

Viney's farm development objection – background information

WildFish and WFA have been closely following the deterioration in water quality occurring between Upavon and Salisbury. The local Environment Agency has been contacted repeatedly over the worsening state of this stretch of the Avon. Despite these warnings, two sites have now surpassed the threshold, under the Water Framework Directive, for orthophosphate. Sites at both Amesbury and Stratford sub Castle now fail to achieve 'Good' status as a consequence of heightened phosphate levels. The degradation of this stretch of river can be attributed to an increase in local population. Local population growth and phosphate input forecasts, outlined in the River Avon Nutrient Management Plan for Phosphorous 2015, were considerable underestimates.

	2020 NMP forecast	2020 estimated actual Population	Percentage above NMP forecast
Ratfyn	10,118	16,500	63%
Amesbury	10,658	15,000	40%

		Nutrient Plan Assumption	2018	2019	2020
Phosphate mg/l	Ratfyn	0.183	0.392	0.614	0.65
	Amesbury	0.606	0.633	0.618	0.58

Pressure from population growth places a strain on existing wastewater infrastructure. Increases in the amount of flow, entering into a sewage treatment works, can increase the amount of phosphate being discharged, via treated effluent, into the Avon. As has been the case with Wessex Water's Ratfyn sewage treatment works. Removing phosphate from effluent is challenging. Creating reed beds to take up the phosphate is only a partial option. Phosphorous stripping is the most effective method. This process requires the use of ferrous metals which is an adverse drawback.

Monitoring sites were set up by WildFish and WFA, in 2019, to track and identify pressures along this stretch of the Avon. Most recently, we have been able to use this data to object to a new development proposed for West Amesbury. Our data indicates that the river sites, in West Amesbury, are suffering from heightened sediment and phosphate pressure, as well as a reduction in invertebrate species. A new development, in close proximity to the Avon, would undoubtedly exacerbate these issues further.

Please find our letter to Wiltshire County Council [here](#).