

CLEAN RIVERS CAMPAIGN



Sudbury Gainsborough WI, Suffolk West Federation promoted our Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife campaign and The River Stour Trust's bid to secure Designated Bathing Water status for its local waterway by holding a WI tea party in it! After carrying a table and picnic kit to the water's edge, the members had to wait as a herd of cows ambled through the shallows. With support from onlookers and the local press, the WI sang 'We want no more sewage in the Stour' to the tune of *She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain*.



Teddington WI, Middlesex Federation joined swimming group the Teddington Bluetits and hundreds of local residents at a riverside demonstration. They opposed plans by Thames Water to build an abstraction plant that would drain millions of litres of river water a day to use elsewhere, and replace it with treated wastewater from a sewage works. The Save Ham Lands and River protest mobilised campaigners and made the BBC News. The next day, Teddington WI and Sunbury Village WI, also Middlesex Federation, hosted a river-swimming event and gave out safety info. A lifeguard, floats and buoys were on hand to encourage people to take to the water.

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK

September's Week of River Action saw WIs fight to protect their local waterways



Potters Bar Gems WI, Hertfordshire Federation crafted a beautiful Make Waves for Clean Rivers banner, which was carried around the River Colne by its walking group. This proved a great talking point with other walkers and everyone who enjoyed lunch with the group at the local pub.

Cleeve-by-Goring WI, Oxfordshire Federation hosted a stall on its local high street to raise awareness of the pollution in UK rivers - particularly the Thames, which flows through the village. They spoke to residents and tourists, handed out leaflets and encouraged them to swipe a QR code to support the application for a Designated Bathing Water just upriver at Wallingford.



Findon Village WI, West Sussex Federation held its Big Quick Dip and Picnic at Midhurst in the South Downs National Park. President Sara Clarke dressed up as a distressed fish, and info bags with fish-shaped biscuits were given to passers-by. There was a litter-pick along the banks of the River Rother, and wetsuit-clad members cleaned up the waterway. The biggest discovery? A bicycle which was repaired and donated to charity.

• Find more stories from our Week of River Action and download resources at mywi.thewi.org.uk/cleanrivers