South West Sussex Internal Drainage District
Proposed abolition

As you are aware, the Environment Agency currently manages three IDDs within West Sussex. In line with government policy, we are seeking to transfer the management of ordinary watercourses within these IDDs to local ownership.

To do this, we must abolish the existing IDDs, including the South West Sussex IDD. Having listened to the views of those affected and considered all the options, we are now proposing to abolish the South West Sussex IDD without creating a replacement.

What happens next?
Following the general election we will formally submit a Draft Scheme to Defra, setting out our intention to abolish the South West Sussex IDD. If and when confirmed by the Secretary of State, this IDD will no longer exist and:

- riparian land owners will be responsible for maintaining the ordinary watercourses in the IDD which we have been maintaining on their behalf
- district councils will have the power to carry out flood risk management work in order to manage the flood risk from the ordinary watercourses and
- West Sussex County Council will be responsible for enforcement and consenting; it will also have powers to carry out flood risk management work with regard to surface run-off and groundwater

We will email you again to let you know when the proposal has been sent to Defra, explaining in more detail what will happen next, time scales and what action you can take.

Submitting the proposal is just the start of a statutory process during which there will be opportunities to make representations to Defra. Depending on the number and nature of any representations made, we would expect the Secretary of State to make his decision on abolishing the IDD in late autumn 2015 and for the IDD to be abolished in spring 2016.

In the meantime our inspectors will assess the condition of assets. This will help us ensure they are in a reasonable condition if and when the IDD is abolished. We will work closely with local authorities, drainage ratepayers, National Farmers Union (NFU), Country Land and Business Association (CLA) and other local interested parties to address any outstanding concerns.

Teresa Willway
IDB Project Manager
Environment Agency
SouthWestSussexIDB@environment-agency.gov.uk