

Good afternoon Lord Mayor and Councillors.

My name is Mark Barrow and with me are my colleagues (TBC) xxxxxx

I have been underwater filming in Yorkshires rivers for over 30 years and have real concerns over some of our rivers particularly the river wharfe with plastic and raw sewage.

I am seeing more and more plastics and garbage entering the river from businesses and the public which in turn will have devastating effects on the life that depends on the river, not so long back a van had tipped its entire contents into the river, after phoning the EA they said it was not their problem phone the council.

Leeds Council environmental services made me aware due to it being in the river, it was an ea problem, maybe our agencies should work together instead of passing the buck, It resulted in myself and freinds clearing it out with me in water.

The wipes and plastics travelling through the river system is of major concern too, I regularly film plastics and wipes and garbage flowing underwater unseen and have started documenting this, I do clean up what I find but it is impossible on my own, how do we get the general public to start caring.

Another point concerning me is raw sewage, again not so long back raw sewage was being pumped in to the river Wharfe at Boston spa which we filmed, it was vile and totally unacceptable.

Why can't we have an independent agency testing the water, Ilkley is having problems too with sewage issues and heard other areas are like Otley and Addingham, my concern is , how much of this sewage is passing through Wetherby where the toddlers paddle and play, how much is effecting wildlife.

I have filmed underwater in these areas where sewage enters and trust me it is shocking and devastating along with being extremely unpleasant. We see the devastating reports of the amazon on fire and want to act yet in our own backyard we seem fit to destroy what we have.

What can be done to stop this and getting the river back to where nature intended not where the EA or Yorkshire water think it should be.

Water quality I'm told is better than the industrial revolution times, you would not have to do much to improve on those times, but water quality is way of the mark at this moment in time. Can the public and council work to improve this and start to eradicate plastics and sewage entering the river.

Is it possible for Leeds City Council to pave the way to a new beginning. We need to act.

Thanks you Lord Mayor