

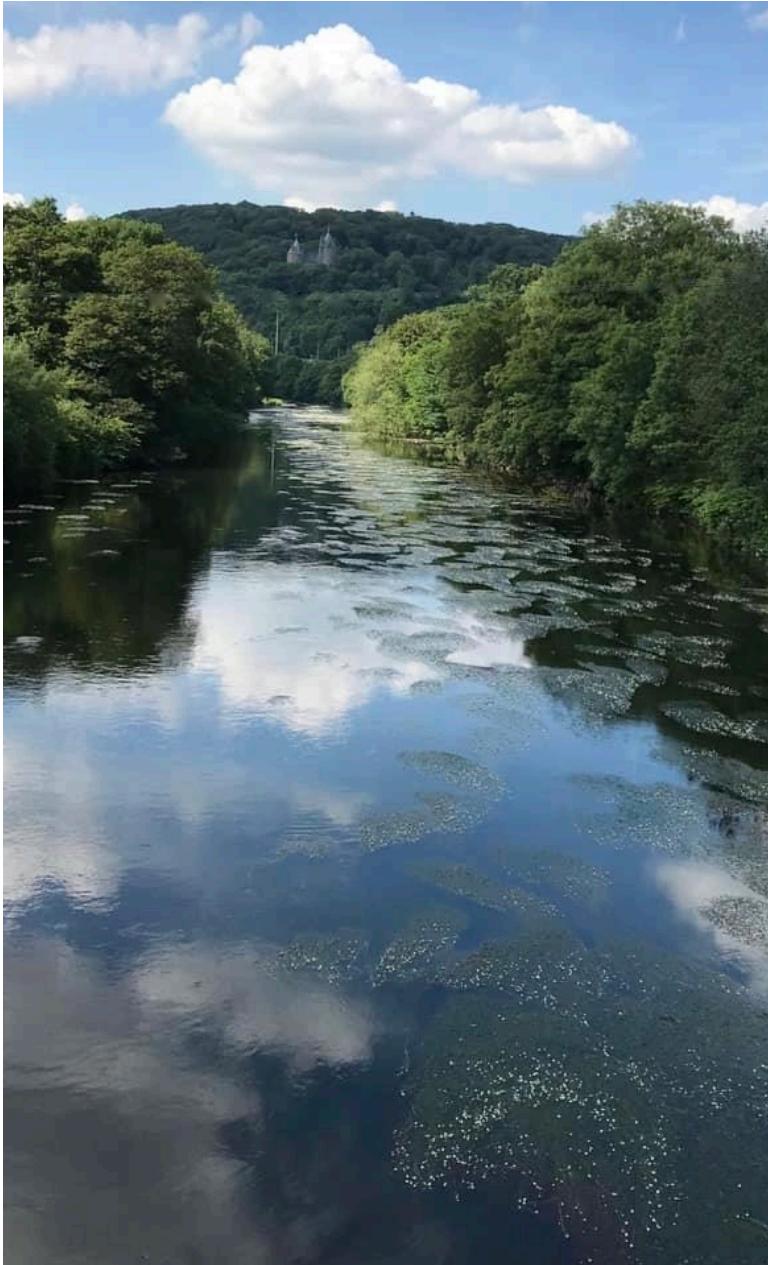
Tackling Litter Pollution in the River Taff

Published by Radyr and Morganstown Community Council in partnership with Natural Resources Wales



The River Taff

[Cover picture: Julie Williams]



Looking towards Castell Coch
Picture: Robert W Jones

Introduction

The River Taff is one of Wales' most important rivers. It flows from its source in the Brecon Beacons as two rivers, the Taf Fechan and the Taf Fawr. These join together just north of Merthyr Tydfil, from where the river continues its journey to Cardiff, joining the Severn Estuary at Cardiff Bay.

At the height of the coal-mining industry, the river was heavily polluted. In recent years, however, a great deal of work has been done to clean the river, which now provides a home for migratory fish, including salmon and sewin.

The river can now be enjoyed by those who live alongside it - and who use the Taff Trail for leisure and enjoyment, including where it makes its way through Wales' capital city.

However, litter pollution remains a problem, with plastic bags and other items finding their way into the river - and getting caught in the low-hanging branches of river-side trees. This is unsightly and unpleasant - and presents a danger to wildlife.

We want everyone to enjoy the river - and to feel proud of the Taff as part of our natural environment - and as a safe and welcoming home for wildlife.

To this end, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is working with local authorities (including R&MCC), Dŵr Cymru and third sector groups to tackle pollution in the River Taff.

This leaflet describes how litter enters the river; what is being done to tackle the problem - and who you can contact if you see a significant amount of litter in the river, or on the river bank.

THE CONSTANT BLIGHT OF POLLUTION



Scenes like these are all too common along the banks of the River Taff.

1. Misconnections

Some of the litter that enters the Taff arises from misconnections. This is where properties' foul drainage has been incorrectly plumbed into the surface water / storm drainage. Where this happens, rag waste such as tissue, wet wipes and sanitary products enter the watercourse, creating some of the litter pollution seen on the river banks and trees next to the rivers. This waste can also enter the river via Combined Sewer Overflows.

Natural Resources Wales is working with local authorities and Dŵr Cymru to address the pollution associated with misconnected properties.

You can help us to tackle these issues by:



Rag waste entering a watercourse

- reporting any sightings of grey water or rag waste coming out of a pipe or outfall into the river. It is possible this could be a misconnection and, as such, it should be reported to NRW or Dŵr Cymru to investigate;
- ensuring any new drainage connections on your property are connected to the foul system.

2. Littering

Illegal tipping can lead to litter entering the river.

Problems with tipping are frequent, and the response to this usually depends on *where* the fly-tipping has taken place. It will usually be the responsibility of either the landowner or the local authority to address.

In the event of a very large fly-tipping incident, or illegal waste activity, NRW will attend and tackle the issue.

Most of the litter along the river banks is dealt with by the local authority, (except where the river banks are within private land ownership). It is managed by their parks or waste management teams, and by volunteer groups such as Cardiff Rivers Group, Keeps Wales Tidy and 'Friends of...' groups (such as the Friends of Forest Farm). These usually work alongside Ranger teams from



Litter left on a riverbank

the local authorities to address local litter issues.

Litter that is washed into Cardiff Bay is collected and removed by the Cardiff Harbour Authority.

You can help us to tackle littering by:

- taking your litter home, or disposing of it in a suitable local authority bin
- offering to help groups such as the Cardiff Rivers Group
- reporting any significant quantities of litter you see left near the river, or trapped in the river.

Current projects

'Restore Our Rivers' is a multi-agency clean-up project on the River Taff and the River Ely in Cardiff. This is a collaboration between Cardiff Council, NRW, Dŵr Cymru, South East Wales Rivers Trust, Cardiff Rivers Group, Keep Wales Tidy, and Groundwork.

Work has taken place to remove rubbish from the river and its banks - and removing lower branches from trees, to reduce litter getting caught - such as wet wipes and sanitary waste. This is not a quick fix, however, and there is much more to do.

As Cardiff encompasses the lower reaches of the River Taff, more work needs to be done in



Cardiff Rivers group members undertaking one of their regular clean-up operations
Picture: Cardiff Rivers group

the upper Taff catchment, to reduce the amount of litter being carried down the Taff.

This involves a cross-organisational approach and NRW works with local authorities including Rhondda Cynon Taff

and Merthyr Tydfil - as well as local angling and volunteer groups to address this.

CONTACTS

See it, report it

Water pollution should be reported to Natural Resources Wales. If you spot a **litter problem**, you can report it to the following organisations:

a) Natural Resources Wales:
incident report: 0300 065 3000
(24 hrs). See also
www.naturalresources.wales.

b) Cardiff Council: 029 2087 2087
(8.30am – 6pm, Mon – Fri). See
also www.cardiff.gov.uk.

Other useful contacts include:

Cardiff Harbour Authority: 029
2087 7900
www.cardiffharbour.com



Here's what to do if you see something like this...

South East Wales Rivers Trust:
01443 824936 www.sewrt.org

Cardiff Rivers Group:
www.cardiffriversgroup.co.uk

Keep Wales Tidy: 02920 256767
www.keepwalestidy.cymru

Together, we can continue to
improve the River Taff, to work
together - and ensure that we
can all be proud of our river.