

## **Ogmore-by-sea and [information redacted]**

This document provides a summary of actions taken and planned for the designated Bathing Waters of Ogmore-by-sea and [information redacted] following their classification as poor at the end of the 2023 Bathing Water season.

With the resources we have available, we continue to progress discussions with key stakeholders in the catchment including the Local Authority, Shared Regulatory Services and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water in order to secure commitments to improve water quality at both beaches. In addition, NRW is currently developing a Project scope for a comprehensive catchment project to investigate and work to resolve water quality issues in the Ogmore, Ewenny and Cadoxton river catchments and wider Barry bathing water catchment. A project of this nature would be subject to funding for additional resources in NRW's local operational teams and additional capital expenditure.

### **Ogmore-by-sea: NRW investigation**

The Ogmore catchment is large and there is likely to be diffuse pollution from urban drainage, misconnections and rural land use. In the lower catchment, there is a large population of birds, grazing livestock as well as river crossings from the local stables. There are numerous water company assets in the catchment including sewage treatment works and storm overflows, and several domestic properties with private sewerage arrangements in the estuary.

An initial desk top assessment of the 2023 season was undertaken by the local team (Oct-Dec 2023). Rainfall and river level data for the River Ogmore and River Ewenny indicates poorer bathing water quality following rainfall events and elevated river levels.

Additional monitoring and development of a water quality model is needed to better understand the relative importance and proportion of sources of pollution within the catchment:

- Ogmore-by-sea has been prioritised for 20 samples in 2024 BW season.
- NRW will take a number of investigative samples upstream of the BW in 2024.
- As part of PR24 planning NRW requires DCWW to investigate all failing BWs during AMP8 (2025-30). This investigation will likely include development of a water quality apportionment model which can be used to identify regulatory requirements for DCWW discharges. Timeframes for the investigation are yet to be agreed and funding is subject to Ofwat's final determination of Prices.

### **NRW Actions**

In preparation for the 2024 season, on 1<sup>st</sup> May pre-season checks were made at the bathing beach, dog faeces was found on the foreshore. A visit and regulatory checks were undertaken at Penybont STW on the same day.

**Local surface water outfalls** were inspected at Ogmore beach following the 2023 season. No issues were identified.

#### **Ewenny pumping station**

There is a high spilling storm discharge which has been assessed under the SOAF (Storm Overflow Assessment Framework) programme. This is a national framework that prioritises improvements, based on environmental impact, on operating storm overflows. This will be followed up with Dŵr Cymru in June 2024 as part of our regulatory programme

#### **Penybont Wwtw**

The sewage works is approximately 2km upstream of the bathing water. Final effluent is subject to UV disinfection year-round.

A routine audit of the treatment works (permit: BB3006701) was undertaken on 13/07/23 where two minor non-compliances were identified and pursued through regulatory engagement with DCWW. An oil leak was rectified at the time and a mechanical breakdown was due to be replaced by 31/07/24.

A data audit is being carried out on 2023 data as part of our regulatory programme.

The storm discharge at Penybont Wwtw (BW3206201) has no UV treatment. The permit has a condition which requires the operator to notify NRW and investigate if there are more than five spills of storm sewage in the bathing season. On 25th August, Dŵr Cymru notified NRW that on the 5<sup>th</sup> August storm spills from Penybont Wwtw exceeded this trigger. Dŵr Cymru are required by the permit conditions to "provide a reason for the Trigger Exceedance and a description of any remedial action undertaken or proposed. Where the reason/s for the Trigger Exceedance cannot be *identified within the 3 months of the Trigger Exceedance the operator must provide a proposal with timeframes for a full investigation to be carried out to identify the reason/s for the Trigger Exceedance for approval by Natural Resources Wales*". NRW has received the report from DCWW and are reviewing the information provided, before we undertake the necessary compliance checks.

#### **Regulatory visits**

Permitted discharges in the catchment are being prioritised for audits in the 2024/25 regulatory compliance programmes for Cwm Taff & Bridgend/Cardiff & Vale Environment teams. This will comprise of a combination of site inspections, monitoring reviews and data audits.

#### **Misconnected drainage**

Regular liaison with DCWW and Local Authorities will be undertaken throughout 2024/25 for Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan. This engagement with stakeholders will be focussed on identifying and addressing misconnections within the catchment. However, progress towards resolving misconnections is currently a challenge due to lack of capacity in Local Authorities, and competing priorities for operational teams in NRW and Dŵr Cymru.

#### **Impact of dog faeces**

Studies have proven the impact of dog faeces on water quality at beaches. In 2023 Ogmore was classed as a 'dog friendly' beach; the Vale of Glamorgan carried out a consultation in March to review Public Space Protection Orders covering dog restrictions, we are awaiting the outcome of this consultation, but the Vale have said they are looking at signage and education on responsible dog ownership. We will continue discussions with the Local Authority on this matter. During the

bathing season NRW sampling officers will take field observations of numbers of dogs on the beach.

**Incident response**

NRW will continue to respond appropriately to reported pollution incidents within the Ogmore catchment relevant examples:

- June 2023 (Ref: 2304296): an incident at a malfunctioning package treatment plant was attended and resolved.
- May 2024 (Ref 2407415): attending and responding to suspected sewage leak from Penybont STW which led to the Abnormal sitation at Ogmore by Sea bathinig water.

*[information redacted]*