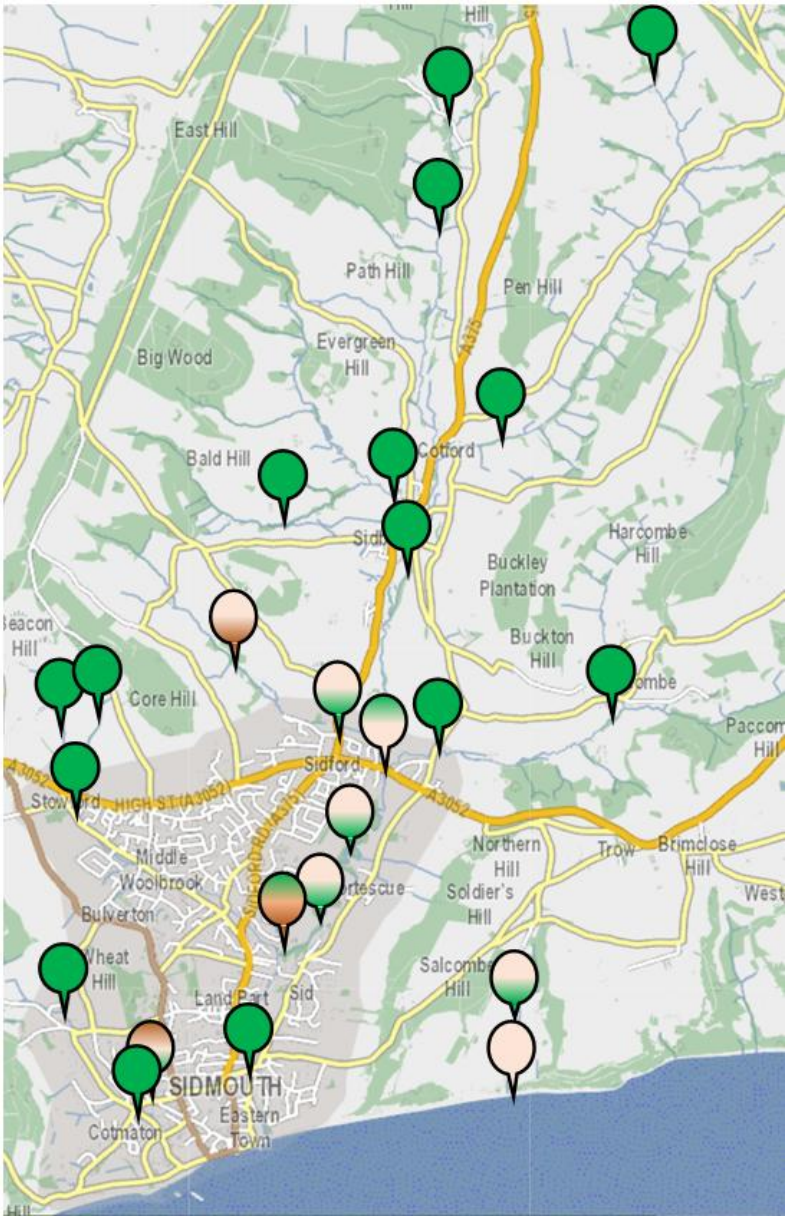
River Sid Catchment Group
Earthwatch Europe Great UK WaterBlitz Results, Sept 2024 – April 2026

Introduction
The UK WaterBlitz is a national biannual event when volunteers test the nutrient levels of their local waterbodies. Both phosphates and nitrates are assessed. These nutrients are essential for all plants and animals but when excessive amounts reach our water courses they can damage aquatic life. The rapid growth of algae reduces light levels and the amount of oxygen available to animals, from trout to shrimp and mayflies. In Spring 2026, the combination of relatively high temperatures and low rainfall has created the conditions for abundant algal growth which can be seen across the catchment.

New this year - pH tests which measure the concentration of hydrogen ions in water. It is measured logarithmically, meaning each whole number change represents a tenfold difference. All our sites had a pH of 7 - 8. Pure water is 7 and readings between 7 and 8 mean that our water is slightly alkaline which is good because most aquatic organisms, from fish to river flies thrive in a slightly alkaline environment.



Results for the Sid valley and Streams to the East in Spring 2026
We monitored in 22 locations across the Sid Valley and 2 on Salcombe Regis Stream. Thanks to all who volunteered; these data assist in understanding our valley water quality and where we might make improvements.

The map shows pins where water was sampled. The upper colour reflects the Nitrate levels and the lower colour shows phosphate levels:
Green – low nutrient concentration
Pale brown – moderate levels
Dark brown - high levels

Thus the pin on the right shows low concentration of nitrates and moderate concentrations of phosphate.

The Upper Sid catchment generally had low levels of both phosphates and nitrates.

Middling levels of one or both nutrients were found in Burscombe Brook and Snod Brook, Woolbrook, Bickwell Brook and Salcombe Regis Stream.

High levels were found for phopshate in Burscombe Brook and Nitrates in Knowle Stream.

National results can be found on the Great UK WaterBlitz website. The more comprehensive the data the more likely it is that the government will take additional action to protect our rivers.

The table below shows the detailed results from the Sid Valley monitoring.

Site	Sept 2024		April 2025		Sept 2025		April 2026	
	Nitrate	Phos	Nitrate	Phos	Nitrate	Phos	Nitrate	Phos
River Sid – Plyford			0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05	0.5-1	0.02-0.05	0.2-0.5	0.05-0.1
River Sid – Wooton Ford	0.5-1	0.02-0.05	0.5-1	<0.02			0.5-1	<0.02
Lower Knapp, feeding into Roncombe					0.5-1	0.02-0.05	0.5-1	<0.02
Pen Hill Goyle feeding into **Roncombe** Stream	1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05						
Roncombe Stream, Sand	0.5-1	0.05-0.1					0.5-1	<0.02
Roncombe Stream, Buckley Rd Bridge	0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1	0.02-0.05	0.2-0.5	<0.02		
Lincombe stream, alongside village hall	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05	0.2-0.5	<0.02	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05
Filcombe stream, Sidbury			0.5-1	0.02-0.05			0.2-0.5	<0.02
River Sid - Millenium field, Sidbury	0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1	0.05-0.1			0.5-1	0.02-0.05
Burscombe Brook above Brook Farm			1.0-2.0	0.05-0.1			1.0-2.0	0.5-1
Burscombe Brook below Brook Farm					1.0-2.0	0.5-1		
Burscombe Brook, under A375 Sidford	1.0-2.0	0.2-0.5	2.0-5.0	0.5-1	0.5-1	0.1-0.2	1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05
Snod – footbridge at Harcombe Farm							0.2-0.5	0.05-0.1
Snod at Harcombe Lane			1.0-2.0	0.05-0.1			0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05
And Brook (feeds into lower **Snod**)	0.5-1	0.05-0.1						
Snod below Packhorse Bridge	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05	1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05	0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1	0.1-0.2
Woolbrook, Core Hill East bifurcation	<0.2	<0.02	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05			0.5-1	0.02-0.05
Woolbrook, Core Hill West bifurcation	1-2	0.2-0.5	0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1.0	0.1-0.2	0.2-0.5	0.05-0.1
Woolbrook at Stowford	1-2	0.2-0.5	1.0-2.0	0.2-0.5	2.0-5.0	0.2-0.5	0.5-1.0	0.02-0.05
Woolbrook at confluence with River Sid	2-5	0.2-0.5	1.0-2.0	0.1-0.2	1.0-2.0	0.1-0.2	0.2-0.5	0.2-0.5
River Sid, Fortescue					1.0-2.0	0.05-0.1		
River Sid at Gilchrist Field			0.5-1	0.05-0.1			1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05
River Sid at Lymebourne	1-2	0.05-0.1					1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05
River Sid at Sidmouth Ford	1.2	0.1-0.2			0.2-0.5	0.2-0.5	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05
River Sid at School Weir			0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1	0.05-0.1		
Muttersmoor stream (drains into (**Bickwell Brook**)	0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05					0.5-1.0	<0.02
Knowle Stream at Cotmaton Rd (feeds into Bickwell Brook & Bedford steps)	0.5-1	0.1-0.2	2.0-5.0	0.05-0.1	5.0-10.0	0.1-0.2	2.0-5.0	0.02-0.05
Broadway Culvert (drains into **Bickwell Brook**)			0.5-1	0.05-0.1				
Bickwell Brook in Glen Goyle	0.2-0.5	0.1-0.2					0.2-0.5	0.02-0.05
Bickwell Brook at beach			0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5-1	0.1-0.2		
Upper **Salcombe Regis** Stream	1.0-2.0	<0.02	0.5 – 1.0	0.1-0.2	1.0-2.0	0.2-0.5	1.0-2.0	0.05-0.1
Salcombe Regis Mouth	0.5-1	0.05-0.1	0.5 – 1.0	0.1-0.2			1.0-2.0	0.1-0.2
Weston Combe at Westernmouth			1.0-2.0	0.02-0.05				

Low nutrient concentrations

Moderate nutrient concentrations

High nutrient concentrations - evidence of nutrient pollution sources

Many thanks to all the volunteers who contributed.