**Good News for the Wye**

Congratulations to all involved including the Hereford Times for raising public awareness about pollution in the River Wye. This week the Nutrient Management Board voted to start the process of obtaining a Water Protection Zone for the entire Wye catchment. This has been further endorsed by Herefordshire Council at their recent meeting. They voted unanimously to support the process. This positive action against pollution is something which is long overdue and which will have immense impact and is the start of a glide path towards cleaning up the river. It feels as though, after years of inaction, a real move towards protection of the Wye is beginning.

Well done to the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee for their strong and clear recommendations to the government this month on the measures needed to protect all rivers. They have also clearly identified sources of pollution such as agriculture and sewage treatment.

At Prime Minister’s Questions, our local MP Jesse Norman raised the issue of needing a cross border catchment approach for the Wye and the requirement for ring fenced funding to secure the much-needed solution. He also appears to have secured a Ministerial visit to the Wye to gather information about the task required to restore the rivers health. A further question by Philip Dunne MP for Ludlow and Chair of the Audit Committee also asked the Prime Minister to support his committees recommendations and secure more funding by water companies to improve sewage treatment plants. We look forward to Bill Wiggin taking similar high-profile steps to protect the river we all value so much.

Much of the focus and pressure to stop pollution is due to the solid work by hundreds of Citizen Scientists across the whole Wye Catchment. With all these parties aligned, we are in a much better place to stop the Wye from dying. More and continued action is essential as it is suggested that we only have two years left before eutrophication will be evident in parts of the river network.

It is now hoped that all agencies and groups including land owners and farmers will work together in a positive way and be part of the solutions to save our great river Wye.

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