

Anglian Water Consultation Response

Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Plan Reg. 16 Consultation

Anglian Water welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the Old Hunstanton Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Anglian Water

- 1.1. Anglian Water is the water and water recycling provider for over 6 million customers in the east of England. Our operational area spans between the Humber and Thames estuaries and includes around a fifth of the English coastline. The region is the driest in the UK and the lowest lying, with a quarter of our area below sea level. This makes it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change including heightened risks of both drought and flooding, including inundation by the sea.
- 1.2. Additionally, our region has the highest rate of housing growth in England. The 2021 Census report identifies that population growth in the East of England region was 8.3% in the past decade against a national average of 6.6%. Population growth in the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk was considerably lower at 4.6%.
- 1.3. Anglian Water has amended its Articles of Association to legally enshrine public interest within the constitutional make up of our business – this is our pledge to deliver wider benefits to society, above and beyond the provision of clean, fresh drinking water and effective treatment of used water. Our Purpose is to bring environmental and social prosperity to the region we serve through our commitment to Love Every Drop.

2. Anglian Water and Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 2.1. Anglian Water is the statutory water and sewerage undertaker for the Old Hunstanton neighbourhood plan area and is identified as a consultation body under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Anglian Water wants to proactively engage with the neighbourhood plan process to ensure the plan delivers benefits for residents and visitors to the area, and in doing so protect the environment and water resources.

3. Commentary on the Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 3.1. The following comments are made in relation to ensuring the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to sustainable development and has appropriate regard to assets owned and managed by Anglian Water.

Policy 13

- 3.2. We support the aims of Policy 13 regarding measures to minimise surface water run-off through the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Together with the policy measures (LP18 Design and Sustainable Development and LP19 Environmental Assets – Green Infrastructure, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity) in the emerging King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, we consider the approach to multi-functional SuDS in the neighbourhood plan area is sound.

- 3.3. Our draft [Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan](#) identifies that SuDS are the main solution for a mixed strategy for the Heacham water recycling catchment (WRC) over the medium term. Our long-term strategy to 2050 aims for 50% surface water removal from the Heacham WRC network.

Policy 14 Groundwater, the River Hun, Ditches and Ponds

- 3.4. Anglian Water notes the evidence highlighted to support Policy 14, including residents' concerns regarding sewage entering the water environment. We take our environmental obligations very seriously and in AMP7 (2020-2025) we are investing £220 million on schemes to reduce spills - protecting and improving our region's environment. We are committed to tackling storm overflows and have measures in place to address them - already having removed many of the highest risk storm overflows from our network.
- 3.5. As part of our environmental programme, we have placed Event Duration Monitors (EDMs) on many of our storm overflows. These tell us the number of times a storm overflow has overflowed. The information from EDMs is reported back to the Environment Agency every year, and if there is any evidence which suggests there is an environmental impact, we invest in a solution to solve the problem. We will have full EDM coverage across all our storm overflows by the end of 2023.
- 3.6. We would emphasise that our commitments to [Get River Positive](#) by 2030 mean we are absolutely dedicated to improving the health of our region's rivers for people and wildlife. All water companies account for 24% of quality issues in England's rivers. With other sectors, including farming, housing, and transport accounting for over 76%. We have partnered with Severn Trent to work collaboratively to drive meaningful action and make the changes we all want to see for a better future for our rivers and environment.
- 3.7. As part of our Get River Positive commitment, we have pledged to be as transparent as possible with the data we collect about our water recycling network and the improvements that we're making, especially around storm overflows. We have published an online map to show our latest investment schemes to improve the environment, 2021 storm overflow data, and the river network¹. This map will be updated as new data becomes available.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. Anglian Water is supportive of the direction taken in the Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Plan in terms of the policy approach to minimising surface water run-off through sustainable drainage systems that will help deliver resilient development. When taken with the emerging King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, the approach is consistent with our strategic direction.

¹ <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/services/sewers-and-drains/storm-overflows/improving-rivers-and-coastlines>