Writing to your representatives to ask them to support action on the river pollution crisis

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If you were moved by the issues raised in the Rivercide documentary, or through River Action's campaigns, please consider writing to your parliamentary representative to express your support and call on them to take action.

Please note that environmental protection is a devolved issue so if you live in England you should write to your local constituency MP and if you live in Wales, you should write to your Senedd Constituency Member.

Please find template letters below:

England – template letter

You can find your MP and their contact details here. Please do consider personalising this template letter if you can, as that may have greater impact.

Dear …

I am writing to you as one of your constituents to urge you to stand up for our rivers in Parliament.

The state of our rivers is a crisis which can no longer be ignored. Every single river in England is now polluted beyond legal limits by human, agricultural and industrial waste.

In 2020 alone, water companies released untreated human sewage into our waterways on more than 400,000 occasions.

[Please do consider adding a local example or your own experience here]

A key part of the problem is the inability of our underfunded regulatory agencies to enforce standards and penalise polluters.

With government funding to England's Environment Agency falling by more than 70% in the past decade, water quality monitoring has been slashed, each farm can now expect to be inspected just once every 263 years, and prosecutions of businesses for polluting rivers have fallen by 88% in the last decade.

As the UK prepares to host the global COP26 climate conference, its time for the government to tackle this vast environmental and public health threat on our doorstep.

I support River Action's call for the Government to double the Environment Agency's environmental protection budget so that it is properly equipped to tackle the river pollution crisis and am writing to ask you to do the same.

Kind regards

…. [Add your name and address so that your MP is able to verify you are a constituent]

Wales – template letter

You can find your constituency's Senedd Member and their contact details here. Please do consider personalising this template letter if you can, as that may have greater impact.

Dear …

I am writing to you as one of your constituents to urge you to stand up for our rivers in the Senedd.

The state of our rivers is a crisis which can no longer be ignored. Widespread leakage and dumping of agricultural, industrial and human waste mean that 56% of rivers in Wales now fail to meet ‘good ecological status’ and over 60% of our protected rivers exceed phosphate pollution limits.

In 2020 alone, water companies released untreated human sewage into our waterways on more than 100,000 occasions from more than 2000 different sewage plants across the country.

[Please do consider adding a local example or your own experience here]

A key part of the problem is the inability of our underfunded regulatory agencies to enforce standards and penalise polluters: Natural Resources Wales has repeatedly had its budget cut and has warned the Welsh Government on numerous occasions that these cuts risk leaving it unable to deliver on demand for its services.

As the Senedd declares a nature emergency in Wales, it is time to prioritise tackling this vast environmental and public health threat on our doorstep.

I support River Action’s call for Welsh Government to double Natural Resources Wales’s environmental protection budget so that it is properly equipped to tackle the river pollution crisis and am writing to ask you to do the same.

Kind regards

…. [Add your name and address so that your Senedd Member is able to verify you are a constituent]