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Annual Report on Conservation, Recreation and Access



Conservation

The Company's total licensed area of supply covers 868 sq km of an attractive part of Southern England between the South Downs and the coastal areas of Hampshire and West Sussex. It includes the historic cities of Portsmouth and Chichester, and the popular holiday resorts of Bognor Regis, Selsey and Hayling Island. The harbours of Portsmouth, Langstone, Chichester and Pagham have a number of important environmental designations under the EU Habitats Directive and are popular water activity venues.

Biodiversity Action Plan - Policy and Practice

The Company's policy is to conserve and enhance the natural environment of its land and water areas and to preserve historic buildings and equipment, so far as is consistent with the primary duty of providing a sufficient supply of wholesome water at reasonable cost. Where possible the Company explores opportunities to encourage recreational use.

The Company has a long history of good practice in consultation and development in an area with many important wildlife sites and with landscape appreciated by residents and a large number of visitors. When new structures and buildings are required, the Company's policy is to ensure that, by careful design and landscaping, they blend into their surroundings. We continue to give full consideration to the environmental aspects of all our activities throughout our area of supply.

Carbon Reduction Strategy

It is now recognised that climate change represents the single greatest threat to our way of life and the world's ecosystems. There is clear international consensus that climate change is happening and that human activities are responsible. The UK water industry contributes towards the UK's carbon footprint.

Portsmouth Water recognises the need to address climate change within their business and has developed a Carbon Management Plan.

The Carbon Management Plan considers existing measures currently being applied and proposes medium and long-term measures to reduce the company's carbon emissions. The measures are split into those that affect the operation of the business and those that affect customer behaviour.

Operational measures relate to the measures Portsmouth Water can influence with regard to service delivery. Customer behaviour relates to the measures that require action to be taken in collaboration with Portsmouth Water's customers.

Sustainable Procurement

In procuring goods and services, the Company's practices are as follows:-

- 1) The environmental impact of new capital schemes are investigated as appropriate and sensitive sites are either avoided or mitigation measures carried out, subject to independent ecological advice.
- 2) New capital schemes are designed and constructed so as to blend with their existing surroundings as far as is economic and practicable.
- 3) Opportunities for environmental enhancement are taken where it is economic and practicable to do so.
- 4) The potential archaeological impact of new capital schemes is investigated prior to commencement of work and monitored during implementation, subject to independent advice.
- 5) Recycling or re-use of excavated materials is carried out whenever economic and practicable.
- 6) All vehicles used have diesel engines with Euro IV reduced emissions.
- 7) Diesel fuel has a low sulphur content, with benefits to exhaust emissions.
- 8) Timber used is from replanted forests.
- 9) 85% of reinstatement material is recycled.
- 10) We ensure that our pipe suppliers have suitable policies for control of pollution, resource management and material selection.



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Astronomical observatory at Clanfield
service reservoir site



Other Environmental Projects

A study into the **sustainability of abstraction from the River Itchen** was undertaken to establish whether Habitats Directive species were adversely affected by the activities of the company.

The outcome for the abstraction licence at Gaters Mill, the point of abstraction for the River Itchen Treatment works, is a reduction in summer monthly abstraction or peak deployable output, and imposition of a minimum residual flow or 'hands off' flow condition which restricts abstraction from the River Itchen when flows fall to a specified level, together with an annual licence reduction. The implications of the sustainability reductions have been included in the company's Business Plan for the period 2010-2015.



Chichester and Langstone Harbours are Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Habitats Directive. A study into the sustainability of abstraction from the Company's West Sussex sources was undertaken to establish whether wading birds were adversely affected by the activities of the company. As a result of this study the Company has agreed a variation to the licence affecting six sources in West Sussex which will reduce overall licenced abstraction by 15%.

At Havant and Bedhampton Springs, the application of a minimum residual flow condition for the Hermitage Stream and the Hampshire Lavant will ensure that freshwater flows are maintained to Langstone Harbour. The new condition has been included in a licence variation which has also reduced the licenced abstraction at Havant and Bedhampton by 16%.

Looking SE across Langstone Harbour

Havant Thicket Winter Storage Reservoir

Construction of a winter storage reservoir at Havant Thicket is part of the Company's 'twin track' approach of both demand management and resource development measures which over the long term will continue to maintain supplies whilst minimising costs and charges to customers.

The reservoir is needed from 2020. Planning permission is to be sought for which baseline ecological surveys have been completed. Further ecological studies are in progress and planned to provide supporting evidence for the Environmental Statement required to support the planning application.

Notable species found in and around the proposed site include Dormice, many species of Bat, Adder, Slow Worms and lizards together with many birds. Plans for the reservoir include habitat enhancement to adjacent woodland, new tree planting and seeding the new embankment with wild flowers and creating a new wetland along the northern shore of the reservoir.

Recycling of Surplus Excavated Material

Maintenance of the Company's underground pipe network generates waste material, which in the past has been placed in an inert waste tip owned by the Company. Existing tipped material and future waste material is now being reprocessed to extract secondary aggregates and a high quality sub base material produced for reinstatement of the company's excavation work in the highway.

Amenities and Recreation

Staunton Country Park, in conjunction with Portsmouth Water launched a 'Water is Life' Trail for visitors as part of the education programme. The trail continues to attract large numbers of visitors and reported to be successful by Staunton Country Park.

The Water Trail can either be guided or self-guided and is designed to help educate children and parents visiting the Park about the importance of water as a resource and encourage them to be more water efficient. The trail takes the form of a walk within the park searching for water information boards.

The 'Water Is Life' education programme provides school children of all ages the opportunity to learn about the world of water by completing practical tasks using resources provided by Portsmouth Water. The Company provides children at Key Stage 2 and 3 with water 'information boxes' containing a number of hands on experiments and activity sheets to assist the process of learning about the importance of water.

The Country Parks at Havant Thicket (in Staunton Country Park) and Highwood Reservoir (in the Itchen Valley Country Park) are open to the general public and managed by Local Authorities. At other sites there is limited access by public footpaths and bridleways.

At the Clanfield Service Reservoirs site, The Hampshire Astronomical Society has for many years operated a number of observatories for the benefit of its members. Small groups of members of the public are able to visit by prior arrangement with the Society.

Portsmouth Water's **River Itchen treatment works** is available for educational visits by schools, universities and other organised groups.

View from The Terrace at Staunton Country
Park towards the site of the proposed Havant
Thicket Winter Storage Reservoir

Little Egret, possible visitor to Havant Thicket Winter Storage Reservoir
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