



# SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AGREEMENT

## SCOTTISH WATER AND SCOTTISH ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY

### Progress Update February 2020

Scottish Water and SEPA have been working closely together to deliver the commitments set out in our Sustainable Growth Agreement, which was jointly signed by our Chief Executives in June 2018.

Good progress has been made and the SGA has helped our organisations to work more closely together on our shared goals of recovering value from wastewater, sustainably managing the environment and maximising the use of blue-green infrastructure to manage rainwater and prevent it from overloading public sewers.

Since the original SGA was published, we have identified an additional long-term outcome associated with blue-green infrastructure, relating to its role in place-making. To achieve this new outcome, we will need to work more collaboratively with planning authorities and local communities.

A summary of the work done so far and what is planned in the next phase of work is provided in the table below.

Shared vision	Long-term outcomes that Scottish Water and SEPA will aim to deliver, including through joint working with other stakeholders	Actions Scottish Water and SEPA are committed to delivering in partnership in advance of the next investment period in 2021 (✓ = completed, 👍 = ongoing, 📅 = planned)	Progress Update
<p>Scotland is maximising opportunities for sustainably recovering resources from waste waters and cycling those resources back into productive uses.</p>	<p>Recovery of energy and materials from waste streams leading to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lowered carbon dioxide emissions;</li> <li>• reduced pressure on natural resource by keeping materials circulating in the economy for longer;</li> <li>• generation of economic opportunities for circular economy businesses</li> </ul>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Identify the practical steps needed to implement potential options for increasing the recovery of resources from waste water and cycling those resources back into the circular economy.</li> <li>👍 If practical and needed, invest in small-scale feasibility studies of resource recovery from waste water to provide proofs of concepts.</li> <li>📅 Develop proposals for a full-scale resource from waste project for delivery in the investment period 2021 to 2027, subject to fit with other investment priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for recovery of value (in the form of energy) from sewage sludge through co-treatment with other organic wastes have been systematically explored at several sites around Scotland.</li> <li>• Two potential co-treatment sites have been identified and bench-scale trials will be conducted to assess the feasibility of this opportunity and the viability of a full-scale installation as part of Scottish Water's next investment programme.</li> <li>• Recovery of grit has been identified as another potential opportunity for increasing value from waste water. A joint project with SW, SEPA and Zero Waste Scotland will investigate options for re-use of this material during 2020.</li> <li>• A further opportunity to recover cellulose from waste water is being explored by Scottish Water with other water companies.</li> </ul>

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<p>The quality of Scotland's river catchments is protected using the most sustainable and resilient combination of pollution prevention measures.</p>	<p>Sustainable pollution prevention delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better protected and resilient river catchments for the future;</li> <li>• optimised use of energy and chemicals in waste water treatment;</li> <li>• increased natural and social capital as a result of greater use of nature based solutions;</li> <li>• overall greater cost-effectiveness</li> </ul>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👍 Identify and progress any investment, planning or regulatory opportunities for making more sustainable choices over how water quality in river catchments is protected, including in catchments where there are multiple different sectors and multiple waste water discharges contributing to the pressure on water quality.</li> <li>✓ Develop approaches that help ensure the effectiveness of pollution prevention measures is resilient in the long-term, including under a changing climate.</li> <li>📅 Identify practical measures for sustainable catchment management that can be supported and tested through trials at local or catchment scale.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have developed a prototype of a new methodology called One Planet Choices for making management decisions for catchments and other systems that seeks to support more sustainable choices in delivering outcomes by considering resource demands, the benefits to business, the natural environment and wider society. We will refine this method further over the coming months by applying it to specific catchments and other systems.</li> <li>• A key next step is to apply and test the method with the involvement of a wider group of stakeholders. We intend to do this in catchments where multiple organisations and stakeholder interests interact to affect the natural environment and society.</li> <li>• This work will help support Scottish Water's investment choices at several wastewater treatment works in the Eden catchment in Fife, further sustainable decision making within its next regulatory period, and SEPA's work on the River Basin Management Plan.</li> </ul>

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<p>Scotland's towns and cities have strengthened resilience to climate change as a result of maximising their use of blue-green infrastructure to soak-up and manage rainwater and keep it from overloading public sewers</p>	<p>Sustainably and effectively drained towns and cities where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impacts from sewer and surface water flooding are being prevented and reduced;</li> <li>• river water quality is protected;</li> <li>• the costs of pumping sewage and stormwater, including energy costs, are minimised;</li> <li>• people are enjoying the biodiversity and amenity benefits of the blue-green infrastructure that is also helping soak-up and manage rainwater.</li> </ul> <p><u>Additional outcome since original SGA was published:</u> a collective focus on place is strengthening a collaborative culture which understands the relationship between plan making, the principles of place, and the funding and financing commitments needed to bring forward coordinated delivery.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 👍 Work with a local authority to plan how the amount of rainwater flowing to the combined sewer system of a Scottish town or city can be significantly reduced, including developing proposals for piloting the plan from 2021.</li> <li>• 👍 Work with partners to develop a practical, decision-making framework for helping plan and deliver integrated urban drainage systems that increase resilience to climate change; and facilitate and maximise implementation of bluegreen infrastructure.</li> <li>• 👍 Identify any changes to existing regulatory and investment planning frameworks that could help support the delivery of more resilient drainage systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are in advanced discussions with Aberdeen City Council to explore how we can drive innovation in managing rainwater and waste water drainage in ways which significantly reduce flows to the combined sewer, increase resilience and contribute to place.</li> <li>• Nine technical guidance notes have been prepared to help drive improved modelling of rainwater runoff by development consultants. This will better inform rainwater management requirements for development proposals.</li> <li>• The regulatory and investment planning frameworks have been revised during the Strategic Review of Charges 2021. These can now support consideration of long-term solutions such as blue-green infrastructure to deliver these multiple outcomes.</li> <li>• We are working with Dundee City Council to develop a decision-making framework for delivering the blue-green infrastructure options in the St Marys area. This is trialling the One Planet Choices approach mentioned above to inform Scottish Water's investment plans and improve our focus on place-making in the location. The trial may be able to be scaled up for use in other catchments.</li> </ul>