



Spring Newsletter for our Zero Pollution Supporters 2025

Hello and welcome to our newsletter; we hope that you are all well and that you have been keeping up to date with our activities on the Stormwater Shepherds UK website at

<https://www.stormwatershepherds.org.uk/>

🌸 Spring is springing and the weather has been lovely recently. But we have had a wet Winter and Stormwater Shepherds have been busy gathering evidence about pollution from urban surfaces. This is going to be a good year for stormwater management!



New years Day 2025 was a bit miserable for the people of Walton-le-Dale near Preston, whose homes flooded as the level of the River Ribble rose up. But this flooding wasn't caused by the River; this was caused by the stormwater drains in the road backing-up, even after the rain had ended.

Our UK Director of Operations took part in some filming with a trade publication called The ENDS Report. The film is due to be shown on YouTube later this month. If you have the time, head over there and have a look. It will be available from March 27th.



Our Stormwater Shepherds colleagues in Australia recently shared this fact about microplastic particles in the ocean. This is what spurs us on to do our work. If your organisation would like a presentation about plastic pollution, feel free to get in touch 📞



🌸 The Marine Conservation Society recently published the results of their 2024 beach cleans. They collected 750,000 pieces of litter from the coastline and they found a 10% increase in plastic litter across UK and Channel Island beaches. 9 out of 10 recorded pieces of litter were plastic. Visit <https://www.mcsuk.org> for more details.

Not a lot of
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Not a lot of people know that runoff from motorways sometimes drains into canals where the toxic sediment settles out and 'lurks' in the bottom of the canal causing long-term pollution. Every time a boat goes by, the pollution is stirred up, causing harm to the creatures that live in the canal. Our Jo Bradley and her colleagues from Groundwork CLM found this outfall from the M6 into the Leeds/Liverpool canal in January and they hope to get a sample of the discharge later this year. The canal is too wide to reach across though, so we're going to have to go across in a boat!! We'll be sure to get some photos to share with you in the next newsletter.



Happy Easter

When you are choosing Easter gifts this year, remember to avoid plastic products that will be played with once and then thrown away. Choose low-packaging Easter Eggs with card and foil that can be recycled. Or make your own Egg-Hunt experience, hiding painted stones around your home or garden. You can paint the stones with your family and use them every year.

Your role as a Zero Pollution Supporter

🌸 It has been an unusually dry Spring this year, which we have enjoyed. But this can leave wildlife without easy access to water and we have to consider the possibility of water shortages later in the year, if we have a dry summer too. These are some things you can think about. You might only be able to consider one of them, but that's fine 😊

- 🛡️ Think about installing a water butt now, before the Summer comes. If you already have one, think about having another one! If we end up having a hot, dry summer, there is nothing more satisfying than having your own water supply in your garden to keep your flowers looking lovely.
- 🛡️ Put a shallow dish of water out in your garden now, so that the wildlife get used to it, and know that they can rely on it. Then you will be ready to provide water throughout the summer so that your garden is wildlife friendly 🐛 But remember to top it up every day!
- 🛡️ Get your soil in tip-top condition so that it can retain water more easily, and won't need watering so often. Now is the time to dig in some compost or farmyard manure 🐾



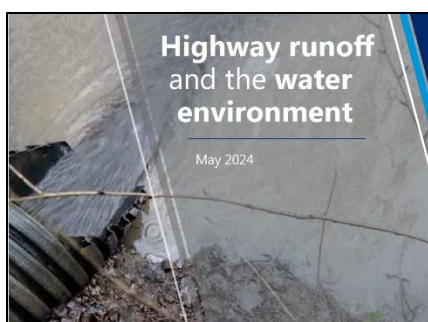
It was National Groundwater Awareness Week in March this year. Do you know if there is groundwater near your home? Do you live near a precious chalk aquifer? You can ask your local water company where your water comes from. It might come from far away; some water from the Lake District goes down to Manchester, and some water from Wales goes across to Liverpool. You can learn a little more about drinking water in the UK from Water UK here:

<https://www.water.org.uk/water-supply/drinking-water#:~:text=The%20UK's%20drinking%20water%20is,places%2C%20directly%20from%20the%20sea.>

In April this year, the new Asset Management Plan period for all our water companies starts. This means that they are starting to invest over £100billion up to 2030. We will all see major infrastructure projects in our areas delivering;

- 🛡️ new sustainable drainage systems,
- 🛡️ improvement to wastewater treatment works,
- 🛡️ reduced spills at storm overflows,
- 🛡️ landscape scale nature recovery,
- 🛡️ improved public access, and,
- 🛡️ in a couple of places, the beginnings of new reservoirs.

All this investment is being delivered to improve the water environment and to secure safe drinking water. Keep an eye on your local area and see what improvements your water company is delivering. If you think that they are 'missing a trick' and there are other projects that they should be considering, speak to them soon, because they are already starting to think about their plans for the years beyond 2030.



If you are particularly interested in the technical work that we do to promote better treatment of highway runoff to protect rivers and oceans from toxic pollution, you'll be pleased to know that we published a report this year, with our friends at CIWEM. The report, 'Highway Runoff and the Water Environment' is free to download from our website here:

<https://www.stormwatershepherds.org.uk/2024/05/08/bold-new-report-on-pollution-from-highway-runoff-to-raise-awareness-of-the-problem-and-possible-solutions/>

We are delighted to have you 'on-board' as a Zero Pollution Ambassador. Let us know if you find out about grants and funds that you think that we may be able to bid into so that we can deliver more projects to improve stormwater management.

And let us know if we can help you too; we can help you to organise a litter-pick, or talk to local groups about plastic pollution and the impacts of stormwater. *Enjoy the summer*