



## ACTION FOR THE RIVER KENNET

2 July 2013

### **Serious Pollution Incident on the Kennet**

Action for the River Kennet's riverfly monitors discovered a serious pollution event on the Kennet yesterday during a routine invertebrate sampling exercise.

The regular survey of riverflies identified that most species had been killed by an unknown pollutant. The point of these surveys is to monitor the health of the river – invertebrates are very sensitive to pollution and are often the first indicators that there is a problem.

The Environment Agency were immediately alerted, as well as the downstream river keepers. By this morning the pollution had spread from the Elcot Lane area to beyond Ramsbury, but the river upstream of Elcot was healthy.

The Environment Agency are currently investigating the extent and cause of the incident.

Although few fish appear to have been killed the absence of invertebrates means that both fish and other wildlife have nothing to eat, which will have a serious impact on the river's ecology.

ARK have a team of over 30 volunteer riverfly monitors who monitor over 40 sites on the Kennet every month.

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For more details contact Charlotte Hitchmough on 07880 515859

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