

Eden Catchment

Water Quality Update – Autumn 2023

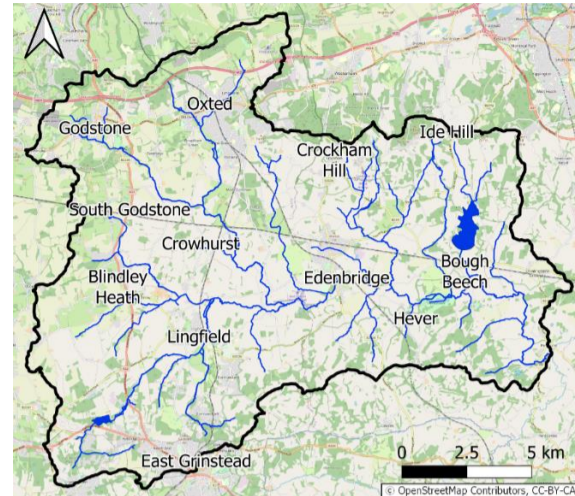


Hello from SES Water

This is the second bi-annual update on water quality in the Eden catchment, designed to keep you informed of the latest water quality data and provide you with updates from SES Water's Catchment Team.

Diffuse pollution from agricultural pesticides and fertilisers in raw water is an ongoing challenge for water companies. Drinking water in England is heavily regulated and needs to meet strict standards to demonstrate it is 'wholesome' for our customers. The SES Water Catchment Team are working in your catchment to help prevent contamination at source rather than relying on 'end of pipe' solutions, such as additional energy intensive treatment processes. Catchment management offers a more sustainable and cost-effective way of tackling water quality issues and can have many wider benefits for the farmers, the environment and local communities too.

Visit our [SES catchment management](#) webpage or email catchment@seswater.co.uk for further information.



The Eden catchment - more information on the catchment can be found [here](#)



SES Water's in-house laboratory team

Water Quality

SES do not abstract from the River Eden between April and September, and as such quality in the river over the past few months has not directly impacted the quality of water in the reservoir, or our ability to produce wholesome drinking water from our Bough Beech treatment works. We do however continue to monitor the water quality in the river and wider catchment over this period; data for some of our priority pesticides and the nutrient phosphate can be found here. Many of these pesticides are applied in autumn, so as expected, we have seen very few detections of these over the summer months.

We are now entering our abstraction period, and the recent rainfall and increasing river flow means pumping will likely be underway soon. The abstraction period coincides with application of autumn-applied herbicides. The increased likelihood of rain on more exposed soils means risk of run-off, and in turn the risk to water quality, is increased. For this reason, SES Water monitor river water quality more closely over the autumn/winter period.

Help us predict what challenges we may expect this autumn/winter season by letting us know what you're farming – fill out this short (2 min) questionnaire. All respondents will be entered into a draw for the chance to win a £50 Amazon voucher.

Upcoming Soil Health Workshop

Healthy, well-functioning soil is not only key for a productive farm but also plays an important role supporting biodiversity and increasing catchment resilience to extreme weather events. For us as a water company, healthy soils also help maintain a sustainable supply of water and benefit water quality.

Join us on 9 November for a free soil health workshop at Henden Manor Estate, led in the field by Agrovista. Advisors from Catchment Sensitive Farming will also be providing insight into how relevant Sustainable Farming Incentive options may work on your farm as we walk through the fields. The workshop will be followed by a light lunch and informal drop-in session.

[Sign up here](#)



SES Water Support/Funding

SES Water can offer support and funding for a variety of farm measures that can help you and also benefit local water quality, including 1-2-1 advice visits with our partners Catchment Sensitive Farming, offering advice on 'water quality friendly farming' and funding available through both SES Water and the Rural Payments Agency. We are also able to help fund specialist advice visits from independent third parties to conduct farm reviews, farm infrastructure audits and offer advice on pesticides, biobeds, and soil/nutrient management plans in priority areas. Please [contact us](#) to book a visit.

We can offer bespoke, case-by-case, funding for measures that can help protect water quality including alternative crop management practices (e.g. cover crops, intercrops, companion crops), or pathway capture (including drainage surveys, sediment traps, wetlands and complex buffers). If you have a great idea about how we might be able to work together to protect water quality, please do [get in touch](#).



Pasture for Life

We are offering free [Pasture for Life](#) (PfL) membership for livestock/mixed farms not already eligible through the FiPL funded Pasture and Profits in Protected Landscapes programme. Pasture-based grazing can offer benefits for the environment, including water quality. There is no obligation for farms to work towards PfL certification, however we can offer support and funding for those looking to achieve this. Please [get in touch](#) to register your interest and find out more.



Advice on Water Protection

Advice on best practice when using pesticides of particular concern to water quality can be found in the Voluntary Initiative's [Water Protection Advice Sheets](#).

Thank you for your interest in helping protect water quality in the Eden catchment. If you have any questions, feedback or ideas on how we might be able to work together to protect water quality, we'd love to hear from you.

