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Date: Tuesday, 11 November 2025

Governance Support  
Town Hall  
Castle Circus  
Torquay  
TQ1 3DR

Dear Member

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - WEDNESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2025**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Wednesday, 29 October 2025 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Spotlight Review on Water and Flooding</b> South West Water Presentation	(Pages 3 - 20)

Yours sincerely

Governance Support  
Clerk

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**South West  
Water**

# Torbay Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Alan Burrows, Head of Local Government Affairs

Ian Lake, Head of Developer Services

Jonathan Coldwell, Operations Manager WWS

Wednesday 29 October 2025

# PR24

## Our priorities

Feedback from our customers has shaped our new business plan and our four priorities.



### 1: Water quality and resilience

Continue to deliver top quality water to all our regions, safely and securely, whilst protecting the environment.



### 3: Net zero and environmental gains

To do our bit to protect and enhance nature and the environment, working with our partners to improve land, rivers and seas.



### 2: Storm overflows and pollutions

Transform our sewer network by 2040, starting with all sites which affect our most loved places.



### 4: Delivering for customers and addressing affordability

To maintain affordable bills for all, whilst making transformative levels of investment.



## We're doing this

## OUR SUPPLY AREA

For water resources planning, our supply area is divided into five water resource zones. These are Colliford, Roadford, Wimbleball, Isles of Scilly and Bournemouth. The zones are defined by water supply connectivity and geographical boundaries. Customers in each zone receive the same level of service and are impacted by the same risks to water supply.

Three of our zones, Colliford, Roadford and Wimbleball are centred around a strategic supply reservoir. We operate these three zones in conjunction with each other, transferring water between them. The Bournemouth zone is not geographically connected to these three areas and is operated independently.

The Isles of Scilly zone has no connection to our mainland zones and there is no connectivity between the individual islands.





# OUR BEST VALUE PLAN

Demand management will benefit all our water resource zones but the scale of activity and benefit varies across each zone. New supplies are considered for individual water resource zones using a range of future scenarios. The scenarios are used to create a plan that can be adapted if the future is different to our baseline forecasts.

## ROADFORD WRZ

Our Roadford zone includes parts of north-east Cornwall and a large part of Devon, from Plymouth, the South Hams and Torbay in the south, to Bideford and Barnstaple in the north. The coastline, wooded valleys and moorland are extremely popular for tourists.

Our Roadford Reservoir is our largest impounding reservoir, and we operate it conjunctively with smaller reservoirs, river intakes and groundwater sources. These sources are also supplemented by bulk transfers between the neighbouring Colliford and Wimbleball zones.

The population is around 850,000 and is centred in Plymouth, Torbay, Newton Abbot, Okehampton, Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, Bude. We supply around 230 ML/d to this zone.

Dartmoor National Park lies at the heart of this zone and can be seen from all over the region. It also includes the Western corner of Exmoor National Park and the South Devon, North Devon and Tamar Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The landscape provides habitat for numerous protected species such as the Marsh Fritillary and 3 out of the five Devon colonies of Southern Damselfly.

### KEY CHALLENGES

To further protect the environment, we have to reduce the amount of water we are taking from rivers, especially the River Dart. To provide a sustainable abstraction regime and meet our Environmental Destination we must reduce the volume we abstract in this zone by 28 ML/d.

### HOW OUR PLAN WILL BENEFIT ROADFORD WRZ

We are aiming to reduce leakage and overall demand so that there is less pressure on our resources. In our Roadford zone we will invest in additional raw water transfer capacity in 2035/36 to offset an Environmental Destination abstraction reduction of 16.99 ML/d on the River Dart.



Population served:

C. 866,470

Population centres

Plymouth, Torbay, Newton Abbot, Okehampton, Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, Bude



Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan  
**Torbay**  
May 2023



Area Overview

Table 2 summarises the number of critical assets within the Torbay catchment and a count of intersections with shellfisheries and bathing waters. The Level 3 (treatment works) catchments and neighbouring areas are shown in Figure 1.

Table 2: Count of key catchment environments/assets

Shellfisheries	Bathing Waters	SPS	Storm Overflows	Emergency Overflows	Monitored Storm Overflows
2	4	28	28	11	37



Figure 1: Catchment Overview

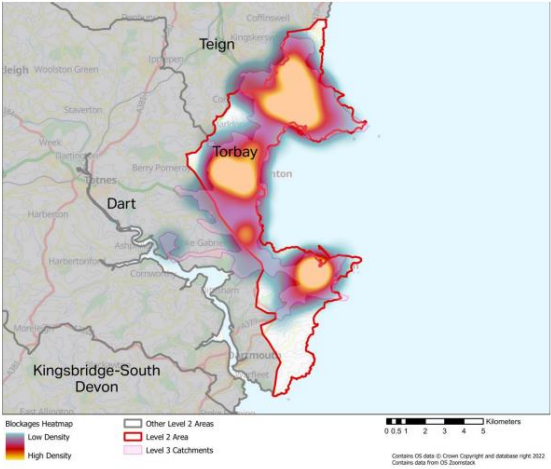


Figure 5: Blockage Event Heatmap

Asset Condition

Gravity Network

A programme of CCTV inspections is undertaken to determine the structural condition of sewers. A risk-based approach is applied, considering frequency of failure and consequence of failure. The sewers in most need of attention due to their condition are prioritised for more frequent inspection or rehabilitation.

The rate of collapses in the Torbay catchment is average when compared to other catchments in the region. A heatmap of sewer collapses since the 2018/19 reporting year is shown in Figure 6 below. Table 8 provides a count of collapse and partial collapse events since the 2018/19 reporting year.

A total of 653<sup>1</sup> Sewage Treatment Works (STW), 1235 Sewage Pumping Stations (SPS) plus the associated wastewater infrastructure were assessed for coastal flood risk. Sites have been assessed based upon a number of different storm and flood scenarios considering the risks to the site, the defence of the site and wider EA flood defence work. The 1 in 200-year flood extent for the three time periods is indicated in Figure 15 below.

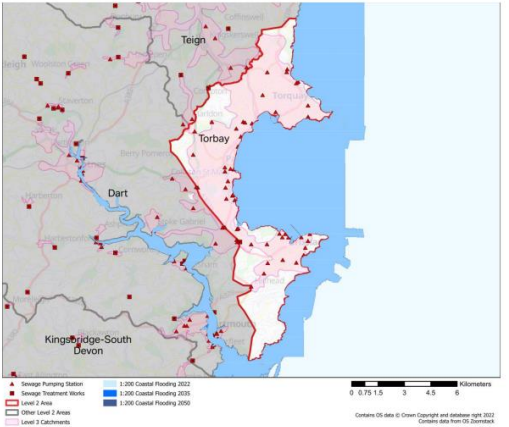


Figure 15: Extent of coastal flooding

Possible interventions to manage the risks have been identified as the provision of flood defences for the site, either as a SWW deliverable or as part of a wider programme of coastal defences working with EA and other RMAs. Thereby delivering greater benefit for coastal communities. An alternative intervention is to relocate the asset to a more secure location ensuring ability to continue to service local communities. This option is more likely to be part of a wider decision to relocate communities at risk and would be taken in close collaboration with the EA and responsible RMAs. The sewer infrastructure identified at risk

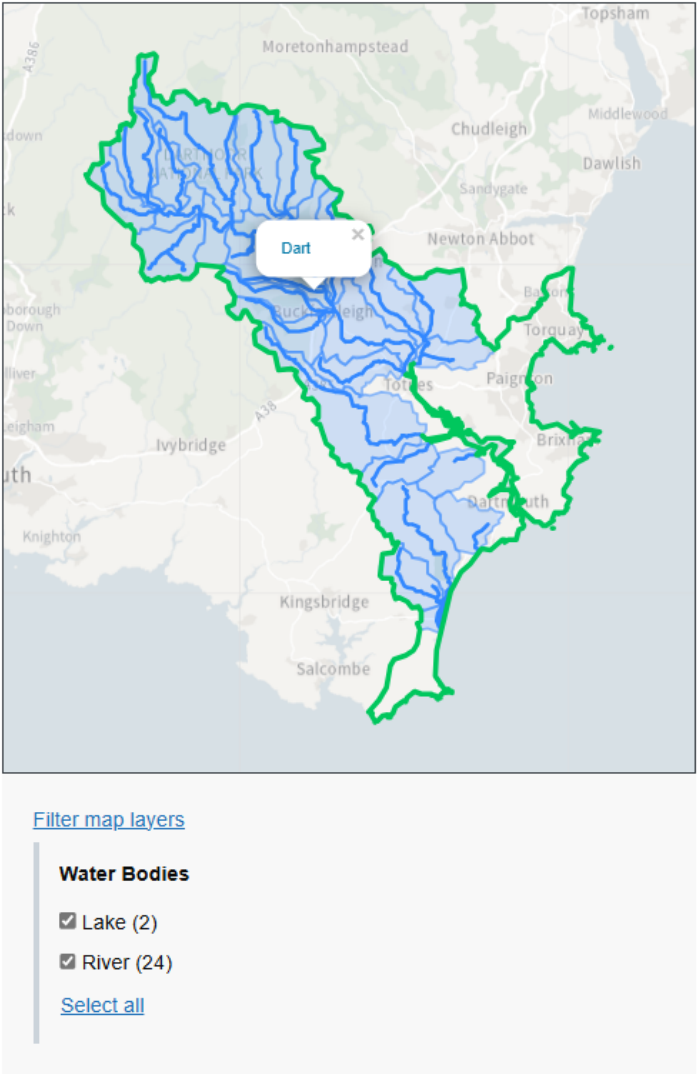
<sup>1</sup> Catchments are being continually reviewed as part of other workstreams and may be subject to change, Power Outage and OT defined in 'Our Regional Plan'

# Dart Start Bay and Torbay Operational Catchment

## Water bodies

There are 26 water bodies in this operational catchment.

- [Am Brook](#)
- [Ashburn](#)
- [Avon \(Devon Tidal\) and Sth Hams - Blackpool](#)
- [Avon \(Devon Tidal\) and Sth Hams - Slapton](#)
- [Bidwell Brook](#)
- [Blackbrook River](#)
- [Cherry Brook](#)
- [Dart](#)
- [Dart \(Tidal\)](#)
- [Dean Burn](#)
- [East Dart River](#)
- [East Webburn River](#)
- [Harbourne River](#)
- [Hems - Lower](#)
- [Hems - Upper](#)
- [Mardle](#)
- [Slapton Ley](#)
- [Swincombe](#)
- [The Gara](#)
- [Venford Reservoir](#)
- [Wash](#)
- [Webburn](#)
- [West Dart River \(Blackbrook to Swincombe\)](#)
- [West Dart River \(Lower\)](#)
- [West Dart River \(Upper\)](#)
- [West Webburn River](#)





# Tor Bay Water Body

Good ecological status



## Get Tor Bay data

- [Download water body \(Shapefile\)](#)
- [Download water body \(GeoJSON\)](#)
- [Download classifications \(CSV\)](#)
- [Download site classifications \(CSV\)](#)
- [Download investigations \(CSV\)](#)
- [Download challenges \(CSV\)](#)
- [Download objectives \(CSV\)](#)
- [Download protected areas \(CSV\)](#)

## Related links

- [Plan maps on ArcGIS online](#)
- [Flood risk management plans](#)

Protected areas

PA Name	Id	Directive	More information
South Hams	UK0012650	Special Area of Conservation	<a href="#">Natural England</a>
Lyme Bay And Torbay	UK0030372	Special Area of Conservation	<a href="#">Natural England</a>
Paignton Paignton Sands	UK24100	Bathing Water Directive	
Broadsands	UK24300	Bathing Water Directive	
Torre Abbey	UK23800	Bathing Water Directive	
Breakwater Beach (Shoalstone)	UK24500	Bathing Water Directive	
Paignton Preston Sands	UK24000	Bathing Water Directive	
Goodrington	UK24200	Bathing Water Directive	
Beacon Cove	UK23700	Bathing Water Directive	
Brixham	UKSW63	Shellfish Water Directive	
Hollicombe	UK23900	Bathing Water Directive	

Monitoring sites which have been used to classify this water body

Shows which sites were used for classification for which years within each cycle.

Monitoring Site	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<a href="#">BRIXHAM SHELLFISH WATERS</a> 70614940	2011, 2010, 2013, 2012	2019, 2016, 2015	2019
<a href="#">SEA 1.25KM EAST OF ROUNDHAM HEAD</a> 70614795	2013	2019, 2016, 2015	2019
<a href="#">SEA 1.25KM EAST OF HOL LICOMBE HEAD</a> 70614780	2013	2019, 2016, 2015	2019
<a href="#">GOODRINGTON BEACH SHELLFISH</a> 70610027		2019, 2015, 2016	2019

BETA

[Home](#) > [Environment Agency](#) > [Water Industry National Environment Programme](#)

# Water Industry National Environment Programme

Published by:

Environment Agency

Last updated:

16 June 2025

Topic:

Not added

Licence:

Other Licence

[View licence information](#)

### Summary

This dataset is the PR19 Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) .It is supported by WISER (Water Industry Strategic Environmental Requirements).

WINEP represents a set of actions that the Environment Agency have requested all 20 water companies operating in England, to complete between 2020 and 2025, in order to contribute towards

[View full summary](#)

### More from this publisher

[All datasets from Environment Agency](#)

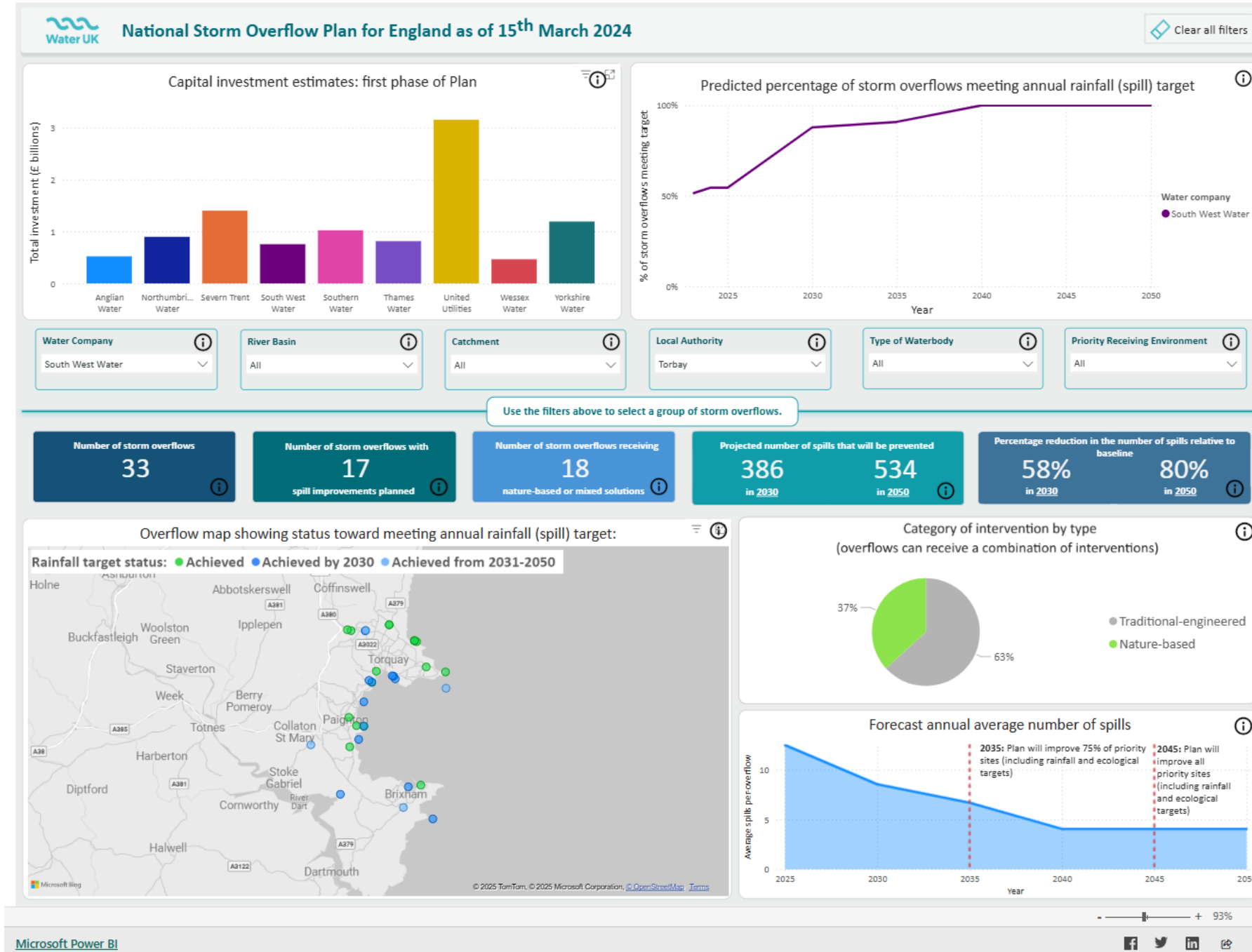
### Search

🔍

### Data links

Link to the data	Format	File added	Data preview
<a href="#">Water_Industry_National_Environment_Programme.xlsx</a>	XLSX	16 June 2025	Not available

## Interactive map





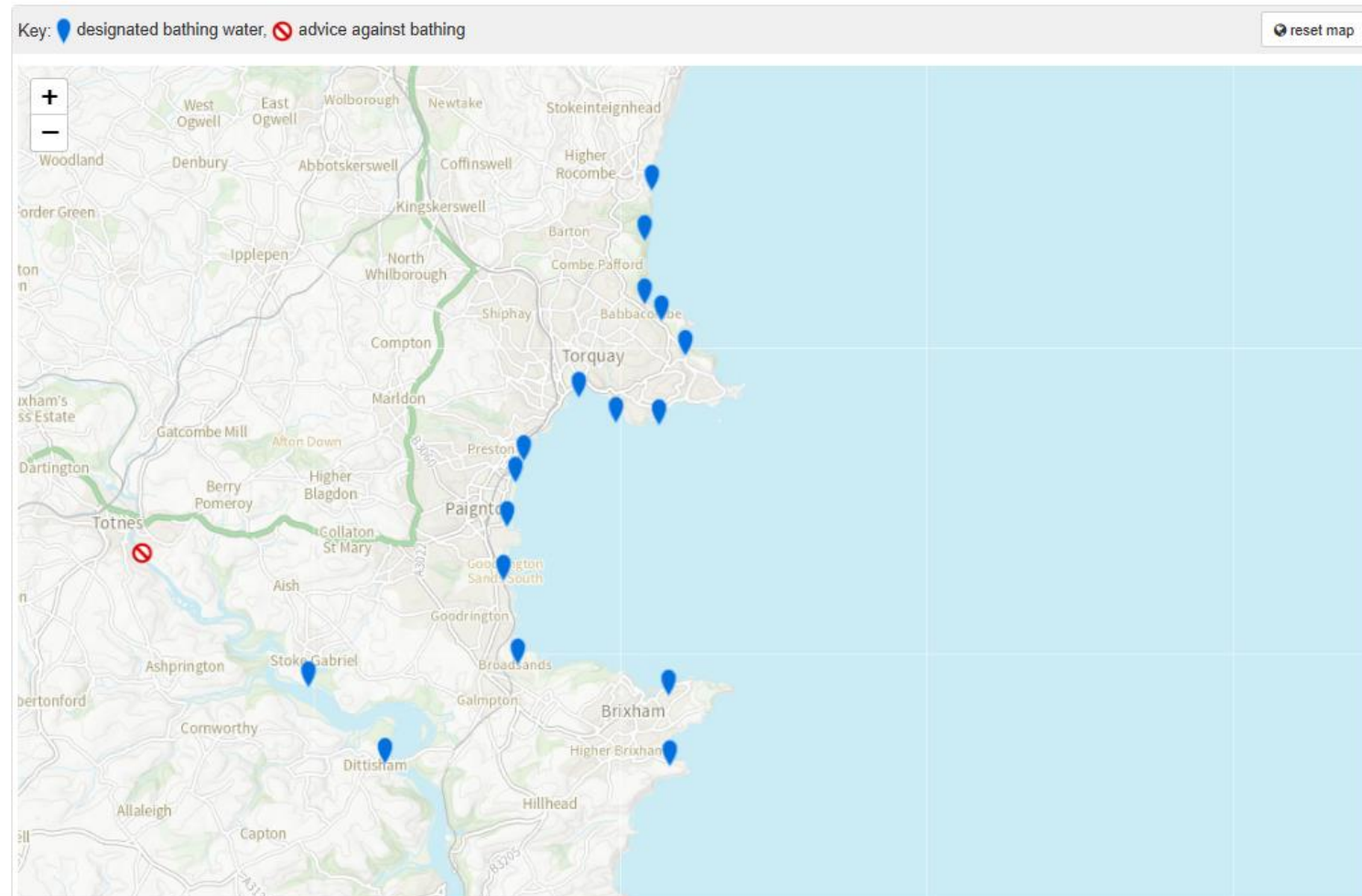
Search results undefined 1 local authorities

### Bathing waters in 'Torbay'

<a href="#">Anstey's Cove (Torquay)</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Babbacombe</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ
<a href="#">Beacon Cove</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Breakwater Beach (Shoalstone)</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ
<a href="#">Broadsands</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Goodrington</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ good ⓘ
<a href="#">Hollicombe</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Maidencombe</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ
<a href="#">Meadfoot</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Oddicombe</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ
<a href="#">Paignton Paignton Sands</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	
<a href="#">Paignton Preston Sands</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">St Mary's Bay (Devon)</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ
<a href="#">Torre Abbey</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ	<a href="#">Watcombe</a> Torbay 2024: ★★★★★ excellent ⓘ

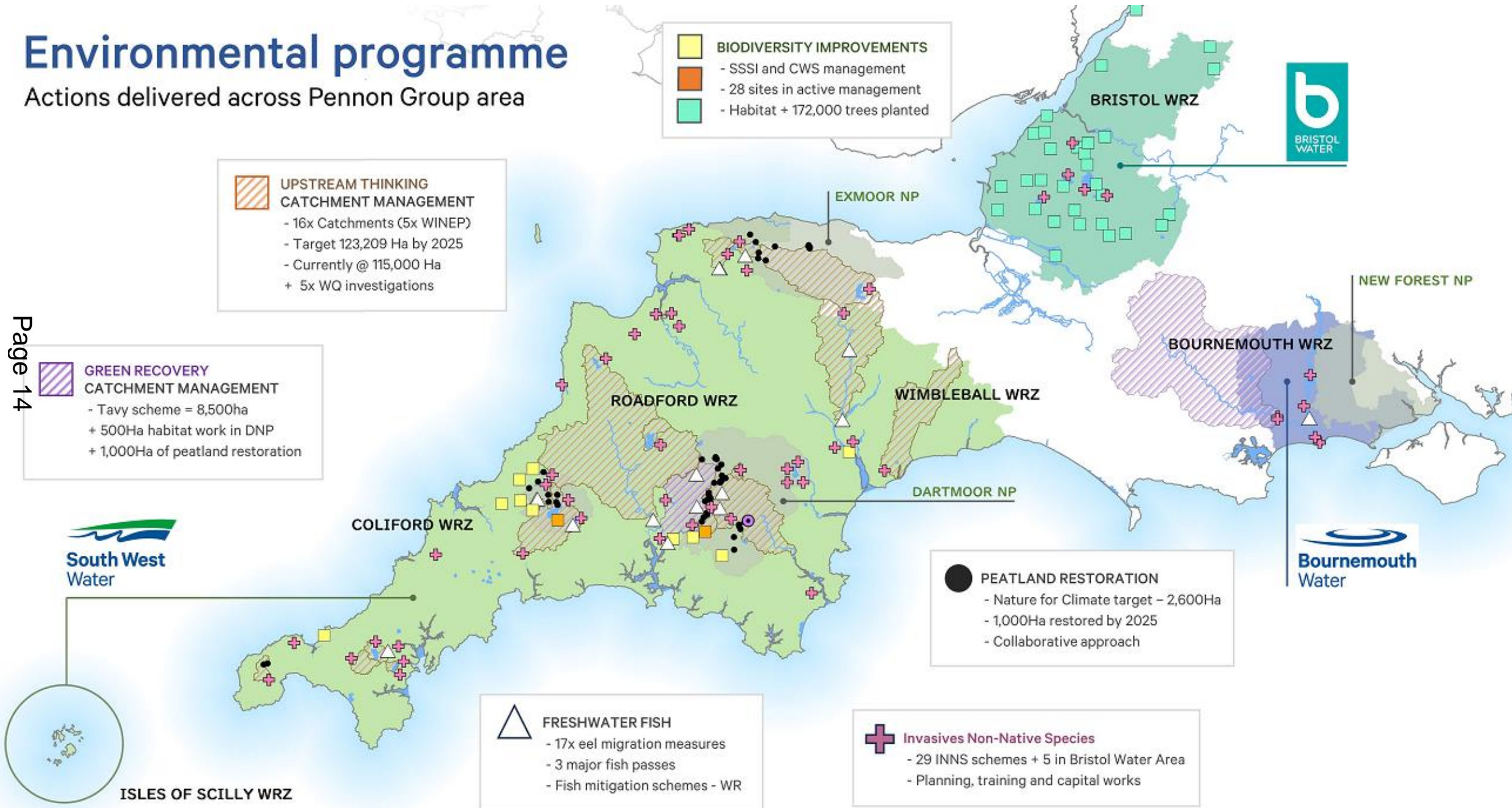
Goodrington- bathing water impacted by diffuse urban pollution, misconnections, dog faeces.

- Bathing water classification results due c. November 2025.



# Environmental programme

Actions delivered across Pennon Group area





# Household Charges Scheme 2025-26

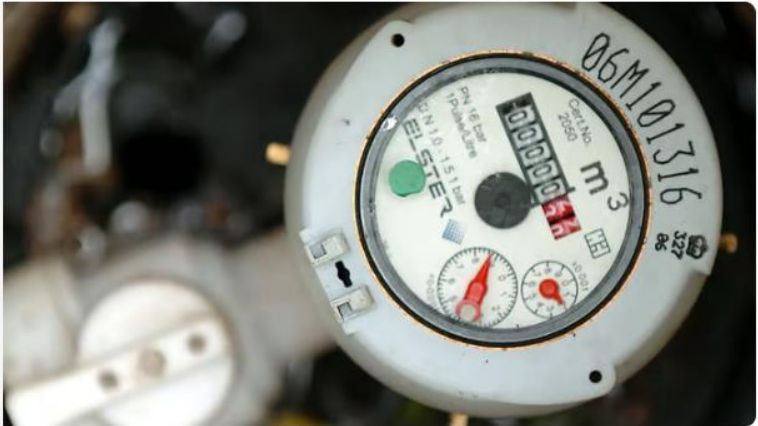


[sww-household-charges-scheme-2025-26.pdf](#)

## Lower your bill further with a meter

As you can see from the examples above, a meter can save the average family a huge amount of money every year. It also puts you in control of your bill, as you're only charged for what you use.

[Learn how to switch](#)



## Priority Services

A helping hand is sometimes just what we need, and our practical help aims to support you so you can still manage your account the way you want to. So if there's something you're struggling to do, let us know.

[Register now](#)



## Financial support

We have a wide range of different support, and we'll make sure you're matched with the right help at the right time. Just get in touch to start putting your money worries behind you.

[Get help with your bill](#)



# Your Questions & Answers



## Nitrates?

SWW believe the Environment agency are attending the meeting. If their analysis indicates a particular source of this nitrate then will then direct the most appropriate action.

Nitrates can be derived from a number of sources including agriculture, wastewater and general run off from a catchment. Hence, it depends on where the monitoring has been undertaken and the levels of nitrates. If there are concerns about the level of nitrates it would be prudent to share this information with the Environment Agency who have the strategic overview for water in England.

Regards safety, there are numerous other reasons that need to be taken into consideration beyond nitrates e.g. access, speed of flow, other hazard within a watercourse. SWW is not the responsible authority to advise on this.

For more detailed information on Nitrates, please find an Environment Agency report on line which was published in December 2024: [Nitrates: challenges for the water environment - GOV.UK](#)

## Cockington and road closures?

Regarding the Liaison Officer it would be helpful to understand the issues in more detail before we are able to respond.

Permission for roadworks are granted by the appropriate Highways Authority. In this case, this is Torbay Council. Utility providers e.g. Water companies, electricity companies, communication companies will apply to the Highways Authority to undertaken works. The Highways Authority will then assess this and make decisions on how these works will be managed regards traffic management and traffic flow. Utilities can apply for a traffic light management system but the Highways Authority may decide this does not manage the risks to the public sufficiently so may ask for a road closure and subsequent re-routing of traffic to take place.

## **South West Water Seasonal Tariff Trial Update, feedback from residents and businesses (updated as 10 October 2025).**

On this trial customers pay a lower price for their water usage in Autumn/Winter, but pay an elevated price in the Spring/Summer. ICS Consulting have been commissioned to evaluate the impact of the trials on customer behaviour through customer surveys and to model the impact on customer bills. The trials are ongoing, and our evaluation has not yet concluded. We are currently analysing the data from Year 1 and will be modelling the bill impact of Year 1 over the upcoming weeks.

Our Consultants ICS have undertaken customer surveys on their perception of the trials:

- One in eight customer believe the tariff will encourage them to reduce consumption
- 32% of customer believe it will encourage more efficient water use more broadly.
- However, only 17% perceive the trial to be fair, with concerns raised about the lack of customer choice in participation. This is consistent with the feedback received throughout the trial.

To be able to measure the full impact on bills and consumptions, trials should continue until the end of the 2026/27 charging year. We have made presentations to Ofwat, CCW and WaterUK about the progressive tariff trials and continue to be transparent with them on the outcomes for customers as we get them.

### **How many businesses asked to opt out but were unable to do so as only residents were able to opt out?**

500 businesses in total are on the Seasonal Tariff Trial, of which 75 are Torbay based businesses. Our records currently indicate 4 have contacted SWW with the notes specifically mentioning the no opt-out process, implying or stating a request for removal.

The reasons SWW made the trial compulsory was:

- Representative Data: A compulsory trial ensures that the data collected accurately reflects the general customer base, rather than a self-selecting group that might have different consumption patterns or financial circumstances.
- Informing Future Charging: The goal of the trial is to inform future, fairer, and more transparent ways of charging for water use, which requires comprehensive and unbiased data from a large group of customers.
- Understanding Consumption: To understand seasonal consumption patterns and their link to water usage, the trial needs to run for its full course and not be disrupted by opt-outs.

## How we can better position Torbay as a stronger partner with SWW and the Environment Agency?

Some ideas include:

- Convene strategic conversations on a sufficiently frequent basis between Torbay Council and major service providers to share opportunities and risks.
- Ensure the Local Plan includes the updated Government housing targets to enable investment decisions to be made in a timely manner.
- Work closely on the impacts of climate change specifically to understand our specific roles in managing surface water flooding and links to storm overflows. Case studies will be provided to outline our specific concerns.
  - The Fleet River – impacts storm overflows
  - Goodrington Boating Lake – impacts storm overflows
  - Clement Farm (aka Barton Tip) – impacts storm overflows
- Promote customer behaviour through council channels to help protect the environment as per below.
- Prompt reporting of incidents e.g. leakages, pollution promptly to ensure and effective response can be made.
- Use our dedicated Council Enquiries email address for locally elected members queries, where we can log, track and respond in a timely manner.

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## What action can residents take to support the water and sewerage network?

- Promote our 'Love you Loo' campaign i.e. only flush pee, poo and paper down the loo. By doing this it stops wet wipes entering our network which can cause blockages to occur and stop our pumps for working effectively. In some instances, this can lead to pollutions occurring and storm overflows operating. A link to our 'Love Your Loo' campaign can be found here: [Bin it don't block it | South West Water](#)
- Promote our 'Think Sink' campaign. Avoid pouring Fats Oils and Greases (or FOG) down the kitchen sink as these can cause "fatbergs" which again cause blockages and can lead to pollutions and storm overflow operation. A link to our 'Think Sink' campaign can be found here. [Bin it don't block it | South West Water](#)
- When considering building extensions which include plumbing of new toilets, sinks, washing machine ensuring they are connected to the correct pipe work. We continue to find mis-connections across our network that have occurred because of wrongly connected pipe work. These can lead to pollutions occurring. There is also a role for Building Regulations to ensure this is assessed and understood.
- Promote water efficient measures e.g. water efficient shower heads, not running the tap when brushing your teeth, installing a water butt. These will help both save water and reduce bills for those on meters as less water is used. There is lots of information here: [Save water | South West Water](#)
- Support our Tariff Trials.

## What action is SWW taking to ensure that the sewer network has capacity to deal with Torbay's intended growth and capital programme?

- SWW's Developer Services team liaise with the planning team at Torbay to assess current and future needs. These inform SWW's investment plans.
- Drainage and Waste Water Management Plans and Water Resources Management Plans provide a strategic view out to 25 years.
- The Government's revised housing targets will need to be accommodated in SWW's investment plans going forward. SWW will need to know how Torbay will be responding to this in the Local Plan.
- Where illegal connections are found these will need to be removed. We would welcome a working group to discuss how this can be achieved.
- Removing surface water ingress into our sewer network and putting this back into the environment.
- Addressing the ingress of groundwater into our network through pipe joints,
- Adopting green infrastructure options to slow the flow and reduce peak flows in our network.

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## Annual update on SWW activities, including storm overflows, background to price rises for SWW, highlights of delivery of the Storm Overflow Action Plan and a link to the Water Share Panel webpage?

- SWW charge increases can be found here in our detailed charges document here: [sww-household-charges-scheme-2025-26.pdf](#)
- Price determination regulated by OFWAT.
- A link to the WaterShare+ pages can be found here: [WaterShare+ | South West Water](#)
- All storm overflow improvements planned for our current Business Plan 2025 to 2030 are due for completion by 31 March 2030. The exception is for Cockington Lane Storm Overflow which is due for completion by 31 March 2029. These are regulatory dates set by the Environment Agency as part of the Water Industry National Environment Programme. We will liaise with Torbay Council and the Environment Agency to obtain the relevant permission and permits to complete these works. **[The Environment Agency plan to publish an interactive map of all WINEP Schemes TODAY 29 October 2025.]**
- Bathing water classification for the 2025 season will be announced by Defra in the Autumn (this is usually in November).