

# **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council**

**Full Council 09/09/2021**

## **Foudry Brook**

**Agenda item 21/067 7: To receive a report and RESOLVE to pursue the matter with Thames Water.**

### **Background**

In May 2021 Parishioner Mike Edmondson raised with SMPC (via Danusia Morsley and Graham Bridgman) whether SMPC received reports on sewage discharges into Foudry Brook. Graham contacted Thames Water requesting information. The reply confirms that discharges take place and records are kept as Event Duration Monitor Data (EDM) which gives the timing of discharges.

Mike Edmondson commented on this reply. He included the statement that between January and March 2021 the discharge averaged 15 hours per day and requested this be brought to the attention of SMPC.

I have examined the data provided by Thames Water and produced the accompanying report. This includes the query to and reply from Thames Water and Mike Edmondson's comments on the reply (see 21-067 7.1 Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

The essential points are:

Thames Water have a permit to release storm discharges of partially treated and untreated sewage into Foudry Brook.

At Mortimer STW, the overflows pass through a CopaSac chamber (a mesh system) before being released, but we don't know how effective this screening is.

The EDM records show that in winter spill periods are often long and there might be a break of a few minutes or a few hours before discharge continues. This means there are effectively long periods of continuous discharge, eg:

7th Nov 2019 to 5th Jan 2020 – 59 days

13th Jan 2020 to 21 March 2020 – 67 days

3rd October 2020 to 25th November 2020 – 52 days

16th January 2021 to 25th February 2021- 39 days

Taking these together in 2019/20 discharge occurred on 126 days between 7th November 2019 and 21st March 2020. In 2020/21 there were a total of 117 days between 3rd October 2020 and 25th February 2021.

EDM data for all sewage works are now available online for 2020. The Thames Water records list details for 466 sewage treatment plants. When ranked by annual hours of discharge, Mortimer is the 5th highest (with Burghfield 4th highest). Reading is ranked 182. When ranked by counted spills (using 12-24 hr method) Mortimer is ranked 9th and Burghfield 10th. Aldermaston is ranked 12th, though the volume of discharges is smaller.

It is apparent that Mortimer STW cannot cope with the winter rainfalls and presumably the same is true of Burghfield. Does this represent under investment in this part of West Berkshire?

We only have information on timing of discharges with nothing on volumes or possible contamination.

The resolution proposes that we contact Thames Water with our analysis and ask for feedback. As Mike Edmondson said: "It would seem that the parish community reaction to all this should be to have a sensible and co-operative discussion about the situation with TW, to establish either whether there really is a health or environmental problem, and if so, what can we do about it."

Mike Dennett  
3rd September 2021