Newnham
Nately Scures & Water End
Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026, 7PM, NEWNHAM CLUBROOM

Parish Councillors: Paul Gaskell (Chairman), Pauline Hedges, Matthew Morris, Sue Symons, Nick Walker; Clerk Susan Turner;

Guests BDBC Council Leader, Cllr Paul Harvey, and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, Cllr Andy Konieczko; Ward Cllr Kate Tuck. Members of the pubic 27

1 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting with introductions.

2 PUBLIC MEETING

Council Leader, Cllr Paul Harvey, and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, Cllr Andy Konieczko, to discuss borough issues including 'Water Infrastructure Capacity and Government Housing Targets'. Ward Councillor Kate Tuck also attended to give an update on her declaration of Rights for Rivers.

.1 Local Government Reorganisation decision anticipated on 25 March.

BDBC is seeking to keep level of councillors currently have; want to keep the local connection. Need to understand what 'Neighbourhood' means in this context; need to define and need a positive conversation what this means for Parishes and in urban areas not parished. Health service aligning with neighbourhoods may relate to social care and services; an opportunity to do things differently.

.2 Local Water Infrastructure; the River Loddon, the Upper Test catchment

Seeking to engage with the water companies serving the borough for waste water; and the Environment Agency. Recent open letters at **APPENDIX I.**

South East Water is the only one prepared to say they cannot meet demand above that set out in their 2024 Water Management Plan. New pipe from Surrey Hills already a decade late and has to be delivered through environmentally sensitive areas. Will not bring an overnight solution.

- With regards to Thames Water we have sewage tankers queuing in the roads of Basingstoke. The Sewage Treatment Works (STW) cannot cope.

The latest Water Cycle Study found that 10 out of 12 storm overflows in Basingstoke & Deane are currently operating above the threshold requiring investigation, including storm tank overflows at at Chineham, Kingsclere, Overton, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Silchester and Wash Water; 100s of hours of dumping sewage into the Loddon at both the Basingstoke and Sherfield on Loddon STWs – 2024 dates shows raw sewage was dumped in the River Loddon for 938 hours. This is the legacy of years of unchecked development without the infrastructure investment to match it.

The River Loddon and the chalk streams of the upper Test cannot absorb a decade of continued under-investment and continued pollution.

> 'At Chineham, Thames Water's Sewage Treatment Works discharges treated effluent directly into the Loddon at a point where the river is little more than a stream. The dilution ratio between the treated effluent and the receiving watercourse is extremely low, which means that the quality of the river at this point is fundamentally dependent on the quality of the effluent Thames Water discharges. Water quality modelling conducted for BDBC in connection with the Local Plan process found that even without further growth, this discharge has a material effect on phosphate and ammoniacal nitrogen concentrations in the upper Loddon.'

Southern Water serve the Test side of the borough

> 'The headwaters of the Test rise in the north of Basingstoke and Deane Borough. The upper Test is a tiny watercourse — in places little more than a few metres wide – where the river is at its most sensitive and most vulnerable – to which even small additional loads of nutrients, organic matter or toxic substances can have material consequences for water

 For signature ……

chemistry and ecology. It is precisely in this stretch that Southern Water operates several of its wastewater treatment works, and it is precisely here that the weight of planning pressure is most keenly felt.'

At Whitchurch, data for phosphates spikes with with increased rainfall and this coincides with points where data is missing from Southern Water's monitoring.

.3 **Local Plan update** Cllr Konieczko noted the last time visited Newnham, discussion focussed on Government's increased housing numbers as per the now current December 2024 NPPF. Increase from 750-800dpa to 1130-1150 and about 6K extra home up to 2040. Have now progressed the Local Plan through a Reg 18 Spatial Strategy consultation which pushed as many homes as possible into the town centre and Basing View and also sadly required the inclusion of additional greenfield sites such as Upper Swallick and Popham airfield which wasn't done lightly.

Crucially, part of this process included updating the Water Cycle Study; the opportunity to ask key questions regarding environmental impacts. The study demonstrated a current lack of fresh water supply; importantly South East Water have confirmed they cannot provide for the Government's higher housing targets.

The study equally identifies the failure of water companies to provide upgrades previously required to service the current Local Plan housing numbers.

'The fundamental problem: Local Plan evidence bases identify infrastructure requirements, water companies note them in their own planning documents, but no binding commitment flows from the process to ensure that the infrastructure is in place before development comes forward. The result is that consented development proceeds, connections to the sewage network are made as of right, and the treatment works become progressively more overloaded.'

Both the Environment Agency and Natural England responded to the Reg 18 consultation in relation to the Water Cycle Study and water supply issues. We are meeting with the EA and NE to find what means in relation to our Local Plan Process.

NPPF is changing yet again – the new Plan based on the December 2025 Draft will be adopted as early as the summer; to wait and see with what amendments.

It seems we will lose our ability to make our Local Plan more ambitious. Polices in our current Draft Local Plan which received the most support were those which supported enhanced requirement for quality of the fabric of buildings – to improve occupants' wellbeing and to combat and mitigate climate change – for energy efficiency / net zero. These Draft Policies cannot go ahead under the new draft NPPF which does not allow for requirements above national Government guidelines.

Cllr Koneiczko and BDBC officers agree as to Government's wider intention to remove decision making from local planning authorities and to introduce a system of automatic decision-making for planning applications. Government's recent removal of Neighbourhood Planning grants ties in with this; BDBC has for now replaced the previous Locality grants with its own funding.

.4 **Rights for Rivers** – Ward Cllr Kate Tuck spoke briefly on her motion for a declaration on Rights for Rivers as approved by BDBC Cabinet of 10 March **APPENDIX II**.

Cabinet agreed:

'To adopt the declaration on the Rights of Rivers and note the actions taken to date, including embedding protection and enhancement of the water environment into key strategies and into the emerging Local Plan.'

The rights include:

1. The Right to Flow – to follow natural and seasonal flow patterns.
2. The Right to Perform Essential Functions within its Ecosystem – to sustain the hydrological and ecological processes that underpin the health of the waterways and landscape.
3. The Right to be Free from Pollution.
4. The Right to Feed and Be Fed by Sustainable Aquifers and other freshwater sources – to be replenished by, and to replenish, groundwater systems without unsustainable depletion.
5. The Right to Native Biodiversity.
6. The Right to Regeneration and Restoration – to recover from damage, including through active protection, remediation and investment in habitat restoration.

Sadly this is not legislated, cannot go against existing law but can push it

It does raise the profile of rivers, provides a focus for thinking; our rivers will be considered in decision making, incorporated into all strategy and Local Plan Policies. Will assert as far as possible the importance of water courses.

Looking now to Parish Councils to support rights for rivers with their own declaration.

We are backing our local chalk streams; the borough is supportive and active in local water testing; pulling together all publicly available date; building evidence. The Environment Agency is reviewing the Thames Water permits; never seen such detailed reporting from the EA. In relation to the Moto planning applications we are asking key questions; also in relation to recent further increases in imported cake at the Chineham STW; a lot of detailed work going on.

In terms of planning applications, it is important for our planning officers to be asking the right questions. What do they do to ensure they are fully satisfied with information submitted? Beholden on councillors to ask awkward questions.

.5 **General questions**

- Q: Is the borough council's approach joined up across the county? A: No co-ordinated movement at the moment; other local authorities have looked at various ways to get around the housing numbers.
- Q: Recent investigations have highlighted the sometimes close affinity between EA and water companies; EA chief execs / managers moving on to lucrative jobs in water companies. A: This something government has to deal with.

  Noted: Experience with EA is that the people who do the work are brilliant, absolutely committed – this is where we want to take the issues to. But recognise the lack of resources not have time look through all detail of all issues.

.6 **Water End question** – from Water End resident regarding recent unauthorised works at the field behind the Iron Bull by Water End Park. The issue has been taken up by Ward Cllrs and BDBC Planning enforcement, but 'People on the Park are really scared about what will happen'. Paul noted that Planning Enforcement is an area of growing difficulty for recruitment. Will be happy to follow up on this… please continue to keep in touch with Kate.

Borough councillors left the meeting with the thanks of all.

3 **PUBLIC SESSION**

.1 **Owen's Farm** – Discussion and debate re the breadth of responses and topics covered in submissions to the consultation.

Members of the public left the meeting with the thanks of the Parish Council.

Parish Council meeting resumed.

4 **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING** of 20 January, agreed and signed.

5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** in items on the Agenda, none.

6 **OWEN'S FARM**

Update on responses to the application.

i Parish Council response focused on policy issues relating to landscape, views, public footpath, local gap, and coalescence / settlement identity, and heritage, notably the Newnham Conservation Area. Noting Hook's Neighbourhood Plan policy HK6 and past Inspector decisions **APPENDIX III and IV**. Also a summery of issues in relation to off-site access (road traffic) and flooding.

ii A detailed response from Hook resident civil engineer regarding road width restrictions at the bridge, at the Newnham Road / Old School Road junction, and at the narrow point of Newnham Road on entering Hook settlement.

iii Response from HCC Highways development planning incorporated all issues raised by the civil engineer; HCC have required topographic surveys from the applicant for Kingsbridge, the junction and Newnham Road to Hook.

iv Response from Environment Agency – a holding objection on grounds that part of site in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and applicant had not sufficiently taken account of impacts of climate change or sufficiently demonstrated that flood risk would not be increased elsewhere. So far an immediate but brief rebuttal from the applicant but with no further information supplied.

v Detailed paper from Newnham resident on local catchment hydrology and hydrogeology – with input from Hook residents – and submitted to Hart as from Hook Action; also to the Environment Agency. No further response from the EA.

vi List of questions re the deliverability of Thames Water provision for the proposal– compiled as at per v above and sent to Thames Water.

vii (A question re over-use of conditions in relation to water infrastructure and flood risk was also forwarded to BDBC council leaders prior to the meeting.)

7 N901 SUMMER FEAST ON THE GREEN and Silent Disco evening Saturday 30 May.

Proposal submitted by the Newnham 900 team for Parish Council support for a Newnham 901 summer banquet on the Green.

To build upon successes of the Newnham 900 event in bringing people from all parts of Newnham together; and upon the team's experience of hosting the event. The delivery mechanism for the summer banquet will be as for the N900 medieval banquet; agreed to again use Berro kitchens to meet the high expectations they created.

Admission will be by ticket to cover cost but looking to subsidise to a degree.

Further discussion

- This will be an evening event with provision for the banquet only.
- Not looking to repeat an event on the scale of N900 but a smaller event on a regular basis building on that success.
- People will begin to anticipate an annual event, will become something to look forward to.
- To make as affordable as possible so to be accessible to everyone.
- To set a baseline ticket price – the Friends will underwrite; then any profit will go to the Friends.

TO RECORD thanks to County Councillor Elaine Still who has awarded £750 to the Parish Council for the purpose of supporting the N901 event.

AGREED this to be a Parish Council event and so covered by the PC insurance.

AGREED to an additional contribution of £1K from the Parish Council.

AGREED that event cancellation insurance not required for banquet only.

8 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

.1 Accounts to date APPENDIX V Bank reconciliation at 15 March = £20,076.12.

(To note £4,146.00 received today from Friends (from ticket sales re reimbursement for N900 banquet – Berro Kitchen invoices) – not yet included in published accounts.)

Payments since last meeting of 20 January (inc VAT where appropriate)

73	Land Reg Deed searches ref Owens Farm application	£56.00
74	Clerk Salary Jan	£432.00
75	IdoxGeospatial-Emapsite OS Masterplan - imagery / topography	£412.60
76	Lloyds Bank service charge	£4.25
77	Clerk Salary Feb	£432.00
78	Clerk Allowance 2025/26	£324.00

Income of note since last meeting:

From County Cllr Grant for Green information board – £1K.

From County Cllr Grant for community event N901 – £750.

.2 Budget update APPENDIX VI

AGREED – Budget 2026/27 to be finalised to include expenditure agreed at 7 above.

.3 **Grant funding**

i County Councillor grants as .1 above (thanks recorded).

ii Bus shelter grant Notice received of grant award of £40,864 from HCC for replacing four x bus shelters.

TO NOTE – Subsequently confirmed the paperwork to be finalised in late April 2026 and payment made into the Parish Council account in June. Also confirmed that works can be scheduled *in lieu* of anticipated funding.

9 **PLANNING UPDATES (BDBC)**

.1 **Parish planning and tree applications APPENDIX VII**.

.2 **Land at Keepers – TPO applicatio**n submitted for Oak by gateway (action ST).

.3 **Newnham Conservation Area re-appraisal** Awaiting public consultation, this will be held after local elections.

.4 **MOTO M3, J6** (Old Basing Parish) Previously scheduled for Development Control (DC) Committee of 11 March; further Parish Council comment submitted and residents encouraged to make further comment. The application was subsequently withdrawn from from consideration at the the 11 March meeting reportedly due to the Case Officer assessing that more information is required from Thames Water.

TO NOTE Unlikely now to return to DC before summer.

10 **A30 and WATER END**

.1 **Lengthsman tasks A30** – Clearing pavement besides Scures Hill. Local map / diagram of work area needed and/description of work required (NW, ST).

.2 **Traffic monitoring camera** – on Highways post at junction Water End Land and A30. Installed without Highways' authority; immediate removal required.

.3 **Defibrillator registration** with the Circuit; previous registration via Iron Bull email address; to transfer (action ST). PH continues to monitor the defib; the cabinet continues to have an electricity supply..

11 **PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY** Notice of casual vacancy submitted to BDBC, advertised as required.

12 **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Tuesdays, 7pm Clubroom 19 May (AGM), 21 July, 15 Sept, 17 Nov.

Meeting closed 9.30pm with thanks to all

 For signature …… Date ……..

APPENDIX I.I – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC OF THAMES WATER 0F 02 MARCH 2026 (ref PH/AK/AR)

Re: Urgent Call For Action On Sewage Treatment, Storm Overflows And Infrastructure Investment In Basingstoke And Deane — The River Loddon And Upper Test Catchment

We are writing to you to express my profound concern about Thames Water's record of performance, and its plans for investment, in relation to the River Loddon and the upper Test catchment. We are calling on you to make urgent, binding commitments on sewage treatment capacity, storm overflow reduction and infrastructure investment in this area — commitments that are proportionate to both the ecological sensitivity of these globally rare chalk streams and the scale of housing development that planning authorities are proposing to approve in the coming years.

The Leader of the Council wrote to you recently regarding the concerns of residents about sewage being dumped into local pipes in local roads, queues of tankers on local roads, the complete lack of any engagement and consultation with residents to understand what was happening and why, and the shocking storm overflow being dumped into the River Loddon. You chose not to reply yourself, you let your communications manager respond and they stated that Thames Water saw no need for a meeting as requested. As democratic representatives of the local authority area in which Thames Water is dumping sewage into the River Loddon, queuing tankers on our local roads, your refusal to meet is a shocking action and further reinforces the complete lack of accountability.

We write against a backdrop of deepening public concern about Thames Water's overall performance. In October 2025, the Environment Agency awarded Thames Water the lowest possible rating — one star — in its annual environmental performance assessment, in what the Agency described as the worst set of ratings it had ever issued for the water industry. This is not a minor administrative shortcoming:

it reflects a pattern of serious and repeated pollution incidents affecting waterways across the Thames region, of which the problems in Basingstoke and Deane are a local but significant part. You have stated publicly that it will take "at least a decade" to turn the company around. The communities and ecosystems of Basingstoke and Deane cannot afford to wait a decade.

1. Basingstoke STW and the River Loddon: A System Under Severe Strain

The River Loddon is one of only around 200 chalk streams in the world — a habitat of global ecological rarity, characterised by exceptionally stable, gin-clear water fed by the chalk aquifer that underlies much of north Hampshire and Berkshire. It supports rare and declining species including brown trout, bullhead, white-clawed crayfish, water crowfoot and chalk stream invertebrates. It is, in every meaningful sense, irreplaceable.

At Chineham, on the northern edge of Basingstoke, Thames Water's Sewage Treatment Works discharges treated effluent directly into the Loddon at a point where the river is little more than a stream. The dilution ratio between the treated effluent and the receiving watercourse is extremely low, which means that the quality of the river at this point is fundamentally dependent on the quality of the effluent Thames Water discharges. Water quality modelling conducted for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in connection with the Local Plan process found that even without further growth, this discharge has a material effect on phosphate and ammoniacal nitrogen concentrations in the upper Loddon — and that any increase in the volume or any deterioration in the quality of the discharge risks causing measurable harm to the water body.

The borough's 2022 Water Cycle Study, and the 2024 Addendum to that study published alongside the November 2025 Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, both acknowledge that Basingstoke STW is the dominant wastewater discharge point into the upper Loddon, and that infrastructure upgrades will be required to accommodate the growth that planning policy is now directing to this area . Currently there is no binding, publicly accessible commitment from Thames Water as to when those upgrades will be delivered, to what standard, and how they will be funded.

2. Storm Overflows: An Unacceptable Record

We are deeply concerned about the frequency and volume of storm overflow discharges from the Basingstoke combined sewerage system into the River Loddon and its tributaries. These are not exceptional events caused by unprecedented weather: they are symptomatic of a combined sewerage system whose capacity has been overwhelmed by decades of urban growth, during which surface water drainage from new developments has been connected to the combined sewer rather than managed separately. We know raw sewage was dumped in the River Loddon for unacceptable periods of 938 hours in 2024, this after years of continued dumping.

Your company's own published investment plans for storm discharge sites acknowledge that Basingstoke STW is not expected to meet all government targets for storm overflow reduction until 2040 to 2045. I regard this as wholly unacceptable for a chalk stream receiving watercourse of this ecological sensitivity. The national Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan was developed to protect watercourses across England; its targets must not be applied uniformly without regard to the exceptional vulnerability of the receiving environment. A chalk stream the width of the Loddon at Chineham requires a far more protective approach than a large lowland river with substantial dilution capacity and a more resilient ecology.

We also note with concern that despite being identified as requiring an upgrade, Basingstoke STW does not appear among the ten priority major capital projects identified in Thames Water's AMP8 delivery plan. Sites such as Maple Lodge, Didcot, Oxford, Rye Meads and Bracknell have been prioritised; Basingstoke has not. Given the scale of planned development in the borough and the ecological status of the Loddon, this appears to be a serious misjudgement of risk and priority.

APPENDIX I.I cont….– LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC OF THAMES WATER 0F 02 MARCH 2026

3. Growth, Infrastructure and the Need for Binding Commitments

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has recently been consulting on a Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy (November 2025 to January 2026) that will, when adopted, provide the planning framework for thousands of new homes to be built in the borough over the period to 2042. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) has increased the borough's housing requirement compared with earlier plan iterations, and new strategic allocations are being proposed across the borough.

As the Council's own Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning has publicly described government changes to nutrient neutrality policy as a "huge step backwards for our waterways," warning that planning authorities were being effectively directed to proceed with housing growth regardless of the consequences for water quality. This is the political context within which Thames Water is being asked —

by the Council's Local Plan process and by the water cycle evidence base — to provide assurances about infrastructure delivery. Those assurances are currently absent. The 2024 Water Cycle Study Addendum, published as part of the November 2025 consultation evidence base, does not contain a binding, independently verified commitment from Thames Water as to when, how and to what standard the required infrastructure upgrades for Basingstoke STW will be delivered.

We are aware that Thames Water is currently in a highly pressured financial position, carrying approximately £20 billion in debt and undergoing a recapitalisation process. We understand that this creates genuine operational and investment constraints. However, the financial difficulties of a private water company cannot be used as a justification for failing to protect publicly owned environmental assets — assets that, once degraded, may take decades to recover and which cannot be replaced. The chalk streams of the Loddon and Test headwaters predate Thames Water, will outlast it, and their protection must not be contingent on its financial recovery.

5. What We Are Asking Thames Water to Do

In light of the evidence set out above, We are calling on Thames Water to take the following steps:

First, publish a specific, publicly accessible infrastructure delivery plan for Basingstoke STW, setting out the scope, timetable and funding of the upgrades required to accommodate planned growth in Basingstoke and Deane to 2042, with binding milestones and independent verification. This plan should include the upgrade works currently described as being "in design," should commit to a completion date substantially earlier than the current 2027 projection —given that consented growth is already coming forward — and should be incorporated into the next revision of Thames Water's AMP8 capital programme with appropriate priority.

Second, produce and publish a site-specific Storm Overflow Reduction Plan for the Basingstoke catchment and the River Loddon, with a programme to bring the number of storm overflow events and associated spill volumes into full compliance with government targets well ahead of the current 2040 to 2045 horizon —

reflecting the exceptional ecological sensitivity of the receiving watercourse.

Third, significantly increase the frequency and transparency of water quality monitoring upstream and downstream of all Thames Water discharge points in Basingstoke and Deane, and make this data available to the public, local authorities and environmental organisations in a real-time or near-real-time format. The current system of periodic self-monitoring and regulatory reporting is inadequate for watercourses of this sensitivity and does not provide communities with the information they need to understand the condition of their local environment.

Fourth, engage meaningfully and proactively with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Local Plan process, providing formal, binding assurances about the infrastructure delivery required to support the Local Plan's growth strategy — rather than issuing generalised statements of intent that do not commit the company to specific actions, timescales or standards. No Local Plan allocation whose development would increase the volume or nutrient loading of discharges into the Loddon or upper Test should be supported by Thames Water unless and until the infrastructure needed to prevent harm to those watercourses is in place or contractually committed.

You have said, Mr Weston, that turning Thames Water around will take at least a decade. We appreciate the candour of that assessment and the scale of the challenge you face. But the River Loddon and the chalk streams of the upper Test cannot absorb a decade of continued under-investment and continued pollution. They are already under profound stress from decades of over-abstraction, nutrient enrichment, and storm overflow discharge. Every year of delay makes recovery harder and risks causing irreversible harm.

We will be sharing this letter with the residents of Basingstoke and Deane, with the Environment Agency, with our local Members of Parliament and with local environmental organisations. We would welcome a substantive written response setting out Thames Water's specific commitments — not general intentions — in relation to each of the points raised above.

APPENDIX I.II – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC OF SOUTHER WATER 0F 02 MARCH 2026 (ref PH/AK/AR)

RE: Urgent Call For Action On Sewage Pollution, Treatment Capacity And Infrastructure Investment In The River Test Catchment

We are writing to you on behalf of the residents of Basingstoke and Deane Borough to call on Southern Water to take urgent action to protect the River Test and its headwater tributaries from the ongoing and increasing damage caused by sewage pollution, storm overflow discharges and the cumulative impact of inadequate wastewater treatment capacity. We write at a moment when Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has been consulting on a Draft Spatial Strategy — under its Regulation 18 Local Plan process — that, if adopted, will direct thousands of new homes into catchment areas already served by Southern Water infrastructure that your company's own published plans acknowledge will be unable to accommodate current growth trajectories without significant further investment. The situation demands urgent, binding action from you.

We note that in January 2025, you told UK lawmakers that the level of impact of pollution incidents by Southern Water was "inexcusable" and that Southern Water's response to service failures had "not been good enough." We welcome that candour. But candour before Parliament must be followed by concrete action in the catchments where the damage is being done. The River Test — one of the finest chalk rivers in the world, internationally designated for its ecological importance, and the lifeblood of communities, farms, fisheries and habitats across north and mid Hampshire — is one of those catchments, and the evidence suggests it has for too long been treated as a secondary concern.

1. The River Test: A Global Ecological Asset Under Threat

The River Test is one of approximately 200 chalk streams in the world — a habitat so rare that it is frequently compared in ecological terms to tropical rainforest. Fed by the chalk aquifer that underlies north Hampshire, it carries exceptionally clear, chemically stable water that supports specialist communities of brown trout, grayling, water crowfoot, brook lamprey, white-clawed crayfish and rare chalk stream invertebrates. Its lower reaches and estuary form part of a network of internationally designated Ramsar wetlands and Special Areas of Conservation. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest throughout much of its length.

The headwaters of the Test rise in the north of Basingstoke and Deane Borough, where the river is at its most sensitive and most vulnerable. The upper Test is a tiny watercourse — in places little more than a few metres wide — in which even small additional loads of nutrients, organic matter or toxic substances can have material consequences for water chemistry and ecology. It is precisely in this stretch that Southern Water operates several of its wastewater treatment works, and it is precisely here that the weight of planning pressure is most keenly felt.

2. Southern Water's Works in the Upper Test Catchment

Southern Water owns and operates 30 separate sewerage systems in the Test and Itchen river basin, including wastewater treatment works at Whitchurch, Overton, Oakley, North Waltham, Romsey, Fullerton and a number of other sites whose catchments either discharge to the Test directly or influence its groundwater-fed flows via the chalk aquifer. Your company's own Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan for the Test and Itchen Catchment acknowledges that without further investment, current discharge permits for wastewater treatment quality could be exceeded by 2050 at six wastewater systems, explicitly naming Romsey and Whitchurch among those at risk.

Whitchurch Wastewater Treatment Works discharges to the River Test at a point where the river is still in its upper reaches — small, sensitive, and with very limited capacity for dilution. Your own DWMP confirms the site has a consented dry weather flow of 2,336 cubic metres per day . An expert review of the Basingstoke and Deane Water Cycle Study, prepared by Archon Environmental for the Whitchurch Conservation Group and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in November 2022, found that the infiltration drainage systems at both Overton and Whitchurch Wastewater Treatment Works are located respectively approximately 100 metres and 400 metres from the River Test — meaning that treated effluent discharged to ground at these sites can, via rapid fissure flow through the chalk aquifer, reach the river in a very short time and without the attenuation of distance or soil chemistry that would apply in other geological settings.

The same independent review stated that Whitchurch WTW does not have an emission limit value for phosphorus — a critical omission given that phosphorus enrichment is a primary driver of ecological deterioration in chalk streams. It also stated that the River Test at and downstream of Whitchurch was failing to achieve good ecological status under the Water Framework Directive, with phosphate cited as a contributing cause. The review went on to identify that the Basingstoke and Deane Water Cycle Study (2022) did not assess the risk posed by unknown organic contaminants discharged to ground at these infiltration-based treatment works. Any increase in the volume of effluent discharged through growth-related connections to the Whitchurch or Overton sewer catchments would, without corresponding upgrades in treatment technology, increase the load of these contaminants reaching the chalk aquifer and thence the river.

3. Storm Overflow Pollution: The Kings Somborne Scandal and Beyond

The scale of storm overflow pollution into the River Test by Southern Water's infrastructure is staggering. Published data shows that in 2023 alone, the Kings Somborne wastewater treatment works discharged into the River Test on 239 separate occasions, lasting a combined total of 4,995 hours — the equivalent of nearly 21 continuous days of sewage discharge into one of the world's most ecologically important rivers. This is not a one-site anomaly; it is symptomatic of systemic under-investment across Southern Water's network in the Test catchment.

In March 2024, a public protest was held at Southern Water's treatment works on the River Test, with the Angling Trust's Director of Campaigns Martin Salter stating that riverkeepers had demonstrated that untreated sewage was being discharged into the Test on almost a daily basis for over a month. He warned that "the lack of investment in the sewage network means it is getting worse." Pete Farrow, Chairman of the Hampshire River Keepers Association, reported that riverkeepers had been reporting ongoing sewage discharges to the Environment Agency on a daily basis. These are not the claims of campaigners seeking to exaggerate a problem — they are observations by trained, experienced professionals with direct knowledge of these watercourses.

We also note that Southern Water's DWMP for the Test and Itchen acknowledges that climate change is expected to increase the risk of flooding in several wastewater systems in the catchment, explicitly identifying Oakley and Whitchurch — both within Basingstoke and Deane Borough — among those at elevated risk. If the sewerage infrastructure in these locations is already struggling to cope with current conditions, the prospect of climate-

APPENDIX I.II cont... – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC OF SOUTHER WATER 0F 02 MARCH 2026 (ref PH/AK/AR)

intensified rainfall events compounding the effects of growth-driven increases in dry weather flow represents a serious and foreseeable risk that demands immediate action rather than long-term planning.

4. The Nutrient Neutrality Challenge and the Designated Sites

Southern Water's own DWMP for the Test and Itchen acknowledges that new development in the Test and Itchen Catchment might put additional pressure on internationally designated habitat sites downstream, including the Solent and Dorset Coast Special Protection Area, and that solutions must be found to ensure nutrient neutrality. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Local Plan policy ENV4 already requires all net new development discharging into the Test and Itchen system to demonstrate nutrient neutrality to avoid adverse effects on those designated sites. However, the nutrient neutrality framework is being placed under significant pressure by the revised National Planning Policy Framework of December 2024, which has increased housing requirements across the sub-region.

Every kilogram of nitrogen or phosphorus that Southern Water's treatment works discharge into the Test above what would have entered in the absence of development represents a direct contribution to the nutrient loading that is causing ecological deterioration in the Solent's internationally protected saltmarshes, mudflats and seagrass beds. Southern Water therefore has not only a legal obligation to operate its treatment works within permit conditions, but a wider duty of care to the internationally protected ecosystems downstream of every discharge point in the Test catchment. The two are inseparable.

5. The Local Plan Process: Infrastructure Must Lead, Not Follow

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's November 2025 Regulation 18 Draft Spatial Strategy consultation — the most recent stage of its Local Plan process — proposes strategic growth across the borough, including in settlements served by Southern Water's treatment works in the upper Test catchment. The Council's 2024 Addendum to its Water Cycle Study, published as part of that consultation's evidence base, identifies continuing constraints on wastewater treatment capacity in these areas and notes outstanding requirements for infrastructure upgrades. There is currently no binding timetable or financial commitment from Southern Water for their delivery.

This is the fundamental problem: Local Plan evidence bases identify infrastructure requirements, water companies note them in their own planning documents, but no binding commitment flows from the process to ensure that the infrastructure is in place before development comes forward. The result is that consented development proceeds, connections to the sewage network are made as of right, and the treatment works become progressively more overloaded — until a wet winter produces a wave of storm overflow discharges that should have been prevented years earlier. Southern Water must break this cycle.

6. What we are Asking Southern Water to Do

We are calling on Southern Water to make the following specific and binding commitments:

First, publish a publicly accessible, independently verified infrastructure delivery plan specifically for the upper Test catchment — covering Whitchurch, Overton, Oakley, North Waltham and associated pumping stations — setting out the scope, timetable, cost and funding source of all upgrades required to accommodate planned growth to 2042 without deterioration in the quality of discharge to the River Test or its chalk aquifer. This plan should be made available to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as a material consideration in its Local Plan process, and should contain binding milestones that are enforceable by the Environment Agency.

Second, introduce an emission limit value for phosphorus at Whitchurch Wastewater Treatment Works as a matter of priority, consistent with best available technology standards and with the Water Framework Directive requirements for achieving good ecological status in the upper River Test. Southern Water should also conduct, and publish, an assessment of the phosphorus, nitrogen and organic contaminant loading from all of its treatment works in the Test headwater catchment, and commit to a programme of improvement works to reduce that loading to levels consistent with WFD objectives.

Third, produce a site-specific storm overflow reduction plan for all Southern Water discharge points in the Test headwater catchment, with a programme to reduce storm overflow events to the minimum technically achievable at each site — not merely to meet the minimum national standards, but to reflect the exceptional ecological sensitivity of the receiving watercourse. In particular, Southern Water should commit to eliminating the pattern of near-continuous discharge events of the kind observed at Kings Somborne and documented across the network in 2023.

Fourth, commission an independent hydrogeological assessment of the subsurface pathways between the infiltration drainage systems at Whitchurch and Overton Wastewater Treatment Works and the River Test, and publish the results together with a funded programme to address any risks identified — including by retrofitting treatment technologies or upgrading drainage systems to reduce or eliminate the risk of groundwater contamination in the chalk aquifer Groundwater Source Protection Zones.

Fifth, substantially improve the quality, frequency and public accessibility of water quality monitoring at all Southern Water discharge points in the upper Test catchment, providing real-time or near-real-time data to the Environment Agency and to the public via an accessible online platform — going beyond the minimum regulatory requirements in recognition of the ecological sensitivity of the receiving environment.

Sixth, engage formally, proactively and on the record with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Local Plan process, providing binding, site-specific infrastructure commitments that can be incorporated into the Local Plan as policy requirements — rather than the generalised capacity statements that currently appear in water cycle study evidence bases and that provide no meaningful guarantee of infrastructure delivery ahead of development.

Mr Gosden, you have acknowledged before Parliament that the impact of Southern Water's pollution incidents is inexcusable. The River Test is one of England's most important rivers — ecologically, historically, and as a source of drinking water for communities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It deserves to be treated as a priority, not as a residual obligation. The communities and wildlife that depend on it have been patient long enough.

We will be sharing this letter with the residents of Basingstoke and Deane, the Environment Agency, local Members of Parliament, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, the Angling Trust and relevant local environmental organisations. We would be grateful for a substantive written response — one that sets out specific commitments and timescales rather than general aspirations — to each of the points raised in this letter.

APPENDIX I.III – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC ENVIRONMENT AGENCY 0F 02 MARCH 2026 (ref PH/AK/AR)

Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol BS1 5AH
Our ref: PH/AK/AR

RE: Urgent Call For Environment Agency Intervention On Water Supply, Sewage Infrastructure, Storm Overflows And River Quality In Basingstoke And Deane

We are writing to ask the Environment Agency to take urgent and direct intervention in Basingstoke and Deane Borough, where the cumulative pressures of accelerating housing growth, chronic under-investment by water companies, persistent storm overflow pollution and inadequate river quality monitoring are placing our chalk streams and waterways at serious risk. The evidence from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's own Regulation 18 Local Plan Updates (January–March 2024 and November 2025–January 2026), its 2022 and 2025 Water Cycle Study, expert review of that study, parliamentary debate, and published data from Thames Water and the South East Rivers Trust, collectively demands a robust regulatory response that only the Environment Agency can provide.

1. The Scale of Planned Growth and Its Water Implications

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has finished consultation on its' Local Plan covering the period 2024 to 2042 which, under revised national planning policy, requires significantly more housing than previously planned. Now 21,000 homes in the plan period. An uplift of 40%. The Council's Regulation 18 Draft Spatial Strategy (2025) identifies growth scenarios delivering thousands of new homes —including in settlements served by already constrained wastewater treatment infrastructure, such as Whitchurch, Overton, Oakley, North Waltham and the wider Basingstoke urban area, as well as the Loddon area to the north east and east of the borough. The borough has already seen some of the highest rates of housebuilding in Hampshire over the past two decades, and its water and sewage infrastructure has not kept pace.

The Council's 2022 Water Cycle Study (WCS), commissioned to support this updated Local Plan, identified significant water-related constraints on planned housing growth across three critical domains: water resources, water quality, and flood risk. An expert review of that WCS, commissioned by the Whitchurch Conservation Group and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and prepared by Archon Environmental (November 2022), found serious concerns about the adequacy of planned wastewater treatment capacity, particularly in the upper River Test catchment, and about the risks posed by sewage effluent to the chalk aquifer and the internationally important chalk stream network.

1a. The 2024 Water Cycle Study Addendum and the November 2025 Regulation 18 Consultation

The November 2025 Regulation 18 consultation — focused on the borough's Draft Spatial Strategy for the period 2024 to 2042 — was accompanied by an Addendum to the 2022 Water Cycle Study (WCS Addendum, 2024), published as part of the updated evidence base. This addendum included an assessment of the water environment in relation to the expanded growth scenarios being proposed at that time, including large strategic allocations and a number of smaller sites in rural settlements.

The WCS Addendum acknowledged continuing constraints on wastewater treatment capacity, confirmed that Basingstoke STW remains the dominant discharge point into the upper Loddon, and noted outstanding requirements for infrastructure upgrades to accommodate growth. The addendum recognised the need for nutrient neutrality mitigation in the River Test catchment, where the Local Plan's Policy ENV4 requires all net new development discharging into the Test and Itchen system to demonstrate nutrient neutrality to avoid adverse effects on internationally designated habitat sites downstream. However, the addendum has not resolved the fundamental question of how the substantially increased housing numbers now proposed under revised national planning policy — including thousands of homes on sites not previously allocated — can be accommodated without material deterioration in the quality of either the Loddon or the Test.

Critically, the 2025 Regulation 18 consultation is itself an acknowledgement that the growth trajectory has increased significantly since even the January 2024 Regulation 18 consultation: new national planning policy introduced through the revised National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) has increased the borough's housing requirement, prompting a fresh call for sites and a revised spatial strategy. Representations to the 2024 Regulation 18 consultation, including from environmental groups and legal experts, highlighted that the Council's own Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning publicly described national government changes to nutrient neutrality policy as a "huge step backwards for our waterways," warning that government was "effectively allowing local planning authorities to ignore technical advice" — a warning that now applies with even greater force given the scale of allocations being contemplated in the November 2025 draft. The Environment Agency, as the body with both the expertise and the statutory powers to hold water companies to account, must not allow the pace of delivery to outrun the pace of infrastructure delivery, and therein we seek your help.

2. Water Supply and the Chalk Aquifer

Basingstoke and its surrounding communities depend on the chalk aquifer for drinking water. Evidence submitted to the Regulation 18 consultation process demonstrated that the Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies already prohibit further abstraction during low flow periods for the Upper Loddon, and that South East Water imports a significant proportion of its supply from outside the area. Crucially, the water supply system between Farnham and Basingstoke currently flows predominantly towards Basingstoke — a strong indication that local aquifer resources are already insufficient to meet existing demand.

APPENDIX I.III cont... – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC ENVIRONMENT AGENCY 0F 02 MARCH 2026

The Environment Agency's own blog has acknowledged that groundwater levels in parts of the South East have reached historically low levels, with chalk aquifers under sustained pressure from over-abstraction and reduced recharge resulting from climate change. Yet the planned housing trajectory in Basingstoke and Deane will place further demand on these already stressed resources. We seek help from the Environment Agency to ensure that water companies serving this area have robust, evidence-based Water Resources Management Plans that adequately account for this trajectory, they do not at this time, and that no abstraction licences are renewed or extended without comprehensive assessment of cumulative impacts on the chalk streams of the Loddon and Test systems. We are deeply concerned that there simply isn't the supply water needed to match future demand.

3. Sewage Treatment Capacity and Infrastructure Investment

The River Loddon — a rare, northward-flowing salmonid chalk stream, one of only around 200 of its kind in the world — receives treated effluent from the Basingstoke (Chineham) Sewage Treatment Works, operated by Thames Water. The works are positioned at a point where the Loddon is little more than a stream, making the dilution ratio extremely low and the river highly vulnerable to any deterioration in effluent quality or any unplanned discharge. The River Test catchment in the west of the borough is served by several smaller wastewater treatment works at Whitchurch, Overton, Oakley and North Waltham.

The Archon Environmental review of the 2022 WCS found that the actual dry weather flows at several WWTWs were approaching or exceeding permitted levels. The review also identified the risk posed by sewage effluent discharging to ground — via infiltration drainage — from WWTWs in the Upper Test catchment, where rapid fissure flow through the chalk could carry contaminants quickly into the river system.

Thames Water's own published investment plan lists an upgrade to Basingstoke STW — still being designed as of May 2025 — with a target completion date of 2027 Critically, Thames Water's site-specific page acknowledges that this location is not expected to meet all government targets for storm overflows until 2040–2045.

We have seen hundreds of hours of dumping storm overflow into the Loddon. Tankers are literally queuing to access the Basingstoke and Sherfield on Loddon STWs. They are pumping into pipes in surrounding communities because of the wait to access the STWs. This is utterly unacceptable and causing huge concern to local communities.

The 2040-45 date to address these issues is an unacceptably distant horizon given the volumes of development already consented and coming forward in the borough. Basingstoke STW is notably absent from Thames Water's initial AMP8 list of ten priority major capital projects (covering sites such as Maple Lodge, Didcot, Oxford, Rye Meads and Bracknell), re-enforcing concern that the works are not being treated as a priority investment. We ask the Environment Agency to use its regulatory powers to require Thames Water and Southern Water to publish binding, independently verified infrastructure delivery plans for all WWTWs in this borough that are proportionate to the scale of planned development, and to impose enforceable compliance milestones.

4. Storm Overflows: An Ongoing Crisis on the Loddon

Storm overflow discharges into the River Loddon are a well-documented and persistent problem. Parliamentary records show that in the first four months of 2020 alone, storm overflows occurred 40 times into the Loddon during an exceptionally wet period in April of that year, when the combined sewerage system was overwhelmed. Basingstoke sewage treatment works dumped raw sewage into the River Loddon for 410 hours in 2020. Independent reporting confirms that storm overflows have continued to discharge into the Loddon in more recent years. We know raw sewage was dumped in the River Loddon for unacceptable periods of 938 hours in 2024. In the last six months evidence from Thames Water shows dumping into the Loddon at Basingstoke for over 310 hours, Sherfield on Loddon for Over 323 hours, Mortimer for over 1,208 hours, Silchester for over 1238 hours and Ramsdell for over 698 hours.

These are not an isolated incidents — and reflect a structural problem with combined sewerage systems in Basingstoke, where developers have enjoyed an automatic right to connect surface water drainage from new homes to the combined sewer, vastly increasing the volume of rainwater entering the system during storm events.

The South East Rivers Trust's River Loddon Storymap, published in 2023, identifies sewage spillages, phosphate loading and wastewater pollution as major challenges facing the catchment, and warns that the risks to river health will intensify as the population of Basingstoke, Wokingham, Fleet, Aldershot and Sandhurst continues to grow in line with proposed development plans across the sub-region.

The Environment Act 2021 created new statutory duties for water companies to reduce and eventually eliminate storm overflow discharges and to monitor water quality upstream and downstream of overflows and sewage treatment works. We ask the Environment Agency to use its powers under that Act, and under the Environmental Permitting Regulations, to require Thames Water to publish a detailed, site-specific Storm Overflow Reduction Plan for Basingstoke STW and each associated overflow point on the Loddon and its tributaries, reflecting the small size and ecological sensitivity of the receiving watercourse. The government's national Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan must not be applied with a one-size-fits-all approach: a chalk stream the width of the Loddon at Chineham requires a far more protective standard than a large lowland river with substantial dilution capacity.

APPENDIX I.III cont... – LETTER TO CHIEF EXEC ENVIRONMENT AGENCY 0F 02 MARCH 2026

5. River Quality Monitoring: Gaps, Deficiencies and the Need for Independent Oversight

The Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (Regulation 18) Policy ENV9 on Water Quality commits to protecting and improving water bodies that are failing Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements and includes a monitoring mechanism linked to the River Basin Management Plan. However, representations to the Regulation 18 consultation — including from legal and technical experts — raised serious concerns that this policy is not adequately linked to WFD targets, does not protect the chalk aquifer itself, and that existing monitoring is insufficient to detect the direction of change within individual water quality elements before band deterioration occurs.

The Archon Environmental review found that existing Environment Agency monitoring data showed elevated orthophosphate and ammoniacal nitrogen concentrations at multiple points in the Upper Test catchment, with concentrations at some monitoring stations reflecting the influence of wastewater treatment effluent. There are also acknowledged data gaps regarding organic contaminants in groundwater, and insufficient monitoring of subsurface pathways by which effluent from chalk-discharging WWTWs in the Upper Test catchment can reach the river.

We respect the Environment Agency has a statutory duty to monitor WFD water body status. We seek help from the Agency to increase the frequency and geographic coverage of water quality monitoring in the Loddon and Test catchments, to include real-time or near-real-time monitoring at key points upstream and downstream of all significant discharge points, and to make this data publicly available in a meaningful and accessible format. Where water company self-monitoring data is relied upon — as is the case for treated effluent quality reporting at WWTWs — the Environment Agency should ensure adequate independent verification.

6. The Need for Coordinated Intervention Before Further Development Consents Are Granted

The Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan will, when adopted, provide the framework for consenting thousands of new homes over the period to 2042. Planning Policy for Water in England requires that development should not increase flood risk and should not be permitted where adequate wastewater treatment capacity does not exist or cannot be guaranteed. Water quality modelling undertaken for the previous Local Plan found that additional development during the plan period would cause deterioration in water quality affecting the Loddon, and recommended continuous environmental monitoring to ensure no significant impact on the water environment. We note with concern that the most recent draft WCS (2025) considers how infrastructure upgrades will be required to accommodate the expanded growth scenarios now being proposed.

We would welcome the Environment Agency, as a statutory consultee on the Local Plan process, providing the Council with clear and unequivocal advice that no further large-scale residential allocations can be confirmed in this Local Plan until water companies have published binding, publicly accessible, and independently scrutinised infrastructure delivery commitments.

7. Our Calls to the Environment Agency

In light of the evidence set out above, we ask the Environment Agency to:

First, urgently engage with Thames Water and Southern Water to require binding, publicly available infrastructure delivery plans for wastewater treatment works in Basingstoke and Deane that are proportionate to planned development growth to 2042, with enforceable compliance milestones.

Second, require that Basingstoke STW is included as a priority site in Thames Water's AMP8 investment programme, and use enforcement powers where investment commitments are inadequate or delayed.

Third, require Thames Water to produce and publish a site-specific Storm Overflow Reduction Plan for Basingstoke and the River Loddon, with a programme to meet all storm overflow targets ahead of the current 2040–2045 horizon — reflecting the exceptional ecological sensitivity of the receiving watercourse — and to enforce these requirements robustly.

Fourth, substantially increase the frequency, spatial coverage and public accessibility of water quality monitoring in the Loddon and Test catchments, with independent verification of water company self-monitoring, and establish real-time monitoring upstream and downstream of all significant discharge points.

Fifth, ensure that abstraction licensing decisions affecting the chalk aquifer serving Basingstoke and Deane fully account for the cumulative impacts of planned development, that no new or renewed licences increase pressure on already over-stressed chalk resources, and that Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies are updated to reflect the latest evidence.

The River Loddon and the chalk streams of the Test headwaters are irreplaceable ecological assets — globally rare, locally beloved, and wholly dependent on the regulatory protection that only the Environment Agency can provide. The evidence gathered through the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan process, the critique of the 2022 Water Cycle Study, and years of documented storm overflow incidents demonstrate that the status quo is failing our rivers. We urge the Agency to please act with the urgency this situation demands.

We are grateful for the partnership we have with the Environment Agency and we seek to work together to secure the future for our precious water ways.

Yours sincerely, Cllr Dr Paul Harvey Cllr Andy Koniezcko Leader of the Council Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure

APPENDIX II RIGHTS OF RIVERS

Adoption of a Declaration on the Rights of Rivers That Cabinet

1) Adopt the declaration on the Rights of Rivers as set out in Appendix 3 of the report; and

2) Note the actions taken to date, including embedding protection and enhancement of the water environment into key strategies and into the emerging Local Plan. The Rights of Rivers declaration is helpful in providing the Council's formal view on the importance of water courses in the Borough which will help to inform and guide key strategies in the future. The declaration highlights the need to protect and enhance water courses through the various strategies and actions in the control of the Council alongside those duties that rest with others.

Appendix Three - Declaration for Adoption

Declaration on the Rights of the Rivers in the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane

Humans depend on our rivers to provide clean water for drinking and sanitation, fertile soil, and regeneration but rivers also support an extensive diversity of species and ecosystems and play a vital role in the functioning of the Earth's continuous water cycle. Rivers are also one of the largest natural carbon-transport systems on our planet, moving land-based carbon to be stored in the oceans and providing temperature regulation functions.

This Council recognises that rivers are vital to the ecological health, cultural heritage, and future sustainability of Basingstoke and Deane. In the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane, these waterways also include our globally rare, ecologically fragile and irreplaceable chalk streams. The Borough contains the springs and headwaters of the River Loddon and River Test as well as important tributaries of the Itchen and the Kennet. Rivers and the wetlands they create give many communities a sense of place and identity. Many towns exist in their place because of a river. Despite this, rivers across the UK, and here in Basingstoke and Deane, face increasing pressures from pollution, over-abstraction, habitat degradation, and climate change. Communities increasingly demonstrate that they care for their rivers and concern grows for the poor state of our rivers' ecological health, which increasingly impacts public health.

To address these growing threats and to uphold our responsibilities to future generations, this council resolves to formally recognise the Rights of Rivers, drawing inspiration from the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Rivers.

1. The Right to Flow – to follow natural and seasonal flow patterns.
2. The Right to Perform Essential Functions within its Ecosystem – to sustain the hydrological and ecological processes that underpin the health of the waterways and landscape.
3. The Right to be Free from Pollution.
4. The Right to Feed and Be Fed by Sustainable Aquifers and other freshwater sources – to be replenished by, and to replenish, groundwater systems without unsustainable depletion.
5. The Right to Native Biodiversity.
6. The Right to Regeneration and Restoration – to recover from damage, including through active protection, remediation and investment in habitat restoration.

This Council therefore declares that:

1. The intrinsic rights of rivers within the jurisdiction of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will be acknowledged.
2. It will work with community groups, river trusts and environmental experts to identify and support the practical recognition of these rights.
3. It will support local initiatives and citizen monitoring efforts that protect and restore river health, such as citizen science water testing, riparian buffer planting, natural flood management and creating wildlife corridors.
4. It will embed river rights principles into council policies, where appropriate, particularly those concerning planning, development, land use, water quality, water management, and biodiversity.
5. It will commit to Council projects and strategies taking account of the principles of Rights of Rivers and chalk streams taking appropriate measures to protect these ecosystems and delivering enhancements where possible.
6. It will advocate to national and regional bodies, including the Environment Agency, the adoption of river rights frameworks and enhanced protections for our chalk streams and freshwater ecosystems.

APPENDIX III HOOK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY

Policy HK6 'Hook to Newnham Gap' requires that 'Development in the Hook to Newnham Gap, as identified on Fig 8.13.1, should not lead to the physical or visual coalescence of these villages, or damage their separate identity.'

2019 Judicial Review of Hook Neighbourhood Plan Gap Policy HK6

Wilbur Developments limited v Hart District Council Case Number: CO/3994/2019

Wilbur Developments contended that the Neighbourhood Plan Policy conflicted with Hart's Emerging Local Plan (ELP) from which a specific gap policy had been removed.

The Judge said that:

> *'A policy in the Neighbourhood Plan which designated specific gaps in its area was, in principle, in accordance with the ELP… the Neighbourhood Plan examiner showed that the gaps policy continued to be supported in the ELP, albeit in a different form.*
>
> *'The Neighbourhood Plan examiner had carefully balanced the potential harm arising from the policy against the benefits of maintaining the gap and had given adequate and intelligible reasons for recommending its adoption,' the judge said.*
>
> *'Wilbur Developments was a well-informed participant in both the Neighbourhood Pan and ELP examination processes and was able to understand from the examiner's reasoning why its prospects of obtaining planning consent to develop the Owen's Farm site "remained poor".'*

Dismissing Wilbur Developments' challenge, the Judge concluded:

> *'The court must be alert to the risk that a legal challenge is being used as a covert way of impermissibly reviewing the planning merits, which I consider to be the case here.'*

A further Neighbourhood Plan policy, requiring that views between the two villages should be respected, was also upheld.

APPENDIX IV OWENS FARM PLANNING HISTORY

APPEAL 22/00024/REFUSE (Received 03 May 2022) Appeal Dismissed – Fairfields Newnham Road, Hook : Erection of a detached four bedroom dwelling following demolition of existing outbuildings

21/01048/OUT (Validated 29 April 2021, refused 14 Oct 2021) Land at Owens Farm - Hybrid application for (a) Outline development (with matters except access reserved) for a retirement care living development comprising up to 160 units (C2 use) and local community facilities, pedestrian and vehicular access, parking areas and landscaping and (b) change of use of agricultural land to Suitable Alternative Green Space (SANG) with sustainable drainage pond

APPEAL 18/00018/REFUSE (Received Jul 2018, Appeal Withdrawn) Land at Owens Farm - Outline permission for the development of up to 700 dwellings, a 2ha site for a primary school, a 0.5ha site for a nursery, a 245m2 retail facility, a 284m2 community facility, together with associated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access, open space and landscape works. All matters other than access are reserved for consideration at a later date. Full planning permission for the provision of 9.68ha Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and means of access. (Revised Transport Assessment submitted.)

17/02317/OUT (Validated 04 Oct 2017, Refuse 20 June 2018) Land at Owens Farm – Outline permission for the development of up to 700 dwellings, a 2ha site for a primary school, a 0.5ha site for a nursery, a 245m2 retail facility, a 284m2 community facility, together with associated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access, open space and landscape works. All matters other than access are reserved for consideration at a later date. Full planning permission for the provision of 9.68ha Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and means of access. (Revised Transport Assessment submitted).

APPENDIX V – ACCOUNTS TO DATE

NEWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL INCOME 2025/26 - 17 MAR

Balance brought forward 1st April 2025										£27,356.76
Date	Item	Precept	BDBC Grass cutting grant	Councty Cllr grant	N900 income/	Hugo Fox refund	Vat PC	Vat (LM) 2024/25	Bank Interest	Total Receipts
30/04/2025	Parish Precept 6 months	£6,807.00								£6,807.00
30/04/2025	BDBC Grass Cutting Grant		£351.93							£351.93
	Hugo Fox refund (error)					£143.86				£143.86
22/09/2025	Tylney Hall N900 advertisement				£100.00					£100.00
25/09/2025	Silent disco deposit refund				£100.00					£100.00
29/09/2025	Parish Precept 6 months	£6,807.00								£6,807.00
12/01/2026	VAT reclaim LM 2024/25							£250.00		
	VAT reclaim PC- 2024/25						£40.50			
	VAT reclaim PC- 2025/26						£1,931.25			£2,221.75
06/03/2026	County Cllr grant (Green)			£1,000.00						£1,000.00
10/03/2026	County Cllr grant (Newnham 901)			£750.00						£750.00
17/03/2026	Friends of St Nics - reibursement				£4,146.00					£4,146.00
2025-26	Bank Interest								£575.91	£575.91
	Total	£13,614.00	£351.93	£1,750.00	£4,346.00	£143.86	£1,971.75	£250.00	£575.91	£23,003.45
										£23,003.45

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SUMMARY		
Bal brought forward 01 April 2025	£27,356.76	
Plus income	£23,003.45	
Minus expenditure	£26,139.34	
Balance	**£24,220.87**	
BANK RECONCILIATION		
Business instant access		
Community account	£51.94	
95-day notice account	£10,000.00	
Interest on 95-day notice account	£427.01	
Minus LM fund remaining	£1,250.00	
Plus LM VAT to reclaim 2025/26	£500.00	
Balance	**£24,220.87**	
PC VAT to reclaim 2025/26	£124.77	
BDBC S106 outstanding	£1,690.00	



NEWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL - EXPENDITURE 2025/26 - 17 MAR

				SUB TOTALS - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER	£1,097.38	£2,160.00	£0.00	£899.45	£0.00	£285.00	£1,070.20	£2,028.00	£165.00	£7,663.56	£1,349.34	£16,717.93
No	Inv date	Date paid	Supplier	Description	Admin / Governance	Salary	Clerk allowance	Villager	Owens Farm	Maintn general	Green Maintenance	Green project	Community	NEWNHAM 900	VAT	Total
47	25/09/2025	01/10/2025	TwoBirds experience	N900 - Falconry										£350.00		£350.00
48	26/09/2025	26/09/2025	St JohnAmbulance	N900 - First aid cover										£114.40	£22.88	£137.28
49	01/10/2025	01/10/2025	Defib Store	Replacement defib pads IronBull						£67.20						£67.20
50		01/10/2025	Chris Webster	N900-Marquee accesssories												
50A			??	Iron tableware hire - N900 banquet										£205.00		
50B			Sainsburys	Candles - N900 banquet										£24.17	£4.83	
50B			Eskdate	Table cloth - N900 banquet										£150.00		£384.00
51	SEPT	01/10/2025	Sarah Matthias	N900-Marquee accesssories										£118.87		£118.87
52	05/10/2025	05/10/2025	ResilienceHospitality/Defib Store	Replacement defib pads IronBull						£77.20						£77.20
52	04/10/2025	05/10/2025	AJ Braidwood	Tudor Reenactors										£600.00		£600.00
54	SEPT	31/09/2025	Clerk	Salary SEPTEMBER		£374.40										
55	SEPT	29/092025	HMRC	PAYE-JAS		£57.60										£432.00
56	13/10/2025	13/10/2025	Richard Knight	Clearing crossroads pond								£1,170.00			£234.00	£1,404.00
57	20/10/2025	20/10/2025	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
58	OCT	28/10/2025	Clerk	Salary OCT		£432.00										£432.00
59	13/11/2025	13/11/2025	Richard Knight	Green ditching							£740.00				£148.00	£888.00
60	17/11/2025	17/11/2025	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
61	20/11/2025	20/11/2025	Villager Sept 2025	Colour pages				£57.78								£57.78
62	20/11/2025	20/11/2025	Hook Action	Donation re leaflets	£50.00											£50.00
63	20/11/2025	20/11/2025	Villager Oct 2025	Colour pages				£57.78								£57.78
64	NOV	28/11/2025	Clerk	Salary NOV		£432.00										£432.00
65	16/12/2025	16/12/2025	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
66	08/12/2025	27/12/2025	Defibstore59149	Battery and pads-Old House						£261.00					£52.20	£313.20
67	DEC	27/12/2025	Clerk	Salary DEC		£172.80										
68	DEC	27/12/2025	HMRC	PAYE-OND		£259.20										£432.00
69	29/12/2025	31/12/2025	Historia Normannis	N900-Reneact plus history talk										£450.00		£450.00
70	29/12/2025	31/12/2025	RichardKnight-JCB&plant	Ditching2 Green, culverts&pipe							£600.00				£120.00	£720.00
71	10/01/2026	10/01/2026	PGGM-3406	Sleeper bridge								£280.00			£56.00	£336.00
72	19/01/2026	19/01/2026	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
73	28/01/2026	28/01/2026	Land Reg	Deed searches for Hook action					£56.00							£56.00
74	JAN	28/01/2026	Clerk	Salary Jan		£432.00										£432.00
75	30/01/2026	30/01/2026	IdoxGeospatial-Emapsite	OS Masterplan - imagery / topography					£343.83						£68.77	£412.60
76	17/02/2026	17/02/2026	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
77	FEB	06/03/2026	Clerk	Salary FEB		£432.00										£432.00
78	2025/26	06/03/2026	Clerk	Allowance 2025/26			£324.00									£324.00
79	17/03/2026	17/03/2026	Lloyds	Bank service charge	£4.25											£4.25
				TOTALS	£1,172.88	£4,752.00	£324.00	£1,015.01	£399.83	£690.40	£2,410.20	£3,478.00	£165.00	£9,676.00	£2,056.02	£26,139.34
	Inv date	Date paid	Supplier	Description	Admin / Governance	Salary	Clerk allowance	Villager	Owens Farm	Maintn general	Green Maintenance	Green project	Community	NEWNHAM 900	VAT	Total

APPENDIX VI – BUDGET UPDATE

NEWNHAM – 2025/26 ACCOUNT SUMMARY @ 17 March			2025/26 BUDGET MAR 2025		2026/27 BUDGET MAR 2026
NEWNHAM	2025/26 TO DATE	LATEST ESTIMATE			
INCOME					
Precept	£13,614.00	£13,614.00	£13,614.00		£14,294.70
County Bus shelter grant					£40,864.00
Grass cutting grant	£351.93	£351.93	£351.93		£351.93
Grant CountyCllr-Green	£1,000.00	£1,000.00			
WardCll-grants-Green					£716.00
S106-board/benches/bridge		£1,690.00			
S106-OpenSpace-wildlfie					
Bank interest	£575.91	£575.91			
Refunds HugoFox	£143.86	£143.86			
N-900-income/refund	£4,346.00	£4,346.00			
Grant CountyCllr N901	£750.00	£750.00			
VAT reclaim (PC) last yr	£40.50	£40.50			
VAT reclaim (PC) this yr	£1,931.25	£2,056.02			
VAT reclaim(LM) last yr	£250.00	£250.00			
Total Income	£23,003.45	£24,818.22	£13,965.93		£56,226.63
EXPENDITURE					
Clerk allowance	£324.00	£324.00	£324.00		£324.00
Assembly Expenses			£150.00		£150.00
Admin/Governance	£1,172.88	£1,172.88	£1,250.00		£1,350.00
Training			£200.00		£200.00
Salary	£4,752.00	£5,184.00	£5,184.00		£5,443.20
Maintenance-general	£690.40	£690.40	£800.00		£800.00
Green Maintenance	£2,410.20	£2,410.20	£2,000.00		£2,500.00
Villager	£1,015.01	£1,015.01	£1,000.00		£1,000.00
Community	£165.00	£165.00	£500.00		£500.00
Precept budget expend	£10,529.49	£10,961.49	£11,408.00		£12,267.20
PROJECTS'					
A30 / gateways			£12,500.00		£12,500.00
Event-Newnham 900	£9,676.00	£9,676.00	£5,000.00		
Event-Newnham 901					£1,750.00
Green project-(grant)	£3,478.00	£3,478.00	£1,000.00		£928.00
Bus shelter replacement					£40,864.00
Owens Farm	£399.83	£399.83			£4,600.17
VAT	£2,056.02	£2,056.02			
Total Expenditure	£26,139.34	£26,571.34	£29,908.00		£72,909.37
Precept budget expend		£10,961.49	£11,408.00		
Project expend		£15,609.85	£18,500.00		
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	£3,135.89	£1,753.12	£15,942.07		£16,682.74
BALANCE TO T/O	£24,220.87	£25,603.64	£11,414.69		£8,920.90
NEWNHAM	2025/26 TO DATE	LATEST ESTIMATE	2025/26 BUDGET MAR 2025		2027/27 BUDGET MAR 2026

APPENDIX VII PARISH PLANNING UPDATE 17 MARCH

APPLICATIONS NEW SINCE LAST MEETING 20 JAN

26/00595/HSE (Validated 27 March) Nately Scures House, Scures Hill. Single storey kitchen extension to rear elevation with balcony above

26/00562/FUL (Validated 17 March) Rowan Lodge. Construction of single storey flat roof extension to rear of building, to provide additional internal communal space for residents of care home. Extension to be constructed over area of existing external terrace within current footprint of existing building.

26/00566/RET (Validated 25 March) The Old House at Home. The siting of container to be used as additional kitchen facilities to serve public house (Retrospective) |

26/00144/LBC (Validated 02 Feb) and 26/00151/ROC (Validated 03 Feb) Newnham House Ridge Lane. Variation of condition 1 of 24/02797/FUL to amend drawing numbers to allow for various alterations to scheme [re Coachhouse]

T/00067/26/TPO (Approve 16 March Validated 27 Jan) Whisperwood, Newnham Road. Fell 3 multi-stemmed Ash trees on driveway entrance.

T/00036/26/TCA (Approve 02 March amended description - to not remove Oak tree, Validated 20 Jan) Fir Tree Cottage Newnham Road H3 - Laurel, Mixed hedge: Remove stems within 6 metres of area of damage. (height: 8m) H5 - Cotoneaster, Hawthorn, Mixed hedge: Remove stems within 5 metres of area of damage. (height: 3.5m

APPLICATIONS PENDING / RECENTLY DECIDED

T/00630/25/TCA (Approve 15 Jan,Validated: Mon 22 Dec) Ashmead Newnham Road. (1/2)To fell 2x Beech trees with tip dieback to ground level. (3)To fell 1x sick Horse Chestnut to ground level (4)To fell 1x Ash tree with ash dieback disease to ground level.

T/00602/25/TPO (Approve 21 Jan, Validated 01 Dec 2025) Land East Of Nately Scures House. T1. Oak: fell to ground level.

25/02829/HSE (Pending, Validated 03 Dec 2025) Fir Tree Cottage, Newnham Road First floor rear dormer and elevational alterations to include roof lights to ground floor rear.

25/02080/FUL (Pending, Validated 26 Aug) Land East Of Nately Scures House, Scures Hill. Self-build single detached house and associated access.

25/02019/RET (Grant 05 March, Validated 18 August) Land At Blackstocks. Variation of condition 9 of 21/01670/FUL - Erection of 1 no. dwelling - Changes to landscaping retrospective.

T/00474/24/TCA (Pending, 24 September) Newnham Lodge Tylney Lane. Acacia tree: fell and remove stump.

24/00882/LBC (Pending, Validated 16 Apr 2024) Nightingale Cottage, Heather Row. Demolition of existing south entrance porch, changes to fenestration, and erection of new porch with access ramp in revised position. Alterations to existing conservatory and replacement of glass roof with tiled roof. Various internal and external alterations.

OWENS FARM – HOOK PARISH

25/02564/OUT (Pending, Validated 15 Jan) Owens Farm Newnham Road. Outline application for up to 415 dwellings, landscaping, open space, SANG, SuDS, and associated works with access from Newnham Road (principle and access to be considered)

OLD BASING APPLICATIONS – MOTO

20/03130/FUL (Pending, withdrawn from DC 11 March 2026), Land At M3 J6 from J5 off slip. Construction of temporary access road to enable construction of Basingstoke Motorway Service Area.

25/00754/OUT (Pending, withdrawn from DC 11 March 2026, Validated 25 March 2025) Land Adjacent To J6 M3. Outline application (with access to be determined, all other matters reserved) for development of a new Motorway Service Area (MSA) and associated landscaping, infrastructure and ancillary works.