



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

Public understanding and engagement: action plan

A plan for developing and improving public understanding of overflows and their interaction with other water quality issues.

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Overview

We will develop and improve public understanding of overflows and their interaction with other water quality issues.

We will develop an understanding of how people relate to their rivers and environment and how they can be motivated to take action to reduce their own impacts on water quality. This communication must also highlight how customer and stakeholder behaviour directly impacts the effectiveness of the network - that sewer misuse can lead to environmental harm.

We will look to develop the package of advice and tools available regarding sewer misuse, sewer misconnection and blockage reduction.

We'll also explore developing an integrated campaign across partner organisations on wider 'Improving Water Quality' with particular reference to overflows.

We will update this action plan regularly so that we reflect progress of activities in the other plans. Each partner organisation will also continue with their day-to-day communications around their action towards better water quality.

Our commitments

Lead Organisation	Action	Why?	By When	October 2023 Update
CCW / DCWW	Increase visibility and representation	To increase transparency	Ongoing	CCW organised a Water and Climate change

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Lead Organisation	Action	Why?	By When	October 2023 Update
	at key political events to increase awareness and understanding of the opportunities and challenges presented from storm overflows.	in our work.		conference in collaboration With NIC Wales and Design Commission for Wales . More to be published here soon by end of 2023
Taskforce	We will collaborate on public engagement and a renewed sewer misuse campaign informed by the work Water UK and the industry undertake as well as learnings from other future campaign effectiveness reviews.	Educate and empower customers to play their part in preventing blockages that could cause storm overflows and river pollution in Wales.	Ongoing	Defra launched a Bin the Wipe campaign in parliament and Water UK is planning a campaign in February.
CCW	We will launch and then develop Walking with Water a project that maps and showcases walks that help people make a connection with the	Help people value water by facilitating their own connection to their environment. Help people	Complete	The Walking with Water project originally launched in October 2022 and was rebooted in June 2023 . This included created more Wales based resources:

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	water environment.	connect their use of water services and their impact the environment.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Waterfall podcast featuring two Walking with Water routes in West and South East Wales • A feature in Wales.com online • A guest blog from Afonydd Cymru on Ponsticill reservoir • An updated, bilingual Walking with Water page which links to more Welsh partners walks and resources with an activity booklet in Welsh and English.
CCW	We will facilitate an open conversation in Wales on information people want and need to understand on water company environmental performance (CCW Public Board Committee for Wales meeting 23/	Increasing water company environmental information transparency and accountability on their environmental impact to increase	Complete	Two of CCW's Public Board Committee for Wales meetings addressed how we communicate company environmental performance and considered the choices we make on delivering good water quality. CCW is running water

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	09/22).	public trust.		<p>industry workshops on environmental information transparency and we invited Welsh Water to present its real time overflow spill data sharing proposals and learn from others with similar initiatives in the industry. CCW & Welsh Water will feedback to the taskforce by February 2024. We are asking Hafren to participate in the workshop so that we can consider a Team Wales approach.</p> <p>Our consumer led information dashboard research indicated the public wants date on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of pollution incidents • Impact of sewage spills
CCW	We are setting up a Citizens Forum for England and Wales	Understand what information	Complete	A forum has been established and meetings will be

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	to co-create action (plans) that help change behaviour, which impacts the environment.	and action we need to help people play their part in minimizing their environmental impact when using their water services at home.		arranged to assess customer's views.
CCW	We are preparing as series of environment focussed podcasts and will explore a river water quality focussed one.	Help people value water by facilitating their own connection to their environment. Help people connect their use of water services and their impact the environment.	Complete	Since it launched in summer 2022 CCWater's WaterFall podcast has 56 episodes with engaging content on environmental impact reduction. Episodes #45 and #36 present stories and initiatives in Wales
DCWW	Public engagement campaign about sewer litter and misuse – Stop the Block.	To increase understanding of the role everyone can play in	Complete	The latest round of Stop the Block campaign activity has been launched.

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		addressing water quality issues.		
DCWW	Promotion of interactive web-based overflow map being taken forward within associated action plans.	To improve people's understanding of storm overflows and give greater transparency on spills and impact from storm overflows.	Complete	Map showing 2021 and 2022 data is now available.
HD	As part of River Pledges, we will work with community groups and organisations such as Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust to care for rivers and further address issues across our region. We will clean and restore rivers and riverbanks across our region, utilising our Community	Help people value water by facilitating their own connection to their environment. Help people connect their use of water services and their impact the environment.	Complete	Get river positive

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	Champion volunteers in conjunction with Glandŵr Cymru.			
NRW	We will continue to report the Annual Water Companies performance adding an assessment of storm overflows as part of the reporting cycle.	To increase transparency in our work.	Complete	<p>We published our annual performance reports for Dŵr Cymru and Hafren Dyfrdwy in July 2023, including an analysis of EDM data.</p> <p>In August we also published our first annual spill data report setting out our current regulatory position on storm overflow spill data for 2022. This also included details of current and future actions on our regulation of storm overflows.</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales Reports.</p>
NRW	Look to strengthen our water quality communications through the secondment of a	To develop and improve public understanding of overflows	Complete	<p>NRW have recruited a dedicated WQ communications officer.</p> <p>In August we published</p>

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	Comms Officer to work on specifically on Water Quality communications.	and their interaction with other water quality issues.		<p>a stakeholder bulletin providing key updates from Taskforce members against the actions plans. There are plans for further updates to follow.</p> <p>We are now preparing a blog which will discuss the use of overflows, how we are changing our regulation of overflows, and how householders can help to reduce pipe blockages.</p>
Taskforce	Explore the development of an integrated comms campaign around wider water quality issues.	To develop and improve public understanding and demonstrate action.	Complete	The first edition was published August 2023. A communique will be published quarterly updating stakeholders on delivery of Taskforce actions. Subsequent editions will include targeted content to improve public engagement.
Welsh Government	Publication of storm overflow action plans.	To increase transparency in our work.	Complete	Action Plans are live and available on the Welsh Government website.

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		To highlight the actions underway or planned within the action plans.		Environmental regulation of overflows: action plan

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