

# Considering and adapting to catchment features



Although land use and management are key variables to water quality, the catchments themselves play a major role in how those risks occur.

Anglian Water's team of Catchment Advisers have been engaging with land owners within Drinking Water Protected Areas (DrWPA's) for the last 5 years, raising awareness of:

- The water journey and its multiple uses/users
- Land connectivity
- Local challenges
- and how **we can all (no matter how big or small) play a role in protecting our water resource and using it wisely.**

Engaging with the regions agricultural sector has seen some huge success in awareness, food and water sector communication, changing behaviours and ultimately water quality however, the catchment features themselves need considering too!

Our weather stations, sensors, catchment investigations, sampling and knowledge of land use patterns (farm crop rotations) help us understand and forecast risks. This enables us to focus actions (proactive seeking out of opportunities to reduce and tackle specific concerns) to achieve the best possible raw water quality entering our reservoirs and treatment works. Despite forecasting - the water quality response to risks does not always appear when expected and occasionally shows a lag, due to **catchment features storing and building the challenge!**

Through local trials we have found that products used safely and legally on land, if finding there way into river bed silts or low flow/volume tributaries and static waterbodies (such as ponds and irrigation lagoons) can accumulate and be re-released to the environment as a legacy effect at a later date.

Identifying which products have this ability to be retained and what features in the catchment are storing them allows for mitigation measures to be considered. Such measures may be increased grass buffer strips, reduced cultivations, tailored soil health enhancements (to increase soil bacterial activity), earlier harvests, crop residue incorporation and so on.

Every catchment will be uniquely connected with its associated land and features, either helping or hindering the waterbodies response to land management and weather. No one approach will suit all areas and only by specifically working to each catchments characteristics (**local solutions to local challenges**) will we achieve the goal of resilient waterbodies - providing us with the quantity and quality of water needed.



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