

River Great Ouse Pollution Incident

3 August 2018

Community Briefing

This update provides information about the recovery work needed following the pollution incident which affected the River Great Ouse between Brackley and Thornton from the 29 June 2018.

Current situation

Whilst recovery from this pollution incident remains a priority for us, this update is limited as we continue to undertake our investigation. Recovery from an incident of this nature is a long process which takes months and years to achieve. As a result, future updates will now be issued on a monthly basis.

To understand what we mean by 'recovery', you may be interested to read about a similar exercise taking place in Lincolnshire following a pollution incident on the River Witham in March. Find out more here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-kick-starts-river-witham-recovery>

Across East Anglia our skilled Fisheries staff have been responding to an unprecedented number of fish kill incidents caused by the current weather patterns. At this time of year we frequently receive reports of fish in distress due to natural causes - hot, sunny weather can lead to low flows in rivers and still water fisheries start to warm up, thunderstorms can compound risks by churning up poor quality water in rivers and lakes causing dissolved oxygen levels to plummet. In some circumstances it's possible to take action to improve water quality immediately through aeration or peroxide dosing to increase dissolved oxygen levels - actions which are not effective when pollutants are causing the issue.

What happens next

The Recovery phase for this incident is still live with staff dedicated to all aspects of the recovery. This work includes:

- investigating the cause and appropriate enforcement
- completing the environmental damage assessment and monitoring work
- identifying actions to recover the ecology of the river
- working with affected partners throughout the recovery process
- communicating our progress to the affected communities via briefings and the media

We have received a number of offers of support from individuals and organisations and we will make arrangements to bring everyone together for a meeting in autumn 2018.

Stay informed

Considering the current situation we will move to monthly briefings which means our next update will be issued on 31 August through this Community Briefing.

Please let us know if you are able to support recovery efforts, or if you would like us to keep your email address on this distribution list (for future updates on our recovery work) by emailing FBG.C&B@environment-agency.gov.uk

Please note, if you ask us to keep you informed we will retain your email address only for the duration of this work.

You can keep up to date with Fisheries activity by following us on Twitter @OusefishEA

Next update due 31 August 2018

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88