

Fair funding for North Herefordshire



Ellie with Minister of State for Care Stephen Kinnock

Living in a rural area has huge impacts on delivering public services, with long travel distances making everything from school transport to bin collections to social care provision more expensive.

However, the government's "Fair Funding Review" simply doesn't recognise this, meaning Herefordshire Council is facing massive cuts to funding as well as removing the 'remoteness adjustment' for everything but social care.

Ellie has been tirelessly challenging this in Parliament, using every opportunity to speak about this in the House of Commons and urge the government to fairly consider the costs of rurality in allocating funding. Ellie has also taken this message straight to government Ministers, meeting with the Minister of State for Care to discuss the crisis in social care in

Herefordshire and the urgent need for more funding for Herefordshire Council, and writing to the Minister for Children and Families about the Department for Education's decision not to fund a new special school in North Herefordshire, highlighting the shortage of special school places in our county.

Out and about in the constituency

Part of Ellie's role as your MP is getting out and about on visits to meet people and organisations across North Herefordshire, from healthcare providers to businesses, charities, and volunteer groups. These visits allow Ellie to hear about challenges and opportunities in our community directly, in person, from the people who are most affected, and to better champion their voices as she carries their stories into her work in Westminster.

Some of Ellie's recent visits have taken her to:



Hereford Community Diagnostic Centre



Ledbury Big Breakfast



Kington Post Office



Heineken cider mill

If your local organisation, group, charity, or business would like to invite Ellie to visit, please get in touch using the details below!

Get involved

Can you spend an hour every few months delivering Ellie's MP update leaflet near you?

To let us know if you can help, or for other ways to get involved please visit:

elliechowns.org.uk/get-involved



Keep in touch

Contact Ellie to raise a concern or request a slot at a constituency surgery:

ellie.chowns.mp@parliament.uk

Subscribe to Ellie's regular email update:

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Herefordshire MATTERS

News from Dr Ellie Chowns MP

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Find out how Ellie is pushing for fair funding and services for North Herefordshire



River-friendly farming

Ellie continues her campaign to support farmers and restore our rivers



Rivers like the Wye and the Lugg are at the heart of our communities: they support wildlife, local jobs, and our heritage, and they bring people together.

Ellie has been campaigning hard to restore the health of the river Wye and its tributaries the Lugg, Arrow and Frome. Pollution from both agricultural run-off and sewage has caused serious harm - so solutions are urgently needed.

That's exactly what Ellie has been working for since being elected. Ellie's three key asks of the government are:

- Provide more long-term funding for farmers to support the transition to river-friendly farming methods.
- Give the Environment Agency proper funding and teeth so rules are consistently enforced.
- Implement a Water Protection Zone for the Wye catchment so that those responsible for pollution do the most to clean it up, and so that we can be sure that enough is done to fix the problem.

This campaign has been a particular focus for Ellie in the last few months, both on the ground in North Herefordshire and in Parliament.

Ellie has been meeting with local groups and organisations to learn more about the brilliant work they're doing right here in the constituency. She's also been challenging the Prime Minister and the Water Minister directly about the need to support farmers and tackle agricultural pollution.

Ellie said:

“**Protecting and restoring our rivers is a huge priority for our community. I'll keep working at both local and national level to help our rivers recover and thrive!**”

INSIDE: How Ellie is fighting for our rivers, at home and in Parliament

From North Herefordshire to Westminster

LOVE THE LUGG

This Valentine's Day, Ellie took a journey to highlight how local communities "Love the Lugg", travelling along the river on a series of visits and activities centred around showcasing the value of our rivers.

Ellie's visits took her from Aymestrey to Mordiford, meeting local businesses, volunteers, farmers, and citizen scientists whose work shows just how vital our rivers are to wildlife, culture, and the local economy.

Beginning the day at the Riverside in Aymestrey, Ellie spoke with Chef-Patron Andy Link about how the River Lugg is important for tourism and hospitality.



In Leominster, she joined members of the Herefordshire Ornithological Club for birdwatching and a chance to learn more about the wildlife the river supports.

At Wharton Court farm, Ellie and the Helme family discussed the Wyescapes landscape recovery project, which aims to restore nature, improve water quality, and reduce flood risk.

In Wellington, Ellie took part in a Riverfly survey alongside volunteers from the Wye Adapt to Climate Change Project.



And in Moreton on Lugg, Ellie met some of the incredible volunteer water quality testers whose efforts have helped create the biggest citizen science dataset in the country with more than 50,000 tests!

The journey ended at Mordiford Mill, near the confluence of the Lugg and the Wye, highlighting the historical importance of the Lugg to local industry.

Holding government to account



Ellie has repeatedly spoken up in the House of Commons to press the government on the need to restore our rivers, managing to raise issues relating to river-friendly farming in Parliament five times in just the past couple of months, including on one occasion directly to the Prime Minister during Prime Minister's Questions.

Other recent parliamentary actions Ellie has taken to support river-friendly farming include:

- Tabling an Early Day Motion expressing concern at the lack of action within the Water White Paper dedicated to tackling agricultural pollution and urging the government to provide proper funding to support farmers.
- Securing a commitment from the Minister for Water and Flooding, Emma Hardy, to visit the Wye catchment to hear more about the scale of pollution and need for action.

All in the same boat

Collaboration strengthens political efforts - and when it comes to cleaning up our rivers, we need all hands on deck.

That's why Ellie has been coordinating a number of cross-party efforts with fellow Parliamentarians, coming together across the political divide to push for greater action.

Following a joint letter coordinated by Ellie, the Minister for Water and Flooding met with Ellie, plus Jesse Norman MP (Hereford and South Herefordshire), Catherine Fookes MP (Monmouth) and David Chadwick MP (Brecon, Radnor and Cwm Tawe). The cross-party MPs stressed the dire state of the Wye catchment and pressed the Minister for further urgent action to restore the river, including supporting farmers to transition to river-friendly methods, and improving flood resilience.

Parliamentary petition

Ellie has launched a parliamentary petition asking the government to take further action to save the River Wye, starting with formally evaluating the option of introducing a Water Protection Zone across the catchment as a way to address phosphate pollution and restore the river. Presenting this petition in Parliament will allow Ellie to highlight the urgent need for government support to restore the Wye and force the government to respond.