

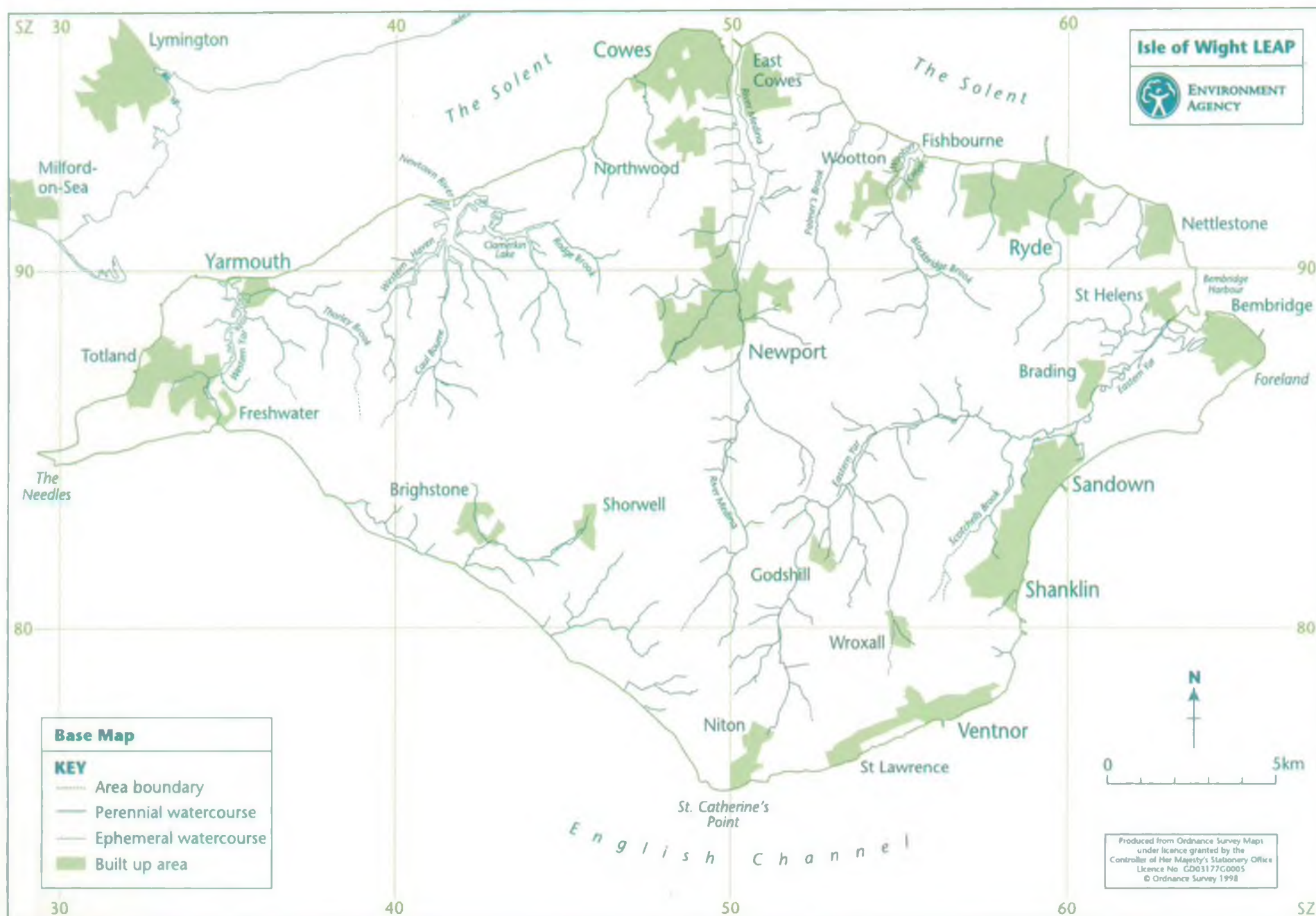
local environment agency plan

ISLE OF WIGHT
JANUARY 2000



**ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY**

Catchment Overview



Foreword

Welcome to the Local Environment Agency Plan LEAP for the Isle of Wight.

The fundamental objective of the LEAP process is to involve all interested parties in working with the Agency in planning for the future well being of the local environment, ensuring decisions on the future management of the LEAP area are based upon a range of views from interested parties. As a result, this document has been produced after public consultation following the launch of the Consultation Draft in March 1999. We are grateful to those people who responded to the draft document. Their comments, and the prioritisation carried out by the AEG have enabled us to evaluate the issues raised in the original report and refine them into an action plan framework. This sets out the work that the Agency intends to carry out in the catchment in partnership with others over the next 5 years. Actions identified in the plan will be monitored and progress reviewed annually.

Many of the issues in this plan cannot be resolved by the Agency alone and are over and above the statutory duties of the Agency. This highlights the need for co-operation bringing together the complementary responsibilities, objectives and resources of different groups. The work of the Agency is increasingly being implemented through partnerships as it becomes recognised that we can achieve more by working together.

I hope you will find the LEAP interesting and informative. I am convinced that the implementation of the actions in this LEAP will lead to improvements in the environment of the Isle of Wight in this new millennium.

If you have any comments or wish to become involved in addressing the issues raised we would like to hear from you.

Thank you for your involvement in the LEAP process.

Peter Quarmby

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Manager
January 2000

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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1 INTRODUCTION

This Action Plan is the third stage in the LEAP process for the Isle of Wight (shown in map 1), following on from the Consultation Draft and Environmental Overview which were published in March 1999. The plan sets out a programme of actions which the Environment Agency and partner organisations intend to carry out over the next five years, to protect and enhance the local environment. Progress against the plan will be monitored and reported annually.

1.1 Role of the Environment Agency

The Agency has wide-ranging responsibilities to protect and, where necessary, improve the environment in England and Wales. In carrying out our work, the Agency is guided by our duty to protect the environment in a way that works towards achieving sustainable development. This involves meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

1.1.1 The Agency's vision is:

A better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations.

Our aims are to:

- achieve major and continuous improvements in the quality of air, land and water;
- encourage the conservation of natural resources, animals and plants;
- make the most of pollution control and river basin management;
- provide effective defence and warning systems to protect people and property against flooding from rivers and sea;
- reduce the amount of waste by encouraging people to re-use and re-cycle their waste;
- improve standards of waste disposal;
- manage water resources to achieve the proper balance between the country's need and environment;
- work with other organisations to reclaim contaminated land;
- improve and develop salmon and freshwater fisheries;
- conserve and improve river navigation;
- tell people about environmental issues by educating and informing;
- set priorities and work out solutions that society can afford.

LEAPs will help to contribute to the principle of sustainable development through integrated environmental management and improvement. They will also play a key role in;

- promoting openness and accountability,
- developing liaison and partnerships with key groups,
- educating the public on local environmental issues,
- tackling issues and establishing an action plan for managing and improving the environment of the local area over a period of five years.

This document therefore is part of a process that will enable a shared vision to be developed, along with a strategy for the area's management.

1.2 Strategic Environmental Management

The Agency recognises that environmental problems invariably need to be dealt with together. To achieve this, we have adopted an integrated approach to understanding, managing, regulating and improving air, land and water. The Agency has set out environmental goals across nine themes which have been published in 'An Environmental Strategy for the Millennium and Beyond' (Sept 1997).

The nine environmental themes which will be delivered at a local level through LEAPs are:



addressing climate change



regulating major industry



improving air quality



managing waste



managing our water resources



delivering integrated river-basin management



conserving the land



managing freshwater fisheries

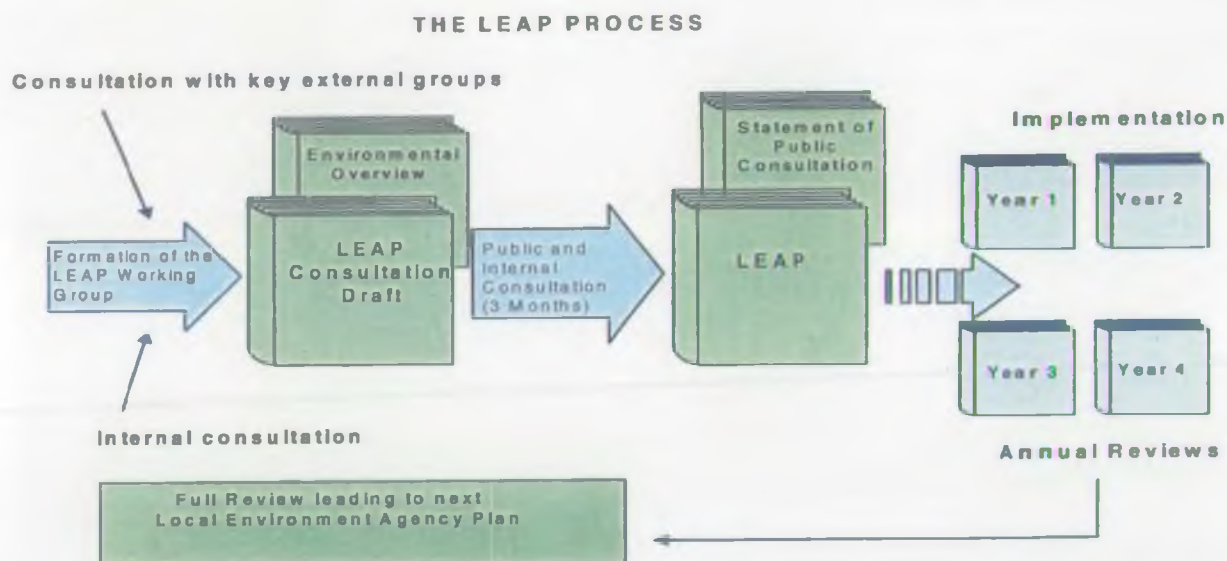


enhancing biodiversity

1.3 The Local Environment Agency Plan (LEAP) Process

Each LEAP takes a long term view of the local environment and sets out a five year plan of action for solving local issues. Consultation Draft reports covering all parts of England and Wales have now been published, but this is only the first milestone in what will be an on-going national programme of LEAPs, which will be regularly up dated, developed and improved.

As figure 1 indicates, the LEAP process includes the production of a number of documents.



1.4 The Consultation Draft

The Isle of Wight Consultation Draft, concentrated on the prioritisation of environmental issues derived from the factual description and analysis of the local environment. By looking at the impact of stresses on its state, it identified options for action necessary to restore/improve the local environment.

1.5 The Environmental Overview

The Overview provides the background environmental information, which supports the Consultation Draft. It is a very useful educational tool for schools and colleges and outlines how the individual issues and actions were selected for inclusion in the Consultation Draft.

1.6 The Statement on Public Consultation

This summarises the responses received to the Consultation Draft. It has been sent to all those who made comments, and to the members of the Islands Area Environment Group (see below). The names of those organisations and individuals who made responses are listed below.

Organisations	Individuals
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Liberal Democrats	Mark Ferguson
Solent Protection Society	H. J. Metcalf
British Canoe Union	George Howe
Royal Yacht Association	Pamela Newton
National Farmers Union - South East Region	Brian Newton
Isle of Wight Council	
Peoples Trust for Endangered Species	
Southern Water	
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	
Wight Wildlife	
Gurnard Parish Council	
Cowes Town Council	
The Inland Waterways Association	
Soil Survey and Land Research Centre – Cranfield University	
The Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management	

1.7 The LEAP

This document firms up the issues and actions following consultation from the draft report. This plan contains a list of actions that take account of costs and benefits, identifying timescales for delivery and partner organisations.

1.8 Annual Reviews

These monitor the progress of the LEAP actions and report on any changes in the programme. These Reviews are integrated into the Agency's internal Business Plans so resources can be considered alongside the day job to tackle the actions. Consequently, in the Southern Region we will be reviewing our LEAPs to coincide with the Business Planning cycle resulting in all the Reviews being published at the start of the new financial year. One Review document will be produced for each of the three Agency Areas i.e. Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Sussex, and Kent, with each LEAP catchment being reported upon individually within the plan.

1.9 LEAPs and the Area Environment Group (AEG)

The Isle of Wight AEG comprises of 20 members who have a broad experience and interest in environmental matters. We regard the group as fundamental in assisting us in building relationships with the local community, as it is a forum through which we seek local opinion on environmental issues. The group meets 4 times a year as a committee, and it was the AEG who prioritised the issues in the Consultation Draft and helped to advise us on the form and content of the report.

2 THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT: AN OVERVIEW

2.1 A Unique And Special Place

By virtue of its location, geology and climate the Isle of Wight has a distinctive and very attractive environment. For such a small island it is also remarkably varied, with a great diversity of landscape, flora and fauna.

The Island's special character is widely recognised by residents and visitors alike. It is also formally acknowledged at the national and international level through the system of environmental designations.

Like elsewhere however, the environment of the Island is subject to a range of pressures. These result mainly from human activity, but also from the forces of nature, which have shaped and influenced the Island over many centuries.

The following paragraphs provide a summary of the environment of the Isle of Wight.

2.2 Geology And Topography

Until well after the last ice age the Isle of Wight was part of the mainland. A major river flowed eastward along the line of what is now the Solent and rising sea levels and coastal erosion eventually breached the isthmus connecting the Needles to Purbeck. The river valley was drowned by the sea, creating a diamond shaped Island in the Solent.

A central Chalk ridge bisects the Island from east to west, terminating in the Needles rocks. A further outcrop of chalk forms the Southern Downs.

To the north, the chalk is overlain by a thick sequence of sands, clays and gravels. To the southeast, most of the chalk has been eroded to expose a varied sequence of lightly sandy soils drained by small spring-fed streams. The southerly coastline of the Island is prone to erosion and landslips, made worse by the instability of the cliffs caused by groundwater moving through the soft rocks. Whilst in Victorian times it was possible to walk down to the sea at Blackgang Chine, there is now a cliff up to 100m high, and fields, roads and properties are gradually being lost to the sea.

The topographical divisions largely follow the geology, forming distinctive areas:

- the high central ridge of chalk downs, and the Southern Chalk Downs;
- the greensand ridge;
- northern clay pastures; and
- intensively managed southern coastal plains, river valleys, estuaries and a dramatic coastline.

2.3 Hydrology, Rivers and the Coast

With the exception of a few brooks on the south coast and the Eastern Yar, all the Island's streams flow northwards. Altogether, more than fifty separate catchments drain to tidal waters. The Island's major rivers are the Medina and Eastern Yar, both of which rise as chalk springs from St. Catherine's Down at the southern tip of the Island. The Western Yar is effectively an estuary whose freshwater catchment has been destroyed by coastal erosion; an extreme example of 'river capture'.

River engineering and land drainage in the past has had a major impact on virtually all of the Island's rivers with loss of associated riverside, wetland and floodplain landscapes, damage to SSSIs and separation of wetland hydrology from the river.

The Agency plays a key role in safeguarding flood defence standards for the protection of people and property in defended areas and to the preservation of flood storage capacity in river channels and flood plains.

The Island is exposed to the full force of the English Channel and is heavily protected by sea defences. The south coast of the Island suffers particularly from coastal erosion. The northern areas of the Island suffer from flooding when meteorological conditions such as low atmospheric pressure, wind speed and direction combine with topography to produce tide levels that are greater than the defence levels. The most significant sea defence on the Island is the sea wall at Sandown and the Agency also maintains flood defences at Bembridge and Yarmouth.

2.4 Landscape, Wildlife And Cultural Heritage

The Island has a small scale, intimate landscape with a mixture of varied and distinctive landforms, diverse land cover types and often sudden and dramatic views of the sea. The varied geology, farming practices and patterns of settlement concentrated around the coast form a rich tapestry across the landscape.

The chalk downs are characterised by rolling pasture and arable land with pockets of unimproved grassland on steeper areas. Heathland/acidic pasture exists in a vale on the greensand between the two ranges of chalk downs. Dairy farming, creating lush, irregular fields bounded by mature hedgerows and coppiced woodland, dominates the northern pastures. Along the north coast are numerous harbours, creeks, salt marshes and tidal mudflats, fringed by woodland. The southern coastal plain is dominated by an intensively managed arable farmland with large open fields and few trees. The undercliff and coastal chines along the southern coastline are a particularly unusual and distinctive landscape feature.

This variety and interest is reflected in the protection that is afforded to the geology and wildlife of the Island through designation at the European and national scale, and to the landscape of the Island through designation in large part as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The Island's coast is extremely diverse and includes examples of several internationally important habitats and many nationally rare species. Key habitats include chalk grassland, ancient woodland, heathland, neutral grassland and rivers and wetlands. The Island has a large number and area of European designated conservation sites. Of the 43 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) on the Island, 20 are water dependent.

The Island also has a rich archaeological heritage, both on land and within its coastal waters. Carisbrooke Castle, famous for its donkey well, was used for many years as a secure place of exile, and included King Charles I amongst its inmates.

The popularity of the Island as a holiday destination is also a tribute to its physical environment and cultural heritage, as are the numerous references in the literary works of Keats, Tennyson and Byron amongst others.

2.5 Water Resources

The major aquifers on the Island are the Chalk, the Upper Greensand and Lower Greensand. The two largest rivers are the Eastern Yar and the Medina, from which abstractions are taken for public water supply.

The Isle of Wight has historically suffered water supply problems due to its limited surface and groundwater sources and high summer population. During the 1976 drought, the Island suffered significant unreliability in public water supplies. This was caused by low yields from groundwater and surface water sources but was compounded by the inadequate distribution system.

Supply restrictions were therefore imposed and Southern Water Authority carried out significant investment in mains reinforcement, leakage reduction and developing new sources of supply - including the Cross-Solent Main, which involves the pumping of water from the Testwood Reservoir in Hampshire.

2.6 Water Quality and Fisheries

In terms of water quality, the Island's rivers are mostly of good quality, while groundwater is of average quality. Particular stretches of rivers periodically have poor water quality, caused by specific discharges (e.g. from sewage treatment works). Water quality is difficult to maintain in the Eastern Yar, which is affected by low flows.

Tidal and estuary waters are generally of good quality. To assist in improving bathing water quality, and to conform with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Southern Water is currently undertaking major investment to provide new wastewater treatment facilities for the Island, including the 'Seaclean Wight' project. In summary, this will involve the transfer of sewage flows from a number of small treatment works on the north coast of the Island to a modified existing works at Sandown, from which treated wastewater will be discharged through a new long sea pipeline into the deep waters of the English Channel.

The small size of the Island's rivers limits their potential for coarse fishing and they are not actively fished for salmonid species. Stretches of the Medina and Eastern Yar are designated as cyprinid fisheries and are typified by species such as roach and dace. The small headwater streams of these rivers contain populations of rainbow trout.

2.7 Air Quality

Although there is little monitoring of ambient concentrations, surveys undertaken indicate that air quality on the Island is generally very good. Only minor, short-term deterioration's occur and these are believed to be mainly attributable to road traffic. Current evidence suggests that industrial sources (both on the Island and on the mainland) have very little impact on air quality. The Agency is undertaking further assessment to confirm this view.

2.8 Population And Settlement Pattern

The resident population of the Island in 1995 was some 125,000, at which time the Office of National Statistics estimated that the Island's population would rise to 129,000 by 2011. The population almost doubles in the peak of the summer holiday season. The main towns, Ryde, Newport and Cowes, are located along the coast and rivers. Transport routes follow this traditional settlement pattern, with main roads around the circumference of the Island and north-south across the middle linking Newport with Shanklin and Sandown.

2.9 Industry And Employment

The Island is mainly rural with mixed farming, although intensive horticulture predominates in the Eastern Yar valley. A small but robust industrial sector exists, notably in the aerospace sector, but tourism and the leisure industry are dominant in the Island's economy, with Cowes and the Solent having an international reputation for yachting and watersports.

2.10 Tourism And Recreation

Tourism is a major industry on the Island and the protection and maintenance of the aesthetic quality of the water environment is essential for promoting the recreational value of the Island. Attractions related to the water environment include the coast and estuaries, the coloured sands of Alum Bay, the collapsing cliffs at the Chines, and specific events of national importance such as Cowes Week. The aesthetic quality of the coastal stretches and river corridors is being improved through restoration projects, such as the Chines Project and the Eastern Yar Valley Project.

2.11 Administration

Since 1994, a unitary authority - the Isle of Wight Council - has administered the Island. There are, in addition, a number of Parish Councils. The existence of a single tier authority, and the 'self-containment' afforded by island status, should facilitate an integrated approach to environmental management.

3 REVIEW OF CONSULTATION PROCESS

This section reviews the consultation process and provides a brief summary of the responses received.

The Isle of Wight LEAP Consultation Draft was publicly launched in March 1999 when the formal 3 month consultation period began. The launch was held at the Isle of Wight Council Chambers and was attended by 45 people representing local authorities, environmental organisations, industry and recreational groups. The launch was publicised in the local press and local television covered the event prior to the launch.

3.1 Informal Consultation

The Isle of Wight Consultation Draft and Environmental Overview were produced in consultation with a number of external organisations including local authorities. Further detail on this can be found in the Environmental Overview.

3.2 Summary of Responses

The Agency distributed over 400 Consultation documents to interested parties, libraries and other organisations and received a range of written responses. The Agency would like to thank everyone who responded and commented upon the plan. These responses varied in their length and comments offered. Some consultees commented on the text and suggested inclusion of up to date / additional information. Many respondents welcomed and supported the issues and associated actions proposed by the Environment Agency.

The Agency's vision for the Island was supported by everyone who commented on it

The Agency's vision for the Island is one

- **Which continues to be renowned for its environmental character and special qualities**
- **Whose populations recognises the importance of the environment to economic and social well being**
- **Where there is an understanding of the concept of sustainable development and its application within the decision making process**

Errors and omissions were also highlighted. Although the Agency welcomes these corrections we must stress that the supporting text and maps within the Consultation Draft will not be revised until the next Consultation Draft is produced.

3.3 Future Action

It is important that the time and effort and expertise from those who responded is acknowledged and acted upon. Consequently a number of changes have been made to the issues, options and actions

following consultation which are identified in the tables in section 4. These changes are covered in more detail in the consultation statement.

We have considered the responses made and have developed the Action Plan so that there is a balance between the opinions expressed and need to ensure a workable, deliverable and feasible plan. The issues in the Consultation Draft Report have identified activities which form the basis of the Action Plan for 2000-2004.

3.4 New Topics Raised

New topics raised during the consultation process can also become part of the final LEAP. Similarly any comments raised after the production of this final LEAP can become part of the Annual Review of the plan and so make it into the Agency's business plan for the Area.

The most common item of interest raised during the consultation period was that of the fixed link and the role the Agency plays in the planning process with regard to this possibility. This is explained in more detail below.

3.5 Role of the Agency in the Planning process

Although the Agency operates within an extensive regulatory framework, it must be recognised that our actual controls in respect of development are limited. The Agency is therefore dependent upon effective planning legislation to ensure the protection of the environment and to prevent future problems arising as a result of development.

Whenever the Agency recommends specific controls, usually by the use of planning conditions and development plan policies, such advice will comply with planning guidance and not duplicate other legislation.

The Agency would liaise with the Isle of Wight Council in order to

- Advise on where proposed development may pose a risk to the public or to property from pollution and / or flooding
- Protect the environment from any adverse effects of potential development
- Wherever possible, enhance the environment in conjunction with development proposals
- Identify demands on our duties and responsibilities, including flood protection, water resource management, conservation and recreation
- Avoid unnecessary conflict between the use of planning conditions and any possible consents or licences required by the Agency

These aims will be achieved by effective liaison with the Isle of Wight Council LPA under the Town and Country Planning legislation and government planning guidance and by providing co-ordinated responses to the Isle of Wight Council LPA's on development plans and planning applications.

Inappropriate development may lead for example, to increased flooding, pollution and / or the need for additional water resources. Measures to overcome such problems can result in increased public expenditure. Without the benefit of appropriate planning controls and co-operation with LPA's, the Agency cannot require developers to

- Implement pollution prevention measures
- Regulate discharges of surface water from new developments
- Resist development in floodplains
- Prevent landowners from increasing flood risk to neighbouring land

Close co-operation and a degree of understanding between the LPA's and the Agency is essential and to mutual advantage.

3.6 Role of the Agency in the Fixed Link

The Agency does not have any direct responsibilities for road or rail transport and so its involvement in any proposal for a fixed link would be limited mainly to commenting on its effect on flood defences, pollution of watercourses and groundwater, and effect on conservation and recreational value of river valleys. The Local Authority would look at and decide upon the impacts of increased road or rail traffic, which could include increased air pollution, noise pollution, and loss of visual amenity.

The Agency already works very closely with the Isle of Wight Council regarding development. The Agency gave a seminar to all Local Planning Authorities in its area in October 1999 which was attended by Isle of Wight Council planners and local councillors. The Agency planning liaison team will continue liaison with the Isle of Wight Council Planning department.

If you need further information on the Agency's planning and development control policies please call the Planning Liaison Team on (01962) 713267.

3.7 Issues for the Isle of Wight

Issue Ranked	Issue Title	Issue Number
1	Need to ensure compliance with the EC directive on the Quality of Bathing Waters	Issue 9
2	Sustainable waste management cannot be achieved on the Island in the long term with the current levels of waste generation combined with the existing waste management infrastructure	Issue 16
3	The Island's ground and surface water resources are heavily committed to abstraction. Full exploitation of licences may result in adverse environmental effects, notably loss of biodiversity and reduced dilution of pollutants. Climate change may exacerbate the situation	Issue 3
4	The recycling of sewage sludge as a soil conditioner on agricultural land needs to be carefully monitored	Issue 8
5	Further development in low lying areas would put people and property at risk from flooding	Issue 12
6	Need to ensure that the Agency responsibilities under EC Nature Conservation Directives are met	Issue 4
7	The aesthetic quality of the Island's estuaries and coastal waters is reduced by discharges of untreated sewage and/or chemicals from boats	Issue 13
8	The need for sustainable management of landfill gas	Issue 1
9	Standards of flood defences need to be continually reviewed taking into account climate change	Issue 11
10	Additional monitoring data is required to assess the contribution to local air quality of certain emissions from industrial processes both on and off the Island.	Issue 2
11	Over-engineered rivers, particularly the River Yar, with low biodiversity value	Issue 5
12	The traditional landscape character and features of the Island's river corridors have deteriorated	Issue 15
13	Lack of adequate regulation / promotion of fisheries on the Island resulting in some unlicensed activities	Issue 7
14	The biodiversity value of Wooton Mill Pond, situated between two SSSI's and partly owned by the Agency is low	Issue 6
15	Opportunities for informal recreation associated with the Island's inland water environment are currently limited	Issue 14
Not ranked	Diffuse pollution of watercourses from developed areas and intensive agriculture	Issue 10

3.8 Prioritisation method

The issues were ranked by the AEG prior to the production of the Consultation Draft. The issues were prioritised against the following criteria.

Sustainability Public Health Legislation Biodiversity Urgency

Further detail on the ranking process can be found in the Consultation Draft.

4 ACTION PLAN

This plan sets out the work that the Agency intends to carry out in partnership with others over the next 5 years. Implementation of the plan is based upon the actions identified to address the 16 key issues that are of significance to the Isle of Wight as a whole.

The intended actions for the Agency which address each of the identified issues are presented where possible with proposed time scales, anticipated costs, Agency lead contact (the majority of the actions involve more than one function of the Agency) and the identification of potential partners. The actions identified are not matters that can be addressed by the Agency through its day to day responsibilities such as regulating water abstraction licences, issuing discharge consents and responding to planning applications. This plan represents the non routine investment by the Agency, and by others in the Isle of Wight area.

Where possible, costs have been outlined for the period covering the plan. This does not necessarily reflect the total cost of the schemes to the Agency and is sometimes an estimate to be more accurately costed later. A number of the Actions will require feasibility studies and an appraisal of options prior to work commencing. In some cases depending on the outcome of these studies further action may not be required. The document is produced in good faith recognising current priorities both within the Agency and in other organisations. As stated in the introduction, the implementation of the actions will be subject to amongst other things, availability of resources (financial and personnel). The timescales for action may vary depending on future political change and priority changes within the economic and environment sectors. Where the cost is identified as MP this means the cost to the Agency is reflected in changes to the manpower requirements. This is then reflected in a re prioritising of the role of some Agency staff.

Many of the issues are interrelated which reflects the need for integrated environmental management. Cross-referencing between issues and actions has been carried out where possible.

4.1 Environment Agency business planning process.

Actions which are taking place in year one of this plan are those which are already in the Agency's business plan for 00/01 and in the majority of cases are already underway. Actions listed under subsequent years are actions the Agency is intending to carry out but which need to be prioritised in conjunction with the Agency's core duties via the Business planning cycle.

The Agency is jointly responsible with identified organisations and individuals for implementing the actions in the plan. A number of the Actions rely on external funding and partner organisations.

The Annual Review process enables the Agency to assess progress on a regular basis and incorporate changing local and national priorities as necessary.

Each issue is accompanied by short explanatory text but please refer to the Environmental Overview and Consultation Draft for further information.

LEAPs translate the Agency's long term Environment Strategy for the millennium and beyond into action on the ground. The actions are linked to the nine environmental themes set out in the strategy.

4.2 Issues for the Isle of Wight

Issue 1: The need for sustainable management of landfill gas.


Issue 1 was ranked as the 8th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

A known cause of climate change is landfill gas, which is the product of the decomposition of organic waste within landfill sites. Whilst it contains many trace elements which give it odour, the most significant component of landfill gas is methane. Methane is a flammable, asphyxiate and powerful greenhouse gas. There are former and current landfill sites on the Island that are producing landfill gas at rates that either detrimentally affect the locality or could contribute to the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. (see also issue 17)

Only one comment was received on this issue, from the RSPB, identifying as a priority the development of a strategy to address the effects of climate change especially sea level rise. Landfill gas is a known cause of climate change which present along with rising sea levels, one of the biggest threats to the conservation of coastal biodiversity on the Isle of Wight. Threats include the coastal squeeze of intertidal habitats and saline intrusion and flooding of freshwater coastal habitats, e.g. grazing marshes.

The RSPB offers support to the Agency's commitment to address the issue of landfill gas on the island, and believes that both options for action should be pursued.

The Agency seeks to address both the cause as in this issue, and effects of climate change as in issue 12.

Actions		Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
			00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
The Agency will analyse the information on landfill gas emissions from landfill sites and prioritise sites where gas can be flared or used as a fuel to produce energy.		MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Waste licensing Team	IoWC IWSL
			This action has been identified as a priority for the Environment Protection team and has now become part of the routine day job.						
The Agency will use waste management licence conditions to set up projects with the operators of key sites to manage the enclosed flaring or energy recovery from landfill gas		MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Waste licensing Team	IoWC IWSL
			This action has been identified as a priority for the Environment Protection team and has now become part of the routine day job.						

Issue 2. : Additional monitoring data is required to assess the contribution to local air quality of certain emissions from industrial processes both on and off the Island.

Issue 2 was ranked as the 10th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group


The Isle of Wight Council's "Draft Review of Air Quality on the Isle of Wight" (1997) indicates that air quality on the Island is generally good. Studies of Nitrogen Dioxide and Benzene indicate that air quality is good. However, in the absence of a monitoring station on the Island there is only limited background data.

One comment was received on this issue from Cowes Town Council who agreed that air quality on the Island is very good, but felt that the air quality in Gurnard, Cowes and East Cowes sometimes gave cause for concern owing to the proximity of the power station and refinery near Southampton.

The Environment Agency regulates emissions to air from both of these processes. During 1998 / 9 work was undertaken to assess the dispersion of these emissions. This work showed that pollutant deposition was predominantly towards the mainland, and that very low levels (well below the relevant standards) would be experienced on the Isle of Wight. Further work on the dispersion of emissions from these sources is being carried out.

In addition, the Agency has reviewed air emissions from the Part A processes on the Island. No action points in relation to air quality were identified.

The Isle of Wight Council has the primary responsibility for carrying out statutory air quality assessments on the Island. The Agency works closely with all Local Authorities, and will continue to work with the Isle of Wight Council over the lifetime of the LEAP. In addition, the Agency will continue to closely regulate emissions to air from those industrial processes that fall within its remit.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Assessment of air quality on the island. - working with Isle of Wight Council	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	PIR team	IoWC Industry
Continued regulation of Part A process releases to air	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	PIR team	Industry

Issue 3. The Island's ground and surface water resources are heavily committed to abstraction. Full exploitation of licences may result in adverse environmental effects, notably loss of biodiversity and reduced dilution of pollutants. Climate change may exacerbate the situation.

Issue 3 was ranked as the 3rd most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group, and is combined here with Issue 4 concerning trickle irrigation from the Consultation Draft, as both are covered by the DETR's abstraction licensing review.

The Government in March of 1999 announced the results of the Abstraction Licensing Review. There are a wide range of proposals, which will strengthen protection for wildlife and important habitats, and full details can be obtained from the Agency's offices. However the main proposals that impact upon the Island are:

- All new abstraction licences will be issued on a time limited basis
- Trickle irrigation will become a licensed activity
- Licences not used for beneficial purposes within four years can be revoked by the Agency
- The Agency will continue to seek voluntary reductions where there are abstractions damaging to SACs, SPAs and SSSI, but can proceed with a programme of curtailment in cases where no agreement can be reached.
- Compensation will be ended from 1st July 2012 for losses arising from revocations or variations of abstraction licences imposed to protect the water environment.
- The Agency will produce Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) which will be separate from LEAPs and will be reviewed every six years.

The Agency's National water resources strategy is currently out for consultation. The Regional Strategy will be produced for consultation in spring 2000, and be published in December 2000. This strategy which is essential for effective water resource management, will aim to protect habitats dependent upon adequate water supply and availability.

There are sufficient licensed public water supply abstractions to meet the demand for water on the Island. This was of concern to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Liberal Democrats, and to CIWEM, but was reiterated by Southern Water in their response. To ensure that its standards of service are maintained, and to overcome the risk of an Island source failing, Southern Water continues to pump water from Testwood in Hampshire.


Water demand has been reduced through metering and the replacement of leaking pipes. The universal installation of meters has greatly assisted in the identification of leakage in consumer service pipes. Details of leakage reductions are found in a number of Agency publications.

Trickle irrigation on the Island is a large and important use of water. The abstractions are centred on the Arreton Valley, where water is used extensively for horticultural purposes. Recent voluntary abstraction returns suggest that more than 250,000 m³ is used annually and this demand is rising. The licensing review as identified earlier brings trickle irrigation under licence control. This is of considerable concern to growers who rely on trickle irrigation but may have difficulty in obtaining a licence under current policy. The NFU commented that all farmers currently using trickle irrigation should be allowed to continue to do so. The Agency will continue to determine licence applications on a sustainable basis but there will be an extended period of adjustment.

As stated above the Agency will carefully evaluate each application for trickle irrigation. This is supported by a number of consultees including CIWEM, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Liberal Democrats.

Two other comments on this topic were received, which are contradictory. The comment from Cranfield University identifies on farm storage reservoirs as suitable to store water for trickle irrigation, whereas the County Archaeology and historic environment service of the Isle of Wight council had major concerns over the building of on farm reservoirs on the Island.

With regard to on farm reservoirs on the Island the Agency manages water resources but has no direct control over changes in land use which is the role of the planning authority. Although the Agency supports the idea of abstracting water in the winter for filling reservoirs the scope for further winter storage abstractions on the Island may be limited.

Actions 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Launch water resources strategy as consultation document across the Southern Region.	Med	✓	Local Abstraction Management strategy will be produced for the Island within 6 years, although the date has not yet been identified.				Water resources	Southern Water
Introduce licensing for trickle irrigation as part of DETR licensing review.	Low	✓	The action will then become part of routine day job				Water resources	
Promote best practice irrigation techniques to improve the efficiency and sustainability of agricultural irrigation	5k	-	-	✓ 5k	-	-	Water resources	Southern Water, NFU

Issue 4: Need to ensure that the Agency responsibilities under EC Nature Conservation Directives are met.


Issue 4 was ranked as the 6th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The Island has a large number and area of European designated conservation sites. The Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA), notified under the EC Directive on Wild Birds, includes several Isle of Wight SSSIs, and has also been designated as a Ramsar Site.

The Island also contains four candidate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under the EC Habitats Directive: the Solent Maritime, South Wight Maritime; the Isle of Wight Lagoons; and Isle of Wight Downs.

The EC Habitats Directive, through the UK Habitats Regulations and Planning Policy Guidance Note 9, invests a number of responsibilities on the Agency as a 'Competent Authority' in all its capacities as an operator, regulator and influencer. In particular the Agency is required to review consents and authorisations in the light of information on their effects on conservation sites designated under the Habitats Directive (e.g. SPAs). The Isle of Wight Council identified in their comments that there is a real need to develop working relationships between the Agency and the local authority to work with English Nature in order to carry out their responsibilities as competent authorities. The RSPB also see the Agency's role as a competent body as a high priority.

The Agency has recently appointed a hydro-ecologist who will be working in the conservation team on areas identified under the habitats directive using computer modelling procedures to analyse relationships between river flows and biodiversity.

Actions 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Train Agency staff and work with English Nature to establish a framework within which to carry out responsibilities under the Habitats Directive.	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Conservation team	IoWC, English Nature
		Agency staff have now undergone training on 2 Habitats directive courses in October / November of 1999, and will continue to work closely with English Nature.						

Issue 5: Over-engineered rivers, particularly the River Yar, with low biodiversity value.


Issue 5 was ranked as the 11th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The Island's rivers have been engineered (deepened and straightened) in the past to increase their drainage capacity. This has had detrimental effects on the biodiversity of river corridors and the continuity between in-stream and marginal habitats.

Substantial work has been undertaken in the Yar Valley, particularly under the East Yar Valley Project. The Project, which forms part of Island 2000 and started in 1994, focuses on areas of the Eastern Yar river floodplain designated as SSSI. As an integrated land and water management project covering 75 sq. km (one fifth of the Isle of Wight's land surface), it aims to restore the natural river and floodplain based upon a total catchment approach.

The NFU encouraged the use of agricultural incentive schemes as long as farm incomes are not adversely affected, and the Isle of Wight Council welcomed the holistic approach to the Eastern Yar, but also identify that the Medina could benefit from a similar treatment. The RSPB also strongly support this issue, but identify the decline in traditional grazing management of wetland pastures due to agricultural intensification. They also identify that the Water Level Management Plans should properly address this. The WLMPs on the Island will be produced by the Agency on the Eastern Yar at Brading marshes, to be done by March 2000, Alverstone marshes by December 2000, and Wooton bridge, which is currently in draft.

To complete the actions from this issue the Agency is seeking to appoint a land care officer to deal with and promote diffuse pollution, ESAs, Countryside Stewardship etc, although the Agency will continue with its current level of involvement in the Eastern Yar project. The Agency's water resources section currently part funds the Eastern Yar project officer, who has around one and half years of funding left.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Work with other interests to ensure that the objectives of the East Yar Valley Project are met.	10k	✓	-	-	-	-	Water Resources	Island 2000 English Nature

Issue 6: The biodiversity value of Wootton Mill Pond, situated between two SSSI's and partly owned by the Agency is low.


Issue 6 was ranked as the 14th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

Wootton Mill Pond, which lies between the Wootton Creek and Firestone Copse SSSIs, is partly owned by the Agency. The biodiversity value of the pond is currently low, and it is considered to have an adverse effect on the two adjacent SSSIs.

The Agency is currently producing the Wootton Bridge Water Level Management Plan, which will outline the key actions and responsibilities which are required in this area.

As the Isle of Wight Council states in its response the Agency and its predecessors have been party to discussions with the council over the future of Wootton mill pond, and there are real opportunities to bring about improvement. This is supported by the comment from the RSPB, and as the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species note the pond is important for a range of conservation designations which rely upon the flow under Wootton mill bridge. However, as this issue covers a very site specific topic it does not have as high a priority as some of the other Island wide issues, and so is not programmed into the budget for this year, but will be targeted for improvement during the lifetime of this LEAP.


The improvements could as Mark Fergusson indicates in his comments allow development for Tourism and allow some pressure to be taken off the coast.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
From the WLMP identify why biodiversity value is low and undertake key actions for restoration.	10k	-	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	-	-	Con team	Joint owner IoWC

Issue 7: Lack of adequate regulation / promotion of fisheries on the Island resulting in some unlicensed activities.

Issue 7 was ranked as the 13th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

Despite the availability of high quality fishing on the Island, it is not widely perceived as an important venue for fishing. There is some evidence of unlicensed removal of eels and fish from the Island and illegal sale of fish brought in from the mainland. A fisheries officer has now been appointed specifically for the Isle of Wight.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Appoint a Fisheries Officer to work on the Island	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Fisheries Team	Fishing clubs
Raise awareness about fishing on the Island, through the production of publicity and information, drawing attention to the Agency's role and the need for licences	5k	✓ 1k	✓ 1k	✓ 1k	✓ 1k	✓ 1k	Fisheries Team	Fishing clubs
		This is part of the role of the Fisheries officer, who will work closely with the Customer Contact team and the AEG to complete this action						

Issue 8: The recycling of sewage sludge as a soil conditioner on agricultural land needs to be carefully monitored.


Issue 8 was ranked as the 4th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The recycling of sewage sludge to agriculture can represent the best practicable environmental option for sludge in many cases, but all other options must be considered (e.g. landfill and incineration) in each individual situation. Agency policy is to support the use of sludge in agriculture where this recycling route is the best option. Monitoring is also required to ensure that it is carried out in ways, and in places, that does not cause harm to the environment.

Agreement has been made such that, as a precautionary approach only treated sewage sludge will be allowed to be spread on agricultural land and a matrix drawn up detailing safe spreading.

The NFU welcomes the use of such a matrix to detail the safe spreading of sludge, and would be happy to be involved in any proposals to amend this matrix in future. Southern Water as major producers of sludge have also identified themselves as potential partners to develop an increased monitoring programme.

The Environment Agency Southern Region has recently agreed a Regional strategy for the disposal of sewage sludge on farmland. In summary, this seeks to ensure compliance with exemption conditions and appropriate enforcement by the Agency's Environment Protection officers.

Actions 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Ensure implementation and monitoring of the Regional Strategy for the Disposal of Sewage Sludge on Farmland	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tactical planning	IoWC Southern Water Land-owners/ farmers


Issue 9: Need to ensure compliance with the EC directive on the Quality of Bathing Waters.

Issue 9 was ranked as the most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The Bathing Waters Directive (76/160/EEC) protects the environment and the health of bathers using identified bathing waters by reducing pollution entering identified bathing areas (of which there are 13 around the Isle of Wight).

One EC Bathing Water on the Island failed to comply with the Directive in 1996 and three failed in 1997. In 1997 two Bathing Waters complied with the more stringent guideline standards. In 1998 and 1999 there was 93% compliance. Whilst achievement of guideline standards is not a statutory driver, the Agency endeavours to ensure compliance with them, and work closely with Southern Water to identify reasons for failures of bathing waters. Southern Water recognise that there is a need for investment in sewage treatment works and combined sewer overflows (CSOs), and this is being reflected through the high investments of Southern Water's Seaclean Wight project and other initiatives.

The RYA welcomes the continued expenditure on improvements to Bathing Water Quality, but are concerned that a move to long sea outfalls just move the problems further off shore. However as both Southern Water and Wight Wildlife point out discharges impacting upon sea water quality are not just from waste water treatment outfalls but from disparate pollution sources. (see issue 10 below)

Actions		Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
			00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Monitor Southern Water's investment programme meets outstanding and new commitments within agreed timescales.		MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tactical Planning	Southern Water
			Although the cost to the Agency is low, the Agency will continue to ensure that Southern Waters large investment programme meets its targets						

Issue 10: Diffuse pollution of watercourses from developed areas and intensive agriculture.

Issue 10 was not ranked by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group.


There are many non-consented discharges which are known to have an adverse effect on the Island's water quality:


- possible leaching/pollution from former landfills in chalk/sand quarries;
- intermittent break out of leachate into the Medina from Stag Lane closed landfill;
- potential pollution of groundwater and surface watercourses from leakage of septic tanks (domestic effluent is discharged to septic tanks in rural areas, from approximately 30,000 households);
- diffuse pollution from urban land uses and construction sites;
- pollution of surface watercourses and groundwater from pesticides, nitrates and diffuse pollution sources from agricultural intensification

The RYA, Southern Water, and Wight Wildlife all identify some of the above as potential sources of pollution, and Cranfield university identifies the erosion of soils as a particular problem.

The Agency treats all diffuse pollution as important and targets the most high risk areas, and industries for example by undertaking farm visits, and by visiting and inspecting the most potentially polluting waste disposal sites frequently. The Agency will also continue to support the Eastern Yar Project (see issue 4)

The Agency also works closely with the Council to ensure that planning decisions reflect the needs of environmental best practice. The Agency visited the Isle of Wight Council before Christmas 1999 as part of its ongoing liaison programme, and is aiming to produce a planning document for the council before the end of 2004. This document will outline the key Agency development policies which we would like to see the Local Authorities take on board, and will be modelled on a document being produced with Hampshire County Council.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Influence planning decisions and promote use of best practice, through ongoing liaison with local authorities to ensure information and policies are up to date.	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tactical Planning	IoWC Highways Authority Farmers & NFU Land Owners

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Pollution Prevention Campaigns targeted at most vulnerable locations, e.g. farm visits, and the potentially most polluting waste disposal sites.	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Environment Protection	IoWC Highways Authority Farmers & NFU Land Owners
The Agency is seeking to undertake a Landcare Project across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight on diffuse pollution, but this is dependent upon receiving some external funding.	150k	-	✓ 50k	✓ 50k	✓ 50k	-	Tactical Planning	IoWC Highway Authority Farmers & NFU Land Owners


Issue 11: Standards of flood defences need to be continually reviewed taking into account climate change.

Issue 11 was ranked as the 9th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The most significant sea defence on the Island is the sea wall at Sandown. The Agency also maintains flood defences at Bembridge and Yarmouth. The principal areas currently at risk from coastal flooding are in Sandown, St Helens, and Cowes. Also some areas of marsh and agricultural land are at risk, as is reclaimed land between St Helens and Bembridge.

The future planning of sea defences needs to take account of possible sea level rise due to climate change. Changes to mean sea level are much smaller than the short-term changes due to tides, surges and waves. However, only a slight rise in mean sea level may amplify the frequency of extreme water levels caused by storm surges. MAFF allows for an increase in sea level of 6 mm/year when appraising its flood defences in the Agency's Southern region and this value is taken into account and schemes are designed for 60 years of sea-level rise.

Shoreline Management Plans are produced with a wide range of organisations and interested parties, and the Shoreline Management Plans undertaken for the Isle of Wight areas identify the work required to maintain and where the circumstance are required to improve flood defences.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
<p>Detailed risk assessment and input to SMP Strategy Plans.</p> <p>The Agency will continue to work closely with the IoW Council on matters relating to flood defence.</p>	50k	✓ 10k	✓ 10k	✓ 10k	✓ 10k	✓ 10k	Flood Defence	IoWC

Issue 12. Further development in low lying areas would put people and property at risk from flooding.

Issue 12 was ranked as the 5th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group


New development, redevelopment, and landraising can have significant implications for flood risk. Within river and coastal floodplains, new development may be liable to flooding and increase the risk of flooding (including tidal inundation) elsewhere by reducing the storage capacity of the floodplain and impeding flood flows.


Whilst the Agency does not have the powers to prevent development in areas liable to flood, it can object to such proposals through its role as statutory consultee with respect to development plans and planning applications. The Agency is currently preparing a planning strategy for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area which will address the issue of development in the floodplain in some detail. Section 105 maps, indicating areas liable to flooding, are currently being prepared by the Agency. The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan contains a policy that seeks to resist development in areas liable to flooding.

Development pressures on low lying areas around the Island's towns can be considerable because of the emphasis on regeneration and the need to avoid major development in areas protected for their landscape value. Despite the efforts of the Agency and its predecessor the NRA to resist these pressures, some development in areas liable to flooding has occurred in recent years - notably in the Yaverland area to the north of Sandown.

All the comments received from consultees including the RSPB and Wight Wildlife support the Agency taking a strong line on development in the floodplain. Following the Easter Floods of 1998 the Agency will oppose all new development in the floodplain and is willing to back this up with objections at Public Inquiry if necessary.

The Agency's National 3 year floodline flood awareness campaign was launched in October of 1999. Costing £2 million pounds the campaign highlights the Agency's role in flood awareness and warning, including the new Floodline freephone number of **0845 9881188**.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Publicise the issue of flooding in local papers - as part of the National floodline campaign.	Low	✓	✓	✓	-	-	Flood Defence	IoWC, developers and the general public

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Ensure that the IoWC, through responses to consultation on planning applications and through responses to local plans, is fully aware of the potential consequences of development in areas liable to flooding, and the impact of development on flood risk elsewhere.	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Planning Liaison	IoWC, developers and the general public


Issue 13. The aesthetic quality of the Island's estuaries and coastal waters is reduced by discharges of untreated sewage and/or chemicals from boats.

Issue 13 was ranked as the 7th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

Whilst normal quantities of untreated sewage and/or chemicals discharged from boats do not pose a significant threat to water quality, it can be unsightly and detracts from people's enjoyment of the estuaries and coastal waters. Current problems are reported at Bembridge, Cowes, Newport and Yarmouth.

It is recognised by the Agency, and in comments from the Solent Protection Society and the RYA that discharges from boats are only one part of any potential pollution problem. Gurnard Parish council however identifies that there should be disposal systems to deal with waste from boats in harbours.

The Agency led a pilot project in Warsash Harbour where with Landfill tax funding from Onyx Environmental Trust permitted a sewage pump out system to be installed. The Partnership behind this scheme is now looking to extend around the Solent, and sites on the Isle of Wight may be considered.


Actions		Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
			00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Raise awareness of the issue amongst boat owners/clubs through estuaries project officer		5k p.a.	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	Customer Services	Harbour Masters Yacht clubs
			The Agency currently provides 5k p.a. to part fund an Estuaries project officer, with English Nature, Isle of Wight Council and the Harbour Authorities.						
Promote the improvement of facilities for safe disposal at harbours and marinas.		10k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	-	-	-	Customer Services	Harbour Masters Yacht clubs Southern Water
			The Agency is looking to work in partnership to install a system in Yarmouth similar to the one recently installed at Warsash, and is seeking external funding to complete this through the Estuaries Project officer.						

Issue 14. Opportunities for informal recreation associated with the Island's inland water environment are currently limited.

Issue 14 was ranked as the 15th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The Agency has a commitment to provide for, and promote, informal water recreation, having regard to other environmental factors. This is particularly relevant in areas where the Agency owns or has control over land or water. Whilst the Island has a well-developed network of public rights of way, there is scope to improve opportunities for informal recreation (such as walking, cycling and canoeing) and interpretation facilities associated with rivers and inland waterbodies, and make best use of existing facilities, such as the Newport-Sandown railway. This is part of the role of the Estuaries project officer which is part funded by the Agency.

Improved access to the Island's inland water environment for informal recreation, for example through the provision of 'greenways' along river corridors, could also help to reduce people's reliance on the car for short journeys and also contribute to opportunities for green tourism. This is welcomed by the Inland Waterways Association. The NFU welcome the identification of landowners as partners, however noting that there can be conflicts between agriculture and public access.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Identify and promote opportunities for informal recreation. - projects are dependent upon securing external funding.	20k	-	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	✓ 5k	FER	IoWC Landowners Ramblers clubs Tourist Board BCU
Seek to ensure, through the planning process, that access for informal recreation is made or protected within new developments. - this is part of ongoing job, through the planning liaison process with local authorities.	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	FER	IoWC Landowners Ramblers clubs Tourist Board BCU

Issue 15. The traditional landscape character and features of the Island's river corridors have deteriorated.


Issue 15 was ranked as the 12th most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group

The combination of extensive river engineering, land drainage for agricultural purposes, and insensitive development has reduced the character and quality of the Island's river corridors and floodplain areas. Partly as a result of this, the distinctiveness of the Island's separate catchments has diminished.

Changes in the Island's landscape character are noted in the landscape assessment work undertaken by the Countryside Commission. Additional, more detailed landscape assessment information is required to inform the Agency's day to day activities and to provide a basis for a programme of restoration and enhancement.

There are a range of rivers and channels that would benefit from restorative works - the holistic approach to management of the Eastern Yar is welcomed by the Isle of Wight Council, who identify the Medina as appropriate for similar treatment.

Any work of this type must be done in partnership, for example with the RSPB, and Wight Wildlife. Wight Wildlife identify wetland restoration as both practical and desirable, and that such restoration should be a consideration across all of the Agency's functions. This issue links closely to issue 6.

Action 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
<p>Liaise with Island 2000 with respect to Agency involvement in landscape restoration/enhancement projects.</p> <p>Working through our external funding officer, and the Estuaries Project Officer the Agency will aim to carry out these actions, building upon the approach used in the Eastern Yar.</p>	4k	-	✓ 2k	✓ 2k	-	-	FER	Island 2000, IoWC
<p>Undertake detailed landscape assessment of river corridors and floodplain areas</p> <p>Working through our external funding officer, and the Estuaries Project Officer the Agency will aim to carry out these actions, building upon the approach used in the Eastern Yar.</p>	20k	-	✓ 10k	✓ 10k	-	-	FER	Island 2000, IoWC

Issue 16: Sustainable waste management cannot be achieved on the Island in the long term with the current levels of waste generation combined with the existing waste management infrastructure.


Issue 16 was ranked as the 2nd most important by the Isle of Wight Area Environment Group.

The solid waste produced from quarrying, construction and demolition, agriculture, other industry and commerce, and households, presents a significant stress on the Island's environment. The Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) plant at Newport currently helps to achieve recycling targets and to divert large quantities of waste away from landfill.

Island Waste Services currently promotes waste minimisation and recycling (through separation at source). There is also a current Waste Management Licence application for a green waste composting facility.

The potential for increasing the amount of municipal waste recycled or composted on the Island will depend on a number of factors including finding suitable sites for collection banks, instigating kerb-side recycling schemes, and increasing public participation. However, the relatively small amount of waste generated on the Island limits the economic viability of running recycling plants and the market on the Island for the recycled products is small. Transporting of waste or recycled products on or off the Island is expensive and may not be the Best Practical Environmental Option. In summary, there are both economic and practical difficulties in encouraging further recycling.

Wight Wildlife identifies the opportunities for cleaning up and restoring old landfill sites to new and novel habitats to the benefit of the island inhabitants. Although this is primarily the role of the Isle of Wight Council the Agency will work on any sites where there are opportunities for partnership.

Actions 	Cost	Timetable					Agency Lead	Partners
		00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05		
Promote waste minimisation through education of the public and industry	25k	5k	5k	5k	5k	5k	Waste Licensing	Island Waste Services IoWC
Support IoWC initiatives to improve recycling facilities at household waste site and kerbside collection of recyclable waste	Low	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Env. Prot.	IoWC, IWS
Help to assess Best Practical Environmental Option for waste - Incorporated in to day job, no extra cost	MP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tactical Planning	Island Waste Services IoWC

5 PROTECTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

5.1 Why Partnerships?

Partnership is a much used term, but essentially means a number of different interests willing to come together, formally or informally, to achieve some common purpose in the spirit of trust and commitment. Partnerships are desirable because they provide accountability, reduce duplication of work between agencies and provide a pooling of scarce resources and joint funding.

The Agency is well placed to influence many of the activities affecting the environment through the Environment Act 1995 and other legislation. For example, the Agency is the lead regulator for the water environment and also has regulatory powers over waste management activities. In addition, the Agency shares with local authorities the regulation of emissions to the air. However, the Agency has little direct control over land use which is primarily the responsibility of local authorities. The Agency will prepare LEAPs into the next millennium to demonstrate and reinforce our commitment to integrate environmental management and the partnership approach.

We are currently involved in a number of projects and activities that rely on partnerships. Close links have already been established with local authorities, water companies, industry, farmers, landowners, conservation bodies, angling clubs and recreation groups. More details on the type of partnership projects we are working on outside of the LEAP is detailed in the Environmental Overview. However, we are always seeking opportunities for new partnerships with others. If you wish to find out more about becoming involved in a partnership with the Agency in the area please contact Customer Services Team on 01962 764866

6 FUTURE REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Environment Agency will be jointly responsible, with other identified organisations and individuals, for implementing this plan. Progress will be monitored and normally reported annually.

The review will take the form of a short progress report and will:-

- Examine the need to update the LEAP in light of any changes in the plan area
- Compare actual progress with planned progress, and explain the reason for any changes to the content or timing of individual actions.
- Roll forward the detailed actions.

If you have any further comments or queries about the LEAP process please contact the Customer Contact Team at the Winchester office on **01962 713267**.

If you have any specific queries about the Isle of Wight please contact the Isle of Wight office on **01983 822986**.

7 APPENDIX 1 DUTIES, POWERS AND INTERESTS OF THE AGENCY

The Environment Agency has wide range of interests in the areas of water management, waste management, and pollution prevention control. Whilst many of these interests are supported by statutory duties and powers, much of the Agency's work is advisory, with the relevant powers resting with other bodies such as local planning authorities. The following information therefore summarises the Agency's duties powers and interests and their relationship to land use planning in Southern Region.

Agency Duty	The Agency has powers to:	The Agency has an interest (but no powers) in:	Partnership
Water Resources The Agency has a duty to conserve, redistribute, augment and secure the proper use of water resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant or vary water abstraction and impoundment licences on application. • Revoke or vary existing licences to reinstate flows or levels to surface-waters or groundwater which have become depleted as a result of abstraction, and are subject to a liability for compensation. • Secure the proper use of water resources through its role in water-resources planning, the assessment of reasonable need for abstractions and promotion of more efficient use of water resources. • Monitor and enforce abstraction and impoundment licence conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more efficient use of water by water companies, developers industry, agriculture and the public and the introduction of water-efficiency measures and suitable design and layout of the infrastructure. 	The Agency is committed to water-demand management and will work closely with water companies and developers, local authorities and relevant organisations to promote the efficient use of water. The Agency acknowledges that new resources may be needed in the future and supports a twin-track approach of planning for water resource development alongside the promotion of demand-management measures. The Agency seeks to influence planning decisions for new development by encouraging the inclusion of water-conservation measures in new properties, particularly in areas such as the Test and Itchen where water resources are under stress, and by ensuring that planning authorities allow for the lead time for resource development.

Agency Duty	The Agency has powers to:	The Agency has an interest (but no powers) in:	Partnership
Flood Defence The Agency has a duty to exercise general supervision over all matters relating to flood defence throughout each catchment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control, through Land Drainage consents, development or construction of a structure that would affect the flow of an ordinary watercourse (Water Resources Act, 1991 Section 109, Land Drainage Act, 1991 Section 23). • Produce flood risk maps for all main rivers under S105 of Water Resources Act 1991. • Undertake works to main rivers using permissive powers. • Issue flood warning relating to main river to the public, local authorities and the police. • Consent mineral workings within 16 metres of main rivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granting of planning permission throughout a catchment but especially floodplains where development can significantly increase flood risk. This permission is granted by Local Planning Authorities. • Installation of surface water source control measures e.g. flood attenuation structures. • Supervising the maintenance of ordinary watercourses which is a Local Authority remit, but may impact on main rivers. • Installation of buffer zones which reduce flood risk and have significant environmental benefits. • Urban and rural land use and measures that can reduce flood risk or the need for watercourse maintenance. 	As a statutory consultee on planning applications within main-river floodplains, the Agency offers advice based on knowledge of flood risk. It also advises on the environmental impacts of proposed floodplain development. The Agency will encourage best practice, including source-control measures and common standards, among Local Authorities and riparian owners to protect and enhance the environment. The Agency works with the civil authorities to prepare flood-warning dissemination plans and supports their endeavours to protect communities at risk.
Water Quality The Agency has a duty to monitor, protect, manage and, where possible, enhance the quality of all controlled waters including rivers, groundwater's, lakes, canals, estuaries and coastal waters through the prevention and control of pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue discharge consents to control pollution loads in controlled waters. • Regulate discharges to controlled waters in respect of water quality through the issue and enforcement of discharges consents. • Prosecute polluters and recover the costs of clean-up operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The control of runoff from roads and highways. This is a Highway Agency duty. • The greater use of source-control measures to reduce pollution by surface-water runoff. • Prevention and education campaigns to reduce pollution incidents. 	The Agency will liaise with Local Authorities, developers, the Highways Agency, industry and agriculture to promote pollution prevention and the adoption of source-control measures. As a statutory consultee on planning applications, the Agency will advise Local Planning Authorities on the water-quality impact of proposed developments.
Air Quality The Agency has a duty to implement Part I of the Environment Protection Act 1990.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate the largest technically-complex and potentially most polluting prescribed industrial processes such as refineries, chemical works and power stations including enforcement of, and guidance on, BATNEEC and BPEO. • Have regard to the government's National Air Quality Strategy when setting standards for the releases to air from industrial processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast number of smaller industrial processes which are controlled by Local Authorities. • Control over vehicular emissions and transport planning. 	The Agency provides data on IPC processes and advice on planning applications to Local Authorities. The Agency is willing to offer its technical experience to Local Authorities on the control of air pollution. The Agency wishes to liaise with Local Authorities in the production of their Air Quality Management Plans. The Agency will advise and contribute to the government's National Air Quality Strategy.

Agency Duty	The Agency has powers to:	The Agency has an interest (but no powers) in:	Partnership
Radio-active Substances The Agency has a duty under the Radio-active Substances Act 1993 to regulate the use of radio-active materials and the disposal of radio-active waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To issue certificates to users of radio-active materials and disposers of radio-active waste, with an overall objective of protecting members of the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The health effects of radiation. 	<p>The Agency will work with users of the radio-active materials to ensure that radio-active wastes are not unnecessarily created, and that they are safely and appropriately disposed of. The Agency will work with MAFF to ensure that the disposal of radio-active waste creates no unacceptable effects on the food chain.</p> <p>The Agency will work with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate to ensure adequate protection of workers and the public at nuclear sites.</p> <p>The Agency will work with the HSE on worker-protection issues at non-nuclear sites.</p>
Waste Management The Agency has a duty to regulate the management of waste, including the treatment, storage, transport and disposal of controlled waste, to prevent pollution of the environment, harm to public health or detriment to local amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary waste management licence conditions. • Suspend and revoke licences. • Investigate and prosecute illegal waste management operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The siting and granting of planning permission for waste management facilities. This is conducted by the waste industry and Local Planning Authorities. The Agency, as a statutory consultee on planning applications, can advise on such matters. 	<p>The Agency will work with waste producers, the waste-management industry and local authorities to reduce the amount of waste produced, increase reuse and recycling and improve standards of disposal.</p>
Contaminated Land The Agency has a duty to develop an integrated approach to the prevention and control of land contamination ensuring that remediation is proportionate to risks and cost-effective in terms of the economy and environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate the remediation of contaminated land designated as special sites. • Prevent future land contamination by means of its IPC, Water Quality and other statutory powers. • Report on the state of contaminated land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing with others, including Local Authorities, landowners and developers, the safe remediation of contaminated land. 	<p>The Agency supports land remediation and will promote this with developers and Local Authorities and other stakeholders.</p>

Agency Duty	The Agency has powers to:	The Agency has an interest (but no powers) in:	Partnership
<p>Conservation The Agency will further conservation, wherever possible, when carrying out water-management functions; have regard to conservation when carrying out pollution-control functions; and promote the conservation of flora and fauna which are dependent on an aquatic environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agency has no direct conservation powers, but uses its powers with regard to water management and pollution control to exploit opportunities for furthering and promoting conservation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation impacts of new development. These are controlled by Local Planning Authorities. • Protection of specific sites or species, which is a function of English Nature. The Agency does, however, provide advice to Local Authorities and developers to protect the integrity of such sites or species. • Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Plan for which it is the contact point for 12 species and one habitat. 	<p>The Agency supports action to sustain or improve natural and man-made assets so that they are made available for the benefit of present and future generations. Many development schemes have significant implications for conservation. The Agency will work with developers, Local Authorities, conservation bodies and landowners to conserve and enhance biodiversity.</p>
<p>Landscape The Agency will further landscape conservation and enhancement when carrying out water-management functions; have regard to the landscape when carrying out pollution-control functions; and promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of rivers and associated land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agency must further the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty when exercising its water-management powers and have regard to the landscape in exercising its pollution-control powers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape impact of new development, particularly within river corridors. This is controlled by Local Planning Authorities. 	<p>The Agency produces River Landscape Assessments and Design Guidelines which it uses when working with Local Authorities and developers to conserve and enhance diverse river landscapes.</p>
<p>Archaeology The Agency has a duty to consider the impact of all of its regulatory, operational and advising activities upon archaeology and heritage, and implement mitigation and enhancement measures where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agency must promote its archaeological objectives through the exercise of its water-management and pollution-control powers and duties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct protection or management of sites or archaeological or heritage interest. This is carried out by LPA's, County Archaeologists and English Heritage. 	<p>The Agency will liaise with those organisations, which have direct control over archaeological and heritage issues to assist in the conservation and enhancement of these interests.</p>

Agency Duty	The Agency has powers to:	The Agency has an interest (but no powers) in:	Partnership
Fisheries The Agency has a duty to maintain, improve and develop salmon, trout, freshwater and eel fisheries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate fisheries by a system of licensing. • Make and enforce fisheries bylaws to prevent illegal fishing. • Promote the free passage of fish and consent fish passes. • Monitor fisheries and enforce measures to prevent fish-entrainment in abstractions. • Promote its fisheries duty by means of land-drainage consents, water abstraction applications and discharge applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The determination of planning applications which could affect fisheries. 	Many development schemes have significant implications for fisheries. The Agency will work with anglers, riparian owners, developers and Local Authorities to protect fisheries.
Recreation The Agency has a duty to promote rivers and water space for recreational use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agency contributes towards its recreation duty through the exercise of its statutory powers and duties in water management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of water sports. This is carried out by the Sports Council and other sports bodies. 	The Agency will work with the Countryside Commission, Sports England, British Waterways and other recreational and amenity organisations to optimise recreational use of the water environment.

MANAGEMENT AND CONTACTS:

The Environment Agency delivers a service to its customers, with the emphasis on authority and accountability at the most local level possible. It aims to be cost-effective and efficient and to offer the best service and value for money.

Head Office is responsible for overall policy and relationships with national bodies including Government.

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For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE

0645 333 111

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY EMERGENCY HOTLINE

0800 80 70 60



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