# Norfolk Rivers Trust to apply for licence to reintroduce beavers to River Glaven



The Norfolk Rivers Trust is setting its sights on a significant conservation milestone by planning to apply for a licence from Natural England to release beavers back into the wild along the River Glaven. This initiative builds on the success of the existing beaver colony in Bodham, which has been monitored since its establishment in September 2021. The ongoing project has yielded positive results, with beavers demonstrating their capacity to mitigate nutrient pollution and enhance local biodiversity.

Jonah Tosney, the technical director of the Norfolk Rivers Trust, noted that they have been keen on this ambition for several years, particularly owing to the tangible benefits observed from the Bodham beavers. "The beavers at Bodham have clearly shown what they can do,” he explained, emphasising the marked improvements in water clarity achieved as a result of their natural behaviours, such as dam construction and wetland creation.

The project aims to foster a collaborative approach, as Tosney indicated plans to engage with local landowners to develop a management plan that reflects their interests and concerns. This participatory style is essential, especially given the complexities involved in reintroducing a species that has been absent from British landscapes for over 400 years.

The reintroduction of beavers in England is part of a broader trend towards ecological restoration, receiving support from recent legislative changes. In February, Natural England announced it would begin issuing licences for wild beaver releases where clear ecological benefits can be demonstrated. The first such release is anticipated soon in Dorset's Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve, marking a significant step for wildlife conservation initiatives across the UK.

While the development of these plans is promising, concerns around unlicensed "beaver bombing," where activists release beavers into the wild without proper governance, illustrate the complexities of managing species reintroductions. Although such activities have resulted in the establishment of clandestine colonies in areas like Devon and Kent, Norfolk has thus far been spared from this phenomenon, a fact that conservationists hope to maintain through structured efforts.

Historically, beavers were driven to extinction in the UK due to overhunting for their meat and fur, leaving behind a significant ecological gap. Conservationists argue that their return as a keystone species could facilitate a resurgence in biodiversity. They help create wetlands that not only support diverse wildlife but also mitigate flooding and improve water quality by filtering pollutants from waterways.

Estimates suggest around 500 beavers now inhabit England, with a more substantial population established in Scotland. The successful development of management plans and community engagement in Norfolk could serve as a blueprint for future reintroduction projects, enhancing ecological balance across diverse British landscapes, and offering promising nature-based solutions to pressing environmental challenges.

As the Norfolk Rivers Trust prepares to submit its application, the anticipation builds around how the reintroduction of beavers could significantly contribute to restoring England's ecological heritage and addressing urgent environmental issues.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2. Paragraph 4
3. Paragraph 4
4. Paragraph 4
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraph 5

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25134474.norfolk-rivers-trust-plans-release-beavers-wild/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-02-28/wild-releases-of-beavers-in-england-get-go-ahead-in-milestone-for-nature> - The UK government has approved the wild release of beavers, marking a significant milestone for nature conservation. A new licensing system will allow beavers to be reintroduced into the wild, with the first releases expected soon. This decision follows decades of campaigning by wildlife and conservation groups and aims to restore beavers to English landscapes after centuries of absence. The government has set out a new approach that will allow beavers to live wild in England’s landscapes centuries after they became extinct in the UK. Natural England will grant licences to release beavers within the year, with wild releases expected as early as autumn 2025. The first release of wild beavers is expected to happen at Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve in Dorset with a licence issued to the National Trust. The return of beavers is expected to improve water quality, boost biodiversity, and build resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions. Beavers help reduce flooding in nearby towns, remove pollutants from waterways, and help create clean water. Working alongside partners, the Environment Agency will continue to support the careful management of wild beavers. Applications for wild release licences will first need to submit an 'expression of interest’ to Natural England. The deadline for the first round of applications is 2 May 2025, with further application windows due to open in due course.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/wild-beavers-natures-engineers-to-return-to-english-waterways> - The UK government has announced the return of wild beavers to English waterways after centuries of absence. Beavers are known as 'nature's engineers' due to their ability to create wetlands that reduce flood risks and boost biodiversity. The government has set out a new approach that will allow beavers to live wild in England’s landscapes centuries after they became extinct in the UK. Natural England will grant licences to release beavers within the year, with wild releases expected as early as autumn 2025. The first release of wild beavers is expected to happen at Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve in Dorset with a licence issued to the National Trust. The return of beavers is expected to improve water quality, boost biodiversity, and build resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions. Beavers help reduce flooding in nearby towns, remove pollutants from waterways, and help create clean water. Working alongside partners, the Environment Agency will continue to support the careful management of wild beavers. Applications for wild release licences will first need to submit an 'expression of interest’ to Natural England. The deadline for the first round of applications is 2 May 2025, with further application windows due to open in due course.
4. <https://www.countryfile.com/environment/beaver-releases-government-licence-england> - The UK government has approved the release of wild beavers into English rivers, centuries after they became extinct. Natural England will grant licences to release beavers within the year, with wild releases expected as early as autumn 2025. The first release of wild beavers is expected to happen at Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve in Dorset with a licence issued to the National Trust. The decision follows decades of campaigning by wildlife and conservation groups and aims to restore beavers to English landscapes after centuries of absence. The return of beavers is expected to improve water quality, boost biodiversity, and build resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions. Beavers help reduce flooding in nearby towns, remove pollutants from waterways, and help create clean water. Working alongside partners, the Environment Agency will continue to support the careful management of wild beavers. Applications for wild release licences will first need to submit an 'expression of interest’ to Natural England. The deadline for the first round of applications is 2 May 2025, with further application windows due to open in due course.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/mar/05/i-feel-real-hope-historic-beaver-release-marks-conservation-milestone-in-england> - The National Trust has released four beavers into the wild at Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve in Dorset, marking the first legal release of beavers in England after 400 years of absence. The beavers were released into Little Sea, a 33-hectare lake, and are expected to help restore natural habitats and biodiversity. The release follows a government decision to allow wild releases of beavers, with the first releases expected soon. The return of beavers is expected to improve water quality, boost biodiversity, and build resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions. Beavers help reduce flooding in nearby towns, remove pollutants from waterways, and help create clean water. Working alongside partners, the Environment Agency will continue to support the careful management of wild beavers. Applications for wild release licences will first need to submit an 'expression of interest’ to Natural England. The deadline for the first round of applications is 2 May 2025, with further application windows due to open in due course.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/05/beavers-released-england-rivers-what-you-need-to-know> - Beavers have been legally released into England’s rivers for the first time, marking a significant milestone in conservation efforts. Beavers are known as a 'keystone species' because they help create diverse ecosystems that support a wide range of other creatures. The return of beavers is expected to improve water quality, boost biodiversity, and build resilience to climate change through nature-based solutions. Beavers help reduce flooding in nearby towns, remove pollutants from waterways, and help create clean water. Working alongside partners, the Environment Agency will continue to support the careful management of wild beavers. Applications for wild release licences will first need to submit an 'expression of interest’ to Natural England. The deadline for the first round of applications is 2 May 2025, with further application windows due to open in due course.