

# Eden Catchment

Water Quality Update – Spring 2025



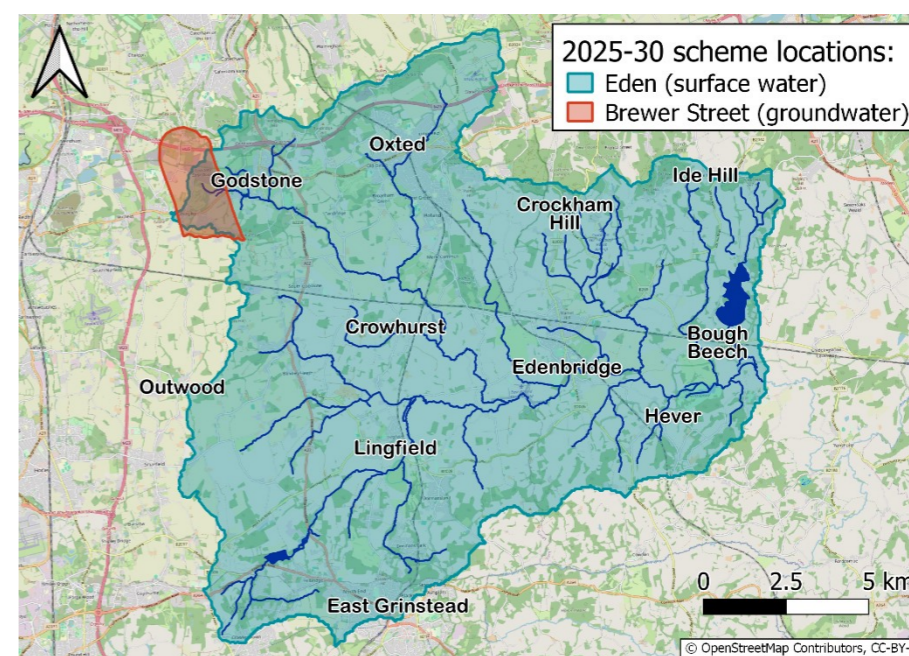
## Working in your catchment to protect water quality at source (2025-30)

We're pleased to announce that SES Water will be launching a new five-year scheme in the Eden catchment, with plans to extend the scheme up to 2035. The scheme, focused on pesticides, and specifically the herbicide flufenacet (e.g. Liberator), aims to protect raw drinking water supplies at source, preventing deterioration and the need for additional treatment at our Bough Beech Water Treatment Works. This catchment-based approach offers a more sustainable and cost-effective way of tackling water quality issues and can have wider benefits for farmers, the environment and local communities too.

As part of this scheme we will be producing these biannual newsletters, designed to provide farmers with an update on the latest water quality data in the Eden Catchment, information on our 'Catchment Fund' for delivery of measures to help protect water quality, alongside other relevant updates from the SES Water Catchment Team and partner organisations.

In addition to the Eden scheme, we will also be working in the Brewer Street groundwater catchment, running a scheme focused on groundwater nitrate. Please be aware that farms falling within this overlapping area will receive a further groundwater-focused newsletter from SES Water.

For more information on SES Water's work in the catchment, please visit our [SES catchment management](#) webpage or contact us at [catchment@seswater.co.uk](mailto:catchment@seswater.co.uk).



Locations of the Eden and Brewer Street 2025-30 catchment schemes.

More information on the Eden catchment can be found [here](#).



Compilation of photos of soil testing being carried out at Vexour Farm in March 2025 (photos courtesy of Maya Wren)

## Soil Testing Funding

Working with the Eden Valley Farm Cluster, SES Water has recently funded soil testing on a number of farms with wheat in their rotation. Funding secured by Bore Place is also being used to test soil on additional farms within the Cluster.

The testing, conducted by soil health specialists [Terraformer](#), measures various parameters including soil organic matter and aims to provide insight into current soil health, helping farmers make informed decisions about land management and establishing a baseline against which changes in the soil can be tracked.

Healthy, well-functioning soil is not only critical for healthy and resilient crops, it also has significant benefits for local water quality and quantity, helping to maintain a sustainable supply of water whilst buffering against contaminants, such as pesticides, entering local rivers.

The Cluster will be holding a follow up workshop to aid with interpretation of the soil testing results and provide practical advice on how to further build soil health and resilience.

SES Water plans to provide funding for subsequent testing in a few years' time so we can understand how positive interventions carried out by the farms in the Cluster may have translated into improvements in soil health.

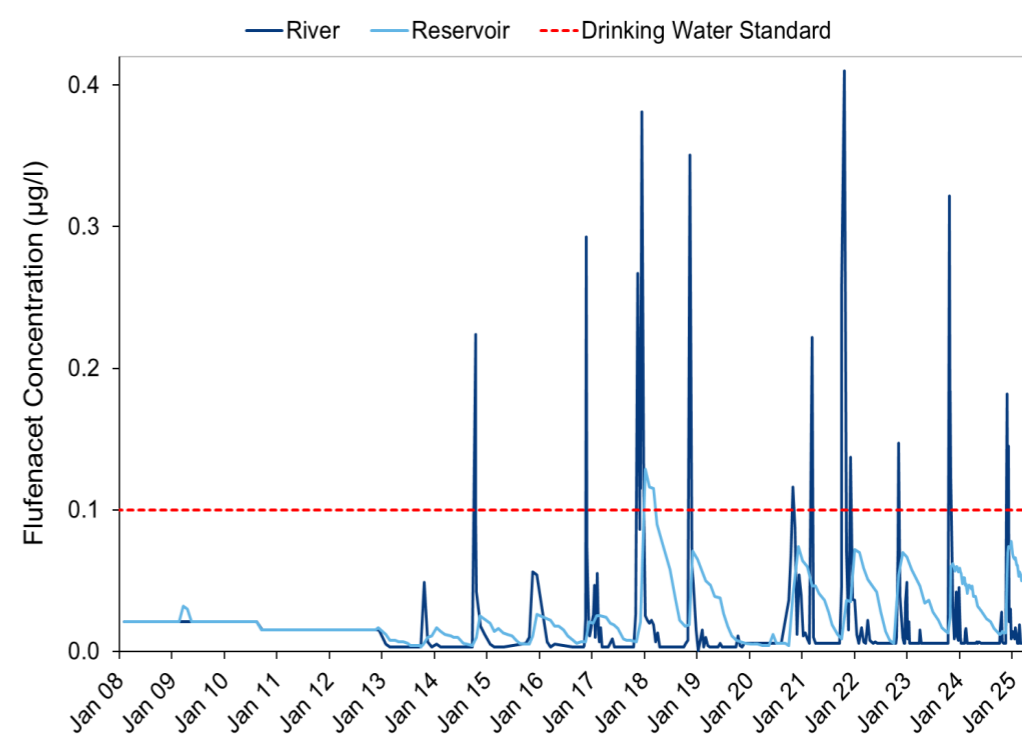
For more details on the Eden Valley Cluster please visit their [webpage](#) or contact their Farm Cluster Officer, Maya Wren at [eden@southeastriverstrust.org](mailto:eden@southeastriverstrust.org).

## Water Quality

The River Eden is used each autumn/winter to fill our Bough Beech reservoir, where the water is then treated at Bough Beech Water Treatment Works before being supplied to over 120,000 local customers. All our treated water must meet strict standards – for pesticides the allowed limit is 0.1 ug/l (this is the equivalent to 1 second in 320 years!).

We're now approaching the end of our abstraction period. Looking back over the past six months, river pesticide concentrations have not presented a significant challenge to treatment, however we have seen high concentrations of propyzamide and flufenacet – fortunately these pesticides are relatively well removed by treatment processes at Bough Beech, however care must be taken to ensure these processes aren't overwhelmed.

The latest water quality monitoring data for propyzamide, flufenacet and other key pesticides can be found [here](#).



Long-term flufenacet trend in the River Eden at Chiddingstone Bridge and in Bough Beech Reservoir. The drinking water standard (0.10 µg/l) is shown for reference

## Support for farmers...



### More Static Tanks to Give Away

We're pleased to announce, after the success of last year, that SES Water has more static water tanks available to gift to landowners. The stackable tanks come with a sight glass and can each hold up to 1800 L of water. They can also be linked in series.

Tanks will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis and will require collection from our Water Treatment Works in Leatherhead.

If your farm could benefit from one or more of these free tanks, please use the link to fill out a [Water tank request form](#).

(photo courtesy of Chris Mighall)



### 2025 Funding Brochure

The Catchment Team at SES Water is busy finalising our Catchment Fund brochure, detailing the financial support we are looking to provide for measures that can help benefit farmers and the environment whilst helping us protect our drinking water at source. We are aware that SFI and Capital grants are currently on hold, and while our grants can't replace these, we hope they may offer some support to farmers.

Measures we are looking to support include training grants, funding for events, support with hedges and pilot trials looking to increase the functionality of existing buffer strips. In addition to this we plan to provide a flexible, variable funding grant, specifically focused on measures which can help mitigate flufenacet pollution.

We hope to share the final brochure, and further details on the grants, with you a little later in 2025.



SES Water work in partnership with Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF). CSF can offer free, impartial, confidential advice to help farmers produce food in a way that protects their local water, air and soil, including guidance on farming schemes and regulations.

You can contact your local CSF advisor at [csf.southeastthames@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:csf.southeastthames@naturalengland.org.uk).

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.



[catchment@seswater.co.uk](mailto:catchment@seswater.co.uk)