South West Water / Torbay Scrutiny Committee meeting

Helen Dobby – Director of Wastewater Services, Recovery, Treatment and Networks

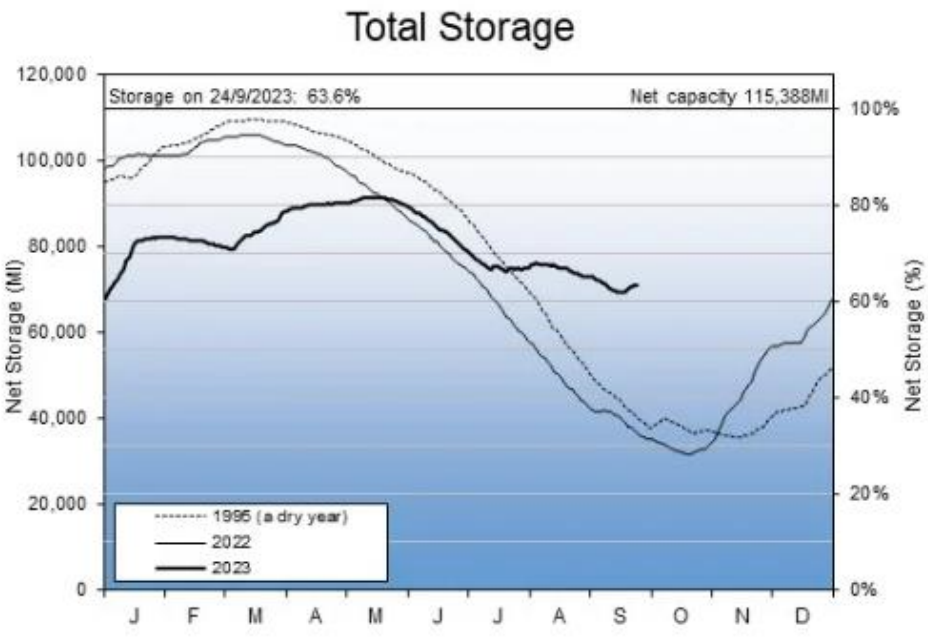
05/10/2023

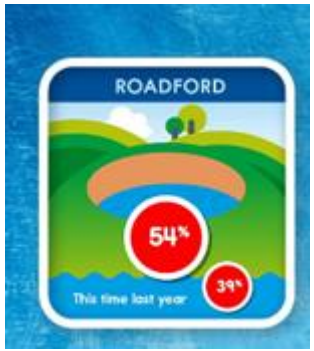
South West Water

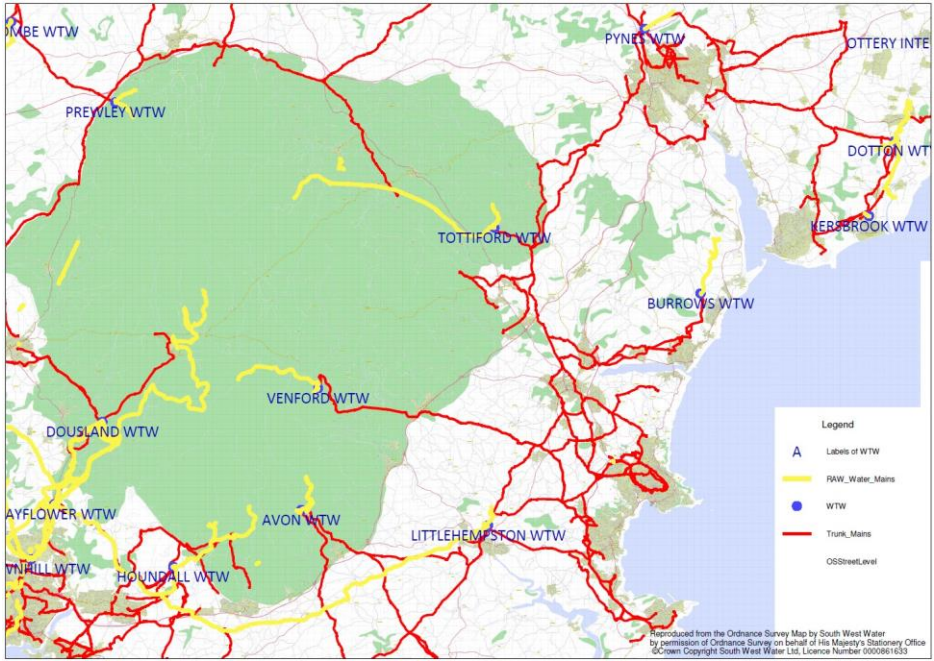
Overview

- Water resources, Torbay area
- Wastewater network (inc storm overflows and WaterFit Live)
- Bathing waters
- Collaborative campaign opportunities with Torbay council

Water Resources – Torbay

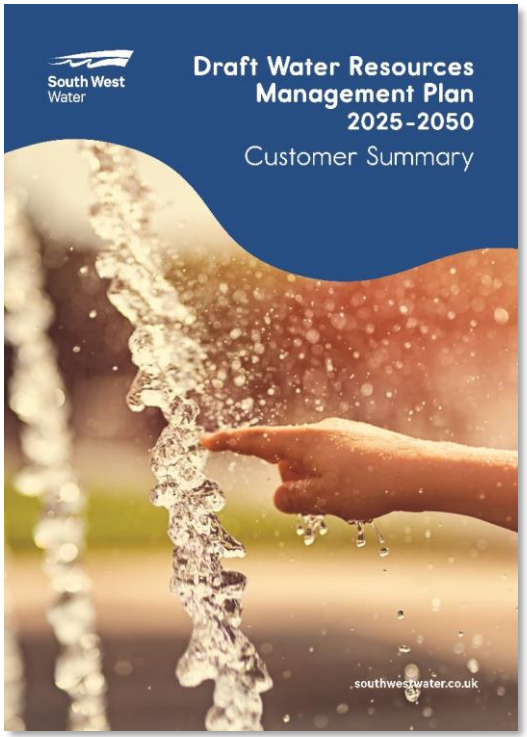






Water Resources Management Plan & Drought Plan

2025 -2050



Water Resources Management

Increasing supply

Storing more water

We are exploring ways to increase how much water we can store from seasonal rainfall so that there is more available during dry periods. Higher river flows in winter can be pumped up into a reservoir and strategically released to make sure the river level is not compromised when we take water from it for supply. We could make dams higher to increase the capacity of reservoirs or create hundreds of smaller ponds in the landscape to store water and enhance the natural habitat. Partnering with other suppliers in the wider regions, there may even be opportunities to create new strategic water storage options.

Using river water wisely

The Environment Agency grants abstraction licences to take specified amounts of water from certain rivers in order to supply our network. The quantities are carefully managed through the licences and regularly reviewed as licences expire. We are exploring options to balance the supply by changing the terms of our licences: how much water we abstract, and where we get it from.

Using groundwater

Currently 90% of the water supply in our regions comes from rivers and lakes. The rest of it comes from groundwater that is extracted through boreholes. Some boreholes are not in use and could be re-commissioned to top up the supply. We are also looking at pumping water back into the ground to be abstracted later.

Recovering wastewater

Recycling water that has already been used is a clean and safe option that benefits the environment. Clean, treated water from wastewater treatment works can be returned directly to the network or it can be used to replenish groundwater supplies instead of being lost out to sea. We are also developing innovative approaches that work to enhance the environment and create rich habitats for wildlife, where recovered wastewater is used to support wetlands, keeping it in the regional system.

Balancing the flow of water

We have opportunities to take more water without causing any harm to the environment at certain times of year (when there is more available) or in locations where there is an abundance. This water can then be used at other times or in other places to make up a deficit. Taking advantage of these opportunities may mean a range of measures such as increasing the capacity of water treatment works or improving our network to get the water to where it is needed. Investing in a smarter network and upgrading works helps us to get the balance right.

Diversified water resources

In response both to climate change and also the extreme circumstances we faced in 2022, we have embarked upon a diversification of our water resources. Currently about 90% of our water resources are taken from surface water supplies (the balance from groundwater). We are currently moving at pace to develop additional resources from repurposed mines and quarries and also introducing climate independent sources into our mix, namely desalination at locations along the Cornwall coastline.

THE BLEND OF SOLUTIONS

Reducing demand

Preventing and fixing leaks

We can improve the efficiency of our supply network by investing where water is being lost through leaks. Putting more experts to work with new technology to detect and respond to leaks around the clock and repairing pipes using new techniques has kept us on track to reduce leakage by 15% by 2025 (from 2017/18 levels), and we plan to do more.

Installing smart meters

There are many types of smart meter, but they all measure how much water is being distributed through a pipe and allow it to be monitored closely. A smart meter may be installed on a particular section of our network, such as a street, as well as individual households having a meter installed that tells them how much water they are using.

We can use this information to build a complete picture of where water is going, and where efficiency could be improved. Smart meters in households help people to be aware of how much water they are using (and therefore use less).

With real-time information on water consumption, we can provide feedback to our customers on water consumption, locate leaks and improve our ability to manage our water supply systems overall.

Promoting community water efficiency

We are asking customers to use less water, and we are committed to helping them to do so through a variety of services. We will fix a leaky loo without charge and can provide rainwater butts and other water-saving products such as tap inserts and shower regulators.

We make funding available for local water-efficiency projects through our Water-Saving Community Fund. These could be small, like a rainwater harvesting project for allotments, or larger, like a wide-ranging education programme. We want to hear from any community groups that have an idea that will help communities to use less water.

Our community team visits schools and supports education initiatives. We are further developing a range of innovative programmes in partnership with communities and non-household consumers such as businesses, universities and factories.

With over 25% of leaks being from customers' supply pipes, taking ownership of supply pipes and repairing leaks on customer properties will also make a significant difference as well as helping customers to find leaks in their homes.

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Prioritising spill reduction

- WaterFit investment of £330m reducing average spills per location to **20 per year by 2025**.
- £900m up to 2030 to radically improve storm overflow performance
- Further investment reducing average spills per location to **10 per year by 2040 (10 years ahead of Defra target of 2050)**
- Accelerated delivery investment to start by 2025
- Established a Storm Overflow Task Force
- Submitted our Storm Overflow Action Plan

South West Water
Bournemouth Water
Bristol Water

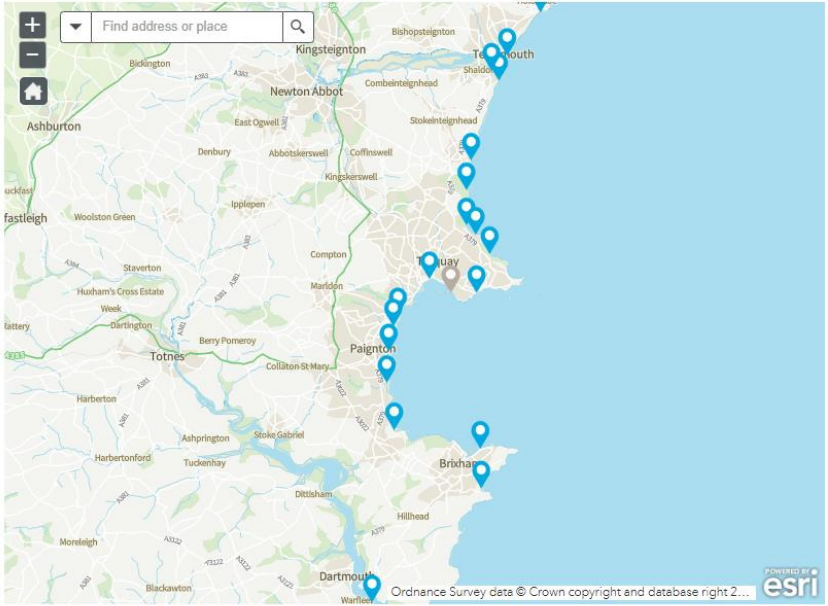
WaterFit live

What is the WaterFit Live beach map telling me?

Our interactive map allows you to see if any of our storm overflows have been operating at your local beach to an extent that they may have temporarily affected bathing water.

For more information about storm overflows, what we're doing to reduce their impact and how you can help do your bit visit our main Storm Overflow page.

We've provided some frequently asked questions below the map to help you understand what's happening and why.



13 Bathing waters in the Torbay area:

- Water quality assessed by Environment Agency
- Classification published by DEFRA
- Near real time and historic storm overflow data published on SWW WaterFit website

Bathing Waters compliance - Torbay area

Name	2022	2021	2019	2018
Anstey's Cove	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Babbacombe	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Beacon Cove	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Breakwater Beach (Shoalstone)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Broadsands	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Goodrington	Good	Good	Sufficient	Sufficient
Hollicombe	Good	Good	Good	Good
Maidencombe	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Meadfoot	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Oddicombe	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Paignton Preston Sands	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Paignton Paignton Sands	Good	Good	Good	Good
Torre Abbey	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

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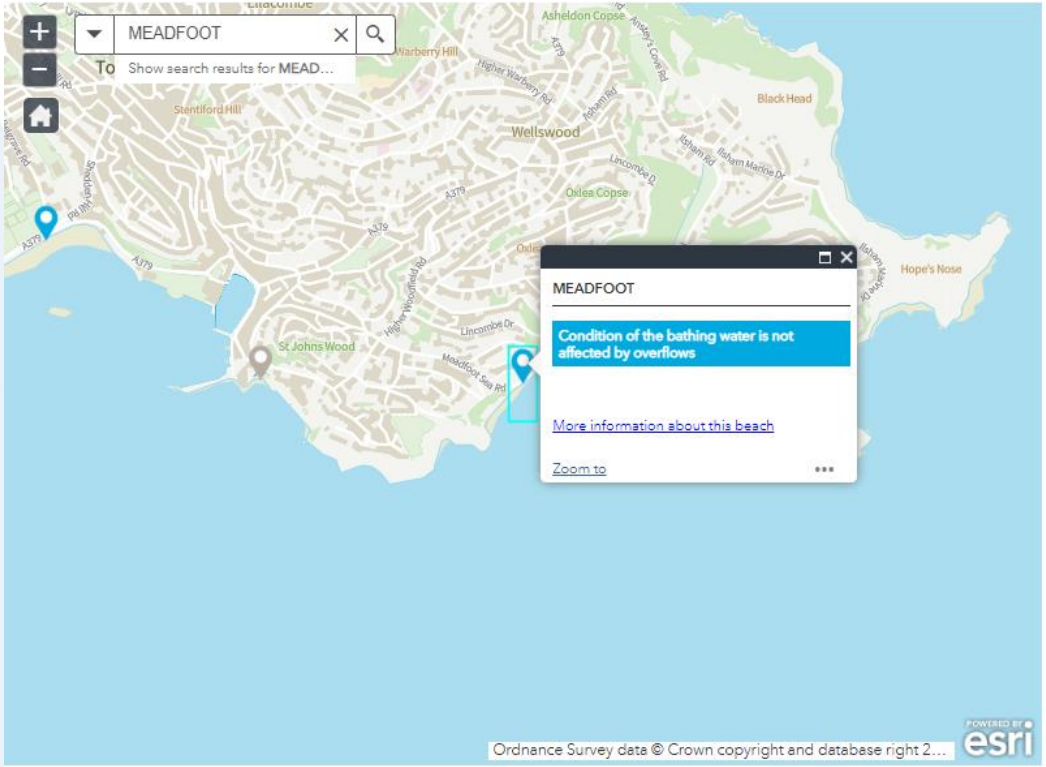
WaterFit live



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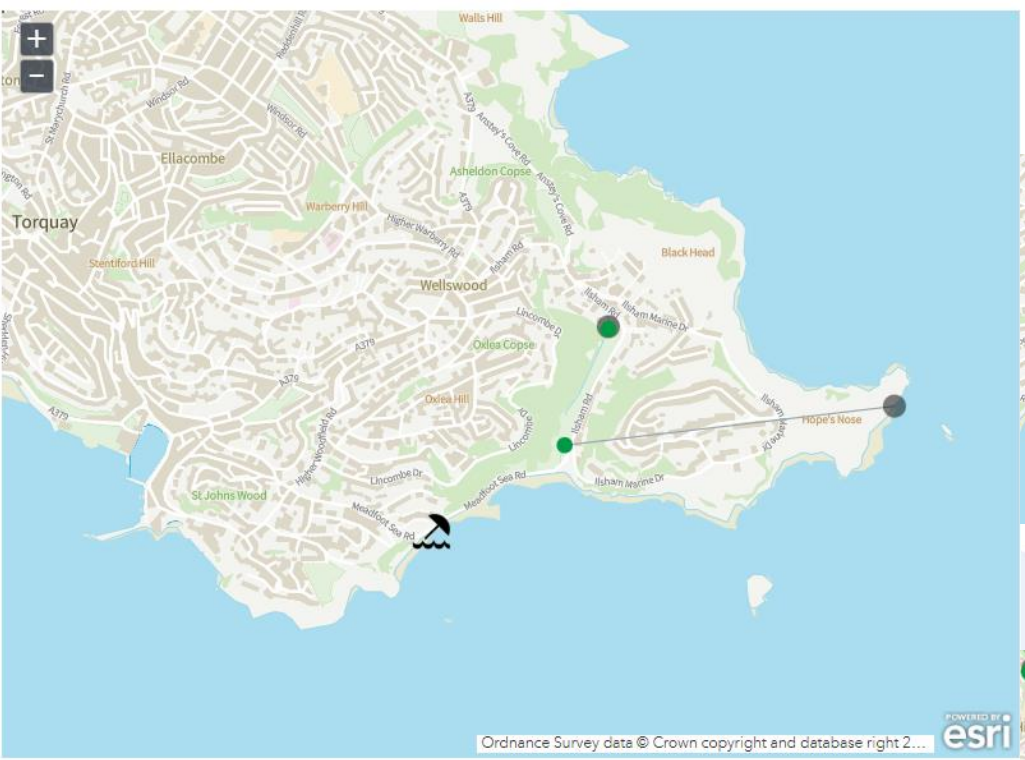

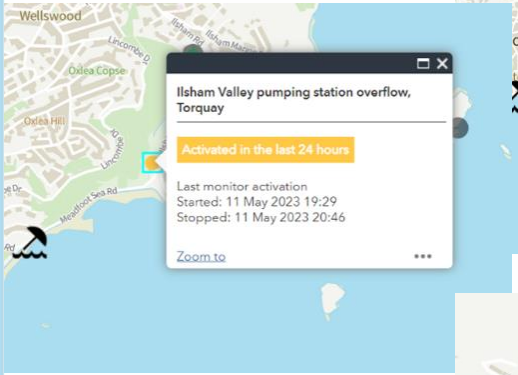

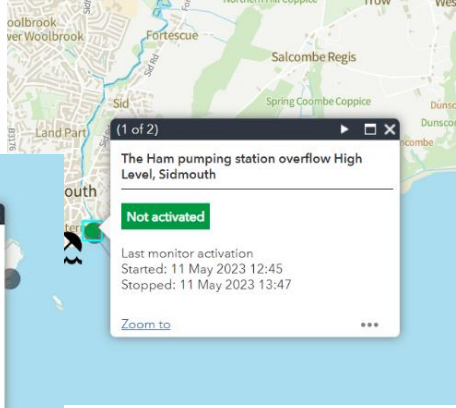

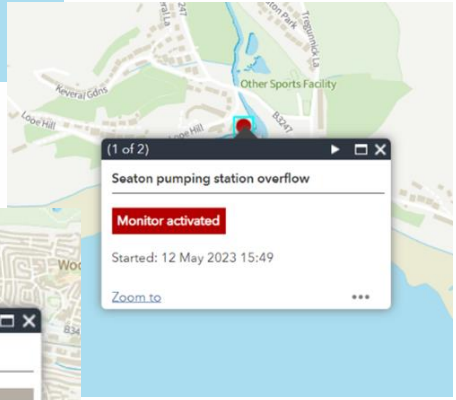

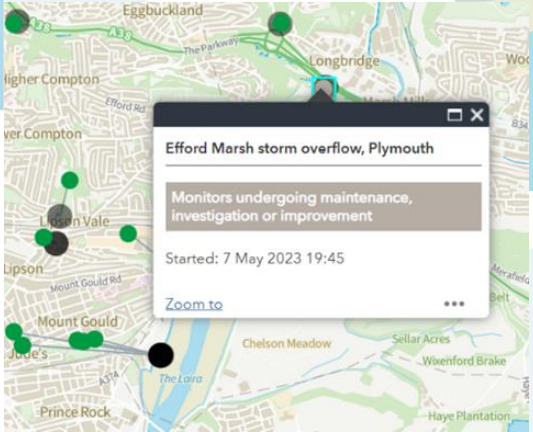

Map key

- Monitor not activated
- Monitor activated in the last 24 hours
- Monitor activated
- Monitors undergoing maintenance, investigation or improvement
- Outlet location
- Beach name

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This page will also show you:

3 year overflow spill information

The data shown in the table below is the reported total spill number for each overflow which has been identified by the EA for this bathing water.

The assignment of an overflow to the bathing water does not always mean an impact will occur, it can be dependent on a number of factors such as tidal state and weather conditions. Sometimes it has been allocated just for investigation purposes and has no impact at all.

All data collected goes through vigorous quality assurance processes before being included in the counts. Sometimes debris can trigger false spills to be recorded, resulting in potentially higher than actual spill numbers.

Number of spills

	2022	2021	2020
Ilsham Road storm overflow, Torquay	2	0	0
Ilsham Valley pumping station overflow, Torquay	79	93	123

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Exeter

Population served	c.163,000 people live in the Exeter catchment
Urgent risk	• A new solution needed for wastewater treatment as our existing treatment facility at Countess Wear is already at risk from flooding due to sea level rise and is located partly in a SSSI designated site, which makes this site unsuitable to extend further
Our plans	Our plans are currently investigating options to transfer flows from Countess Wear to a new treatment facility, which will be designed with the headroom required for future development. We will also reduce flood risks in the catchment through surface water separation and nature based solutions along with significant network storage to reduce spills from the 71 overflows.

Plymouth

Population served	c.105,000 people live in the Plymouth central catchment
Urgent risks	• The wastewater treatment works was constructed as part of the Clean Sweep programme in the 1990s and is nearing the end of its operational life. • Plymouth central and three other works in the Plymouth area are currently at risk from coastal flooding and sea level rises
Our plans	Our plans will increase resilience to coastal flood risk, reduce overflow spills and improve bathing water quality.

Drainage and Waste Water Management Plan

We have developed a long term plan and by 2050 we will have

- Maintained flooding risk
- Improved storm overflow performance
- Raised treatment standards
- Maintained compliance of our treatment works
- Built resilience against wider climate change risks

DID YOU KNOW?

510,000m³

of additional storage is the equivalent of 204 Olympic-sized swimming pools

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Joint campaign with Newquay town council 2023 – Sewer Misuse

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