

## **Official Statistics: Weekly rainfall and river flow summary: 25 to 31 January 2017**

*Updated:* A corrected version of the weekly rainfall and river flow summary, 25 to 31 January 2017.

A review of the rainfall and river flow data for England covering the 7 day period (Wednesday to Tuesday).

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## **Research and analysis: ACRE advice: increasing photosynthetic efficiency in wheat trial**

This document is the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE's) advice to government in considering a request from Rothamsted Research for a trial of genetically modified (GM) wheat. This research is looking at the impact of the genetic modification in field conditions.

The committee concluded that all appropriate measures have been taken to avoid adverse effects to human health and the environment from the proposed trial.

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## **Press release: Kerry Ingredients UK Limited paying £127,000 over pollution incident**

The Environment Agency has accepted an offer of more than £127,000 for an enforcement undertaking from Kerry Ingredients UK Limited following a pollution incident in the River Cam in Gloucestershire.

The incident, which took place in June 2014, resulted in the deaths of more than 200 fish.

As a result, a financial contribution of £127,975 is being shared between Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (£40,451), Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (£19,766), Severn Rivers Trust (£52,758) and Bristol Zoological Society (£15,000)

The Environment Agency's ability to accept Enforcement Undertakings was extended in 2015 to a far wider range of offences. The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for suitable cases to swiftly restore the environment, improve practices of the offending company and avoid longer criminal court cases. However prosecutions will still be taken, particularly in the most serious cases.

The Kerry case is one of a number revealed today in which charities will receive more than £1.5 million for projects benefitting wildlife and the environment as a result of enforcement action by the Environment Agency.

Peter Kellett, Legal Director for the Environment Agency said:

We take pollution incidents very seriously and the payments of £1.5 million we're announcing today are the result of our firm but fair enforcement action and will benefit people and the environment across the country.

Enforcement Undertakings allow those who commit offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence. When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right with their local communities.

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## [News story: Kestrel close encounter](#)

With their pointed wings and long tails, kestrels are a familiar sight along UK motorways and main roads as they use thermals from the road to hover while they look for prey.

Now one of them has discovered their perfect perch – on a Highways England CCTV camera stand.

[Kestrel video](#)

Our Traffic Officers Leigh Goodchild and Steve Dyas first spotted this cheeky kestrel while monitoring traffic flows in October 2016. Since then they have been treated to frequent sightings – and have grown fond of their new friend.

We have released this video to coincide with the RSPB's [Big School Bird Watch](#), which encourages pupils to get closer to nature by counting birds at set times.

Kestrels are on the RSPB amber list of protected species, with only around 46,000 breeding pairs estimated to be in the UK. They are most recognisable in their characteristic hovering hunting mode but also like to find a high perch where they can stay on the lookout for prey.

Our CCTV camera platform seems to fit the bill. Traffic Officer Leigh said:

On one occasion she returned with half a mouse, which she promptly swallowed tail and all!

She's rather obsessed with her own image but her inquisitiveness has given us some good close-ups.

She's squawked and attacked the lens a few times as well. When that happens we discourage her from hurting herself by tilting the camera skywards.

Her visits certainly brighten up our day and make a change from the traffic.

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## [Research and analysis: Habitats Regulations Assessments – North East North West South East South West Marine Plans](#)

Under the EC Habitats Directive, all marine plans must have a Habitats Regulation Assessment.

The Habitats Regulation Assessment looks at what impact a plan could have on the objectives of a European conservation site. It includes:

- pre-screening review
- screening review
- an appropriate assessment information report