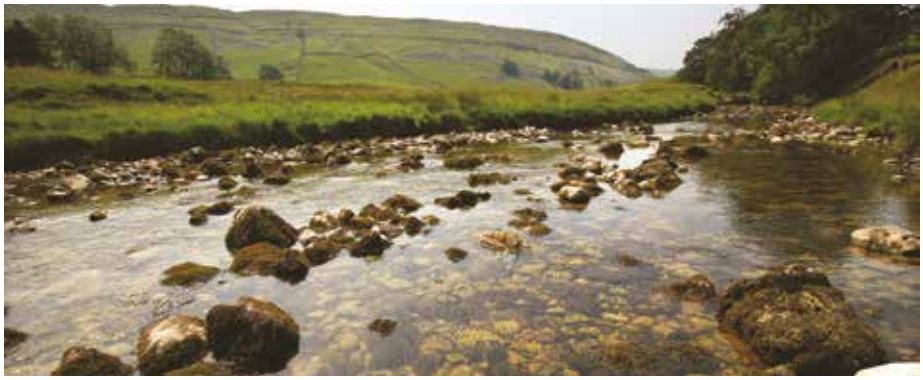
Yorkshire Water to improve 196km of rivers by reducing phosphorus levels

Yorkshire Water is investing £70 million to improve the final effluent from 16 of its waste water treatment works to meet new environmental targets on phosphorus removal.



As part of the Water Framework Directive, the amount of phosphorus has become a measure of the health of rivers and watercourses.

As a result of Yorkshire Water's investment, over 196 kilometres of watercourses will be improved and will ensure the company exceeds targets to reduce phosphorus and in turn improve the local environment.

Mark Allsop, communications advisor at Yorkshire Water, said: "This work will build on our vision to take responsibility for the water environment for good. We're committed to doing everything we can to improve our local environment and by completing this work we'll ensure the water we return to the environment is of the highest quality and deliver significant environmental benefits, and in particular to aquatic life."

Phosphorus is a normal part of domestic sewage, entering the sewer system via domestic showers and washing machines due to products such as shampoo and liquid detergent containing phosphorus. It can also wash off from agricultural fields after the use of fertilisers and be dissolved from soil which can be difficult to control.

If a river becomes overly enriched it can lead to excessive plant and algae growth that can lead to oxygen depletion from the water, resulting in fish suffocating.

All work will be completed by the end of 2019.