

Yorkshire Water chief says PFAS pollution in Bentham 'will not impact drinking water'

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The chief executive of Yorkshire Water has said she 'does not believe' that PFAS pollution from the Angus Fire site will 'impact its assets or customers' in response to concerns raised by the Labour parliamentary candidate for the area about the safety of the environment in Bentham.



The Angus Fire site. Source - Rob Whitrow

Last week, Malcolm Birks, candidate for the Skipton and Ripon constituency, wrote to Angus Fire, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water, the Health & Safety Executive, North Yorkshire Council and Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care, calling for "urgent" answers. The letter followed a recent [ENDS investigation](#) which revealed that firefighting foam company Angus Fire had polluted the town of Bentham with the highest levels of PFAS pollution known to be recorded in the UK.

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The chief executive of Yorkshire Water, Nichola Shaw, has now responded to the letter, addressing the concerns raised.

In response to Birks' question of why Yorkshire Water has not made a public statement in relation to the PFAS contaminated groundwater in Bentham, the utility's chief executive said that "groundwater and the water table is generally the responsibility of the Environment Agency", with the water company responsible for the collection, treatment and supply of drinking water, as well as managing effluent within the sewer network.

"As such we would not normally make statements about groundwater outside of our network unless it is

impacting our assets or operations", Shaw wrote.

She added that the Angus Fire property would "not directly affect our local raw water catchment area" which is the Embsay-Skipton Water Supply System, and that "therefore, from a drinking water quality perspective, we do not believe that pollution at this location would impact our assets or customers".

[ENDS' investigation](#) revealed that PFAS pollution from Angus Fire has contaminated the Millstone Grit aquifer, a class one aquifer that provides drinking water to other private abstractors in the local area.

This prompted North Yorkshire Council, which is responsible for regulating the safety of water supply under the Private Water Regulations, to test drinking water supplies at the Riverside Caravan Park, which is licensed to abstract drinking water from a borehole for drinking water.