

NEWS: Join FORCES with the Friends of the River Crane and stop pollution now

Improvement work which prevents waste water from polluting the River Crane caused by faulty (misconnected) domestic pipework in nearby homes is underway.

The Thames Water programme of improvements has so far identified 50 households with misconnections within the drainage area of Crane Park. Homeowners will be notified by the water company that they have plumbing faults. A list of Thames Water approved plumbers will be provided to homeowners and it is their responsibility to arrange for the problem to be repaired.

Thames Water's misconnections initiative was launched following requests by the Friends of River Crane Environment (FORCE) who have been working in partnership with Richmond Council's award-winning Parks Team. The friends group became aware of the problem after closely monitoring the river. They discovered that some or all of the waste water from nearby homes - from washing machines, dishwashers, and even toilets - is feeding directly into the river.

Richmond Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Pamela Fleming, said:

"Most homeowners are shocked to find that their waste water is polluting the local river and park – and readily agree to fix the problem. Those few who don't are reported to the local Environmental Health Office and can ultimately face prosecution."

Rob Gray, Chair of FORCE, added:

"We welcome this initiative by Thames Water and the very positive response by most local residents to their surveys and findings. We hope that their ongoing work – along with a growing public awareness of the problem and its impact on the river – will gradually result in improvements to the chronic pollution in the Crane."

Tim Stuckey, from Thames Water's Environment team, said: "No one wants toilets emptying directly into their local river so we're pleased to be playing our part in

stopping that happening. Hopefully with our support property owners will understand the importance of having their pipework correctly connected and do their bit too.

“We’ve got a massive job still to do to trace more of these misconnections across our patch – so it’s really important that anyone having extensions built or carrying out plumbing work employs a reputable plumber and knows exactly where their wastewater is heading.”

For more information on misconnections and how to fix the problem visit

www.connectright.org.uk

For media enquiries contact Mark Coleman on 020 8487 5158 or email

mark.coleman@richmond.gov.uk

