

The Rt. Hon Steve Reed OBE, M.P.
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and
Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural
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Councillor Bethia Thomas
Leader of the Council

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Dear Mr Reed,

I am writing on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to the issue of flooding. Following short periods of extremely heavy rainfall, several areas within the Vale experienced significant flooding on three separate occasions over the course of 2024. While parts of the Vale have previously experienced flooding issues, these incidents – due to our changing climate – are becoming more frequent and are hampering the lives and economies of our communities on a more regular basis.

Consequently, given the devastating impact that flooding has had on both residents and businesses throughout our district over the course of 2024, the council was disappointed to learn that the Environment Agency has decided not to proceed with the Thames Valley Flood Scheme on the grounds of cost effectiveness. The scheme, as proposed, would have looked to reduce flood risk across the Thames Valley – which includes large parts of the Vale – through a combination of large-scale water storage projects and natural flood management.

Although the council recognises the decision that the Environment Agency has made regarding the Thames Valley Flood Scheme, it highlights the need for further action to be taken to help protect those areas of the Vale which experience regular incidences of flooding. We are, therefore, calling upon HM Government to:

- a) review whether the level of resources currently being spent on flood prevention and mitigation is high enough.
- b) assess whether the formula used for allocating funding for flood prevention and mitigation to the Vale is adequate/fit for purpose.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Bethia Thomas
Leader of the Council