# Volunteers remove 6,000 tyres from River Ogmore in largest community clean-up in Wales



In a remarkable display of community spirit and environmental responsibility, a volunteer-led initiative in Bridgend, South Wales, has culminated in the removal of a staggering 6,000 tyres from the River Ogmore over a recent five-day clean-up. This effort, touted as the largest community river clean in Wales to date, has underscored the pressing issue of pollution in local waterways and the ongoing challenge of responsible waste disposal.

Two years prior to this extensive operation, a similar clean-up saw approximately 2,000 tyres, along with shopping trolleys and other debris, extracted from the river. Andrew Stride, affiliated with the Ogmore Angling Association, voiced his frustration at the persistence of littering, questioning why individuals fail to take their rubbish to designated disposal sites. He highlighted the significant ecological risks posed by such pollution, warning that contaminants could jeopardise local insect populations, subsequently disrupting the entire aquatic food chain, particularly impacting species such as salmon and sewin.

Initiated by local resident Alun, this 2023 undertaking benefitted from the concerted efforts of over 150 volunteers, supported by Natural Resources Wales, which provided essential machinery to facilitate the removal of waste. The clean-up not only aimed to improve water quality but also sought to raise awareness about the environmental impact of accumulated litter, which has long threatened the river’s ecosystems. Community involvement has proven crucial in these initiatives, reflecting a growing recognition of the importance of local stewardship in combatting pollution.

Despite these substantial efforts, the challenge remains considerable. The sheer volume of tyres and waste that continue to plague the river serves as a stark reminder of the pervasive issue of fly-tipping—a problem that expert voices, including Owen Derbyshire, CEO of Keep Wales Tidy, acknowledge requires a comprehensive national strategy to address effectively. He described the magnitude of the clean-up as "unbelievable," emphasising the essential role that community-led initiatives play in driving change.

The Ogmore River Clean project, which plans to establish itself as a Community Interest Company, aims not only to continue its clean-up efforts but also to expand its influence on environmental initiatives across the UK. Such aspirations are vital, as previous clean-ups have demonstrated that without sustained commitment and appropriate policies, pollution may continue to undermine the health of the river's habitat.

Notably, this clean-up operation illustrates a broader trend towards community-led environmental activism, showcasing how local actions can lead to significant impacts. As public engagement in environmental stewardship grows, there is hope that these community efforts will inspire a paradigm shift in attitudes towards waste management and ecological conservation.

In conclusion, the ongoing clean-up of the River Ogmore is not only a commendable local initiative but also a vital part of a broader conversation about environmental preservation and community responsibility. The challenge ahead is to maintain momentum, encourage responsible waste disposal, and ensure that such pristine natural habitats are protected for future generations.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2
2. Paragraphs 3, 4
3. Paragraph 5
4. Paragraphs 6, 7
5. Paragraph 8
6. Paragraph 9
7. Paragraph 10

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/videos/c0eq8jnl8xro> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/wales/2023-08-30/river-ogmore-volunteers-work-hard-to-remove-thousands-of-tyres-out-of-water> - In August 2023, a major clean-up operation in the River Ogmore, South Wales, led by local resident Alun, resulted in the removal of 2,000 tyres and 250 shopping trolleys. Approximately 150 volunteers participated, with support from Natural Resources Wales providing diggers to assist in the removal of waste. The initiative aimed to improve water quality and address the environmental impact of accumulated debris, highlighting the importance of responsible waste disposal to prevent pollution and protect wildlife habitats.
3. <https://www.matthewgoodfoundation.org/project/ogmore-river-clean/> - The Ogmore River Clean project, initiated by local resident Alun, focuses on addressing the pollution in the River Ogmore, South Wales. In 2023, the first large-scale clean-up removed 2,000 tyres, 34 trolleys, and a tonne of plastic and metal scrap. Despite these efforts, thousands of tyres remain, posing ongoing environmental challenges. The project plans further clean-ups and aims to establish Ogmore River Clean as a Community Interest Company to expand its impact on environmental initiatives across the UK.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-66655131> - In August 2023, a significant clean-up operation in the River Ogmore, Bridgend, Wales, led by local dog walker Alun, resulted in the removal of thousands of tyres, up to 100 shopping trolleys, and a fridge. Approximately 150 volunteers and two diggers participated in the effort. Experts highlighted the environmental risks of fly-tipping, noting that such pollution could harm aquatic life and biodiversity. The initiative underscored the need for responsible waste disposal to protect river ecosystems.
5. <https://www.herald.wales/south-wales/bridgend/2000-tyres-and-hundreds-of-shopping-trolleys-dragged-out-of-welsh-river/> - A large-scale community clean-up in August 2023 targeted the River Ogmore near Ogmore-By-Sea, South Wales, addressing significant pollution from tyres and other debris. Organised by local resident Alun, the event saw hundreds of volunteers and businesses participate, removing nearly 2,000 tyres, along with trolleys, bikes, and metal waste. The initiative aimed to enhance the natural environment, making the river more accessible for activities like walking, swimming, and kayaking, and to combat the longstanding issue of fly-tipping in the area.
6. <https://news.sky.com/story/2-000-tyres-recovered-from-river-ogmore-in-south-wales-during-clean-up-operation-12950893> - In August 2023, a clean-up operation in the River Ogmore, South Wales, led by local resident Alun, resulted in the recovery of 2,000 tyres, along with trolleys, fridges, and armchairs. Approximately 150 volunteers participated in the event. Owen Derbyshire, CEO of Keep Wales Tidy, described the achievement as 'unbelievable' and emphasized the need for a national approach to large-scale litter and waste issues. The operation highlighted the environmental impact of such pollution and the importance of community involvement in addressing it.
7. <https://nation.cymru/news/2000-tyres-and-hundreds-of-shopping-trolleys-dragged-out-of-a-welsh-river/> - In August 2023, a community clean-up in the River Ogmore, South Wales, led by local resident Alun, resulted in the removal of nearly 2,000 tyres, along with trolleys, bikes, and metal waste. The event aimed to improve the river's natural environment and make it more accessible for activities like walking, swimming, and kayaking. Local volunteers and businesses participated, with support from organizations such as Cardiff Rivers Group, Natural Resources Wales, Trolley Wise, and Keep Wales Tidy.