

# Leicestershire CC- Climate Change Overview

## Briefing Document AD

1 August 2022

### Question 1:

**What are your respective roles and responsibilities in regard to river, water course, water body quality and water resource management within the water/river sector.**

The EA has legislative responsibilities for water quality and water resources throughout England. We regulate water company activities and aim to work with them, other partners, and customers to reduce pollution. At present we are prioritising efforts to reduce phosphates and nitrates in watercourses.

Our role concerning water resource involves regulating abstraction through water resource licences to optimise the use of available water. We have recently experienced driest summer period June-August across England since 1995 and this work has a significantly high priority for the area.

In summary, we protect and improve the quality and availability of water, making sure there is enough for people, businesses, agriculture and the environment. Our work also helps to ensure people can enjoy the water environment through angling and navigation.

### Question 2:

**Please set out local Leicestershire context, facts and figures, different metrics, historic trends, sources of pollution, relative contributions, how data is gathered and collated**

We hold historic water quality data on our WIMs system allowing us to look at trends.

Catchment Data Explorer (CDE) is publicly available and provides information on the Water Framework Directive Data.

We identify sources of pollution by undertaking catchment walkovers, targeted monitoring, Farm visits and catchment water quality models.

Attached as Appendices showing:

1. The ecological status of Leicestershire rivers according to Water Framework Directive (WFD) measures.
2. The chemical status of rivers in Leicestershire according to WFD measures.
3. Storm overflow data for Leicestershire.
4. Environmental Inequalities, Clean & Plentiful Water – Upper Tier Authorities (Leicestershire is good quality).

These are examples of some of the data we use to guide our actions.

### Question 3:

**What is the current chemical and ecological status of Leicestershire rivers, water bodies and water courses? Why is this and what are the key risks to Leicestershire rivers?**

The previous Appendices show the status.

Main issues with pollution are sewage treatment processes and farming. These are priority areas for us. We are ensuring the Water companies invest to improve treatment and prevent storm overflows through the Price Review Process. We are also working on advising and helping farmers to adopt best practise to reduce the amount of Phosphates and Nitrates entering the water course.

### Question 4:

**What is the Environment Agency doing to improve the chemical and ecological status of Leicestershire rivers to reach ‘good standards’ by 2027 as set out in the Water Framework Directive?**

Environment Agency work includes:

- Using our regulatory influence and powers.
- Working with Severn Trent Water to agree environmental improvements on their assets through the price review process.
- Using a Local Outcome Plan to direct our work focus.
- An Environment Programme of projects to enhance rivers and the environment.
- Always considering wider environmental benefits and linking these with other EA activities such as flood risk reduction.

### Question 5:

**How many serious water pollution prosecutions were recommended in Leicestershire in the last 3 years? How many were pursued and what was their success rate?**

Recent examples of enforcement include:

- July 2022 – Sapcote Quarry - JRM Hire and Leasing Limited prosecution, £16K fine for water resource offences also including WQ
- July 2022 – Welby Grange, Melton Mowbray – Mr Hobill, £5.6K fine for water pollution killing fish
- August 2016 – Rothley Brook – Severn Trent Water – Enforcement Undertaking £226K to Trent River Trust (paid in December 2019)
- The Environment Agency carries out a range of enforcement activities including warning letters for low level offences, enforcement undertakings, variable monetary penalties and prosecution.

### Question 6:

**As environmental regulator for the discharge of liquids and waste what data for storm overflows and pollution incidents do you have, and what are the reasons for the incidents?**

Appendix 3 provides an overview of the storm overflow incidents. However, the EA collects lots of data and evidence about storm overflows and pollution incidents, this includes:

- Event Duration.
- The results of water quality monitoring carried out by Water Companies of effluents discharged to the environment.
- Flow monitoring data about the quantity of effluents that is treated and discharged at water company sewage treatment works.
- The EA have an annual programme of inspections at permitted water discharge sites, this includes Sewage Treatment Works, Sewage Pumping Stations, Combined Sewer Overflows and Water Treatment Works.
- The EA also respond to investigate pollution incidents and collect water samples and evidence of any offences being committed.
- We monitor Water Company pollution incidents. (In 2021 there were 23 (SvT) category 3 (minor) pollution incidents, 1 (AWS) category 2 incident and 1 category 1 (Major) incident from foul sewers in Leicestershire). The other main sources of pollution were the Water Distribution System and Sewage Treatment Works.

## Question 7:

### How do you monitor water companies and storm overflows reporting?

In recent years as part of the Price Review the Environment Agency has required Water Companies to install Event Duration Monitors on their storm overflows. These record when the storm overflow discharges start and finish. By the end of 2023 all storm overflows will be required to have Event Duration Monitoring (EDM). An annual summary for each overflow has to be reported to Environment Agency and detailed spill data is available on request.

The EDM spill data is used for planning and permit compliance assessment. For example, a storm overflow with a high number of spills may be selected for inspection and compliance checks

The EA carry out inspections at sites where there are permitted storm overflows. Checks are carried out to make sure that the site is compliant with its permit and that there has not been an impact on the receiving watercourse.

The performance of Water Companies is closely monitored by the Environment Agency with each company being assessed annually under the Environmental Performance Assessment and awarded a 1 to 4 star rating. The EPA criteria includes discharge permit compliance, total number of pollution incidents and serious pollution incidents, self-reporting of pollution incidents, delivery of the Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) and Supply Demand Balance Index (water supply).

[EA's latest Environmental Performance Assessment](#)

## Question 8:

### What programmes, plans, actions and investment are being undertaken and planned over the next five years to improve river water quality in Leicestershire?

The EA work closely with Severn Trent Water to develop an Asset Management Planning (AMP) programme. This sets out the environmental measures or actions the company needs to invest in and complete during a 5-year rolling investment period. The measures include asset improvement schemes, investigations to inform future actions and monitoring designed to improve:

- fisheries
- biodiversity
- geomorphology
- water quality
- water resources

## Question 13:

### How do partners work together to reduce water pollution, improve river water quality and tackle the areas of the biggest concern to the public such as storm overflow, raw sewage and water leakage?

There are many partners involved including Severn Trent Water (SvT), the EA, Natural England, The Forestry Commission, various Rivers Trusts and Wildlife Trusts. Each has a specific role to play and through numerous coordination activities and joint projects we align to improve water quality.

## Question 14:

### How will the water elements within the Environment Act 2021 affect future responsibilities and actions on water and river quality?

The Environment Act 2021 does introduce one new direct responsibility for the Environment Agency with respect to storm overflows reporting. This will improve stakeholder's access to the data and provide better information with more detail around watercourse name, grid reference and the water body to which they discharge. It will also include a log of the actions taken by Water Companies to address data issues and frequently spilling overflows. This reporting has already contributed significantly to the debate around Storm Overflow performance and will no doubt inform the "Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan" which DEFRA are working on.

The Environment Act 2021 also contains various duties not directly on the Environment Agency but upon the Secretary of State and the Water Companies concerning Storm Overflows, Drainage and Sewerage Management Planning, monitoring, reporting and planning. The Environment Agency is working through the Defra led Storm Overflow Task Force and directly with Water Companies to understand how we might contribute to the delivery of these new duties. In summary:

- The Environment Act 2021 brings in extra duties for Defra, the water companies and the Environment Agency.
- The main duties for the Environment Agency is to report the EDM data annually.
- The water companies have the most additional responsibilities including:
  - Reducing the number of storm sewage spills.
  - Reporting of EDM data annually including details of investigations, near real-time spill reporting (within 1 hour of spill starting).
  - Continuous monitoring of overflows and Sewage Treatment Works.
  - To develop and publish Drainage Waste Management Plans (DWMP's).

## Question 15:

### What are your mitigation and adaption plans in respect of the impacts of climate change?

The EA2025 plan is the plan as to how the EA will address climate change. Its objectives are:

1. A nation resilient to climate change
2. Healthy air, land and water
3. Green growth and sustainable future

This will be achieved through:

1. Building resilience into infrastructure.
2. Becoming net zero by 2030.
3. Strong regulation concerning water, air and land.
4. Net capital gain.

These are the aims and principles which focus all our work.

**Question 16:**

**Is there anything the County Council can do by working with partners to help address any concerns?**

We are very keen to align with your aims and priorities and to ensure there is synergy. The specific areas we see are:

1. Planning – proactive not reactive.
2. Funding.
3. Resources for flood risk reduction and environmental activities.
4. Share ambitions – partnership.

**Question 17:**

**What is the best way that residents can contact you to report or highlight incidents they are aware of in terms of water pollution and leakages?**

Water Pollution, report to our 24-hour hotline on 0800 80 70 60 and we will respond using a risk based approach.

For leakages, please contact the relevant water company.

Appendices:

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