North Norfolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Anglian Water written answer to questions following meeting on 11 June 2025

General/overview

Cllr J Toye:

An update on Anglian Waters plans for further improvement and the work programme and outline timescales for delivery. These can then be reviewed at a future meeting.

It would be helpful to include the following in this: -

- *Percentage of investment in North Norfolk*
- *Upgrading of water treatment centres*
- *North Norfolk focus on 2025 data*

Answer:

We have planned capital investment of **around £103 million in North Norfolk during 2025-2030.** It is important to highlight that planned investments are continually kept under review to ensure that investment is made on a prioritisation basis. Planned investment includes:

- First time sewerage schemes in Antingham, Barton Turf, Hanworth, Bessingham, Happisburgh and Ludham.
- Phosphorous removal schemes which will improve the quality of the treated water released to watercourses such as the River Thurne from 11 water recycling centres (WRCs). This will prevent phosphate pollution that causes algal growth in rivers and is harmful to fish and plant life. The WRCs are – Langham, Corpusty, Stalham, Aldborough, Gresham, Roughton, Briston, Hindolvesten, Sculthorpe, Stibbard-Moors and Ludham Walton-Hall. In addition, a phosphorous removal scheme at Fakenham was originally scheduled to be completed by 31 March 2025. In the Final Determination of our PR24 Business Plan by Ofwat in December 2024, this date was extended to 30 September 2025 to allow for operational optimisation of the infrastructure and for an updated permit for the WRC to be issued.
- Additional treatment processes at Briston, Fakenham, Southrepps and Stalham WRCs to reduce the amount of nitrogen in the treated water returned to watercourse.
- A contribution towards progressing plans for a desalination plant at Bacton (see details below regarding overall planned expenditure on Bacton during 2025-2030).
- Measures to reduce Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) spill frequency down to <2 spills across all assets impacting Mundesley bathing water.
- Measures to reduce storm overflow discharges at Briston, Horning Knackers Wood and Fakenham WRCs and Fakenham Norwich Road storm overflows. This will be achieved at Briston by increasing the treatment capacity, at Horning Knackers Wood WRC by constructing a wetland stormwater storage system and at Fakenham WRC through sustainable urban drainage / surface water management.
- Measures to enable as much abstracted water as possible to be retained for water supply by recirculating water on site at Metton, Royston Bridge and Sheringham Water Treatment Works.

As highlighted at the Scrutiny Committee meeting, it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons in terms of how proposed investment compares as a percentage of the planned investment across the whole region, or other parts of the region due to factors such as growth, past investment, population and population density.

The table below shows the validated Event Duration Monitor (EDM) data for storm overflows discharges across North Norfolk in 2025 until the end of May. Final numbers may change once data has been checked and assured.

	2025 Jan-May
Total Spills	48
Total Duration (hours)	251.11
Average Spills	1.71
Average duration (hours)	8.37

2. Questions on discharge:

Cllr J Boyle:

To see the statistics on discharge for the last three years so we could make a comparison and see which direction the travel is.

Answer:

The table below shows the EDM data for storm overflow discharges across North Norfolk from 2022-2025. As mentioned above, the data for 2025 is the validated data until the end of May 2025. Final numbers may change once data has been checked and assured.

	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025 Jan-May**
Total Spills	382	347	714	48
Total Duration (hours)	3302.88	2211.21	8547.57	251.11
Average Spills	13.17	11.57	23.80	1.71
Average duration (hours)	113.89	73.71	284.92	8.37

Answer:

A detailed breakdown of the EDM data for each storm overflow in North Norfolk from 2022-2025 is also shown overleaf.

Detailed EDM breakdown 2022-2025

	2022			2023			2024			2025 verified to date (May)		
Site	**Spills**	**Duration (h)**	**Monitor Operation (%)**	**Spills**	**Duration (h)**	**Monitor Operation (%)**	**Spills**	**Duration (h)**	**Monitor Operation (%)**	**Spills**	**Duration (h)**	**Monitor Operation (%)**
ALDBOROUGH SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS	4	9.25	100.00	8	20.95	100.00	6	27.77	92.38	0	0.00	100.00
BRISTON STW	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
CROMER PROMENADE	0	0.00	100.00	6	0.90	100.00	2	0.17	100.00	1	0.10	99.99
CROMER STW	88	399.10	100.00	33	69.40	100.00	91	523.80	99.87	8	63.16	100.00
ERPINGHAM-CALTHORPE BRIDGE SP	15	73.25	100.00	16	88.00	100.00	36	304.50	83.99		67.25	100.00
FAKENHAM STW (NEW)	1	1.75	100.00	4	34.75	100.00	42	843.75	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
FAKENHAM-NORWICH ROAD OV	1	1.25	100.00	1	0.25	98.94	10	3.25	100.00	0	0.00	99.98
GIMINGHAM-NR MILL TPS	2	0.50	100.00	17	18.75	99.99	5	2.25	99.74		0.50	98.08
GREAT WALSINGHAM STW	1	0.25	100.00	3	3.33	100.00	6	26.40	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
HOLT-MAIN ROAD STW	6	16.75	100.00	4	8.25	100.00	6	4.53	100.00	0	0.00	98.72
HORNING-KNACKERS WOOD STW	115	2167.00	100.00	72	1317.50	100.00	203	4359.50	99.83	6	64.75	97.83
LANGHAM STW (NORFOLK)	3	12.50	100.00	11	98.76	100.00	88	1500.57	100.00	1	0.07	100.00
LUDHAM-WOMACK STAITHE TPS	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	1	0.25	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
MELTON CONSTABLE-BURGH BECK SP	2	2.75	100.00	4	31.25	100.00	13	47.75	100.00	1	1.50	100.00
MUNDESLEY-DELL CHALET PK OV	8	1.30	99.99	8	1.60	97.82	3	1.30	100.00	0	0.00	47.37
MUNDESLEY-KNAPTON RD OUTFALL	48	173.50	100.00	43	174.98	100.00	87	371.50	99.99	14	42.06	100.00
MUNDESLEY-NEW PROMENADE TPS	3	8.43	100.00	3	19.87	100.00	2	6.70	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
NORTH WALSHAM STW SSO/EO	2	3.00	100.00	5	21.03	100.00	6	9.73	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
NORTH WALSHAM, MARSHGATE PS, NORTH WALSHAM STW	0	0.00	100.00	2	1.25	100.00	2	0.50	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
NORTH WALSHAM-BLUEBELL ROAD OV	3	1.25	99.72	8	7.00	99.99	5	2.75	100.00	0	0.00	63.55
OVERSTRAND-PAULS LN SM	24	15.50	100.00	28	24.00	100.00	14	12.75	99.98	9	6.00	99.99
RUNTON WEST WATER LN TPS	17	38.77	99.96	26	99.99	94.84	32	116.73	100.00	4	4.19	99.99
RUNTON-BEACH RD TPS	2	0.33	73.98	5	7.99	99.99	5	1.87	100.00	1	0.03	99.48
SHERINGHAM BEACH RD	1	0.20	100.00	3	5.56	97.26	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	99.98
STALHAM STW	21	367.75	100.00	14	102.89	100.00	34	341.20	100.00	0	0.00	96.20
STALHAM-MILL ROAD TPS	11	6.25	99.87	6	13.00	99.90	5	7.50	100.00	2	1.00	50.93
WELLS-FREEMAN ST OV	3	1.25	99.96	12	16.25	100.00	4	1.75	100.00	1	0.50	99.84
WELLS-FREEMAN STREET STW	1	1.00	100.00	3	15.71	100.00	6	28.80	99.98	0	0.00	100.00
WEYBOURNE-BEACH LANE SP	0	0.00	100.00	2	8.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00
TRIMINGHAM-RESERVOIR OV				0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0	0.00	98.82
Average	**13.17**	**113.89**	**99.09**	**11.57**	**73.71**	**99.62**	**23.8**	**284.92**	**99.192**	**1.71**	**8.37**	**95.02**
Total	**382**	**3302.88**		**347**	**2211.21**		**714**	**8547.57**		**48**	**251.11**	

Cllr V Holliday:

Please present the data on the following:

Storm overflow data for North Norfolk (selected outflow regulatory return data for 2024 for North Norfolk ie all the waste water treatment works and receiving water bodies in our district)

Data fields to be extracted please:

- *Site name (name of waste water treatment works (WTW))*
- *Storm discharge asset type (eg storm tank at WTW)*
- *Receiving water/ environment (common name)*
- *Bathing waters*
- *Total duration all spills*
- *Counted spills*
- *Investigation activity for reported period*
- *Improvement activity for reporting period*

Data to cover last 2 -3 years to see direction of travel.

Answer:

The requested data is included in the attached document. Please note that the Investigation and Improvement activities were completed where our spills team had carried out specific investigations.

A Fletcher:

In view of the considerable increase in housing provision demanded by the Westminster Government, and the corresponding change in the Local Plan, could Anglian Water outline how they intend to protect rivers, and associated fragile ecosystems from the effects of large-scale building projects? The headwaters of the River Bure in Briston will be impacted by the extension of the area designated for development behind Astley School, but the threat is more generalised than this, given the number of similar chalk streams in the area.

Answer:

We play an active role in reviewing and commenting on local authority Local Plans and are a statutory consultee.

In terms of our role in planning, we are not a statutory consultee on planning applications and under the Water Industry Act 1991, any development with planning permission has an automatic right to connect to Anglian Water foul sewers, regardless of capacity issues/concerns. That said, we do actively engage in the planning process by responding to major developments (10 dwellings or more). We also comment on specific minor proposals if requested to do so by the Local Planning Authority.

We have recently changed our approach to commenting on planning applications and where capacity is not available at a WRC to accommodate growth, and we do not have a growth scheme:

we will object to the development due to the possible environmental harm from flow. In addition, where we do have an approved growth scheme, we will recommend a pre-occupation condition is applied if permission is granted, to ensure no connections are made until we have delivered the capital scheme. But as developers do currently have the automatic right to connect, we rely on local planning authorities to take our concerns and comments on board, encouraging them to work with us on a phased growth approach so that infrastructure can keep pace with new development.

In addition, our planned investment in 2025-2030 includes a number of schemes which will help to improve the quality of river water. These include:

- Phosphorous removal schemes which will improve the quality of the treated water released to watercourses from 11 water recycling centres. This will prevent phosphate pollution that causes algal growth in rivers and is harmful to fish and plant life. Details of the WRCs are included above on page 1. As mentioned on page 1, A phosphorous removal scheme at Fakenham was originally scheduled to be completed as part of AMP7 by 31 March 2025. In the Final Determination of our PR24 Business Plan by Ofwat in December 2024, this date was extended to 30 September 2025 to allow for operational optimisation of the infrastructure and for an updated permit for the WRC to be issued.
- Additional treatment processes at Briston, Fakenham, Southrepps and Stalham WRCs to reduce the amount of nitrogen in the treated water returned to watercourse
- Measures to reduce storm overflow discharges – as outlined above on page 1.

5. Cllr V Holliday:

What is the timetable for planned improvements to reduce nutrient pollution and sewage overflows at waste water treatment works where the receiving water bodies are chalk streams in our district.

Answer:

The programme of investments for delivery between 2025-2030 at our WRCs relating to nutrient neutrality, other WINEP (Water Industry National Environment Programme) schemes to improve habitats and biodiversity and schemes to reduce storm overflow discharges are:

- ALDBOROUGH-THWAITE HILL WRC, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- BRISTON WRC, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- BRISTON WRC, WINEP, Investment for Nutrient Neutrality for Nitrogen to 10mg/l
- CORPUSTY WRC-BESIDE RIVER, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- FAKENHAM WRC (OLD AND NEW), WINEP, Investment for Nutrient Neutrality for Nitrogen to 10mg/l
- FAKENHAM WRC (OLD AND NEW), WINEP, This Investment is to deliver the AMP8 Habitats scheme as part of AMP7 Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery (AID) to meet Nutrient Neutrality Targets. Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l)

- GRESHAM-CHEQUERS INN WRC, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- HINDOLVESTON WRC, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- LANGHAM WRC (NORFOLK), WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (1.5 mg/l) to ensure no Waterbody is in a Poor or Bad ecological status due to Water Company activities by 2030
- LUDHAM STW, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- ROUGHTON STW, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (1mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- SCULTHORPE-RAF CAMP STW, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- STALHAM STW, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (0.25 mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- STALHAM STW, WINEP, Investment for Nutrient Neutrality for Nitrogen to 10mg/l
- STIBBARD-MOORS END RD HSW, WINEP, Identification of a Phosphorus-Removal Action (2mg/l) to maintain or restore the habitats and species, within a Waterbody that is a designated European site
- Measures to reduce Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) spill frequency down to <2 spills across all assets impacting Mundesley bathing water.
- Measures to reduce storm overflow discharges at Briston, Horning Knackers Wood and Fakenham WRCs and Fakenham Norwich Road storm overflows. This will be achieved at Briston by increasing the treatment capacity, at Horning Knackers Wood WRC by constructing a wetland stormwater storage system and at Fakenham WRC through sustainable urban drainage / surface water management.

Timing - Excepting the phosphorus removal scheme at Fakenham (Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery scheme), all the nutrient neutrality upgrades and storm overflow activities are programmed for delivery in AMP8 2025-2030. The Fakenham phosphorous removal scheme is due for completion in September 2025.

4. Questions relating to housing development pressures on water supply and wastewater treatment

Cllr P Heinrich:

There are two key questions relevant especially to the significant growth proposed for North Walsham:

1. The two water towers and associated boreholes were constructed in the early 1950's to serve a population of some 5000 people. The projected population once new housing is complete will be in excess of 20000 people. How do you propose to ensure an adequate water supply?

Answer:

Details about our approach to commenting on planning applications are outlined above on pages 4 and 5.

Securing and maintaining water for our region is our biggest challenge. Hotter than average temperatures and the lowest level of rainfall make our region prone to drought, with this predicted to intensify in the future. This, combined with the estimated 700,000 new residents in the East of England over the next 20 years, will put enormous pressure on water resources.

However, we look forward and plan for growth and demand by considering water and drainage capacity at least 10 years ahead of current major housing and non-household development. Our Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) sets out how a sustainable and secure supply of clean drinking water will be provided to customers over a minimum 25-year period. The latest DWMP which was published in May 2023 is available here .
(https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/SysSiteAssets/household/about-us/dwmp/dwmp-1.pdf)

This is why we're investing heavily in water security – since 2020 we have invested over £1bn in long term water supply resilience. Our investment includes £230 million in two new reservoirs – one in the Cambridgeshire Fens and the other in South Lincolnshire. These will supply water to an additional 625,000 properties in our region and ensure that all our customers have at least two sources of water supply. Alongside this, we are investing over £500 million on interconnecting pipelines which will help us to unlock new water resource options in future and transfer water from areas of our region with a water surplus to areas in deficit.

We also have an industry-leading smart metering programme and have recently finished our initial rollout. This saw over 1 million smart meters installed across the region. Smart meters not only give customers visibility of the water they are using, but they also help our engineers find and fix leaks. Since the programme started, we have saved an average of 14 litres of water per property per day in leaks, this has stopped 14 million litres of water getting wasted every day. This programme is continuing – we will invest £130 million to complete our 10-year smart meter rollout, so that every customer in our region will have a smart meter by 2030.

In North Norfolk, we support the District Council's local plan, which makes provision for up to 10,000 new homes in the district by 2026 and sets local water efficiency standards higher than the optional standard for building regulations (110 litres/person/day). We are currently reviewing and reassessing the demand forecast (including non-household) for WRMP29. The smart meter rollout will also help customers in North Norfolk to understand and change their water usage and help identify leaks.

To ensure we are protecting the environment, the Environment Agency has asked us to give up many of our abstraction licences. We support this as we recognise the importance of leaving more water in the natural environment, particularly to protect our rare and unique chalk streams. But, we need to ensure we can provide a resilient supply of clean water for years to come, and that is why we are planning to build a desalination plant at Bacton. As part of our WRMP24, this site will provide 25Ml/d potable water by 2040, and we have funding in our business plan (2025-2030) to develop these plans.

2. Although new developments will have SUDS, so reducing rainwater discharge into sewers what improvements are planned for Marshgate treatment works and the Gimingham CSO in order to prevent pollution issues on Mundesley beach and the North Walsham & Dilham canal (River Ant).

Answer:

Our AMP8 investment (2025-2030) includes a scheme to reduce spill frequency down to <2 spills across all assets impacting Mundesley bathing water. The assets are:

Dell Chalet Park MUNDOV CSO, the Mundesley Storm Tank PS and Gimingham CSO and Mundesley Knapton Rd CSO.

In terms of Marshgate WRC, there is currently substantial on-site capacity to store storm water during wet weather events. Last year, we implemented an investment programme to automate the return of the storm water to the head of the treatment plant. This automation ensures that tank levels are maintained as low as possible, significantly reducing the need for operator intervention and helping to minimise storm overflow discharges. These improvements are reflected in the site's spill data.

We have also recently carried out investment in the form of on-site flow monitoring to give us a rigid insight into site capacity and flow data - this piece of work being completed 3 years earlier than scheduled. As it stands, there are no further capital schemes planned for the 2025-2030 period due to the site operating within permitted limits, although this is kept under review.

Cllr P Neatherway:

There is a growing issue in Felmingham where the sewerage treatment unit is clearly not capable of handling the amount of waste currently being passed to it and Anglian Water are currently tankering it daily to stop the effluent overflow from contaminating the nearby homes and allotments. Given that there are housing planning applications currently under consideration that would be expected to be added to it and the possibility of a housing scheme being approved a short distance away under the "Small Village" programme which would also require a sewerage solution, what are Anglian Water's plans for resolving these issues and a realistic time scale for them?

Answer:

We are tankering this site due to the existing soakaway system being hydraulically overloaded. Over the years, additional surface water connections have progressively contributed to the volume of flow entering the system, resulting in a level of infiltration that the original infrastructure was not designed to manage.

As a result, the infiltration system is no longer able to cope with peak flows, particularly during wetter periods, and tankering is necessary to prevent effluent overflow and protect nearby properties and allotments.

We are aware of the pressures on this system and are assessing longer-term solutions. One of the potential solutions currently under investigation to address the site's capacity constraints is the

construction of a new soakaway within the existing site boundary. To assess the feasibility of this option, a percolation test will be undertaken in the coming weeks to evaluate the soil's suitability for an infiltration system.

In parallel, we are also exploring alternative solutions, including a potential pump-away arrangement or a change to the discharge point.

These options are currently under review, and we are working to identify the most appropriate solution, with full consideration given to the need for a timely resolution.

Cllr K Bayes:

On a local level at Stalham, what is the current situation regarding the capacity of the wastewater treatment works and how much headroom do they have for future development? Also does Anglian Water have any plans to cope with storm overflow events by engaging with landowners to treat the effluent by reed bed or similar structures.

Answer:

There is sufficient dry weather flow headroom at Stalham WRC to accommodate committed growth with planning consent and proposed growth in the forthcoming Local Plan.

There is also an investigation into overflows with the output likely to form the basis of proposed funding during AMP9 (2030-2035) to reduce the frequency of overflows at Stalham WRC and Stalham Mill Terminal pumping station. Nature based solutions would be considered as part of any future investment.

Additional questions following the meeting:

Data for North Norfolk regarding 'dry day' spills, including dates, location, rainfall levels and the reasons for the spill.

Answer:

Dry day spill data is not publicly available yet as we are currently refining the methodology with the Environment Agency and other water companies. We must make sure we are analysing the data in a consistent way. We will share what we can in due course as we realise there is a great deal of interest and concern about dry day spills.

https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/28/what-are-dry-day-spills/

Data regarding leakages in North Walsham for the last 12 months

Answer:

Since 1 April 2024 the following leaks have been identified in North Walsham:

- 30 leaks at individual properties which were the responsibility of customers to repair, i.e. past the controlling stop tap or the boundary of the public highway
- 11 burst mains on the main distribution line
- 97 leaks on other Anglian Water assets such as valves, stop taps and fire hydrants

Information setting out how Anglian Water consults and engages with landowners regarding nature-based solutions for dealing with overflows and spills – such as reed beds.

Answer:

We carefully consider the best way to reduce storm overflow spills at individual sites, including wherever possible, nature-based solutions and work closely in partnership with landowners where this is identified as an option.

We are currently developing a sustainable urban drainage landowner engagement strategy and will provide a further update on this as soon as possible.

Cost of desalinisation project at Bacton – and the impact on the overall spend in North Norfolk (Cllr Housden)

We have around £79m planned investment for this business plan period (2025-2030) in relation to planning and development activities for the desalination plant at Bacton. £4.1million of this is part of the £103milion planned investment in North Norfolk.

Detailed North Norfolk breakdown of 'spills data' (Cllr Boyle)

Answer:

A detailed breakdown of the EDM data for each storm overflow in North Norfolk from 2022-2025 is shown above on page 3.

Data on investment and flow rates in Fakenham including discharge into the River Wensum (Cllr Cushing)

Answer:

A detailed breakdown of the EDM data for Fakenham is included in the table above on page 3. As discussed at the Scrutiny Committee, rainfall does impact the number of storm overflow discharges, and this is reflected in the data for Fakenham in 2024. As shown in the table, validated data to the end of May 2025 shows that there had been no spills from either the WRC or Norwich Road storm overflows.

In terms of planned investment, there are planned spill reduction schemes during 2025-2030 at both Fakenham WRC and Fakenham Norwich Road to reduce spill frequency at each site to less than 10 per year by March 2030.

Invitation from Councillor Fredricks for Anglian Water to work with her and Housing team on the current requirement for Housing Associations to instal large underground tanks for use in tackling fires at considerable cost (£100k per development). It was suggested that discussions with your team could be helpful in coming up with some possible solutions going forward.

Answer:

There is national guidance that fire services follow when developers apply for planning permission.

When it comes to private storage tanks, we are unfortunately unable to comment on size or suitability due to the fire service and insurance requirements. We are also not experts about potential solutions available in the private market.

As a result, our input is limited to modelling the connection size for a tank that the developer is looking to install and/ or advising on the instantaneous flow available from a particular part of the network so the developer can obtain quotes and decide which solution to adopt.

Further details about our fire guidance is available on our website here.
(https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/developing/water-services/fire-guidance/)