

# Blueprint for Water

WATER PEOPLE NATURE

# BLUEPRINT FOR PR19

ENVIRONMENTAL  
OUTCOMES FOR  
THE PRICE REVIEW



Wildlife and  
Countryside



[www.blueprintforwater.org.uk](http://www.blueprintforwater.org.uk)

# BLUEPRINT FOR PR19

The Blueprint for Water coalition and our 6 million plus members believe the 2019 Price Review (PR19) and 2020 Business Plans are crucial to deliver for customers and the environment.

We want to see healthy rivers, clean beaches and coastal waters, safe drinking water, less waste, reduced flooding and thriving wildlife. Importantly, water company customers want to see this too. This means improving catchment management from source to sea, stopping pollution of our waters, using water wisely whilst pricing it fairly, and addressing over-abstraction, which threatens our rivers and wetlands.

We passionately believe that a healthy natural environment is at the heart of a resilient and successful water industry - an industry that can meet the needs of current and future customers and deal with the challenges we face, such as climate change and population growth. In the context of uncertainty around Brexit, we look to the water sector to develop business plans based upon the principles and obligations enshrined in the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Nature Directives. We want water companies to work with Blueprint to ensure that the Government maintains overall levels of environmental protection, with any future amendments to have full parliamentary scrutiny and public consultation.

Blueprint has been engaging with the Government, regulators and water companies, as well as our members and supporters, to develop environmental priorities for PR19. We are extremely grateful to all the organisations and individuals who took the time to engage with us.

“ The purpose of the WFD is to provide a framework of protection on inland surface, coastal and ground waters... prevent deterioration, protect and enhance aquatic ecosystems... promote sustainable water use based on long-term protection of water resources... progressive reduction in pollution... contribute to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts... ”

We urge water companies to adopt our Blueprint for PR19 environmental manifesto. We are confident that customers will support the programme we set out, based on effective company research to date. As Blueprint, we will play our part, continuing to work with the water industry to develop and successfully implement its plans.

Pages 4-6 of this document set out our perspective on the future challenges and opportunities facing the water sector. Our four headline outcomes are then described with case studies through pages 8-19 and are summarised on pages 20-23. Our final pages, 24-26, highlight our thoughts on next steps and key milestones.

**£8bn**

THE WATER COMPANIES IN ENGLAND AND WALES ARE INVESTING OVER £8BN PER YEAR.<sup>1</sup> THIS INVESTMENT MUST DELIVER FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE.

<sup>1</sup> [waterbriefing.org/home/regulation-and-legislation/item/9576-ofwat-draft-decisions-on-%C2%A343bn-amp6-investment-programme-published](https://www.waterbriefing.org/home/regulation-and-legislation/item/9576-ofwat-draft-decisions-on-%C2%A343bn-amp6-investment-programme-published)



# FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We are at a crossroads politically, economically and environmentally. The decisions we make and the direction we take, in the next two to three years, will be critical if we truly want to be ‘the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than when we found it’<sup>2</sup>, as the Government has stated.

## We certainly have work to do...

- 13% of our freshwater and wetland species are currently at risk of extinction<sup>3</sup>;
- We have lost 90% of our wetland habitat over the past century<sup>3</sup>;
- More than 25% of our freshwater species have become extinct since records began<sup>3</sup>; and,
- Only 20% of water bodies in England and Wales currently achieve ‘good ecological status’<sup>4,5</sup>.

A healthy natural environment is important not just for nature, but for our society, our economy and our individual wellbeing. As the **major private investor** in water and environmental management in the UK, the water industry has a pivotal role to play in the stewardship of the environment we all cherish, and that the sector relies on to operate.

Following the EU Referendum, we welcome the **Government’s commitment to transpose existing EU laws**, including environmental laws, into UK legislation, with any subsequent changes having full and proper parliamentary scrutiny<sup>6</sup>. We cannot afford to regress on the achievements we have made over recent decades in river and bathing water quality. The public agree: polling indicates that 80% of British adults think we need the same or stronger levels of environmental protection after we leave the EU<sup>7</sup>.

Brexit offers a **once in a generation opportunity to reform the agricultural system and to make real progress in addressing the agricultural pollution issues** that have dogged the delivery of healthy river and groundwater bodies (28% of water bodies fail to reach good status due to agriculture and rural land management<sup>8</sup>).



Payments from the public must deliver public goods, such as improved water quality, reduced flooding and enhanced biodiversity, and be underpinned by an effective regulatory baseline that ensures the polluter pays. In 2015 farming was responsible for more serious pollution incidents in England than any other sector<sup>9</sup>. Blueprint members are working hard to make this happen, and would welcome greater support from the water industry.

There remains much to do to address the **legacy of past environmental damage**. From dealing with over-abstraction to getting a grip on sewer overflows, we welcome the commitment water companies have shown to date in tackling these issues. We want to see momentum maintained through the next price review cycle (2020 – 2025), with focus on implementing solutions on the ground.

Looking ahead, there will be **increasing pressure from climate change and population growth**. We are pleased to see industry efforts to investigate

and plan for these risks through projects such as the Water Resources Long Term Planning study<sup>10</sup>, led by Water UK, and initiatives such as Water Resources East and Water Resources South East.

The economic, social and environmental risks posed by drought are severe. This is particularly the case in the south east, where already stretched supplies will be most impacted by population growth and climate change. Here, water companies must be exemplars on **demand management** before they look to take more water from the environment. This can be achieved through delivering class leading leakage levels, implementing full metering, installing water efficiency measures in new and existing homes at significantly scaled-up levels, and creating effective behavioural campaigns and incentives.

We look to Government to deliver reform of our archaic abstraction regime and to ensure that companies develop strategic, long-term plans for our wastewater systems, as they do for water resources.

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/environment-secretary-speaks-at-state-of-nature-report-launch](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/environment-secretary-speaks-at-state-of-nature-report-launch)

<sup>3</sup> [www.rspb.org.uk/Images/State%20of%20Nature%20UK%20report\\_%2020%20Sept\\_tcm9-424984.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/State%20of%20Nature%20UK%20report_%2020%20Sept_tcm9-424984.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015)

<sup>5</sup> [waterwatchwales.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/en/](http://waterwatchwales.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/en/)

<sup>6</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-governments-negotiating-objectives-for-exiting-the-eu-pm-speech](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-governments-negotiating-objectives-for-exiting-the-eu-pm-speech)

<sup>7</sup> [www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/yougov-survey-brexit-environment-august-2016-101683.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/yougov-survey-brexit-environment-august-2016-101683.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-478/POST-PN-478.pdf](http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-478/POST-PN-478.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/553537/Pollution\\_incidents\\_2015\\_evidence\\_summary.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/553537/Pollution_incidents_2015_evidence_summary.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [www.water.org.uk/water-resources-long-term-planning-framework](http://www.water.org.uk/water-resources-long-term-planning-framework)

We want to see far more attention placed on improving **the resilience of the natural environment** that companies rely on to operate, alongside investment in pipes, power and processes. By proactively enhancing the quality of the natural environment, through techniques such as river restoration and improved catchment stewardship, companies can also greatly improve the resilience of their own systems to future stresses, securing a reliable service for customers whilst enhancing the environment they enjoy.

We have a huge opportunity to work together to **connect people to the environment**. Significantly, initial feedback from company customer engagement, both before the last price review and since, shows that customers value the environment. They expect companies to mitigate their environmental impact as part of business as usual, prioritising action on leakage and water efficiency. We would like to see companies build on their customer engagement work, making the connection with the mental and physical health benefits that our coastline and countryside can offer. Water companies should support and engage with the efforts by NGOs to encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to visit, enjoy and value nature in both rural and urban landscapes, helping to improve the connection between people and their local environment.

We need to do more to ensure that the **risks of invasive non-native species for the environment and water companies are avoided**. In 2010, estimates indicated invasive non-native species (INNS) were costing the water industry nearly £4 million per year. INNS can block water pipes and are hugely detrimental to the natural environment, and the public's enjoyment of areas such as reservoirs. INNS can also increase flood risk and soil erosion, and pose a serious risk to water company assets.

We recognise the need to ensure that **customer bills are affordable**. Although nearly all companies now have social tariffs to support customers struggling to pay, the awareness and take-up of these schemes has been patchy. We urge companies to do more to help tackle affordability issues and support customers in vulnerable circumstances, proactively promoting that support is available to all those customers who may be eligible and reporting on the proportion of all eligible customers that are benefiting from social tariff schemes.

Water efficiency is also an essential part of a package to tackle affordability and vulnerability, helping customers manage their bills, as well as pay them.

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Meeting the significant challenges described above, and making the most of the opportunities, will require new thinking and novel approaches. The water sector has a strong record of accomplishment in undertaking **research** and fostering **innovation**. One challenge would be that we need to become quicker at implementing these great ideas and doing it at scale.

Whilst Blueprint will continue to challenge companies on their environmental performance, we also celebrate the contribution the sector has made, and is making, to improve the environment. We should explore areas where, **in partnership, we can achieve more** for customers and the environment, for example, through joint working in the policy arena; through conversations with our customers or supporters; and through on the ground delivery.

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WE NEED TO DO MORE TO ENSURE THAT THE **RISKS OF INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER COMPANIES ARE AVOIDED**.

# PROTECT AND RESTORE CATCHMENTS FROM SOURCE TO SEA

Healthy, functioning catchments can deliver multiple benefits for water companies and their customers through improved water quality, reduced flood risk, increased availability of water for abstraction, and greater resilience to climate change. In addition, they provide significant biodiversity, recreational and health benefits.

## What we are calling for:

- **Enhanced and extended catchment initiatives** – We continue to advocate for water companies to play a greater stewardship role in the catchments that they and their customers depend on, working in partnership with others to address problems at their source, rather than end of pipe. With over 300 catchment initiatives currently underway, the sector needs to ensure that it is sharing best practice and valuing the wider benefits of these schemes. In PR19, we would like to see companies scale up catchment management, using this approach to deliver solutions for water resources, wastewater and long-term resilience. In particular, we would like to work with companies in lowland and urban areas to understand the potential of catchment approaches in innovative settings.
- **Increased ecosystem resilience in vulnerable locations and catchments** – Healthy, diverse ecosystems are much better at coping with change. Investing in thriving ecosystems will increase the resilience of water companies to drought and future population growth and help meet the resilience duties of Defra and Ofwat. Water companies should consider how ecosystem resilience could be enhanced at their vulnerable sites and catchments, setting out what they will do to increase resilience within their investment plans.
- **Natural Capital to be assessed and grown** – The Natural Capital Protocol was published in 2016<sup>11</sup>. It offers a new approach to assessing and valuing the environmental assets an organisation is responsible for and depends upon – rivers, aquifers and soils – so that they can be incorporated into decision-making. It is important that this helps to shape investment decisions – we want to see options appraisals account for Natural Capital recommending schemes that help to restore it, rather than deplete it. We can see the potential for companies to have developed Natural Capital Accounts by the start of the investment period (2020 – 2025), and would like to see a commitment to grow this capital through the five-year investment window.
- **Contributing to achieving good environmental status** – The health of our water bodies provides an excellent indicator of the health of our catchments. However, in 2015 only 20% of rivers in England and Wales were at ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ status,<sup>4,5</sup> with a third of the reasons for not achieving good status due to water company abstractions and discharges<sup>12</sup>, and a similar proportion due to poor land management. This needs to be tackled. We urge water companies to work closely with Blueprint and our members to ensure that all sectors, including agriculture, do their part.

<sup>11</sup> [naturalcapitalcoalition.org/protocol/](http://naturalcapitalcoalition.org/protocol/)

<sup>12</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/514944/National\\_evidence\\_and\\_data\\_report.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514944/National_evidence_and_data_report.pdf)

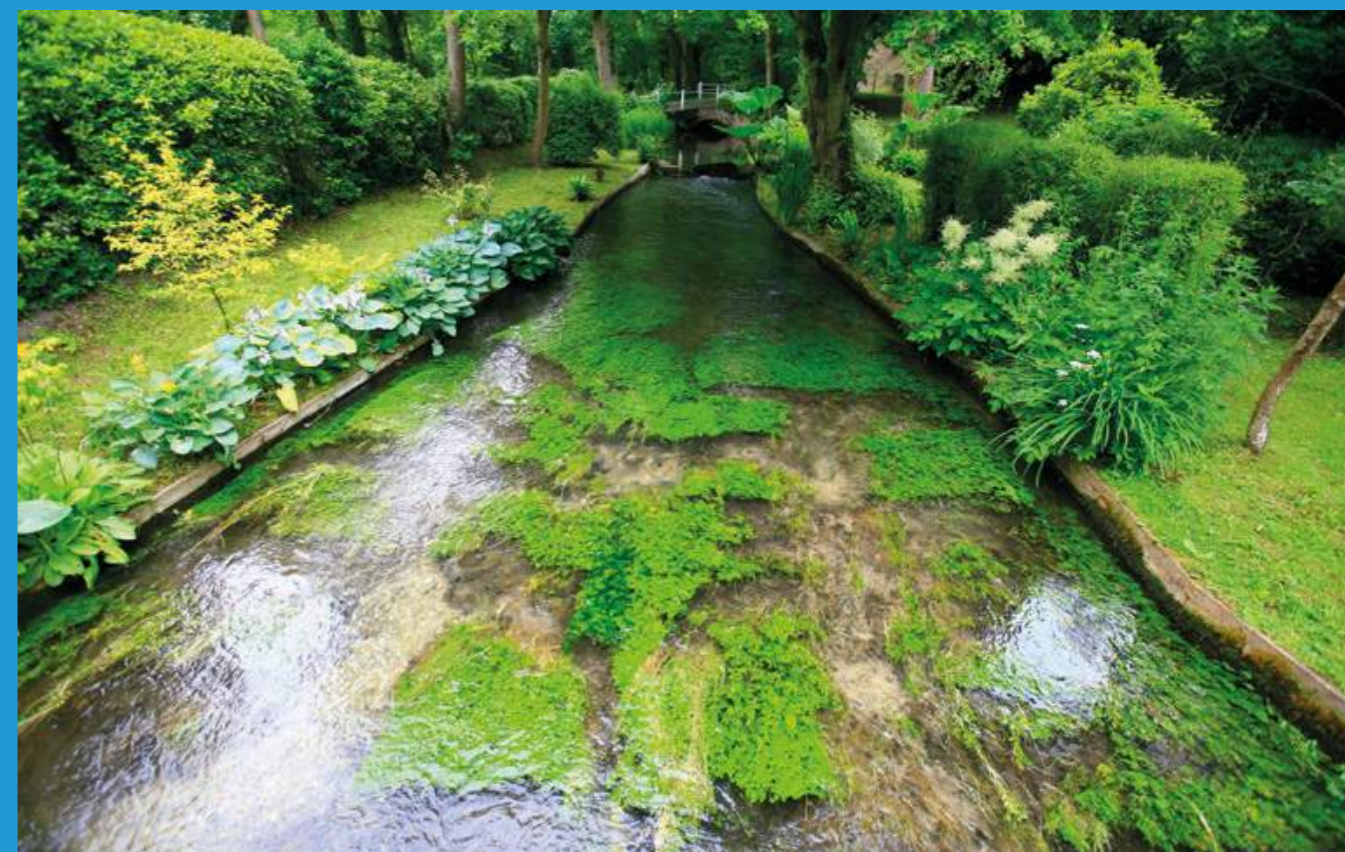
# CASE STUDIES

## STEPS to cleaner water

The Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme (STEPS) is, through AMP6 (the investment programme for 2015-2020), investing over £20million in catchment initiatives to improve water quality and provide wider benefits. Interestingly, one element of the scheme sees landowners paid based not on what they do on their land (although they can access advice on this), but on the actual water quality results seen in the river.

## Catchment-wide permitting trial

Three quarters of the Bristol Avon catchment is failing to meet good ecological status, and phosphorus inputs from sewage treatment are one of the key pressures. To reduce the phosphorus levels, as well as prepare for future phosphorus permits (which will be stricter than those currently), Wessex Water is trialling a catchment wide permitting scheme approach. Instead of individual permits for all sewage treatment works, there is one permit for the whole catchment, effectively spreading the required phosphorus reduction, without necessarily having to build additional treatment process at all sewage treatment works. It is the first trial of catchment permitting across the industry, and will last for four years.



# STOP POLLUTION OF OUR WATERS

Pollution continues to be the biggest problem facing the freshwater environment. In addition to the pollution pressures from agriculture, around one quarter of rivers are not in good ecological health due to sewage pollution from water companies and private sources.

With many sewage treatment facilities and sewerage pipes under-sized to deal with peak flows in wet weather periods, raw sewage can spill straight into rivers and streams. Climate change and population growth will increase this risk. Pollution from septic tanks has also been largely ignored and unregulated, but can cause significant issues in some catchments.

## What we are calling for:

- Strategic long-term wastewater plans –**  
 Companies already develop long-term plans to support their investment decisions on water resources<sup>13</sup>, and we want to see similar plans prepared for sewerage/wastewater systems. These plans should ensure sewerage and treatment systems are sufficient to prevent pollution, sewer overflows and flooding, in the context of population growth and climate change.

## Number of pollution incidents (per 10,000 km of sewers)

Water Company	2015
Anglian Water	35
Thames Water	38
United Utilities	40
Severn Trent Water	47
Wessex Water	48
Welsh Water	58
Yorkshire Water	72
Southern Water	75
Northumbrian Water	97
South West Water	171

Source: Environment Agency & Natural Resources Wales  
[www.discoverwater.co.uk/environmental-performance](http://www.discoverwater.co.uk/environmental-performance)



POLLUTION FROM SEPTIC TANKS HAS ALSO BEEN LARGELY IGNORED AND UNREGULATED, BUT CAN CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IN SOME CATCHMENTS.

<sup>13</sup>[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228861/8230.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228861/8230.pdf)



- Targeting zero pollution incidents, 100% monitoring of sewer overflows and 100% self-reporting of incidents** – Progress has been made by the sector to reduce the number of serious (category one and two) pollution incidents<sup>14</sup>, but the picture is not so good if category three incidents are included. Companies should not be rewarded through the Outcomes Framework for causing pollution incidents, as they are at the moment. We welcome action by companies to address overflows on beaches and increased monitoring to understand the impact that sewer overflows are having on inland waters. Dealing with pollution from sewer overflows should be a top priority.
- Dealing with emerging pollutants** – Monitoring by the water industry, through the Chemicals Investigation Programme<sup>15</sup>, is finding a number of potentially harmful chemicals are present in the water system including pesticides, flame-retardants, pharmaceuticals and micro-plastics. Rather than default to end of pipe solutions, which can be ineffective and expensive, we need to consider better source control around usage and disposal, promoting less harmful alternatives supplemented by investment into innovative natural treatment solutions, such as wetlands<sup>16</sup>.
- Green infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) prioritised and promoted** – New and retrofit SuDS should be encouraged within a company’s own drainage schemes, and those of third parties looking to connect to the sewerage network. There are many innovative green solutions (SuDS, reed beds, treatment wetlands) that are a critical part of the tool kit in dealing with pollution and preventing flood risk<sup>17</sup>. The automatic right to connect should be removed. Instead, SuDS should be used to reduce peak flows in the sewerage system, addressing flood risk, avoiding the need to invest in larger underground pipes; instead providing biodiversity and amenity benefits for local communities.

<sup>14</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-and-sewerage-companies-in-england-environmental-performance-report](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-and-sewerage-companies-in-england-environmental-performance-report)

<sup>15</sup> [www.ukwir.org/site/web/news/news-items/ukwir-chemicals-investigation-programme](http://www.ukwir.org/site/web/news/news-items/ukwir-chemicals-investigation-programme)

<sup>16</sup> [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmsctech/272/272i.pdf](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmsctech/272/272i.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [www.ciwem.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/A-Place-for-SuDS.pdf](http://www.ciwem.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/A-Place-for-SuDS.pdf)

# CASE STUDIES

## Rainscape

Welsh Water’s Rainscape programme is providing innovative solutions to managing the amount of surface water entering sewers by catching, redirecting and slowing the flow of surface water as it enters the sewerage network. The solutions include swales, basins, planters, porous paving, grass channels and geocellular storage. The projects are providing biodiversity and amenity benefits for local communities, alongside flood risk management benefits.

## Wet Wipes campaign

Many Blueprint members were pleased to sign up to an international flushability statement and the recent campaign by the water industry and the Marine Conservation Society to stop wet wipes getting into the sewerage system and the environment.



# USE WATER WISELY AND PRICE IT FAIRLY

Using water wisely is a win-win for customers and the environment. If we waste less water we need to abstract less water, so our supply system is more resilient to drought.

In turn, water companies can lower their costs (and carbon use) for treating and pumping water. All of this would mean customers see lower bills – and better protection for the environment - which water company research shows customers care about.

## What we are calling for:

- **Demand reduction** – Water scarcity is a nationwide issue. As Ofwat has made clear, companies need to go much further and faster on metering and leakage reduction, as well as working with customers to help them reduce consumption, particularly in dry years and at peak times when water demand can double. Water resource options appraisals should materially consider the value of water left in the environment. Additionally, plans should not result in any overall increase in the amount of water abstracted from rivers and groundwater, despite increases in population and climate change.
- **Every home to have a water meter and greater uptake of social tariffs that protect vulnerable customers and all those struggling to afford their bills** – The impact of water bills falls disproportionately on the poor<sup>18</sup>. For 10% of households with the lowest incomes, water bills represent over 5% of income<sup>19</sup>. We welcome the development of social tariffs to help vulnerable customers however, levels of awareness and sign-up for these schemes have been disappointing. Additionally, independent review has shown that the current system of rateable value charging is not socially progressive, with a £420m subsidy
- **A commitment to developing and using reward tariffs** – Behaviour change is needed to ensure everyone uses water wisely, and we want to see companies rolling out smart meters allied to incentive schemes to encourage this. Companies such as Thames and Southern are starting to pilot schemes, and in PR19 these should be delivered at scale. For example, community rewards linked to reduced water use during drought periods could be developed and trialled. A company could benefit from protecting supplies with this approach, and therefore would not need to progress expensive alternative drought measures. The environment would be better off and the community would be rewarded for their efforts.
- **Better water efficiency built into homes** – Ideally, better water efficiency measures would be required through Building Regulations. However, if this does not deliver, companies should work directly with developers to ensure the right water efficiency measures are built in to new developments, especially within our most vulnerable areas.

from poorer households to the better off<sup>20</sup>. A common performance commitment should be adopted, based upon the percentage uptake of social tariffs by those who are eligible. A rapid switch over to metering is also needed, with the independent Walker review recommending that at least 80% of households in England and Wales should be on a meter by 2020<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> [researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06596](https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06596)

<sup>19</sup> [researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06596](https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06596)

<sup>20</sup> [www.waterwise.org.uk/data/resources/7/fairness\\_on\\_tap\\_report.pdf](https://www.waterwise.org.uk/data/resources/7/fairness_on_tap_report.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69459/walker-review-final-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69459/walker-review-final-report.pdf)



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IS NEEDED TO ENSURE **EVERYONE USES WATER WISELY**. WE WANT TO SEE COMPANIES ROLLING OUT SMART METERS ALLIED TO INCENTIVE SCHEMES TO ENCOURAGE THIS.





### Daily Water Usage in Litres per Person (Including international comparison to Germany)

Company	2015-16
Average Overall	139
Average Metered	123
Average Unmetered	153
Germany	121
South Staffs	129
Severn Trent	130
United Utilities	130
Southern	132
Cambridge	133
Yorkshire	133
Bournemouth	134
Anglian	135
Dee Valley	135
South West	137
Wessex	138
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	139
Bristol	141
Portsmouth	143
Northumbrian	145
Thames	149
Essex and Suffolk	151
Affinity	152
South East	161
Sutton and East Surrey	161

source: www.discoverwater.com

### Litres of Water Leaked per Property per Day

Company	2015-16
Average	121
Southern	76
Essex and Suffolk	77
Dee Valley	78
Bristol	84
Sutton and East Surrey	84
Anglian	85
Portsmouth	89
South East	90
Bournemouth	96
Cambridge	96
South West	103
Wessex	112
Northumbrian	113
South Staffs	119
Affinity	123
Severn Trent	123
Yorkshire	125
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	127
United Utilities	138
Thames	171

source: www.discoverwater.com

# CASE STUDIES

## A new Water Efficiency Strategy

Blueprint member Waterwise has worked with the water sector to develop a Water Efficiency Strategy for the UK. It brings together current thinking on the next steps and actions required to achieve a water efficient UK.

## Metering success

Between 2010 and 2015, Southern Water nearly doubled its household meter penetration to 83%. Over the same period, the company achieved a 12% reduction in per capita water consumption and a 15% reduction in leakage. A community wide incentive scheme is being trialled to protect the River Itchen. The company is also delivering a 10% saving on top of this, through household retrofit of water efficiency equipment, in some areas bringing the average water use per person to below 120l per day.



# KEEP OUR RIVERS FLOWING AND WETLANDS WET

A resilient natural environment forms the basis of a sustainable and resilient water sector. Healthy, diverse ecosystems are much more able to cope with change.

Unfortunately, the 2016 State of Nature report found that over half of our UK freshwater and wetland species are in decline, with 13% threatened with extinction<sup>22</sup>. Hydrological change was identified as the third most significant driver for negative change, after agricultural practices and climate change.

## What we are calling for:

- **All abstractions to be within sustainable limits and controls in place to prevent deterioration** – 14% of rivers in England are classified as over abstracted, and a further 9% would be if all water licensed for abstraction was taken<sup>23</sup>. While some good progress is being made (as part of the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme in PR14), companies need to make faster improvements, especially for those water bodies already failing to meet WFD standards due to over abstraction. Unfortunately, while companies investigate the impact of their abstractions and develop alternative solutions, the environment bears all the risk. This is at odds with the precautionary principle, and companies should do more to mitigate this risk in the interim. For example, this could be achieved through targeted demand management schemes and greater uptake of the Abstraction Incentive Mechanism (AIM).

- **The risk of deterioration due to increased abstraction to be addressed** – Over 300 water bodies have been identified as ‘at risk’ if more water is abstracted in the future, albeit within currently licensed limits. The volumes of water at stake are potentially significant, amounting to several 100Mld<sup>24</sup>. Companies need to investigate these risks with mitigation measures proactively implemented and impacts avoided.
- **Supply side options to be environmentally acceptable** – Supply side water resource options, such as bulk water transfers, water reuse and new reservoirs, should only be developed where it can be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts to reduce demand have been implemented. Options should contribute to achieving good ecological status and certainly not result in deterioration. They must be sufficiently scaled to address problems of over abstraction, include measures to prevent the spread of invasive non-native species and, where appropriate, reduce the need for energy intensive systems.

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**23%** of English catchments are at risk due to unsustainable abstraction.

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<sup>22</sup> [www.rspb.org.uk/Images/State%20of%20Nature%20UK%20report\\_%2020%20Sept\\_tcm9-424984.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/State%20of%20Nature%20UK%20report_%2020%20Sept_tcm9-424984.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Based on a response to a Freedom of Information request to Environment Agency, October 2016

<sup>24</sup> [www.water.org.uk/water-resources-long-term-planning-framework](http://www.water.org.uk/water-resources-long-term-planning-framework)

# CASE STUDIES

## Water Resources East

Anglian Water is leading a groundbreaking multi-sectoral study into long-term water scarcity challenges and solutions in East Anglia, one of the driest regions in Europe. The performance of the regional water supply system under a range of future drought, growth and demand scenarios is being tested to identify vulnerabilities and inform decisions about suitable option portfolios that meet the needs of a number of sectors.

## AIMing High

The Abstraction Incentive Mechanism (AIM) has the objective of encouraging water companies to reduce the environmental impact of abstracting water at environmentally sensitive sites in low flow periods (i.e. droughts). Affinity Water has been at the forefront in trialling the use of the AIM at 23 groundwater sources.



# SUMMARY OF OUR OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES



## Protect and restore catchments from source to sea

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1.</b> Companies commit to addressing their pressures on the environment, including contributing towards ensuring 75% of water bodies achieve 'good' status by 2027, as required by the WFD.</p>   | <p><b>3.</b> Companies advocate the use of regulatory measures when voluntary measures are insufficient to protect water sources and customer interests (e.g. controls on agricultural pollution).</p>   |
| <p><b>2.</b> Companies significantly extend investment in catchment management supporting delivery of water resources and wastewater outcomes. Companies show leadership in the Catchment Based Approach and commit to working with partners, to sharing best practice, and to valuing the benefits of this approach to water quality, water resources, flood risk, carbon and recreation.</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Companies set out how they will deliver and report on long-term resilience (and the resilience of the ecosystems they rely on to operate) in their investment planning.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Companies commit to assessing the Natural Capital they depend on, with the intent to grow it and to integrate it into decision-making.</p> |

### How could we measure success?

- Hectares of land in better stewardship and km of river length improved due to water company actions
- Percentage of drinking water safeguard zones where improvements in water quality are being seen.



## Stop pollution of our waters

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1.</b> Companies underpin investments by long-term strategic wastewater plans to ensure sewerage and treatment systems are sufficient into the future to prevent pollution incidents, Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) spills and flooding, despite population growth and climate change.</p> | <p><b>3.</b> Companies aim for zero pollution incidents (categories 1, 2 and 3), 100% monitoring of CSOs and 100% self-reporting of incidents.</p>   |
| <p><b>2.</b> Companies extend investment in green infrastructure and SuDS (new and retrofit) to reduce flooding and provide biodiversity, recreation and water quality benefits.</p>   | <p><b>4.</b> Companies include ongoing monitoring of the presence and treatability of emerging pollutants (pesticides, pharmaceuticals, and microplastics), using results to inform appropriate management (product and usage controls, upgraded treatment and natural solutions).</p> |

### How could we measure success?

- Percentage of catchments with a long-term strategic wastewater plan
- Percentage sewerage capacity incorporating SuDS
- Total number of pollution incidents in each category each year, and a trend to zero pollution incidents. Percentage pollution incidents, where the company has a role, that are self-reported.





## Use water wisely and price water fairly

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Companies significantly scale up their demand management programmes to increase resilience. This includes ambitious water efficiency measures, through both offering and fitting products and behaviour change engagement, increasing overall metering of households as well as the proportion of smart meters and reducing leakage.</p> | <p><b>3.</b> Companies increase the availability, promotion and take-up of social tariffs and efficiency retrofit to protect vulnerable customers and all those struggling to afford their bills, combining these with water efficiency measures to help manage bills down.</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b> Companies ensure no overall increase in the amount of water abstracted from rivers and groundwater despite increases in population and climate change – a ‘water neutral’ PR19.</p>  | <p><b>4.</b> Companies develop plans to incentivise customers and communities to reduce consumption during dry periods and in catchments most at risk from abstraction, setting out specific and ambitious programmes to manage demand during periods of peak use.</p>          |

### How could we measure success?

- Per capita consumption in litres/household/day – dry year annual average / peak day multiple. Leakage per km of network (Ml/d/km)
- Proportion of metered/smart metered households (percentage of total households). Total water volume put into distribution (Ml/d)
- Percentage of the households eligible for social tariff that actually receive one. Percentage of households on a tariff or financial incentive scheme that rewards water saving.



## Keep our rivers flowing and wetlands wet

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Companies commit to addressing abstraction where it is preventing achievement of ‘good’ status or poses a risk of deterioration.</p>    | <p><b>3.</b> Companies consider the value of natural capital and benefits of water left in the environment within water resource options appraisals.</p>                                    |
| <p><b>2.</b> Companies use mechanisms such as the Abstraction Incentive Mechanism (AIM) to reduce abstraction pressure around sensitive sources.</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Companies ensure that where new water supply options are considered, they are transparent about environmental risk and include mitigation measures to support good status.</p> |

### How could we measure success?

- Percentage of total abstraction from groundwater sources that are in poor quantitative status
- Percentage of total abstraction that is from surface water sources in water bodies where recent actual flows are below the Environmental Flow Indicator at high flows (Q95).



# MAKING PROGRESS

Our priorities for the environment within PR19 have been informed by our engagement with the Government, regulators, water companies and our own supporters, over the last 12 months.

Looking forward, we will be working nationally and throughout our networks of regional colleagues and supporters, continuing to engage across the water sector to ensure future investment delivers for nature.

We call on company Boards and Customer Challenge Groups (CCGs) to actively consider this manifesto for the environment in their meetings and report against it in company business plans and the CCG reports to Ofwat.

In 2018, Blueprint also intends to publish a review of water company performance on the environment to date throughout PR14 / AMP6.

In addition to our work on PR19, Blueprint members will be working hard to ensure that environmental legislation is strengthened, not weakened, as we leave the EU; taking the opportunities Brexit provides to improve our environment, supporting the Government in delivering its pledge to 'be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it'.



# KEY MILESTONES:



# OUR VISION

Water matters: it is integral to our lives for drinking, health and recreation, as well as critical to the lives of all plants and animals. All waters and wetlands, from our ponds and rivers to our seas, should be alive with the splashing, buzzing and croaking of flourishing wildlife. By working together and managing our water more sensitively, we can ensure a future full of wildlife-rich places that everyone can explore and enjoy.

## THE BLUEPRINT FOR WATER COALITION

**18 leading**

ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS

WORKING WITH MORE THAN

**50,000**

VOLUNTEERS

MANAGING OVER

**525,000ha** OF LAND

INVOLVED IN

**all** OF THE CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIPS

**6 million**

SUPPORTERS AND MEMBERS

LOOKING AFTER MORE THAN

**2,500**

OF OUR BEST WILDLIFE SITES

ADVISING OVER

**10,000** LANDOWNERS A YEAR

WORKING WITH WATER COMPANIES ON

**dozens** OF PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS





We would like to thank all of the organisations, partners and supporters who provided comment and advice during the development of our Blueprint for PR19.



Blueprint for Water is a campaign of Wildlife and Countryside Link

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