



WATER ENVIRONMENT GOVERNANCE GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

September 2022

1. BACKGROUND

At NWG, we take care to protect and improve the environment in everything we do, leading by example. In our PR19 customer research, our customers told us that they would like us to work with others to deliver wider improvements beyond just water quality to the areas of rivers and beaches that they use. In response, and with support from our partners, we have developed a new approach to improving the water environment for 2020-25 (AMP7).

The new approach includes a bespoke performance commitment (PC) and Outcome Delivery Incentive (ODI) for Water Environment Improvements, which allows us to build on the existing activities in our plan, working with others to go 'above and beyond' our baseline activities and investment where we think it is of benefit for our customers. This is supported by a new funding scheme – bluespaces – to develop and deliver projects in partnership.

The Water Environment Governance Group (WEGG) provides external assurance and gives our regulators and stakeholders confidence that where we decide to invest in water environment improvements, we do so for the right reasons and with customers' interests at heart.

Further detail on NWG's approach to water environment improvements and bluespaces are available on our [webpages](#).

2. PURPOSE

The WEGG provides NWG with advice, guidance and external assurance on its water environment approach. The group helps ensure, through development of and involvement in due process, that the approach taken delivers km of improvements to meet and exceed targets for NWG's Water Environment Improvements ODI that are justified and of benefit to customers. The WEGG is also responsible for providing evidence of external assurance to Ofwat.

3. SCOPE

This group covers NWG's approach to improving the water environment across its Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk supply and operating areas (10 management catchments across the North East, Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk).

The areas of interest for ESW include ESW supply areas, drinking water source areas, and downstream management catchments (Figure 1). The water environment within these regions is considered to be all rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs, wetlands, beaches and coastline.

Accessible water environment is defined as the areas of rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs, wetlands, beaches and coastline that customers can get to via public or private access, allowing customers to engage with, enjoy and benefit from water in the environment.

Improvements delivered upstream may benefit downstream accessible areas.

The WEGG determines whether proposed projects fit within the scope of the approach and has the final say on eligibility.

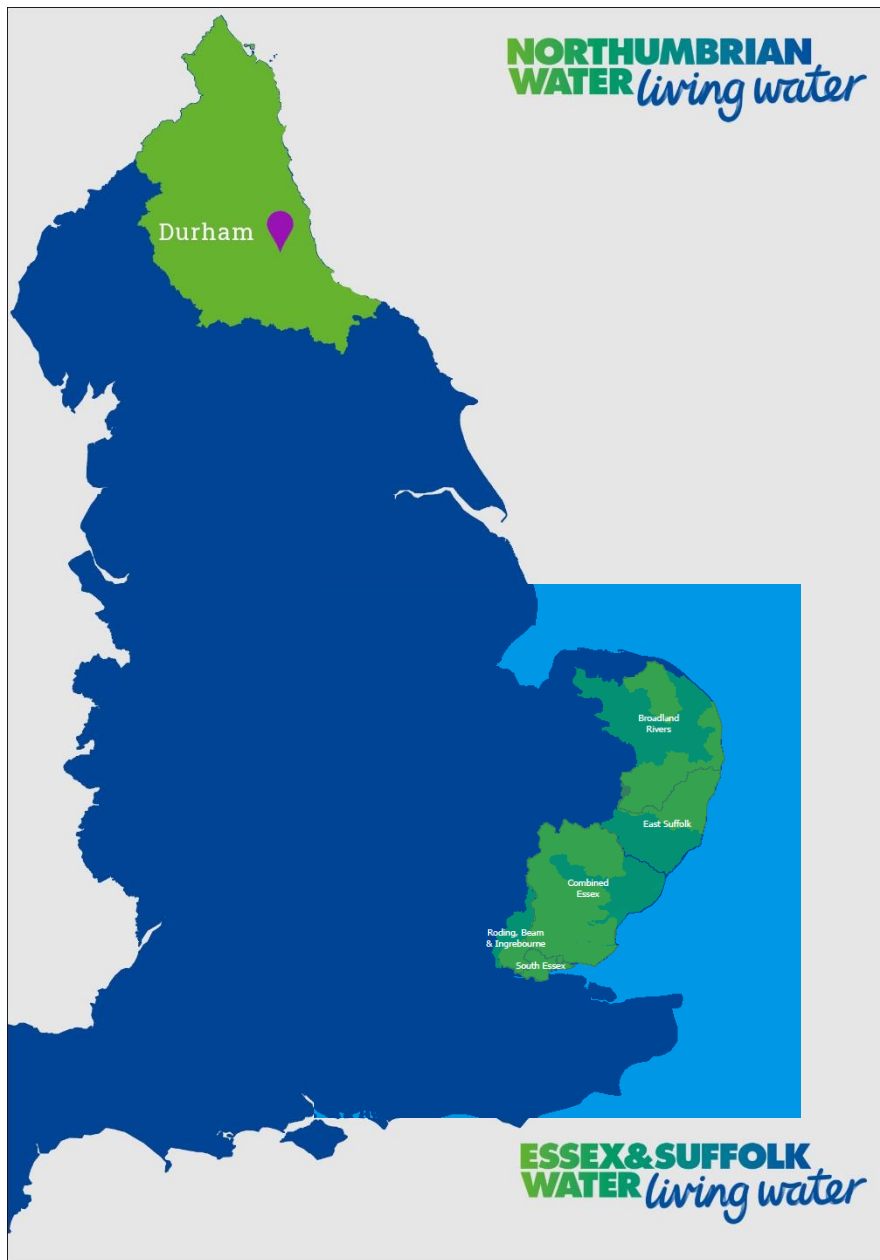


Figure 1. Areas of interest for delivering Water Environment Improvements

4. AIMS

The aims of the WEGG are to:

1. Bring together key individuals to work together to provide NWG with advice, guidance and external assurance on its water environment approach, including the bluespaces scheme and projects developed for the Water Environment Improvements ODI;

2. Provide strategic advice and support to NWG's Strategic Catchment Manager, who has overall responsibility for NWG's water environment approach, and NWG's Water Environment Coordinators who are responsible for developing and delivering projects;
3. Ensure, through development of and involvement in due process, that the approach taken by NWG delivers projects which are cost-beneficial, justified and of benefit to customers and improve km of accessible water environment to an appropriate standard for the Water Environment Improvements ODI;
4. Provide a formal link to regional stakeholder groups and through these to other partnerships and partners, demonstrating external assurance and supporting engagement activity which can be of benefit to improving the water environment;
5. Provide evidence of external assurance to Ofwat on NWG's Water Environment ODI through contributions to the Annual Performance Report.

5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the WEGG are to:

- Review and advise on projects in development for the ODI as these are presented to the group at meetings
- Review and advise on Candidate Projects presented to the group at meetings or via email and give formal approval as a group for these to be included in annual programme plans
- Review and advise on Evidence Packs for delivered projects and give formal sign off as a group for km water environment improvised to be recorded against the ODI
- Give feedback on the approach and the programme to NWG as it develops to support its successful development
- Submit an annual formal statement to NWG which can be included with the Annual Performance Report to confirm assurance activities have been undertaken by the group

6. MEETING INPUTS AND OUTPUTS

The Wastewater Strategic Planning Team will provide the following to WEGG members ahead of meetings:

- Meeting papers (if relevant)
- Candidate projects for review
- Evidence packs for sign off

Expected outputs from meetings include:

- Action log
- Decisions log
- Meeting notes
- Presentation pack as PDF

7. STANDARD AGENDA

The proposed agenda items for WEGG meetings are:

1. Introductions
2. Review of actions
3. Programme update
4. Project approvals
5. Project sign offs
6. Projects in development
7. Issues and risks
8. A.O.B

8. ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

- Initial Terms of Reference were agreed at the first meeting of the WEGG on 14/10/20. Following the completion of the feasibility study and the agreed approach, these ToR have been updated in August 2022 and will be approved by the group at the next meeting.
- The WEGG meets every two months.
- The agenda and papers for each meeting and further information of relevance to the group are stored in the Water Environment Governance Group SharePoint site: <https://nwqcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/td0273>

9. MEMBERSHIP

Members have been selected for their individual skillset and personal strengths, in addition to their organisational representation. The group has aimed for a balance of members from across NWG's NW and ESW regions.

The external WEGG members are:

- Richard Powell OBE, Independent Member (also member of The Water Forum) – Group Chair
- Graham Dale, CC Water (also member of The Water Forum)
- Anna Gerring, The Rivers Trust (also representing the Catchment Based Approach)
- Mike Jeffries, Northumbria University
- Melissa Lockwood, Environment Agency (also member of The Water Forum)

NWG members are:

- Mike Madine, Head of Wastewater Service Planning, Quality & Performance
- Clare Deasy, Strategic Catchment Manager (Programme Lead)
- Stephen Thompson, Water Environment Coordinator – NW
- Kim Wallis, Water Environment Coordinator – ESW
- Laura Kennedy, Secretariat