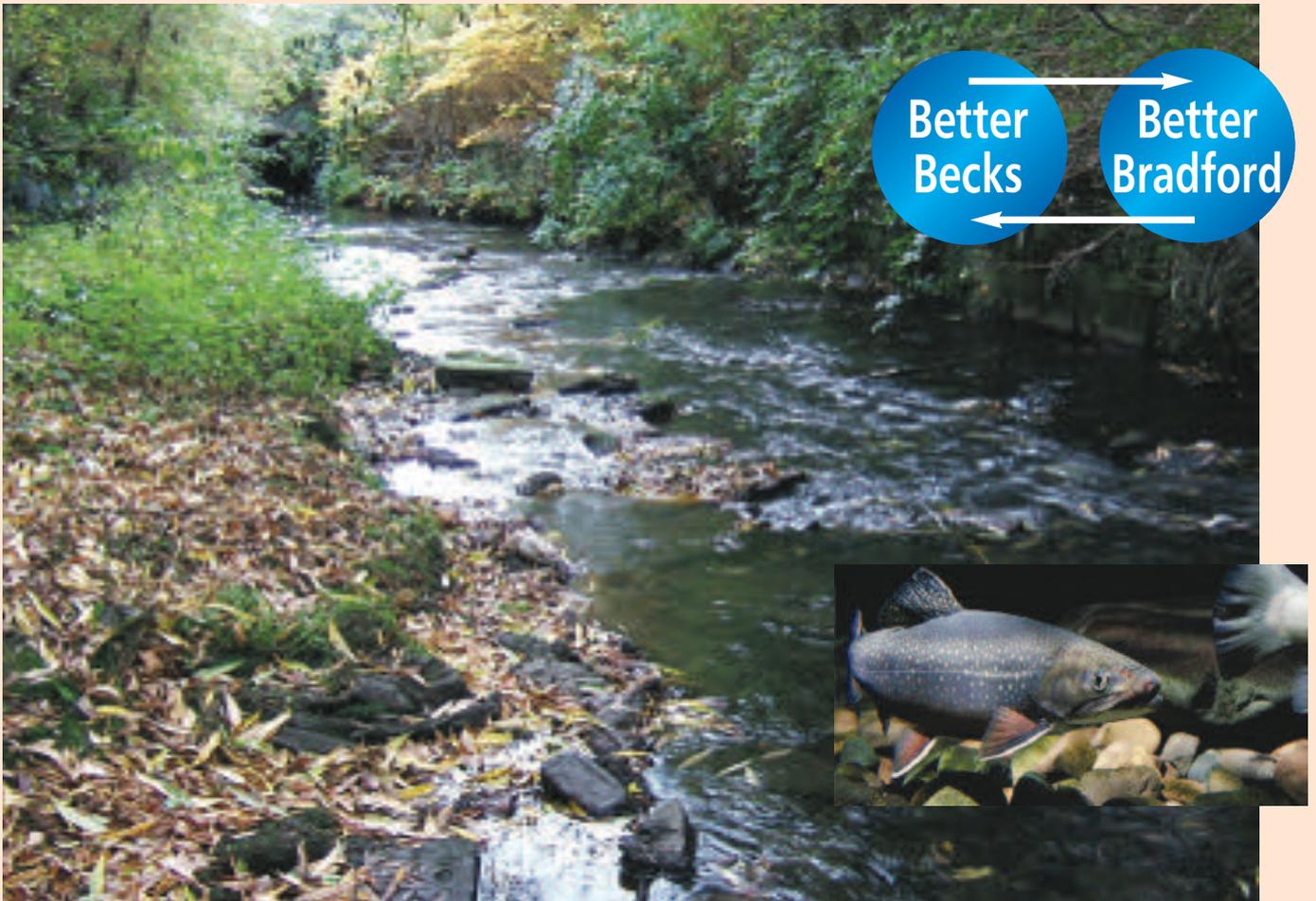


How to keep our rivers and becks clean



Clean becks running through woodlands, farms, parks and cities bring pleasure to everyone. Clean streams are healthy, supporting fish, birds and other wildlife; we have trout, dippers, and kingfishers in Bradford's Becks when the water is clean. Clean, healthy and accessible becks make the city and villages better places to live, work and play.

But it doesn't take much to damage the water quality, especially with 200,000 people living in the area that drains to Bradford Beck. The water then goes on to join the River Aire at Shipley, flows down to Leeds and on to the North Sea.

Above: A short natural stretch of Bradford Beck near the city centre.

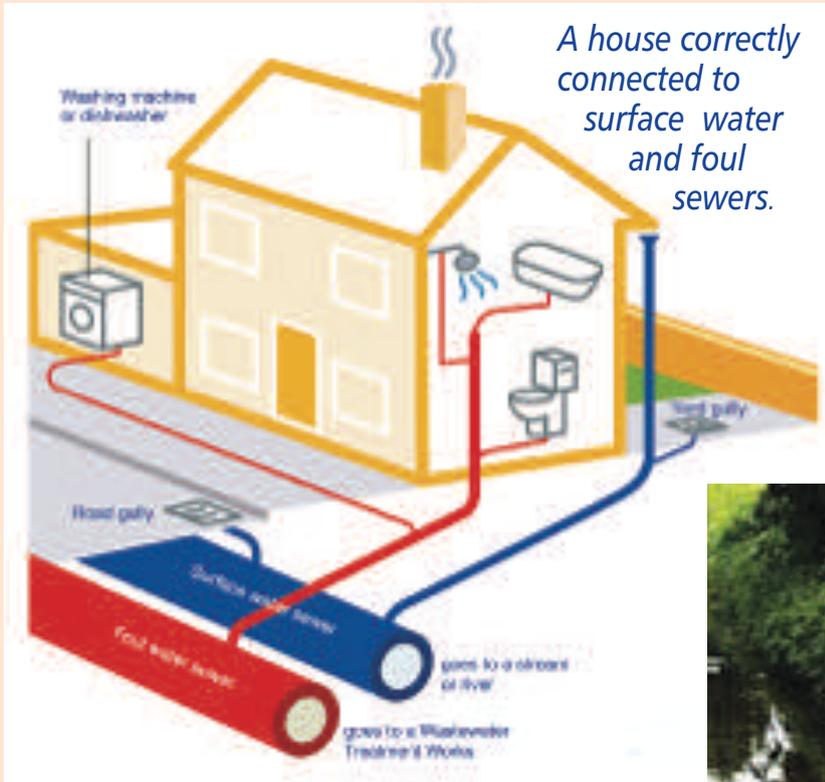
Inset: an urban trout.

Many people benefit if our becks are clean! Even if you can't see a river from your front door, your actions do affect it.

So please:

- ★ Report any pollution you see.
- ★ Check your own house for misconnected drains.
- ★ Ask at work if the drains have been checked recently.
- ★ And enjoy Bradford's Becks!

How do sewers and drains work?



Rainwater from roofs and roads can be sent straight to streams. Sewage – foul water from toilets, sinks, domestic appliances, car-washes and factories – must go for clean-up at a treatment works before being released to the river.

New houses (1960s onwards) have separate sewers for rain and sewage. Pollution occurs when the foul sewer is misconnected to the rainwater sewer and ends up in the stream without treatment.

For example, in a house a new bathroom might be accidentally connected to the rainwater pipe because it is closest! When factories change their layout of equipment, waste water may be plumbed into the nearest (and wrong) drain. The sewers for new houses are sometimes misconnected by the builder.

Above top: Waste water from a food factory. Above: Misconnections can send dirty water straight into our becks.

Older houses (1920s and earlier) usually have combined sewers taking both foul and rainwater; the 1930s to 1950s was a period of transition between layouts.

With combined sewers, pollution occurs when they are overloaded by too much rain, and the excess mixed water has to be discharged direct to the stream through a combined sewer overflow (CSO). There are over 50 of these CSOs in the Bradford Beck catchment. They should only flow a few times a year during heavy rain.

In the road

Road drainage often goes direct to the nearest stream, even in areas where the houses have combined sewers. So any pollution on the road and pavement can damage the waterway.

Please don't:

- ★ Wash your car on the driveway or in the street. Go to a car wash or stand the car on gravel where the water can soak away.
- ★ Leave dog poo! Unpleasant on the street, and washed into the river when it rains.
- ★ Pour waste oil, paint or dirty water down the road drain.
- ★ And if you spot a tanker unloading into a gully, report it!

Below: A tanker discharging in the road.



Don't pour unwanted chemicals, paints or oils in the drains. Recycle instead.



Spotting and reporting pollution



*Above left: Discolouration due to sewage.
Above right: Pollution from a surface water drain.
Right: Pollution by acid mine drainage.
Below right: Illegal paint discharge.*



What are you looking for?

- ★ **Discolouration** – muddy, grey, white, orange - almost any colour. Although if the water is fluorescent green, it may be a dye used for tracing misconnections.
- ★ **Grey fungus** – growing on the bed and water plants.
- ★ **Outfalls** – flowing when it isn't raining.
- ★ **Coloured discharges.**
- ★ **Outfall pipes** – with grey growth on them.
- ★ **If it looks wrong** – it probably is!





To report pollution:

- ★ **Take photos!**
- ★ **Phone the Environment Agency (EA)
Hotline 0800 80 70 60.**
Ask for an incident number and for a report back on action taken.
- ★ **If it might be sewage,
also report to Yorkshire Water
0345 1 24 24 24.**
- ★ **Use Twitter:**
This often gets a quick response from YW but don't use it for the EA.
- ★ **Tell Friends of Bradford's Becks too,
via Facebook, Twitter or email.**
Include the EA incident number.
Facebook:
[www.facebook.com/groups/
BradfordsBecks/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/BradfordsBecks/)
Twitter: @BradfordsBecks
Email: FOBBpollution@gmail.com

*Above top: A stream polluted by fly tipping.
Above left: Fungus growing caused by a sewage leakage into a beck.
Above right: Sewage leaks from an outfall.*

Images credits in this section: Theo Pike (South East Rivers Trust), Robert Hellawell, Gary Rushworth, Barney Lerner, Connectright, Telegraph and Argus, Kevin Sunderland.

Flytipping:

- ★ **Flytipping is dealt with by
Bradford Council and can be reported
by calling the Council
01274 434366
and asking for the Environment
Enforcement Team.**