

A Peace for Nature Site Visit Report

6 July 2026

Bedford Park Sewage Pollution Incident



Purpose of this report

This briefing summarises independent field observations and indicative environmental monitoring undertaken by A Peace for Nature on 6 July 2026 at Bedford Park, Cefn Cribwr.

The visit was undertaken in response to notification from the Leader of Bridgend County Borough Council at 11:19 hours that there was an ongoing and active pollution incident at Bedford Park. APFN was also provided with photographs and video footage from a local resident, which appeared to show serious pollution.

APFN attended the site within approximately one hour of notification, arriving at Bedford Park at approximately 12:30 hours.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the reported pollution incident, record site observations, undertake indicative field testing, and establish whether the evidence observed supported pollution to land, watercourse impact, or both.

The key finding from this visit is that APFN's observations and field testing support a conclusion of serious sewage pollution to land, woodland floor and public footpath. APFN's observations and field testing do not support confirmed river pollution at the time of attendance.

Background

Bedford Park is a public green space and nature reserve in Cefn Cribwr. The area is used by members of the public, including walkers and dog walkers.

On 6 July 2026, APFN was advised that an active pollution incident was taking place. On reviewing photographs and video footage provided before attendance, APFN considered the incident serious enough to attend immediately.

Upon arrival, it was apparent that parts of the public walkway had been taped off with red and white barrier tape. There was a noticeable sewage odour in the air.

At the site of concern, APFN observed what appeared to be an active sewage discharge from a Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water asset / manhole. The approximate location of the leak was 51.538477, -3.659814.

Visible sewage-related material was present, including toilet paper and whole faeces. The discharge was active and could be heard running into a pooled area on land.

Sampling locations

The principal locations considered during this visit were:

Location	Description
Adjacent watercourse / river sample	Sample taken from the nearby watercourse to check for any immediate obvious indication of river impact
Point of loss / discharge	Sample taken from the active sewage discharge / source area
Downstream indication check	Indicative downstream check for ammonia

The river / watercourse sample and the point of loss sample were taken from different environmental contexts. They are not presented as directly comparable upstream/downstream receiving-water samples.

At the time of APFN's attendance, there was no clear or obvious mixing observed between the sewage discharge and the adjacent watercourse.

Site conditions and observations

APFN arrived at Bedford Park at approximately **12:30pm** on 6 July 2026.

The weather conditions were fine at the time of sampling.

On arrival, APFN observed that areas of walkway normally open to the public had been taped off. A sewage odour was present in the air.

At the approximate location 51.538477, -3.659814, APFN observed an active discharge from what appeared to be a DCWW manhole / asset. The discharge was visibly sewage-related.



Toilet paper and whole faeces were present, and the smell was consistent with sewage.

The discharge was flowing into a pooled area on land. APFN estimated the affected area to be approximately 5 metres wide and 50–80 metres long. Sewage-related material was visible within this area.



Several hay bales were present and appeared to have been placed to contain or direct the discharge. APFN was informed that these had apparently been placed by DCWW within the previous 24 hours.

DCWW staff and Drainforce contractors were present on site. APFN observed Drainforce undertaking jetting / flushing of the pipe. This produced a very loud noise and was followed by the release of thick black sludge from the manhole area and around the hay bales.



This black sludge washed over the public footpath. APFN photographed and videoed the material in situ. The sludge appeared to be approximately 5–8 inches deep in places. After the jetting activity, the active discharge appeared to stop.



APFN also observed signs of sewage-related material on or near the public footpath over an estimated distance of approximately 50 metres.



APFN spoke by phone with Heulyn Davies of DCWW and Huwel Manly of NRW. Both advised that the incident had been recorded internally.

APFN also met the BCBC Park Manager, on site. APFN advised that what appeared to be dog vomit was present near the affected area and close to the discharge point. Given the risk of animal ingestion or exposure, APFN understands that the park was closed immediately and public advice was prepared for dog walkers.

Watercourse observations

A watercourse was present adjacent to the pollution area.

APFN did not observe clear or obvious mixing between the sewage discharge and the watercourse at the time of attendance.

The watercourse appeared visually clear at the sampling location. Flow was low, steady and slow. No sewage odour was recorded from the watercourse sample.

The findings from the watercourse sample do not support confirmed river pollution at the time of APFN's attendance.

This does not rule out possible later risk, particularly if contaminated material is mobilised by rainfall, ground movement, clean-up activity, drainage pathways, animals, people or machinery.

Field testing equipment used

Hanna Instruments HI83399 Multiparameter Photometer with COD capability
Hanna Instruments HI98193 Dissolved Oxygen Meter
Hanna Instruments HI98192 EC/TDS/NaCl/Resistivity Meter
Hanna Instruments HI98713 ISO Turbidimeter
Hanna Instruments pHep+ Portable pH Meter
Clean sample collection containers
Hanna Instruments consumable reagents for tests undertaken
GPS-enabled mobile device for recording sampling locations and photographic evidence
Mobile phone / camera for photographs and video evidence
PPE / gloves

Methodology

Samples were collected using clean field sampling equipment via telescopic pole.

The river / watercourse sample was taken first. This was deliberate, to avoid taking a sewage-contaminated sample first and then risking the introduction of sewage-contaminated material into the water body.

For the river / watercourse sample, the sampling container was rinsed three times using water from the sample location before collection.

The point of loss / discharge sample was taken after the river / watercourse sample.

Cuvettes were rinsed between sample readings.

Samples were tested using portable field equipment. Results were recorded contemporaneously through APFN's River Monitoring form and supported by photographic and video evidence where available.

The monitoring was undertaken as independent field screening by APFN. The results should be treated as indicative field evidence of conditions at the time and location of sampling. They are not a substitute for statutory regulatory monitoring, laboratory analysis or formal investigation.

Field results

Parameter	Watercourse sample	Point of loss / discharge
Time	13:26	13:41
Weather conditions	Fine	Fine
Turbidity	3.64	653
Nitrate	3.4	* Unable to test due to sample condition
pH	Not recorded due to onsite conditions	6.51
Dissolved Oxygen	6.59 mg/L	0.12 mg/L
Dissolved Oxygen Saturation	66.6%	1.3%
Temperature	15.3°C	18.5°C
Conductivity	403.1 µS/cm	727.4 µS/cm
Resistivity	2.48	1.38
TDS	201.7	363.6
Salinity	0.20 PSU	0.36 PSU
Phosphate	1.9	* Unable to test due to sample condition
Ammonia	0.1	48.2
Reference Temperature	25°C	25°C
Water level / note	Low	Source of pollution
Flow conditions	Steady / slow	Steady flow of sewage
Odour	None	Sewage
Faecal indicator lab sample taken	No	No

* The point of loss sample was extremely turbid. APFN was unable to run phosphate or nitrate testing on that sample due to its condition.

Environmental significance

The field evidence supports the presence of sewage pollution at the point of loss and across the affected land area. This is supported by visible sewage-related material, sewage odour, thick black sludge, very high turbidity, very elevated ammonia and extremely low dissolved oxygen in the point of loss sample.

The incident occurred within a public nature reserve and affected land and public access areas used by walkers and dog walkers. The presence of sewage-related material on or near the public footpath creates significant public health and animal exposure concerns.

The findings do not support a conclusion of river pollution at the time of APFN's attendance.

The watercourse appeared visually clear at the sampling location, there was no observed mixing, no sewage odour from the watercourse sample, and the indicative watercourse readings did not show an immediate sewage pollution signature.

This distinction is important. The evidence currently supports land pollution, not confirmed river pollution. However, contaminated material remained close to a watercourse, meaning further checks may be required after rainfall or clean-up activity to confirm whether any delayed or indirect pathway develops.

Conclusion

The independent field observations and indicative monitoring undertaken by A Peace for Nature on 6 July 2026 indicate a serious sewage pollution incident to land at Bedford Park.

APFN observed an active sewage-related discharge from what appeared to be a DCWW asset / manhole. Visible toilet paper, whole faeces, sewage odour, pooled sewage-contaminated liquid and thick black sludge were present.

APFN's observations and watercourse testing do not support confirmed river pollution at the time of attendance. No clear or obvious mixing was observed between the sewage discharge and the adjacent watercourse, and the watercourse sample did not show an immediate sewage pollution signature.

APFN's position is therefore clear: this incident should be treated as a serious sewage pollution incident to land, woodland floor and public footpath within Bedford Park. Further investigation is required to confirm the cause, duration, volume, clean-up requirements, public health risk, animal health risk, ecological risk and whether any delayed or indirect pathway to the watercourse existed or later developed.