

# BRIEFING NOTE

31 August 2023

## UPDATE: NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY – LEVELLING UP & REGENERATION BILL

Further to our post yesterday, and to draw some balance against many suggesting that nature/environment-based solutions are set to be abolished and which, by default, encourage damage to our waterways, does not seem correct. It seems the Government want to tackle the solution (including nature-based solutions) a different way. Key soundbites from Michael Gove to MPs confirms:

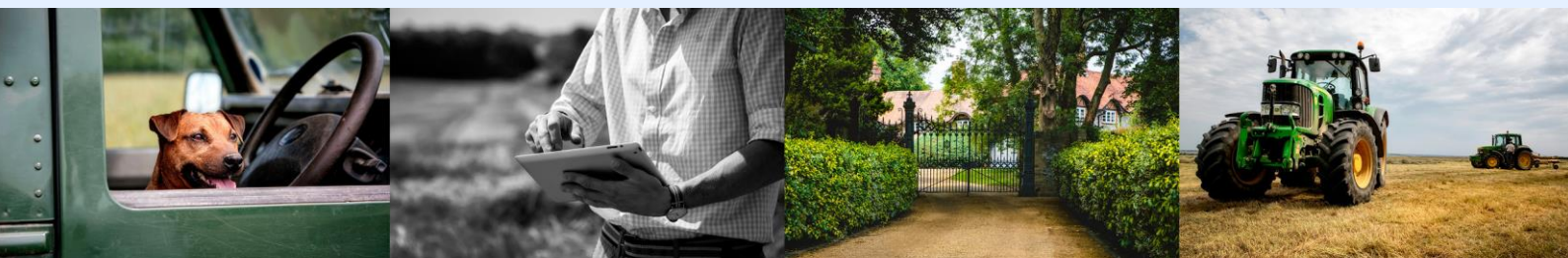
“Nutrients entering our rivers are a real problem, but the contribution made by new homes is very small”.

“...which mandate water companies to improve their wastewater treatment works to the highest technically achievable limits by 2030. They further demonstrate our commitment to improving water quality – enabling catchment-based approaches to be taken and making explicitly clear on the face of the Bill that nature-based solutions may be used when upgrading wastewater treatment works”.

“To ensure habitats are fully supported to recover and flourish, we are committing £280 million for Natural England to expand and evolve their existing Nutrient Mitigation Scheme. This commitment to double existing funding will mean additional strategic measures such as creating new wetlands. The Government intends to work with the house building industry to ensure that larger developers make an appropriate and fair contribution to this scheme over the coming years”.

“Nutrient reduction activities will be accelerated by further work to develop Protected Site Strategies in the catchments most affected by nutrient pollution and with the most acute housing pressures. These new plans will be created by Natural England in partnership with local communities to identify bespoke measures to combat the causes of nutrient pollution in their catchments”.

“Alongside these measures to mitigate and restore habitats, we will go further to help farmers to grow food sustainably and protect the environment, increase productivity, and build a more circular economy for nutrients. We will open a new £25 million nutrient management innovation fund, invest £200 million in slurry management infrastructure, and consult this year on modernising our fertiliser product standards to drive the use of products based on organic and recycled nutrients”.





Whether the Government is tackling this matter from the right end of the lens or not can be debated, but its clear nature-based solutions and placing pressure on water companies to improve their infrastructure is here to stay.

## CONTACT

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