

Response ID ANON-NEE3-3WGT-G

Submitted to **Challenges and Choices**

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The water story

1 The way we treat water today will shape all our futures. What changes can you make to improve the water we rely on?

Please input your response in the box below :

We are a small organisation so our impact is limited as an organisation.

We can help by making others aware of their impact, what they can do to reduce this and ensuring (as individuals) we do all we can to reduce our impact on the water environment.

Climate and biodiversity crisis

2 What more can we do to tackle the impacts of climate change on the water environment and what additional resources (including evidence, targets, tools and additional mechanisms/measures) do we need to do this?

Please enter your response into the box below:

Looking at changes to farming techniques and also our eating habits, reduce food waste by people and businesses.

Better designed houses/business premises and infrastructure so that water is used more sustainably and treated water is not used for all purposes, such as watering the garden and flushing the toilet.

More surfaces should be permeable and arable land better managed so any rainfall will be able to penetrate to fill groundwater resources.

Reducing the growth of crops that require high water content in areas of low rainfall.

More education to the general populace about the impact of the water environment of certain foods and activities so they can make more informed choices about what they buy (Supermarkets and other businesses could help with this). Making people aware of things they can do to reduce their impact on the water environment in the home and during everyday activities and what benefits their efforts deliver.

There should be incremental targets to ensure the whole of the aim is completed by the deadline. By setting a date 20+ years in the future, it pushes the issue to the back of the agenda and can be ignored until the date gets much closer and then there is not enough time to meet the target. A plan and timeline for delivery should be set now and delivered as planned.

3 What can we do to address this biodiversity crisis and meet the 25 Year Environment Plan targets for wetlands, freshwater and coastal habitats and wildlife?

Please input your response in the box below :

More emphasis needs to be put into biodiversity and the environment. For too long this issue has been pushed into the long grass as it is not been an area that reflects achievements in financial growth and therefore of little importance. I think more should be done to highlight the impacts that an improved and sustainable environment can have on improved growth overall. Looking at the bigger picture is necessary whether that be regionally, nationally or globally.

4 Environmental targets can generate action and provide a strong signal of intent. Could additional statutory targets contribute to improving the water environment? If so, what types of targets should be considered?

Input your response to the question in the box below:

Yes.

All new developments should reduce their impact on the water environment in terms of reduced sewage/waste water, usage of water resources, increasing surface runoff/reducing permeability and flooding to the local area.

The impact should be zero but this may only be achieved with offsetting put in place.

Stricter regulation on any installation of water systems to reduce likelihood of misconnections. introducing restrictive fines for any negligence, that can't be offset by budgeting or insurance pay-outs.

More regulation of food growth on the levels of permitted phosphate, nitrate, pesticides and herbicides allowed into the water systems and restrictive fines to ensure adherence.

Challenge 1: Changes to water levels and flows

5 What can be done to address the challenge of changing water levels and flows?

Please input your response in the box below :

Individuals need to take action to reduce water use in the home.

Businesses need to take action to reduce water use in offices and production areas.

Food production needs to look at ways to reduce water usage by changing crops grown in certain areas or growing within a closed system so water can be recycled.

Improving river catchments and floodplains so water is kept within the system for longer enabling groundwater to be replenished.

6 The abstraction plan, referenced in the changes to water levels and flows narrative, explains our current and future approach for managing water abstraction. What else do we need to do to meet the challenges of climate change and growth while balancing the needs of abstractors and the environment?

Please input your response in the box below :

There needs to be a better understanding amongst the public of the affects we have and the problems that are to come. People still think a small amount of rain is enough to undo many months of drought, they do not seem to get the correlation between lack of rainfall and reduce drinking water. Also corporations must be made to play their part. Emphasis is put on the individual to do their bit but all too often big companies need to do more to have a much bigger impact. Stronger legislation is needed as asking people to change their behaviour is often ineffective and the softly softly approach leads to only small changes and takes longer.

7 What kind of a water flow environment do we want? Should we maintain statutory minimum water flow and level standards universally across England as we do now, or go further in some places based on environmental risk?

Please input your response in the box below :

I think each area should be assessed on its needs and limitations. A one size fits all approach doesn't work.

Challenge 2: Chemicals in the water environment

8 What can be done to address the challenge of chemicals in the water environment?

Please input your response in the box below :

Fewer chemicals should be available for general distribution and an amnesty of allotments, etc. should take place to remove chemicals that have been banned but are still in use in allotments and gardens, Making householders aware of the impact these chemicals have and some training on the levels of fertilisers and pesticides they should be using. Continue to work with farmers on improving their use of chemicals and continued research on the impact of such chemicals and development of those that will be less harmful to the water environment. More needs to be done to raise awareness of the affect soil loss has on the water environment. Road runoff should also be tackled. Stricter legislation on what is included in household products, clothing, etc. and banning products that contain chemicals that are damaging to the water environment. Also raise awareness of the types of chemical that are damaging and what they are in. Possible research into reducing the levels of drugs that leave humans and animals systems and/or how STW can remove these before they re-enter the water cycle.

9 Do you support the Environment Agency's proposed strategic approach to managing chemicals as referenced in the Chemicals in the Water Environment challenge document? If not, what changes would you make?

Please input your response in the box below :

It is a very long document so perhaps I missed the detail but I read what the aims were and what the future challenges are likely to be but none of the detail about how the future challenges will be reduced and what actions will be taken to meet the targets. I hope that this includes plans to encourage or fund research in producing chemicals that leach into the environment significantly less than they currently do!

10 What balance do you think is needed between current chemical use, investing in end-of-pipe wastewater treatment options and modifying consumer use and behaviour?

Please input your response in the box below :

I think that prevention is better than cure. Reducing the levels of chemicals, where possible, should be the priority followed by preventative measures to reduce chemicals entering the environment and finally end of pipe solutions.

Challenge 3: Invasive non-native species

11 What can be done to address invasive non-native species?

Please input your response in the box below :

Increased efforts to prevent new species entering the country. We are luckier than most in that we are a small island so this should be significantly easier than other countries that have shared borders. There needs to be better checks on things entering the country and what people bring in, similar to what Countries like Australia do. The biggest challenge will be the marine environment as controlling what comes in to our coastal waters on ships is impossible to control. However, shipping companies and other ship users need to do as much as they can to control the species they bring in. In terms of species already in situ and causing issues, tough decisions need to be made about which species are tackled that will have to most positive impact on the environment if removed. There will also need to be sufficient funding committed to achieve complete eliminate of species like Mink and Himalayan Balsam (which are probably the easiest to eliminate completely) or commit to a long-term control programme to reduce species impact but accept they are here to stay. Biocontrol should continue to be explored but with great caution as this can sometimes create more problems than it solves.

12 How would you promote Check, Clean, Dry to all recreational users of water, including those who are not in clubs or attend events?

Please input your response in the box below :

Social media would be a good start, advertising in relevant publications such as angling and boating magazines, putting up posters in relevant areas, visiting sites and giving individual advice and answering questions, attending events that are popular and giving out information and advice to attendees. Give presentations at large well attended events. Get advice from the users on the information available and whether it has the appeal required to engage the correct audience.

13 Are there any barriers stopping you adopting good biosecurity when you are in or near water?

Please input your response in the box below :

Time scales; if you are working in an industry where there are time pressures and movement between sites is required, it is likely that biosecurity will not be at the top of the priority list.

Emergency events, if rescuing people, animals, etc. from dangerous situations in water environments I don't think biosecurity will be a big priority. For example life guards, life boat operators, ambulance services, wildlife rescue charities, etc. The biggest risk group within this is probably life boats and wildlife rescue charities.

Not having the correct information about your impact/lack of knowledge.

Lack of appreciation of the impact individuals have. I find it very concerning when I speak to water specialists that have been involved in the sector for many years who do not take biosecurity seriously and pass on this information to others, including members of the public! This tends to be the older generation who want to continue to do things as they have always done.

Challenge 4: Physical modifications

14 What can be done to address the physical modification of our rivers and coasts?

Please input your response in the box below :

With enough funding and research, redundant structures that are causing significant barriers to fish and other aquatic species could be removed.

Removal of concrete lining of water ways and replacement with more sympathetic materials that will not increase flood risk would also be greatly beneficial.

In general removal of unnatural materials from water course and replacement with more natural materials will greatly improve our rivers.

15 Giving more space for rivers and coasts to move and adjust naturally will regenerate habitat, improve wildlife and help us adapt to climate change. What can you and others do to support these changes?

Please input your response in the box below :

Be open to change and do not automatically reject suggestions because they are different - be open minded.

Make local and national government know that these actions are supported and encouraged.

Respond to consultations to show support for these measures.

Volunteer in local area to help with these schemes.

Allow public spaces to be used in this way without objections, i.e. green spaces and parks.

Support charities that carry out this work.

Challenge 5: Plastics pollution

16 What can be done to address plastics pollution in the water environment?

Please input your response in the box below :

Reduction of single use plastic productions as well as plastic in general. (exceptions can be made where necessary, for things that cannot be made any other way, there is no alternative and is vital).

Better and more understandable recycling schemes and public bins.

Glass container return schemes.

Banning single use plastic that is not able to be easily recycled.

Providing better and more available information to the public.

Have a national recycling scheme so that no matter where you live the same things are recycled and collected by the local authority.

National campaigns to encourage people to reduce single use plastic consumption.

Pressure put on all companies to reduce their reliance on single use plastic, especially when it is completely unnecessary.

Encourage and incentive people to become part of litter picking schemes in their local area. These will need support from local authorities too.

17 What actions should the Environment Agency take to reduce plastic pollution?

Please input your response in the box below :

Public campaigns.

Working with local authorities to improve local recycling schemes.

Working with companies to reduce their reliance on plastic.

Publicising information on plastic levels and the impacts these are having (increased research may be needed).

Additional research into microplastics and their impact on humans and the wider environment in drinking water, food and the air.

Challenge 6: Pollution from abandoned mines

18 What can be done to address pollution from abandoned mines?

Please input your response in the box below :

Continue to support the work of the Coal Authority to prevent the contamination of ground and surface water supplies.

Look for innovative ways to 'clean' the contaminated mine water and reduce the impact on the water environment.

Challenge 7: Pollution from agriculture and rural areas

19 What can be done to address pollution from agriculture and rural areas?

Please input your response in the box below :

Better land management to reduce soil loss. I believe this is happening but a change from only looking at water and looking at the wider landscape and the impact that better soil management can have on improving the water environment is definitely needed.

Continue to improve on current practices that are adopted to reduce contamination such as buffer strips, riparian tree planting, spray best practice, etc.

More investment in 'smart' technology which ensures the levels of pesticides, herbicides and nutrients added to arable land is maintained within the plants and soil so little is lost to ground and surface water sources.

Reductions are needed in animal agriculture levels.

20 How can we support the farming sector to excel at innovative solutions which benefit both productivity and the environment? What should these solutions look like?

Please input your response in the box below :

Most farmers do not earn a profit on their crops and only remain solvent due to government subsidies. Therefore a review is needed on what the tax payer is funding and what is needed by the country.

This will allow tax payers money to fund the growth of crops needed, that crops are grown in areas where they cause the least amount of damage/have the least impact (areas that can tolerate thirsty crops for example) and can then fund changes to land use where traditional crops are not needed. Instead crops such as fruit and nut trees can be grown or trees to supply a wood crop and other to store carbon alone. Also land could be returned to natural floodplains so that flooding can be reduced in downstream areas and the catchment can become more water resilient.

Challenge 8: Pollution from towns, cities and transport

21 What can be done to address pollution from towns, cities and transport?

Please input your response in the box below :

Subsidies and infrastructure to allow change over from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric or hydrogen vehicles.

Improvements to public transport so they are more affordable, payment is more flexible so you can use multiple forms of transport and/or multiple companies with 1 ticket.

Improved services on public transport and more areas covered, especially in rural areas.

Improved infrastructure for cycling so that it is a safer way to travel. Cycling on busy roads will deter many people from cycling.

Moving towards schemes where people can easily and cost effectively hire cars to reduce the need of individuals to own their own car. Something similar to the cycle hire scheme in London.

22 How can sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure be most effectively used to tackle pollution from urban areas? What challenges are there to using them?

Please input your response in the box below :

These should be mandatory in all new developments. The impact of the drainage from a new development should be designed so that it does not have a negative affect on the local water environment or existing land or buildings. If the developer fails to have put as much in place as possible to achieve this, they should be fined and the level of these fines should be sufficient so the cost penalty acts as a real deterrent, i.e. can not be factored in as a cost at the beginning so they can take the hit, as often happens now.

More tree and general planting in urban areas (along high streets and in green spaces) to improve shading as temperatures increase and offers increased permeable surfaces for heavy rain periods. Planting should be centred around native species and those good for pollinators.

Management will be the main challenge. Often management will fall to the local authority and with reduced funding this will not be possible. Therefore a commitment is needed from National government to fund the management of these schemes for the long term. It may also be possible to get some funding from businesses via carbon credits.

Challenge 9: Pollution from water industry wastewater

23 What can be done to address pollution from water industry wastewater?

Please input your response in the box below :

Movement towards using more natural solutions such as wetland treatment ponds such as done by Norfolk Rivers Trust with Anglian Water.

24 What opportunities exist for water companies to collaborate with other sectors and organisations on measures to improve the water environment?

Please input your response in the box below :

Extend their work with farmers and communities.

increased work with businesses to reduce their impact on the water environment.

Work with leisure companies, such as golf course, to tackle their impact on the water environment.

More work needs to be done with gardeners and allotment holders to reduce their impact through the chemicals they use.

Work with the charity sector to get the message out to schools and local communities, the wider community.

Catchment partnership working

25 How can local partnerships become more inclusive and representative of all of the stakeholders within their catchments?

Please input your response in the box below :

This is a difficult challenge as it is not possible to be all things to all people.

Members of the public may not want to attend a meeting where the focus is on areas they are not interested in and do not feel they can contribute.

I think it is finding ways to communicate to various audiences so the messages are received by all stakeholders in a way they understand or find relevant.

Often time limitation is the problem. Many of the organisations that host the partnerships are small and are juggling many different areas of work. However, their involvement is desirable as they have a more neutral agenda than other organisations.

26 How can local partnerships achieve a better balance of public and private funding to support and sustain their environmental work?

Please input your response in the box below :

I think they need much more support to be able to receive funding from the private sector. Advice is needed on what types of work the private sector want but finding the right person within the company to have this conversation with is often challenging.

If some leg work is done towards interesting big companies, such as supermarkets, in the work the CP's do this will help when CP's try to make contact and request funding for their local work.

Who pays?

27 How should the step change in protecting and improving the water environment be funded and who should pay? Are there any barriers to doing this?

Enter the response in the box below:

I think this is multisector. Tax payers and businesses should be paying for this work. Businesses that have the biggest impact should make the largest contributions or commit to actions within their business which will reduce their impact that way.

Complete and submit consultation

28 When we come to analyse the results of this consultation, it would help us to know if you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation or group. Please select from the following options:

Responding on behalf of an organisation (Please specify which organisation or group and include what type it is, e.g. business, environmental group, etc)

Name of organisation or group, if you don't want to leave the organisation name, please tell us what type it is.:

Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust

If other, please specify:

29 What is your email address?

Email:

info@essexsuffolkriverstrust.org

30 What is your name?

If you are happy for us to contact you about your response please leave your name below. We will not publish your name and will only contact you for clarifications about your response or to follow up on any suggestions you have made. :

Jane Herbert

31 Please select which river basin district your response to this consultation applies to (you can select more than one or submit a national response by selecting 'England').

Anglian

32 Are you happy for us to publish your response? We will not publish any personal information or parts of your response that will reveal your identity.

Yes

If not, please let us know why.:

33 Finally, it would really help us if you let us know where you found out about this consultation.

Through engagement with Environment Agency

Where did you hear about the consultation - other: