

COUNTY COUNCIL – 16TH MARCH 2021

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Indira Vadhia	Councillor Josh Schumann, Chairman of Environment and Sustainability Committee	<p>There are 220 chalk streams in the UK, representing 75-80% of this habitat type globally. Most of these chalk streams are located in the south and southeast of England. Many are within Cambridgeshire; from Burwell Spring and Burwell Brook in East Cambridgeshire to Melbourn Rock in South Cambridgeshire, and several brooks within Cambridge City itself.</p> <p>Chalk streams are not only beauty spots but sources of clean water and habitats for many significant species such as brown trout and water vole. Nine Wells in south Cambridge supplied the city with clean, running water for over 250 years via Hobson's Conduit. The water from Nine Wells is also authorised to be used on surrounding farmland due to us having some of the lowest levels of rainfall in the country.</p> <p>It is clear how important chalk streams are to both our environment and to our people. They are rare and unique areas of biodiversity in our local surroundings, with a global importance.</p> <p>However, unsustainable water abstraction poses a threat to our chalk streams; the Environment Agency has moved to protect 63 chalk streams in the UK by limiting this harmful practice.</p> <p>I believe that it would be in-keeping with the Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy, in particular with reference to its focus on biodiversity, for the County Council to join efforts to recognise the importance of Cambridgeshire's chalk streams as natural habitats, including supporting restoration works and providing protection thereof.</p> <p>I would therefore like to ask if the Council will support the adoption of Cambridgeshire's chalk streams as County Wildlife Sites.</p>

	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Councillor Josh Schumann, Chairman of Environment and Sustainability Committee	Indira Vadhia	To be provided at the meeting.