

Watercourses in Spelthorne

Description of document:

This document contains all information relevant to the various watercourses within the Borough of Spelthorne. This includes general information, flooding information, biodiversity status, recent history and a continually updated account of each watercourse. Additionally, it contains information of riparian responsibility of Spelthorne Borough Council.

Flood Risk Map of Spelthorne:

This is attached at Appendix B.

Contents

Description of document:	1
Flood Risk Map of Spelthorne:	1
Main Rivers:	3
List:	3
Feltham hill brook:	3
River Ash	4
Black Ditch	6
Sweeps Ditch	6
Staines Moor Watercourses	9
River Colne	9
Bonehead Ditch	11
River Wraysbury	12
County Ditch	12
Stanwell Watercourses (including Stanwell ditches & West Bedfont ditches)	13
River Thames outlet	15
Ordinary Watercourses:	16
Stanwell Moor:	16
Hithermoor Farm	17
Horton Rd/Hithermoor Road.....	17
Hawes Lane	17
Stanwell Town:	18

Longford river:.....	18
The border of Stanwell Fields School:	19
Shortwood Area:	19
Shortwood Common	19
Shortwood Avenue.....	19
London Road Allotments.....	20
North of London Road	20
Shortwood North Allotments.....	20
Staines:	20
Moor Lane	20
Moor Lane North.....	21
Birch Green & Moormede	21
Shepperton:	21
Manor Park Cricket Ground (Las Palmas)	21
Ferry Lane	21
River Ash side channel.....	22
Thames Meadow.....	22
Felix Lane	22
Nutty Lane	22
Lower Sunbury:	22
Markway/Lower Sunbury ditch	22
Ashford Common:	23
Spelthorne Wetspots	23

Key issues at present, 08-2023:

- River Ash is currently experiencing flooding due to a Thames Water outlet discharging high, permitted volumes of clean water.
- The Sweeps Ditch requires regular maintenance in Staines Park, this is a contentious issue with local community groups.
- There is flooding on the river Ash at Bronzefield prison nature area, being investigated by SCC.
- Long Lane, and long lane recreation ground has suffered flooding as a result of a suspected culvert collapse. SCC and EA are leading on this and designs are being drawn up for SBC flood alleviation mechanisms within Long Lane recreation ground.

Main Rivers:

Main Rivers come under the powers of the Environment Agency. Spelthorne Borough Council's responsibility for Main Rivers only relates to where our land borders a river (riparian responsibility), and these areas are shown in the table below:

List:

- Feltham Hill Brook
- River Ash
- Black Ditch
- Sweeps Ditch
- Stanwell Moor Watercourses (including Holme Lodge Ditch & Stanwell Moor Ditch)
- Bonehead Ditch
- River Colne
- River Wraysbury
- County Ditch
- Stanwell Watercourses (including Stanwell ditches & West Bedfont ditches)
- River Thames outlet

Feltham hill brook:

Background information

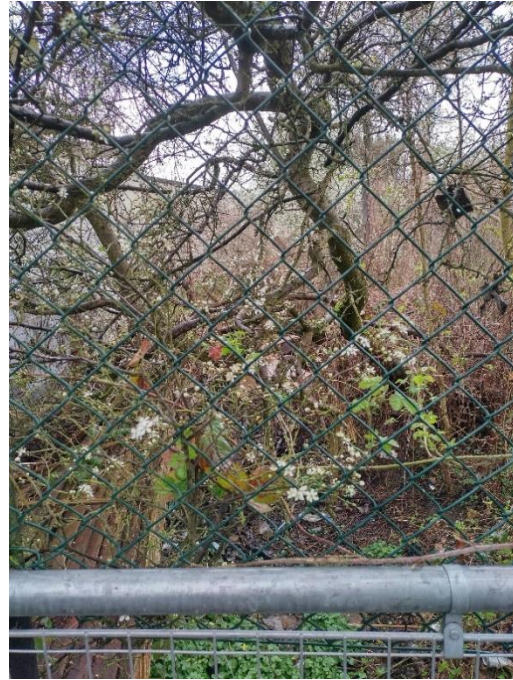
The Feltham hill brook is a deep, almost permanently dry channel. The channel is found full of litter and municipal waste from the adjacent dwellings that back onto the brook.

Historically, the brook appears to pass through Feltham hill farm, flowing southwest and forming part of the boundary between Spelthorne and the London boroughs of Hillingdon and Hounslow.

SBC Riparian responsibility:

SBC Riparian Ownership	Inspection/responsibility	Notes
Groveley recreation ground	3 x Annually	Large, deep channel, almost permanently dry. Inspect mainly for litter - tri-annual litter clearance at Groveley by back entrance.
Kenyngton Manor Park	Annual Inspection	

Images of Feltham Brook from Kenyngton Manor park



River Ash

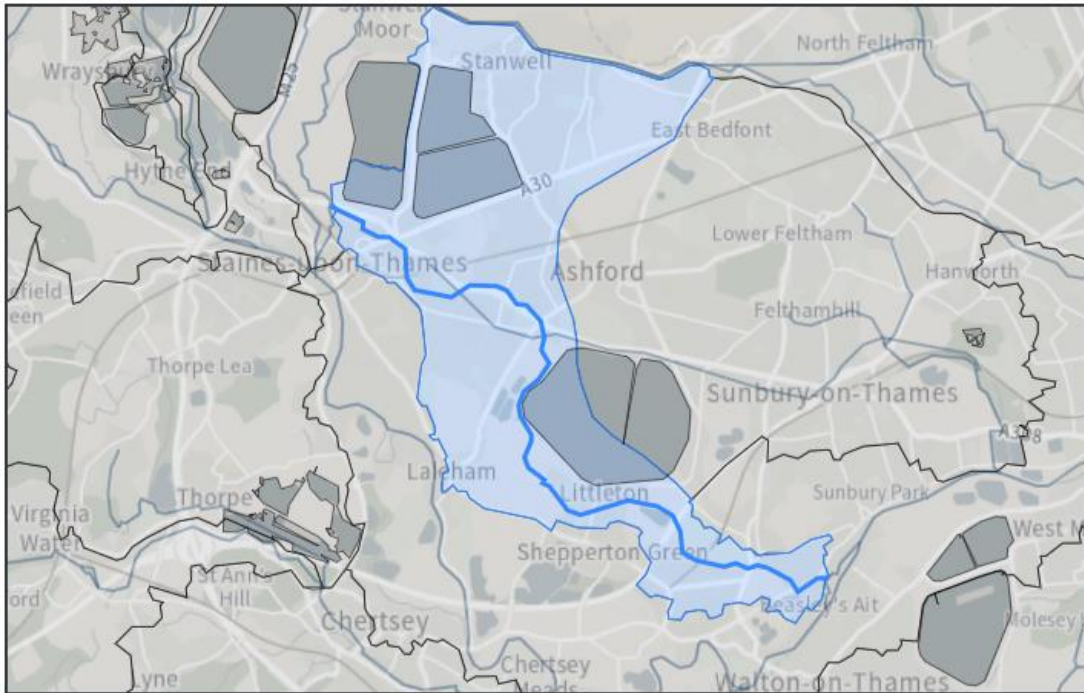
Background information:

The Ash is a 10km (6.2mile) river that flows from the river Colne south of Staines moor, flows south of the Staines bypass and joins the River Thames. It is a very stable, sluiced gate watercourse. The water levels are consistently around 0.5m throughout the course, depending upon the width of the channel.

The Ash is controlled by a sluice gate at its source from the river Colne. Therefore, it is not a 'natural' watercourse.

There are multiple points along the ash where water is discharged into the ash.

MAP of River Ash



Updates to note:

Nutty Lane – Thames Water treatment facility outfall point.

This is consented to discharge wastewater into the Ash at a rate of 45mL/hour 24 hours a day. As this is a computer-controlled mechanism that discharges when water levels are lower within the reservoir to clear silt from their water treatment mechanism, it typically discharges at a rate of 40mL/hour for 4-5 hours a day on average.

In August of 2022, during a prolonged period of drought, this outlet began discharging for 24 hours a day for 3 weeks. This caused the water level within the Ash to rise by approx. 2-3 feet. As a result, some residents gardens began to flood where they met the ash. However, further investigation found that many residents had be constructing artificial banks/outbuildings and decking areas on the bank of the Ash without approval from the EA. This therefore meant that damages caused could have been prevented.

M3 overpass, Sunbury golf course – Discharge from motorway drainage network around marker point 27/2 into the Ash.

Black Ditch

The Black Ditch is a main river located in lower Shepperton. The ditch is roughly 1km long, flowing from west to east, from its source of the lake on Littleton Lane to the River Thames.

SBC Riparian ownership:

SBC Riparian Ownership	Inspection/responsibility	Notes
Manor Park	Annual Inspection	These are to be inspected annually and require occasional litter clearance and vegetation clearance from the channel.
Russel Road Grass Verges	Annual Inspection	

Images of Manor Park section of Black ditch bordering cricket ground entrance



Sweeps Ditch

Background information

The Sweeps Ditch is an ancient, man-made defence ditch that in Roman and Medieval times likely forms the northern and western border of historic Staines.

Originally, the source is thought to be the Colne, passing through what is now Staines shopping centre and joining where the surface section currently exists. However, recent investigations propose that the source was likely the Ash, connected via a now defunct watercourse that likely split near modern

day iron bridge. Here the ditch likely flowed north to the Colne, and south to the Thames. After industrialisation, the construction of the railway and straightening of the Ash, the Sweeps Ditch likely became stagnant.

Until the 1980s, there was a complete connection from the Colne to the Thames, directed through a culverted section of the ditch in Staines town centre. After the redevelopment of Staines town centre, including the two rivers complex, the decision was made to make the Sweeps Ditch culverted and pump fed from the Thames.

Current situation

The Sweeps Ditch's current source is a small culvert and pump located on the River Thames at Riverside Carpark, Staines.

The ditch is then pumped to the original culverted section, northwest of the railway in Staines Elmsleigh Surface carpark. The ditch appears on the surface to the rear of units within the industrial park southeast of the railway. It then flows south/southeast overland through Staines Park, around 3 miles and joins the Thames just downstream of Penton Hook Lock.

As the Sweeps Ditch is a designated 'main river' it falls within the riparian owner's responsibility to ensure river flow without hindrance. This is interpreted differently between owners; some would have been unaware of their responsibility.

In October 2022, SBC distributed a letter to all potential riparian owners residing within 20m of a watercourse informing and reminding owners of their riparian responsibility. This was conducted in collaboration with Surrey County Council and the Environment Agency. Included with this letter was a Surrey County Council leaflet that visually detailed riparian ownership and guidance.

SBC riparian ownership along the sweeps ditch:

Riparian Ownership	Inspection/ responsibility	Notes
Staines Park	4 x annually	Focus areas: litter can build up between bridge to main park up to near the health centre; channel by Commercial Road bridge is also a dumping spot; Vegetation growth in channel where it borders back of Farm Close properties can require annual clearance; Reed growth by bridge to main park can require annual cut back; Pinch point in channel behind pond feature can get dammed by kids. Health Centre area is Surrey CC responsibility -

		they often need to be chased to undertake work.
--	--	-------------------------------------------------

Examples of Sweeps Ditch at various sections:

Image of upper section of Sweeps Ditch on Gresham Road	Image of mouth of Sweeps Ditch where it meets the Thames at Penton Hook lock
	
Sweeps Ditch as seen from the East side of Staines Park	Sweeps Ditch passing between Kingtsbridge Crecent and Nursery Gardens



Staines Moor Watercourses

About:

There are several watercourses in Staines Moor, a mixture of both naturalised and managed.

Spelthorne Borough Council is responsible for the management of Staines Moor, with the Lord of the Manor and the landowner being Brett Aggregates,. As part of this management, riparian responsibility for all watercourses within this section falls under Spelthorne Borough Council. Therefore, the following table outlines the details around riparian responsibility of all Staines moor watercourses.

Riparian Ownership	Inspection/ responsibility	Notes
Staines Moor Watercourses	4 x annually (1 per season)	<p>Biodiversity Officer regularly visits Staines moor and monitors the state and condition of watercourses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bonehead ditch ▪ River Colne <p>Focus area: Trees/vegetation growth on the banks of the Colne and the Bonehead ditch.</p>

River Colne

Background information:

The Colne is a tributary of the River Thames, joining just upstream of the Penton Hook Lock, in Staines Upon Thames. It forms the source of many distributaries within Spelthorne, including the Sweeps Ditch, Wraysbury River, The Ash and Longford river.

The Colne flows from its source in North Mymms park, Hertfordshire. The Colne is the largest of a unique collection of rivers within this catchment, ranging from internationally rare chalk rivers in the north, to canals, rivers, and lakes, which have been heavily influenced by gravel extraction and urban development to the south. The northern part of the catchment predominantly lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Current Situation 2023:

There currently are no ongoing flood concerns within the borough. There is a small section of the Colne that requires bank reinforcement within Staines Moor. However, this is not a flood risk and is a result of resident interference with the channel in 2014.

Moormede Open Space:

An area of SBC owned land that riparian responsibility is held due to it bordering the Colne. There are no concerns here as it is a significant main channel.



River Colne as seen from Staines Moor



Bonehead Ditch

Background information:

Bonehead ditch is a distributary of the River Colne and runs along the eastern edge of Staines Moor. The Bonehead ditch is a branch of the Colne, and it flows parallel to the Colne before re-joining the Colne just upstream of the two rivers complex in Staines Town Centre.

Current Situation 2023:

There are currently no flood risk concerns within the borough for Bonehead Ditch.

Bonehead ditch as seen from its mouth with the Colne



River Wraysbury

About:

The River Wraysbury is another branch of the river Colne. It leaves the river Colne at West Drayton, passes underneath the M4 and M25, where a branch of the Wraysbury feeds the Colne Brook. It then runs parallel to the M25, and flows back beneath the M25, across the western edge of Staines Moor where it re-joins the Colne in Staines town centre.

History:

Historically, as part of a management agreement between the landowners of the western most stretch of the Staines moor, SBC were responsible for land management of the area, and so held the riparian responsibility for this section of the Wraysbury. This agreement has since ended as of March 2023, therefore riparian responsibility of the Wraysbury is no longer under the responsibility of SBC.

Current Situation:

The responsibility for maintenance of the Wraysbury resides with the current landowners (who are unknown) and the Environment Agency, given it is a main river.

River Wraysbury as seen from Staines Moor.



County Ditch

The County Ditch acts as the western border of Spelthorne, on the edge of Staines. It flows from the lakes north of Church Lammas, namely, Heron Lake. The ditch acts as a flood relief channel for the Wraysbury through a

further flood relief channel located on the northern section of the Church Lammas Lakes, which flows into the county ditch within Lammas Park.

SBC riparian ownership details:

Riparian Ownership	Inspection/responsibility	Notes
Lammas Park	1 x Annually	No concerns here - No historical vegetation growth issues

Image of County Ditch as seen from Lammas Park	Image of Ditch as seen from Church Lammas Lake
	

Stanwell Watercourses (including Stanwell ditches & West Bedfont ditches)

About:

There are a few underground watercourses that run through Stanwell. In some areas, they appear as surface level drains that are then culverted underground.

Current Situation 2023:

There were issues with flooding in houses and gardens along Long Lane, adjacent to Long Lane recreation ground. It was determined that an underground culvert had become damaged, leading to surface water flooding.

This flooding was focused to areas around a drain that leads from the southern most part of Long Lane recreation ground.

There are ongoing conversations with Surrey County Council and the Environment Agency as to how this may be addressed in the future. See below photos for the state of the drain that became flooded.

Spelthorne Borough Council riparian ownership among Stanwell watercourses:

Riparian Ownership	Inspection/ responsibility	Notes
Stanwell Watercourses	4 x annually (1 per season)	<p>These watercourses are intercepted along Spelthorne Borough Council owned land in multiple areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Park <p>There is a culvert running under Village Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fern Walk <p>There are no concerns here, access is difficult due to fence and undergrowth blocking view but no historic issues. Connects to River Ash.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Lane Recreation Ground <p>Mostly these ditches are dry and overgrown. No immediate concerns.</p> <p>They are monitored by the Sustainability and Flood Risk Officer.</p>

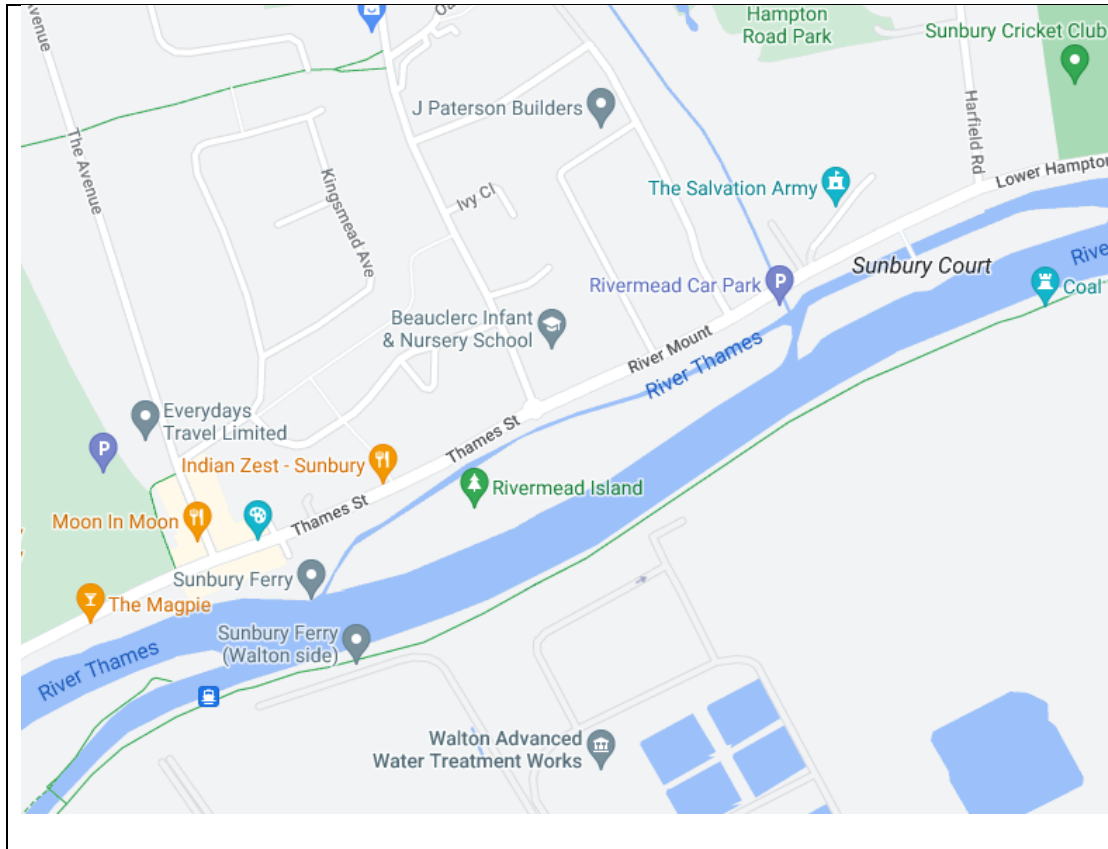
Image of Drain adjacent to long lane recreation ground



River Thames outlet

The River Thames outlet is a watercourse that leaves the Thames, forming the Rivermead island in Sunbury.

Map showing Rivermead island and the Thames outlet.



Riparian Ownership	Inspection/ responsibility	Notes
Rivermead Island	1 x Annually	Bank vegetation clearance 1x a year. Residents comment upon the levels of vegetation towards the mouth of the watercourse, this section lies within the riparian ownership of the residents that own the watercourse.

Ordinary Watercourses:

Ordinary Watercourses come under the powers of local authorities, however due to new legislation under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the enforcement powers are held by the Lead Local Flood Authority (Surrey CC).

This section breaks down each ordinary watercourse within the borough by area.

Stanwell Moor:

Hithermoor Farm

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	Private land - no access, do not monitor

Horton Rd/Hithermoor Road

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	Mostly on private land - do not regularly monitor

Hawes Lane

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	Soakaway ditch bordering Public Footpath. Originally connected to River at Hithermoor Road end, but blocked off many years ago, likely due to green waste fly-tipping. Long running issue with resident Mr Leer regarding flooding of the Footpath. Contact at Charles Morris redug a small channel at Hithermoor Road end to reconnect to River, to help alleviate flooding. No issues here now for several years.

Spout lane/Recreation ground flooded area:

Although there is not a known ordinary watercourse here, there is the presence of a semi-permanent source of water located in the Stanwell Moor recreation ground, on spout lane.

Photo of the water source located in the Stanwell moor recreation ground



Stanwell Town:

Longford river:

The Longford river is an artificial watercourse that is a distributary of the Colne designed to embellish Bushy Park and Hampton Court Palace. It was constructed for Kings Charles II as a water supply for Hampton court palace.

The watercourse is 12 miles long, joining lakes within the grounds of Hampton Court Palace.

The Longford is bordered on one side by a Surrey Highway and on the other by the London Borough of Hillingdon. There is no Spelthorne Borough Council owned land and so riparian responsibility is not held.

Longford river in north Stanwell	



The border of Stanwell Fields School:

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	There are no concerns here, it is a reactive situation

Shortwood Area:

Shortwood Common

There are two ordinary watercourses that flow through Shortwood common.

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Spelthorne land	Annual	Occasional clearance work but little flood threat to properties here, other than where borders Sykes Drive. Here the ditch is deep so still low risk.

Shortwood Avenue

A small watercourse that runs adjacent to Shortwood Avenue, into Shortwood pond.

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
Shortwood Common	There are no concerns here.

London Road Allotments

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Spelthorne land	Monitored by Allotment site rep	No Concerns

North of London Road

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	Private Land, no access. Do not monitor

Shortwood North Allotments

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
Shortwood Allotments	No concerns here

Staines:

Moor Lane

On three areas where watercourses interact with the grass verges on Moor Lane.

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Grass verges by Berkeley Close		No concerns here
Moor Lane Allotments & Common Land	Annual inspection	Occasional vegetation clearance

Moor Lane Common Land	Annual inspection	Occasional vegetation clearance/Litter Pick
--------------------------	----------------------	------------------------------------------------

Moor Lane North

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
Church Lammas	No concerns here, the channel is fairly wide and deep.

Birch Green & Moormede

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Birch Green Common Land	Annual Inspection	No Concerns as the ditch is dry.

Shepperton:

Manor Park Cricket Ground (Las Palmas)

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Manor Park	Annual Inspection	No Concerns

Ferry Lane

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
None	Annual Inspection	Has been cleared previously by Community Payback (arranged by local councillor)

River Ash side channel

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Studios Walk	Annual Inspection (Biodiversity Officer)	Managed by the Biodiversity Officer

Thames Meadow

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
Land bordering Walton Lane	Annual Inspection	Channel opened up after redevelopment of Walton bridge. Can become overgrown and collect litter. Occasional clearance required

Felix Lane

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	We paid for part of this watercourse to be culverted to reduce flood risk to bordering properties. This has left some onus on us to maintain but we are not a riparian owner here, so technically it should now be down to the residents.

Nutty Lane

Riparian ownership for SBC	Comments
None	None

Lower Sunbury:

Markway/Lower Sunbury ditch

Riparian ownership for SBC	Inspection	Comments
-----------------------------------	-------------------	-----------------

None - but footpath side is unregistered land	Annual Inspection	Minor flow/mostly dry watercourse. Does get quite vegetated in places and some fly-tipping. One side is bordered by residential properties the other by a public footpath. The footpath is on unregistered land so has no clear riparian owner. Spelthorne have occasionally carried out work here as have voluntary groups. The downstream grill does get partially blocked with detritus and needs clearing once a year.
-----------------------------------------------	-------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Ashford Common:

Spelthorne Wetspots

As of Surrey County Council, 2020

ID	Road Name	Town/ Village	Status	Score
SP039	Town Lane	Stanwell	InProgress	259
SP011	Thames Side	Laleham	Dormant	251
SP021	Ashford Road	Ashford	Dormant	151
SP003	Charlton road	Charlton	Resolved	137
SP050	Wheatsheaf Lane	Staines-Upon-Thames	Dormant	131
SP038	Staines Road West	Staines-Upon-Thames	Current	121
SP023	Hithermoor Road	Stanwell Moor	Dormant	106
SP006	The Broadway	Laleham	Current	93

SP048	Church Road	Shepperton	Resolved	78
SP017	Manor Farm Avenue	Shepperton	Dormant	74
SP037	Benen-Stock Road	Stanwell Moor	Dormant	61
SP046	Hale Street	Staines-On-Thames	Dormant	37
SP049	Parkside Place	Staines-Upon-Thames	Dormant	21
SP045	Gloucester Crescent	Laleham	Resolved	16
SP004	Ford Close	Sunbury	Dormant	6
SP051	Knightsbridge Crescent	Staines-Upon-Thames	Dormant	1