

Tackling Pollution of our rivers - in Parliament.

NAG was formally set-up in 2022 out of a concern that sewage was polluting our lovely river Nidd unnecessarily and illegally, making it unsafe and unhealthy for humans and all the diverse life in it

1. We are working 'On the Ground' to **understand the sources and causes of Nidd pollution**

- through collaboration with other key stakeholder organizations such as the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust (YDRT), The Environment Agency (EA), Yorkshire Water, environmental organisations, our universities and individual citizens
- We are currently working as part of a Yorkshire-wide AQuA research project with just these aims.
- This follows recent work with YDRT, EA and YW on Oak Beck

2. We are also raising awareness of the importance of the Nidd through local, regional and national media (e.g. BBC Countryfile), seeking to ensure that the improvements that citizens continue to look for are pursued vigorously.

3. Another 'angle' we are following is to scrutinise plans and strategies in PARLIAMENT



There have been **2 major reports 'Commissions' this year.**

The Cunliffe Report, commissioned by the UK Government [Independent Water Commission Final Report](#) focused on improving the current model of our privatised water sector through better regulation and setting up of new regional planning bodies to balance the competing demands on our river catchments in a more holistic way. It made 88 recommendations that are being considered by Government.

[The Peoples Commission report](#) took a broader view, with independent academics tabling and receiving evidence from experts around the world about what 'worked' and listening to the public face to face. Their 6 recommendations were to:

1. setup a strategic advisory group of experts
2. transition to public ownership of water
3. reform governance to include worker and service user directors
4. hold those responsible for pollution accountable
5. improve democratic oversight and public participation
6. establish a single regulator for water.

NAG is a member of [The Sewage Campaign Network](#), and was present this week at Parliament when SCN, led by its president, Feargal Sharkey, briefed MPs on the impending White Paper on Water, based on recommendations from the Commission(s)



Office for Environmental Protection Report

[This OEP report, into the regulation of combined sewage overflows.](#) was published very recently

This report:

- states that DEFRA, EA and OFWAT have not applied the law, and that '**exceptional circumstances**' for the dumping of sewage into our rivers means just that - **NOT** allowing the excuse of inadequate capacity of assets to cope with surface and waste water flow.
- calls for the updating of 'Permits' granted by EA to water companies, so that they comply with the law.

Actions from YOU please

Please contact:

- your MP and local councillors to ensure that they are aware of, and active in promoting effective regulation of water in the light of these reports and the impending White Paper on water
- the EA to ask when they will be updating their permits so that they comply with the law.
Philip Duffy, CEO of the Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol [email them here](#)

It is not enough to gather evidence directly from our river Nidd, important as that is. We need to inform and influence our politicians and our government into improving the law and the regulatory structure and rules that currently allow and do not check harmful pollution.