

How can you keep your river healthy and clean?

In a series of articles Norfolk Rivers Trust will provide advice to help maintain the health of our globally rare chalk streams and lowland rivers in Norfolk. In times of drought and hot weather it is especially important because of the wildlife our rivers support. Endangered white clawed crayfish, brown trout, eels, and water voles are just a few of the iconic species at risk in Norfolk and you can do your bit to help protect them.

Soil management and loss: excess soil and silt in rivers has a hugely damaging impact. Silt from road verge and field erosion covers up the gravels that fish and invertebrates require to spawn. Silt and soil carries nutrients (such as fertiliser) and pollutants (such as pesticides, oil and brake dust) into the water where they are released, damaging the fragile balance and encouraging algae blooms resulting in dominant weeds out-competing our aquatic plants. Allowing a wide 'buffer' of long grasses, trees and shrubs along the riverbank will let water filter through but prevent soil from reaching the stream. You can also help prevent these pollution events by blocking un-used field gateways where rainwater can wash out carrying silt and soil with it. Rather than digging grips to drain rainwater directly into the river, instead re-direct silty water into a dead-end ditch or silt trap which will allow the water to filtrate into groundwater, whilst trapping the high nutrient silt which can be reused on the fields.

If you are a landowner with riparian land and would like to talk to us about restoration and rewilding please do get in touch with us at Norfolk Rivers Trust. We offer a wide range of services including surveys, restoration and management advice. Email info@norfolkriverstrust.org