



Fiddling Whilst Our Rivers Die

The Green-Independent Coalition are great at self congratulatory publicity and bold public statements but scratch beneath the surface and you will find little of substance. Especially when it comes to the declining state of our Rivers.

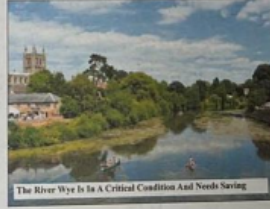
The Coalition has focused on

"We need action now not four more years of grandstanding"

their own bespoke "wetlands projects" which several years down the line have either been rolled back or scaled down. Not to mention failing to get to grips with other major sources of pollution across the county.

And whilst the Council fiddle, the Phosphate moratorium, which has been

in place for the last three years, has hamstrung the rural economy and cost an estimated £316 Million in lost investment across the county. We need bolder action on our Rivers including partnerships with agriculture and business to produce innovative solutions which will cut pollution at the source, not four more years of navel gazing and grandstanding whilst the situation declines.



The River Wye Is In A Critical Condition And Needs Saving

Fiddling whilst Our Rivers Die: This article is positively Orwellian in its content. Up is Down. Black is White. Lies are Truth.

This county has been without the protection of planning policies for waste management precisely because the Tories were responsible for drafting such an inadequate set of waste policies back in 2015 that the Planning Inspector threatened to throw the entire Local Plan out on its ear unless they were removed.

In the same timeframe as these botched policies were being drafted, the **Tory run council approved hundreds of new planning permissions for Intensive Poultry Units (IPU)** – over 12 million chickens are 'in production' in Herefordshire at any time – often located close to one another in the Lugg catchment, and without any thought or concern given to the cumulative pollution effect and biohazard this creates for transmission of bird flu.

Meanwhile **Avara and their international parent company Cargill were courted by the Tories**, awarding them the first every Diamond County Award in 2013 despite there being more than 40 nominations for other local businesses.

Over **72% of Phosphate pollution in our rivers comes from agricultural practices** of spreading IPU chicken litter on fields or from over application of artificial fertilisers. All of which leach out into ditches and enter our rivers killing the aquatic plants fish and invertebrates depend upon and creating algal blooms which stifle water-life.

Why is there so much phosphate in chicken litter? Well, it's because **producers dose chicken food with phosphate** to artificially strengthen their bones to cope with their fast growth rate so they can be slaughtered at 30-35 days old. No new chicken farms have been approved since we were elected in 2019.

A further **25% of the Phosphate pollution in our rivers comes from Water Companies** failing to install phosphate scrubbers in their treatment works and them releasing raw sewage and storm water directly into the rivers during heavy rainfall events. **These practices are allowed under Conservative government legislation which both of our local MPs have supported.**

As a consequence of the **phosphate pollution created by the Tories' mismanagement of planning and their national bending to business interest**, a moratorium on development has been in place across the River Lugg catchment since 2018. Yes, this is hugely damaging to our local building industry, but **it has been CAUSED by the Tories** and now we are having to clear up the mess.

The Tories poke fun at our phosphate scrubbing wetland mitigation projects – but they shouldn't do so. **These innovative projects are the first of their kind IN THE WORLD** to be approved with scientific certainty to remove phosphate from water treatment works outfalls. The phosphate removed is being used to offset the phosphate modelled to be generated by new development schemes. Thus **enabling our local building businesses to begin to build again** in the moratorium zone. We can't gain back the £316m already lost to our economy as a consequence of Tory mismanagement. What we can do is aim to prevent the £12m/month which the moratorium continues to cost local business.

Unlike the Tories, we ARE tackling agricultural practices, as the major source of phosphate pollution across the county. Since 2019 we have been meeting regularly with the farming community and, through the work of our Cabinet Commission for River Restoration, we are not just doing that here in Herefordshire, we have brought together all four local authorities responsible for the entire Wye catchment to work together to seek a solution. We are **spearheading the design of a collaborative approach with the catchment farming community, DEFRA and national agencies** to monitor and to regulate how nutrients are managed so as to safely manage down the 30,000kgs of legacy phosphate presently lying in our soil systems without releasing these nutrients into our rivers.

It's a complicated business and will take time, patience and goodwill on all sides to achieve - but **we are tackling it head-on and are not being swayed by local interests or influenced by big business.**



The Conservatives published their own 'newspaper' full of misleading nonsense. For a full explanation of why their claims are such utter rubbish, go to the Myth Busting page. Meanwhile here are the headlines...



The 'bypass' was a Conservative waste of money. It would have encouraged more traffic at a time when we need to find ways to encourage less. Plus it would still take another 10 years to do and cost another £250 million+

Conservatives raised council tax by the full amount every year they were in power. Plus inflation was lower then.

Government directed all councils to reorganise bin collections with a greater emphasis on recycling. The public were consulted on the plans and a majority agreed with the new arrangements

Planters were paid for out of a covid grant to improve the city centre, not from your council tax.



Money spent on Hereford city centre is aimed at actually solving the cities transport problems, which these roads schemes never would.



The new cycle lane was not our 'vanity project'. It was actually part of a scheme designed by the Conservatives. Costs went up because their design needed improvement.

Our Children's services have been in trouble since long before the Coalition took over. The headline cases date back to when the Conservatives ran the council. Funding has been under pressure for over 10 years.

Conservatives approved a massive increase in poultry farming without thinking of the effect of phosphates on our rivers. Now they try to blame us!

The reason our rivers are so polluted is because Thatcher sold off our water to companies who want profit over nature. The Government still refuses to take the pollution of our rivers seriously, letting these companies discharge raw sewerage into our rivers.



Rural areas are undervalued by Government. It is they who spend billions on HS2 rather than local bus services. Not your council

Basically every story in their 'newspaper' is a total misrepresentation of the truth. Even the 'potholes have potholes' story conveniently forgets to mention that the government has slashed the money available to sort out roads while the cost of materials has gone up.

Find out more about Independents for Herefordshire on our website: www.i4H.org.uk