



# Biodiversity and invasive non-native species (INNS) policy



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Policy no. POL014

## Purpose

The Executive Risk Committee has approved this Biodiversity and invasive non-native species (“INNS”) policy (the “policy”) to set out the principles for managing the large areas of land and water in a responsible manner that enhances biodiversity and prevents the establishment of INNS, whilst delivering our services in the most sustainable way.

Implementation of the policy and supporting standards will help to mitigate the principal risk of “we fail to protect biodiversity and mitigate the effect of climate change and population growth” of which breaches may involve financial penalty, enforcement action and/or reputational damage.

This policy was approved on 31 May 2023 by the Executive Risk Committee.

## Scope

This policy covers Biodiversity and INNS regulatory and licence obligations and commitments, managed by Thames Water Utilities Limited, and its associated subsidiaries. It applies to all Thames Water employees, contractors and business partners working with Thames Water.

## Key principles - describing our approach

The aim of this policy is to take great care of the large areas of land and water we manage, balancing the needs of the animals, plants, birds and insects, improving our biodiversity performance, taking biosecurity measures at all our sites and beyond, whilst delivering our services in the most sustainable way. This is delivered through:

- Complying with all applicable legislation and regulations
  - driving for more sustainable solutions as well as improved biosecurity and INNS management where we operate.
- Engaging with all our stakeholders:
  - Working closely with external regulatory bodies and other water companies to develop consistent reporting and response procedures for dealing with new discoveries or risks and ensuring emerging environmental challenges are addressed.

- Continuing to be a socially responsible business, working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, communities, and organisations across our region to share knowledge, combine resources and provide engagement opportunities that encourage native biodiversity, prevent the spread of INNS, and support nature recovery.
- Educating customers of all ages with key wildlife messages that link to our broader education programme and by increasing access to and enjoyment of our sites, where we can.
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity during our activities by:
  - Continued investment at our sites, demonstrating a 5% net gain on our 253 sites of biodiversity interest and a 10% net gain on engineering projects.
  - Implementing best practice solutions to retain trees and hedgerows on new developments and prevent the use of netting intended to stop birds from nesting.
  - Ensuring 99% of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest reach 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' status and that at least 50% of those are in favourable condition.
  - Good management of the wildlife within our landholding.
- Being proactive in biosecurity and INNS management by:
  - Keeping our approach under review and promote effective working with operations and grounds maintenance teams. In particular where INNS affect our operational sites and nature reserves.
  - Working to understand and address the ongoing problem of INNS to meet the impacts of climate change and population growth.
  - Proactively protecting biodiversity, human health and operational performance through prevention, early detection, rapid eradication and ongoing management of INNS.
  - Actively engaging our employees so they're aware of and understand their responsibility to help manage INNS, and implement the nation-wide 'Check, Clean, Dry' process for everyone who visits our sites.
  - Planning, monitoring and delivering our biosecurity and INNS commitments in the Water Industry National Environment Plan.
  - Ensuring an overall improvement in the management of the wildlife within our landholding, particularly with regards to managing the spread of invasive species.

## Responsibilities

All employees, contractors and business partners are responsible for ensuring their actions are consistent with this policy.

Managers in relevant positions are responsible for communicating the details of this policy to employees, contractors and business partners, promoting a compliant working environment.

The Executive is responsible for conducting all business in line with this policy and our core values.

## Sharing our progress

Doing the right thing for society and the environment is the responsibility of everyone working at or with Thames Water. We will make our employees, contractors, business partners and our wider supply chain aware of this policy and what it means to protect and continuously improve the biodiversity within our operational sites and the wider landscape.

We will report regularly to the Board on our performance against this policy and will share our plans and the progress made within our annual Sustainability Report.

## Useful references

- Sustainability policy
- Environmental policy

## Contacting us

For questions, comments or feedback relating to this policy, you can contact us through [customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk)

If you would like to contact us for environmental information, please refer to our dedicated webpage [Environmental Information Regulations](#) or contact us through [eir.requests@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:eir.requests@thameswater.co.uk)

For concerns regarding dishonest or unethical behaviour, please contact us on any of the following:



You can also raise your concern or issue to independent organisations, such as contacting a Regulator (e.g. Ofwat, DWI, EA) or whistleblowing charity (e.g. Crimestoppers). You are not required to submit a disclosure to us before contacting an independent organisation.

If you are an employee of Thames Water, you can also speak with your Line Manager.