

District Councillor Emily O'Brien

June 2026 Report

As ever I remain busy with all things local government reorganisation related. Another day another consultation, it seems. None of which appear to get listened to. Elections of course have happened since my last report, but I am sure you have seen the outcomes. I am glad that once again residents elected Johnny as our county councillor.

Planning remains a key area, both locally e.g. Howell's bank application but also in terms of how we respond as a local authority to the latest raft of government measures which seem designed to destroy the ability (or even the point) of a local plan, as well as strip away yet more nature protection plus directly threaten local decision making e.g. taking decisions away from planning committees for larger development.

I am busy on water as ever. I have attended a useful right of rivers session at Kew Gardens. Johnny, Lucy and I attended the SE water session drought management session – these have developed out of the session I hosted at Lewes District Council and it's great to see a more collaborative approach having developed out of that especially with the severe drought issues that are constant. I've also visited the LDC funded natural flood management sites and will be attending the Wilder Ouse Conference in Lewes on June 26th. Do consider attending and please do share info with any landowners you know - The link to grab a **free** ticket for the Eventbrite is here: [Wilder Ouse Conference Tickets](#).

In national news I was delighted to be elected as the leader of the new Green Group at the Local Government Association. I get officially anointed in July but am very busy with the role even now, so bear with me while I get my feet under the desk and also get the new group office there under way. The office should be fully staffed by September, and the role is a great chance to ensure local issues make the national stage.

Warm regards

Emily O'Brien (She/her)

Green Party Councillor for Ouse Valley & Ringmer

Cabinet Member for Nature, Climate & Food Systems at Lewes District Council

Vice Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA) Neighbourhoods Committee