

# Water Matters

As many readers will know, two Buriton residents are volunteer 'River Guardians' for the Western Sussex Rivers Trust (WSRT). Like others elsewhere, they are volunteers who regularly test the water quality in our local streams and rivers: building up a picture of the Rother-Arun river catchment area.

Several weeks ago, WSRT tests in the stream along The Links (both close to the Southern Water works and further downstream) showed unusually high levels of phosphates. At the same time, villagers walking in the area noticed an unpleasant smell. Our River Guardians reported their concern to the Environment Agency, who reacted quickly and asked Southern Water to look urgently into the problem.

Southern Water say they identified the cause of the pollution as a blockage on the network that caused a manhole cover on The Links to overflow. They told the Environment Agency that the blockage had been cleared and measures taken to clean up the area. The Environment Agency investigation is ongoing.

Separately, after the weeks of drought earlier this summer, we are concerned by the very low water levels that led to the stream flowing out of the pond drying up.

There should be more news coming soon about plans to improve the village pond. BEA and the Parish Council are working with EHDC (who own the pond) and some funding has been secured.

Everything has to be planned carefully and done at the right time of year. It is hoped that some of the silt that has built up on the bottom of the pond can be removed in the autumn, and that the ornamental goldfish that have appeared can be removed to a more suitable home. There is due to be an open meeting about plans for the pond in the coming months.

## **Things we can all do to improve the water in our parish:**

Please do call the Environment Agency if you see or smell a suspected sewage spill: 0800 80 70 60. Problems can also be reported online: <https://www.gov.uk/report-water-pollution>

Please don't put fat, oil, wet-wipes or other items down loos and drains. These can all contribute to blockages and sewage spills. It's easy to remember: "only paper, pee and poo down the loo".

Please don't feed bread to the ducks. Alternatives like seeds and peas are better for them. Remember too that food left lying around the pond encourages rats.

One more thing, for dog owners: please make sure that any flea or tick treatment is wildlife friendly. If in doubt, keep your pet out of the water.