

Knarborough Lido is polluted with a wide range of organic chemicals as well as bacteria



NAG volunteers contributed water sampling data from The Lido to the largest inland bathing water quality study ever conducted in the UK, of 23 inland bathing waters in one week in July 2023

The overall study revealed a high number and concentration of pharmaceuticals and 'forever chemicals' (PFAS). [European Environment Agency Reports Widespread Forever Chemical Contamination in Europe's Waters](#). There are more than 10 thousand variants of these synthetic compounds, some of which are banned, and all of which are persistent, not breaking down in the wild.

In the overall study high levels of organic substances included a cocktail of pharmaceuticals, PFAS, pesticides, vet medicines, caffeine and nicotine. Some of the other pollutants monitored for were: Bacteria, phosphates, aluminium, manganese, nitrates, zinc, nickel, iron, copper, PAHs, UV filters [see Watershed report](#)

Some of the results are still being interpreted and may throw some light on the origins and potential mitigations of these emerging pollutants that can be initiated.

Bathing waters are monitored by the Environment Agency in England for up to 20 weeks during the bathing season, focusing primarily on two harmful bacteria, E. coli and intestinal enterococci

As you know DEFRA has announced that the Bathing Water quality based on the concentrations of these bacteria found at The Lido is POOR.

The EA is preparing a plan to improve the Water Quality at the Lido

Commenting on the results, Dr. David Clayden, Chair of Nidd Action Group said:

"The Lido had the sixth highest number and concentration of organics in this nationwide study. Of the more than 100 organic chemicals tested for, The Lido had 41, including 30 pharmaceuticals, 3 PFAS and 2 pesticides. The top three pharmaceuticals found were a type 2 diabetes, an epilepsy and an antihistamine treatment.

The sheer variety of organic chemicals presents us with an alphabet soup of shorthand names to understand. It is a complex, emerging science requiring expert interpretation.

While the traces of these individual substances are small, together they form a complex mix of chemicals with unknown impacts on humans - which are currently not screened or monitored.

More than anything this study highlights the need to expand the monitoring regime to include a broader range of contaminants that may pose risks to human health, while continuing to reduce the dumping of sewage into our river, and our bathing waters" EA and YW plans for improving the water quality and the safety to humans of the river Nidd in general must include these emerging threats"

Articles about the research results have just been published in The Times/News, and The Stray Ferret has been provided with information.

This citizen science study was a collaboration with Surfers Against Sewage, Watershed Investigations and the University of York to raise awareness about the quality of inland bathing waters and demand radical reform of current legislation to account for emerging pollutants that pose new threats to public health. "