

DEFRA's national Storm Overflow data show hefty rises in the number and duration of sewage spills this year, nationally as well as locally.

Of course, it has rained a lot this winter but we need to be prepared for changed weather patterns, not just hoping for the best.

In 2022 Yorkshire Water got the benefit of dry weather in their figures and there were still 14 YW 'assets' producing more than 2000 spills in the Nidd for more than 12,000 hours in 2022!

From NAG's quick look at the Nidd data, published today, there seem to be at least 30% more spills

this year for almost double the hours of spilling sewage than last year.

The eight major Sewage Treatment Works on the Nidd each contribute more than 100 spills pa and

the spill numbers are increasing rather than decreasing, compared with 2021 and 2022. E.g. Pateley

Bridge STW spilled 129 times in 2023, 3 times the 2022 level and 2X the 2021 level.

Storm overflows also come from Combined Storm Overflows in towns, and often enter the Nidd via our polluted becks. e.g.

- Bilton Beck, just a very short stream, typically has 30 spills p.a.

- Oak Beck had more than 400 spills pa (30% more than 2022), and this is in addition to

Harrogate North STW's contribution at the foot of oak beck.

- Crimble Beck had more than 100 spills pa, in addition to Harrogate South STW

Bear in mind that YW's plan, determined by Government, is to reduce the average number of spills

per asset to <10 pa by 2050 (quicker for Knaresborough if we get Safe Bathing Water Status).

YW's considerable investment in infrastructure is coming too late, and won't get the safe bathing and

ecological balance in our river right for many years

The numbers are going the wrong way. NAG is looking for reduction year on year, not upward blips!

NAG will continue to scrutinise what is being planned and what is being achieved for the Nidd, and

press YW and The environment Agency for effective rapid ways to reduce this tide of sewage that we

all are experiencing.

David Clayden

Nidd Action Group Chair

27/03/24