

Conservation and Biodiversity

We are committed to ensuring compliance with all environmental legislation and obligations, carefully assessing the impact of our activities, especially construction projects, to ensure the impact of such schemes is minimised. We strive to ensure our staff are aware of detailed legislation and in 2010 ran courses on specialist topics such as water voles and otters. Staff learnt about the life cycle and habits of these endearing creatures and how to avoid causing harm throughout their daily work activities.

As part of our wider commitment to improving environmental quality, we have responsibility to conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity on our landholdings. The Company owns and manages 44 operational sites throughout the region, including 19 water treatment works. Sites are located in a variety of habitats including chalk downland, river catchments and coastal margins. In 1999 we appointed an independent ecologist to review the habitats and species present on all operational sites. This information was used to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan with site specific advice and it is currently under review to ensure it remains appropriate and up to date.



A site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) extends on to the Itchen Water Treatment Works and a number of sites owned by us contain Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). We have liaised with Hampshire County Council to provide information for their database on the status of SINC's.

In 2010/11 we provided funding to two community wildlife partnership projects to support water vole conservation on the River Meon in Hampshire and on the Selsey peninsula in West Sussex. The Company is an active corporate member of the "Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust" as well as the "Water for Wildlife" organisation.



**Hampshire & Isle of Wight
Wildlife Trust**
Protecting wildlife. Inspiring people.

water for wildlife



Improving the Habitat at Highwood Reservoir

In preparation for a construction project at our Highwood raw water reservoir, near our abstraction site on the River Itchen, it was necessary to remove young trees and gorse. We took the opportunity to complete this

work in accordance with our biodiversity plan creating large open areas encouraging a more diverse woodland edge habitat with sunny slopes to encourage plants, reptiles, butterflies and birds.

Recreation and Access

Staunton Country Park: The proposed Havant Thicket Winter Storage Reservoir site is owned by the Company but managed through an agreement with Hampshire County Council as part of the Staunton Country Park. The 160 hectare site includes a public bridleway and network of permissive paths through woodland and grassland, linking the Country Park to the Forestry Commission land at Havant Thicket to the north.

In 2010/11 we extended our education partnership with Staunton Country Park for a further 3 years. Both organisations are committed to delivering a variety of fun and interesting activities to spread the word that everyone can do something to save water now and save the environment for tomorrow. The partnership aims to promote water efficiency and to deliver a curriculum linked "Water is Life" programme to schools which incorporates the water cycle, water supply and treatment, as well as water conservation.

In addition to supporting an education officer post we provided £89,000 funding to help deliver new projects at the park including:

- A water themed toddler trail around the farm
- Creation of a water zone

Highwood Reservoir: This raw water storage reservoir site owned by Portsmouth Water is located within the popular Itchen Valley Country Park operated by Eastleigh Borough Council. The site is not fenced and is open to the general public, with a circular permissive path around the reservoir. In 2011 scrub clearance work has helped to open up the circular path and improve the habitat for wildlife.

At other company owned sites there is limited access via public footpaths and bridleways. Special arrangements have been made for access at:

- The Itchen Water Treatment Works to enable schools, universities and other organised groups to participate in educational visits.
- The Clanfield Service Reservoir site for the Hampshire Astronomical Society who organise a number of visits for the benefit of its members. Small groups of members of the public are able to visit by prior arrangement with the Society.