



Action for the River Kennet

28 April 2014

Pollution from Road Run-off enters River Kennet

The dramatic bus fire on Marlborough High Street on Monday morning caused problems not only on the High Street, but also in the River Kennet.

All the drains from the High Street run directly to the River Kennet with no cleaning process in between. The diesel from the damaged bus flowed straight to the river, causing a rainbow film across the water as far as Mildenhall.

Riverside resident Val Compton said 'The fumes from the diesel were overwhelming, and the whole river was covered with a film of oil - even four hours later fuel was still coming out from the drains and into the river'.

Action for the River Kennet is discussing with the Environment Agency whether there is a role for local volunteers to deploy oil-absorbent booms around drain outfalls to contain spills from the High Street in future. Although the Fire Brigade cleaned up as much diesel as they could at the scene of the accident, an alarming quantity made it to the watercourse.

This incident illustrates how vulnerable the river is to spills, pollution and run-off from the road. It is too early to tell whether the fuel spill will cause lasting harm, but it is a timely reminder that our road drains lead to the river, and whatever goes down them will end up in the Kennet.

Action for the River Kennet is asking people to report pollution to the Environment Agency Incident Line: 0800 807060 as well as telling ARK where the problem hotspots are by emailing carolyn@riverkennet.org.

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For more details contact Charlotte Hitchmough 01672 513672

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Diesel collecting in Kennet Place – image courtesy of Val Compton