

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the "Clear Access, Clear Waters" campaign.

I am enthusiastic about promoting sport and recreation in the countryside and understand the positive benefits outdoor activities can have both physically and mentally. However, I am also mindful of the rights of communities and people who live or work on land adjoining water, and of the need to maintain our rivers' environmental integrity. We must seek to maintain this delicate balance and the enjoyment of our rivers and inland waterways by all users and interests. I believe this is best achieved through consensus and by local agreement.

I therefore support continuing to use locally agreed, voluntary agreements to increase river access for walkers, swimmers and non-powered craft. The rights of other users, as well as protection for wildlife and the environment, are important considerations. These sensitive issues can best be dealt with at a local level rather than through a one size fits all approach decided in Westminster.

I also fully support my Ministerial colleagues' aim to make this the first generation which leaves the environment in a better state than we found it. I share your concern about the health of our rivers, but I am glad to say that the Government has improved more than 5,300 miles of rivers since 2010. This means our water environment is in the healthiest state for 25 years with otters, salmon, sea trout and other wildlife returning to many rivers for the first time since the industrial revolution.

As well as this, since the water industry was privatised, around £25 billion has been invested to reduce pollution from sewage, covering improvements in sewage treatment and in sewer overflows keeping our rivers clean.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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