

Report of the Environment Agency to the meeting of Environment and Waste Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 26 September 2017

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Subject:

Environment Agency Annual Report

Summary statement:

This report is to update the Committee on the work and Environmental Outcomes achieved by the Environment Agency within the Bradford District throughout 2016-2017.

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Portfolio:

Yorkshire Flood Risk Management

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

N/A

1. SUMMARY

- The Environment Agency protects and improves the environment.
- Acting to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on people and wildlife is at the heart of everything we do.
- We reduce the risks to people, properties and businesses from flooding and coastal erosion. We are committed to supporting more than 1,500 flood alleviation schemes throughout the country, which will better protect more than 300,000 homes by 2021.
- We protect and improve the quality of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment. Our work helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation.
- We look after land quality, promote sustainable land management and help protect and enhance wildlife habitats. And we work closely with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations.
- We can't do this alone. We work with government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and communities to make our environment a better place for people and wildlife.
- **This annual report is to update the committee on the Environmental Outcomes that the Environment Agency has achieved within the Bradford District throughout 2016-2017.**

2. BACKGROUND

➤ Flood Risk Management

In July last year we set up the Bradford Flood Programme Board with our partners Bradford Council and Yorkshire Water. The board secured £850,000 Local Levy funding for the Bradford Flood Programme, to investigate options for reducing flooding problems, and develop community resilience and stewardship projects.

The board drives our catchment and evidence based approach to tackling flood risk across Bradford. It covers multiple activities supported by Bradford Investment Group, Community Resilience and Engagement Group and partners Network Rail, Aire Rivers Trust, and volunteers.

Detailed studies known as Initial Assessments (IA) have been produced for priority locations along the River Aire. Completed IAs, funded by Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA), can be found on Bradford Council's website:

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/emergencies/flooding/flooding-information-and-support/>

IAs are supporting the development of an integrated programme of work, which includes: modelling assessments of upstream storage options, surface water modelling, in-water debris clearance at the IA locations and enabled the partnership to send out Flood Resilience and Community Engagement information packs.

The role of the Flood Programme Board is to ensure we achieve value for money to protect those at highest flood risk. One theme of the IA outputs are the benefits of managing flows through upstream storage areas. Time and hard work will be needed to make this happen in the River Aire catchment. It is part of a long-term investment programme across the district. Once we have updates to the River Aire model (autumn 2017), we will complete further upstream storage scenarios and work on options appraisals to enable preferred options to be identified and taken forward should we secure funding.

Hundreds of homes and businesses along the Rivers Aire, Wharfe and Worth have taken the important step of signing up to our free flood warning service. To register, and for more information, including current river levels, call Floodline 0345 988 1188 or visit www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk.

Having a concise plan is the best way to protect people and their properties from the risk of flooding. Advice that can be given to residents is that you do not have to live in a flood risk area to be affected by flooding, and that the geography of Bradford is such that higher ground can also be affected by non-river flooding, surface water and/or groundwater flooding.

We will continue to work with Bradford Council on town and parish council emergency plans, the plans are helping to enhance resilience in the face of any emergency, including flooding. Plans give structure to community responses and supports the help communities can offer in an incident. Being 'local' means valuable information can be sourced quickly. We are developing enhanced communication between emergency services and local communities by using two way radios so 'real time' information is readily available to responders so decisions will better reflect the current situation.



Flood Drop-in sessions.

➤ **Industry & Waste Regulation and Tackling Illegal Waste Sites.**

We are responsible for regulating the most polluting industries in England and Wales, under the national Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) regime. EPR covers emissions into air and water, and on land, as well as other environmental considerations.

Throughout this last year we have remained focussed on regulating the 129 Waste Sector

Environmental Permits and 17 Installations Permits within the district and tackling those illegal waste sites (IWSs) that pose the highest environmental and community risk.

➤ **Water Quality**

We continue to work on the core principles of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), which are to prevent deterioration of our rivers, by protecting what we've already got in our water environment. It means we are looking after the most important pieces of water that is; drinking water, protected areas, bathing waters and habitat sites. We do this when we take regulatory decisions or when we design works in flood risk areas.

The River basin management plans produced under the WFD are very important documents that are strategic standing advice that we or any of our partners can look at and say- that's how we want to manage the future of the water environment.

The WFD cycle enables us to move rivers to 'good status' by looking at the places where benefits relative to costs are great, but also look at the opportunities to work with others. Partnership working with Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Friends of Bradford Beck to share evidence and understand how a catchment works has helped us and will help us understand the environment but also access different delivery mechanisms which will improve the water environment.

➤ **Incident Management**

We are a Category 1 Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, which places incident planning, response and recovery obligations on us in relation to the carrying out of our functions under existing legislation such as the Water Resources Act 1991, Environment Act 1995 and Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

We respond to a wide variety of incidents affecting people and the environment. We have area offices across England as well as a national office. Unlike most other Category 1 Responders, we are a national organisation with local delivery. We define a major incident as 'an incident or event that is, or is likely to be, significantly disruptive to normal operations requiring the implementation of special arrangements'. To ensure effective working between all response partners, our ways of working are compatible with the framework, principles and language of the wider UK Government emergency response arrangements.

Our core activities of regulating industry, protecting water, land and biodiversity and managing flood and coastal risk represent our prime contribution to preventing and mitigating the impacts of incidents. Depending on the nature of the major incident we will provide general or regulatory advice, environmental data, public warnings and information, and an operational response

From April 2016 to April 2017 the Environment Management teams dealt with nearly 600 pollution incidents around the Bradford District, of those the Waste and Water industry came out as the highest recorded source sector. The photographs below detail the range of incidents we received and matters investigated. Our actions can range from warning letters to prosecution. Incidents can be reported on the 24 hour incident hotline on: 0800 80 70 60.

Illegal Waste Activity South West Bradford



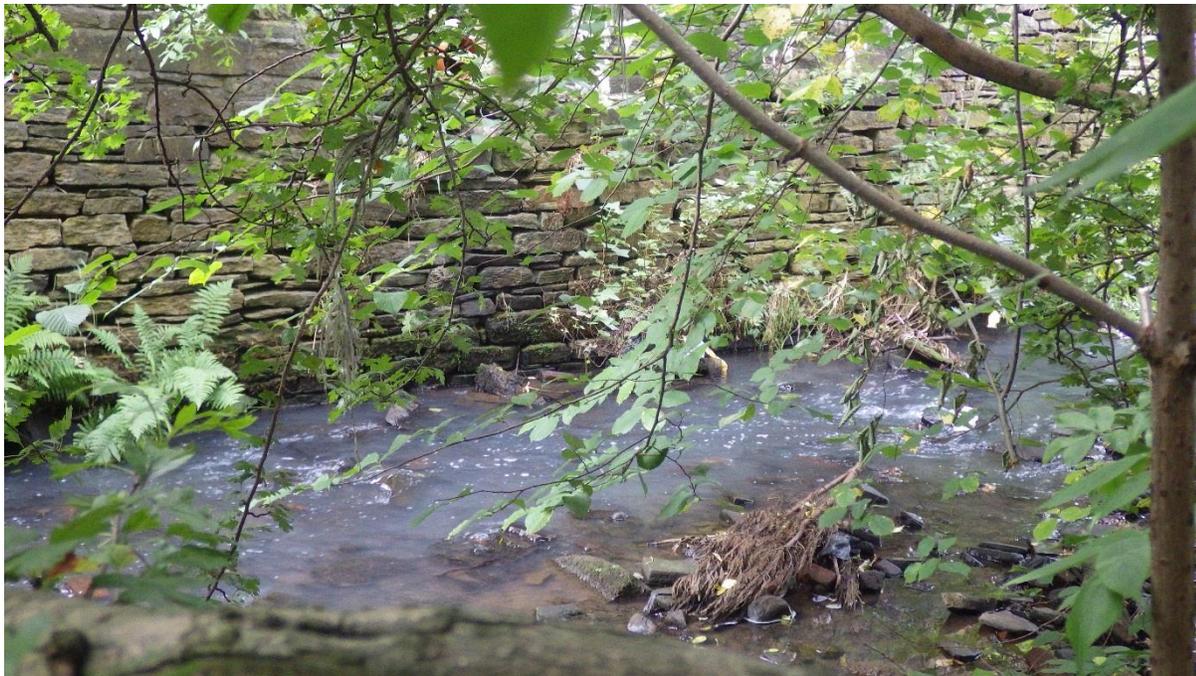
Illegal Waste Activity South East Bradford



Waste Deposit land above Keighley



Bradford beck, over 50 incidents reported on Bradford Beck and its tributaries





M606 Paint spill





3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

➤ N/A.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

➤ None.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

N/A.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

➤ N/A

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

N/A.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- N/A.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

- N/A.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- N/A.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

- N/A.

7.6 TRADE UNION

- N/A.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

- N/A

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

- N/A.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

- None.

9. OPTIONS

- Our ambition is to continue our strong and authentic relationship with City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council members and colleagues across all of our business areas. Sharing data, information and resources will enable us all to protect and improve the environment for people and wildlife.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended -

The committee welcomes the reports and its content and continues to work in partnership with the Environment Agency.

11. APPENDICES

- None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

➤ None.