

Consultation on draft River Basin & Flood Risk Management Plans opens

The Environment Agency has today (22 October) launched a six month consultation on the statutory review of the [draft River Basin Management Plans \(RBMPs\)](#) which set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to improve the water environment over the next six years.

River Basin Management Plans play a key role in the Government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) for 75% of waters to be as close to their natural state as soon as is practicable. They are designed to:

- Provide an overarching strategic framework for managing the local water environment, including pressures such as more extreme weather events and climate change;
- Set out the objectives and measures required to protect and improve the river basin districts in England, cross river basin districts in England and Wales, and the Northumbria River Basin District; and
- Inform decisions on land-use planning and work alongside other plans and strategies, such as flood risk management plans

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive, Environment Agency, said:

“Water quality overall in England has improved over the last twenty five years – wastewater treatment works put 60% less phosphate and 70% less ammonia into the water environment than they did in 1995 – but we know there is still much to do.

“These plans will play a key role in informing the way our rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal areas, wetlands and groundwater are managed and improved in response to the challenges we face now and can see ahead.

“We need radical and sustained action from all parties to ensure clean and plentiful water alongside greater resilience to flooding. I encourage all those with an interest to take part so we can take their views forward into the final plans.”

All submissions will inform the final plans, which will be published in December 2022 following approval by the Secretary of State.

In order to enable respondents to take a complete view of the water environment, the Environment Agency is also today opening its consultation on the draft Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) which set out how the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities will work together to manage flood risk in at-risk areas.

There are draft FRMPs for each of England's 10 river basin districts, with the three month consultation a chance for comment on the key actions in the plans as we work to implement the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy and ensure homes, businesses and communities are resilient to

climate change. Effective alignment between these plans is critical to building resilient catchments, mitigating the impact of natural hazards, and contributing to the delivery of the ambitions in the [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England](#).

The RBMPs consultation is open [now](#) and will close in 6 months' time on 22 April 2022. The final plans will then be published by December 2022.

The FRMPs consultation is open [now](#) and will close in 3 months' time on 21 January 2022. The final plans will then be published by Autumn 2022.