



LAURA FARRIS MP

Member of Parliament for Newbury

Richard Aylard
External Affairs and Sustainability Director
Thames Water
Clearwater Court
Vastern Road
Reading
RG1 8DB

18 September 2023

Dear Richard,

I am writing regarding serious concerns about the River Pang recently receiving a “poor” ecological status due to sewage discharge.

It is incredibly disappointing that the River Pang has gone from “good” in 2014-2016 to “moderate” in 2019, and has now been downgraded to “poor” by the Environment Agency. As you will be aware, this new rating follows months of ongoing discharge from Thames Water at Hampstead Norreys in my constituency – an issue that has caused serious consternation amongst local residents for some time and appears to be getting worse.

The Pang is a significant chalk watercourse in West Berkshire, with huge ecological significance, and such high levels of spillage present a significant risk to water quality and to public health. As such, I would be grateful for a clear statement from Thames Water on the action that is being taken to mitigate the effects of sewage leakage.

I understand that significant upgrades are coming to the Hampstead Norreys treatment works in 2025. This is not soon enough given the seriousness of the problem. Thames Water needs to treat this with the seriousness that it deserves and this needs to be prioritised for 2024.

I would also be grateful for details on the state of all sewage works along the Pang and for confirmation on how many times sewage leakage has occurred in the last three years; and how each leak has been addressed.

I would welcome the opportunity to attend a meeting of the Pang Flagship Project, as well as visiting some of the sites where the habitat and meandering works will take place.

I regret that I have to press so much on this issue, but after the events of recent months I have been seriously disappointed by Thames Water’s willingness to be proactive when its performance falls so seriously below the standard which its customers expect.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Laura Farris MP