

North Cotswolds River Pollution Meeting – Environment Agency update

As requested by Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, the following provides a summary of progress the Environment Agency has made with respect to topics relevant for the meeting on 06 December 2024 in Moreton-in-Marsh.

Regulation

- **Water Industry Regulation Transformation Programme**
 - We are taking significant steps to enhance our regulatory oversight of water companies through our Water Industry Regulation Transformation Programme. This initiative is backed by an additional £55 million in annual funding aimed at addressing poor performance. Further information is available at: [How we're bringing change to water industry performance – Creating a better place](#)
 - Recruitment is underway for more Environment Officers and Enforcement Officers employed specifically to regulate the Water Industry across England
- **Thames Water**
 - Our Thames Area Environment Management teams regulate Thames Water's permitted assets and respond to pollution incidents. This includes the towns of North Leach, Moreton-in-Marsh, Stow-on-the-Wold and surrounding villages in the North Cotswolds constituency.
 - We haven't had any pollution incidents - Category 1 or 2 - in Thames Area and within the North Cotswold Constituency boundary within the last year.
 - Between April 2024 and now, we have already completed 202 inspections of Thames Water assets, from a target of 330 between April 2024 to March 2025. Should we find any instances of non-compliance we will not hesitate in taking appropriate enforcement action.
 - With further Environment and Enforcement Officers, we will be conducting more inspections and increase our capability to conduct enforcement action where necessary.
- **Severn Trent Water**
 - In the Midlands, we are consolidating our Area Environment Management teams into a single department regulating the entire Severn Trent Water area. This investment is in addition to Ofwat's Price Review 2024, which is set to enhance our ability to address pollution incidents at their root cause.
 - Between April and June 2024, we completed 121 inspections of Severn Trent Water assets. Should we find any instances of non-compliance we will not hesitate in taking appropriate enforcement action.
 - During the 2023-2024 period, we conducted 373 inspections at Severn Trent Water sites out of a total of 1,349 across all water companies in England.
 - We are committed to increasing the number of inspections in the Midlands as follows:

Period	Inspections Planned
2024-2025	707
2025-2026	1,700
2026-2027	2,000

Enforcement

- The Environment Agency is conducting investigations into sewage treatment works. In addition to this, Water Companies are now required to ensure a progressive reduction in the adverse impacts of discharges from storm overflows to protect people and the environment. Further information can be found at: [Environment Agency investigation into sewage treatment works - GOV.UK](#)
- We recently accepted an Enforcement Undertaking for a pollution incident on the Dimore Brook, caused by Severn Trent Water, in contravention of the Environmental Permit. The Dimore Brook forms the boundary line with the constituency of Gloucester. The investigation revealed that sewage had been discharged into the brook from a blocked sewer. This resulted in Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust benefitting from a payment of £327,500 for environmental projects.

Asset Management Plans (AMP)

AMP 7 : Price Review 2019 – 2020 to March 2025

- Several sewage treatment works have had improvements completed under this programme.
- Any schemes not delivered by the deadline, will be considered under our enforcement response in line with our Enforcement and Sanctions Policy.

AMP 8 : Price Review 2024

- Work is being led by Ofwat in relation to Water Company Business Plans for 2025-2030.
- Thames Water have previously stated the need for a substantial increase in investment to tackle the widespread groundwater infiltration challenges that they face. We provide input to Thames Water's Groundwater Impacted Systems Management Plans, and this includes Moreton-in-Marsh and Bourton-on-the-Water in the North Cotswolds constituency.

Monitoring

- We have significantly driven up monitoring and transparency from water companies. This includes Event Duration Monitoring (EDM), which measures how often and for how long storm overflows are used. The number of storm overflows monitored across the network has increased from 10% in 2015 to 100% today. Publishing EDM data is a statutory requirement in the Environment Act 2021, which must be completed by 1st April every year. Recent spills can be accessed on water company storm overflow maps at:
 - **Thames Water**
[EDM Map | Storm discharge data | River health | Thames Water](#)
 - **Severn Trent Water**
<https://www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/storm-overflow-map/>
- Water companies are also required to submit the spill data annually to the Environment Agency. This data can be accessed at: [Event Duration Monitoring - Storm Overflows - Annual Returns - data.gov.uk](#).
- Through our work with the Severn Vale Catchment Partnership, we are supporting the newly established Gloucestershire citizen science project (WaterWatch Collective) being led by the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust. This will gather existing data (statutory and by gathered by volunteers), to improve our understanding of the water environment. It is

creating a better place



hoped that this will enable us and the partnership to better target project interventions such as river restoration.

Approved by: Colin Chiverton, Thames Area Environment Manager and Martin Quine, Place Manager - Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, Environment Agency

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03708 506 506
enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/environment-agency



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