

River Great Ouse Pollution Incident

8 February 2019

Community Briefing

Current situation and next steps

Recovery and restoration

We are working with partners; Upper Ouse Catchment Partnership, local angling clubs, Buckingham Town Council, and other landowners to help restore the river and hopefully improve on what was there before the incident, the Upper Ouse Recovery Plan will look at:

- Restocking roach, dace and chub
- Removing barriers to help fish migrate naturally which could speed up the recovery
- Increasing flow speeds to improve fish spawning and invertebrate communities
- Improving marginal features to create habitat for fish and other wildlife.

As previously communicated, recovery from an incident of this type will take many years, but steps have been taken to start the process. On Tuesday, 5 February, 8,000 chub were released into the Great Ouse around Buckingham, from the Environment Agency Fish Farm at Calverton. The fish released measured between 14 and 20cm (1oz - 4oz).

These fish will help kick start the fishery and will provide information to help support further recovery work. Fish scale samples have been taken so that we can learn about the fishery in the future when we re-catch these fish in routine fish surveys. This information will help us understand:

- Growth rates: which shows us how well they are doing, what competition for food is like and the stability of the population
- What fish are eating: which will even help us understand the recovery of the invertebrate community
- Natural recovery of the fishery: we will be able to distinguish between stocked fish and native stocks
- The distribution and success of stocked fish.

Read more in the attached Upper Ouse Recovery Plan - see photos of our fish restocking on Facebook [here](#) and on Twitter [@OuseFishEA](#).

Partnership working

On Tuesday, 29 January we hosted a meeting for potential River Warden volunteers. 11 people attended, including representatives from Aylesbury Vale District and Buckingham County councils. At this initial meeting, interested members of the public heard about how other River Warden schemes work in other areas, how they can become involved and lead on this scheme, as well as the potential to access funding for a Project Officer to get the scheme up and running.

Read local press coverage of our River Warden event [here on the Buckingham and Winslow Advertiser](#).

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Stay informed

We hope to provide an update on recovery plan actions and River Warden Scheme in the next Community Briefing.

To add your contact details to this distribution list please email FBC.C&B@environment-agency.gov.uk

You can keep up to date with fisheries activity by following us on Facebook and Twitter [@OuseFishEA](https://www.facebook.com/OuseFishEA).

Next update due by 3 May 2019