

# **Holbeton Parish Council Climate Change Subcommittee update**

**The River Erme.** Did you know that as well as being in the South Hams Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Erme estuary is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Marine Conservation Zone?

Last month I reported that in 2020 there were 175 occasions when untreated sewage from the “Waste Water Treatment Works” serving Holbeton was discharged into the Erme estuary (visit <https://www.therivertrust.org/>) as appears to have been happening for some years. The plant is now functioning simply as a holding station, with tankers removing sewage early each morning.

In May Gillian Banner wrote to our MP, Sir Gary Streeter, about the River Erme’s problems, asking him to try and get answers from South West Water.

The SWW CEO, Susan Davy, replied revealing that a leaking valve at the works during the winter months in 2020 had resulted in “some temporary issues”, and that it “has now been fixed and the tank will now be cleansed monthly to prevent debris from accumulating”. She reported that “all recent spills have been related to heavy rainfall”.

More generally SWW “will increase monitoring of our network and improve management, performance and understanding of storm overflows through investigation. We also plan to accelerate work to reduce storm overflows in areas prioritised by the Environment Agency”.

The Parish Council has been composing a letter in response. Despite the SWW letter there remain a number of further important questions to be answered.

There is a copy of the letter on the Parish Council website, and available by emailing me. The Parish Councillors invite residents of the parish to join us in signing the copy of the letter in the village shop, to demonstrate the strength of feeling in the community about this serious matter. It will be there until the 13<sup>th</sup> July.

**The book of the month is English Pastoral: An Inheritance**, by James Rebank. He is also author of *The Shepherd’s Life*, about his world as the first son of a shepherd, who was the first son of a shepherd himself. His family have lived and worked in and around the Lake District for generations. *English Pastoral* tells of how rural landscapes around the world were brought close to collapse, but also of how one farmer began to salvage a tiny corner of England that was now his, doing his best to restore the life that had vanished. Both books are in the environmental library in the Reading Rooms.

Look out for the **Environmental Tip of the Month**, this month on laundry detergents, by Caroline Howarth, a member of the climate change subcommittee.

**Holbeton Climate Change and Eco Group Facebook Page** is where to share ideas and tips for making our parish a greener place! Please do join in.

**Do join the Holbeton Climate Change Forum!** This is an informal group interested in projects and ideas to support the environment. If you are interested in being part of the forum please contact [annawest123@gmail.com](mailto:annawest123@gmail.com).

**To find our Environmental Action Plan**, simply Google ‘Holbeton Parish Council’, access the Climate Emergency page, scroll down and open the pdf file called “Action Plan v3”.

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