

**Report by Liz Green, West Alvington Parish Council's representative on the
Salcombe and Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum – 01 December 2020**

Parishioners are reminded that a number of road drains are linked to their nearest natural water course; often in our case, the estuary's waters. Therefore everyone is requested to act responsibly and report any pollution identified in the estuary immediately to the Environment Agency's Emergency number:- 0800 807060.

South West Water's phone number for reporting blockages in a public sewer is 0344 346 2020.

Some of the prolific dwarf seagrasses from the Blanksmill-Rowden-Collapit mudflats are being transplanted to other locations in the estuary in the hope that they flourish there too. The dwarf seagrass beds do a tremendous job in capturing and locking in carbon.

The project to reduce the number of feral, invasive, non-native Pacific Oysters (aka Rock Oysters) by manually pushing them down into the mud, ended in the summer. These oysters are having a concerning impact within the protected site of the estuary since they can significantly alter the ecosystem processes. Nigel Mortimer, South Devon AONB Unit's Estuaries Officer, has submitted a report to Natural England in the hope that funding might be made available to sustainably control them.

It has been confirmed that the dense, red tides observed in the estuary over the summer were due to a species of dinoflagellate -"Prorocentrum micans" which, fortunately, is harmless. A pleasant side effect of these nutrients has been incidents of bioluminescence. All parishioners are reminded to consider and reduce their release of nutrients that ultimately make their way into the estuary's waters. They don't only come from agricultural land. The South Devon Catchments Partnership is working on projects with the West Country Rivers Trust to improve water courses.

Defra has issued a request to anyone around the estuary who spots unusual, or a significant number of, bird deaths to report their concerns to the Defra Helpline 03459 335577, Option 7. This is in order to monitor cases of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu).

Concern continues over a resident pod of bottlenose dolphins around the south west coast that is sadly in serious threat of decline. In order to record their movements, the University of Plymouth is seeking archival or recent photos or videos showing the date and location of sightings of the dolphins. These should be forwarded to shauna.corr@postgrad.plymouth.ac.uk.

The next online Zoom meeting of the Estuary Forum's "Round-the-table" spring session will be on Tuesday 30th March 2021, by invitation.