

Incident update

Cryptosporidium in Hillhead, upper parts of Brixham and Kingswear areas

On Monday 17th June we held a community drop-in session at Kingswear Hall to meet with you and answer your questions.

For those who weren't able to attend, this document has the information that we shared, along with your questions and answers from the event.

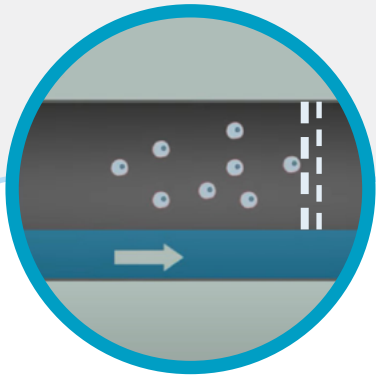
We are very sorry for the disruption and distress caused to people placed under a boil water notice and we're working around the clock to bring the supply back to normal for all households.

We would like to thank people in the affected areas for their patience and understanding during this challenging time.



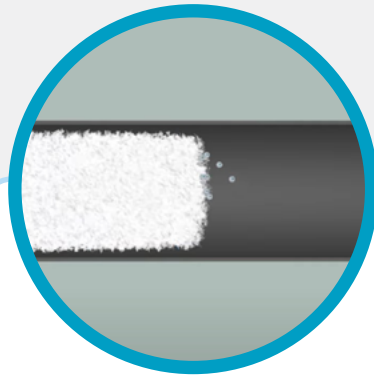
Scan this QR code
for more information

What's involved in removing cryptosporidium



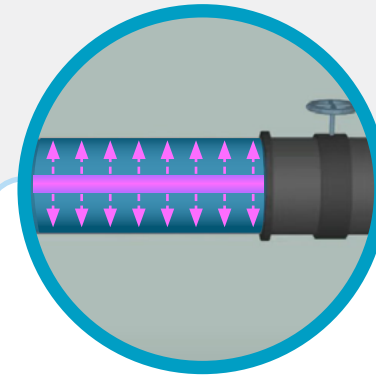
Filters

Specialised filters have been installed at our Hillhead and Boohay supply tanks, which act as barriers to the parasite.



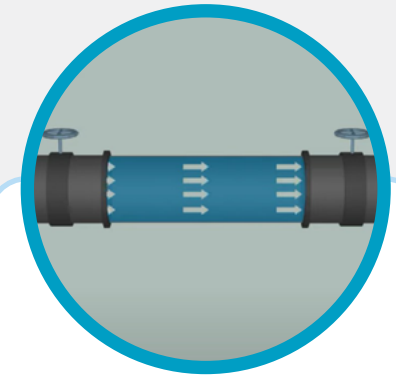
Ice Pigging

To clear larger pipes, an ice crystal solution is pumped in, scouring the pipes as it passes through. This process is called Ice Pigging.



Ultra Violet treatment

We are installing ultra violet treatment at our Hillhead and Boohay supply tanks, which kills cryptosporidium.

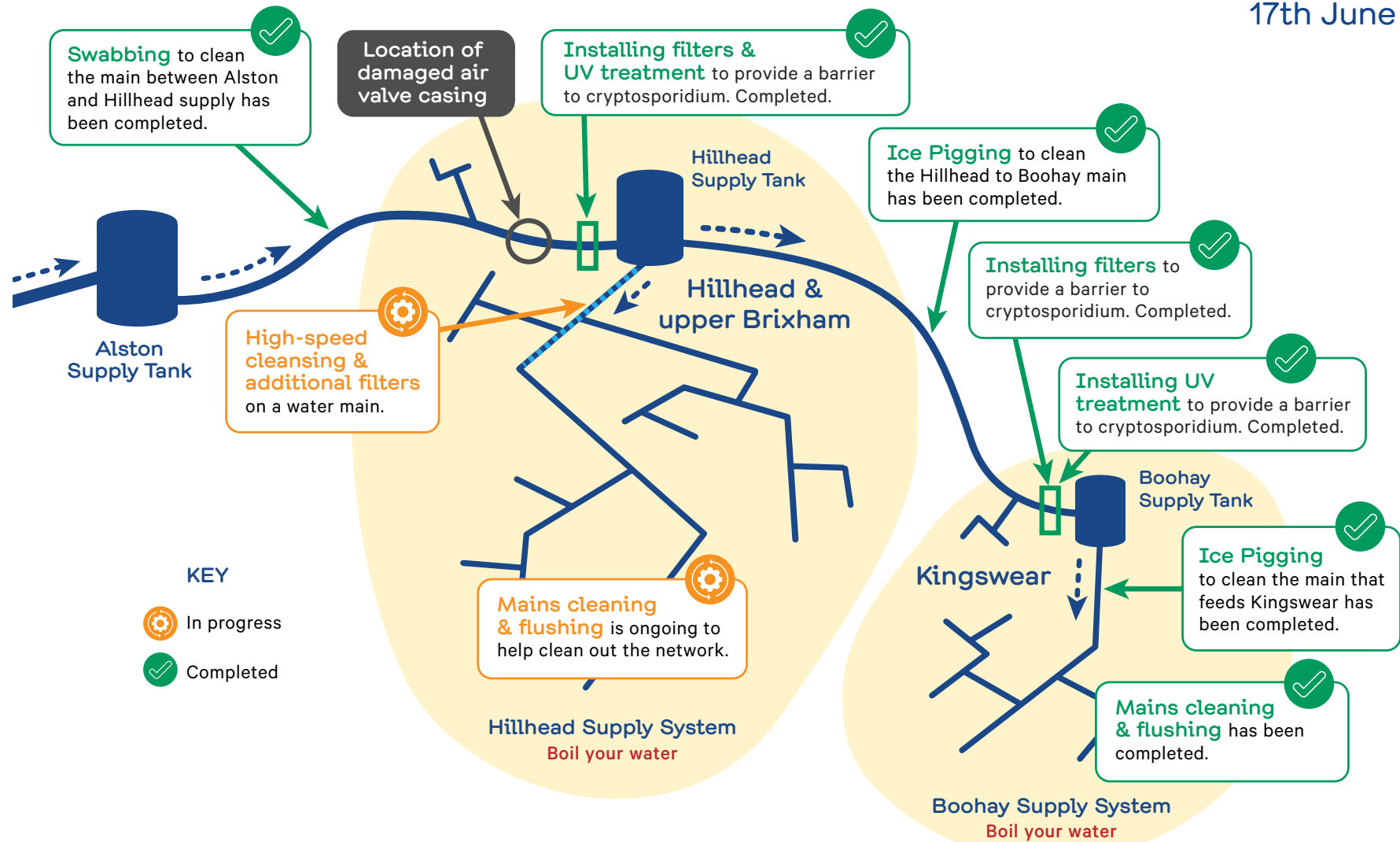


Flushing

To clear cryptosporidium from the system, we open hydrants to increase flow, flushing through the network.

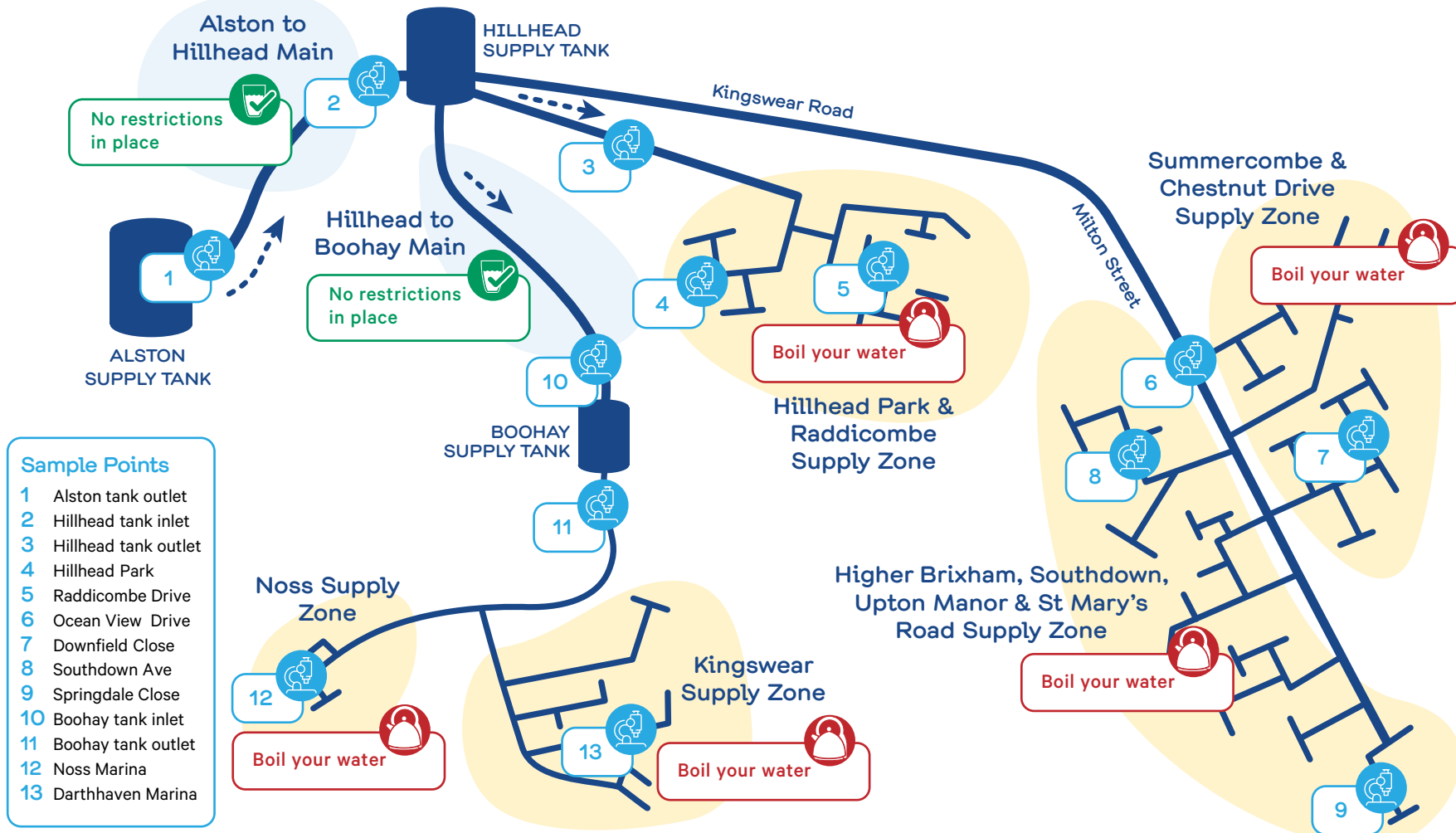
How we are cleaning the network

17th June



Our approach for lifting the boil water notice

17th June



Please refer to the appendix for data sampling results

What will you need to do when your Boil Water Notice is lifted?

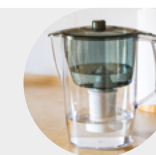
Step 1. Flush cold water tanks

If you have a cold water storage tank, or have been away from your property during the Boil Water Notice, you will need to run all your cold taps on full for 30 minutes to flush your system through. If you don't have a water storage tank, your water is fed directly from the mains so as you have used the water for things like washing and toilet flushing, you will have been flushing your system already. We will automatically apply a run-off allowance to all our measured customers' accounts for this.



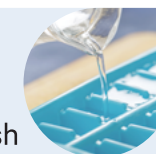
Step 2. Replace filters around your home

Replace filters around your home. This applies to filter jugs and plumbed-in water filters. You will need to replace all filters with new ones.



Step 3. Make fresh ice cubes

Make fresh ice cubes. You will need to discard all existing ice cubes, wash any containers that hold the ice, and remake. If you have a plumbed-in ice machine you will need to discard the stored ice, create a fresh batch of ice (this will flush the plumbing), and repeat. The second batch of fresh ice will be safe to use.



Step 4. Flush out boats and caravans

Flush out boats and caravans. You will need to drain your water tank and system, fill the tank with clean water, turn on all the taps and empty the tank again – this will flush the system. Once you've done that, you can refill the tank and use as normal.



Appendix



Were you sick, or did your business lose money as a result of the cryptosporidium incident?



Contact us on 03332 343 293 to start your claim.



Our claims handlers will contact you within two working days to discuss your claim.



Claims can be settled in as little as seven days by our claims handlers.

We want to support those who have experienced illness and/or loss of income as a result of the cryptosporidium incident.

Our teams are ready to start your claim. Call 03332 343 293 from 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 2pm Saturday and Sunday. Our claim handlers will contact you within two days to discuss your claim. Claims can be settled in as little as seven days by our claims handlers.

The more evidence you can supply when you call the quicker your claim will be processed.

Business evidence might include:

- Emails/correspondence showing cancellation of bookings or orders
- Profit and loss accounts and/or tax returns to show average net profit on turnover for the past 12 months or for the same period last year
- Receipts to show any financial outlay you have expended as a result of this event

Health evidence might include:

- A timeline of your sickness
- Symptoms that you have experienced
- Test results (if applicable)
- Details of whether you needed time off work

Questions you asked us on the day

Lifting the Boil Water Notice

When are you going to lift my area?

We are not yet able to confirm when this will be but we will lift as soon as it is safe to do so and are working hard to make this happen.

When will you start lifting?

The lifting of any notice will only take place once it is safe to do so and we can ensure that our customers will receive all of the necessary information and support. We are not yet able to confirm when this will be but we will lift as soon as it is safe to do so and are working hard to make this happen.

Why are you lifting for some areas?

Based on our interventions and the test results from the part of our network which supplies the properties for whom the notice has been lifted, we are confident the water is now safe in those areas. We will continue our heightened monitoring of the quality of your water for the foreseeable future. Since cryptosporidium was detected in our network we have worked as fast as possible to remove it and make the water safe again.

To do that, our teams have:

- Identified, removed and replaced the source of the contamination – an air valve casing
- Drained and cleaned the supply tanks and cleansed the pipework using a range of cleaning techniques including flushing, ice pigging and swabbing
- Put further protections in place, including microfilters at both the Hillhead and Boohay supply tanks and in the Hillhead supply network. We have also installed UV treatment at both the Hillhead and Boohay supply tanks, to provide additional barriers to cryptosporidium entering those networks.

Questions you asked us on the day

Lifting the Boil Water Notice

Who have you worked with during this incident and do they agree that lifting is right thing?

We are working closely with our public health partners on a regular basis and we will only lift the boil water notice when we and public health officials are fully confident it is safe to do so.

Where will you lift first?

We have already lifted in two separate zones. For remaining areas, we will lift as soon as it is safe to do so and are working hard to make this happen. The map on our website shows the individual zones we are looking at. We will also share the sampling data daily so that customers can see how areas are testing and getting close to lifting with clear results.

How are you going to ensure this won't happen again? What are the risks of this happening again in Brixham or in other areas?

Incidents such as this are thankfully very rare in respect of drinking water in the region and the UK as a whole.

We continue to actively investigate the circumstances in which this event has occurred and what further steps can be taken to avoid such circumstances arising again.

We have already installed additional protection around both the Hillhead and Boohay networks – UV and microfiltration – which will prevent any further cryptosporidium from entering those networks.

We will ensure any learning from this event is implemented within South West Water and share this learning with the wider industry.

Questions you asked us on the day

Customer support

What do I need to do now that you are lifting?

We will be advising customers to follow some simple steps to ensure the water in their homes is safe to drink.

We will be proactively contacting relevant customers directly when we are able to lift any boil water notices and will provide them with all of the necessary information on what they need to do.

Customers who are informed their property is no longer under a boil notice will receive an information leaflet through their doors that details everything they need to know for the lift.

How are you supporting businesses during this lift?

We will be proactively contacting businesses when we are able to lift any boil water notices and will provide them with all of the necessary information and support at that time. We have also reached out to businesses in the affected area to help them prepare.

Once lifted, the water supplied will be clear and safe to drink; we are asking non-domestic properties in the area to flush any cold water storage tanks amongst other steps. For those businesses with a drinking water network on their premises, we are advising them to contact their appointed water hygiene partner, as they will be able to advise on specific actions needed. We will reimburse the costs associated with this.

Do I need to do anything with my hot water tank once the boil water notice is lifted?

No. You can continue to use your hot water supply as normal for washing and bathing.

Questions you asked us on the day

Returning water supplies to normal

I hear you are ‘flushing’ the network. What is flushing - do I need to do anything?

Flushing is when we flush water through our network to clean it.

You may notice slight pressure changes or discolouration to your water during this time. On rare occasions you may experience a short interruption to your supply, but this should not last longer than an hour.

What will be done to make sure this doesn't happen again?

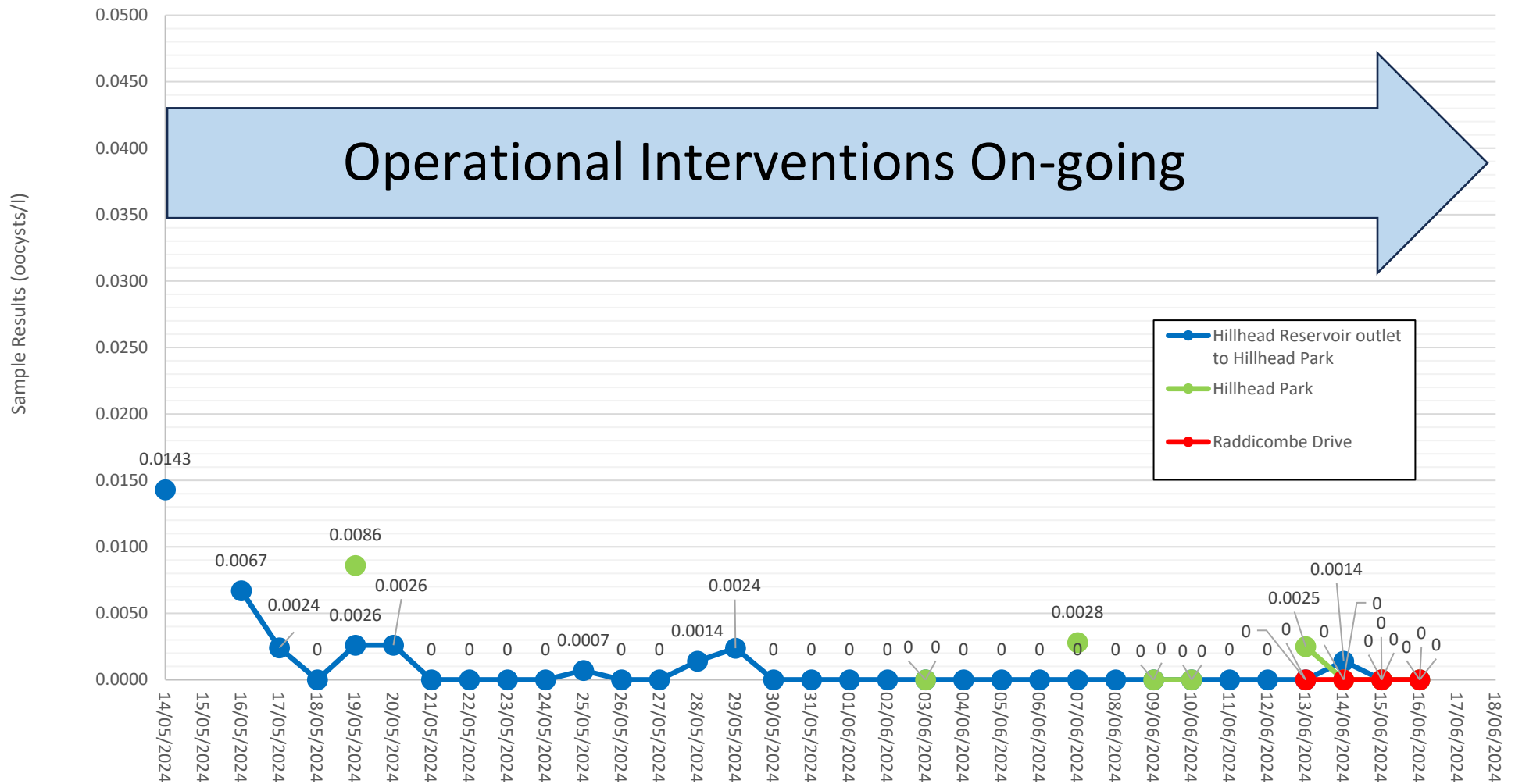
We continuously monitor for cryptosporidium from our treatment works.

Incidents such as this are thankfully very rare in respect of drinking water in the region and the UK as a whole. We will ensure any learning from this event is implemented within South West Water and share this learning with the wider industry.

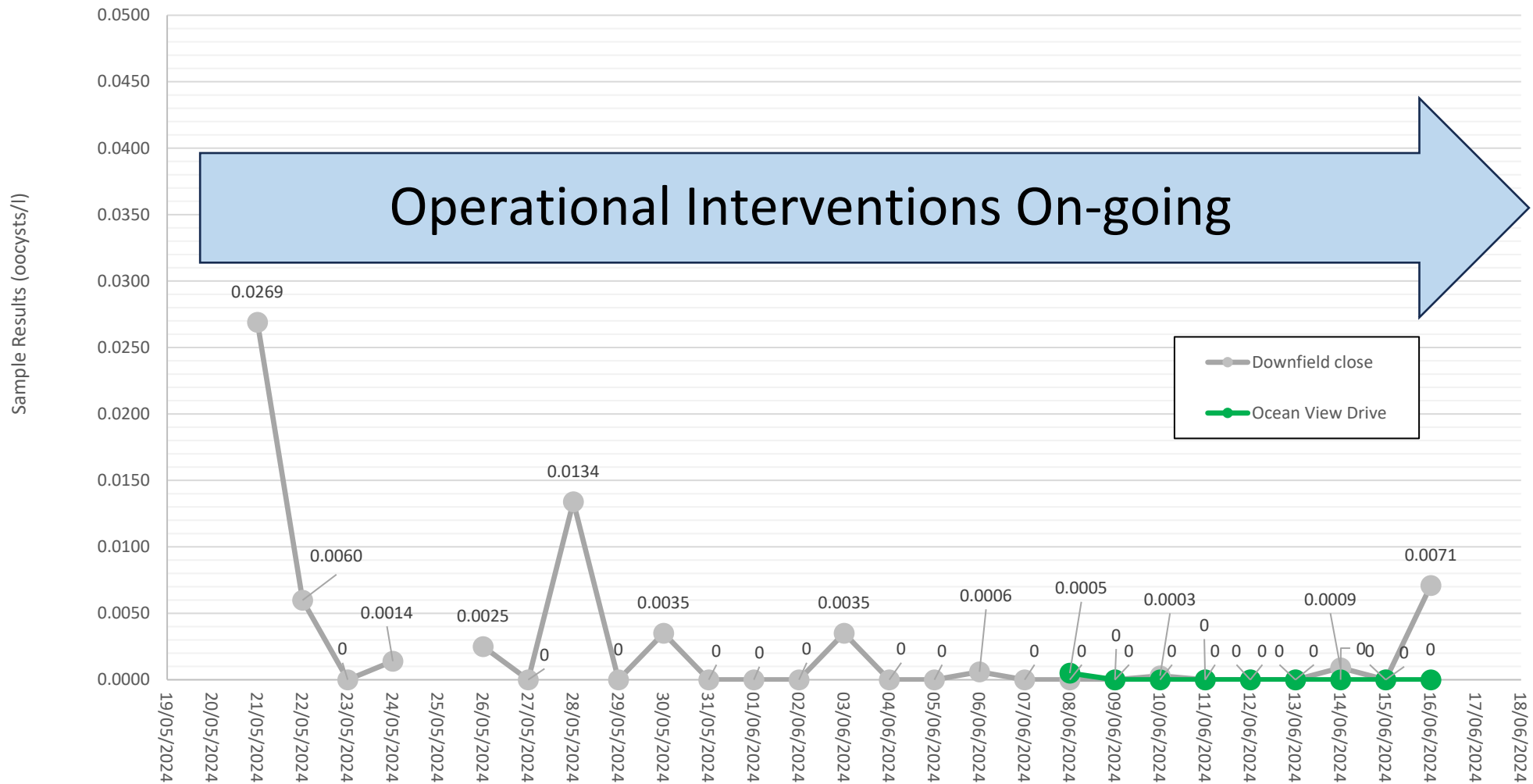
Is this due to lack of investment?

We've invested over £13 billion in our infrastructure across the region since privatisation and we are well underway in delivering more by outlining £2.8 billion of capital investment over the coming years. Despite this localised event, we benefit from some of the best drinking water in the country due to the investments we've made over recent decades.

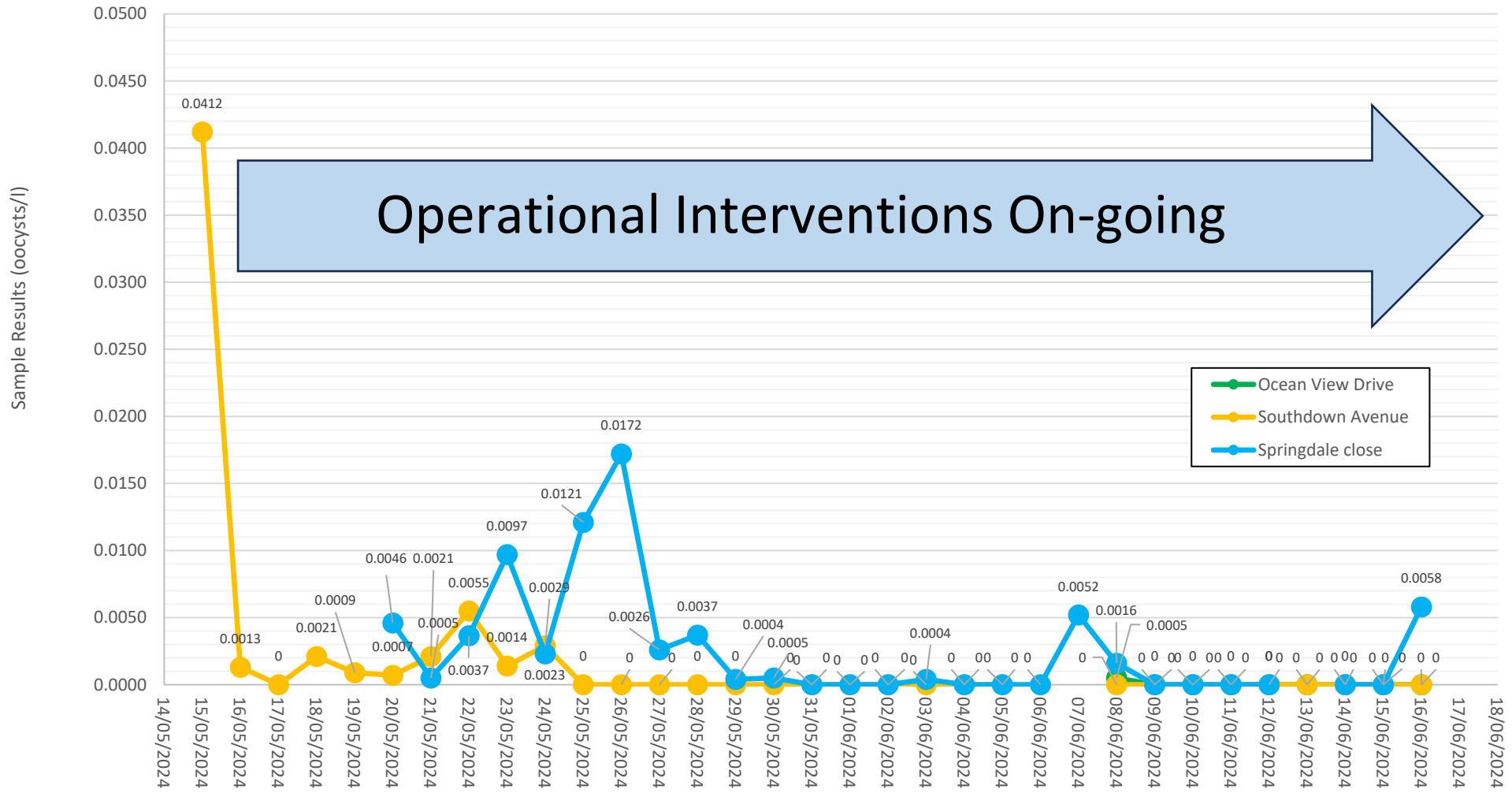
Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Hillhead Park and Raddicombe Supply Zone



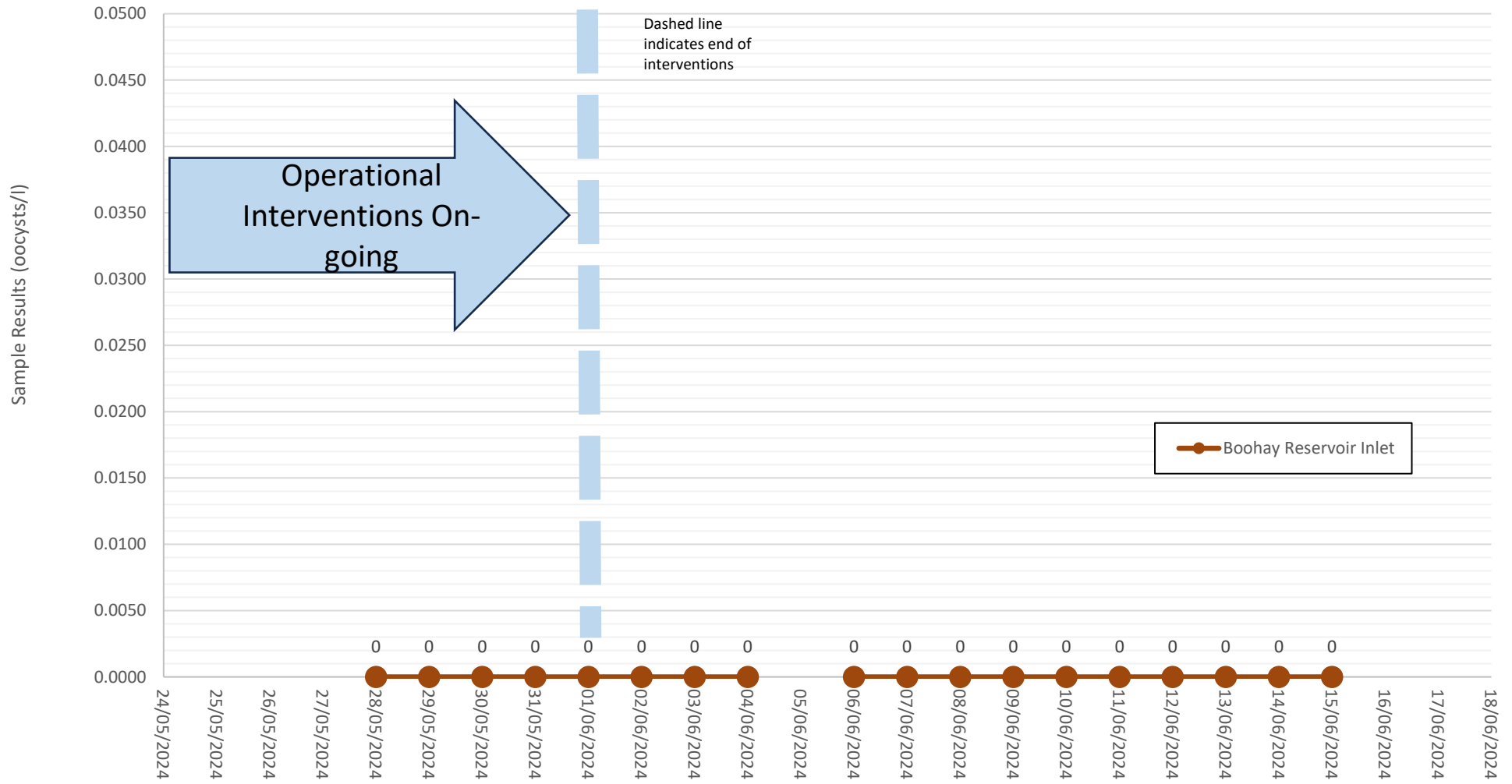
Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Summercombe & Chestnut Drive Supply Zone



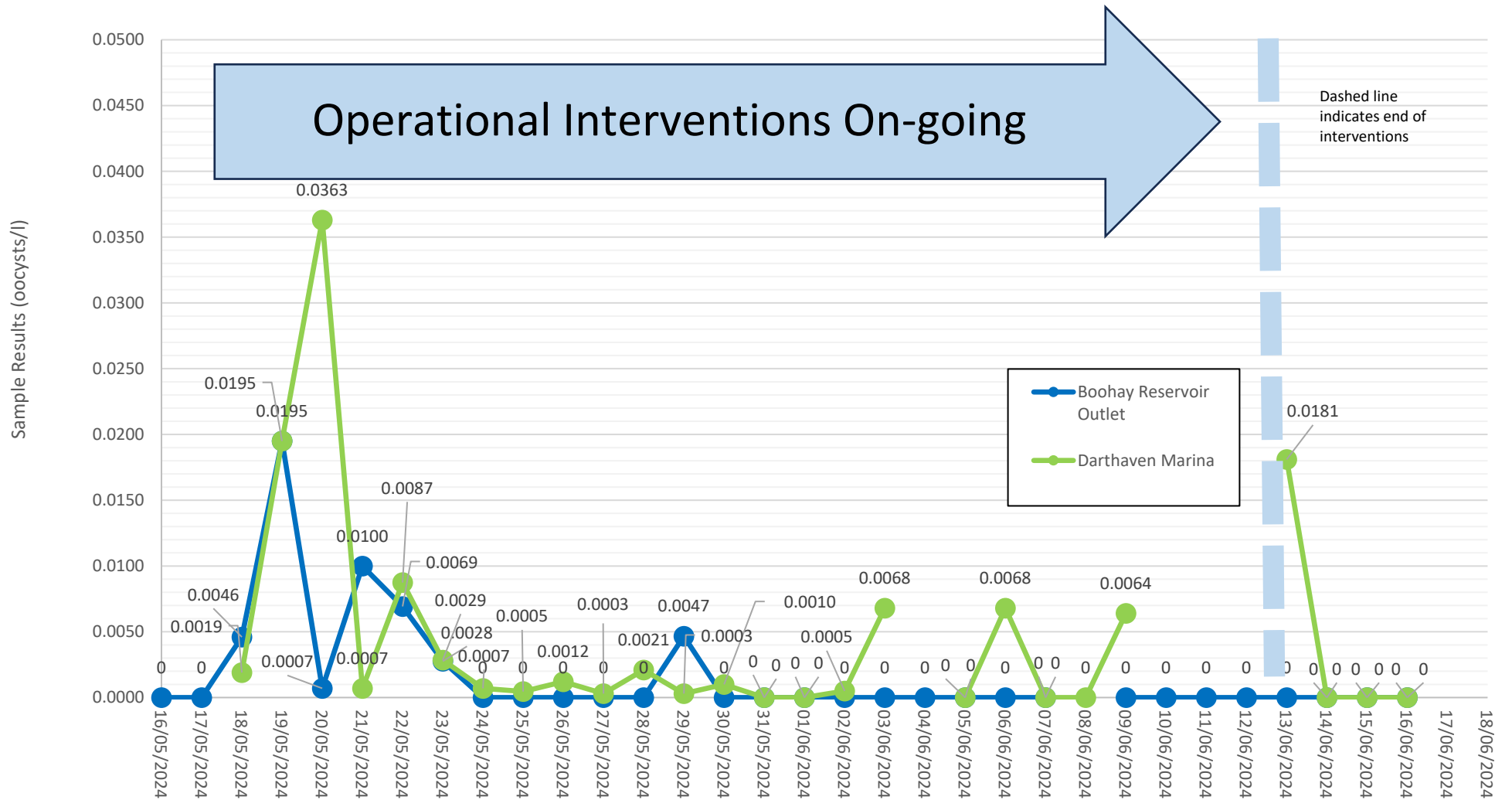
Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Higher Brixham, Southdown, Uptown Manor, and St Mary's Supply Zone



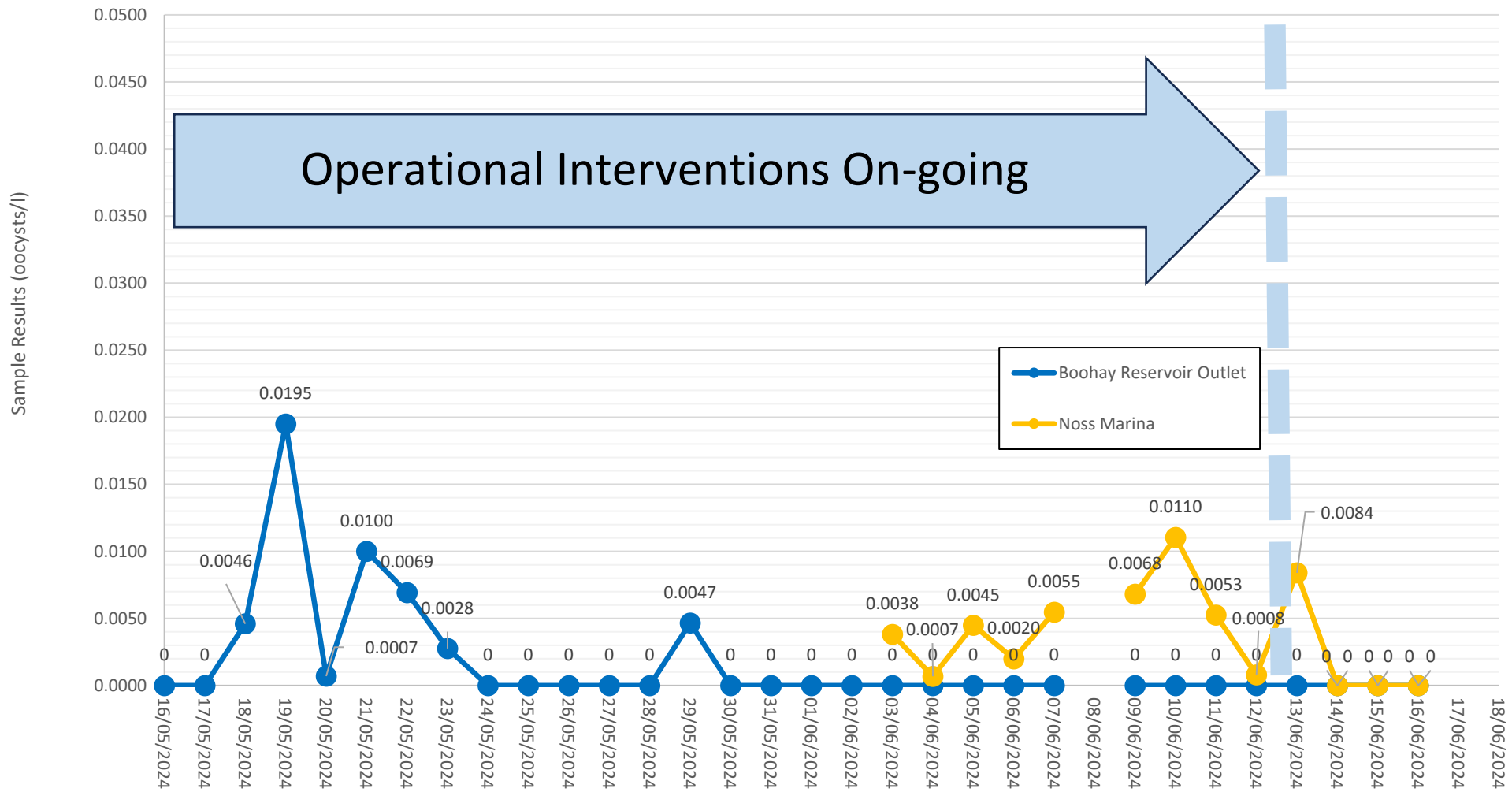
Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Hillhead to Boohay Main Supply Zone



Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Boohay Supply System - Kingswear Supply Zone



Cryptosporidium (oocysts per litre) in the Boohay Supply System - Noss Supply Zone



Cryptosporidium (oocyst per litre) detected in the Alston Supply Zone

