



**South West
Water**



WaterFit

Update May 2023



WaterFit one year on

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Introduction

We want everyone in the South West to feel confident about the water at their favourite beach, river or lake. And to know we are genuinely committed to improving water quality and reducing the use of storm overflows – a symbol of unacceptable practices in the water industry.

That's why in April 2022 we launched WaterFit.

WaterFit is the next stage in our environment strategy, **going further and faster** to protect and enhance the South West's waters for future generations, with a **£330m of investment** over three years and focused on **protecting our 860 miles of coastline and rivers.**

One year on **we have made good progress** on the six pledges underpinning WaterFit. **We know there is much more to do**, but the improvements we have made show what we can achieve in the years to come.

What did we set out to achieve?

When we launched WaterFit we set out 6 key pledges with targets and goals to achieve. These pledges allow us to monitor our progress and let our customers and stakeholders know if we're keeping our promises.



#1 Nurturing healthy rivers and seas



#2 Putting nature on everyone's doorstep



#3 Creating and restoring habitats



#4 Inspiring our local champions



#5 Creating a sustainable future



#6 Putting people in control



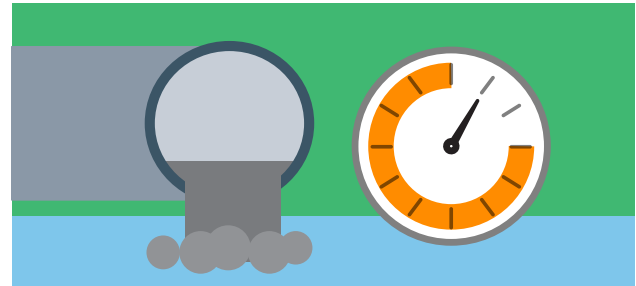
WaterFit

Highlights at a glance



Our cleanest ever sewage treatment works

We achieved our best ever wastewater treatment works compliance, with performance improving to 99.4% meeting the Environment Agency's strict standards.



100% of overflows monitored

All our storm overflows are now fitted with monitoring systems (Event Duration Monitors) – a year ahead of schedule.



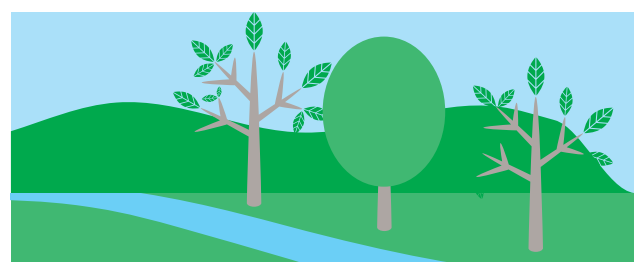
Pollution reduced

Pollution incidents were down 30% last year, and 50% over 2 years – our lowest ever level.



100% of our bathing waters passed EA standards

All of our regions' bathing waters met the stringent Environment Agency standards, up from 28% in 1991 – achieved through our improved sewage treatment and reduced spills.

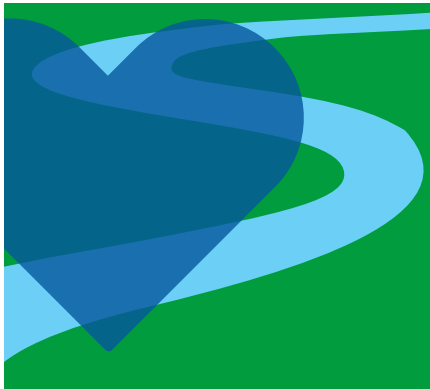


220,000 trees planted

We've planted 220,000 trees to support river health and create new wildlife habitats. Well ahead of our 2025 commitment.

Progress update

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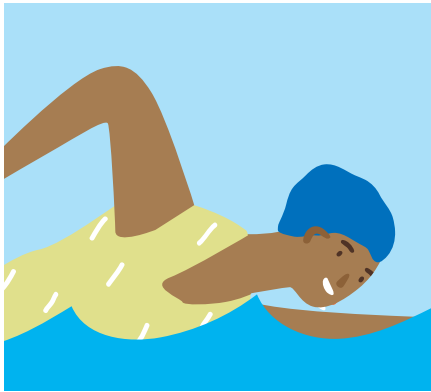


#1 - Nurturing healthy rivers and seas

Our region is known for its beautiful coastline and beaches. We need to look after our rivers and seas and take steps to improve water quality. Pollution incidents are at the lowest they've been in generations, but there are still too many. Tackling the root causes of the remaining incidents is key to protecting our waters for the long-term.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Reduce our impact on rivers by 2025, by one third as part of putting forward plans to target zero harm.	Improved compliance of our wastewater treatment works, to our best ever performance, and investments to reduce nutrients from our rivers continues, with 2 schemes delivered in the last year.
Reduce spills from storm overflows to an average of 20 per year per overflow by 2025.	Storm overflow spills for 2022 reduced from 39 to 28 – ahead of our trajectory of 20 on average to 2025 – through upgrades to 5 treatments works and investment in additional storage at 18 sites.
Maintain our excellent bathing water quality standards, all year round, so that everyone can enjoy our 860 miles of coastline, whatever the time of year.	100% bathing water quality standards for the second year running. Reduction in number of storm overflow spills at beaches by 50% with 75% reduction in duration.
Deliver zero serious pollutions by 2025 and target a year-on-year reduction in all pollutions.	Overall pollutions reduced by one third, and by 50% over 2 years as we target year on year reductions. Serious category 1 and 2 pollutions reduced from 8 to 2.

Progress update May 2023

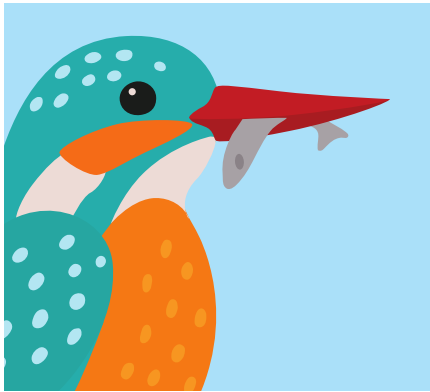


#2 Putting nature on everyone's doorstep

Our customers regularly use our region's beaches, rivers, lakes and reservoirs for recreational purposes including swimming, surfing and enjoying the natural environment. Improving water quality, boosting nature, and providing readily accessible recreation spaces for our customers helps to improve their physical and mental wellbeing, and is one of our key priorities.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Make bathing water accessible, less than an hour's drive, for 100% of our residents and visitors.	100% of beaches met environmental standards, making bathing water accessible to all – with less than an hour's drive for 100% of our residents and visitors.
Provide access to our 40 inland lakes and reservoirs, so that local communities can continue enjoying them for health and recreation.	We provide access to all 40 inland lakes whenever the weather permits safe and secure access – customers and visitors alike can enjoy for recreation and health.
Achieve the region's first bathing quality river, using learnings from our current pilots on the rivers Dart and Tavy.	Dart and Tavy steering group and investments on track.

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#3 Creating and restoring habitats

We work with local farmers and landowners to create more sustainable farming practices and reduce nutrient run-off and pollutions into our rivers and streams. We use a variety of nature-based plans, such as tree planting and peatland restoration which have wide benefits for natural habitats and also flood prevention.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Stop pollutants from 120,000 hectares of regional farmland getting into rivers and seas by 2025, working with local partners.	Our Upstream programme is ahead of target with 107,735 hectares delivered.
Restore an additional 1,000 hectares of peatlands by 2025, to create new habitats, improve river quality and reduce flooding.	Peatland restoration on track as part of our Green Recovery investment on Dartmoor, with one third delivered in the first year.
Plant a quarter of a million trees by 2025, to help combat climate change, support river health and create new wildlife habitats.	220,000 trees planted, ahead of our commitment to plant at least 250,000 by 2025.

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#4 - Inspiring our local champions

We passionately support local communities working to improve the health of our rivers and bodies of water. We believe it is essential to provide education on sustainable water use, through outreach programmes in schools and the local communities.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Donate 25% of our Community Fund to local groups that protect river and sea health.	Donations to 22 local communities that share our passion for rivers and seas – over one third of all donations.
Launch our WaterFit Warriors programme, to inspire thousands of water quality champions in schools and communities across the region.	WaterFit Warriors launched through our school education programme.
Share progress with our customers through our unique WaterShare+ scheme at quarterly public meetings and our annual Customer AGM.	We have provided regular updates on our environmental performance to our WaterShare+ panel - and will share our annual WaterFit update at the customer Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July.

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#5 - Creating a sustainable future

We are campaigning for measures to ensure only the 'Three Ps' – paper, poo and pee, go down the drains. Flushed wet wipes and other objects combine with fats and oils in our sewers causing blockages, flooding and pollution – this is a particular problem in tourist areas. We aim to provide education for customers and visitors to the South West on preventing blockages and reducing stress on our sewer systems.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Work collaboratively on the building of new developments in our region, to help us manage our network.	Building partnerships to better manage our network.
Back the ban on non-flushable or plastic-containing wet wipes, to help prevent blockages.	Supporting the call for a ban on non flushables – and responding positively to the ongoing consultation by Defra on plastic-based wipes.
Work with our 10 million visitors, and 3.5 million customers, so they all understand the important role they play in protecting our region, through our Love Your Loo campaign.	Engaging customers and visitors alike on priorities and sustainable behaviour – through our business as usual and future planning engagement processes.

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#6 - Putting people in control

We know how important it is to be transparent about our impact on the environment. This means providing our customers with real-time information on river quality, our treatment works and storm overflows, so they can see the change we are delivering and make informed decisions when using our waters recreationally.

Pledge Commitment April 2022	Progress update May 2023
Work with partners to provide water quality information for residents and visitors, making it easily accessible on our website by the end of 2023.	Our WaterFit Live interactive map launched in March 2023. This will expand to near-real time on all our monitors including rivers.
Help people understand river health, by sharing real-time river water quality information.	Launched our new stakeholder forum – to foster working relationships with partners across the region.
Provide 100% monitor coverage at our treatment works and on our storm overflows in 2023.	Monitors installed on 100% of our overflows, ahead of our December 2023 commitment, and over 1,440 sewer depth monitors installed to ensure we put our people in control.

Next steps

WaterFit is our three year programme to protect rivers and seas to 2025. One year on we have delivered significant changes, with over 50 initiatives across our region. Many of these have only recently been installed, and we have not seen the full benefits of them yet, but they will provide substantial improvements in water quality for the future.

Over this coming year we will continue to deliver WaterFit, focused on:

- Tackling the higher impacting overflows using our newly installed monitoring systems and employing the latest technologies.
- Continuing our programme of investment to improve combined storm overflows, sewage pumping stations and sewage treatment works – ensuring they are future proofed and meet the new standards of the Government's Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan.
- Delivering customer engagement and improving transparency through our WaterFit Live programme, and customer engagement initiatives such as 'Love Your Loo' and 'Your Beach, Your Say, Our Investment'.
- Supporting new development and growth in the region, while improving river water quality, by delivering 'Nutrient Neutrality' and 'WINEP Phosphorous Removal' schemes.