

Suggestions for completing the WRSE consultation

Go to wrse.uk.engagementhq.com

You need to register to take part in the consultation. In '**Organisation**' enter either '**Private individual**' or '**Community organisation**'. You will be sent an email with a 4 number code to enter to verify your registration.

Some of the questions are not relevant to us, some are very important. Please see the bullet points to give you ideas for answering each question below. Please try and personalise your response in your own words, emphasising those points that are most important to you.

Q1 and 2: Please tell us about the type of organisation you represent

- Either choose Community group or select '**Other**' and enter '**Private individual**' or '**Resident of Steventon**' (Or Drayton or wherever) in the box below.

At this stage you can save and come back later, but once you start on Qn 3 you can't save until Qn 24! You should be able to get everything done in 30 minutes with this pdf.

Q3. Abstraction reduction to protect the environment is likely to be the single biggest driver of investment in water resources over the next 25 years. Do you agree with our approach to establishing the appropriate level of abstraction reduction required across the South East England? Please explain your answer.

- No, absolutely not.
- Your abstraction estimate is far higher than that quoted by Chalk Streams First or the recent report sponsored by DEFRA. These figures suggest 150 MI/d rather than your 300 MI/d. Why are you so far out?
- Abstraction reductions should be started as soon as possible. Why can't the Severn Thames Transfer, Grand Union Canal and other schemes be implemented much more quickly to support this?

Q4: We'd like to hear your views on how we prioritise where abstraction is reduced.

Please score the following criteria from 1 to 7 - with 1 being the least important and 7 being the most important.

Normally these sorts of questions only let you use each number once. This doesn't seem to do that. We disagree with this attempt to force you to prioritise some issues over others - several are equally important. Feel free to use your own numbering if you feel strongly about certain issues. Otherwise use ours.

Q4. Prioritise upper catchments, because headwater ecologies are the most vulnerable and the benefits to flow should improve the whole catchment.

- 7

Q5. Prioritise catchments where the impacts on flows are the most severe.

- 7

Q6. Prioritise catchments where there is the highest degree of certainty that abstraction reduction will restore flows and deliver environmental improvement.

- 7

Q7. Prioritise catchments where people have the most unrestricted access to rivers and streams.

- 2 (Because we want all catchments restored)

Q8: Prioritise catchments where nature will benefit most, even if public access is restricted.

- 7 (Because restoring flows is more important than access)

Q9: Focus abstraction reductions on a smaller number of catchments but fully address the issues they face.

- 2 (Because we want them to restore all catchments)

Q10: Focus on a wider range of catchments and partially address their abstraction issues

- 7 (But enter the comment below in box 11.)

Q11: Are there any other factors that you think should be considered as we prioritise where abstraction could be reduced in the future?

- These questions are unreasonable. I want you to restore all catchments and quickly. You have over abstracted and destroyed the environment for far too long.
- Please work with organisations such as 'Chalk Streams First' to prioritise and give the best results as quickly as possible.
- Why don't you explain how water that flows in these restored rivers and streams can be extracted from the Thames downstream?

Q12: We have assessed the future water needs of the other sectors that don't rely on the public water supply provided by water companies.

Do you agree with our assessment?

Please explain your answer.

- No. I want to see a WRSE higher level board that has all sectors as equals.
- Many sectors are stakeholders yet have no say in major decisions which are taken solely by the water companies (as explained on the WRSE website). I want all sectors to work together to provide a water solution for the southeast that works for everyone, not just the water companies. The interconnectedness of all water sources means you cannot act in isolation.
- See the WRE structure as an example of how it should be.

Q13: We've described our adaptive planning approach and the scenarios we've included in our adaptive planning pathways.

Do you agree that we have planned for the right scenarios in each of the pathways, with a wide enough range for each of our key challenges, though our adaptive planning approach?

Please explain your answer.

- No
- RAPID asked for an adaptive plan that could be scaled up or down or moved backwards or forwards. You have chosen a plan that is fixed until 2040 and cannot be altered before then. This makes no sense and isn't what was asked for.
- Why is the start of the major Severn Thames Transfer scheme delayed so that it doesn't deliver until 2040? Start it at the earliest opportunity, ie. in 2025.
- The scenario chosen for the first period until 2040 is almost worst case, with no option to downscale. Your population and housing plans are simply unbelievable. Why have you made no attempt to choose a most likely option, particularly in the short term, which should be the easiest period to predict?
- You will end up building infrastructure that isn't needed at vast cost to customers.

Q14: Do you support our approach to treat each pathway as equally likely and not choose a core pathway beyond 2040?

Please explain your answer

- No
- Use the output of your studies to choose a most likely pathway, using principal or most likely projections where available.
- Develop small and medium scale schemes that can be scaled up if you have underestimated or scaled down or dropped if you have overestimated.
- I also disagree that you have chosen what is almost the worst case set of scenarios between now and 2040. This approach risks investing in very cash and carbon expensive projects that are not needed.
- If your plan was adaptive it would cope with changes in demand - up or down.

Q15: Do you have any other comments on our approach to addressing the challenges that are facing South East England?

- How can you use a population projection that assumes a growth in the southeast greater than ONS assumes for the whole of England? It makes no sense and discredits the whole plan you have produced. If these figures are so obviously wrong, how can we trust anything you are telling us?
- Why do you delay the Severn Thames Transfer, which by your own figures could be available 6 years earlier in 2034?
- An earlier Severn Thames Transfer and an extra recycling plant would mean you don't have to rely on drought orders until 2040

Q16: Reducing the demand for water through leakage and water efficiency activity contributes to more than half of the total amount of water needed in the first 15 years of the emerging plan. The balance then shifts to include a greater reliance on supply side solutions, particularly in the more challenging future scenarios.

Water companies are committed to delivering these reductions, but they are reliant on customers making sustained reductions in their water use over the long-term.

**Do you think our plan strikes the right balance between demand and supply solutions and the risks associated with delivery of such solutions?
Please explain your answer.**

- The current plan on leakage is inadequate and ignores the fact that Thames Water is so much worse than all the other water companies. By the time they have reduced their leakage by 50%, they will still only be at the level that most companies are at now. This is not good enough
- Why does Thames Water's leakage plan stop by 2050? It needs to be continued until they are at the industry average. You can't keep making the point that this is the most water stressed region, while watching water pour away through leaks.
- Other regions in your webinars reported much better results in driving down individual water use, why are you so bad at this. What lessons are you taking from other regions?
- Your webinars stated that most customers have low consumption figures already but that a few customers were using very large amounts. What action are you taking to incentivise these people to act responsibly? Why aren't you raising this as an issue with government and regulators?
- Why don't you have a scheme that penalises individuals who use unreasonable amounts of water?

Q17: The plan assumes that the Government will introduce new policies that will support more efficient use of water across society - through labelling of water-using products by 2024, introducing a minimum standard for all water using products by 2040 and tightening the water efficiency requirements within the Building Regulations for new homes by 2060.

**Do you support these interventions and the timing of their introduction?
Please explain your answer.**

- Yes, but they need to be done much more quickly
- Previous policies were watered down by the house-building lobby. If we are in a climate emergency, we need to introduce these measures much more quickly.
- Water companies should be lobbying against unconstrained supply of water. Developments should only be permitted where water and sewerage can be provided without either environmental damage or unreasonable increases in existing customer's bills.

Q18: Do you think it is appropriate for Temporary Use Bans and Non-Essential Use Bans, that reduce demand for water further during droughts, to be used as options in this regional plan?

- No
- The idea of improving resilience was that you do something about it and soon. Your plan seems to be business as usual until 2040 and deliberately delays the introduction of schemes that could provide extra water more quickly. This is unacceptable.
- Bring forward schemes that can be implemented quickly (including transfers into the area and desalination) so that we are protected more quickly

Q19: Do you agree with the mix of options that provide new water supplies for the region within our plan - reservoirs, desalination, water recycling, new transfers, improved abstraction from groundwater storage and ASR schemes? Do you think that some options should feature more or less in our plan to secure future water supplies?

Please explain your answer.

- No
- Why has Thames Water dropped desalination as an option.
- The reservoir comes at a massive environmental, carbon and cash cost. It should be dropped, and alternatives found that don't destroy the environment/planet and are affordable.
- The reservoir is not adaptive or flexible and brings no new water into the area. It is not resilient in the event of a 1:500 drought.
- More, water transfers, recycling/reuse/desalination. Less, reservoirs and environmental destruction.
- Oxfordshire Council believes there are other sites for reservoirs that wouldn't have such a disastrous effect on communities. Why aren't you listening to them?

Q20: Do you support the use of new, potentially long pipelines to move water around the region?

- Yes, it should be done sooner and also connected to adjoining regions so that we have a proper water transfer network that can bring water into the region.
- I do not however, agree with transfer of water out of the Thames valley to Southern Water. You argue that the Thames Valley is the most stressed part of the most stressed region, then propose to transfer water out of it. This is nonsense.

Q21: We have identified where water companies might investigate a number of new, more innovative nature-based solutions to improve the region's water catchments.

Whilst these options can provide multiple benefits, the fact they are still relatively new can make it more difficult to be certain of the benefits that will be delivered and the return on investment. Do you agree that we should promote new, more innovative nature-based solutions in our plan to develop a better understanding of their future value and role in delivering water supplies and wider environmental improvements?

- Yes. I don't understand why you aren't making more of technological and environmentally sustainable solutions.

Q22: Do you support our approach to stop using the majority of Drought Orders and Permits - only continuing to use a limited number during droughts until we achieve one in 500-year drought resilience, and stopping their use after 2040, unless we experience a drought more severe than a one in 500-year event?

- No. I do not support your overall approach. You do not have to rely on Drought Orders for 1 in 500 year resilience until 2040 if you have the correct plan.

- You should plan options that provide resilience before 2040. This would be possible by 2035 if you did not deliberately delay the start of the STT (or if you chose more Recycling and Desalination).
- There may be an argument to retain water restriction measures if it is shown that 1:500 cannot be achieved in an environmentally or cost-effective way. Otherwise, you spend a lot of customers money at huge environmental cost, building infrastructure that will never be used.

Q23: Overall, do you agree that the emerging plan, which presents the most cost-efficient adaptive planning solution, should be used as the basis to further develop our draft best value regional plan?

- No
- You provide no cost data to support your plan
- You provide no environmental assessments to support your option choice
- Environmental and carbon cost issues are an important part of the process that seems to be ignored
- You are confusing cost-efficient with best value, which includes all factors under consideration.
- Your plan is not adaptive before 2040, so it is not adaptive.
- Start again, using most likely outcomes rather than the nearly worst-case scenarios.

Q24: Finally, do you have any other comments about our emerging regional plan? If so, please give more details below.

- At the moment, the plan is not fit for purpose and very disappointing. If you are unable to formulate a sensible plan, please step aside.
- You need to empower stakeholders and include them at board level on WRSE
- This looks like a plan designed by private water companies for the benefit of private water companies