

Please reply to: Cllr J Carter

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Mr K Harvey CBE
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Our ref: IG
27 October 2011

Dear Mr Harvey

SALCOMBE SOUTH SANDS BATHING WATER, BEACH LIVE AND ESTUARINE WATER QUALITY

Thank you for your letter of 13 August, which Salcombe Harbour Board discussed at its recent meeting.

It was encouraging to read of the improvements which you have in hand, in particular in relation to the removal of nitrogen from Gerston STW by 31 March 2015 and the development of Beach Live. We appreciate also your support for our phosphate-free initiative and our work together on Scrape The Plate.

However the Board has asked me to write to you again because of our concern about storm outflows from Malborough. Whilst we recognise that storm outflows are unavoidable from time to time, two points especially concern us:

- i. we were alarmed by the frequency of the outflows which Beach Live was revealing. You say that at least one of the alerts was false but nevertheless we would like to know what plans you have to reduce the frequency of these outflows and what you expect the yearly incidence of storm outflows to be;
- ii. whilst outflows may be unavoidable, the Board would like to know whether there is anything that can be done, or is planned, to reduce the impact of these spillages. You mention that, under the Clean Sweep programme, some sewage treatment plants have increased storm storage and better screening: has this been installed at Malborough, or are there plans to do so?

The reason why the Board attaches such high importance to these issues is that storm outflows from Malborough pollute the stream which runs right across the middle of South Sands beach, one of the premier and most popular bathing beaches in Salcombe, with a sailing school and two of Salcombe's larger hotels, and our only EU Blue Flag beach.

The Board and South Hams District Council has worked very hard over the last few years to safeguard the water quality at South Sands and to regain the Blue Flag which we lost in 2007. We achieved that this year and it would be truly devastating to lose the Blue Flag now because insufficient priority was being given to limit the impact of storm outflows from Malborough. I hardly need add that it would be a really serious matter if these outflows were to endanger the health of children playing on the beach.

I would therefore like to press you over whether your company can do anything more to reduce the frequency of storm outflows, or mitigate their effect.

Yours sincerely

Cllr J Carter
Chairman
Salcombe Harbour Board