

Press Release

MISBOURNE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LIMITED
apply for Judicial Review against
THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, HS2 LIMITED and ALIGN JV.



The River Misbourne, and the Little Missenden Vent Shaft

Misbourne Environmental Protection is a group of concerned local residents including Hydrologists and Geologists who are actively working on conservation projects throughout the Chilterns AONB to protect this wonderful landscape.

As individuals, we have lawfully engaged with the Environmental Impact Assessment process of the High Speed 2 project and petitioned the Select Committees of Parliament for protection of the Misbourne Chalk Stream, Shardeloes Lake and the Chalk Aquifer.

Both individually and collectively these are some of the most important water bodies in South East England. The Aquifer supplies 20% of London's fresh water. Shardeloes Lake carries an abundance of unique wildlife and is a visually stunning body of water popular throughout Buckinghamshire. The Misbourne is a globally rare Chalk Stream and one of only 210 left in the world.

These unique systems are at very significant risk from pollution, destruction and total or partial loss as a consequence of the tunnels under construction for the High Speed 2 project. The Environment Agency (EA) have a duty to protect this environment, but instead have permitted HS2 to endanger it.

HS2 admit that Bentonite and prohibited substances will be used in their tunnel construction and that these substances are hazardous to wildlife. They also admit there have been pollution incidents already and accept there is a risk of total or partial loss of each or all of these vital water bodies as a consequence of their tunnelling works.

Parliament passed the Act which approved the construction of High Speed 2, but they did so expecting statutory bodies, such as the EA, only to approve these works after a full and transparent assessment and review to ensure the designs comply with all of the legislation designed to protect the natural environment. During petitioning, it was stated that before they approve the tunnel applications, the EA would need to be satisfied that all potential risks to the river and the surrounding environment had been mitigated - but the EA approved the application in under 8

weeks, and so approved the use of hazardous substances that will pollute the Aquifer and cause significantly higher risks to the Misbourne than were disclosed to Parliament.

Time and again we are seeing statutory bodies like Natural England and now the EA fail in their duties to hold High Speed 2 to account and provide proper scrutiny of their works. Nobody wants to resort to legal challenge, since the time is better spent looking after our precious landscape, but regrettably we must challenge these decisions in the hope that the Courts will require the Agency to undertake a proper assessment and protect this precious environment.

What might we achieve ?

The deficiencies of the proposed scheme do not (in themselves) provide grounds for a review, but the legal shortcomings of the EA procedures do. Our intention is to force the EA to reconsider the entire tunnel project, take proper account of the Water Framework Directive, and consult interested parties before reaching a decision. This should result in the tunnel running entirely through solid chalk when passing under the Misbourne, and external monitoring of the operation, to ensure an immediate response to any situation which might endanger the Aquifer, Shardeloes Lake or the Chalk Stream.

How can you help?

There are many people that circulate crowd funding challenges but there are few as important as this. We ask that you help us protect these rare and unique water bodies. You can donate in the name of your children, in the name of environmental protection or just because it's your freshwater they will harm.....the very water that will flow from your taps.

Give what you can and let's work together to ensure that these people to do their jobs properly.

<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/savethemisbourne/>