



Doing the right thing for our rivers



Our plan to reduce harm to water quality in the River Thames catchment

“ We want all our rivers to be wonderful, natural places, full of wildlife and able to provide peace and tranquillity in an increasingly hectic and uncertain world.

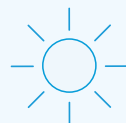
We have a big part to play in restoring our rivers which is why we have set out our plans for the period 2022 – 2025 to reduce the harm we cause to river water quality. We are going to Speak up, Open up and Clean Up.

Sarah Bentley
CEO Thames Water

Speak Up

We view any discharge of untreated sewage as unacceptable, even when it's legally permitted, and we're taking initial steps to make the use of storm overflows unnecessary.

We're working towards the virtual elimination of sewage overflows in the Chess and upper Windrush catchments and starting preliminary work in the Kennet catchment.



We've worked closely with the Oxford Rivers Project to achieve the successful designation of the Wolvercote Mill stream at Port Meadow in Oxford as an inland bathing water.



Our river water quality report



Open Up

We're currently doing a trial of near real-time, online and text notifications, for members of the public, of storm discharges from six sites in the Oxford area and have committed to making this available for all of our 468 permitted discharge locations by the end of 2022.

We're making more operational data available and will respond to all requests for data made under the Environmental Information Regulations within the statutory timescales, if not sooner.

We'll gladly speak with all interested parties about the issues that affect their local river, including local people, parish councils and environmental groups.

We've recently launched a £5m fund to support catchment partnerships, managed by the Rivers Trust.

468 locations issuing
live notifications

£5m fund to support
catchment
partnerships

Clean Up

We're committed to achieving at least a 50% reduction in the total annual duration of untreated discharges by 2030 and, within that, an 80% reduction in sensitive catchments (using a 2020 baseline).

We're delivering the Thames Tideway tunnel, London's 'super sewer' and the biggest single overflow reduction project ever, to improve the health of the River Thames.

We're increasing the capacity at our Sewage Treatment Works to make sure that sufficient flow is fully treated before flows overflow to the storm tanks and ultimately the river.

We're investing in the resilience of our sewage pumping stations and we're repairing or replacing the highest risk pumped mains sewers.

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We want to do our bit to restore the rivers that characterise London and the Thames Valley – but we can't do it on our own. We'd like to ask everyone to pull together, including government, regulators, local councils, environmental organisations, and local communities. Together, we can create a legacy that we're all proud of.

