

## Email to Adam Afriyie MP 23/3/14:

Dear Mr. Afriyie,

Please see below email sent to Eton Town Council today. We have also requested updates from RBWM.

We are working extremely hard to represent residents and resolve this situation. However, we are not receiving documented support from elected representatives.

Could I ask you to confirm any actions taken on our behalf please?

With thanks,

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Dear Mr. Thomas,

Would be grateful for your assistance please.

As you will be aware from Mr. Highy, Mr Lawless and Mr. Lovell, Eton Wick residents are working to raise awareness and seek resolution to the TW sewage discharge into Roundmoor and Boveney Ditch.

Residents were not aware of the problem until waters receded. Early on the 25/2 my attention was drawn to a swan in distress. He was covered in grey slime and unable to clean his feathers. When I ventured into the garden I was appalled to find highly odorous, slimy effluent covering banks and gardens. Fish were dead floating in the water; a fox was lying dead in the reeds, wildfowl had either died or left our beautiful stream. Sadly, the village as a whole was affected. Due to flood levels Roundmoor Ditch backed up into Colenorton Brooke also polluting the watercourses on this side of the village. We are surrounded by smelly, degrading effluent.

This discovery resulted in us spending many days trying to gain information from Thames Water, the Environment Agency and RBWM. Rather than again describe this tortuous time I have attached the leaflet issued to residents living next to the stream, homes close by and meeting points within the village to spread the word. Whilst a number of residents had started to question authorities, the leaflets gave focus for complaint and we started to see some action.

A number of residents are now acting together to raise awareness, question the agencies involved and work for short, mid and long term solutions.

The problems since EA's issue of the open ended licence on 19/1 are now well known. Items have appeared in the press over the last two weeks and today Mark Cannon was interviewed on BBC Radio Berks; the matter is also featured on the BBC website.

However, there are questions to be answered and we would be grateful to receive an update on actions being taken by Eton Town Council. During a conversation with my neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Lovell on Sunday. Mr. Lovell advised it was a Borough matter not ETC. When we both raised the issue of representation by our local town councillors, Mr. Lovell replied he understood ETC had issued correspondence but could not confirm recipients, contents or response.

Some Eton Wick residents have received a letter from TW which trivialises the issue plus they have received a leaflet containing the RBWM response. However, we have not received comment or confirmation of actions from ETC, Cllr. Lawless or Mr. Afriyie MP. It appears it is only the residents fighting this issue. I would be grateful if you could confirm actions taken as we will be providing another update leaflet this weekend.

This has been a sad and upsetting matter; fundamentally due to lack of communication and respect for residents. As soon as the discharge occurred each body should have worked with the correct local authorities and residents/landowners to raise awareness. Due to this appalling failure residents and their pets became ill and wildlife suffered without rescue. The matter has united the village; it would be remiss to underestimate the strength of feeling.

The following are a representation of the questions residents would like answered?

Short term:

Why were residents and landowners not informed and warning notices displayed at time of discharge?  
How did EA manage to advise Public Health England and SBDC but not RBWM?  
Why did the EA wait until 6/2 to issue public health warnings?  
Why were local animal rescues not advised?  
Why did TW fail to tell the truth to residents who questioned engineers following installation of hydrogen peroxide pumps and aeration equipment at the cattle grid?  
Why, despite complaints and visits from TW on 25/2 during which we requested urgent action, did TW wait until 3/3 to issue 'trivialising' correspondence?

When will the discharge cease? (Floodwaters have now subsided but the discharge continues particularly at night).  
What will be the published programme of works to clean up the stream and adjacent land/properties?  
When will the works commence?  
Will TW make recompense for property damage and losses due to personal illness and to cover vet bills due to failure in notification?  
Will TW ensure all residents are made aware? (EA have confirmed each resident will have to contact TW personally)  
What will be the published plan of action to re-stock the stream and protect its bio-diversity?

Will RBWM be responding to residents requests to review their council tax banding as they are living next to an open sewer with a high chance this will be a regular occurrence?  
Will TW make recompense to residents for any affect on their house value. Vendors are legally obliged to make known any neighbour disputes of matters affecting their property at time of sale?

Mid term:

What will all relevant bodies learn from this matter and will they document and set in place a comprehensive emergency procedure should an application for discharge be made in future?  
How can we ensure our local elected representatives support residents and respond/communicate effectively with residents during such incidents?

Long term:

What rights do residents have and what action can they take to prohibit the discharge?  
What criteria need to be met before EA allow TW to discharge storm tanks?  
What are the alternative options to avoid discharge?  
What investment is TW making to ensure sewer system can cope with additional planned homes for Slough and climate change?  
What can be done to strictly monitor water quality?  
Can the natural water element, removed during construction of Jubilee River, be re-instated with cost carried by TW?

Interestingly, we met with Stuart Keable (EA Fisheries Officer) on Tuesday this week. Stuart was extremely concerned by his findings and helpful in his advice; he will also be raising the issue within EA generally. Stuart also mentioned TW and EA have been called to the Dorney Parish Council AGM next week to face questions and provide solutions. He was surprised that residents would not be represented there; he was unaware we are represented by RBWM and ETC.  
Could you confirm whether ETC also intend to call EA/TW to order and will it be possible for resident representatives to attend please.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 01753 866007 or by email at anytime if you would like to discuss the issues, visit the affected areas or require further information.

Your assistance is much appreciated and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

## **Emails to Adam Afriyie MP 25/2/14:**

Dear Mr. Afriyie,

I have written to you on many occasions and this time the topic is much, much closer to home. Please see my email to the Windsor Express this morning.

I live in Cornwall Close, Eton Wick. Although the water course was originally called Boveney Ditch, over the year it has developed into a wide stream and, thanks to the efforts of all residents it had clear water, abundant plantlife and fantastic wildfowl and birdlife.

Today it is a sticking, polluted health hazard thanks to Slough sewerage treatment works.

Despite my, and my neighbours calls to the EA, we have not received replies. This morning I received a voice message from RBWM advising that Environmental Health could not help us and any complaints should be forward to the EA. I have reminded them we are RBWM residents and tax payers. The issue is within their boundaries and I expect a proper response.

Thames Water are the only agency to have responded. I have received visits from four engineers today. They confirmed this has been happening for over six weeks, the EA are aware and the clear up operation, once the sewage ceases pumping, will be extensive.

I queried why villagers had not been advised of the problem, risks to their animals, human health risks, why local wildlife rescues were not informed such that they could respond and what were the proposals for resolving the situation. It will take years for the stream and wildlife to recover. Wendy from the Swan Lifeline at Eton has also given them TW and EA the benefit of her opinion.

I am working to make as many of my neighbours aware as possible. TW confirmed they usually display hazard signs to ensure animals do not enter the stream but "didn't want to cause panic". Swan Lifeline are collecting as many swans as possible today for safety and treatment.

Please can you help us to understand why this has been allowed to happen, why we were not notified and how and when the EA/TW intend to take action to stem sewerage and carry out treatment.

Every government department bounces queries from one to the next without answering.

I have attached photo's of the stream last year and will email today's photo's under separate cover to reduce email size.

We would all be most grateful for your help.

Thanks and kind regards,

I write with a further update regarding the pollution.

Sadly, Swan Lifeline are unable to rescue the swans as the agencies involved cannot confirm what measures are needed in protection. They have told them to assess how concentrated the sewage is!

I am speaking to Anda Tsilika at the EA who has been very helpful. She explained EA only deal with pollution but interestingly confirmed RBWM Environmental Health and Public Health England were advised of issues on 6/2/14 and instructed to liaise with TW and residents as required. When I mentioned the wildfowl rescue she confirmed that the relevant bodies would need to assess. Again, being pushed between departments and in the meantime further wildlife succumbs and residents remain in the dark.

Anda was surprised residents were not appraised of situation and risks to health. This is extremely worrying.

She also confirmed many residents were making complaints. Surely it would be better to deal with this issue in an organised manner to save time and agency resources.

Please could you help to ensure residents are fully appraised and rescue and treatment actions appreciated and progressed.

Many thanks, again.