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Councillor Emily Smith
Leader of the Council

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Dear Ms Rees,

I am writing on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council regarding flooding and the clearance of gullies and drainage ditches. The events over Christmas have again shown the importance of regular maintenance in helping to prevent significant flood events from occurring.

The Vale are, therefore, requesting that Oxfordshire County Council consider developing a rational, comprehensive and cost-effective management plan for the maintenance of roadside gullies and drainage ditches. It should involve regular and meaningful dialogue with landowners to clear important drainage features and be supported by increased funding.

While we appreciate that the current approach is in part driven by financial constraints, it is both limited and too reactive – when it needs to be comprehensive and proactive. Moreover, with the effects of climate change, it is likely that severe flooding events will become more frequent in the coming years. Oxfordshire, therefore, needs a maintenance plan for its roadside gullies and drainage ditches which is fit for the future.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Emily Smith
Leader of the Council