**If you are unsure who your local councillor is, find out here:** [**https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors**](https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors)

Dear **[INSERT LOCAL COUNCILLOR NAME HERE]**,

None of England’s rivers are in good overall health. Sewage outflows, over-abstraction, polluting runoff, physical modifications and inappropriate developments continue to degrade the health of our rivers, intensified by the pressures of a changing climate.

This has a devastating impact on our wildlife, and it shows. Over 10% of our freshwater and wetland species are threatened with extinction in the UK, and we’ve lost 90% of our wetland habitats in the last 100 years. The European eel is critically endangered, Atlantic salmon populations are at less than half the conservation limit, and water voles are Britain’s fastest declining mammal.

The growing ‘River Rights’ Movement seeks to grant protections to rivers, acknowledging their intrinsic value and vital need for better representation in decision-making. Councils across the country, including Lewes District Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, are adopting ‘River Rights’ motions to protect our rivers.

These motions follow framework established by The Universal Declaration of River Rights, which outlines the following fundamental rights:

1. The right to flow
2. The right to perform essential functions within its ecosystem
3. The right to be free from pollution
4. The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers
5. The right to native biodiversity, and
6. The right to regeneration and restoration

Adopting River Rights locally offers a plethora of opportunities, to strengthen protections for rivers, meaningfully engage with the community and foster pride in our unique natural environment.

Please will you commit to supporting River Rights and introduce a motion at Full Council to establish them?

Thank you for your time, I hope to hear from you soon.

Kind regards,

**[YOUR NAME]**

**[YOUR ADDRESS]**