Greener Kingsclere

Public Meeting with Southern Water

Join us for an evening dedicated to the restoration of Gailey Brook and the launch of a new community-led environmental initiative for our village.

Greener Kingsclere Community Voluntary Group

Ark — Action for the River Kennet

Southern Water

The Fieldgate Centre — Kingsclere Community Association — Your community, your place

Kingsclere CE Primary School

University of Southampton

Tonight's Two Big Ideas

1. Restoring Gailey Brook

Southern Water will share their plans for the ecological restoration of our beloved local stream — a vital waterway for both residents and wildlife.

2. Launching Greener Kingsclere

We're unveiling a brand-new community initiative dedicated to protecting, enhancing, and celebrating the green spaces and waterways that make Kingsclere special.

Our Goals

A Better Stream

Cleaner, healthier water for residents and thriving wildlife habitats.

Community Involvement

Bringing neighbours together around a shared natural heritage.

Improve the Mill Pond

Restoring a much-loved local landmark to its full beauty.

Get Children Involved

Inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.

Water Conservation

Using this precious resource wisely, today and tomorrow.

This Evening's Agenda

01

Introductions

Cllr David Conquest, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

02

Why Are We Doing It?

Eco-Warriors from Kingsclere Primary School

03

Why It Matters

Dr Kate Parks, University of Southampton

04

Restoring the Stream

Richard Gamble (Southern Water)

Simon Cain (Cain Bio-Engineering)

Tim Power (WSP)

05

Launching Greener Kingsclere

Charlotte Hitchmough, ARK

06

Join Us!

Andy Bates, Kingsclere Community Association

Kingsclere CE Primary School

Why Are We Doing This?

> *"Our stream belongs to everyone — and it's up to all of us to look after it."*

We're starting with our youngest voices. Pupils from Kingsclere Primary School will share what our local waterways mean to them, and why their generation has a stake in what we do next.

Why It Matters

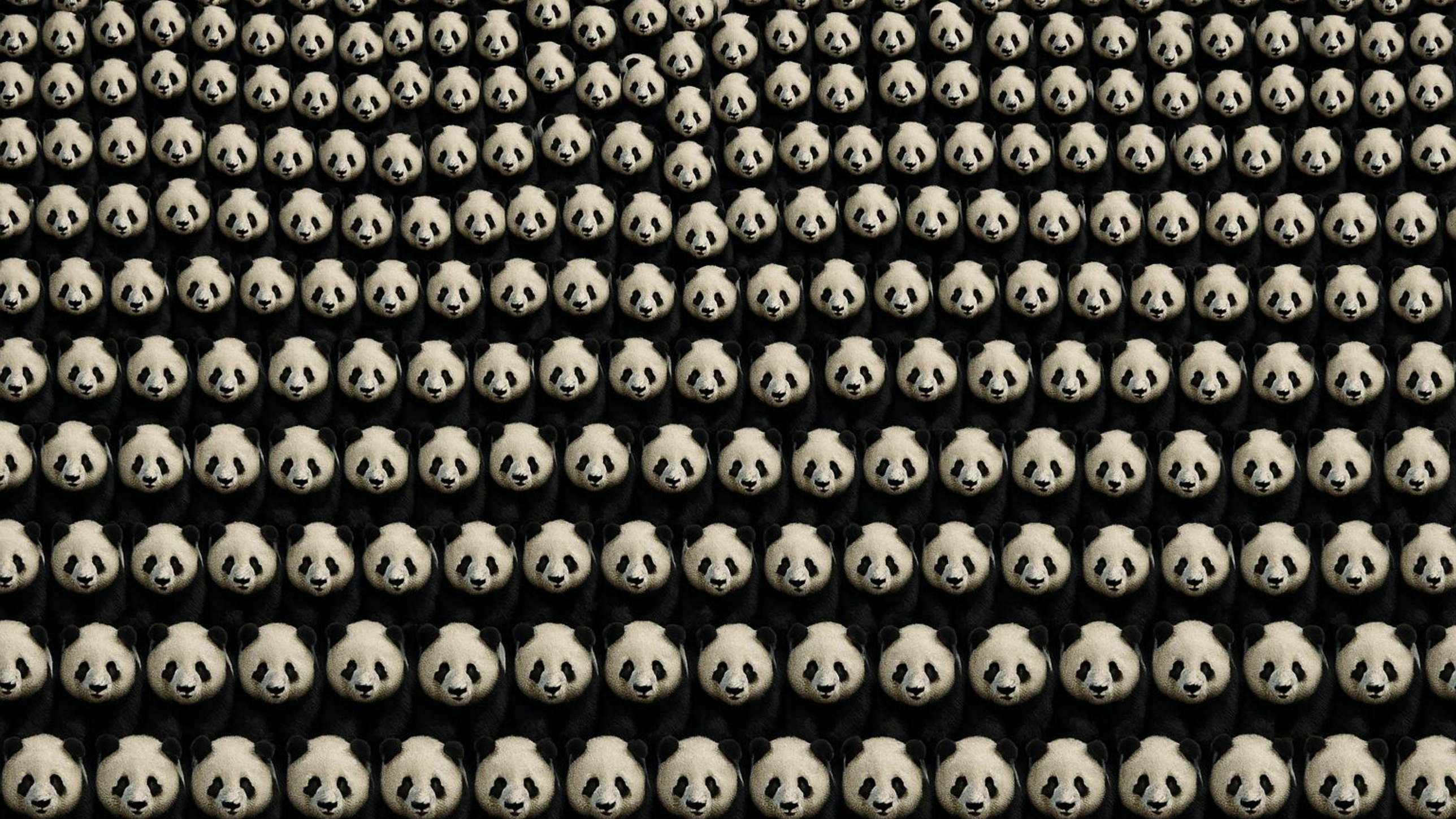
University of Southampton

School of Geography and Environmental Science

EXPERT INSIGHT

Dr Kate Parks, University of Southampton

Healthy chalk streams like Gailey Brook are among the rarest habitats on Earth — England holds roughly 85% of the world's total. Dr Parks will explain the ecological importance of our stream and why restoration is urgent.



What is a chalk stream?

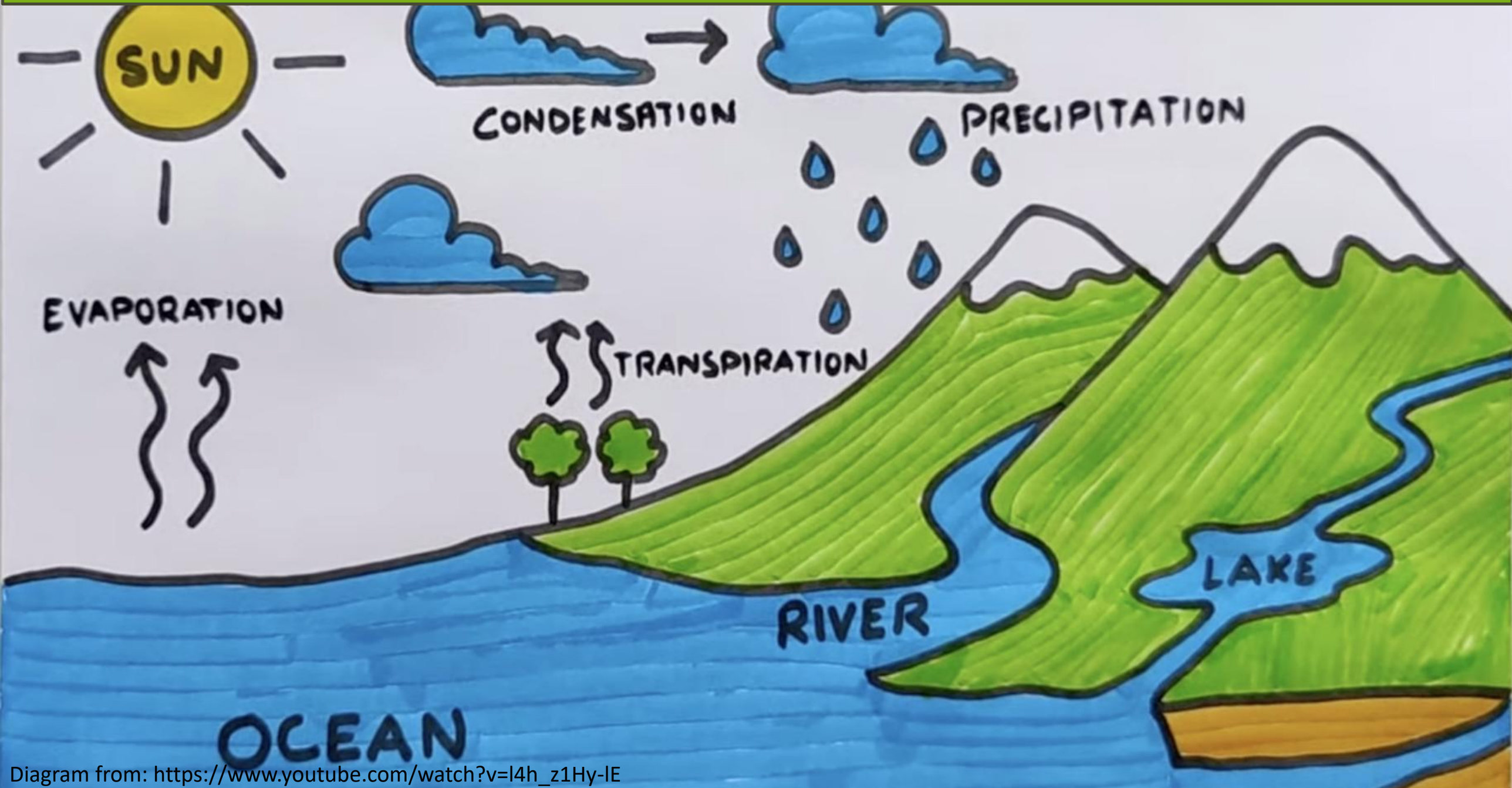


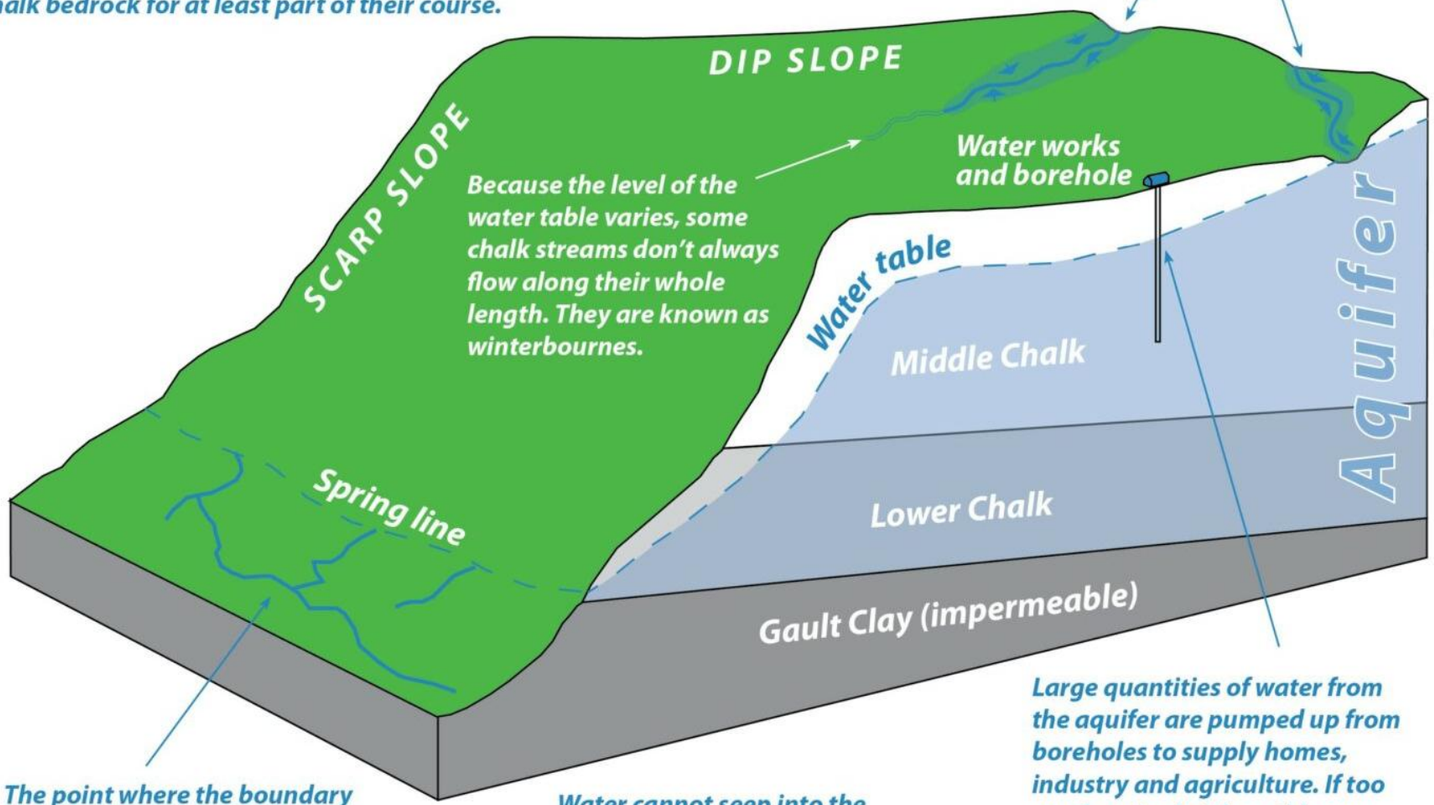
Diagram from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4h_z1Hy-lE

What is a chalk stream?

Rainfall filters down into the porous chalk rocks of the Kent Downs and is stored there. Rock that stores water is known as an aquifer and its upper limit is called the water table.

In places where the water table meets the land surface water flows out as chalk springs. Chalk streams are rivers that are fed by chalk springs and flow over chalk bedrock for at least part of their course.

In places where the water table meets the land surface of the gentle 'dip slope' of the Downs, chalk springs occur and chalk streams flow.



The point where the boundary between the aquifer and impermeable clay meets the surface, is known as the spring line. Chalk springs appear here, at the foot of the steep 'scarp slope' of the Downs.

Water cannot seep into the impermeable Gault Clay under the chalk, so this is the lower limit of the aquifer.

Large quantities of water from the aquifer are pumped up from boreholes to supply homes, industry and agriculture. If too much water is taken, this can reduce the flows of chalk streams and affect wildlife.

#kentishstourcp
#chalkstreams

Diagram from: https://kentishstour.org.uk/about-the-stour-valley/the-river-stour2/crystal-clear-why-chalk-streams-matter/chalk-stream-origins/

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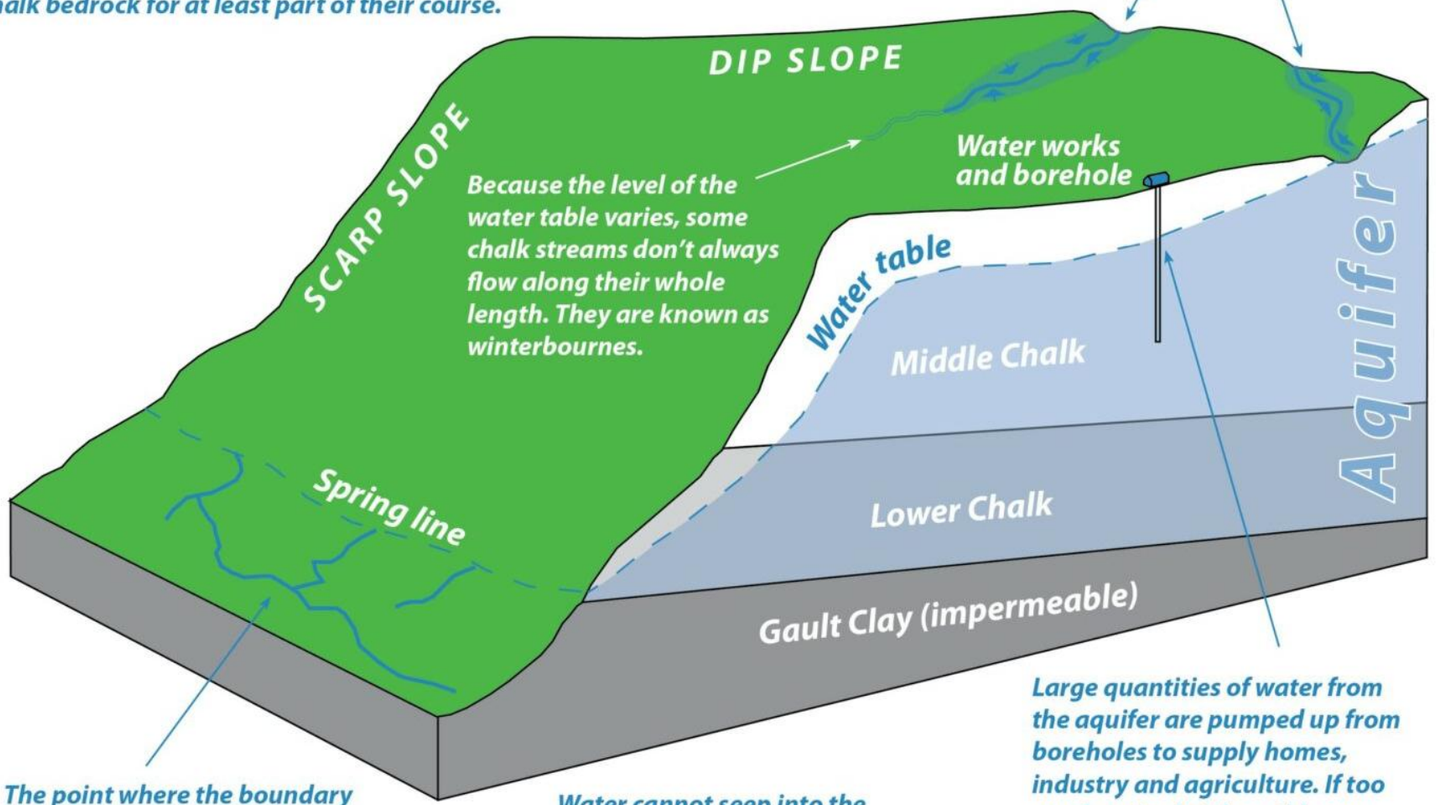

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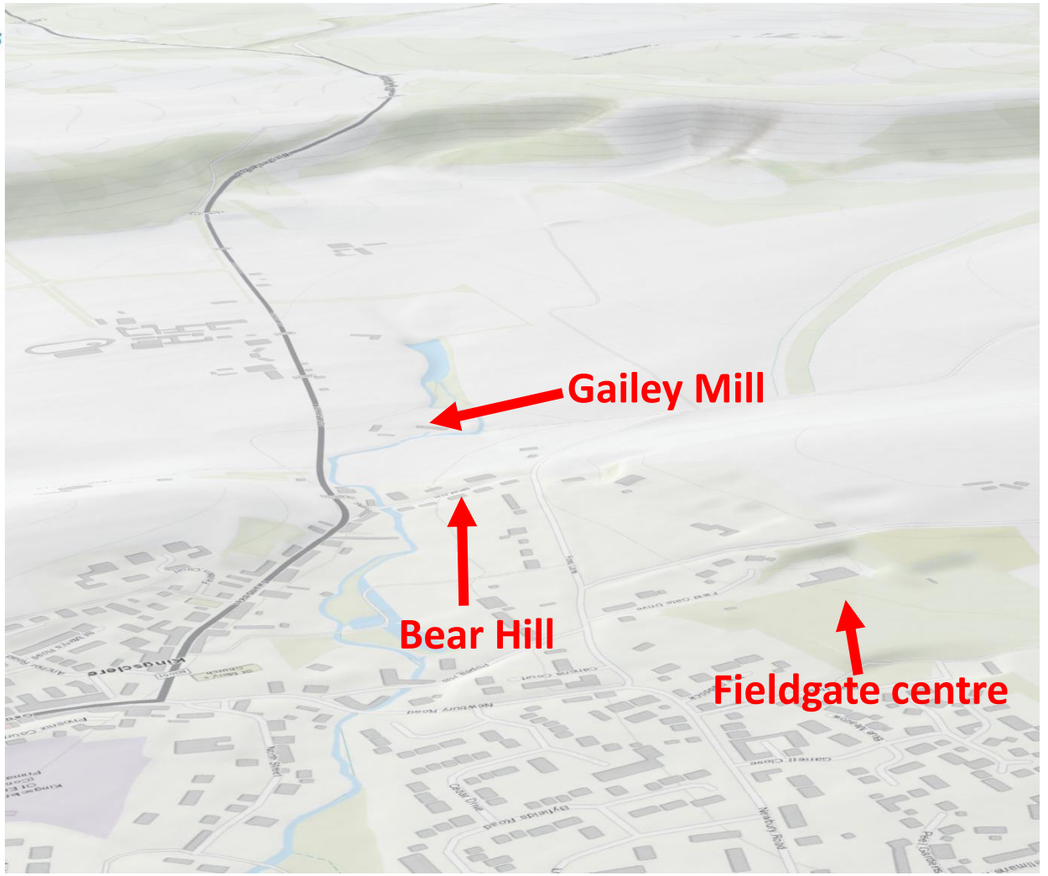

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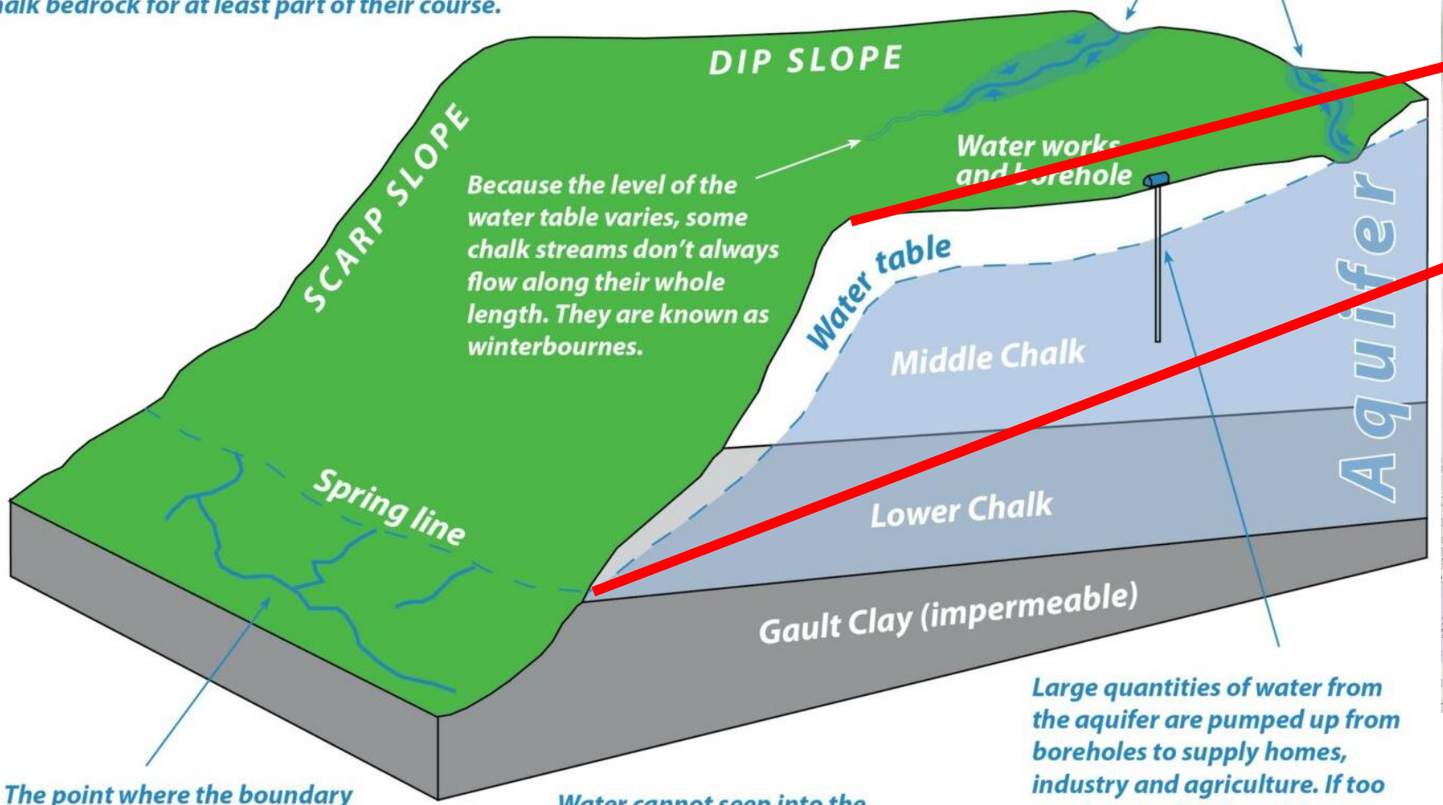

Because the level of the water table varies, some chalk streams don't always flow along their whole length. They are known as winterbournes.

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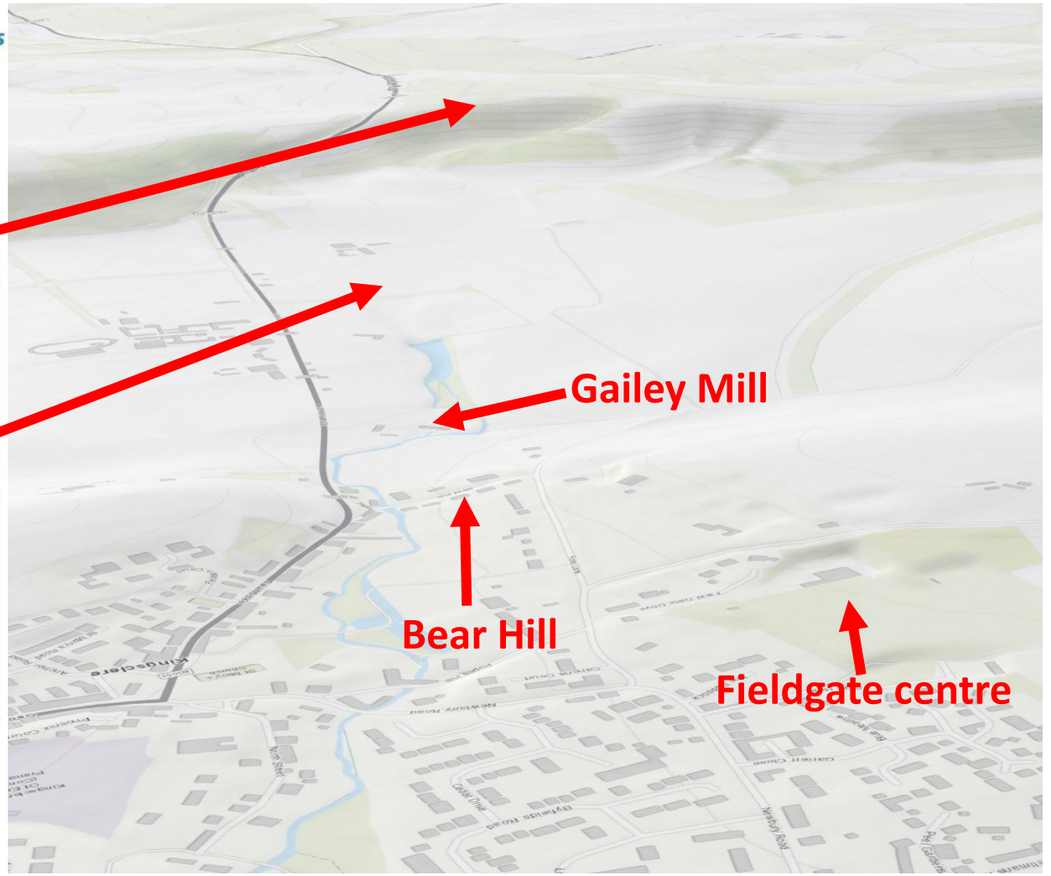

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What have chalk streams ever done for us?

Picture from: https://chalkstreams.org/

Apart from cleaning our water, making our village a nicer place to live, supporting our mental health and wellbeing, moderating flood risk, and boosting our house prices?

Restoring Gailey Brook

Assess Condition

Implement Bio-Engineering

Monitor Recovery

Richard Gamble of Southern Water and Simon Cain of Cain Bio-Engineering will walk us through the plans to bring Gailey Brook back to life — using natural techniques that work with the landscape, not against it.

Kingsclere Brook Ecological Improvements – Southern Water WINEP

Richard Gamble, Matt Dempster (Southern Water)
Simon Cain (Cain Bio-Engineering)
Tim Power (WSP)

Wednesday 20th May 2026

Agenda

- Introductions
- Project background
- Update on river enhancement schemes
- Update on stream augmentation trial
- AOB

Introduction

Richard Gamble	Principal Catchment Hydrogeology Specialist at Southern Water
Matt Dempster	Senior Catchment Hydrogeology Specialist at Southern Water
Simon Cain	Director of Cain Bio-Engineering
Tim Power	Technical Director of Catchment Science at WSP

Cain Bio-Engineering

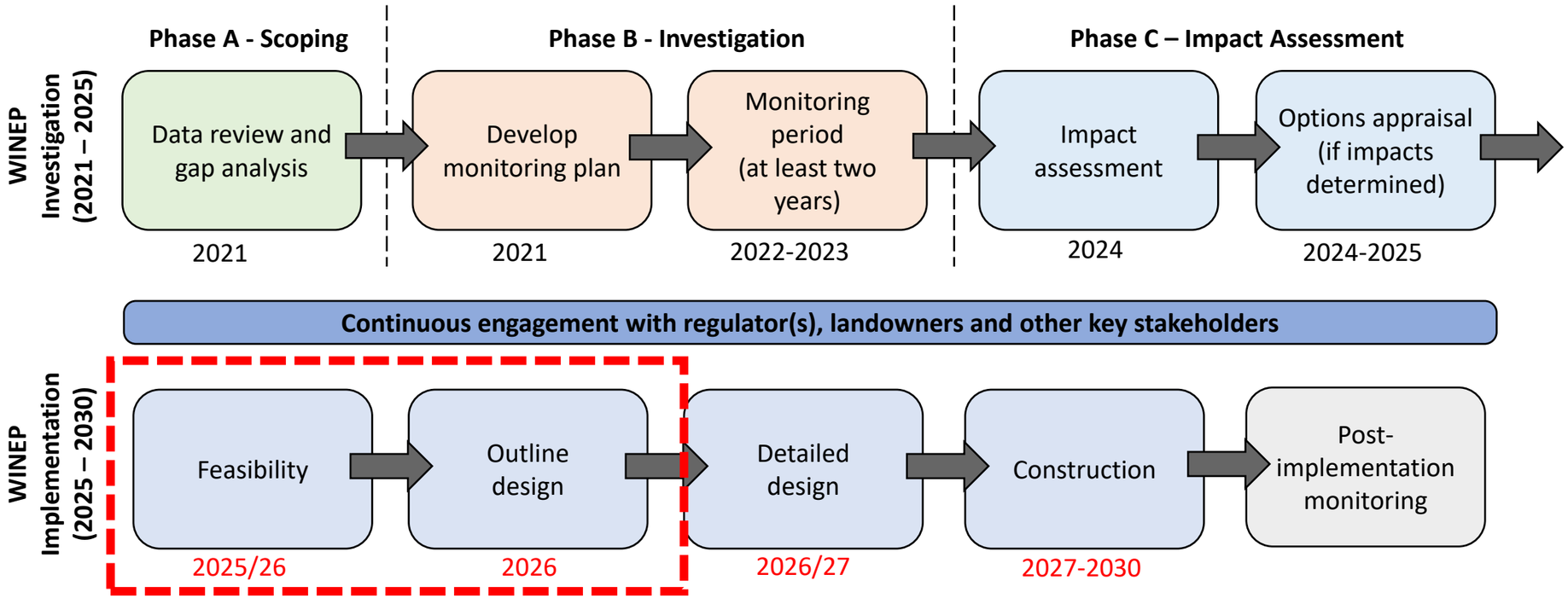
WSP

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Background

- The Kingsclere Brook was identified by the Environment Agency (EA) for a Water Framework Directive (WFD) driven abstraction investigation through the WINEP funded by Southern Water Services (SWS)
- SWS operate a groundwater abstraction at Kingsclere for public water supply (PWS) which is a strategic supply source. There is a wastewater treatment works operated by Thames Water.
- There was a need to investigate the flow conditions and ecological health of the Kingsclere Brook – and understand what the pressures were.
- The investigation concluded the abstraction reduces flow to the Kingsclere Brook and during low flow periods (summer), some ecology showed flow stress. However, one of the biggest pressures facing the health of the stream, is from the significant number of historical physical channel modifications and barriers/weirs.
- Kingsclere is an island resource zone i.e. water cannot currently be brought in from other areas to allow abstraction to be reduced
- It was agreed with the EA to deliver a number of river restoration schemes along the Kingsclere Brook to improve long term ecological resilience, along with a stream augmentation trial.

Environmental Regulation – The WINEP Process…



Feasibility nearly complete
Starting of outline design

Proposed River Enhancement schemes

- Our aim is to improve the river habitat at a number of locations throughout Kingsclere.
- Final list of options now being progressed, following a feasibility study.
- Six schemes now being taken forwards to design stage.
- Cain Bio-Engineering, specialist Chalk stream restoration experts, are undertaking river design and construction.
- WSP are providing continued consultancy support – ecology, hydrology, permitting etc.
- We are working with landowners to develop the schemes throughout this year, with construction expected to start in autumn 2027 through to the end of 2029 (spring and autumn windows for working in the

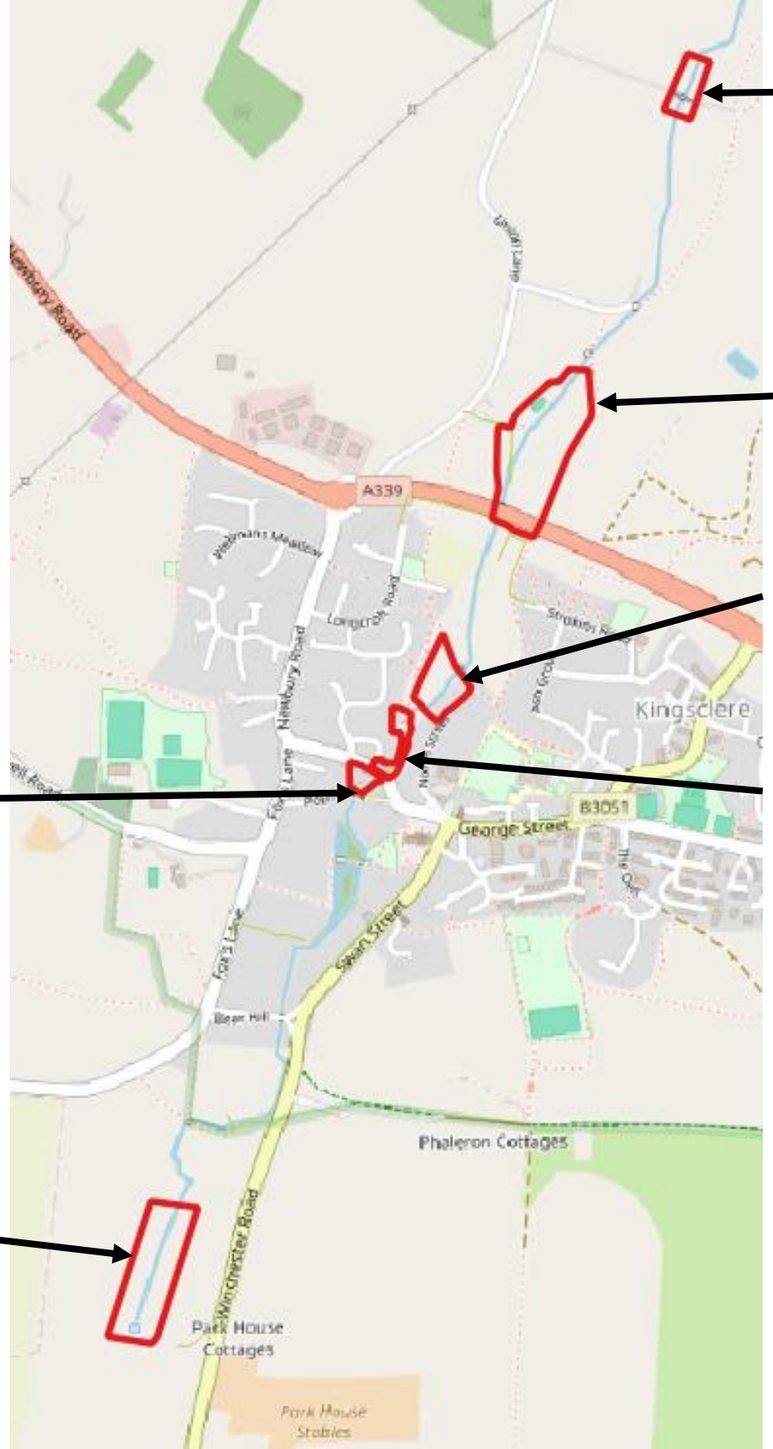
Ecological monitoring – Otters!.....

- We've had several reports of Otters being spotted on the Kingsclere Brook.
- WSP have undertaken detailed preliminary ecological appraisals (PEA) of all the potential schemes, highlighting a range of constraints and opportunities for a variety of protected and notable species.
- Over the next year WSP will be undertaking a range of additional surveys including otter surveys of the majority of the Kingsclere Brook reach in accordance with latest best practice guidance (The Otter Field Survey and Monitoring Handbook - A Practical Guide to Field and Camera-Trap Surveys).
- Any further sightings please do let us know!

Courtesy Hannah Crossland-Scott

Proposed River Enhancement schemes

We are progressing multiple separate schemes along the Kingsclere Brook.



1. Harridens Farm – culvert fish pass

2. Island Mill – fish pass

3. Brooklyn House – channel improvements

4. EA weir removal and channel improvements

5. Brook House – channel improvements

6. Wells Head – channel improvements

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Chalk stream restoration principles

Gradient

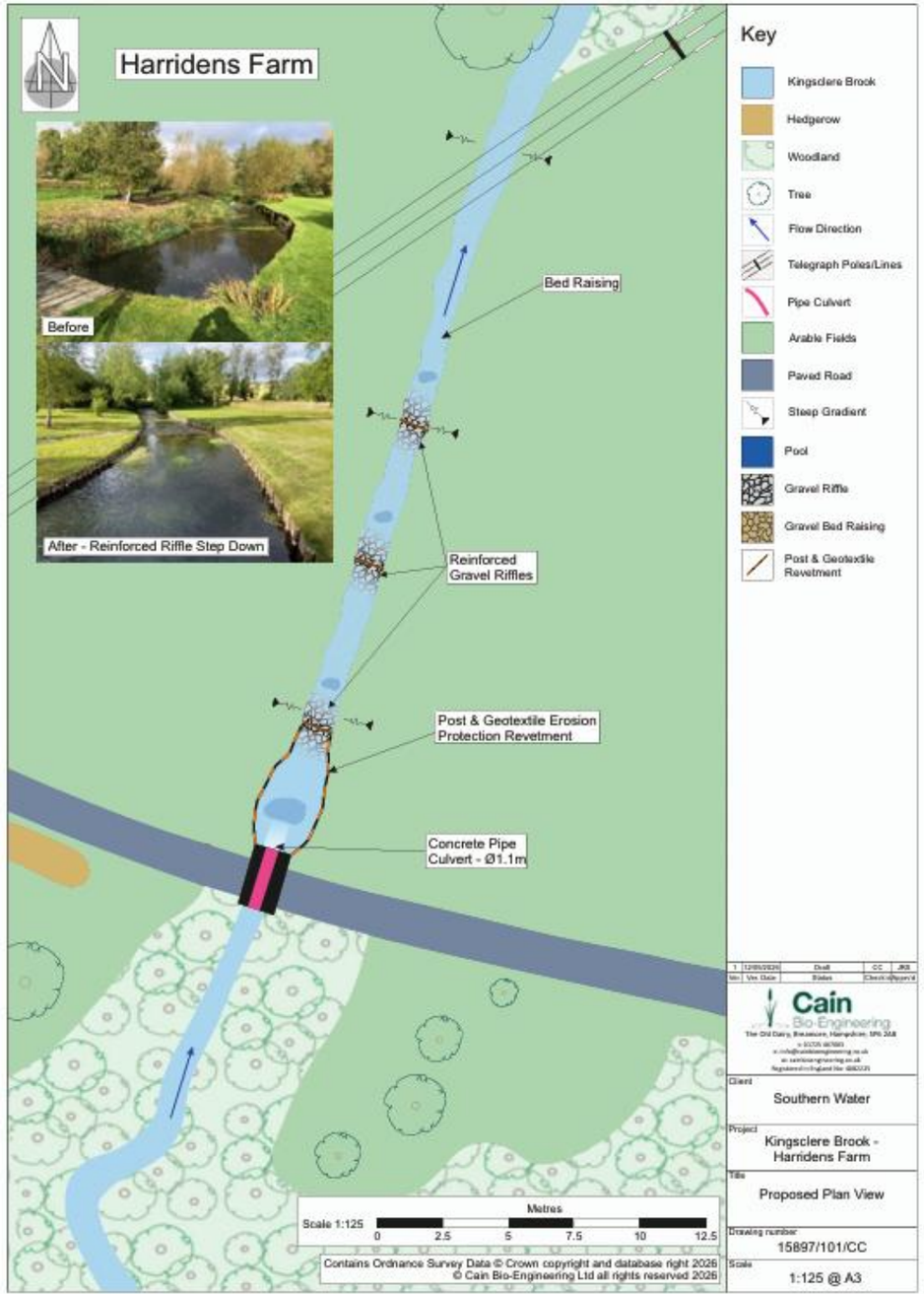
Velocity

Sinuosity

Cain Bio-Engineering

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Scheme No.1: Harridens Farm



- Stream currently flows through pipe culvert under road access bridge with drop/cascade at d/s end of pipe, causing potential barrier to fish passage under lower flows.
- Proposed design to create stepped up gravel pool/riffle sequence to make structure fish passable under all flow conditions.
- Will also create new additional gravel spawning habitat for fish.

Cain Bio-Engineering

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Scheme No.2: Island Mill

- The historic mill is currently not passable to fish, being the first major barrier in a sequence of structures through Kingsclere.
- Proposed design to create stepped up gravel pool/riffle sequence along the existing eastern offtake channel to make it fish passable.
- Will also create improved chalk stream habitat through the Mill leat channel.

Cain Bio-Engineering

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Scheme No.3/4/5: Brooklyn House to Brook House

- Three separate schemes through the village centre.
- Fish passage currently impacted by EA weir, causing impounding effects upstream.
- Proposed design to remove concrete weir structure whilst retaining existing side walls.
- Improved gradient to be distributed through the reach, improvements to channel sinuosity using gravel placement, marginal planting and minor tree works/daylighting proposed.
- Reduced sediment deposition to support improved fish spawning.

Cain Bio-Engineering

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Brook House example

Slow laminar flow
Heavily sedimented bed
Overwide channel
Lack of typical macrophytes

An example of what a similar chalk stream should look like once natural process is restored

Cain Bio-Engineering

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Scheme No.6: Wells Head

- The source of the Kingsclere Brook where the Wells Head spring discharges. The existing habitat here is generally very unique and high quality so works are focussed on improving on what is already present.
- Proposed design to remove small historic concrete weir, install woody flow deflectors in channel, minor tree works to improve daylighting, and creating sediment traps on side channels.

Cain Bio-Engineering

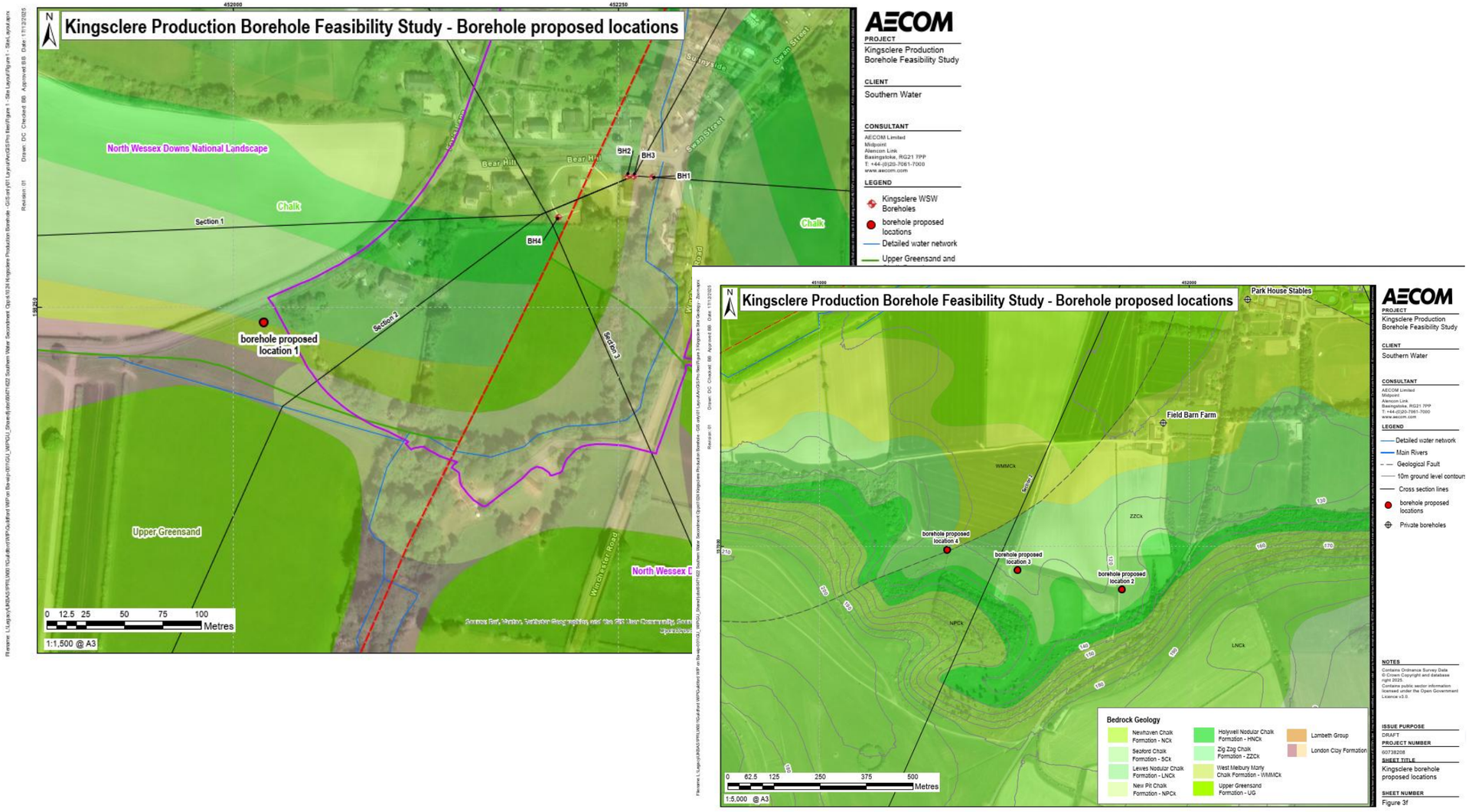
WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Augmentation trial

- Augmentation trial is proposed to see if increasing the amount of water in the brook during low flow periods, such as in the summer, is an effective use of water resources that mitigates the impact of abstraction.
- This will use groundwater from the underlying Chalk aquifer pumped from a borehole situated near the top of the stream to supplement flows.
- Agreed with the EA to perform at least 2 trials to be undertaken in summer low flow periods during 2027 – 2029 to test effectiveness before deciding on permanence of scheme.
- To undertake the trial, Southern Water are currently drilling exploratory boreholes near Wells Head to better understand the underlying geology, will then select the preferred site to drill a production borehole later this summer for the first trial in summer 2027.
- A Water Feature Survey is currently being undertaken, residents with boreholes or ponds etc may receive letters in the post regarding potential monitoring the EA request us to carry out.
- Robust environmental monitoring is being installed including groundwater level monitoring, river flow and level monitoring, and spring flows.

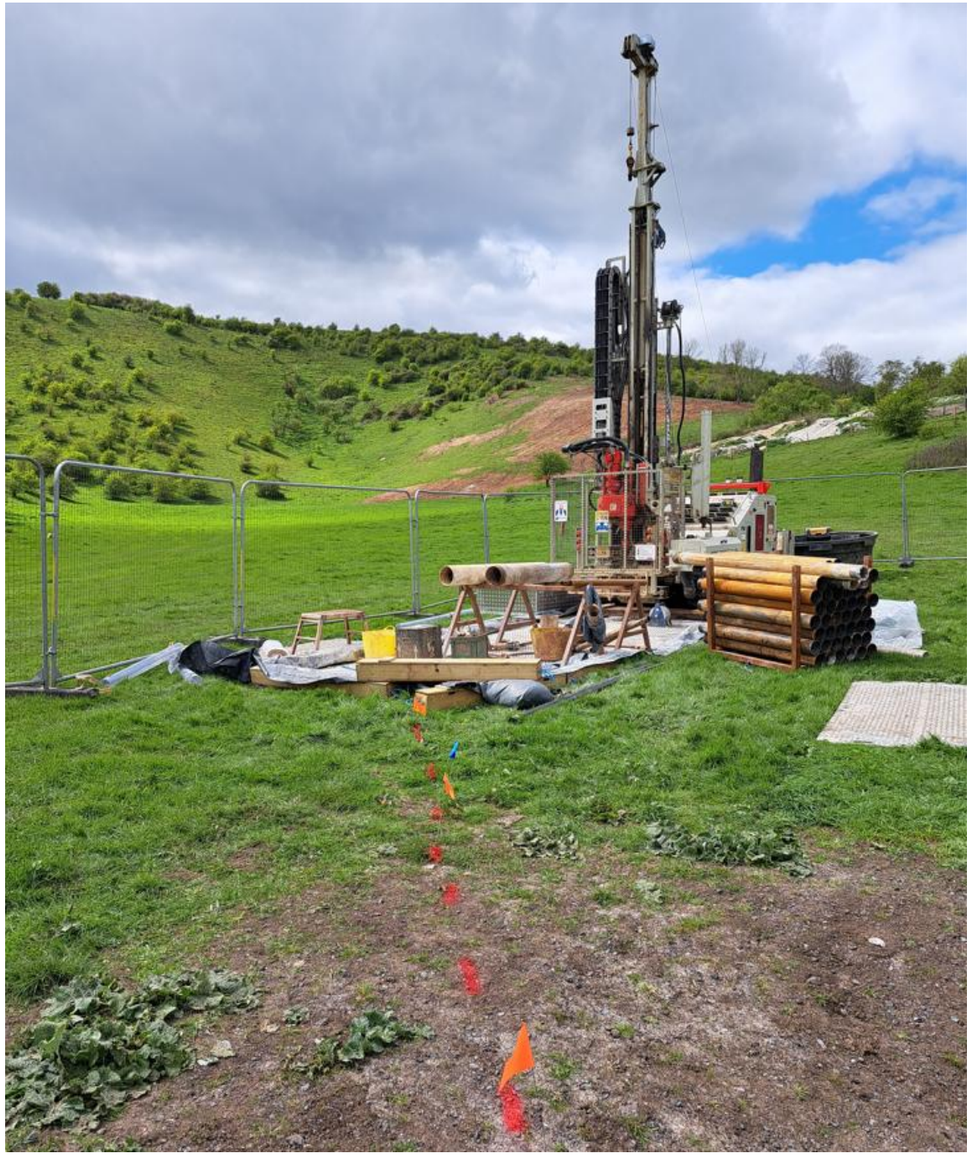
Augmentation borehole drilling

- Drilling of 4 nr. exploratory boreholes completed to confirm thickness of Chalk and groundwater levels at Wells Head/ Field Barn Farm



from Southern Water

Augmentation borehole dr



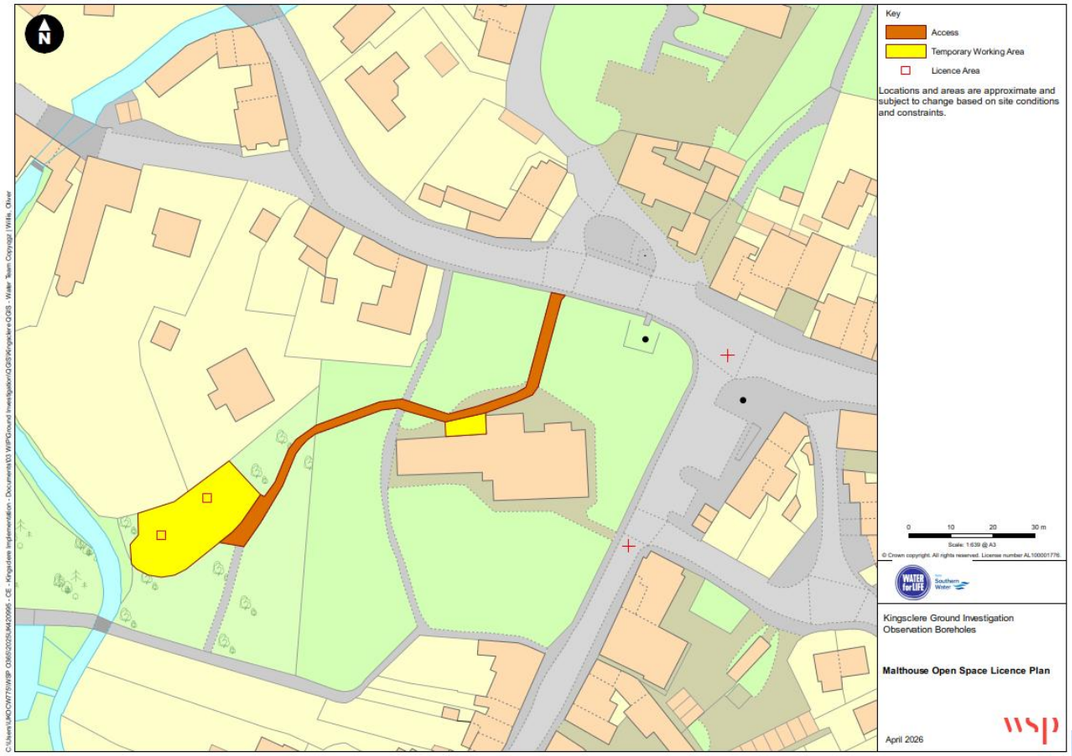
What the drilling rig looks like which you may see in the village

Geological cores retrieved of the underlying Chalk

wsp

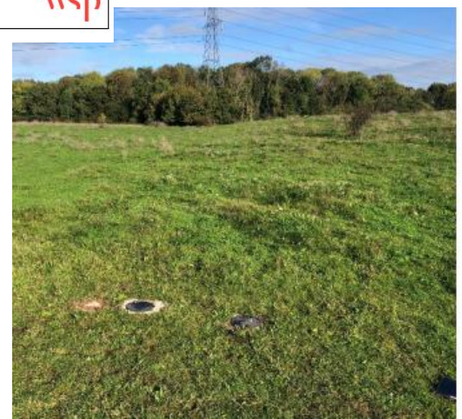
WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Observation borehole drilling – Malthouse open space & Fieldgate playing fields



- Due to happen in June/July
- Fieldgate Centre - on edge of sports pitch
- Malthouse Open Space – No works within the Church boundary, only access via the church yard to get to Malthouse open space
- Will allow for monitoring of groundwater levels in the village

Example of observation boreholes completed flush to ground:



from Southern Water

Community River Group – Greener Kingsclere

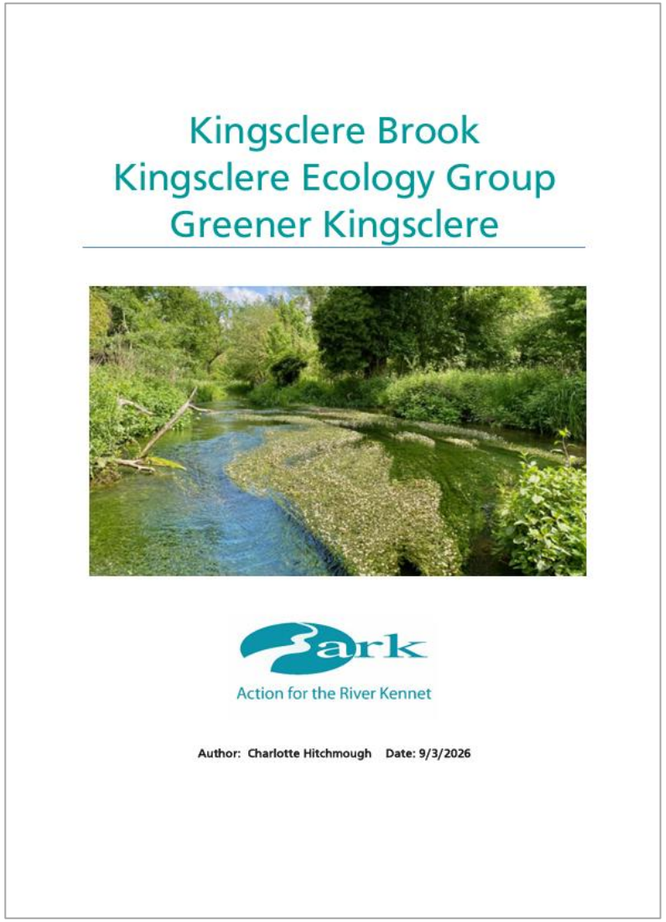
- SWS have now agreed the scope for the Greener Kingsclere group, supported by Action for River Kennet (ARK) Rivers Trust.
- Committed to funding the group over the next 4 years.

The principal aims are:

1. connect the community with their chalk stream through education and activity

2. provide community driven practical ongoing local stream management to ensure that the benefits of Southern Water's investment in physical river enhancement continue into the future.

3. measure and monitor impacts of interventions using a citizen science.



Water saving measures

- With Kingsclere being an Island resource zone and the increasing pressures from climate change, keen to support people who wish to become more water efficient.
- Southern Water provided two different types of water saving kits for families and individuals for a trial running in 2026.
- Looking to trial a number of new Garden Kits in the coming months.
- Have committed £2000 funding for purchasing water butts, currently confirming a supplier.

WATER for LIFE from Southern Water

Actions from last public meeting

Liaison with Thames Water

- Concerns raised in last public meeting around wastewater issues in the village and possible impacts to the stream. SWS met with TW Environmental Partnerships Lead on 27 June 2025, and then TW Healthy Rivers Community Manager on 19 March 2026, to explain our WINEP project and the public feeling on water quality challenges in Kingsclere.
- Kit Malthouse MP has also been recently involved.
- Tackling wider catchment water quality pressures is key aim for Greener Kingsclere group.

Kingsclere Mill Ponds

- SWS have asked Cain Bio-Engineering to undertake a survey to better understand issues with water quality and sediment affecting Mill Ponds, report to be shared with Greener Kingsclere Group shortly.
- Opportunity for Greener Kingsclere Group to take this forward and look at actions to improve the mill ponds in agreement with landowners.

AOB

Any questions?

Launching Greener Kingsclere

A new chapter for our village begins tonight. David Conquest and Charlotte Hitchmough (ARK) introduce Greener Kingsclere — a community movement built on shared goals for our streams, wildlife, and future generations.

Action for the River Kennet

River School

- ✓ 1st workshop complete
- ○ 2nd workshop (in river) early June

Action for the River Kennet

River School

More activity over next few years including eDNA sampling to learn more about what lives in the river.

Investigating school site to identify opportunities to manage water better

Action for the River Kennet

Citizen science monitoring

Riverfly Monitoring – Summer 2026

Invasive species monitoring – Summer 2026

Water vole surveys – Summer 2027

Water quality testing – Summer 2027

‘Mudspotting’ – Summer 2027

Action for the River Kennet

Activities 2026

eDNA testing

Great litter pick

Drain marking

Moving on to 2027 and beyond to include habitat restoration, invasive species removal, redd spotting, rain gardens and more...

Join Us!

Andy Bates invites you to get involved

Whether you can spare an hour a month or simply want to learn more — there's a place for you in Greener Kingsclere.

- *Come and talk to us. We'd love to hear your ideas, answer your questions, and welcome you to the team*