

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
8 JULY 2026**

Officer: Helen Ball (Town Clerk)

RIVER TESTING

1. Purpose of Report

To consider supporting the continued testing of water quality on the River Severn

2. Background

The River Severn in Shrewsbury was designated as a Bathing Water Site in 2024. The site's location is adjacent to the boat ramp at Frankwell. The regulations require the Environment Agency to test the water quality of the river during the Bathing Water Season (15 May to 30 Sept Bathing Water Site. For the last two seasons, the site has been designated as POOR. Whilst this designation has been disappointing to local users, it does not reflect the overall quality of the river.

Last year the Environment Agency were awarded funding from DEFRA to undertake additional testing throughout the whole of the year and not just the 15 weeks of the Bathing Water Season. These results were uploaded onto the Swimfo website for users to access and determine whether they feel safe to swim.

Funding has now expired and the equipment has been removed meaning that water users have to rely on the statutory testing.

3. Additional Testing

Last year's data set of additional water testing allowed for a greater understanding of what affects the condition of the river, including temperature, rainfall, water flow and impacts further upstream which are not affected by storms. Continuing that dataset will also help to determine the success of infrastructure improvements. It will also allow the EA to add it to a wider dataset of testing further up the catchment to determine source of any spikes in testing.

The cost of the testing is around £20k a year. Equipment could be installed and operationalised quickly

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Council supports the funding of additional training**
- (iii) That the Town Clerk liaises with the EA on delivery options**