

## Our stakeholders

# Our environment & the planet

The environment is at the heart of our purpose as a company; we work hard every day to protect and enhance the land, water, air and wildlife in our region and beyond, for today and for the future.

NUMBER OF POLLUTION INCIDENTS PER 10,000 KM OF SEWER NETWORK

27.65

(Target for 2020/21: 24.51)

ABSTRACTION INCENTIVE MECHANISM

-83 MI

(Target for 2020/21: reduction)

WATER INDUSTRY NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

520

ENVIRONMENTAL SCHEMES DELIVERED  
(Target for 2020/21: 280)



## HOW WE ENGAGE

- Through our Strategic Direction Statement (SDS) for 2020–2045, first published in 2007, with an updated version reviewed and approved by the Board in 2017. It includes the goal to “work with others to achieve significant improvement in ecological quality across our catchments” (see page 23) and is fully aligned with the Government’s own 25-Year Environment Plan.
- Through the plans and strategies we set out, including our Water Resources Management Plan, our new Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan, currently in development, our Drought Plan and our Adaptation Report, all of which are issued for public and stakeholder consultation.
- The Board regularly considers environmental matters including water quality, water resources, compliance against the Environment Agency’s Environmental Performance Assessment, and renewable energy.
- We maintain a strong presence in environmental policy development forums, feeding into government thinking through formal and informal meetings and workshops, and responding to policy consultations. We contribute both individually and collectively as members of Water UK, the Aldersgate Group and the Broadway Initiative. Taking part in these exercises is a two-way process, with the results informing our internal approach to environmental policy issues, nature restoration and the delivery of our long-term plans for water resources and water recycling infrastructure.
- The Management Board sponsors an internal Policy Advisory Committee that oversees our input into external environmental policy and regulatory exercises.
- We also engage with farmers, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions on soil health, catchment management and broader issues around sustainability.



## Planning ahead: long-term resilience

How can we safeguard resilient future water supplies for our fast-growing region while ensuring we protect the environment and manage our response to climate change? These are some of our biggest challenges, and they require long-term strategic focus. Our long-term plans, set out in ‘how we engage’, above, will enable us to tackle these huge and fundamental issues. Key to our Water Resources Management Plan is addressing our supply-demand balance which, if we took no action, would see our region experience significant water shortages within the next five years, and up to 146 million litres a day by 2045. We are taking steps to manage demand by driving water efficiency through behavioural change programmes, reducing leakage and installing smart meters, while on the supply side we are investing in a network of strategic pipelines to better join up our network and move water from areas of relative abundance to areas of deficit (see page 24).

We are also developing proposals for two new multi-purpose, multi-sector reservoirs, one proposed for Lincolnshire and the second for Cambridgeshire or Norfolk, which, if confirmed, will be commissioned between 2035 and 2040. Both reservoirs are expected to be facilitated through the Regulatory Alliance for Progressing Infrastructure Development (RAPID) and are likely to be of a similar scale to Grafham Water. And in a further example of stretching our thinking, we have partnered with our neighbours at Essex & Suffolk Water to create a water trading platform that allows water abstractors to advertise if they have water to share or need to acquire more.

The project has been developed with input from the Environment Agency and Water Resources East.

### SMART METERING DELIVERY

# 164,400

SMART METERS  
INSTALLED AT  
CUSTOMER PROPERTIES  
(Target for 2025: 1.1 million)

### TREATMENT WORKS COMPLIANCE

PERCENTAGE OF WATER  
AND SEWAGE TREATMENT  
WORKS MEETING PERMITS  
FOR THE QUALITY OF  
WATER DISCHARGED TO  
THE ENVIRONMENT

# 99.3%

(Target for 2020/21: 100%)

### REACTIVE MAINS BURSTS BURSTS IDENTIFIED AND REPORTED BY CUSTOMERS

# 4,037

(Target for 2020/21: 3,063)

## Our stakeholders continued



### WHAT THEY TELL US

Our customers tell us they support our plans to invest now to protect our environment for the long term. Tackling leakage and preventing pollutions are two of their particular priorities for us, and we are investing billions of pounds in capital programmes to ensure our infrastructure performs as it should.

Our environmental stakeholders, including catchment partnerships, government and non-governmental organisations, farmers and landowners, value our committed and ongoing engagement with them to drive positive progress.

### Getting smart about water efficiency

One of the key tools in our water efficiency armoury is our smart metering programme, through which we have begun upgrading all of our customers' meters. We have installed 164,400 meters in the first year of this award-winning installation programme, which will now ramp up even further with a goal of 1.1 million installations by 2025. The meters remotely collect hourly consumption data, helping customers to understand and reduce their water use through our upgraded MyAccount customer portal, and helping us to better understand how our water network operates and identifying customer-side leaks.

### Tackling leakage and optimising our network

We know that leakage is one of our customers' highest priority areas. Together with our regulator Ofwat, we are committed to addressing it and, as far as possible, preventing it. With our fellow water companies in England, we have undertaken to triple the rate of sector-wide leakage reduction by 2030, a commitment which is sponsored by our CEO Peter Simpson in collaboration with the CEOs of Portsmouth Water and Affinity Water. Ofwat has set stretching targets for our performance which will require us to make a 16.4 per cent reduction by 2025 from our industry-leading 2020 leakage baseline. As a frontier company it is incrementally harder year on year to find new ways to better our performance. However, we are determined to meet this challenge and are investing millions of pounds in advanced technology to help us do so. We found and repaired 35,607 leaks in 2020/21, including hidden leaks found by our leakage team and visible leaks called in by members of the public.

**This year we have continued to roll out our world-leading network of 'smart' fixed network hydrophones which listen for new leaks so we can tackle them proactively, before customers need to tell us about them.**

We have also been exploring fibre-optic technology, machine learning, electroscanning to assess the condition of pipes and the volume of leaks, satellites to detect leaks from space and drones to find leaks using thermal imaging — all in pursuit of the significant further reductions we and our customers so want to see.

In a year of Covid lockdowns and extreme weather which saw us coping with nearly triple the number of burst mains we had to contend with last year, we are immensely proud to have maintained our industry-leading performance and exceeded our target for the 10th year running.

### Protecting and enhancing our environment

Our Water Industry National Environment Plan for 2020–2025 is our most ambitious ever, boosted by the acceleration of £300 million of investment through our green recovery plan (see page 23). We have delivered 520 environmental schemes in the first year of our five-year programme alone — a remarkable achievement through the pandemic, especially when set against the 1,000 schemes we delivered in total between 2015 and 2020. Among the schemes we have delivered are two projects tackling invasive species — floating pennywort on the River Ouse and Himalayan balsam on the River Wensum. These species are detrimental to river wildlife and the public enjoyment of our waterways.



## Safeguarding our chalk streams: action on the River Lark

One of the crucial ways in which we are working to protect the environment is by reducing the amount of water we abstract from sensitive areas by 85 million litres per day by 2025, and working to restore the health of the precious and internationally important chalk streams in our region.

A particular area of focus is the River Lark, in Suffolk, where we have agreed with the Environment Agency that by March 2025 we will significantly tighten the ‘Hands Off Flow’ level, which means we will act sooner and leave more water in the river. This will allow for flows to be protected, particularly at times of drier weather.



Find out more at [anglianwater.co.uk/casestudies](https://anglianwater.co.uk/casestudies)

To allow this to happen we are creating a connection to our new strategic grid which will move water from the north of our region, where supply is more abundant, to areas of water shortage. During this period we will also be completing river restoration and river support schemes on rivers within the wider Lark catchment, including the River Linnet.

Working with local stakeholders plays a vital part in unlocking progress and helping us understand regional drivers. Here on the River Lark, we have joined forces with local MP Jo Churchill, together with the River Lark Catchment Partnership (for which we have funded a catchment study), the Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Partnership (Cam-EO) and local landowners, farmers and businesses to protect this unique chalk stream habitat.

### Increasing biodiversity

We are committed to delivering a 10 per cent gain in biodiversity resulting from construction, where there is a material impact, and land management on Anglian Water land from 2020. This year we have also begun work on a collaborative model with landowners founded on our desire to deliver the carbon offsets we will need within our region, rather than offsetting overseas. Through partnerships and the development of a sequestration marketplace based on improving soil quality, we aim to sequester hundreds of thousands of tonnes of carbon, bringing multiple co-benefits in terms of biodiversity and water quality.

### Preparing for COP26

The global COP26 summit being hosted by the UK in Glasgow in November provides an international platform to showcase UK leadership on carbon reduction and adaptation to climate change. We hope to showcase the Future Fens: Integrated Adaptation initiative (see page 24) in partnership with Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, the Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment and the Dutch Delta Commission in the Resilience Hub as an exemplar of how integrated water management can unlock opportunity as well as manage risk. We are also partnering with the Centre for Digital Built Britain, BT and UK Power Networks on an ambitious project to create a national digital twin demonstrator to model the shared impact of extreme

climatic events on interconnected services and assets. This project, funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, will see us collaborating and sharing data in new ways to advance the national conversation on climate change adaptation.



*“Future Fens: Integrated Adaptation will be a pioneer in how to adapt to the impact of climate change across a complex, low-lying landscape. We are hugely supportive of Anglian Water convening the Future Fens taskforce and we look forward to being part of it.”*

**Emma Howard Boyd,**  
Chair, The Environment Agency

## Our stakeholders continued

### Environmental Performance Assessment

We have maintained a relentless focus on all aspects of our environmental performance this year, following a challenging year for pollutions in 2019 which saw us lose our status as a 3\* company in the Environment Agency’s Environmental Performance Assessment for the first time since the measure was introduced in 2011. Two-star performance is not acceptable to us, our customers or the environment, and we are pleased that following a comprehensive action plan (see page 91) we have reduced the number of pollutions by 20 per cent and anticipate that we will regain 3\* status in July.

### Water recycling compliance

The quality of the water we return to the environment from 718 of our water recycling centres is monitored by the Environment Agency. We have delivered our best ever performance on compliance this year, with 99.3 per cent of centres meeting their numeric limits on water quality. However, every failure is investigated to discover root cause and improve our performance.

### Contributing to a circular economy

In a world first, we have partnered with Oasthouse Ventures to use warm water, the natural by-product of the water recycling process, to heat two of the UK’s largest greenhouses, one in Norfolk, the other in Suffolk. Together, they are capable of producing up to 12 per cent of the UK’s tomatoes with a carbon footprint 75 per cent lower than a traditional greenhouse. This remarkable engineering feat provides a blueprint for sustainable, low carbon food production to meet the challenge of delivering net zero. There are additional environmental benefits,

too, since the water that is returned to the chalk stream is cooled – better for aquatic organisms and less likely to promote bacterial growth.

### Protecting our rivers and beaches

We have partnered with Keep Britain Tidy since 2001 to empower communities to look after their local coastline and waterways by tackling litter, removing invasive species and restoring rivers. Forty-nine established RiverCare and BeachCare volunteer groups look after stretches of river and beach across our region.

### Focusing on coastal water quality

Protecting the quality of coastal bathing waters is of huge importance, both to the environment and to the economy of our region’s seaside towns. Our Coastal Water Protection team works with councils, the Environment Agency, local businesses and residents’ groups to identify and address sources of pollution. Our 2019 scores against the four standards set out for bathing waters were as follows: 32 of our bathing waters are rated as ‘Excellent’ (required for Blue Flag awards); 11 were rated as ‘Good’ and five as ‘Sufficient’.

This followed a judicial review in Anglian Water’s favour of a downgrading triggered by samples taken by the Environment Agency during unprecedented rainfall and flooding in June 2019. New classifications were not made for 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### We constantly look for new ways to improve the quality of the water discharged to bathing waters from our water recycling centres.



One of two vast greenhouses which will be heated using water from the water recycling process (see left)



Up to 12 per cent of the UK’s tomatoes will be grown with a lower carbon footprint



Our BeachCare volunteers look after stretches of beach across our region

**Two of our bathing waters – Cleethorpes and Ingoldmells South – were recategorised from ‘Good’ to regain their ‘Excellent’ status this year.**

This year we became one of the first organisations in the UK to trial the use of performic acid as a low carbon, environmentally friendly and cost-effective alternative to ultraviolet treatment to destroy bacteria. The trial will continue at Southwold this bathing water season, where water quality at the water recycling centre and nearby bathing waters will continue to be monitored, providing learnings which we hope can be rolled out elsewhere.

**Tackling plastic pollution**

We’ve continued our work towards meeting our ambitious pledge to rid the East of England of plastic pollution by 2030, most notably through hosting a virtual work experience week focused on tackling plastic waste, finalising a collaborative research project to baseline the quantity of plastic waste being received via the sewer network and, as a result of improving our understanding of PPE waste, developing a new hard hat recycling scheme.

**Reduce, reuse, recycle**

We undertake a zero to landfill approach, recognising our responsibility to reduce the environmental impact of the waste streams we produce in line with our value of ‘doing the right thing’. Across the business and our alliance partners, 96 per cent of waste was recycled or recovered – an improvement of 8 per cent from last year.

In 2020 we built on the progress made in implementing the strategy at Flag Fen Water Recycling Centre (WRC) by introducing it at our large Cotton Valley WRC, increasing waste recycling options, introducing new signage and creating ‘buy in’ to enhance existing good waste management practices.

By working with Biffa, we can make sure wastes produced at Cotton Valley and Flag Fen (excluding sewage screenings and grit) are recycled or reused rather than disposed of in a landfill. As well as being environmentally friendly, it is also cost-effective, as it is typically cheaper to send waste to recycle rather than landfill.

See more in-depth info on page 44

**REDUCTION IN LEAKAGE**  
**1.5%**  
 (Target for 2020/21: 1.4%)

**PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION (PCC)**  
**3%**  
 ADDITIONAL USAGE  
 (Target for 2020/21: 0.8% reduction)

**ABSTRACTION INCENTIVE MECHANISM**  
**-83**  
 MEGALITRES REDUCTION  
 (Target for 2020/21: reduction from historic levels)



Stakeholder visits to our environmental projects (including this one from 2019, before the pandemic) are a key way to share our learnings and progress