

# WATER QUALITY REPORT

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## INTRODUCTION

Waste water treatment for the Strettons community is delivered at the Church Stretton Sewage Treatment Works (STW) located at Little Stretton; a Severn Trent Water Ltd asset. The main river discharges into the Quinny Brook, which is a tributary of the River Teme, and ultimately the River Severn (Severn River Basin Management Plan). Figure 1 shows the River Teme catchment.

Storm overflow events occur during periods of high rainfall and can lead to the sewage system capacity being exceeded. Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) were developed as overflow valves to reduce the risk of sewage backing up during heavy rainfall. Excess wastewater is released directly into our surface waters, in this case the Quinny Brook.

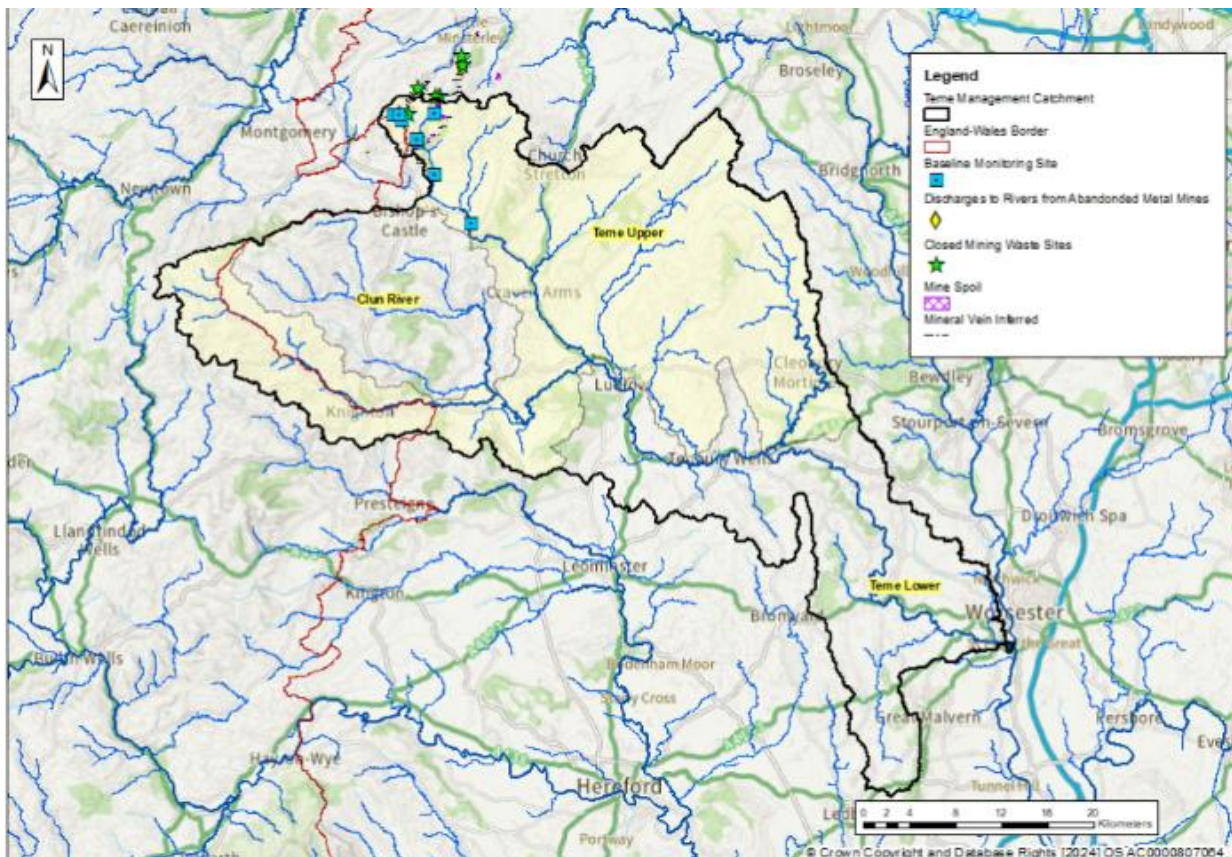


Figure 1. River Teme catchment.

### *Surface water quality classification in England*

Inland surface water quality within England is classified under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017), which states in Section 13 “the objectives are to prevent deterioration of the status of each body of surface water and protect, enhance and restore...by 2021” (HM Government, 2017a). The revised date is now 2027 (Section 16) (HM Government, 2017b). Moreover, the local authority has an obligation to consider the environmental objectives in the River Basin Management Plans.

The latest surface water quality classification for the Quinny Brook was in 2022 when it was classified as **MODERATE**. Phosphate results were reported as Poor. (The Ecological status of the waterbody drives the overall classification and in this case the plant communities assessed were reported as Moderate.) Two sources have been identified for phosphate pollution: diffuse sources from agriculture and point source from sewage treatment works. Figure 2

shows the Objectives for the Quinny Brook (Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, 2026a) which is clear in that there is Low confidence in achieving Good status for phosphates as it is disproportionately expensive.

Classification Item	Status	Year	Reasons
<b>Ecological</b>	<b>Good</b>	2027 - Low confidence	Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens
<b>Biological quality elements</b>	<b>Good</b>	2027 - Low confidence	Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens
Fish	<b>Good</b>	2015	
Invertebrates	<b>Good</b>	2015	
Macrophytes and Phytobenthos Combined	<b>Good</b>	2027 - Low confidence	Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens
<b>Physico-chemical quality elements</b>	<b>Good</b>	2027 - Low confidence	Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens
Acid Neutralising Capacity	<b>Good</b>	2015	
Ammonia (Phys-Chem)	<b>Good</b>	2015	
Dissolved oxygen	<b>Good</b>	2015	
Phosphate	<b>Good</b>	2027 - Low confidence	Disproportionately expensive: Disproportionate burdens

Figure 2. Water Regulations (WFD) Objectives for the Quinny Brook.

### *River Teme Bathing Water status*

The Quinny Brook is a tributary of the River Teme, which has achieved Inland Bathing Water status at Ludlow under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013. This means that Quinny Brook is part of a monitoring regime that is undertaken from May to September inclusive to sample *Escherichia coli* and intestinal enterococci in the water during the official bathing season between 15 May and 30 September (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2026b). Results for four bathing water seasons will determine the annual classification for that water. The status of the river Teme is **POOR** (2024 and 2025 data).

Shropshire Council’s assessment of housing need in the Parish is 200 for the period 2016-2038. This allocation is aligned to the Drainage Water Management Plans delivered by Severn Trent Water Ltd (Severn Trent Water Ltd, 2023) to address challenges such as climate change and population growth. The Neighbourhood Plan informs the opportunity for delivery of the housing need for the period 2016-2038 and it does not support development outside of the development boundary. Therefore an urgent review of water quality in the Quinny Brook has been undertaken as there are serious concerns about the contribution additional housing on land east of Chelmick Drive (planning application 26/00328/OUT), outside of the development boundary, may have on surface water and bathing water quality.

## RESULTS

Data have been obtained through Open Data sources and Freedom of Information requests to the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water Ltd.

### Storm Overflow Results

CSO data for February 2026 are presented in Figure 3. A total of **196** events occurred. For comparison, Craven Arms Stokesay CSO had 2 events and Ludlow Sewage Treatment Works had 56 events in that same month.

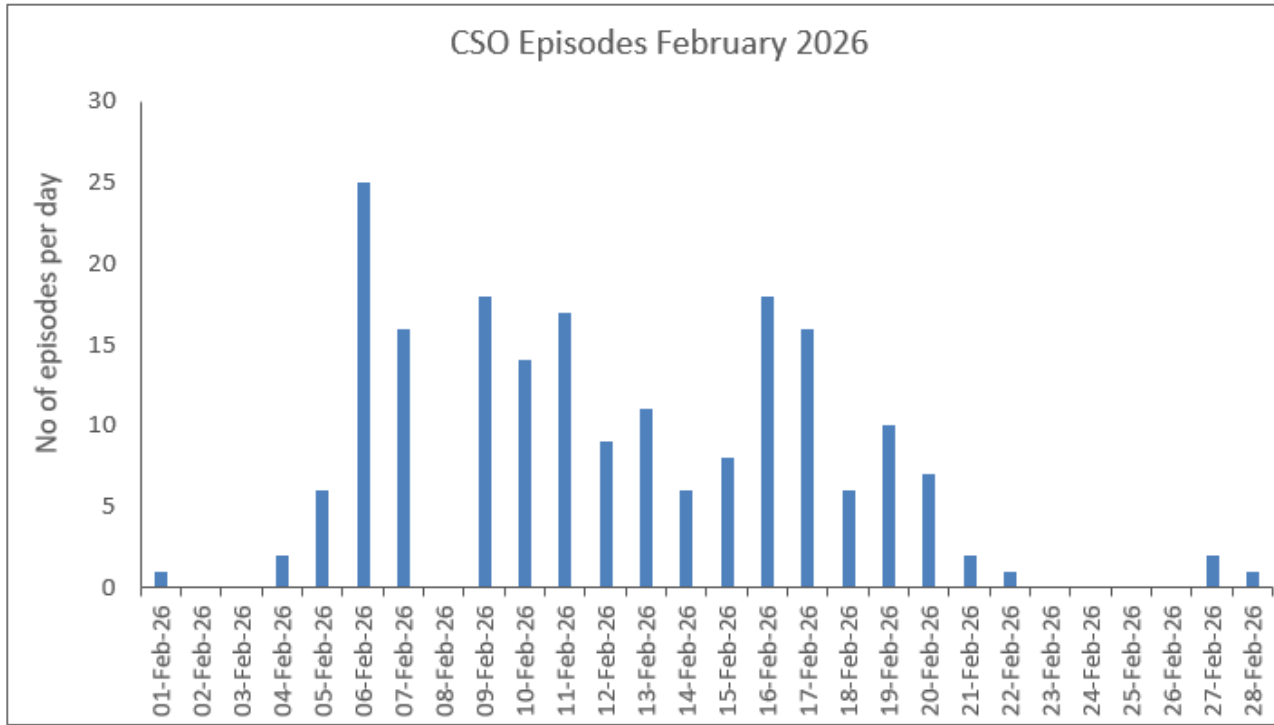


Figure 3. Storm overflow data for Church Stretton STW, February 2026.

Table 1 shows the number of discharges from Church Stretton STW for the period November to February 2025.

Table 1. CSO discharge events November 2025 to February 2026.

November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026
37	116	48	196

### Quinny Brook Escherichia coli results

Figure 4 (Appendix) presents Escherichia coli (E -coli) data for the period May-September 2025 for Quinny Brook and the River Teme at Ludlow. Due to the high level of counts reported from the Quinny Brook sample point (values ranged from 160 to 86000) compared to those reported on the River Teme the E coli-count axis is to 10000 only. Refer to Table 2 for actual values reported. Values over 900 classify the waterbody as Poor for Bathing Waters status (as a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile).

Table 2. E -coli counts from Quinny Brook, 2025.

Sample Date	E -coli count
12/5/2025	320
27/5/2025	<b>54000</b>
30/5/2025	<b>1200</b>
10/6/2025	<b>1400</b>
16/6/2025	460
26/6/2025	400
10/7/2025	460
13/7/2025	<b>1100</b>
15/7/2025	<b>3700</b>
25/7/2025	390
28/5/2025	<b>1700</b>
10/8/2025	440
13/8/2025	160
22/8/2025	160
26/8/2025	270
28/8/2025	260
8/9/2025	<b>1900</b>
12/9/2025	<b>1700</b>
22/9/2025	<b>86000</b>
24/9/2025	<b>1700</b>

## CONCLUSIONS

- The water industry is the known point source for phosphate loading and the Reason for not achieving Good (RNAG) status points to continuous sewage discharge as the main activity (agriculture also source apportioned)
- The Quinny Brook is the main contributor of the bathing water status of **POOR** for the River Teme at Ludlow. Data on the River Corve and the River Onny have been analysed and are available via the following portal: <https://www.stwater.co.uk/get-river-positive/event-duration-monitor-edm-report-5/>
- Ten of the twenty E -coli samples taken from the Quinny Brook exceeded the 900 count value
- Limitations of E -coli sample results are: Downstream sample results (Teme at Ludlow) have sometimes been taken before the upstream site (Quinny Brook). It is highly likely that the levels of E -coli present in the River Teme at Ludlow are far higher than reported (and allowing for downstream flow)
- In the Statement of Common Ground between Shropshire Council and Severn Trent Water Ltd (SvT) in relation to the Shropshire Local Plan 2026-2038 (at which time this development site had been excluded from the Local Plan) it is evident that Church Stretton Sewage Treatment Works (STW) will not be upgraded
- This is verified by the current SvT DWMP23 plan which has excluded Church Stretton STW from any form of upgrade, nor is it expected to be upgraded before 2035 (DMWP28)
- Church Stretton sewage waste Red Amber Green (RAG) assessment shows Church Stretton STW as Red (Shropshire Council and Severn Trent Water Ltd, 2021)
- Storm rainfall is becoming more intense and more frequent (Met Office, 2026) and this will place a relentless burden on our waste-water system locally from surface water run-off and increasing demand due to population growth
- **Building on land identified referred to in planning application 26/00328/OUT will contribute further to:**
  - **point source pollution of the Quinny Brook**
  - **Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017) MODERATE classification status of the Quinny Brook waterbody or worse and therefore the target of Good status by 2027 will not be met**
  - **Inland Bathing Water status of POOR for the River Teme at Ludlow**
- **In line with the Drainage Water Management Plan for Church Stretton and delivery of the housing need within the Church Stretton boundary of 200 dwellings by 2038, this report indicates development beyond this “target figure” requires a review of SvT’s storm overflow risk assessment and wastewater treatment works assessment**
- **Shropshire Council must, in exercising its functions, have regard to River Basin Management Plans. These plans contain the main issues for the water environment and the actions needed to tackle them.**

## REFERENCES

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# Appendix

Figure 4. E -coli counts for Quinny Brook, 2025.

