



# Water Focus Group

Standing up for our countryside



The countryside charity  
Hampshire



# About the group

The Water Focus Group was set up in 2012 to establish a CPRE Hampshire Water policy, which was updated in 2023.

Hants globally rare iconic chalk streams are under threat and are a key component of all life in our dynamic countryside.

Our overarching policy is to: Link planning to water to protect our sensitive chalk streams - and therefore our living countryside.





# A Water Resource Policy for CPRE Hampshire

To protect our rivers and water supplies and prevent flooding in a time of climate uncertainty, rapid development and changing planning controls.

July 2023

## A. CONTEXT

## B. ISSUES FOR CPRE-HAMPSHIRE

- Protecting the Resource (reduce abstractions)
- Demand Reduction (efficiency/conservation & recycling)
- Water Quality and River Biodiversity (both declining)
- Floods & Droughts (more frequent)
- Climate Change (future-proofing)

## C. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- Policy 1 Support efficient use of existing Resource ( more mains-links & less leakage)
- Policy 2 Support Demand-Reduction (meters, price/tariffs, recycling, education)
- Policy 3 Link Planning and Water
- Policy 4 Support Agricultural Practices to conserve water in the Catchment
- Policy 5 Change Attitudes - to value & conserve water

## D. WHAT MEMBERS CAN DO (reduce flushing the loo)

## E. REFERENCES

# Why is Water so important to CPRE Hampshire?

Our rivers are a key feature of our countryside.

1. Rivers are the essential arteries of life for the entire aquatic food chain. Key habitats for prime species like salmon and trout but also for aquatic insect biota, (dragon flies, mayflies), birds and plants etc.
2. Over-abstraction and diverse pollutants & pollutions are increasing threats.
3. The aquifers which feed them are also challenged and depleted by our over-use of water. Housing numbers and water use are forever on the rise
4. Pollution from sewage, excess nutrients (N&P) and household chemicals & drugs
5. Climate change is reducing the recharge-period of the aquifers, whilst more frequently recurring droughts threaten us all and the living-countryside.
6. Flooding is mainly caused by inappropriate/excessive developments. Catchment management is key (e.g. land-use and original water meadows)
7. Rivers also play an important social and economic role in the countryside of Hampshire (e.g. watercress and fish farming plus salmon & trout fly-fishing)



# Our rivers are threatened by our water use

England has 80% of the 200+ chalk streams which exist on Planet Earth

Their low-nutrient, but high biodiversity, is very fragile.

Water quality and quantity are twin keys to river health

We are damaging our rivers both through over-abstraction and pollution, upsetting the natural balance.





# What we do

- Monitor as many water companies as we can – Southern Water especially as it's the largest (5 others (just) in Hants). Stakeholder for Southern Water.
- Represent CPRE Hampshire views on key water issues to CPRE's National Office, CPRE-SE Water Gp , LPA's, local-MP's, T&ICP,
- Make members aware through our mailings, news articles etc of what they can do for water locally, and in-house
- Encourage members to link planning and water in every planning application they respond to.
- Liaise with other CPRE groups on their issues e.g. Abingdon Resr.
- Liaise with river managers, Trusts and fishing groups. Wild Trout Trust Director (Shaun Leonard) is a member of our group.





# Key issues

There are a number of key issues affecting water in our area, and we're actively involved in addressing them.

1. Quantity. As stakeholders for Southern Water we monitor their Resource, Catchment and Drought Management plans. Hampshire's shortfall could increase to around 192 million litres of water a day by 2035 during droughts.
2. Quality. The role of nutrients (N & P) and the related planning protocols.
3. The frequency and severity of combined sewer outflows (CSO's).
4. The state of the aged, inefficient, waste-water infrastructure, including both public sewers, drains & private septic tanks. Also household chemical cocktails.
5. Demand. The building regulations (or lack of them) to regulate demand and reduce average UK use of 142 lppd to 100 lppd (Southern Water's ott target) or 120 lppd. (Govt. target) B-Regs 'recycling by 2060'
6. Behaviour. Misuse of rivers. Stopping the use of river-beds as driveways as in the Meon; dumping rubbish, dog flea/pesticide control etc.



# Our area

West Hampshire is very short of water – approx. 90Mlpd will need to be transferred-in.

East Hampshire has abundant water from PWC's Bedhampton Springs. West Hants. has reached the harm-limit of supplies from local natural sources. (Us v Nature)

The Test and Itchen flows are now being protected by the EA as iconic chalk streams.

The EA has set a minimum flow limit to protect the rivers. This limit can be exceeded in severe droughts - but only until 2030!

So, other supplies must be found.





# What happens after 2030?

S.W.'s 'Water for Life' Havant Thicket Reservoir is now underway.

CPRE Hampshire supported both this new reservoir, and the later added wastewater-recycling and transfer plan (with some reservations), because there is no reasonable alternative to stop the regular drought shortages which are killing our iconic chalk rivers.





# The Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project (-7)

- Build a new advanced wastewater recycling plant south of Havant to turn treated wastewater into clean, recycled 'pure' water, by 2035?
- New underground pipeline takes recycled water to top-up the nearby new HT-reservoir.
- New 40km pipeline to transfer water from the new HT-reservoir to Otterbourne Water Treatment Works, where it will be treated further to become drinking water.
- Existing long sea outfall from Budds Farm WWTW to release mixed reject water stream from the joint water recycling plants, dispersed out into the sea.



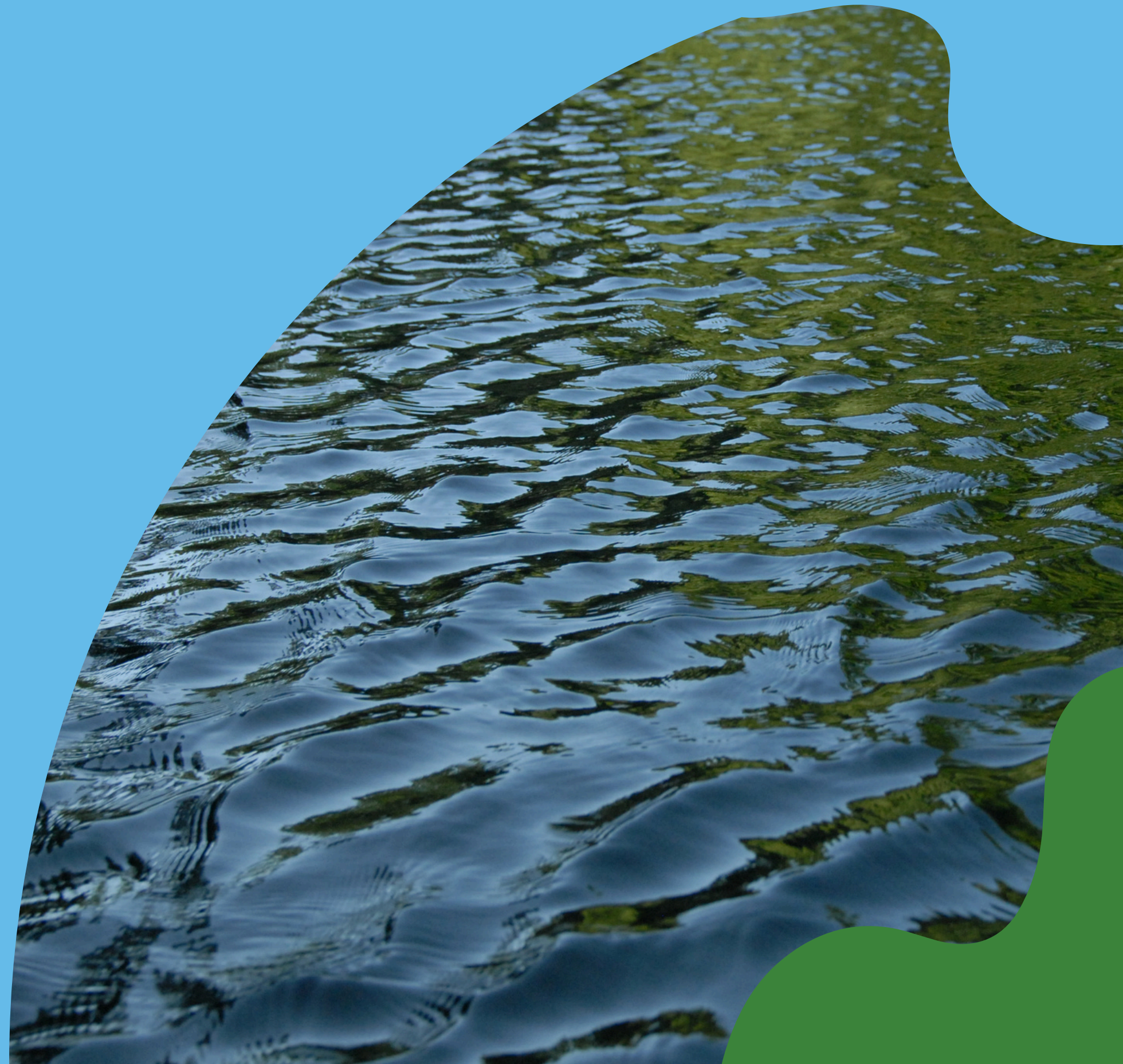


# Worried about recycled water?

The proposed advance-treated, treated waste-water will contain fewer impurity molecules and ions than any natural water, even rain!

Final water quality will have lower hardness and fewer N and P nutrients metals, plastics, bacteria & chemicals.

Re-mineralization (lime) will make the water taste like usual water supplies.





# Nutrients

Chalk streams are naturally nutrient-poor. Unique biodiversity.

Nitrate and phosphate nutrients come mainly from both historic and current agriculture's use of fertilisers, from sewage discharges and from your septic tank.

They accumulate in the aquifers making borehole sources eventually unusable (WH). They travel down the rivers, 'fertilising' aquatic plants - leading to rapid excess river-weed growth

Surplus of Nutrients cause algal blooms. These decay and rob the water of oxygen. Death occurs both in the rivers and in the estuaries, causing unpleasant eutrophication & stagnation. ie buying 'offset credits' from land which will absorb nutrients. Eg reed-beds and wetlands, from farmland. OR swapping an old ST for a new PTP.

NB Nitrate-removal plant planned for WestHam PS in 2025/6



# CSO's and aged waste-water infrastructure

Combined Sewer Overflows – rainwater shouldn't be in the sewers – but is. On old houses, down-pipes and gutters can empty directly into the sewer.

Leaky old sewer pipes can allow groundwater in - which floods the system.

Overloaded sewers lets sewage back-up into houses unless it is released via CSO's into local waterways – causing pollution

The data for 2023 shows: A 54% increase in the number of sewage spills – from ~300,000 spills in 2022 to over 465,000 in 2023

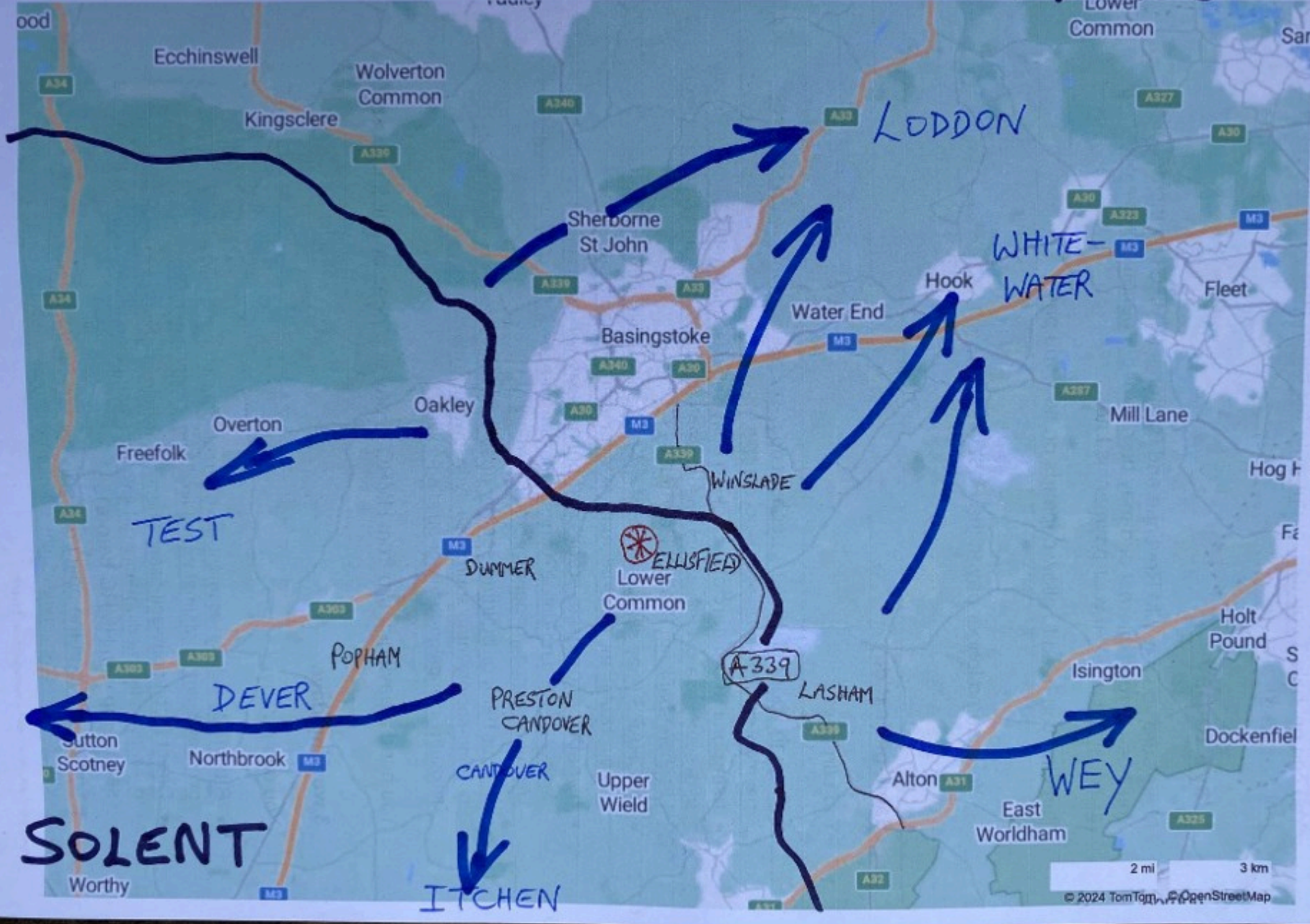
Some of this is legal and monitored BUT is happening far too often (eg 'Dry' Spills)

Sept 2023 - Govt's updated Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan set out stringent targets to monitor and protect both people & environment.

BUT - Aged sewers & waste-water treatment plants often can't cope; So - New developments shouldn't be permitted unless capacity is available.



# THAMES



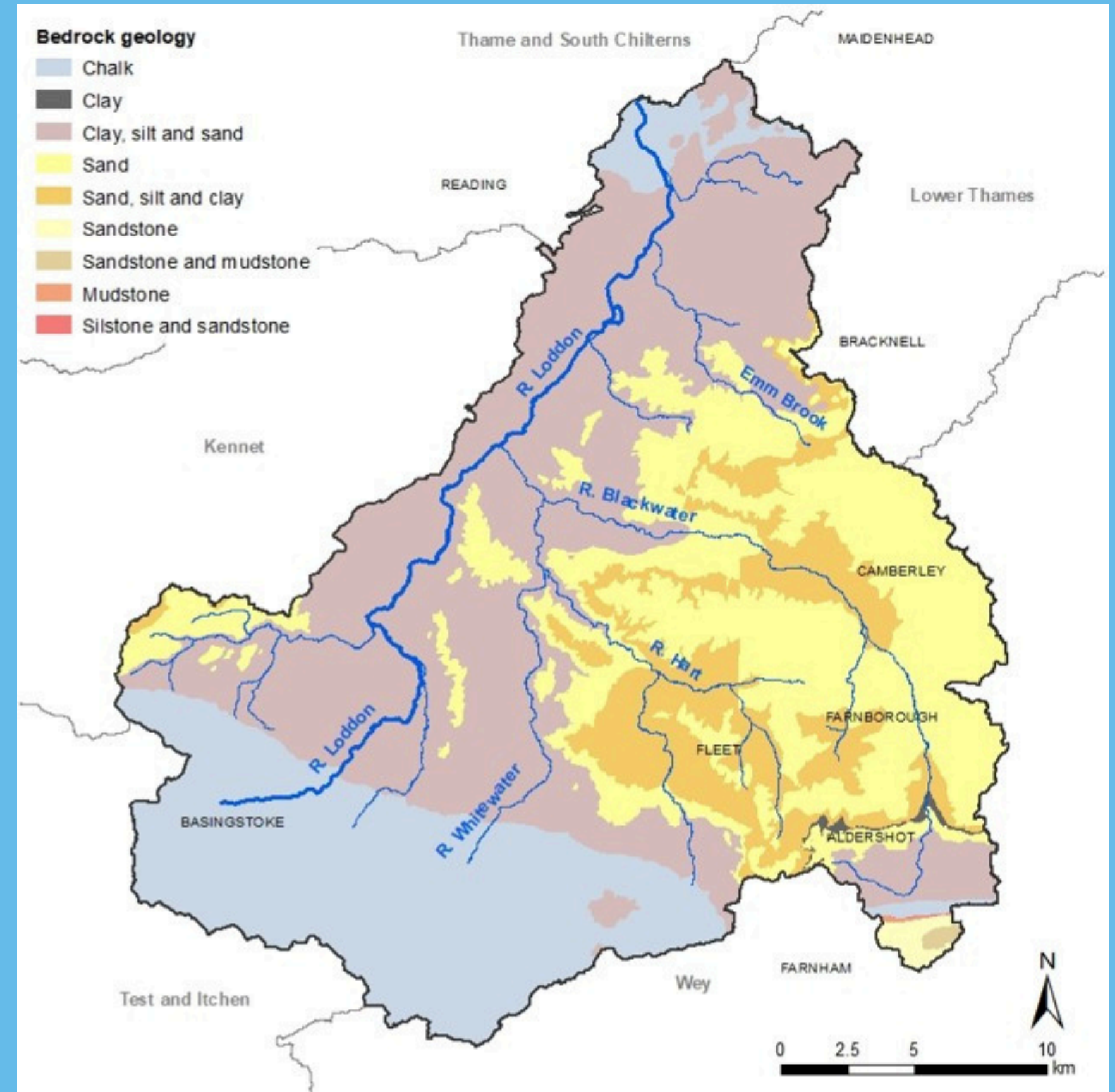


# River Loddon

Over-abstracted and polluted from rural agriculture (nutrients & sediment) and town waste-water/sewage.

Physical modifications and changes to natural levels and flows of water are some of the main challenges in the catchment.

Physical habitat restoration is also needed at a number of locations to address the problems of past engineering (eg Mills) and the impacts of control structures/weirs where these are severely limiting the ecological potential of the catchment.





# Threats

From the many new Basingstoke-area housing developments planned (several x100's and Popham x 1400)





# River Loddon

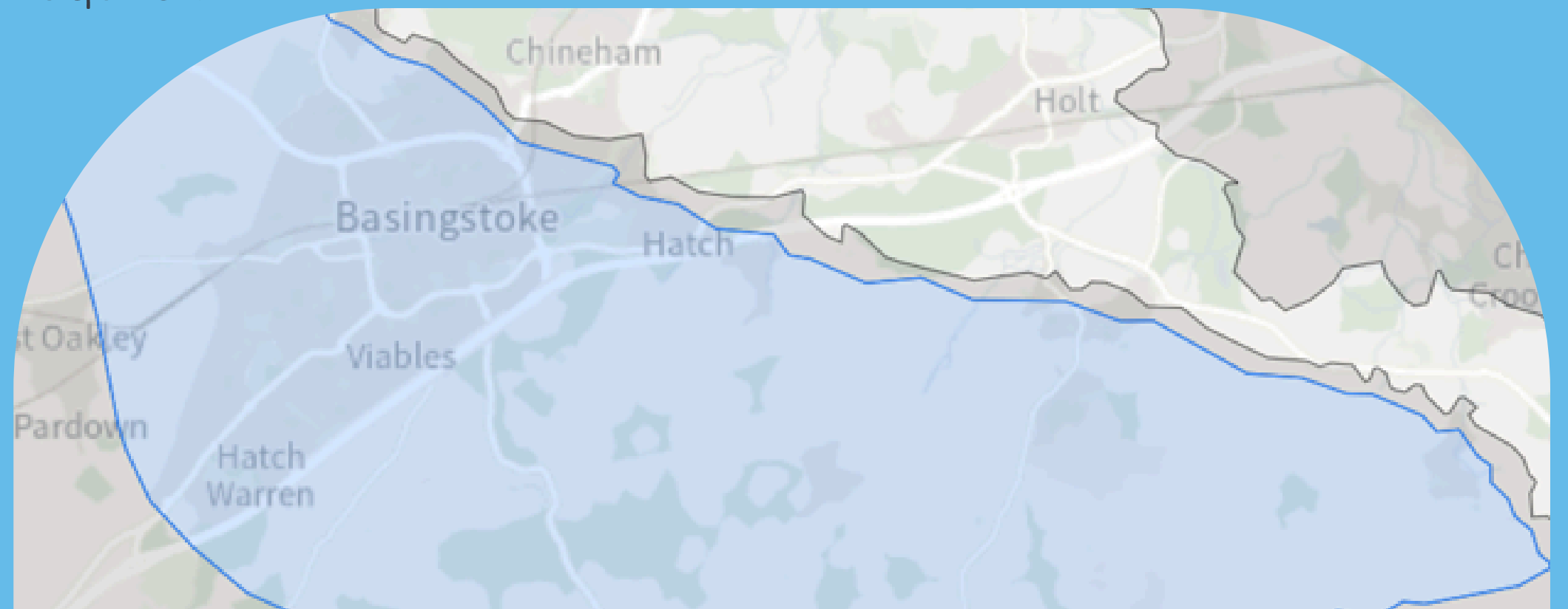
The Basingstoke chalk aquifer at the source of the Loddon is already classified poor for ground water chemical status.

The proposed Moto service station - application for M3 Junction-6 is atop a source of the Loddon in the protected Chalk aquifer, close to the water table.

“It is likely that the development would reduce low flows in the River Loddon.

The proposed SuDS design will not provide the required level of flood risk attenuation or protection of groundwater quality in the underlying Chalk aquifer.”

Review of Flood and Hydrogeological  
Risk Assessments Prepared by:  
Archon Environmental (2024)





# What can we do?

Water is a scarce resource.

## Reduce demand

- Use less. Turn the taps off.
- THINK – no waste down the plughole!
- Check your usage on your water bill. Reduce to 110 (or fewer) litres per person per day. Current average nationally is around 140 lppd (NW = 86 l/d)
- Don't waste loo water – flush rarely; expensively cleaned drinking water (25%) is totally wasted this way
- Use water butts, irrigation pipes, not hoses, in garden
- Recycle and re-use wherever possible

If responding to ANY planning application, raise the issue of water supply with the planners. Raise sewage issues too. Can the local sewers & WWTW cope?

- Think - will the plan affect the underground aquifers and local springs, or cause flooding downstream?





# Wastewater Systems

Simple steps to help ease the strain on the aged waste water infrastructure

## Planning

- Always challenge water availability and waste-water capacity in every planning response you make at every level.

## At home

- Ensure that rainwater from your property does not enter the foul sewers via gutters, drains or leaking laterals.
- Maintain your septic tank. Use only ST-friendly chemicals

## Every day

- Use only environmentally friendly Eco Products. (eg Ecover)
- Never flush wipes of any sort down the loo. Flush rarely
- Pee, Paper & Poo only down the Loo. Nothing else
- NO sanitary products, old medicines or drugs down the loo
- NO fats, oils and grease poured down the sink - but into yoghurt pots & into black bins. Wipe leftover fats/grease, then bin it.



# Clean Water is a vital but scarce resource

Sustainable use in the face of climate change means we all have to take more care.

CPRE Hampshire's Water Focus Group tries to monitor the issues for you and LINK PLANNING to WATER.

