

Lib Dems accuse both governments of neglecting sewage problem

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP said it is time to “flush out the filth” of SNP and Tory neglect, accusing both governments of failing to tackle sewage.

Earlier today, Mr Cole-Hamilton and his deputy leader Wendy Chamberlain MP visited the River Almond in Cramond to inspect the water quality and to highlight the issue of sewage in the area. Residents living near the Almond claim that the water has become discoloured, stating that “foaming and fungus” has appeared on its surface.

Across Scotland, there were more than 14,000 sewage discharges logged during 2022, up from 10,799 incidents in 2021. However, the LibDems say this is likely a significant underestimate as only 4% of sewage discharges are monitored.

As well as proposing a new fund to protect communities from extreme weather which can often lead to sewage overflows, Scottish Liberal Democrats would bring forward a Clean Water Act that would see:

- Scotland’s Victorian sewage network updated;
- Every sewage dump monitored and published with binding targets for their reduction;

- A blue flag system for Scotland's rivers;
- A complete ban on the release of sewage in protected areas such as bathing waters.

The proposals are part of a UK-wide campaign by the Liberal Democrats to clean up the country's waterways and get the government to take action.

Mr Cole-Hamilton said: "Neither the SNP nor the Tories seem to care about preserving the invaluable natural habitats on which we all depend and enjoy.

"SNP ministers have become spin doctors for the government-owned water company that pockets bumper bonuses as our rivers and coastlines are destroyed.

"This country's sewage scandal is inextricably connected to the climate emergency: extreme weather increases the risk of sewage overflows. And yet, we have a Prime Minister who has back-pedaled on key measures for reducing fossil fuels and a Scottish Government which repeatedly misses emissions targets.

"It's time to flush out the filth of SNP and Tory neglect."

Liberal Democrats have outlined their plans for a Clean Water Act in Scotland, including vital upgrades to the sewage network and a clamp down on discharges. They are also calling for a new fund to protect communities from the effects of extreme weather.



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