

# River Wandle Pollution update

Outfall and incident updates for SERT PAVs

June 2015

**Hello everyone. The PAV scheme has now been running successfully on the River Wandle since February 2013, since when many improvements to water quality in the river have been made, thanks to your reports and observations. The scheme has recently been extended to tributaries, including the River Graveney and Norbury Brook. I thought I would share the latest news about pollution on the Wandle and its tributaries**

## Morden Hall Park outfall

There is a history of regular FOG pollutions from an outfall in Morden Hall Park (MHP). Below is a photo showing bands of fats spread across the river after an incident in August 2013. The site was put on the PAV outfall monitoring list, and put on Thames Water's surface water outfall programme (SWOP). SWOP investigates outfalls that discharge chronic pollution. MHP suffered from this, as well as acute pollution incidents.



With the information from your reports, we were able to ask Thames Water to prioritise this outfall, which is in a National Trust park. After a year of

investigations, including sewer cleaning, misconnections work and pollution prevention visits, we were able to sign this outfall off the SWOP list as being vastly improved, in May 2015. See the next photo for the new-look MHP...clear water right next to the outfall, with no signs of fungus or fats.



If you see any further issues here, please let us know via the SPOC, or if you think an incident is occurring then call it through to the Environment Agency hotline.

## Weir Road oil pollution

Back in March and April this year, there were several reports of oil in the Wandle downstream of Plough Lane. These were traced back to the Weir Road South outfall by Plough Lane, and turned out to be a leak from the power network. We knew this as our laboratory was able to identify the type of oil collected in the sample.

Power cables are lubricated with oil, which is what leaked into the ground and filtered into the outfall. UK Power Networks have since carried out major excavations to find the source and to remediate the spill.

## Norbury Brook silt pollution

We received a report from a member of the public regarding cloudy flows in the River Graveney at Streatham Vale on Saturday 2 May. As it was out of office hours, our Duty Officer (that weekend, it was me!) attended. The flow was traced upstream to an outfall in Norbury, where tonnes of sandy silt had discharged. The photo below shows the flow from the outfall.



The weather had been dry for several weeks and the flow from the outfall was very lively. Thames Water engineers were able to trace the flow in the surface water network quickly, thanks to the substantial flow, and discovered the source within a few hours. This was a burst water main in Beulah Hill that had been discharging for four days. Thames Water clamped the main to stop the flow. Clean up arrangements were being made when the rains came a few days later, washing the silt downstream.

## Bridges Lane outfall

There have been a number of sewage related incidents at this outfall since the PAV scheme started. Most have been due to blockages in the sewer network causing foul sewage to discharge into the surface water. Thames Water has been investigating the other issues here through SWOP, though work is slow. Thanks to Janet's regular reports, I can pass information about times and dates when pollution is seen, and keep the momentum up to complete works there.

## Richmond Green outfall

This spot has a long history of pollutions, as it has a number of industrial estates upstream. Happily, no pollution has been reported recently. In April 2013, we installed a preventative pollution measure here, in the form of a boom which reaches across the river on the top of the flow. This will hold back any oil pollutions. However the boom has come adrift, and needs replacing. There is an opportunity for a couple of volunteers to help install another boom across the river here, please let Polly know if you are willing to come and help. Suggested date is Thursday 16 July



**Thanks everyone for your time and efforts in tackling pollution in your local rivers, carry on the good work!**

**From your local Environment Officer**

**Kate**

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