

Weekly Houghton Water Quality Status

Summary: Even very low levels of Ecoli still potentially pose a health risk to people in the water.

HOUGHTON LOCK	E.Coli Petrifilm (Weekly)	06/08/2026 Houghton Lock Coliforms E.coli Enterococci N/A 700 N/A Good	E.coli ★★★ Good bathing water quality ★★★★★		Rainfall 0mm last 7 days prior to 06/08/26 River Level - 0.143 on 06/08/26 at time of test at Brampton Sluice Cow Lane no discharges last 14 days from 06/08/26 RAF Wyton no discharge last 14 days from 06/08/26
HOUGHTON MILL	E.Coli Petrifilm (Weekly)	06/08/2026 Houghton Mill Coliforms E.coli Enterococci N/A 100 N/A Excellent	E.coli ★★★★★ Excellent bathing water quality ★★★★★		Rainfall 0mm last 7 days prior to 06/08/26 River Level - 0.143 on 06/08/26 at time of test at Brampton Sluice Cow Lane no discharges last 14 days from 06/08/26 RAF Wyton no discharge last 14 days from 06/08/26

HOUGHTON LOCK	E.Coli Lab Test (Monthly)	22/06/2026 Houghton Lock Coliforms E.coli Enterococci <100 <100 <100 Excellent Excellent	E.coli ★★★★★ Excellent bathing water quality ★★★★★	Enterococci ★★★★★ Excellent bathing water quality ★★★★★	No rainfall prior to sampling on 22/06/26 back to 19/06/26 River Level 0.133mm on 22/06/26 at Brampton Sluice Cow Lane no discharges last 14 days from 08/05/26 RAF Wyton no discharge last 14 days from 08/05/26
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KEY:	EC Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC is reproduced below	EC Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC	NB: While the above official key is confusing, E.Coli readings under 900 cfu/100ml is considered sufficient bathing water quality https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/help-understanding-data.html
Excellent : E. coli ≤ 500 cfu/100 ml; Enterococci ≤ 200 cfu/100 ml			
Good : E. coli ≤ 1000 cfu/100 ml; Enterococci ≤ 400 cfu/100 ml			
Sufficient : E. coli ≤ 1000 cfu/100 ml; Enterococci ≤ 330 cfu/100 ml			

Hanna Checkers - see Definitions tab (Weekly)	Houghton Lock Ammonia	06/08/2026	0.03 mg/L (ppm) ammonia-nitrogen (NH ₃ -N)	Rainfall 0mm last 7 days prior to 06/08/26 River Level - 0.143 on 06/08/26 at time of test at Brampton Sluice Cow Lane no discharges last 14 days from 06/08/26 RAF Wyton no discharge last 14 days from 06/08/26
	Houghton Lock Phosphates	06/08/2026	0.64 mg/L phosphate (PO ₄)	
	Houghton Mill Ammonia	06/08/2026	0.03 mg/L (ppm) ammonia-nitrogen (NH ₃ -N)	
	Houghton Mill Phosphates	06/08/2026	0.61 mg/L phosphate (PO ₄)	
	Cow Lane Ammonia	06/08/2026	0.94 mg/L (ppm) ammonia-nitrogen (NH ₃ -N)	
	Cow Lane Phosphates	06/08/2026	1.37 mg/L phosphate (PO ₄)	

Phosphates & Nitrate (Monthly) EarthWatch/FreshWater Watch tests	Key:	Rainfall 0mm last 7 days prior to 25/07/26 River Level - 0.152 on 25/07/26 at time of test at Brampton Sluice Cow Lane no discharges last 14 days from 25/07/26 RAF Wyton no discharge last 14 days from 25/07/26
July	Nitrates - 2 mg/L Max safe limit	
25/07/2026	Phosphates - 0.1 mg/L Max safe limit	
Nitrates		
1.5	0.02	Huntingdon
2	0.02	Hartford (outflow)
2	0.2	Houghton Lock
2	0.2	Hemingford Abbots
2	0.02	The Thicket
1.5	0.02	St Ives

DISCLAIMER: The above EC Bathing Water Directive is reproduced as a guide only. These results obtained and presented by The Great Ouse Valley Trust and their trustees & volunteers are not intended as a recommendation to swim or not to swim. These descisions are for the individual to make based on multiple factors of current conditions and to carry out their own risk assessment and due dilligence. The purpose of this report is only to provide a guide to the level of pathogens in the river and is not intended to be taken as advice on whether or not to enter the water.

NB: While the above official key is confusing, E.Coli readings under 900 cfu/100ml is considered sufficient bathing water quality
<https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/help-understanding-data.html>

The Bathing Water Regulations classify officially designated bathing sites each year based upon the result of tests taken in the previous year.