

News story: Water resources during hotter summer months

The Environment Agency is urging people to follow water company advice to use water wisely during these hotter summer months to help manage demand and reduce the impact on the environment.

The overall water resources situation across England is looking generally healthy. Groundwater levels throughout England are now starting to naturally decline as expected for the time of year but remain within normal levels the start of summer. Rivers, lakes and reservoirs are also broadly where they should be for this time of year. Although during dry spells it's not unusual for some rivers and lakes in faster responding water catchments to drop quickly but they tend to recover quickly when the rain returns.

Environment Agency operational teams and hydrologists continually monitor water levels throughout the year and will determine what action is needed. During hot weather we work with water companies and other organisations to reduce the impacts of the hot weather on the environment. The action we take includes incident response, regulating water abstraction, advising businesses and farmers on water usage and monitoring for environmental impacts.

The Environment Agency also takes action to ensure water companies have made robust plans for managing water supplies, although water companies themselves would decide on proposing water restrictions.

Paul Hickey, Deputy Director and head of water resources for the Environment Agency said:

A natural reduction in river flows and groundwater levels at this time of year is to be expected and water companies plan for these summer months. The summer started with river flow and groundwaters at normal levels in most areas, including the south east following the rain in spring.

There is enough water for companies to maintain supplies if water resources are managed properly. There are no water use restrictions in place. It is always helpful, in terms of future supplies and protecting the environment, for everyone to follow advice on saving water from their water company and use water wisely. At this time of year the Environment Agency is always ready to respond to pressure on rivers caused by low flows and we continue to monitor the situation.

If the public see fish gulping for air that could be because of reduced oxygen and river flows, please report it the Environment Agency incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

More detail on the current water situation is available on the Environment Agency's Creating a Better Place blog:

[Summer has started – what does that mean for the water situation in England?](#)

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Policy paper: Elmer flood and coastal erosion risk management scheme

Updated: Update to scheme progress 22 August 2018.

In August 2018 the Environment Agency will provide the local community with the opportunity to find out more about the preferred option to improve the sea defences at Elmer, and the chance to provide feedback to the project team.

News story: Update on seasonal closure for North West queen scallop fishery

A working group, including representatives from the fishing industry, is encouraging fishermen to voluntarily avoid targeting queen scallops in the Irish Sea (ICES area VIIa) and waters West of Scotland (ICES area VIa) until after 31 July 2018.

[This follows an earlier, seasonal closure between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018](#) which the Marine Management Organisation put in place for conservation reasons.

The seasonal closure will be enacted each year until further notice and is designed to protect the stocks during the spawning period. This closure was supported by respondents to a UK-wide [consultation held between 11 October](#)

[2016 and 2 January 2017](#) by Marine Scotland.

The working group was formed as a result of correspondence from some queen scallop fishermen and processors about the fishery. It includes fishermen, processors, fisheries administrations and scientists. The group aims to assess the current status of the fishery and, if appropriate, develop management measures and reduce long-term risk.

Following significant discussion, the working group considered that in the short term a voluntary closed season until 31 July 2018 should be introduced.

Notice: River Thrushel, Tinhay, Lifton: flood defence improvements

The Environment Agency gives notice that it proposes to carry out improvement work to the flood defences on the River Thrushel in Tinhay, Lifton, immediately downstream of Tinhay Bridge (NGR SX 39368 85345).

The proposed improvement works will involve the construction of a new revetment wall in the channel on the left bank of the river and the reinstatement of the bank to protect the existing flood wall. The work will take place along the length of the flood wall (approximately 30 metres).

This is in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999 as amended by SI 2005/1399 and SI 2006/618.