

PFAS – update following public meeting in Upper Heyford Village Hall 13th September 2026

Source - UK gov website

Introduction

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), often referred to as ‘forever chemicals’, present a complex and global challenge. They are long-lasting and widespread in our environment yet are essential for many uses in our society. PFAS are valued for their resistance to heat, water and oil, and have been widely used across industries from firefighting foams and medical devices to textiles and packaging. They can benefit society, support economic growth, help us achieve our aims of making Britain a clean energy superpower, and contribute to meeting climate change targets and protecting the ozone layer. Their use in defence equipment and military capability contributes to protecting national security.

There is growing evidence that their widespread use and past management have generated risks of harm to people and to the environment, including wildlife. Their persistence means that some PFAS will remain in our environment for hundreds of years. While there is scope to continue to improve our understanding across all PFAS, this growing concern over potential health risks and irreversible environmental contamination means that action should not be unnecessarily delayed.

The UK government, together with the devolved governments, have been working for over 2 decades to monitor, ban, or restrict specific PFAS and address issues caused by their historic use. The way forward should involve coordinated action, with the governments working together with industry, other bodies and the public to understand and manage PFAS risks. Chemical pollutants, and especially those with the properties of PFAS, know no national borders.

This is not a challenge unique to the UK. Countries around the world are also managing the legacy of past PFAS use and the ongoing use of PFAS. Like the UK, many are taking steps to understand and mitigate the impacts. We have been working internationally to agree global prohibitions of some dangerous PFAS, and we will continue to engage internationally, learning from global best practice and contributing to collective efforts.

We wish to find the right balance between the ongoing use of some PFAS and the valuable benefits PFAS can provide, whilst ensuring we transition to safe and sustainable alternatives where appropriate. While this transition takes place and we contend with pollution from the past, there is an ongoing need to manage the prevalence and risks of PFAS in society and in the environment.

Gallos Brook has a **Critically high concentration of PFAS “forever chemicals”**.

That is a scientific fact, published by the British Geological Survey, UK Centre of Ecology and Hydrology, and the Environment Agency.

Following a crowd funding campaign in [May 2026](#), Gallos Brook & locals commissioned two reports –

The first analysing The Environment Agencies test results and the chemical components found in their tests.

The second a test on a watercourse 0.5km downstream from the old air base.

The concentrations of PFAS found in May 2026 is **42,174 ng/L**.
500M from residential buildings at Heyford Park.

According to the test report the

“The suite of compounds detected is highly characteristic of aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) contamination, typically associated with fire-training areas, airports, military installations and similar facilities, rather than ordinary urban wastewater or diffuse background contamination. In our opinion, the concentrations recorded are sufficiently elevated to indicate the presence of a significant historic source of PFAS contamination.”

[Subadara report May 2026](#)

The ex-air base is currently the site of extensive residential development. Heyford Park & Heyford Springs. There is currently a planning application in for 9,000 houses on the airfield.

The awareness of PFAS in our local area is new news, most have only been aware since the start of 2026, although as per the information on the UK Governmental website this has been known about for many years. The good news is that some of the harmful PFAS have already been restricted. Many are very concerned about the higher-than-normal readings on our area. This has been raised with the Environment Agency, Local Developers, Oxfordshire and Cherwell Councils and Central Government.

From my understanding there is currently no agreed plan of action nor ownership of the issues in our specific area. Responsibility appears to be batted between Cherwell District Council who manage planning applications, Oxfordshire County Council who are responsible for roads and infrastructure, the Developers to ensure that they follow the planning processes and the Environment Agency to protect and improve the environment. Meanwhile there are developments/construction works currently taking place and in planning in our local areas and we are unsure of the impacts.

Plans as per the UK Governmental website -

Our PFAS vision for the future

Our long-term vision is to work in partnership, taking a science-based and proportionate approach, to reduce and minimise the impacts of harmful PFAS on public health and the environment, including through the transition to safer alternatives.

We will meet this vision by:

- understanding and identifying the sources of PFAS including where they originate from
- accounting for the movement of PFAS around society and the environment, which means tackling PFAS pathways
- reducing and managing ongoing exposure to PFAS for people, animals and the environment

This PFAS Plan is structured in line with these 3 pillars:

Section 1: Understanding PFAS sources

Section 1 of this plan relates to understanding PFAS and its sources. It sets out:

- what we know about PFAS currently
- priorities for improving our understanding of PFAS use in society, its prevalence in our environment, and the risks this presents

Section 2: Tackling PFAS pathways

Section 2 relates to tackling PFAS pathways, including reducing PFAS at source and preventing PFAS from entering and circulating in the environment. Using our evidence on PFAS, we can:

- take actions to manage risks of PFAS across their full life cycle
- support the transition to safer alternatives whilst recognising where critical PFAS uses are still currently needed

Section 3: Reducing ongoing exposure to PFAS

Section 3 relates to reducing and managing ongoing exposure to harmful PFAS, to protect people and the environment, including from legacy pollution.

The 3 sections work together to manage PFAS risks in a coordinated way. Understanding PFAS helps deliver effective and well prioritised interventions that, in the longer term, contribute together to reducing PFAS risks across the environment and society. This will, in turn, reduce our reliance on costly preventative measures at the point of exposure.

What we can do as residents in Weston on the Green –

Lobby CDC and OCC to keep the pressure on.

As a parish council we should comment on all planning applications in the impacted areas to try to ensure Developers take the necessary actions/precautions.

Raise awareness – talk to friends/neighbours.

Test bore holes that are used for drinking water.

Continue monitoring water samples in our local streams and rivers.

Consider testing our local streams for PFAS – but plan and share this with the relevant parties.

Link to the presentation -

<https://gallosbrook.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/pfas-update-september-2026-1.pptx>

Link to the Government website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pfas-plan>