

Title:	Fumes on Bramley High Street
Description	For several months there has been a smell of diesel or heating fuel in the High Street. The problem is affecting some businesses. It is proving difficult to determine the source of the problem.
Owner:	Waverley BC, Environment Agency
Area:	Environment
Status	Waverley BC and EA Investigation ongoing
Last Updated:	30/03/2023

Actions

Date	Action by	Action/Event
29/03/2023		Slick seen in Bramley Stream -
23/03/2023	Various	Update from Jeremy Hunt
09/03/2023	Various	Report from Jeremy Hunt
01/03/2023	BVS	Whilst Waverley are investigating, to date no result.
07/02/2023	BVS	Complaint sent to Waverley, and forwarded to BPC.

Details:

30/03/2023 – Message from Jeremy Hunt MP	BRAMLEY SAGA CONTINUES Last Friday, local volunteers noticed the awful smell had returned, and led them to the river. Very worryingly, some sort of chemical film was seen on the surface of the water - so a huge well done to local campaigner Jane Austin, along with local residents Charlotte and Claire, for obtaining a sample and reporting the incident to the Environment Agency (EA). I have raised this directly with Alan Lovell, Chair at the EA, and asked him to facilitate the collection and testing of the sample. Alan has since informed me that his staff attended the site on Saturday to assess the stream. They confirmed that very small amounts of oil were visible, but that there was no evidence of significant, ongoing contamination. Given the heavy rainfall on Friday (the smell is always worse after a downpour), Alan thinks the oil resulted from urban surface water drainage, but the EA did collect more samples yesterday morning. I will of course keep you posted, but in the meantime, if there are any further incidents, please report them directly to the EA hotline on 0800 807060.
29/03/2023	Facebook posting by Jane Austin (Facebook Posting) BRAMLEY SMELL Once again yesterday following rain the smell of fumes was awful. Some of our intrepid Bramley ladies went to investigate and we found this - some kind of fuel or solvent clearly visible in our stream and it absolutely stank. We have informed the EA (thanks Claire Davis), Waverley Borough Council and our MP Jeremy Hunt . Charlotte Ivory got her water PH testing kit out and I also have a water sample to give the EA to test.

	We need to get to the bottom of this asap! We will keep you posted.
23/03/2023 – Message from Jeremy Hunt MP	BRAMLEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Talking of which there are still odour issues in Bramley. It's reassuring to hear that last week all fuel tank chambers at the filling station were clear, and no fuel smell was detected. The interceptor separator was inspected and cleaned and water levels were normal. The last 12 months of wet stock reconciliation records have also been reviewed, and reassuringly confirm that there are no variances that would indicate loss of product. I also got back in touch with the Environment Agency who carried out a further site visit on 10th March to assess the local watercourse. They too confirmed that there remains no evidence of any fuel/oil contamination. An EA officer also re-visited the public house last week, and as soon as I receive the report from this visit, I will let you know. In the meantime, I have requested more regular updates from WBC. Thames Water engineers have also been working both upstream and downstream from the pumping station to understand exactly why we're seeing high flows in the network. More on which next week.
09/03/2023 – Message from Jeremy Hunt MP	<p>BRAMLEY SMELL ISSUE - Following my email to them, Thames Water have confirmed that there is no link between the worrying odour and the pump issues at Gosden Common. However, they did observe an obvious smell by the Post Office and under a nearby gully. As you know, SCC Trading Standards undertook a pressure test at the service station on 22/02 - I have now received a copy of the report, and all seems in order. However, they have said that the onsite petrol interceptor separator was last emptied on 26/10/22, and the frequency of the clearance of the interceptor should be at least every 6 months/determined by site conditions. A job report has been submitted by the service station for these works to be carried out as a precaution, and once completed, Trading Standards will let me know. As things stand, Waverley has said that there is little else they can do with regards to linking the smell to the petrol station.</p> <p>However, this morning I was alerted to the fact that the fire service had closed and cordoned off the petrol station, as worryingly, fuel was seen running down Station Road. At this stage we don't know whether this incident is linked to the ongoing smell, but regardless, the situation in Bramley requires urgent action and the root cause of the issue needs to be identified as soon as possible. Residents are understandably worried about their health - some are having to use fans to disperse the smell, and local businesses are experiencing drastically reduced footfall. Therefore, I have contacted Tom Horwood (CEO at Waverley), Alan Lovell (Chair at the Environment Agency) and SCC Trading Standards requesting that specialists attend the site today for more in-depth investigation, including re-checking the watercourse for fuel contamination (there are no water abstraction points in the vicinity). We must get to the bottom of this!</p>
08/02/2023 Email received from Waverley	<p>Dear residents,</p> <p>You have all recently made complaints to the Council concerning a malodour in the vicinity of Bramley High Street and it is likened to the smell of petrol or diesel fuel.</p>

	<p>The Council has been investigating this matter and I would like to update you as follows:-</p> <p>Due to the smell, the investigation has started with the Co op petrol station as a possible source. There is a report of a spill in December last year but unfortunately the station has a new Manager, who is unable to confirm this or provide us with details. The paperwork has been called for from the Company to examine what happened at that time and if this spill could have contributed to the odour. The Petroleum Officer may contact you as part of his investigation.</p> <p>The Petroleum Officer has visited and he will be taking measurements/analytical readings this week using specialist equipment to try and confirm the source of the odour and ensure that there are no safety risks here.</p> <p>He has already confirmed visually that the tanks and pipes are not leaking but he has required a pressure test to see if there is any leakage of any kind to their system.</p> <p>It has also been confirmed that the Open reach workers were first to complain about the smell, which they noticed in the underground chambers and pipes. I understand that they subsequently washed down the tunnels and chambers and have now finished their work and left the site.</p> <p>We hope to send you a further update after the tests are completed.</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p>James McGowan Environmental Health Officer Working days Monday – Wednesday 01483 523222 Council Offices, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HR www.waverley.gov.uk</p>
<p>07/02/2023 Email send by BVS</p>	<p>From: bramleyvillagesociety@gmail.com <bramleyvillagesociety@gmail.com> Sent: 07 February 2023 11:27 To: environmentalhealth@waverley.gov.uk Cc: ENQUIRIES@JOLLYFARMER.CO.UK Subject: Diesel Fumes in Bramley</p> <p>Hi, For the last week or more, there has been a smell of diesel in the Bramley High Street. I believe this was originally reported by Openreach when their engineers were trying to work in the BT ducts on the High Street by Holy Trinity Church. On visiting the Jolly Farmer Pub last Saturday, the smell in the pub was to say the least unpleasant, and apparently far worse in the pub cellars. The landlord said he has tried to report the issue but has had no success in finding someone to take action so far. A number of customers have had to leave the pub as they were unable to cope with the fumes, so the pub is losing business. The smell is also evident further down the High Street opposite Windrush Close.</p> <p>Whilst currently unproven, the most likely source of the diesel leak is the Coop Service Station at the junction of the A281 and Station Road. The Service station manager has denied any responsibility.</p> <p>The DOE state that:</p>

Councils must look into complaints about smells from industrial, trade and business premises that could be a 'statutory nuisance' (covered by the [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#)).

For the smell to count as a statutory nuisance it must do one of the following:

- unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of a home or other premises*
- injure health or be likely to injure health*

Given that the diesel fumes are interfering with the Jolly Farmer's business and that according to National Health England "*breathing in diesel fumes may cause dizziness, drowsiness headaches; breathing in large amounts can result in coma, loss of muscle control, heart and lung problems*", please would you advise on what action is being taken to urgently correct the problem.

Regards

Joe O'Connell
Bramley Village Society
01483 894240