Arun & Rother Rivers Trust at **riverems@arrt.org.uk** or Arun & Rother Rivers Trust – Part of a National network of Rivers Trusts.

www.arrt.org.uk

This leaflet is supported by:

Chichester District Council

Downs & Harbours Clean Water Partnership

Arun & Western Streams Partnership
A healthier future for our catchment

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Cover photo: Water Vole © Peter Trimming

Improving and Protecting the River Ems

arrt
Arun & Rother Rivers Trust

Photo: S Hughes

Arun & Rother Rivers Trust

We are working on a 10 year restoration plan for the River Ems to set long term goals for restoration and protection. We need help from local people to make sure it is as relevant as possible and considers all opinions.

With the plan co-designed with the local community we can develop a strategy for ecological restoration.

We need your local knowledge and input on its special places, issues, and opportunities, so that an achievable plan for delivery is created.

Why is this important?

For its wildlife to thrive, the River Ems needs a strong flow of good, clean water. However, its aquifers forms part of a larger groundwater system that also supply 80% of the drinking water in the Southeast of England. Over recent years, this, and a variety of other pressures including climate change, have caused a drastic drop in water levels (leading to an absence of water for long continuous periods), as well as a drop in water quality. This has a devastating impact on the habitats and species that call the River Ems home.

Why is the River Ems so important?

The River Ems is a vitally important chalk river and wildlife corridor, which is fed by chalk streams and springs. It connects the South Downs National Park to the Chichester Coastal Plain, providing a habitat for many rare species and enables wildlife to move and migrate.

What is a Chalk stream?

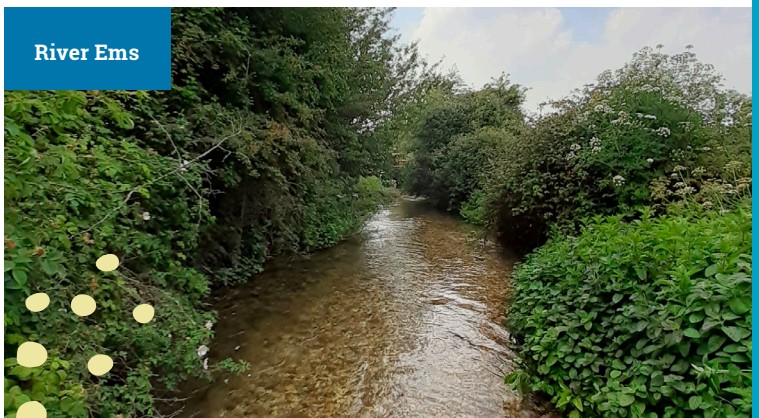
A watercourse which flows across or is influenced by chalk bedrock. Usually fed by underground or seasonal springs and with stretches of the river that can dry in late summer.

Why are Chalk rivers & streams important?

About 85% of the world's chalk streams are in the UK. Chalk geology is rare worldwide. The Sussex chalk rivers and streams are therefore of global importance.

All chalk rivers are fed from groundwater aquifers which means they have clean, clear water at relatively stable water temperatures. These unique conditions, support an unusual diversity of wildlife including important fish populations and many specialist insect species.

Key species include the European Eel (Critically endangered); Water voles (Priority Species) & bat species (including the very rare Barbastelle bat, only 5,000 in the UK).



River Ems

Riparian Landowner

If you own land or property next to a river, stream or ditch you are a 'riparian landowner' and this guide is also for you.

As a riparian owner you must:

- Let water flow freely across your land and not obstruct or divert its course without the permission of the Environment Agency
- Maintain the waterway's banks, bed and vegetation and any approved structures such as culverts
- Protect the quality of the water by not disposing of garden waste or rubbish
- Not build new structures like a culvert, bridge or boardwalk that encroach or alter the flow of water or obstruct passage of fish without permission from the Environment Agency or Local Authority

Prevent water pollution when working in or close to water

When you work in or near watercourses, it is important that run-off from your site does not contain grass clippings, soil or sediment.

If these pollutants enter a stream or river it can have serious effects on the life in it.

1. Insects living in the bed of the watercourse can be killed through lack of light and oxygen and change in habitat.
2. Fish may be killed when sediment blocks their gills.
3. Sediment deposits on the bed of a watercourse can prevent fish spawning.
4. Additional nutrients from grass clippings in the sediment cause excessive weed growth.
5. When applying pesticide to land near to watercourses, establish at least a 6m buffer.