The wonders of water:

Tips for achieving your Eco-Schools Green Flag

Thames Water

Eco-Schools

Water makes the world go round

Without water, there would be no life on Earth. We need it to survive – but it's not just about us!

Water gives life to everything that breathes. Plants and animals depend on clean, healthy water to make this planet their home, too.

We love water, every day

Everyone at Thames Water is proud to look after one of the world's most precious resources, and we take care to make every drop count.

Besides using less and saving more, we look after our watery world in lots of other ways, from improving wildlife habitats to making sure our sewers flow freely. And you can join in by taking care of water at school!

Go green by loving blue

Water is one of the ten topics recognised by Eco-Schools, the largest educational programme on the planet. So being water-wise inside and outside the classroom may take you one step closer to achieving your Eco-Schools Green Flag.

Best of all, your class will learn valuable life lessons by working together for a more sustainable future.

Ready to dive in?

The sections in this booklet are designed to support steps 2 to 6 of the Green Flag programme. We'll also share a bit of our knowledge about water to help you achieve your goals and make positive changes for the planet in your school, home and local community.

The Eco-Schools Environmental Review

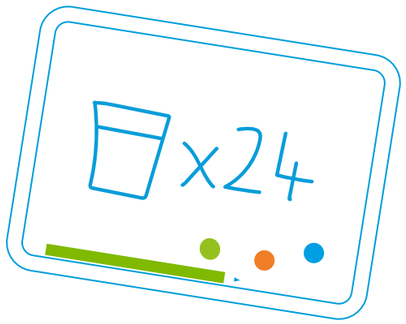
This review is the second of seven steps you need to take to achieve your Green Flag. To help you think about your school's sustainability, we've included its water-based questions below. To carry out the full review, just head to the **Eco-Schools website**.

Are school plants watered with grey water?

Plants don't need their drinking water to be as clean as ours. Are you collecting rainwater to help yours grow? Look out for water butts, which look like big upside-down bins that collect rainwater from roofs.

Are your taps self-stopping, and do your toilets have water-saving devices?

Busy children can forget to switch taps off. If a tap switches off automatically, you could save six litres per minute – enough to fill 24 glasses of water!



Support for step 2

Do you use reusable water bottles?

Every time your class refills with tap water, it's a step closer to healthier rivers and oceans. Introducing eco-friendly alternatives to bottled water also links well to other Eco-Schools topics, including Marine, Healthy Living and Litter.

Do you learn how to save water?

Bringing the world of water to life is worthwhile in the classroom. Why not conduct a survey with your teachers to find out how often they talk about water?

Where's your school water meter?

Water meters are the devices that measure how much water your school uses. As long as a responsible adult is on hand to help, your classes may be able to do a bit of detective work to find yours – here's what to look out for.

Do you learn about issues surrounding the availability of clean water in other countries?

Access to water is a global issue. We support WaterAid, a charity that provides clean water to communities all over the world – find out more at **wateraid.org**

Getting involved may also support the Eco-Schools Global Citizenship topic.

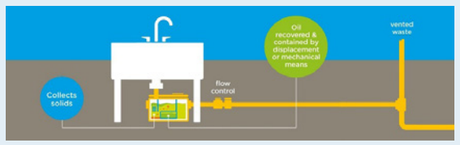
Explore your environment

Support for step 2 continued

Look around your school and what do you see?

In the great outdoors

- Have you got any watery habitats on your school grounds, such as a pond or bog?
- Do you have swales, planters or flower beds on your school grounds that soak up rainwater?
- Do you use equipment to collect rainwater, such as a water butt?



In the bathrooms

- Do you have flush controls fitted to stop toilet water flowing all the time?
- They might look like the images above
- Or they might be above the cisterns or even in the ceiling!

In the canteen

- Do you have a waste system to dispose of cooking fats?

Around the building

- Have you got any helpful signs on the walls?
- Do you know who to report a leak to?
- Do you know how much leaks might be costing you?

Use the tables below to work it out!

Amount of water a leak can waste (litres)

	Minute	Hour	Day	Week	Year
Tap				80	
Toilet			400		
Urinal		78			

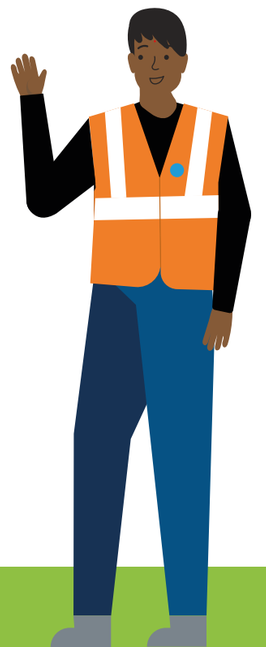
Amount of money a leak can cost (pounds)

	Minute	Hour	Day	Week	Year
Tap				0.18	
Toilet					321.20
Urinal		0.17			

We've based our calculations on a combined clean and wastewater charge of 0.22p per litre.

Did you know?

If people wash fat and grease down the sink, it can slowly build up to create a blockage. This can stop your pipes working properly or even cause a sewage spill.



Build an action plan

Start building your action plan using the template on the **Eco-Schools website**. Here's one example of how you might put yours together!

Support for step 3

Action Plan

Eco-Schools topic: Water

Date: 29/05/2020

Aim:

Develop a system to measure and record how much water our school uses so we can evaluate our success with using less water

Action(s):

- Find out where the water meter is and take a reading
- Ask for last few readings from bills
- Set up system of regular checks on meter

How long will it take?

One week for first reading then four times a year

Who's responsible?

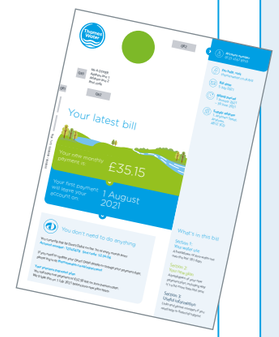
One member of the Eco-Schools Committee with support from bursar / caretaker / headteacher

How we'll monitor progress:

Plot data on a graph to measure success of actions

Evaluation:

We'll use the data to evaluate the success of our action plan over one year



Start making waves

Support for step 3 continued

Need some help bringing your action plan to life? Here are just a few ways you can use water more sustainably in your school.

Write to your headteacher

Put your heads together to make a list of things you'd like to see change – and then write to your headteacher to make a case for each one.

Arrange a free Smarter Business Visit

Book a Smarter Business Visit and we'll pop by your school to review your facilities and recommend the best water-saving solutions for you. Wherever we can, we'll fit water-saving devices, fix leaky loos and install urinal sensors – and best of all, it won't cost you a penny.

Depending on how much we can do to help, you could save as much as 1,000 litres a day with a Smarter Business Visit – that's an estimated £800 a year back in your bank!

To arrange your visit, please email **watereefficiency@thameswater.co.uk**

Make a pledge at school or at home

Take the World Water Day pledge on 22 March to care for water, come rain or shine.

Make the most of our free resources

Dive into the wonderful world of water on one of our free educational visits to a real-life sewage treatment works, or book one of our volunteer community speakers to visit your school.

We'll tailor an educational workshop to your school's curriculum – and if your school is in our region, we'll do it for free!

Find out more and access free online resources at **thameswater.co.uk/schools**

Far left:
How Dirty Old Father Thames was Whitewashed, Punch magazine, 31 July 1858
Left:
Portrait of Sir Joseph Bazalgette in the 1870s

Support for step 4

Link water to your curriculum

Find creative ways to weave water into your lesson plans, like in…

Maths

Why not look at volume and capacity when measuring leaks, or use water meter data to plot a graph?

Geography

Explore the ways fresh water is distributed around the world – after all, it's a resource everyone on our planet needs!

History

Showcase individuals from the past with significant achievements in the water industry, like John Snow and Sir Joseph Bazalgette, as well as events like the Great Stink.

Find free resources at
archive.thameswater.co.uk

Science

Splash into the world of watery habitats by making a river or pond food chain. And don't forget solids, liquids and gases – we wouldn't have much to drink without the water cycle!

Support for step 5

Inform and involve others

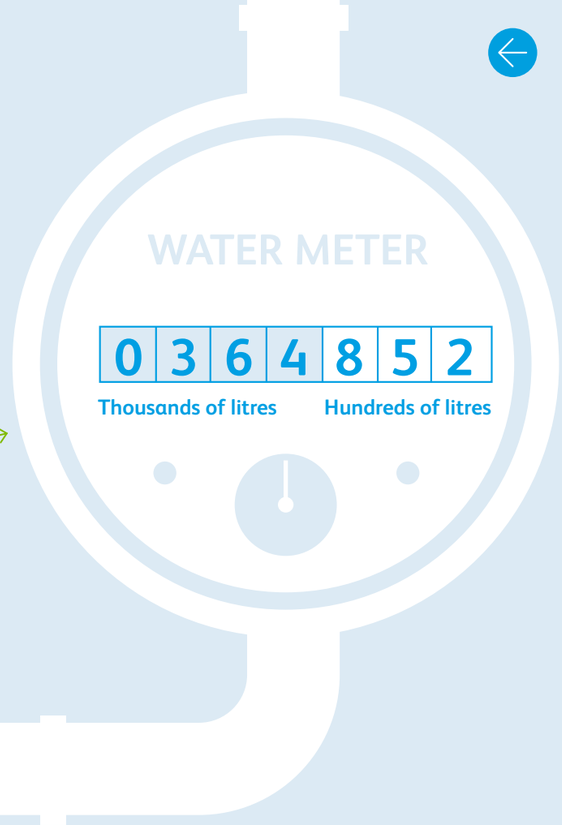
Reach out to organisations beyond your school – lots will be interested to hear about your watery work! If you're not sure where to start, try to find out who's involved in caring for your local river.

- Use your school social media channels to engage with other interested groups and show what you've been working on.
- Try your hand at journalism and create a newspaper article, podcast or blog to share your progress.
- Think about what you can share with your family – if you've done an action plan for school, maybe it's time to develop a new action plan at home!
- Run an assembly in your school or at another local school if they're interested in getting involved.
- Create an Eco-Board in your classroom to share your pledges and any other eco-friendly inspiration you find!

Monitor and evaluate your water use

Keep track of your water use if you have a water meter. This is a great way to keep a real record of any savings you make!

Your school's water meter should have a numbered dial, which slowly turns to give a reading. It'll look something like this:



If you're ready to start tracking your use, just fill in the table below. You'll need safe access to your school's water meter to take a reading every month for a year.*

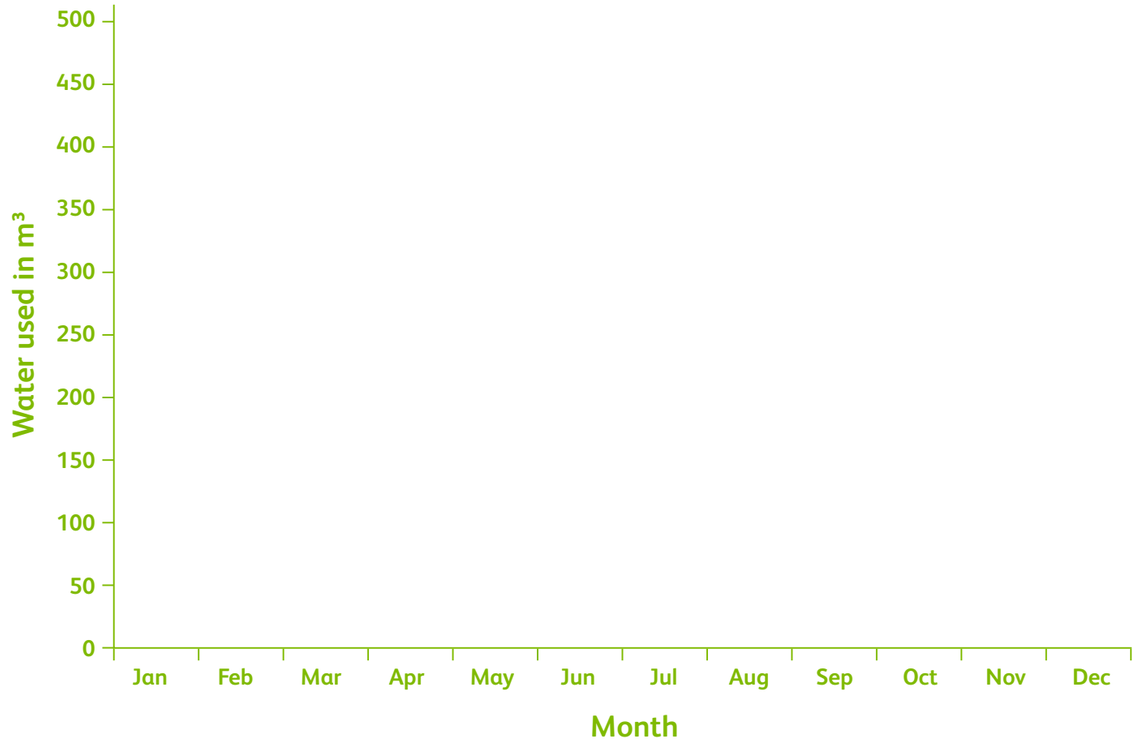
If accessing the water meter is tricky, why not carry out a survey to find out how many people are making an effort to save water? Alternatively, create a scrapbook or PowerPoint presentation that features all the new ideas you've implemented.

Your water retailer may also be able to share more information on your water use, so it's worth checking with them, too!

Got a year's worth of data at the ready? Track your water use on the bar graph below!

Support for step 6

Date	Meter reading	Water used in m^3



*Any children taking part should always be supervised by a teacher

Link up with other Eco-Schools topics

Develop your plan with other Eco-Schools topics in mind. One of the great things about the programme is the way they can be linked together so easily.

There are lots of fun ways to do this, but here are three of our favourites:

Biodiversity

From butterflies to bees, birds to badgers, we do everything we can to support Britain's wildlife across our Thames Water sites. By maintaining healthy rivers, lakes and ponds, we make happy homes for hedgehogs, newts, dragonflies, bats, kestrels and much, much more! Have you considered access to outdoor water sources to encourage insect and animal life in the school grounds?

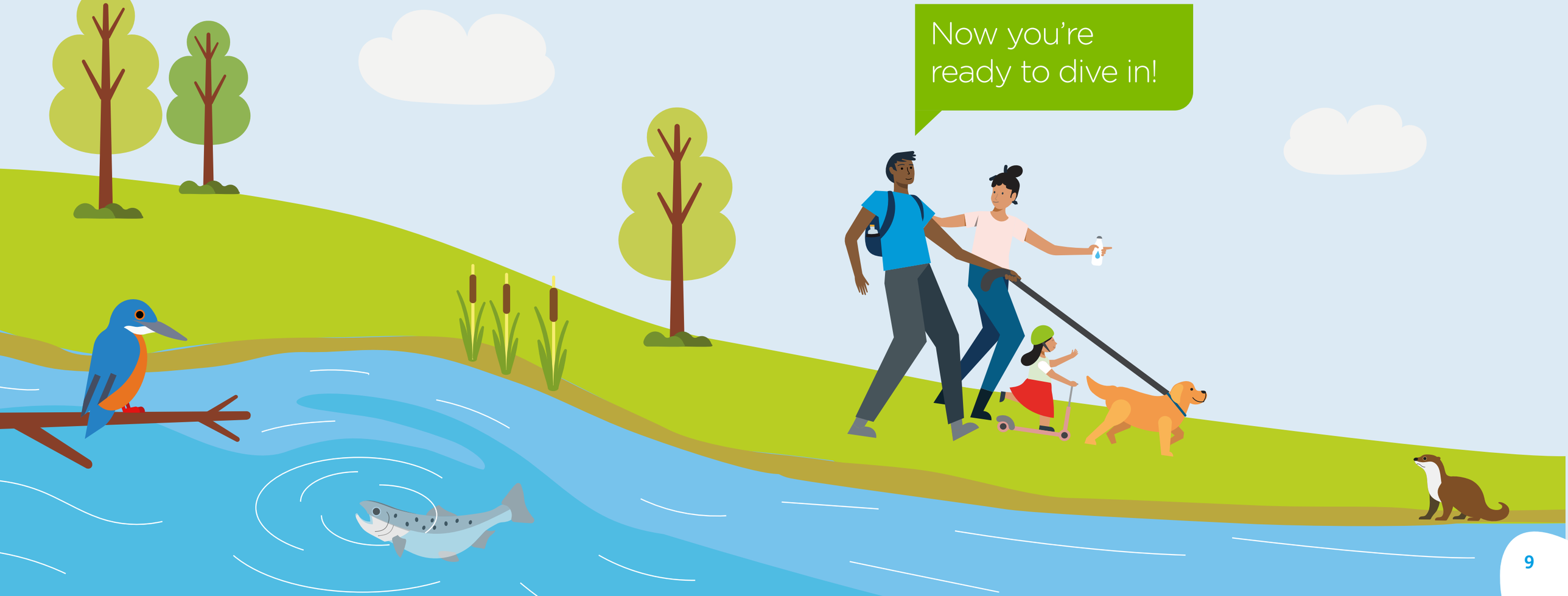
Global citizenship

Clean water and sanitation are global problems. According to the charity WaterAid, there are 785 million people on our planet who don't have access to clean water, and a whopping two billion people who don't have access to a decent toilet.

Could your school help to improve this situation? Find out at **wateraid.org**

Healthy living

Drinking tap water isn't only good for the environment – it's also a healthy choice for you! Educating students on the health issues linked to sugary drinks could help to prevent more problems in the future. Could you make tap water more accessible and do more to encourage the use of reusable water bottles?



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eco-schools.org.uk

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