



Rescuing Pymmes Park Lake



A blocked drain spilled raw sewage into Pymmes Park Lake last November, dropping dissolved oxygen levels to zero. Since then another 3 pollution incidents have occurred.

Pymmes Park Lake in Edmonton has suffered from severe pollution problems for many years. It seemed that it would never improve. People who use the Park are disgusted by the state of the Lake, which regularly produces a foul smell. The Friends of Pymmes Park complained but to no avail.

In the wake of these events, the Love the Lea Campaign stepped up its two year call for more to be done. The Pymmes Park Friends Group, and Theresa Lefley in particular have worked hard too.

When it rains, rainwater flows down roofs, along streets and into gutters and storm drains which will eventually reach the Lake. Sadly many homes have their dishwashers, washing machines and showers connected to the drainpipe; so this dirty water also flows into the Lake. The waste water from the thousands of homes around the Park should go into the sewer pipe.

Thames Water has been checking which homes are sending their wastewater to the Lake, Enfield Council has cleared the drains within the park and has assigned an Enforcement Officer just to deal with the homes that refuse to sort out their [misconnected pipes](#). The Environment Agency has also prioritised the problem.

All of this is great news and shows the system can work well. However more could be done; Enfield Council could use its website and newspaper '*Our Enfield*' to tell people about misconnections. Without further awareness, all the hard work that has been done so far will be wasted and the problem will return.

River Lea struck by pollution from Industrial Estates



Significant levels of pollution have been spotted entering the Lea from industrial estates in North London.

“You could smell the oil and fuel in the air...”

Oil entered the Pymmes Brook from Eley Industrial Estate by the North Circular in Edmonton on the 15th June. It travelled all the way to the Lea at Tottenham Hale and then as far down as Lea Bridge Road in Hackney, before being flushed down the

eastern channel of the Lea past Hackney Marsh. I could smell the oil and fuel in the air the whole length and see the contamination on the surface. It is unclear where this pollution came from in Eley Industrial Estate as it was only noticed when it entered the Lea.

Foam spreading from the pipe...



On the 27th June, I witnessed another pollution incident in the same area. Water was pouring out of a pipe that is only meant to flow during periods of heavy rainfall. Foam spread from the pipe and into the channel that goes into the Pymmes Brook. Again, it has not been possible to locate the source of the pollution.

Orange liquid...

That same day I was at a site next to an outfall from Montague Industrial Estate, again in Edmonton. The liquid that came from it, into a channel that leads to the Pymmes Brook, was orange.

It is clear that pollution entering drains and ditches around these Industrial Estates is unacceptable and will likely contain a complex mix of toxins. The Environment Agency is investigating the problem.



Salmons Brook River Park ?



The Salmons Brook flows under the A10, close to Bury Lodge Gardens. Sadly every time it rains oils and heavy metals, deposited on the road, are washed into the river.

The river, when it runs through this area, is hidden away and ignored, which partly explains why it so 'sick'.

As part of our [Salmons Brook – Healthy River Challenge](#) project we are planning to create a chain of wetlands, next to the A10, to intercept the water from the road and clean it before it flows into the river. These Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are shallow basins planted with vegetation which act like natural features.

To save this valuable green space and stop the polluted run-off entering the Salmons Brook a River Park could be created which could see the Salmons Brook at the centre of a fantastic place for local people. ***Give your views ...***

Poisons from road and carparks...



Along the Lea Valley, too many roads dump poisons into rivers when it rains. Where possible, systems should be created to intercept the storm water and clean it. The same goes for car park many of these send their run-off into a nearby river or watercourse. That is why we want to see the roads and car parks of the new Olympic Park send their road run-off through SuDS, before discharging it into the Lea and the Bow Back Rivers that flow through the site. There is the space to create these natural drainage systems in the Olympic Park that can filter the road run-off and it will, hopefully, encourage surrounding supermarkets and businesses to install SuDS too.

Project Reedbed

As part of Love the Lea we have just unveiled our plan to create reedbeds along the River Lea. While we need to stop the pollution entering the river, we also need to boost the natural systems that would make the river stronger. The reedbeds would remove pollution from the water, give a home to wildlife, and look amazing. If you live nearby to the Lea and would like to help create a reedbed please contact ben.fenton@thames21.org.uk

Greening the Lea: Green Wall Watch



Green wall module in May



Green walls in June

Our green wall modules certainly are flourishing in all this nice weather we have been having lately. The modules are installed on the East bank of the River Lea, near to Cody Dock. The aquatic sedges that are growing not only *green the Lea*, they act as a filter for pollutants in the River and also provide habitat for riparian species.

What you can do

If you see pollution call 0800 80 70 60 and tell the Environment Agency where, what and when. Ask to be called back.

If you see pollution and can take a photo email it to theo.thomas@thames21.org.uk

[Pledge to Love the Lea](#) – we need more people to show they care about their river.

Talk to your local councillor and ask them to work towards making the authority a [river friendly council](#)