

## **ARK director meets MP Laura Farris to highlight problems facing chalkstreams**

ARK's director Charlotte Hitchmough was delighted to meet Newbury MP Laura Farris by the River Kennet in Newbury, Berkshire.

Charlotte highlighted the pollution caused by untreated sewage regularly polluting the rivers in the Kennet catchment, which include the famous River Lambourn as well as the Kennet itself. The scale of the problem has been recently revealed by a map created by the Rivers Trust which you can find by searching 'is my river fit to play in'.

In 2019 untreated sewage flowed into river in the Kennet catchment for more than 12,200 hours in 2,798 combined sewer overflow incidents. All these incidents were from sewage treatment works and the figures don't include the accidental spills or overflows directly from sewers.

The socially distanced meeting was also an opportunity to show how positive community involvement can make a huge difference to improving the health of chalkstream habitat, and give an overview of ARK's work.

Laura as quick to recognise the role of her predecessor Richard Benyon, who was instrumental in improving water quality and reducing abstraction in rivers, through his policies as Minister for the Environment.

**More information:** [www.riverkennet.org](http://www.riverkennet.org) or 01672 512700