

**COUNCIL**  
**13 December 2023**  
**Motions for consideration by Council**

**(a) Proposed by Councillor Emma Beard**

England is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. This fact is officially recognised by the Government, in the form of a commitment to create a national Nature Recovery Network (NRN) which will be based on the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) mandated by the Environment Act 2021.

An aspirational Nature Recovery Network has been mapped for the District. This is largely based around waterways, especially rivers which, by themselves, are crucially important as wildlife corridors and as habitats. But to deliver in this role within the NRN, our rivers need to flow naturally through the landscape, with curves and bends, flood plains and natural river margins and banks. The natural river margins and banks, including the wider riparian area, provide distinct habitats and protect the river against runoff of pollutants, sedimentation and erosion of the riverbank. Good water quality is essential for wildlife and for people.

Horsham District hosts two main rivers and their associated watersheds. Both the Western Adur and the Arun rise and start their journeys in our District. The journey of a third river, the Rother (a river of great significance for the South Downs National Park) finishes when it joins the Arun north of Hardham.

In 2019, every river in England failed to meet quality tests for pollution. Here, in Horsham, the Council is already working hard on turning that around and showing its intention to be a leading light in nature recovery with the Wilder Horsham District initiative, its involvement in the Adur River Recovery project and its partnership with the Weald to Waves initiative.

We wish to ask for better official recognition of the importance of our rivers' health. We are in a position now to move faster towards a world where there is a healthier balance between humans and the natural world so that we can ensure that decisions and policies made today hold fast for the health and happiness of future generations of the rivers' people, flora and fauna.

In doing this, we are recognising our crucial role in nature's recovery in our District and beyond.

**Motion**

This Council recognises:

- (a) The importance of the rivers Rother, Arun and Adur to the wellbeing and health of Horsham District's communities, businesses, agriculture and visitors and, in doing so, acknowledges the need to protect these rivers by supporting and maintaining their healthy flora, fauna and complex ecosystems.

It therefore commits to:

- (b) The development of a 'Rivers Charter' (the terms of which will be approved by Horsham District Council) which (if viable) will build on the work that is already taking place in the District. As such, the Council would like to work alongside the Arun and Rother River Trust, the Ouse and Adur River Trust, the Adur River Recovery project, the Sussex Wildlife Trust, the South Downs National Park Authority, the Farm Clusters and landowners, as well as other stakeholders, so

our rivers, our communities and the natural environment, of which we are the custodians, can thrive and flourish in perpetuity.

**(b) Proposed by Councillor Claudia Fisher**

The events in Israel of 7th October were profoundly horrifying and evil and the price exacted upon the innocent population of Gaza since then has been horrific. Both have rightly shocked the world.

It has been a relief that a deal was reached for a temporary cessation of violence, and that some of the hostages were released. But the world must demand that they all be released immediately and that the killing must cease, so that a robust political settlement can be forged that will bring this terrible situation to an end.

**Motion**

This Council

- Expresses deep sympathy for all those affected by this conflict and by all wars.
- Hopes for an immediate further release of all hostages and an immediate ceasefire to allow more aid and the possibility of a peaceful resolution.
- Holds the view that people of all faiths and none should feel safe and supported wherever they are.

This Council resolves to:

- Explore how the council can better support and facilitate events in our District for people of all faiths and none where they can come together and express solidarity and sadness.
- Offer appropriate support to any Horsham resident who needs our assistance as a result of these and any other violent events.
- Stand ready to provide support and open our arms to innocent people displaced by events of conflict.
- Condemn the use of all dehumanising language and call on our communities to treat each other with respect and refrain from inflammatory terms to describe any other group.