

## Local Development Order consultation – Revamp Your Tank scheme Briefing Note No. 24 - 10

**Service :** *Natural and Historic Environment*

**Further Enquiries to:** Rachel Jones

**email:** [Rachel.jones@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.jones@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**Date Prepared:** 17/05/24

### Background

As per briefing note no. 24-02 Wiltshire Council is offering fully funded grants for homeowners in the Hampshire Avon catchment to upgrade their domestic sewage systems (e.g. septic tanks) and improve water quality.

The River Avon (Hampshire) is an internationally protected river and is suffering from poor water quality. This is caused by agricultural runoff, sewage from existing urban and rural areas and new development. Natural England has advised that new housing developments in the Hampshire Avon catchment should not add more 'nutrient pollution' to the river. To help deliver interventions that improve water quality, the council has been awarded up to £9.8m for capital projects via the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund. Part of this fund will be used to deliver these upgrade projects to improve water quality in the river.

Wiltshire Council has teamed up with Wessex Rivers Trust to improve water quality in the Hampshire Avon catchment (Fig1). Many of the rural parts of the river catchment are not on the mains sewer network so water companies are not treating the sewage. Instead, householders must treat and manage their sewage. We're offering full grants for homeowners to upgrade their septic tanks with more efficient small sewage treatment works. By doing so, this reduces pollution and limits the excess nutrients from human waste entering precious water courses and harming aquatic ecosystems.

To support this project, Wiltshire Council is undertaking a consultation as part of the process to potentially implement a Local Development Order in the Hampshire Avon catchment which, if introduced, should help accelerate the project to the benefit of local communities and the natural environment.

Local Development Orders provide permitted development rights for specified types of development in defined locations. They are flexible and locally determined tools that a Local Planning Authority can use to help accelerate the delivery of appropriate development in the right places. They streamline the planning process by removing the need to make a planning application to a local planning authority for the upgrade of a septic tank, in this instance. In addition, this will introduce a requirement that any householder upgrading their septic tank in the future does so with a new system that performs to the same or higher environmental standards laid out in the scheme. This helps to reduce river pollution and helps protect Wiltshire's most important places for nature.

## Consultation details

The consultation is now live and can be found at [LDO Upgrading Septic Tanks and Small Sewage Treatment Plants Feedback - Details - Keystone \(wiltshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1102/LDO-Upgrading-Septic-Tanks-and-Small-Sewage-Treatment-Plants-Feedback-Details-Keystone). The consultation runs until 17 June 2024. Additionally, there are some hard copies available in council offices in Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham. Please share details of the consultation with your local community. Once the consultation has concluded the local planning authority will determine whether the Local Development Order can be implemented.

Local Development Orders are made by local planning authorities and give a grant of planning permission to specific types of development within a defined area. They streamline the planning process by removing the need for developers to make a planning application to a local planning authority. They create certainty and save time and money for those involved in the planning process.

## More information

For more information, please visit <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1102/Biodiversity-and-development>. If you have any additional queries, please don't hesitate to contact [LDOConsultation@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:LDOConsultation@wiltshire.gov.uk).