

PLEASE HELP US PROTECT OUR CHALK STREAM



The river MEON is one of only 280 chalk stream rivers known worldwide and is a Compensatory Special Area of Conservation with enormous ecological importance.

Wildlife that lives in the River Meon

The water vole is a protected species under threat. It lives in burrows along riverbanks and needs clean water and stable banks to survive.



Salmon and Brown trout lay their eggs in clean loose gravel. Eggs are destroyed if the gravel is disturbed. Salmon are an endangered species.

The southern damselfly is a nationally scarce insect. It lives in shallow, clean chalk streams and is a sign of a healthy river.



Why the River Meon Matters

Chalk streams are one of the rarest river habitats in the world and 80% of them are in England.

Chalk streams have a steady flow of clear, clean water and gravel beds rich in oxygen.

These special conditions result in highly adapted species and the most bio-diverse and abundant of the English rivers.

Chalk streams take millions of years to form but are fragile and easily damaged. Once damaged, recovery is slow and costly, and wildlife will suffer.



PLEASE KEEP VEHICLES OUT OF THE RIVER

Driving vehicles into the river causes serious harm to this fragile habitat and kills wildlife.

Motorbikes often get stuck or topple over and have to be towed out. This causes fuel to leak into the river.

Damage to the riverbed

- Vehicle tyres crush and compact the gravel riverbed. Fish eggs are crushed, buried and suffocated.
- One vehicle crossing can destroy a whole breeding season.

Mud and Pollution

- Vehicles stir up fine silt.
- The water becomes cloudy.
- This smothers plants, insects, and fish eggs.

Oil and Chemicals

- Vehicles leak oil, fuel, and brake dust.
- Pollution builds up in slow flowing water.
- Even small leaks can be harmful.

Loss of Wildlife

- Insects living in the riverbed are destroyed.
- Fish lose their food source.
- Birds and bats are affected.

Bank Damage

- Bankside plants are crushed.
- Riverbanks are damaged even when vehicles are travelling at slow speeds and eventually collapse.
- Water vole burrows are destroyed.

Please Do Not Drive Vehicles into the River. This is a fragile chalk stream. Damage from vehicles KILLS WILDLIFE. Please help protect this river by choosing another place to drive.