

# River Basin Management Planning

## National Advisory Group Update

June 2016

### The Second River Basin Management Plans

[The river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district 2015 - 2027](#) (2.8mb)

[Appendices to the river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district 2015 - 2027](#)  
(1.43mb)

[The river basin management plan for the Solway Tweed river basin district: 2015 update](#) (1.6mb)

[Appendices to 2015 update to the river basin management plan for the Solway Tweed river basin district](#) (1.29mb)

#### [Water environment hub](#)

The [Water environment hub](#) is a comprehensive online data tool that provides information on current condition and future targets for rivers, lochs, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwaters. The system has been designed to be user friendly with easy filtering options and the ability to export data, maps and charts. An updated version with waterbody sheets is now available.

Please contact us if you have any questions or queries about how to use the application, or if you would like to arrange a training session, via [NAG@sepa.org.uk](mailto:NAG@sepa.org.uk)

### Delivery of Objectives for River Basin Management Planning

SEPA and responsible authorities are currently assessing the objectives set within the plans to create a properly managed, efficient and effective plan to deliver measures based on the current resource available. Lessons learned from the first cycle have informed the development of existing, and introduction of new, measures to expand and achieve the “step change” in delivery needed to meet the ambition set out in RBMP2.

Some theme specific updates are included below. Further information about the delivery mechanisms are available on the SEPA web pages;

<http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/actions-to-deliver-rbmp/>

## Bathing Water Protected Areas

This year we report the first European water quality classifications under the [Bathing Water Directive](#). These new classifications give a more consistent picture of water quality condition at each location information on which can be viewed on [Scotland's Environment Web](#).

Of Scotland's 84 designated bathing waters, 80% meet at least the sufficient classification, with 65% of bathing waters meeting the good or excellent classifications.

There are 17 bathing waters in Scotland which will have a poor classification displayed in 2016.

We realise the economic importance of tourism to these local communities and our aim is to bring these bathing waters up to at least sufficient by 2020.

The key strategies to achieve this are to:

- Working with stakeholders to identify sources and reduce the levels of pollutants entering the bathing water
- Use the provisions detailed in the Directive to inform and advise on occasions when bathing is not encouraged.

Further information can be found at <http://www.sepaview.com/2015/10/the-new-wave-of-bathing-water-classifications/>

## Rural Diffuse Pollution

Measures to address rural diffuse pollution are co-ordinated and managed by the national Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group, [DPMAG](#)

We will expand upon the first cycle targeted catchment approach for [Priority catchments](#) and include new Focus Areas. During the second cycle, resources will be targeted on improving the condition of protected areas, such as bathing waters, shellfish waters, drinking waters and Special Areas of Conservation, SACs.

In the priority catchments there will be awareness raising, 1 to 1 farm visits and if required revisits to non-compliant farms. Focus Areas will involve evidence gathering and monitoring, local awareness raising and land manager visits similar to priority catchment delivery. Both processes should deliver significant change in land manager behaviour over time resulting in improvements in water quality.

We will also carry out a national campaign of awareness raising, including land manager workshops, promotion of '[Farming and Water Scotland](#)' messages; training courses, and best practice guides. This approach will complement the work being carried through the priority catchment approach. The [water environment hub](#) provides more details on these targeted catchments.

## **Engagement with Stakeholders to Support Delivery of Objectives**

The publication of the river basin management plans provides the opportunity to refresh the role of the advisory groups and refocus them on delivery. Our engagement with external stakeholders will be focused on:

- Raising awareness of RBMP2 – so that people understand the plans, what it means for them and how to access information. This will enable stakeholders to use data relevant to them to inform decisions and take action to improve the water environment.
- Supporting the delivery of actions through partnership working –by creating new structures with delivery partners or making use of existing ones.
- Coordination with other strategic planning processes and funding mechanisms – for example, flood risk management, land use planning, marine planning, forestry and the land use strategy.

Proposals have been sent to the current members of NAG for comment. Please contact [NAG@sepa.org.uk](mailto:NAG@sepa.org.uk) for further information about how you can become involved.

## **Water Environment Fund**

The [WEF](#) is the main delivery mechanism for non-regulatory work to improve fish passage and the physical condition of Scotland's water environment. SEPA administer the Fund on behalf of Scottish Government who make an annual grant for restoration projects that deliver environmental improvements.

In the financial year 2015/16 WEF has used third party grants to produce restoration plans and designs that will achieve good status in 40 water bodies in future years and improving over 1000km of river for fish or morphology. Control and eradication of Invasive non Native Species has also been funded along 281 km of rivers, in 43 water bodies and fish access and morphology improved in 16km of river. The Scottish Government has awarded SEPA a grant of £3.7 million for the financial year 2016/17 for restoration projects to improve the water environment.

## **Pilot Catchments**

Over the last year the agreed work plan for the South Esk, Dee, Nith, Glazert Water and Leven [pilot catchments](#) has continued to be delivered with the objectives of improving physical condition and contributing to natural flood management. At present we are working on 15 water bodies across the catchments: 3 are at the landowner engagement stage; 5 at options appraisal; 6 at the point where third parties are engaged and leading on design; and one where we have taken on the design role. For the Leven, catchment scoping has been completed and the catchment plan agreed in December. This will result in the inclusion of a further three water bodies within the pilot catchment work.

If all the projects progress to construction in future years then five water bodies are expected to improve to good condition. Of those that won't achieve good, four will improve by two status classes and five by one status class. One water body is a non-baseline and not classified but has been included for natural flood management benefits. All will deliver localised natural flood management benefits, with two potentially delivering benefits to downstream potentially vulnerable areas.

Further information is available from the catchment coordinators listed on the [Pilot catchment web pages](#).

## Good News

Congratulations to [the Spey Catchment Initiative, SCI](#). They won the innovative project category and made the final 4 for the overall [2016 UK River Prize and Nigel Holmes Trophy](#) at the recent [River Restoration Centre](#) annual conference that was held in Blackpool last month.

Their project on the Allt Lorgy (Spey Catchment) was focused on restoring the morphology and habitats on a 1km stretch of river and its adjoining floodplain. The long term vision is for the Allt Lorgy and its surrounding site to re-establish its natural wandering morphology through the operation of natural river process. Read more about the project and watch their video [here](#).

## Next Update

If you would like to see a specific topic covered in the next update paper or contribute an item please contact [NAG@sepa.org.uk](mailto:NAG@sepa.org.uk) with the details.

