

Monday, 30 September 2024

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD SPOTLIGHT REVIEW**

A meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Board – Spotlight Review on Water and Flooding** will be held on

**Tuesday, 8 October 2024**

commencing at **5.30 pm**

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

**Members of the Committee**

Councillor Spacagna (Chairman)

Councillor Cowell

Councillor Douglas-Dunbar

Councillor Fellows

Councillor Foster

Councillor Hutchings

Councillor Johns

Councillor Law

Councillor Long

Councillor Tolchard (Vice-Chair)

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# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD SPOTLIGHT REVIEW – WATER AND FLOODING AGENDA

## 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence, including notifications of any changes to the membership of the Board.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

**For reference:** Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

**For reference:** Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

**(Please Note:** If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)

## 3. Urgent Items

To consider any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent.

## 4. Drainage and Flooding Issues

South West Water and the Environment Agency have been invited to the meeting to follow up the issues raised at the Spotlight Review on 5 October 2023 and to discuss current issues relating to drainage and flooding etc.

(Pages 5 - 26)

### Supporting documents:

1. Key lines of enquiry and responses – Environment Agency
2. Key lines of enquiry and responses – South West Water
3. Link to previous spotlight review - [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Board on Thursday, 5 October 2023, 5.30 pm \(torbay.gov.uk\)](#)

(Note: South West Water Representative and Clarissa Newell, Area Environment Manager, Environment Agency have been invited for this item.)

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## Key Lines of Enquiry Responses from Environment Agency

21888 Torbay Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting on 8 October 2024

### Questions:

1. Please can you provide the latest statistics on the health of the bathing water and associated water courses for each area within Torbay and details on what action is being taken to improve this.
2. How often do you test the quality of bathing water in Torbay and what action is taken as a result of the testing?
3. How does activity from Torbay impact on the Aller Brook that feeds into the river Teign and how often is that tested and what action is taken as a result?
4. What action is the Environment Agency taking to address poor performing Water Companies? How and when can Torbay residents expect to see the impact of this action?
5. What can Torbay Council, Councillors and our residents do to help improve water quality and reduce pollution?

### Responses:

1. Please can you provide the latest statistics on the health of the water environment for each area within Torbay and details on what action is being taken to improve this.

3. How does activity from Torbay impact on the Aller Brook that feeds into the river Teign and how often is that tested and what action is taken as a result?

Response to questions 1 and 3:

Torbay has one river classified in 2022 under the Water Framework Directive, the Upper Aller Brook. The Upper Aller Brook is designated as having Good Ecological Status.

Outside of Torbay, the both the Aller Brook and Lower Aller Brook had classifications in 2022 under the Water Framework Directive, both being designated as having Moderate Ecological Status. The Lower Aller Brook covers the Aller Brook from the Teign to the confluence of the Upper Aller Brook with the Aller Brook. Given the Good Ecological Status of the Upper Aller Brook and the Moderate Status of the Aller Brook upstream of the confluence, it appears that the pressures impacting the ecological status of the Lower Aller Brook are not derived from Torbay and/ or the Upper Aller Brook.

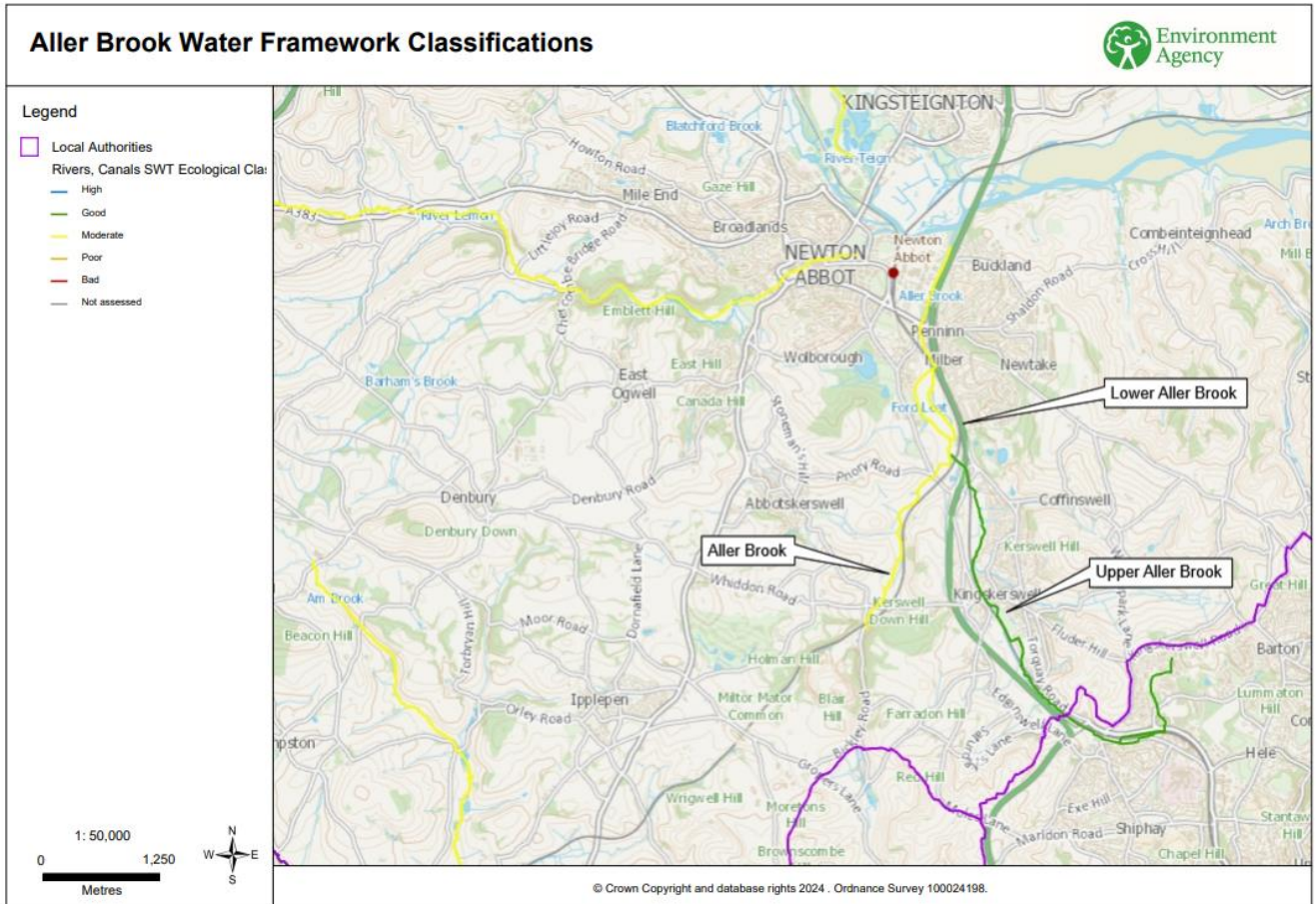
As the Upper Aller Brook has Good Ecological Status, no actions are being taken to improve this. The frequency and sites used to inform this classification are listed below:

## Monitoring sites which have been used to classify this water body

Shows which sites were used for classification for which years within each cycle.

Monitoring Site	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<a href="#">ALLER BROOK AT ALLER ORCHARD</a> 70611134	2012, 2009, 2010, 2011	2015, 2016	
<a href="#">9467</a> 9467	2012, 2010, 2011, 2014	2015, 2016, 2014	

A map of the Aller Brook catchment is shown below:



The two coastal water bodies were also assessed under the Water Environment Regulations (WER) in 2022, Tor Bay as having Good Ecological Status and Lyme Bay West is designated as having Moderate Ecological Status.

The element driving the moderate ecological classification in Lyme Bay West is attributed to Invertebrates.

**2. How often do you test the quality of bathing water in Torbay and what action is taken as a result of the testing?**

The Environment Agency is required to adhere to the monitoring guidelines outlined in the Bathing Water Regulations. These regulations specify a fixed bathing water season, which runs from 15 May to 30 September.

Monitoring is required to take place within these dates, except for the first sample of the season, which must be taken just before the season starts.

During the bathing season each year, we take between ten and twenty water samples at each of England's designated bathing waters.

In each sample, we test for bacteria that indicate whether faecal matter is present in the water. These are known as faecal indicator organisms (FIOs), and the specific ones we test for are E. coli and Intestinal enterococci.

The monitoring results are used to produce a classification scheme, which is set out within the regulations. Each season's samples are combined with up to four years' worth of data from previous seasons to give a bathing water its annual classification.

<b>BW Reference</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Sampling to be taken between May - September</b>
23100	Maidencombe	10
23200	Watcombe	20
23300	Oddicombe	10
23400	Babbacombe	15
23501	Anstey's Cove (Torquay)	20
23600	Meadfoot	10
23700	Beacon Cove	15
23800	Torre Abbey	20
23900	Hollicombe	20
24000	Paignton Preston Sands	20
24100	Paignton Paignton Sands	20
24200	Goodrington	20
24300	Broadsands	15
24500	Breakwater Beach (Shoalstone)	10
24600	St Mary's Bay (Devon)	10

We work together with local partners to improve water quality at Poor or Sufficient bathing waters. In Devon and Cornwall, we have action plans for bathing waters that have deteriorated or have 'at risk' water quality. We use these to investigate sources of pollution and work with partners to rectify problems when possible. In Torbay, the only Sufficient bathing water is Goodrington and we have been working very closely with Torbay Council, South West Water and other stakeholders on this. Please see Goodrington action plan for more information on actions.

#### **4. What action is the Environment Agency taking to address poor performing Water Companies? How and when can Torbay residents expect to see the impact of this action?**

The Environment Agency is improving how we regulate water companies. Having secured an additional £55m of funding from government and water company permits, the Environment Agency is investing in a bigger, more specialised workforce and setting aside £15 million for new digital and monitoring systems. As a result, the number of officers regulating South West Water has increased with more compliance checks at water company sites (including unannounced inspections) being made and data specialists being used to translate storm overflow monitoring data into regulatory intelligence.

We are also ensuring all water companies have a Pollution Incident Reduction Plan with thorough root-cause-analysis of incidents informing actions and clear targets for pollution reduction. Our officers meet with South West Water to monitor delivery of these plans, which have been proposed, via the new Water (Special Measures) Bill to become statutory plans.

We assesses and record every pollution incident reported, responding to every incident where there is a significant risk to the environment. We have taken tough action against those companies which are breaking the rules and last year South West Water was fined more than £2 million for a series of environmental offences across Devon and Cornwall spanning a period of four years. We are also conducting the largest ever criminal investigation into potential widespread non-compliance by all of the water and sewerage companies at thousands of sewage treatment works.

Water company business plans also play an important role in ensuring improvements are made at water company assets to improve capacity and treatment, reducing spills to the environment. Draft plans for the current price review 'PR24' propose £26bn of expenditure by water companies to meet statutory environmental obligations. Spending on storm overflows will increase to £10bn which will mean upgrades to 2,500 storm overflows which Ofwat says will reduce spills by 44%.

The Government has introduced the Water (Special Measures) Bill to increase enforcement powers for both the Environment Agency and Ofwat and drive improvements in performance and culture of the water industry. The Bill represents a significant step forward in transforming how we regulate the water industry. The Bill gives us the opportunity to step up our regulation with these additional powers to impose tougher and faster penalties, helping us hold water companies and their bosses to account more easily and fix the broken water system.

We work hard to hold water companies to account and expose poor performance and have set clear performance expectations for water companies since 2013. However, all water companies need to take responsibility to tackle their own specific performance issues and it is their responsibility to comply with the law.



## 5. What can Torbay Council, Councillors and our residents do to help improve water quality and reduce pollution?

- 1) Report serious pollution by calling 0800 80 70 60 ([Report an environmental incident - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)).
- 2) Don't pour fat, oil or grease (FOG) down sinks/drains or into the sewer network as this can contribute towards sewer blockages: [Protecting the network | South West Water](#).
- 3) Check your household (or business) plumbing is not polluting the environment: [Plumbing and drainage misconnections | Water UK](#) and [Misconnections - check my property 0.pdf \(water.org.uk\)](#)

Residents can follow recommendations from the water company about reducing blockages in the sewer system and reducing excess rainwater into the network. [Caring for your sewerage | South West Water](#)

Residents can volunteer to become citizen scientists here - [Westcountry CSI - Westcountry Rivers Trust \(wrt.org.uk\)](#)

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## Action Plan: Goodrington (Deterioration)

<b>Location</b>	Torbay, Devon					<b>Bathing water number</b>	24200				
<b>Usage</b>	Popular					<b>Controller</b>	Torbay Council				
<b>Type of Bathing Water</b>	Coastal					<b>Designate in</b>	1988				
<b>Local contact- Water Quality:</b>	Gabrielle Garland					<b>Champion</b>	A&R Devon				
<b>Local contact- comms:</b>	Sophia Ashby					<b>Area Environment Manager</b>	Bruce Newport				
<b>Expected Result in 2024</b>	Sufficient					<b>Area</b>	DCIS				
<b>Year</b>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Classification and % risk of failure</b>	Sufficient (0%)	Good (0%)	Good (0%)	Good (0%)	Sufficient (0%)	Sufficient (6.2%)	Sufficient (32%)	Un-classified	Good (46%)	Good (0%)	Sufficient (0%)

Bathing Water History & Characteristics
<p><b>Bathing water profile</b></p> <p><a href="#">Bathing water profile (data.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Sampling Programme</b></p> <p>BW statutory sample: <a href="#">Goodrington Beach (24200)</a>                      Investigational sample: <a href="#">Goodrington Stream At Beach</a>                      Investigational sample: <a href="#">Goodrington Stream Car Park</a></p> <p><b>Local context</b></p> <p>The Environment Agency (EA) engage with the Torbay Council and South West Water (SWW) closely and liaise around water quality issues that could affect the bathing water.</p>

What can affect water quality?			
Agriculture %*	Sewage%*	Urban diffuse%*	Other%*
10	30	40	20
*expert judgement based on limited evidence & information			
<p><b>Agriculture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The catchment is mostly urban with little agriculture input. However, in heavy rainfall run-off from further up in the catchment can affect the water quality at the bathing water.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sewage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The closest Sewage Treatment works (STW) is Brokenbury STW which discharges offshore over 10 km from the bathing water. There are several storm overflows that discharge near the bathing water, which may impact the bathing water. Storm overflows may operate during heavy rainfall to protect properties from flooding. A full list alongside real-time monitoring can be found on SWW Waterfit <a href="#">website</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Bathing water is also impacted by a variety of pollution sources including diffuse urban pollution, misconnections, and dog faeces. These sources elevate bacteria levels at the bathing water which results in a variable bathing water classification of either good or sufficient in the past several years.</li> </ul>			

## What is being done to improve water quality?

### Agriculture

- Our investigation has not found any indications of water quality issues that can be directly attributed to agricultural practices. Our investigation included a detailed analysis of water samples from various sources in the area, as well as a review of agricultural activities that may have an impact on water quality. At this time, we can confirm that there are no known issues related to agriculture that are affecting water quality, if the situation changes, we will investigate further.

### Sewage

- In 2019 an EA survey using a rapid bacteria detecting machine identified very high bacteria levels in the Goodrington Stream. The source of the bacteria was traced to a manhole discharging and flowing overland to the stream. The manhole had become blocked by tree growth. The EA worked with SWW who resolved the issue.
- In 2020, as part of their Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) SWW carried out a Clennon Valley investigation, Nijhuis (on behalf of SWW) carried out additional sampling and flow monitoring within the catchment. SWW also installed metal cages at locations across the sewerage network to trap any ragging to identify misconnections. None were found.
- In March 2021 SWW completed their Clennon Valley Watercourse Misconnections Project. This did not identify any areas of concern.
- In September 2022 as part of their WINEP SWW concluded its Bathing Water Ambition Investigation at Goodrington. The investigation focused on the current understanding of water quality issues at Goodrington. It also quantifies what changes need to be made to bathing water quality to achieve at least 80% confidence of 'Good' or 'Excellent' compliance. The outcomes suggested that the most beneficial interventions are likely to be catchment management interventions and ongoing vigilance with respect to misconnections. SWW also concluded that Clennon Valley PSCSO is a contributor to bacteria loads at the bathing water. The suggested improvement will be considered in the next WINEP cycle following Ofwat's approval.
- In 2023 the EA completed a Dye Trace Survey of a holiday park in the area after a previous investigation has suggested it as a direct source of pollution. However, it was found there was no connectivity from the park sewer system to the small tributary.
- In 2023 SWW completed survey work in the area to look for area with impermeable drainage in order to identify areas for surface water separation.
- In 2023 SWW reviewed storm overflow spill from asset and found no correlation between storm spill and elevated bathing water samples.

### Other

- The 2019 survey also identified other locations of high bacteria that require further investigation. Follow up visits were planned for the 2020 season but were unable to happen due to Covid-19 restrictions. These visits were rescheduled for 2021.
- In 2021 the EA, Torbay Council and SWW began regular meetings to tackle pollution affecting Goodrington bathing water. These meetings led to an action plan being developed with actions assigned to each organisation. These meetings are ongoing.
- During the 2021 season we carried out additional monitoring of the Goodrington Stream alongside the bathing water monitoring. We included Microbial Source Tracking (MST) prep to the sampling giving us the opportunity to analysis for DNA marker if required.
- In 2021 Torbay Council checked the drainage arrangements at the Wildfowl lakes within Youngs Park to determine if they are impacting on water quality. This has been ruled out as a possible source as it drains to the SWW foul line.

- In August 2021 the EA installed water quality sondes in the stream to help assess any impact from a local business on water quality. This identified some areas for improvement which we will work with business owners and farmers on.
- During the 2021 season we carried out a further survey using our RapidBacti machine. We tested the “Oyster Point” water flow from the bank wall onto the Southerly end of the beach, and two flows in the stream at a Holiday Park. While all of these were low in bacteria it did identify some issues which we will be followed up.
- In 2021 Torbay Council we shared information with the EA when travellers set up sites near the watercourse. The EA sampled the area when vacated to measure and assess any impact on water quality.
- In 2022 the local authority monitored the number of dogs and birds on the bathing water to understand their effect on the bathing water classification. In 2023 Torbay Council replaced the bathing water signage to provide further information to the public.
- In 2022 we investigated the potential impact of a business upon the bathing water, and information has been passed onto the local environment officer who will follow up on the findings.
- Before the 2024 bathing season, we met with the local authority and SWW to share update and plan out action for the following year.

## Summary of planned future actions

### Agriculture

- No planned actions

### Sewage

- As part of their own environment programme ‘Waterfit’ SWW is planning on carrying out further work in the area. Clennon Valley storm overflow already has a large storm water tank. To further reduce discharges from storm overflows, SWW are looking at opportunities upstream to stop surface water, such as rainwater and groundwater, entering the network by 2025. This helps reduce the volume of water in the network and therefore helps reduce the operation of storm overflows.
- Through the Price Review 24 we are working with SWW to build their next WINEP, there are several schemes under review and being considered by Ofwat currently that would be beneficial for the bathing water.
- SWW are completing Natural Catchment Management Plans (NCMPs) for 12 pilot catchments in Devon and Cornwall in which Goodrington is a selected catchment. The NCMPs will be based on a comprehensive evidence review and an assessment of potential risks to water quality within each catchment area. The outputs will highlight the water management issues and opportunities within the catchment and form the basis for engaging local stakeholders, partners, landowners and land managers to identify actions and opportunities for local collaboration.
- Torbay Council will be investigating and following up on reports of boats discharging waste into the bay.

### Other

- We will continue to liaise with Torbay Council and SWW regularly to share data and information related to water quality at the bathing water.

- Torbay Council will be working with SWISco to gather data and information on reports of dog waste and will investigate adding a QR code to Bathing Water signage to direct public to the 'My SWISco service' App.
- During the 2024 bathing season both the local authority and the Environment Agency will collect detailed monitoring data on dog numbers at the bathing water and assessing these against bathing water data.
- During the 2024 bathing season, we will collect extra freshwater samples at various locations in addition to the standard bathing water sample. The purpose is to identify potential sources of pollution. These additional samples will be prepared for Microbial Source Tracking (MST). If we observe higher than normal levels in any sample, we will consider submitting it for MST DNA analysis, provided that resources are available.
- In 2024 the EA will be conducting a detailed walkover before the bathing season to better understand the drainage of the car park, we aim to understand whether run-off is entering the stream. We will liaise with Torbay Council on the results.
- Torbay Council will be evaluating all future planning applications in the area and consider future risks of pollution and mitigate where possible and ensure this information is shared with other stakeholders.
- Further resources would enable the EA to request full DNA analysis (MST) on elevated sample results recorded in the 2023 bathing season to understand and provide accurate sources of pollution.
- Further resources would enable, our Environment Management teams to complete a full catchment walkover to identify potential pollution pathways such as drainage systems discharging into the watercourse and land management issues such as livestock in /around watercourses.
- Currently, Land and Water teams are only resourced to attend the most serious pollution incidents and the vast majority of "minor impact" incidents go without response/attendance. Attendance can reveal the true impact of incidents as well as prevent repetition. Bathing water quality can be influenced by relatively minor incidents therefore subject to funding, additional resources to aid these incidents could be beneficial to water quality.

# Action Plan: Goodrington (Deterioration)

## Planned improvement actions (funded)

	Action description	Owner	Expected completion date (month/year)	Cost (£)	Funding source	Expected outcome	Expected impact on classification
<b>Agriculture</b>							
There are no planned agricultural actions in the catchment							
<b>Sewage</b>							
1.	SWW Waterfit Programme (Surface Water Separation)	SWW	12/2025	n/s	Waterfit	Reduce spill frequency of storm overflows	Unknown
2.	Natural Catchment Management Plans	SWW	06/2024	n/a	SWW	assessment of potential risks to water quality	Unknown
3.	Follow up on reports of discharge by private boat users	Torbay Council	10/2024	n/a	Torbay Council	Reduce sources of pollution	Unknown
<b>Other</b>							
3.	Data & knowledge sharing at regular meetings between EA, SWW and Torbay Council	EA/Torbay Council/SWW & others	Ongoing	n/a	EA/Torbay Council/SWW	Improved understanding of pollution sources and improved water quality	Unknown
4.	Dog waste data gathering campaign	Torbay Council/SWISco	10/2024	Unknown	Torbay Council	Informed public & improved water quality	Unknown
5.	Data gathering on Dog usage at the bathing water in 2024 bathing season	EA/ Torbay Council	10/2024	Unknown	EA/Torbay Council	Improved understanding	Unknown
6.	2 FTE Walkover and dye of tanks and Sewer Line in the catchment to understand drainage in the car park and lower Stream	EA	05/2024	n/a	EA Local monitoring commission	Improve understanding of sources of pollution affecting the BW	Unknown
7.	Review future planning application to understand risk to bathing water quality and mitigate where possible	Torbay Council	Ongoing	n/a	Torbay Council	Proactively manage sources of pollution	Unknown



## Action Plan: Goodrington (Deterioration)



8.	Additional Freshwater monitoring in the 2024 bathing season at 3 locations with MST prep.	EA (A&R)	10/2024	n/a	EA	Improve sources of pollution	Unknown
9.	MST prep added to the statutory bathing sample	EA	10/2024	n/a	EA Local monitoring Commission	Improve understanding of potential pollution sources	Unknown

## Planned improvement actions (subject to securing funding)

	Action description	Owner	Projected completion date (month/year)	Cost (£)	Potential funding source	Projected outcome	Projected impact on classification
<b>Agriculture</b>							
There are no planned agricultural actions in the catchment.							
<b>Sewage</b>							
1.	WINEP 2025-2030	SWW	2025-2030	Unknown	SWW (WINEP)	Reducing storm overflow spills and reducing sources of pollution	Unknown
<b>Other</b>							
2.	Requesting full MST analysis on four elevated sample results from the 2023 bathing season.	EA/SWW/Torbay Council	Unconfirmed	£85 for each DNA marker per sample (£800 for all markers) <i>Unconfirmed cost based on limited information</i>	Unknown	Improved understanding	Unknown
3.	Requesting full MST analysis on elevated sample results in the 2024 bathing season	EA	Unconfirmed	£85 for each DNA marker per sample (£800 for all markers) <i>Unconfirmed cost based on limited information</i>	Unknown	Improved understanding	Unknown
4.	<b>Catchment walkovers</b> generally focusing on potential pollution pathways such as drainage systems discharging into the watercourse and land	EA	Unconfirmed	n/a	Unknown	Improve understanding of pollution sources	Unknown

# Action Plan: Goodrington (Deterioration)



	management issues such as livestock in /around watercourses						
5.	<b>Reactive response to pollution incidents or elevated monitoring results.</b> Currently Land and Water teams are only resourced to attend the most serious pollution incidents and the vast majority of “minor impact” incidents go without response/attendance. Attendance can reveal the true impact of incidents as well as preventing repetition. Bathing water quality can be influenced by relatively minor incidents.	EA	Ongoing for Cat 1 and 2. Unconfirmed for Cat 3.	n/a	Unknown	Reactive response to pollution incidents	Unknown

## Action Plan: Goodrington (Deterioration)



### Planned engagement

	Engagement description	Owner	Completion date (month year) (if applicable)	Cost (£) (if applicable)	Funding source (if applicable)	Expected outcome
1.	Pollution Risk Forecasting	EA and Torbay Council	Ongoing	n/a	EA and Torbay Council	Informed public and potentially improved compliance
2.	Beachwise Partnerships	EA/LA/SW W/Others	Pre & Post Season	n/a	Beachwise/SWW/EA	Increase knowledge between stakeholders
3.	Public engagement campaign to reduce dog faeces pollution	Torbay Council	Ongoing	n/a	Torbay Council	Informed public & improved water quality
4.	Communication & education to boat users re-emptying of sea toilets in the bay	Torbay Council	Ongoing	n/a	Torbay Council	Informed public & potentially improved water quality

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### Key Lines of Enquiry Responses from South West Water

- 1. Please provide the 2023 statistics for the number of spills for each area in Torbay compared to previous years. Can we have hours and volume of discharge please. What spills in the last 18 months have occurred due to mechanical breakdowns?**

Please find attached the spill data taken from our annual return for Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in Torbay. Spill count and spill duration are reported annually to EA and shared on our website. Spill volume is a calculated, rather than a measured metric, calculated by hydraulic modelling and is generally used for detailed analysis of spills and investments to reduce spills. As we don't measure it is not contained within the published return.

With the response to the number of spills in the last 18 months in the Torbay caused due to mechanical breakdowns we can say that from time to time spills are caused by mechanical breakdowns however when this occurs the teams work hard to rectify making the necessary repairs.

- 2. Please can you provide details of what action has been taken to reduce the number of spills and how this will enable you to meet your target of 20 per year by 2025 as a result of your WaterFit investment of £330m?**

As part of our WaterFit programme we have installed monitoring on all of our overflow sites and developed our Storm Overflow Action Plan (SOAP). In addition, we have optimised network storage and invested in surface water separation to reduce spills at 4 CSOs impacting Goodrington Beach and Paignton Sands. This work will continue in the period 2025-2030. Of the 31 CSO's in Torbay, 14 already have a long-term average spill count of less than 10 spills per year. This is mainly due to the existing and historical need to reduce overflow spills impacting on designated waters. There are 9 CSO sites where the long-term average spill count is greater than 20 per year. We plan to deliver improvements to 13 CSO sites in Torbay, in AMP8 (2025-2030), reducing spills in line with the Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan, (SODRP). The SODRP has set out clear prioritisation process for water companies to follow which prioritises designated bathing waters, shellfish waters and spills impacting on ecologically sensitive sites.

**3. How many leaks have been reported and repaired over the last 12 months?**

During the last 12 months (1/9/23 - 1/9/24) the number of leaks that have been reported is 645 leaks reported in the Torbay area. Over 1427 leaks have been detected. Out of this total figure of 2072, 350 of these were customer leaks which are customer's own responsibility to repair.

**4. What publicity has been undertaken to encourage people to use less water and to report leaks, including raising awareness of the free or financial help towards leaks, including leaking toilets?**

In terms of encouraging customers to save water – we have our Water is Precious campaign. Please see the following link for more details - <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/household/your-services/save-water/water-is-precious>. This campaign is all about how our customers can protect water resources now and into the future by changing their behaviour through the promotion of free water saving devices.

We had an out of home campaign run over the summer months encouraging customers and tourists alike to be more mindful when it comes to water usage and offered water saving tips on our website. Please see the following link for more information: <https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/household/your-services/save-water/visitors>

In terms of leaky loos, customers are able to order a free leaky loo strip to their property to test whether they have a leaking toilet. Please see the below link:

[Leaky Loo | South West Water](#)

**5. What was the root cause of the cryptosporidium outbreak in Brixham and what was the timeline for the actions taken by South West Water and when do they expect this to be completely resolved? What mitigations have you put in place to prevent future outbreaks? Why did it take so long to rectify the problem and ensure that the water in the area was safe?**

We understand that those affected by the outbreak want to understand how this outbreak occurred, but due to the ongoing nature of the inquiry, and to avoid potential prejudice to any future legal proceedings, we cannot answer



questions on root cause at this time. We continue to fully cooperate with the DWI in their ongoing investigation.

This was an extremely rare and we have put in I filters and UV treatment at Hillhead reservoir as part of our extensive efforts to remove cryptosporidium from our network. Following receipt of the sample results, we acted quickly to implement the Boil Water Notice to all customers using the Hillhead Service Reservoir, and also extended this to the Alston area on 15<sup>th</sup> May on a precautionary basis.

Since 15 May, SWW and its contractors worked 24/7 to clean the network, including flushing and ice pigging while also replacing sections of pipework where high velocity flushing was not possible. We also inspected, cleansed, and tested the service reservoirs. We continued sampling throughout these interventions to ensure that the water quality returned to our usually high standards over a period of time and only then did we start to lift the Boil Water Notices in a phased approach.

We have proactively compensated all customers in receipt of a Boil Water Notice: far in excess of the compensation payments within our Customer Promise. We have also worked with the local tourism industry and have compensated both customers and businesses.

**6. What can Torbay Council, Councillors and our residents do to help improve water quality and reduce pollution?**

We welcome the support of Torbay Council, Councillors and residents to reduce pollution. Pollutions and overflow spills can be caused by sewer blockages, which in turn can be caused by inappropriate items being flushed into our network. We are working hard to raise awareness of the impacts of unflushables, e.g., wet wipes. To tackle these blockages, we have for a number of years run two successful campaigns called 'Think Sink' and 'Love Your Loo' that address that things that should and shouldn't be entering our network. Alongside this we have a successful education campaign in local schools to educate young people on responsible sewer use including the 3 P's (Pee, Paper, Poo) We would ask residents and visitors to dispose of unflushable items responsibly, therefore reducing the risk of sewer blockages, pollution, and spills.

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