



Press Release

14 June 2022

Local MP supports Action for the River Kennet's call for OFWAT to do more to stop sewage pollution

Pollution from untreated sewage continues to be a serious problem for the rivers in the Kennet and Pang catchments. Last year more than 1,020 spills of untreated sewage lasted for 12,837 hours in the Kennet catchment, and 363 spills for 5,317 hours on the river Pang.

In parliament last week Danny Kruger MP joined a debate lasting more than two hours calling for the water industry regulator OFWAT to do more to make sure that water companies clean up their act. Government instructs OFWAT on what its priorities should be and rivers trusts including Action for the River Kennet (ARK) are amongst many campaign groups asking OFWAT to make preventing river pollution a top priority.

Danny Kruger joined other MPs calling for tougher regulation on the water industry, a constructive approach to fines for pollution that would allow fines to be used to make good damage done, and more use of more nature-based solutions like wetlands and reedbeds to supplement improved sewer infrastructure. Danny Kruger made special mention of the work of ARK when he said: *'I end with a tribute to some people in Wiltshire who have inspired me to take up the mission of cleaning up our rivers ... I thank Charlotte Hitchmough, who leads Action for the River Kennet, which is an outstanding charity—I have been out planting trees and supporting its work.'*

Charlotte Hitchmough said 'We are very pleased to see this issue debated in parliament and thank Danny Kruger and his colleagues for sponsoring the debate and drawing attention to the groundswell of public opinion and scientific evidence that clearly shows we need to stop polluting our rivers with untreated sewage'.

The whole Hansard transcript can be found here:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-06-09/debates/AB74436F-08C2-4D89-8C54->

[75991181F67B/OfwatStrategicPriorities#contribution-9DE43C1D-8FA5-46BD-BFE7-EAEC9720560E](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/75991/181F67B/OfwatStrategicPriorities#contribution-9DE43C1D-8FA5-46BD-BFE7-EAEC9720560E)

The Rivers Trust map of sewage pollution can be found here:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ebbc9dccc0224420b9d6668ed3356ef4>

Notes to Editor

Action for the River Kennet (ARK) is a charity dedicated to protecting and improving the rivers in the Kennet and Pang catchments, we are proud members of **The Rivers Trust** movement.

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