

What you can do to help

- Join us – get trained in collecting/testing water samples and/or sign up to join our Bugs in Brooks survey group. We have recently started training other local residents, including some of our Sixth Form students, on sample collection and testing
- Check your own properties – make sure there are no leaks from septic tanks or pipes which might be adding to the problem
- Do not flush anything except toilet paper down the toilet, and try not to add to the high levels of cooking fats and oils being washed down sinks
- Respect our waterways – take your rubbish home. Be mindful about letting dogs into rivers because their flea powder contains compounds like fipronil, which is highly toxic to insects. So even our favourite walking companion can be another source of water pollution.
- Try to use environmentally friendly cleaning products – ultimately all the sources of pollution are man-made, and this includes phosphates from detergents etc, as well as from sewage and agriculture
- Lobby our politicians and water companies – see the excellent work of WASP locally, and many national groups
- Keep an eye on our waterways – we know that there are lots of people using them recreationally (swimming, fishing, paddle sports etc). Be mindful of the possible effects of pollution on both humans and wildlife.

There are now real time alerts of sewage overflows by Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OxThamesSewage>, but these are controversial - several volunteers have seen what looks like sewage when no overflows were reported. If you see any concerning signs of pollution (sewage foam etc), consider taking a photograph and recording a location (using What Three Words) and reporting it to us or the Environment Agency. You can also check real time data on the new live spill map from Thames Water at <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/edm-map>