

Press release: Anglian Water pays £50,000 after water pollution incident

Anglian Water has agreed to pay £50,000 to an environmental charity after a manhole overflowed with black sludge and grey liquid into a watercourse in Bedfordshire due to a blocked sewer.

An enforcement undertaking (EU) has been agreed with the water company, which has donated £50,000 to the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

The Environment Agency accepted the offer by the water company to put right any damage caused by the pollution and to donate to an environmental charity.

The money is to benefit the local environment of Nene Valley and Ouse Valley Living Landscape areas. Anglian Water also paid back the Environment Agency's costs of £3,451.

Chris Tate, Environment Agency Team Leader, said:

Enforcement undertakings allow those who commit offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence.

When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right voluntarily working with their local communities.

Due to the pollution, which raised ammonia levels in the watercourse at Highfield Farm near Ravensden, the incident was classified as a category 2 by the Environment Agency.

The blockage in the sewer was in the branch from Yarlswood Immigration Centre and included single-use shampoo sachets which the immigration centre provided for its residents. There had been six blockages on the same stretch of sewer since 2011 when the sewer was transferred to AWS. It was not mapped onto the company's mapping system until after this incident in June 2015.

Practices for checking the sewer and at the immigration centre have since changed.

Press release: Military grade underwater cameras working to end illegal fishing for eels in the Fens

Fisheries enforcement staff at the Environment Agency have been working with new underwater sonar technology to assess fish populations, especially where it's hard to use classic methods like netting and electric fishing. The technology is also being put to excellent use elsewhere and giving us eyes underwater as well as above.

Our fisheries enforcement work helps to protect the environment and ensure fisheries income is generated through rod licence sales. All anglers require an Environment Agency rod licence to fish in England and Wales. The Environment Agency also lead on the enforcement of permits for migratory species like eels, smelt and lamprey. Regular auditing of these fisheries is essential to ensure protection of these iconic and in the case of eel – a critically endangered species; but also to ensure that the activity is regulated and sustainable.

Illegal eel fishing is a priority for the Environment Agency who are the lead organisation responsible for the conservation of this now endangered species. The eel stock is in decline, recruitment is at an all-time low, and exploitation of the stock is currently unsustainable. We regulate the fishing industry, which is carried out by only a handful of licensed fishermen. We also protect eel habitat, improve passage allowing ore access for eels further upstream and regulate other activities that might impact on each life stage of the species. While the West of England has issues with elver fishing – the capture of tiny juvenile eels returning from the America's for a global market, in the East the fens provide excellent habitat for mature eels, vital in supporting this European species. Adult "silver" eels will return to the Sargasso Sea as their final life stage to spawn and much of our enforcement work protects this phase.

Our new sonar equipment has allowed us to see, with amazing clarity, where we've never been able to before – under the water.

This makes checking for nets, especially illegal equipment, much easier and makes us more efficient and in some cases 100% effective. A recent audit of a river near Kings Lynn resulted in a record illegal eel net seizure; 16 nets in total capable of significantly impacting an emigrating eel population – hundreds of eels were released. The nets were removed and we worked with Norfolk police to investigate the case.

Using boat mounted sonar equipment we can travel up to 10km per day, checking every inch of channel for illegal and submerged equipment. This is our greatest weapon in halting the illegal exploitation of eels and gives us a chance to completely rid waters of illegal instruments. We are using this technology to regulate other areas of illegal fishing including poaching,

netting and trapping. You can see from the images how easy it is for us to spot illegal equipment, here both ends of an eel “fyke” net can be clearly seen stretching across the river channel. We use boats and specially trained enforcement staff to check traps and remove any illegal ones we find.

Anyone fishing for eels should be permitted, be fishing within the conditions of the licence, and nets must include visible and valid tags, as well as being equipped with otter guards too.

Any suspected illegal fishing activity should be reported to the Environment Agency’s Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Anyone wishing to fish for migratory species including eels should visit [Permission to trap crayfish, eels, elvers, salmon and sea trout](#).

All anglers need a valid Environment Agency rod licence which can be bought using a credit or debit card by calling the Environment Agency’s telesales line on 0344 800 5386. Alternatively, they can be obtained from any Post Office or visit:

[Buy a rod fishing licence](#)

Policy paper: Unlocking the River Severn: Powick and Knightsford

This document provides information about work being carried out on Environment Agency owned weirs (Powick Weir and Knightsford Bridge Weir) as part of the Unlocking the River Severn partnership project.

Notice: PE19 5UH, Anti Waste Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: Anti Waste Limited
- Installation name: Buckden Effluent Treatment Plant
- Permit number: EPR/GP3431LF/V005

Notice: River Humber improvement works 2018

The Environment Agency considers that the improvement works are not likely to have significant effects on the environment.