

North Norfolk District Council – verbal update for Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 10th December 2025.

Thank you for inviting us back to provide an update following our appearance at the June committee meeting.

We've provided written answers to the questions we've received and are happy to talk through these.

We're particularly pleased to note that **all seven of the bathing waters in North Norfolk are now rated as Excellent** and that the Environment Agency's recent classifications reinforce the East of England's position as home to some of the UK's cleanest bathing waters.

As we highlighted at the last committee, our 2025-2030 business plan proposes **£11 billion of investment across our region including £1 billion for tackling storm overflows**, whilst our total environmental enhancement spend will double to £4 billion. These plans are subject to approval by Ofwat, our financial regulator, and we are currently in discussions on the outcome of our final determination.

The proposed £1 billion storm overflow investment is geared to address the highest priority overflows soonest and will reduce storm overflow spills by creating new storage and ways to prevent surface water from entering the sewer network, installing additional monitoring and increasing the capacity of our treatment sites to deal with more rainfall as a result of unpredictable weather.

We aim to reduce discharges from storm overflows by 17% in the next five years, in line with our Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan (SODRP).

In North Norfolk, planned schemes (subject to review and prioritisation) include:

- Spill reduction schemes at Briston, Fakenham and Horning Knacker's Wood WRCs
- A storm tank at Aldborough WRC – pleased to report that work on this started at the beginning of the month
- An overflow reduction scheme at Fakenham Norwich Road overflow
- Mundesley – a spill reduction scheme for all assets affecting bathing waters (including Gimmingham)

- New storm overflow screening at Briston, Ludham and Runton West Lane
- Surface water management schemes for Potter Heigham, Horning, Hoveton and Hickling

In addition, investigations are planned at a number of sites into reducing storm overflow spills. The outcome of these investigations may identify and inform the scope of any future improvement schemes.

As the Committee knows, all storm overflows are fitted with Event Duration Monitors (EDM). Full details of storm overflow discharges for 2025 will be released next April once all EDM activations have been fully validated. However, the latest validated EDM activations for 2025 (up until the end of October), show that **storm overflows in North Norfolk have discharged a total of 194 times – an average of 6.47 spills per storm overflow for an average of 21.09 hours.** This is significantly lower than the figures for the last few years, reflecting the drier weather we've experienced this year.

Other planned investments during this business plan period (subject to review) include phosphorus removal from wastewater at 12 WRCs as well as nitrogen removal at four WRCs and ammonia removal at one site – helping to improve river water quality.

And as part of our Dynamic Sewer Visualisation (DSV) programme, **we've installed 939 monitors to date in North Norfolk** so that we can proactively detect blockages and resolve them before they escalate.

As we mentioned in June, our teams cleared a total of 35,000 blockages from the sewer network last year. 80% of these were avoidable and were caused by rubbish such as wet wipes, sanitary products, nappies and cooking oils which should have gone in the bin and not down the toilet or sink. Wipes are the most common problem – around half a million (9,500 packets) are flushed into our region's sewers every day. **And issues with Fats, Oils and Grease are especially worth bearing in mind as we head into the Christmas period.**

To help reduce blockages, our [Just Bin It](#) behaviour campaign is encouraging customers to only flush the 3Ps: pee, poo and (toilet) paper – so they can avoid costly blockages in homes and businesses as well as protecting the local community and environment. **We'd appreciate any help councillors can provide to help drive behaviour change and reduce blockages, floodings and pollutions.**

We've produced a toolkit which includes posters, flyers and ready-made social media posts to help spread the word and can share this with the committee. The toolkit also includes free materials on ways **people can save water.** Despite the rainfall in recent

weeks, this is, of course, especially important as Spring and Summer were one of the driest in our region since records began in 1899.

Finally, we're pleased to update the Committee that we're also investing in our water supply network in North Norfolk with plans to replace **10,381 metres of pipe, representing an investment of £2.4million over the next five years.**

We hope this update is helpful and now we would be happy to run through the pre-submitted question responses if needed, and take any further questions.