

Holbeton News Climate Change & Environmental section

Meeting with South West Water

Things are moving on. John Sherrell, John Mildmay-White and I met with representatives from SWW on the 21st March. This focused on the current state of the drainage in the village and on getting the best for Holbeton from the planned new surface water drain in the village as part of the agreed infrastructure developments associated with the 14 new houses up Church Hill.

SWW will be surveying the village drainage and report back.

Minutes from the meeting will be published once agreed. There is no date fixed for a further meeting, which will be arranged for when the SWW survey is completed.

The Erme Estuary sewage problems illustrated

Compare the satellite image below showing the Erme Estuary in 2021...



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...with this second image, from October 2021, showing the shocking reality of 'storm overflows' after 128 hours of raw discharge from Ivybridge sewage works:



Source: ESA sentinel satellite images: sewage spills SWW dated EDMs 2021, requested under EIR and reproduced by kind permission of Donncha Scollard © April 2023

The newly formed River Erme Water Quality Group

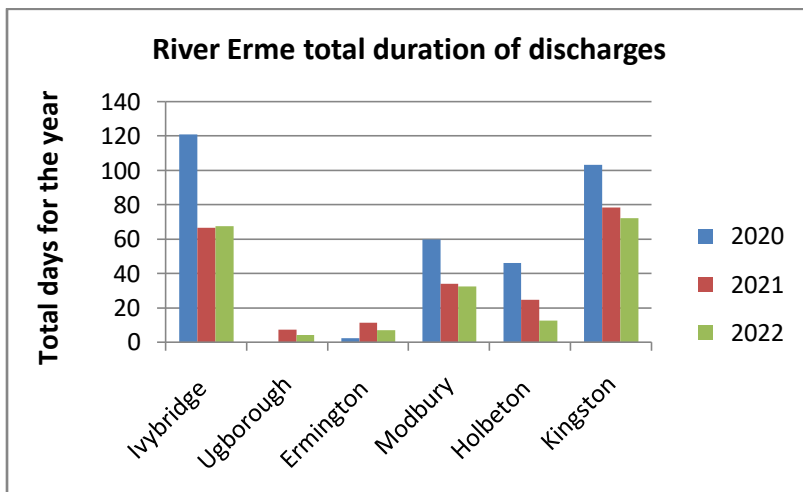
Held its second meeting on the 23rd March in Modbury. There had been a well attended and successful Rivers Assembly organised by Sustainable South Hams prior to this. There are a lot of people in the Erme catchment area concerned about the situation and wanting to help.

Sustainable South Hams has been asked to organise a facilitated meeting to help with such things as its terms of reference. There is a preliminary date for an open meeting on the 22nd May, 7:30pm in the Watermark, Ivybridge.

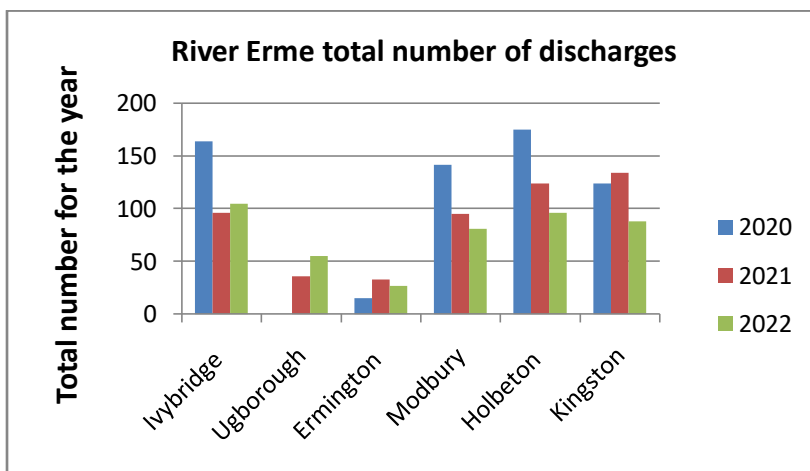
The Rivers Trust 2022 data

The Rivers Trust has just published details of raw sewage discharges by the water companies throughout the UK. The 2 graphs on the following page show the length of time in the year that raw sewage was reported by SWW to have been discharged into the Erme and the number of reported discharges:

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Whilst Kingston's sewage facility drains into the sea rather than the Erme estuary, it is close enough to the estuary and Mothecombe beach to contribute to the problem. In each of the last 7 years Mothecombe was the 2nd most polluted beach in the region and in 2022 was 10th in the country! [*Donncha Scollard 2023*]



If you want to help and have not yet declared this, do get in touch with John Mildmay-White (jmw@flete.co.uk).

Native Bees and how to support them

Brigit Strawbridge Howard, author of "Dancing with Bees" will give an introduction to Bumble Bees, Solitary Bees, Bee Mimics and other Pollinators at 7pm in the village hall on Friday the 26th May (entrance free!). Tickets for the talk, "Native bees and how to support them" can be obtained via:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/native-bees-how-to-support-them-tickets-551356280477> .

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Holbeton's Environmental Library has moved to **All Saints Church**, where the books are along the rear pew in front of the tapestry – open all day to browse &/or borrow. A small selection are held in the **Mildmay Colours** by kind permission of Nicky and Rick.

The **20's plenty campaign**. Your parish council is supporting this campaign to reduce all 30mph speed limits in Devon to 20mph, part of a national campaign.

A community composting facility.

Last month I reported that Newton & Noss are looking at a potentially suitable site that could be available sooner rather than later. Having seen the site it remains to be seen whether the access is good enough. There is a lot of work to be done by Newton & Noss before a decision is made on whether it is suitable. I will continue to report progress.

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Yealm Community Energy edge closer to a local owned renewable share offer!

As valued members and supporters of YCE, the journey to potentially acquiring the three solar farms at Newton Downs, Creacombe and Marlands has been slow and with numerous setbacks and false starts. As a recap, these farms are currently being warehoused by an organisation called CORE. Late in 2021, they successfully secured long term debt against these assets and spent 2022 bedding that in and planning the next steps.

Whilst we don't wish to get ahead of ourselves, the exciting news is that we have now started drafting our community share offer documentation with the hope we may be able to go public this summer and launch this share offer enabling investors in the communities and beyond to participate in buying these three solar farms so that YCE can buy these three solar farms and they become local owned.

There is still an extraordinary amount of work we need to do and the timetable may slip but we want to share this exciting news after such a long wait. The benefit of community ownership, apart from giving investors a return on their investment, is that the forecast surpluses will flow to YCE and we will be able to use this funding via our Community Benefit Fund to continue to help local causes within the 5 parishes, which at the end of this year will have paid nearly £100,000 back into the local economy.

Join us on this journey. To become a member of YCE and to have the chance to invest it costs £1. You can join on our website. www.yealmenergy.co.uk

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