

South East Water Resources Forum

Annual Report
2004



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY



SOUTH EAST
ENGLAND
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

Working for England's World Class Region

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Chairman's Introduction

I have great pleasure in writing the introduction to the Annual Report of the South East Water Resources Forum. As with the Report for 2003, this Report serves a number of purposes. It is a report on the Conference for 2004, an annual report on the various activities that have affected the Forum during the past 12 months or so and a look ahead to what is on the horizon for 2005 and beyond. We have included summaries of the papers presented at the conference in May 2004 as part of this report and a number of Forum position papers on water related topics.

The South East of England continues to face immense challenges, a phrase I used in my introduction in 2003, but one which seems to have increased in the past 12 months rather than diminished. The dual challenge of finding sufficient suitable land for the proposed developments coupled with providing sufficient water for the new homes is one that we all face. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has announced the numbers of homes it anticipates being built in our region over the next few decades. The South East England Regional Assembly has published a number of different housing scenarios in its Draft South East Plan but there is not yet agreement at individual county level. Tensions between planning authorities are replicated by tensions further down the chain, whether between developers and planners, developers and water companies, planners and environment groups or between existing inhabitants of the South East who are worried by the extent of development and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The South East Plan, as the Regional Spatial Strategy will be known, has reached an interesting and critical stage and one that presents a real opportunity for the Forum to make a positive contribution to the water environment in the region. To some extent that happened with the Conference in May 2004, but this has been taken to the next stage with our event in March 2005, which addressed specifically the South East England Regional Assembly's consultation on the Draft South East Plan in respect of water supply, wastewater and flooding. The decisions made as a result of this plan will affect our region for generations to come, so every effort will be made to ensure that the Forum contributes effectively on the topic of sustainable development, particularly in the area of water.

The Water Companies five yearly economic review has now been completed. Companies in our region now know what schemes will be funded over the next five years. As a result of their plans, customers will face significantly increased bills for water and wastewater. The Forum can assist in communicating what these plans will mean. Companies can now begin to implement their programmes for new water resources, improved water efficiency, reducing leakage, improving wastewater treatment and hence improving the rivers and beaches in the South East. Delivery of these programmes, which include a number of reservoir schemes, presents real challenges to the water companies and the community. The Forum can help members understand the costs and benefits of such programmes of work and in turn can communicate with the Water Companies about some of the anxieties felt by members.

English Nature and the wildlife Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's) remind us that we have 700 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) in our region covering 130,000 hectares and many of these sites are of international importance. Many depend upon the water environment around them. Conserving this environment and these sites remains high on our agenda. We have not experienced a summer drought for a number of years, but signs this winter are not encouraging. Late winter flows in our rivers are well below average and groundwater levels are lower than average. A summer drought would reinforce the feeling amongst many that we can ill afford the developments proposed. The Forum is in a unique position to present a balanced view of the conflicting pressures facing us.

Water efficiency is a very hot topic and one that has been exercising the Forum Executive over the past couple of years. Our planned conference for 2005 will have water efficiency as its theme. We need to see new homes built to exemplar standards of efficiency and retro fitting of efficient appliances become easier and more fashionable. To this end we have to promote how this can be achieved and our position statements and website will begin this process. Again the Forum is in a unique position to be able to work with all the stakeholders to see how better progress can be maintained.

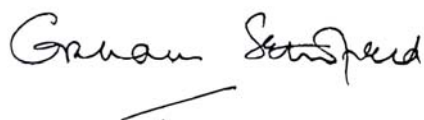
In the introduction to the Report for 2004, I referred to the need for the Forum to become a focal point as a source of useful information particularly relating to good practice. Progress with our web pages has been slower than we would all have liked, but our pages will be amongst the first on the SEOnline site developed by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) when it goes live this year. This means we have the opportunity to assist anyone who is seeking to find information or understand best practice. The Environment Agency organises the annual Water Efficiency Awards and there are many entries from our region. We hope to be able use our web pages to gain publicity for these companies, schools and organisations who are leaders in this field.

Leadership was one of my themes last year and I make no apologies for repeating the message again. Inspirational leadership will be needed to ensure that this region meets the various challenges that we face. The Forum can assist in the process of leadership but ultimately it will come from the many organisations across our region whose everyday activities and decisions have an impact upon water. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has to become more than a trendy aspect of corporate governance. Water is at the heart of CSR for many companies in our region and we look to the leaders in those companies to demonstrate that they are amongst the exemplars in this aspect.

The development of the web pages will give the Forum the opportunity to reach new audiences. High in our list of priority audiences will be school children who we know often have water-related projects on their curriculum. If we can give them the opportunity to see and read about the water issues we all face, then when they become adults in this region, their understanding of sustainability will be better than that of our generation. For too long we have been unsustainable in our behaviour and habits with water; we need to change and children can often be a most effective catalyst for change.

Climate change has been raised up the political agenda and we face greater climate change than many other regions. Whether one agrees with the various scenarios or not, something odd seems to be happening to our weather. It would be irresponsible just to sit and wait before taking steps to ensure that our quality of life in the broadest sense is not damaged beyond repair by an unsustainable approach to water supply, wastewater treatment and flooding. Whichever of the climate change scenarios is favoured, they all impact water negatively. Hotter summers, drier winters and greater storm intensities all threaten our quality of life. This is another reason why it is important that the Forum assists in communicating the challenges and the remedies to an enlarged audience.

It is still only three years since the inception of the Forum. There is much to do and there are even more challenges now than when it was created. I will be handing over the Chair to my successor at the conference in May 2005. I have enjoyed the role and wish the Forum every success in the future.



Graham Setterfield
Chairman
South East Water Resources Forum

The Conference – Making Space for Water

From the outset, members of the South East Water Resources Forum have identified the importance of long-term strategic planning for water. They have also pointed to a lack of joined-up thinking in the past between different aspects of water management.

The review of current Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) by The South East England Regional Assembly has presented an opportunity to incorporate the latest knowledge and understanding of our water regime into strategic planning. The Regional Spatial Strategy, to be known as the South East Plan, will replace RPG9 and will address spatial planning and specific sub-regional issues. The quantity and quality of available water in the South East is a fundamental issue; coupled to an environmentally important landscape and the challenges of climate change, the new Plan needs to be able to cope with all of these pressures whilst providing sustainable solutions to our development needs.

The Forum decided therefore that its 2004 Conference should focus on the relationship between water planning and the South East Plan. Held at Egham on 25th May, the event attracted over 80 delegates from a wide variety of interests and backgrounds. Speakers representing the Regional Assembly, the water industry and consumers set out the issues and helped delegates to understand how the Plan will be developed and how they will be able to input effectively to the process. Discussion sessions and workshops offered a first opportunity to debate and contribute advice to the Regional Assembly. This has subsequently been followed up by an event in March 2005 specifically to enable members of the Forum to formulate a response to the first draft of the South East Plan that was published in January 2005.

This section of the Annual Report includes the presentations that were made by the speakers at the Conference in May 2004.



New reservoirs will be a key element of long-term water resource planning



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South East Water Resources Forum Annual Conference 2004

“Making Space for Water”

Chairman's Introduction
Graham Setterfield

South East Water Resources Forum Conference

“Making Space for Water”

Remit of the Forum

- Informal partnership set up in 2002
- SEEDA and Environment Agency sponsorship
- Broad stakeholder membership with an executive
- All aspects of water
- Seeking to promote sustainable water solutions

South East Water Resources Forum Conference

“Making pace for Water”

Forum Priorities

- Achieve strategic influence
- Raise awareness of issues
- Promote best practice
- Broker solutions
- Provide leadership for stakeholder engagement
- Organise annual conference and report

South East Water Resources Forum Conference

“Making Space for Water”

The challenges for us all

- Driest corner of England
- Rising demand
- Changing patterns of occupancy
- Climate patterns
- The number of new houses
- ODPM's Sustainable communities plan

South East Water Resources Forum Conference

“Making Space for Water”

- This event
 - In previous years we've explored many issues
 - Strategic planning was a recurring theme
 - Now it's for real; the SE Plan will shape the region for the next 20 years or more
 - We are in at the start and can influence the plan
 - This is an early opportunity to advise the Regional Assembly on water related issues and to ensure that sustainability remains the watchword

Putting Reality and Transparency into The South East Plan

Margaret Devlin – Managing Director, South East Water

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) - a grand sounding title if ever there was one. And it's quite a mouthful, isn't it? Quite difficult to say, even at this time of the morning. But actually it's quite appropriate that it's difficult to say, because - what a difficult task. At the same time, what an opportunity; an opportunity to get it right; an opportunity for true partnership working, to ensure that everyone can contribute to shaping the future of our region. We have here a real chance to have a Plan that all stakeholders can support, that contains information and data that we all understand and can sign up to. A plan that we will all have confidence in. Difficult to achieve, but surely not impossible if we all work together.

The South East England Regional Assembly has started the ball rolling, and we welcome the series of spring debates that have been taking place recently, although I have some concerns about the guidance notes that have been issued in relation to water, which I'll come back to later.

Today however is an opportunity to set water firmly on the agenda and enable all of us involved with water in some shape or form, for better or worse, to work together to input to the process and make our voices heard. And not just heard; listened to and acted upon. Because if we don't - if water supply and wastewater issues are glossed over or at best given lip-service in the RSS - let's be clear - the South East is going to be in trouble.

I mentioned confidence just now and that's important. Because before I move on to talk about how the RSS can help water resources planning in the South East, I do think it's important that we look at where we are now, certainly in terms of the current planning guidance. Quite frankly, the current plan - RPG9 - has fallen apart and has and is continuing to create enormous difficulties in water resource forward planning. What do I mean? Well, let's look at where we are now.

The increase in housing that was set out in the 1990's simply has not been achieved. We are way behind in the numbers that were forecast then and which we need to take into account when preparing our water resource plans. Why? Why hasn't this materialised? The house-builders certainly aren't holding things up, they want to get those houses built.

The multi-tiered and tortoise like planning system may well have created delays and is long overdue its revamp. Perhaps not enough account was paid to the 'not in my back yard' attitude which often prevails. A local plan may indicate say 10,000 new homes in one area, but the people already living there often have very different ideas and the debates and public meetings can delay the process significantly.

Was the data surrounding RPG9 inaccurate or over-optimistic or both? Whatever the reason, the fact is the figures for new housing forecast haven't materialised, and yet these are a key data source that we currently have to use for forecasting demand and new connections. If this data is either inaccurate to start with, or the system cannot deliver the expected outcome, where does this leave us - how do we plan?

We need to ask ourselves a series of questions - we need to take a reality check and to stand back and really ask ourselves some serious questions. The increase in new housing hasn't materialised. And as a result has homelessness actually increased in the South East? I'm ready to be proved wrong, but I really don't believe that this is the case.

Therefore, do we actually really need the vast number of new homes in the future that Mr Prescott has told us we need? Where are the drivers for this huge increase? Where are all the extra people coming from? Where are the robust population figures that support this? Are they coming from Eastern Europe, from the North of England? Well if so, they are likely to face quite a problem. And, I think this is incredibly important - anyone coming to the area (other than from London) is going to face, not necessarily a shortage of housing but a shortage of affordable housing. Isn't this the reality of the situation?

In the recent MORI research commissioned by SEERA to evaluate residents' attitudes towards the region, housing was overwhelmingly chosen as the top priority in the region. Interestingly however it was the cost of housing that was identified by 86% of residents as a problem. Residents didn't say that they wanted more housing in general, but that they would prefer homes coming onto the market (new or old) that were priced less expensively. Is it

a case of redeveloping existing housing stock rather than building more?

That's what the results of the research tell us many people believe. The majority of the residents interviewed believe that the best way to tackle the issue is to bring empty homes back into use; 20% see improving and adapting existing homes as the best option. Only 16% believe new housing development is the answer. If there is strong public opinion in this direction, is it surprising that new development is often so strenuously resisted? Making the South East into one big town is not going to address the affordability issue and surely this needs to be addressed first before deciding that hundreds of thousands of new homes should be built.

SEERA's discussion paper to inform and guide the spring debates that are being held around the region proposes further study into the links between housing supply and house prices and we fully support this. We too have serious concerns about the Barker Review, which suggests that higher building rates must be achieved to stabilise the housing market. As an aside, this is an interesting approach; we're short of something, so build more. Not an approach we take or that would be supported for water resources planning; "we're short of water, so build more reservoirs?" This doesn't actually seem to have received much support in the last 10 years, does it?

We strongly agree that the ODPM's so far unpublished regional household projections using Census 2001 data should be used as a comparison for SEERA's own demographic forecasts. I understand that currently there is no date available from the ODPM for the publication of this data. We should be seeking ways to speed this up as it's essential that the forecasts that are used are as accurate as possible, and that we can all agree upon and use consistently in planning.

Whilst I have broad agreement with some of the points in SEERA's discussion paper entitled Projections and Forecasts, I am extremely concerned that we could be going down the old avenue of simply holding a finger in the air to predict new housing growth. After explaining at some length that a significant amount of data is not available or is uncertain and much further work needs to be done - the paper then concludes that the range for debate should not start below the current RPG rate of 28,000 per annum and that an upper figure of 36,000 should allow for other factors to be taken into account as necessary. How can a conclusion like this have been reached before the

work that needs to be done to reach it has been completed? What is the basis for the conclusion?

The water companies in the South have taken the initiative and worked together to commission research to produce the population and property forecast for the next 25 years. So if between four of us we can do this, why can't a Government body do the same and distribute the figures to everyone, so that we are all working from the same data? It is absolutely essential that we all have confidence in the demographic and housing projections that ultimately feature in the new RSS in order to do our own demand forecasting in the water industry. And that all stakeholders are using the same data and that there is a single source. Otherwise we could be investing in new resource development and water and wastewater infrastructure that is not in fact actually needed. This is no way to run a sustainable business or create a sustainable community.

Moving on, another area where data can vary wildly and cause all sorts of issues is that of demand management. Demand management has to continue to play a key role in water resource planning, but it is enormously difficult to assess the effectiveness of current demand management activities. Water companies have been promoting the water efficiency message to customers for a significant time now. And we certainly do support the twin-track approach of resource development alongside demand management. But how do we really know what effect all this demand management activity has had, or will have?

From the Environment Agency (EA) I have heard the view that we should be able to offset growth in demand by water efficiency savings. I've even heard the figure of 30% savings from water efficiency as being achievable. 30%? Where can this figure possibly have come from? Where in the UK is the data available to support this? Perhaps it's from the planet Pie in the Sky. Certainly our own customer research indicates that most people are already pretty well aware of the ways in which they can use water wisely. But, and those of you who know me won't be the least surprised by what I'm going to say next, compulsory metering is the only way that will provide an effective way of reducing water consumption.

All the time that water is available on an unmeasured basis for customers to use freely - without any real thought as to how much it is costing them - no amount of leaflets, free pens with water saving messages stamped on the side, or balloons given out in town centres, will make much

difference. Water is given no real value, because it's cheap and you can use as much as you want. 37p a day - that's an average bill for our customers. Yes, it is cheap. Am I being cynical?

Last year, our reservoirs were down at unprecedented levels. We had extensive media coverage showing people standing in mud, in virtually empty reservoirs appealing for the public to think carefully about their water usage. We ran advertising campaigns with the same message, suggesting that there could be the need for restrictions next spring if we didn't have above average rainfall during the winter. And what effect did these empty reservoirs have on demand? What more powerful image could we have used in a water efficiency campaign? Well, no effect at all of course. Did demand drop? No it did not. Only when people understand the true value of water, and their usage is directly related to how much they pay, when they have a financial incentive, will they really change their habits.

But, I hear you cry. What about affordability? Yes, of course, we need to look at tariff structures, and vulnerable customers are already protected. But, for goodness sake, let's get those meters in the ground, in the most economic way, which is to meter whole areas. We need to have the power to compulsorily meter. And this is where SEERA can help, by supporting this approach in the resource-constrained South East. The time for shilly-shallying around this issue has gone.

What about new houses then, which all of course now have a meter installed as a given. How can we ensure that new houses are built with sustainability in mind and that water efficient appliances are fitted as a matter of course? As Tony Hillier of Hillreed Homes says in the Water Resources Forum's Annual Report 2003, "there is a resistance to water saving measures in new homes, such as water recycling because they add cost to the property but do not add value. Given the choice between whether a customer would like a tiled floor, a conservatory or grey water recycling there is simply no contest". As Tony says - and I agree - let's get real about water saving.

What we can do, however and where SEERA can also use its influence, is lobby for extending the Building Regulations to take account of sustainability. The Regulations were established to support health and safety and don't at present extend to most of the sustainability issues. I believe this is something that the Sustainable Buildings Task Group is highlighting and which I would support. A voluntary approach or code in

this area is unlikely to be successful. Equally, public bodies should lead by example in this area. Building in the public sector should be to the highest standards and should take the lead in the sustainable use of resources. Perhaps this should be made a condition for a construction company doing business with a public body.

We've read in the Barker Review that social housing levels must be increased. Here's a perfect opportunity then, for building these with sustainability high on the agenda. There is no doubt however, that no matter what demand management we undertake, there is a need to develop new resources, because demand is growing, we are already resource-constrained, and climate change is creating erratic weather patterns. The Institution of Civil Engineers recently reported to the Commons Environment Food & Rural Affairs Committee that "new reservoirs, water treatment plant upgrades and increased sewerage capacity are all vital if Britain is to avoid the worst effects of climate change". They called for the reluctance to build new water reservoirs to be re-examined to increase capacity for drought storage.

Water companies are of course forward planning as best they can, given the vagaries and inconsistencies of data we've already discussed, however if you were taking part in one of SEERA's Spring Debates, you could easily believe that actually, we're doing nothing of the kind. The organisation's guidance paper on Natural Environment and Resources doesn't include any information from water companies on their plans for resource development, but focuses exclusively on information. The EA aren't the only experts in this field; we need to see a balance in the debate, not just highlighting the problems but actually looking at some of the solutions, which are already in progress or planned.

Also this paper states that the EA has indicated that in some areas of the region, water abstraction may be close to or at sustainable limits with the environment being adversely affected. How do we know? How do we know that it is specifically over-abstraction of ground water that may be affecting the hedgerows in an area. It could be, for example the construction of a nearby road that may be creating this problem. Where is the baseline data for some of the sweeping statements we hear? How can the effect on the environment be accurately measured if there is insufficient baseline data? How can you assess the impact on the fish population if there is no seasonalised fish count data?

Summing up then. What are we looking for from SEERA and the Plan? Well, I've talked a lot about data and that's what we need, data not opinion. We need transparency and uniformity across all areas, whether population forecasts, housing projections or where environmental data needs to be collected. We, the water companies need to be included in the planning process - we really do know what we're talking about, we are experts in water resources in the same way that Tony Hillier is providing input from the angle of housing and what customers want. And we need to dispel the idea that water efficiency promotion is going to result in enormous savings in demand; it won't. And we need support for compulsory metering.



Sensitive planning can enhance the water environment

Difficult? Yes. Impossible? There's no such word in my vocabulary.



Adequate water resources are essential when planning a development



Community and Social Issues

Catherine Harvey - Chairman, WaterVoice Eastern

Despite being from the Eastern region, we have much in common with the South East:

- Dry areas/patches
- Development plans:
 - o Cambridge/Stamsted
 - o Milton Keynes/Bedford
 - o Thames/Essex
- Higher than national average of metering penetration
- Four companies ranging from big to small
- Water important in tourism – significant environmental programme

Differences:

- Eastern region has vast tracts of land designated agricultural
- Sparse population (relatively)

In response to RPG14, as it is called in our region, WVEN has taken a seat as one of 29 community stakeholders in the East of England Regional Assembly (EEDA), for the sole purpose of enhancing the consideration of community and social aspects of water and sewerage in the context of the planned extensive development.

So I am very pleased to both speak and listen to the audience today. The principle I want to address is the need to engage with water customers to ensure:

- A consumer perspective in the plans
- An acceptability of the plans by the community and
- A full understanding of their implications and cost

Water consumers are not a homogenous group. We usually divide them into domestic/commercial, metered/un-metered, large users/small users. In fact the divisions are more complex than that:

- Enthusiasts and detractors of metering – not always determined by those who do and don't have a meter
- Those on mains drains and those not
- Those who believe it's a valuable, reasonably priced service
- Those who believe water is a right and should be free
- Those able to pay bills and those not able
- Those wilfully in debt and those who struggle to manage

Customers do have factors in common:

- A tendency to take water for granted
- They want security of supply
- They want to be free of the risk of sewer flooding and other interruptions
- They perceive the service as good value for money - acceptability
- They want manageable bills - affordability. This applies to all customers except those who think that it should be free.

Not only is the customer base not homogenous, further changes are evolving: sophistication of understanding:

- Flooding has increased the common awareness of the complexities of delivering water and sewerage services. The impact of planning decisions – building in flood planes is almost common parlance
- Climate change is generally understood as impacting upon water availability and likelihood of flooding
- Metering has increased individual awareness of being a consumer of water
- Increasing prices will change perceptions of value and make customers more sensitive to water as a commodity. This, in turn, increases awareness of lack of choice.

These four factors contribute to gradual erosion of the 'taking it for granted' approach and increase the sophistication of understanding, the likelihood of strong opinions and interest about aspects of the development plans under discussion. The gap between our informed position and the general customer base is closing.

Accepting that there is an increasingly interested customer base and responding to that in the consultation phase will go a long way to ensuring ultimate acceptability of changes to water and sewerage services. Consulting with the customer base also represents best practice for both planners and water and sewerage providers. There is no reason why the monopoly services of regional planning or water service should not encourage and enjoy the benefits of consumer representation.

We believe there is an imperative to have a discussion in public, both in venues such as this and in the general press, about the very serious questions that are mentioned within the confines of the organisations represented here:

- Issues about the adequacy of resource and the short and long term costs - financial and environmental - of delivering it
- Are the sewerage services adequate for the new development – short and long term? Will existing customers be paying for these improvements, or just the new house purchasers?
- Where development is planned for areas with chronic low pressure, will it make matters worse? Or, with the extra customer base, will it make repairing the problem financially viable?
- Will so much agricultural land be used that future sludge disposal becomes a problem?
- Does some of the development encroach upon existing sewage treatment plants? Again, will it be existing or future customers who are expected to pay for the consequential odour control?
- Does the timetable for development take account of the planning application needed to provide greater resources and infrastructure?
- Does the timetable for development take into account the Office of Water Services (OFWAT's) five year Business Plan cycle? Or, perhaps, has OFWAT taken into account the prospect of these developments? Or, is there such a mismatch that the additional costs are going to be met by interim determination, thereby springing price increases on the customer base?
- Will customers need to change the way they use water to further minimise waste? This alone is a reason for engagement of the public. If people are to change, they will only do so if they can see a good purpose in it. A good parallel here is the change in attitude to drink driving - only achieved with information and public acceptance of a once accepted behaviour becoming unacceptable.
- What will be the overall impact on metering? Will the increased population metered mean there will be an imperative to meter everyone? Would an increase in metering mean that it was possible introduce a whole new range of tariffs? Possibly some that in turn will further promote the minimisation of wastage.
- If water efficiency becomes such an imperative will this be desirable? We know that around 8% water efficiency is sustained after meter installation. Coupled with a tariff structure this could be much more. These development plans offer an ideal context in which to address all of this.
- How compatible are these plans with National Water Framework Directive – timetable and price?
- Have we learnt from past mistakes - building on flood plains? Is there sensible co-operation between planners, companies, all three regulators and the public?

- Will the increased cost of water and sewerage services mean affordability will be an issue for others in addition to those on low and fixed incomes? Ministerial guidance said the Government was “looking at” this. Do these development plans increase the urgency and robustness with which this needs to be tackled?

In conclusion:

- There needs to be leadership in the area by conglomerates such as this, including Central Government, regulators, water companies, planners
- Controversial topics, increasing costs, compulsory metering, flooding vulnerability and an adequacy of resource in long term.



Uckfield – devastating effects of flooding

SOUTH EAST PLAN

Water Resources Forum



Councillor Royce Longton

**South East England Regional Assembly
Regional Planning Committee**



SOUTH EAST PLAN

The South East Plan



The South East Plan will:

- Replace existing Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9)
- Simplify the planning system to two tiers

It will be

- A statutory Regional Spatial Strategy
- Broader yet more specific...
- Provide a regional framework up to 2026
- A plan of plans – linkages to other strategies & cover spatial issues beyond town & country planning



Regional Spatial Strategy – the linkages



National Policy

Regional Strategies

Regional Strategies

South
East
Plan

Local
Development
Frameworks

Local Community
Strategy

Local Transport
Plans



SOUTH EAST PLAN

What will the Plan cover?



Subject to consultation, key issues are likely to include:

- Housing provision
- Improving accessibility to work, services and facilities, with better transport choices
- Ensuring sustainable economic growth
- More prudently management of resources
- Urban renaissance
- Improving health
- Addressing climate change and its implications
- Enhancing landscape quality and biodiversity



SOUTH EAST PLAN

South East Plan Research



Research will make sure the Plan is based on the latest data, including:

- Housing need and demographic forecasts
- Travel to work & inter-regional movements
- Potential for economic & employment growth
- Waste and cross-border movements
- Transport investment priorities
- Flooding and water supply



SOUTH EAST PLAN

South East Plan Sub-regional Studies



Ten sub-regional studies are assessing the need for specific policies and sub-regional strategies in the Plan, considering:

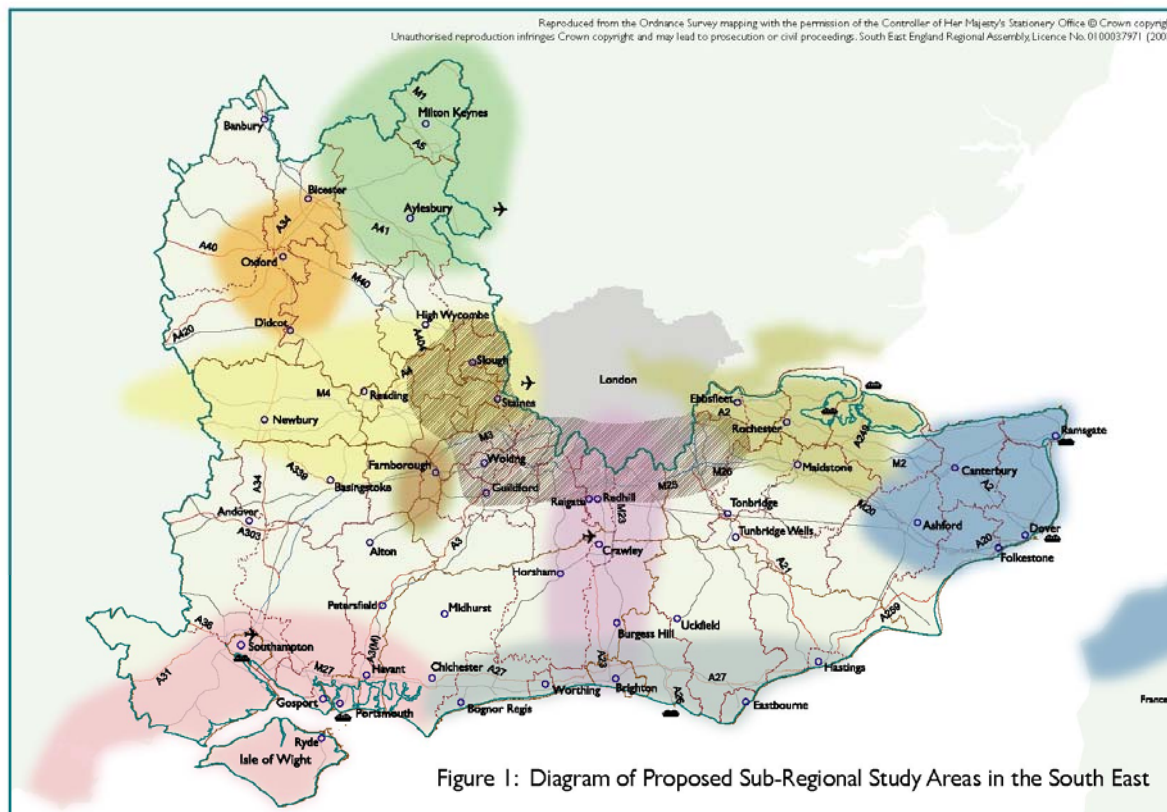
- Cross-boundary issues (within & beyond the area)
- Strengths & weaknesses
- Economy – aspirations & strategy
- Housing - scale & type of provision & distribution
- Investment priorities – especially infrastructure

The first phase of work completed and the need for sub-regional strategies is currently being considered



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Sub-regional study areas



SOUTH EAST PLAN

South East Plan Context



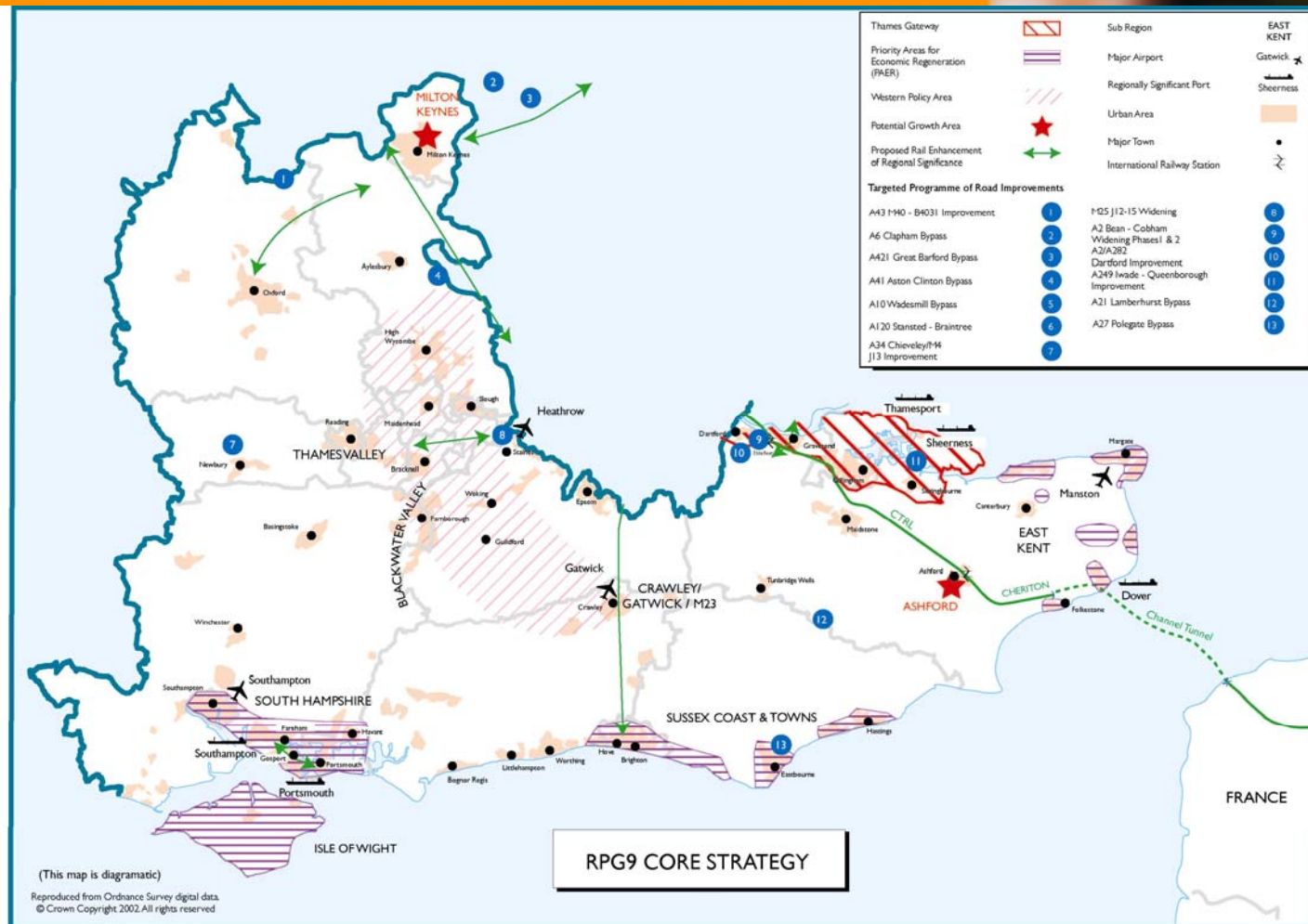
Not starting from scratch...

- existing Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9)
- Other regional, local and sectoral strategies
- Partial reviews of RPG9 policies by the Assembly



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Context RPG9 Core Strategy Map



South East England Regional Assembly

From Crisis to Cutting Edge



Draft Regional Transport Strategy

JANUARY 2003



South East England Regional Assembly

Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Regional Waste Management Strategy



No Time to Waste

MARCH 2004



South East England Regional Assembly

Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Regional Minerals Strategy



MARCH 2004



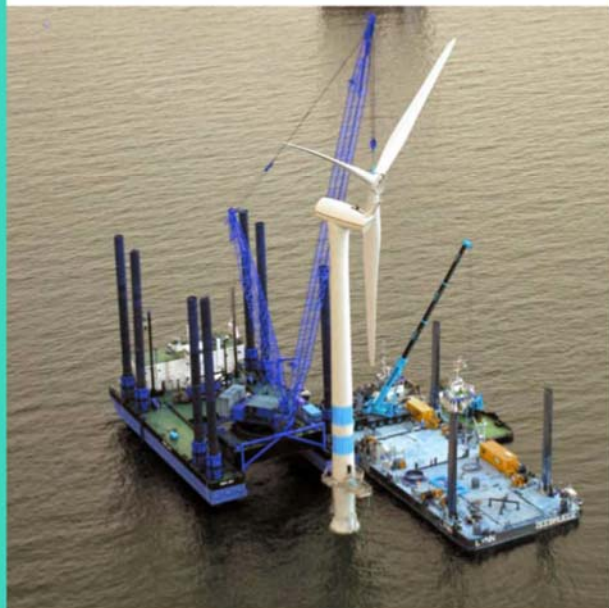
South East England Regional Assembly

Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy



Harnessing the Elements

MAY 2003



South East England Regional Assembly

Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation



Destination South East

MAY 2003

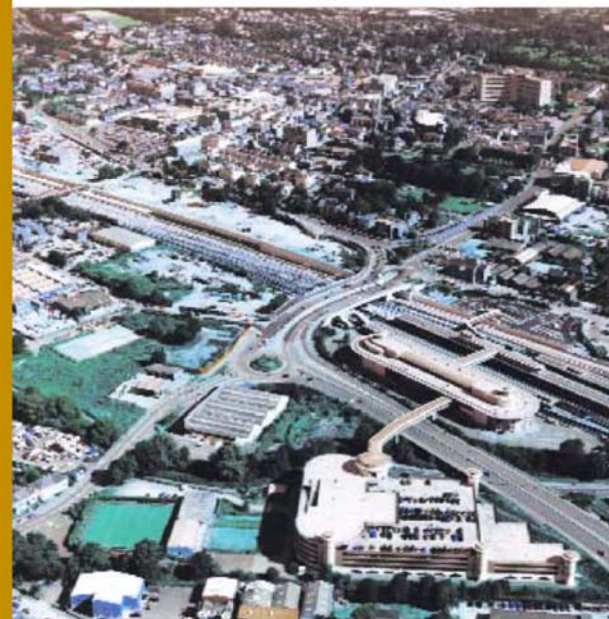


South East England Regional Assembly

Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Ashford Growth Area



JULY 2003



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Consultation - The Spring Debates



- 19 workshops – general & sub-regional
- Over 800 participants engaged
- Part of consultation on issues including
 - Population & economic forecasts
 - Housing
 - Transport
 - Climate change, especially impact on water
 - Spatial choices & options
- Build on research and work of Advisory Groups
- Inform Assembly on drafting SE Plan



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Consultation – MORI research



- Attempt to get to “man on the street” (8.5 million people)
- 1,800 residents surveyed, representative cross section of population (c.200 per county)
- Eight Focus Groups – qualitative
- First phase complete
- Next phase (June 2004) will include specific questions about environment and water issues

Results on website

[www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/
southeastplan/consultation/opinion_polls.html](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan/consultation/opinion_polls.html)



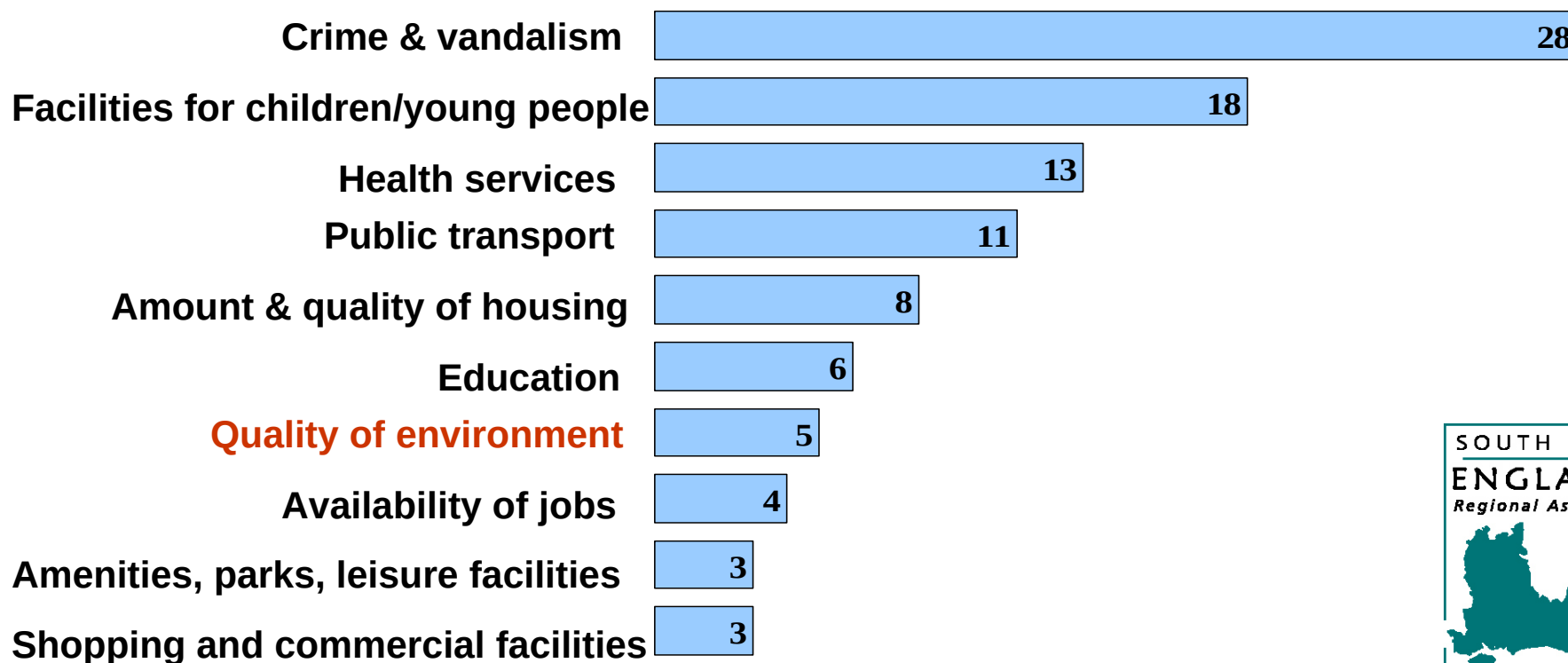
SOUTH EAST PLAN

Consultation – MORI research



Aspects of the area that need to be improved (prompted) %

Telephone interview of 1,839 adults (16+) in South East Jan-Feb 2004 (MORI)



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Consultation – MORI research



“I don’t think it is going to resolve issues just to chuck up loads of houses, they need to build a whole infrastructure with it like shops and schools. If they just chuck up houses then it is not going to be a very nice place to live”.

“The trouble is, there are all the amenities. There are sewage works, schools, water supplies and everything else. They have got to be thought of before they even attempt to build. If they are not, it makes it very difficult for the people living there.”



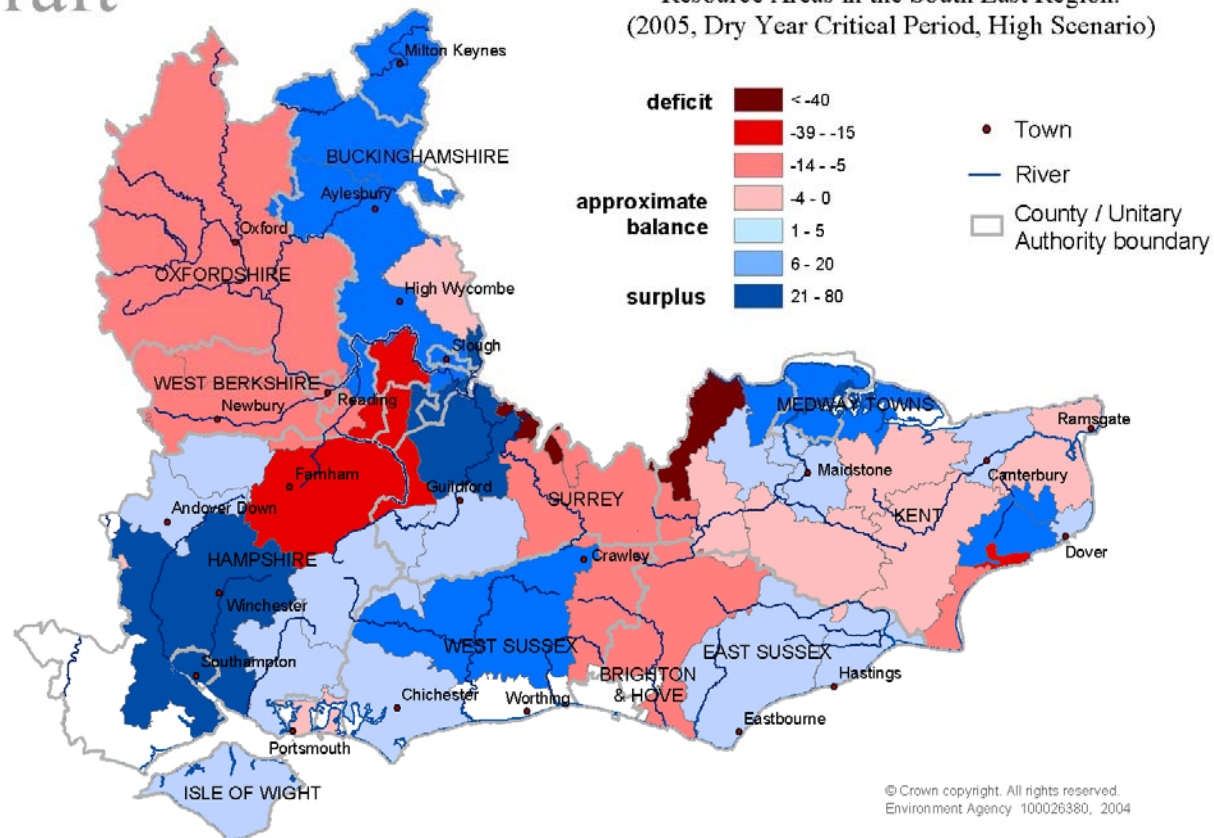
SOUTH EAST PLAN

Water Resources – advice from EA



Draft

Initial Available Headroom (MI/d) by Water Company
Resource Areas in the South East Region.
(2005, Dry Year Critical Period, High Scenario)



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Environment Agency 100026380, 2004



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Planning for water



- Climate change is cross-cutting issue for the Plan
- Environment Agency advising SEERA on:
 - water resources & supply-demand balance under different scenarios
 - flood probability & assessment
 - waste water treatment capacities
- Dialogue developing with water companies
- Trans-national learning through ESPACE Interreg 3B project
- Natural Resources & Climate Change Advisory Group
- SE Climate Change Partnership
- Consultation including Spring Debates



SOUTH EAST PLAN

Next steps - A tight timetable



Report prepared for member workshop re Spring Debates	16 June 2004
Regional Planning Committee	29 June 2004
Executive Committee	2 July 2004
Regional Assembly Plenary	21 July 2004
Prepare Draft Plan including sub-regional policies/strategies	Autumn 2004
Public consultation on Draft	January 2005



Report Back

A summary of the work carried out by the Forum during the past 15 months

The Executive Committee has continued to progress the activities covered in the Annual Report 2003. These include the following:

- The Annual Report for 2003 was produced. This included a report on the Conference held in May 2003 and also included useful information about the South East Plan process, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), the Sustainable Communities Plan, the Water Act 2003 and the Water Framework Directive. Over 2,000 copies of the Report were issued and the Report can now be found on our web pages, details below. The Forum is very appreciative of the support from the Environment Agency in the production and expense of producing the 2003 Annual Report.
- The Forum held its annual conference entitled “Making Space for Water” in Egham, Surrey in May 2004. Over 80 people attended this event which took the South East Plan as its theme. The Conference is reported within this Annual Report.
- The Executive considered the implications of the autumn drought of 2003 for the Forum. A proposal that the Forum should issue a statement was overtaken by the onset of rain.
- The Executive and co-opted specialists have produced a series of position statements which will be available on our web pages. Other statements are currently being prepared. The full list includes:
 - o Customer's role in water efficiency
 - o Metering
 - o The role of Local Authorities in sustainable water management
 - o Best practice building construction and design
 - o Water efficiency of appliances and products
 - o River and coastal water quality
 - o Flood risk management
 - o Sustainable drainage systems
- The planned web pages can now be accessed via the SEEOonline site developed by SEEDA. The pages give details of the Forum's aims and work, its membership and publications and provide links to other useful sites and information. The full web address is as follows:
www.seeonline.net/naturalresources/waterresources
- The Forum has continued to support the Sustainable River Catchment Project which is being led by Professor Ed Maltby of Liverpool University. The project has now secured funding from the EU LIFE Environment Programme and work will begin in 2005.
- The Forum has continued its engagement with DEFRA on the Water Framework Directive with a view to having a role in the consultative process required as part of the Directive.
- The Forum held a consultation workshop on the South East Plan in Guildford in March 2005. This event was attended by over 40 members and focused on the topics of water resources, wastewater and flood risk management. The Forum continues to engage with SEERA on the South East Plan.
- The Forum presented a paper at the SEEDA Environmental Technology seminar at Basingstoke in February 2004.
- The Forum contributed to a seminar in November 2004 held by the Institute of Public Policy and Research on sustainable development in the South East.

Position Statements – An Introduction

As part of its role in raising awareness and promoting sustainable water management, the Forum intends to produce a series of simple Position Statements on different aspects of water in the South East.

The Position Statements will follow a common format, explaining each issue and its significance for the region, what the Forum's view is and what action it proposes to address the issue. They will be public documents that can be distributed freely and quoted as the Forum's formal view on each subject.

The first five Position Statements are included below and focus on various aspects of water efficiency, which the Forum believes is a key issue for South East England.

A further four Position Statements are in preparation for release during 2005. They will be available on the Forum's webpages

www.seeonline.net/naturalresources/waterresources and will cover the following topics:

- Climate Change
- Flood Risk Management
- River and Coastal Water Quality
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)



Position Statement No. 1 Water Efficiency of Appliances and Products

Background

Water use is determined by the efficiency of appliances and products and individual behaviour. For example water used by a shower is related to its flow rate (water efficiency of the product) and the time spent by the individual in the shower (behaviour). This position statement is related to the former, the efficiency of the appliances and products.

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 prescribe maximum water use limits for some appliances (see Table 1). The regulations are enforceable at the point of installation rather than at the point of sale or manufacture.

Table 1. Appliances and Water Regulations

Appliance	Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
Toilets	6 litre and re-introduction of dual flush
Clothes washers	120 litres/cycle
Dish washers	4.5 litres/place setting



(Note quantities for clothes washers are based on a 5kg load, a typical washing machine capacity – the regulation states no more than 24 litres of water per kg of washload capacity. Also note that in the USA there are federal standards for shower and taps: flows of no more than 9 l/minute).

Water efficiency is not a major motivating factor driving most customers buying domestic appliances. The amount of water used by clothes washers and dish washers has reduced significantly over the last 5-10 years due to energy labelling.

Several initiatives are underway in response to the potential environmental impact of the Government's housing projections.

- ODPM is to consider incorporating water fittings in Building Regulations, and at the same time set higher standards of efficiency.
- DEFRA is working on a water efficiency labelling scheme for products.
- DEFRA'S Market Transformation Programme is currently examining how market interventions can lead to the production of more efficient appliances.
- For businesses, DEFRA has added water-using appliances and water use monitoring equipment to the products eligible for enhanced capital allowances (ECAs).
- The Sustainable Buildings Task Group has reported to Government recommending a single national code for Sustainable Building (CSB).

The Forum's Position

The Forum believes it is possible for many water-using appliances to perform the tasks they are designed to do using less water. In households this applies to showers, toilets, clothes washers, dishwashers and taps.

The Forum supports the following government initiatives:

- ODPM's initiative to develop new regulations governing water use. In addition to more demanding standards for toilets, clothes washers and dishwashers, the Forum would like to see consideration given to similarly demanding new standards for taps and showers.
- DEFRA'S initiative to develop a water efficiency labelling scheme, where the least efficient label is equivalent to the regulatory standard.
- DEFRA'S Market Transformation Programme as an alternative, but complementary to, regulation.

The Forum would like to see:

- Manufacturers and retailers providing water use information to customers buying appliances. Labelling here will help. It also needs to provide information on the cost of water (the South East is above average in terms of metered properties)
- Manufacturers striving for best practice and aiming for a higher standard than specified by regulations.
- Reduced VAT on water efficient appliances (the labelling scheme would be a useful reference point) thereby helping householders and non-tax paying institutions such as schools not covered by the ECA scheme which is directed at businesses.
- Forum members individually and collectively promoting water efficient appliances, perhaps as a larger water efficiency campaign.

Position Statement No. 2

Water Metering

Background

A metered tariff is the fairest method of paying for water because the charge is related to the volume of water used. The number of household customers paying for their water consumption on a volumetric basis in the South East is, however, relatively low at approximately 26 percent. Other utility companies such as gas and electricity charge all of their customers on a volumetric basis.

Existing legislation permits metering under the following circumstances:

- **New properties** – all new and converted properties.
- **Optant metering** – customers may opt to be charged on a metered tariff.
- **Selective metering** - in the following situations:
 - o Designation of an area of water scarcity via the Water Industry Regulations 1999 upon application from a water company. Government determines whether an area should be classified as water scarce after considering evidence from the various interested parties.
 - o Customers using sprinklers and owning swimming pools (at the discretion of the water companies).
 - o High-use domestic appliances. Properties can be metered where high-use domestic appliances are installed. Information on the ownership of these appliances is however currently not available on an individual household basis.
 - o Change of occupancy. A meter can be installed in a property on change of occupancy where the consumer is the person responsible for paying the bill.

There are a number of well recognised benefits associated with metering but it is also important to accept that there are limitations which should be recognised and accommodated within metering policy and the associated implementation strategy. These are discussed below.

The Forum's Position

- **Metering represents an effective method of charging for water and provides potential opportunities for reducing average and peak demands.** Recent national research reports that customers who have opted for a meter have reduced their consumption by 9%. The reduction in water used by customers who have a meter installed compulsorily has yet to be confirmed.
- **The use of rateable value for charging for water is not sustainable as a long-term tariff option.** Metering provides opportunities to introduce variable tariffs but it should be recognised that poorer customers living in low rateable value properties are likely to be adversely affected and help should be given to vulnerable customers.
- **Installing meters in existing unmeasured households in large metropolitan areas with a high proportion of flats and terrace properties on common supply is unlikely to form part of an economic least cost plan for managing supply and demand.** The complex internal and external plumbing can result in very high costs. Implementation costs should not be excessive and the funding issue must be adequately addressed as part of future price setting.
- **Water companies should actively seek to promote metering in line with existing legislation, i.e. new properties, optants and selective metering.**

Position Statement No. 3

Best Practice Building Construction and Design

Background

Water resources need to be managed very carefully in South East England to cope with the level of new development and population increase proposed by Government.

Developers need to consider water in their plans. The design and construction of buildings should be water efficient and the impact of buildings upon river catchment must be considered. Water conservation was a key issue considered at the Better Buildings Summit in 2003. The Sustainable Buildings Task Group, charged with identifying cost-effective improvements in the quality and environmental performance of buildings, is progressing the outcomes from the Summit.

The Forum's Position

The Forum supports the Sustainable Buildings Task Group and encourages the following:

1. **Design and Specification.** Incorporate efficient technologies into the design of new buildings or the refurbishment of existing buildings. These technologies include:
 - Water efficient showers and taps, including controls that prevent taps being left running.
 - Water efficient or waterless toilets.
 - Water metering.
 - Rainwater harvesting to minimise potable water use.
 - Water recycling systems.
- Making more extensive use of the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) to assess the environmental performance of new and existing buildings. BREEAM is regarded by the UK's construction and property sectors as the measure of best practice in environmental design and management.
- Developers should be encouraged to use EcoHomes, the homes version of BREEAM. This aims to reduce running costs through greater energy and water efficiency. It provides a simple, independently-verified, environmental assessment method that rewards developers who improve environmental performance through good design.
- Developers should also be made aware of tools such as Aquaspec, a software programme that compares the impact on water use of different types of water conservation products. Aquaspec highlights the relative benefits of different conservation measures in terms of a payback period.



Efficient use of technology reduces waste

2. Water Issues in the Construction Process

- Construction is a major cause of water pollution. Development projects need to be designed in such a way that environmental damage is minimised. Reducing such incidents will reduce the loss of water through contamination and reduce the costs of any remediation.
- Developers should reduce consumption during construction by using water efficient construction techniques and site management.

3. Drainage Design

- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) aim to reduce the amount of run-off that returns to rivers through storm water systems and can protect or enhance water quality and encourage natural groundwater recharge. The Construction Industry Research Information Association, CIRIA, provides information on good practice and current research.
- The use of SuDS such as porous pavements/swales, basins/ponds, wetlands/infiltration trenches, basins and filter drains should be encouraged.

4. Appliances specification - water efficient white goods

- Information on the water consumption of white goods is included on the EU Energy Efficiency labelling schemes. Developers should specify such appliances as part of the fit-out. See also the Forum's Position Statement No. 1 on Water Efficiency of Appliances and Products.



Sustainable drainage systems reduce the run-off from development

Position Statement No. 4

Consumers' Role in Water Efficiency

Background

South East England faces a significant challenge in managing its water resources in the future. This is particularly so due to the high levels of new development and increases in population envisaged during the next few decades.

It is likely that long-term solutions will need to address all aspects of water resource management: new supplies, water transfers, leakage control, efficiency measures and demand management. Three quarters of all water consumption in South East England is accounted for by domestic use and per capita consumption is higher than in any other region. This must be a priority area for efficiency savings.

The Water Act 2003 places duties on ministers, water undertakers and public bodies to promote water conservation. A range of measures needs to be considered, including regulation and building control, pricing structures and efficiency of appliances. However, these alone will not maximise water efficiency. It will be fundamental to engage consumers, raise awareness of the issues and encourage habits and behaviour that conserve supplies of water.

The Forum's Position

- Long-term planning and management of water resources in South East England is essential to ensure that development in the Region is sustainable. This process will entail a combination of developing new sources, minimising waste and managing demand.
- The South East Water Resources Forum brings stakeholders together to address the Region's water challenges to ensure that development in the South East is sustainable. The Forum's members have identified that water conservation and efficiency is one of the highest priorities for action.
- The Forum recognises that many different agencies have a role to play in achieving greater water efficiency, but believes that every consumer also has a responsibility to use water wisely in the home and at work. This is a crucial component of sustainable water use, and a concerted effort is required to ensure that all consumers are properly informed of the importance of their contribution.
- The Forum believes that significant improvements to water efficiency can be made by consumers through simple changes to everyday habits without compromising standards of living or hygiene.
- The Forum endorses the measures being promoted by water companies, the Environment Agency and others to reduce domestic water consumption.
- Employers should be encouraged to adopt environmental management standards including water efficiency, and encourage their staff to play a major part in meeting these standards.

Position Statement No. 5

The Role of Local Authorities in Sustainable Water Management

Background

Land use development in the UK is 'plan-led'. The role of the planning system is to enable the provision of homes, buildings investments and jobs in a way that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. Local planning authorities prepare development plans, deal with planning applications and guide developers in making investment decisions. They are guided by national policies given in Planning Policy Guidance notes; overall development strategies given in Regional Planning Guidance for specified regions and Structure Plans at a county level. Structure Plans and RPG notes are to be replaced by Regional Spatial Strategies via the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. Local Development Frameworks (a portfolio of documents) will replace Local and Unitary Plans.

Local authorities therefore can be seen to be a key stakeholder in the process of sustainable water management and this is reinforced in the Water Act 2003 (Section 83) which requires due account to be given to their role in water conservation. DEFRA is planning to issue guidance to public authorities on this matter.

The Forum's Position

In order to promote sustainable water management, including water efficiency, the Forum recommends that Local Authorities use their planning controls to ensure that new developments follow best practice guidelines. The following actions should be implemented:

- Commit staff to training in water management issues.
- Use Issues Documents and stakeholder consultation to develop planning policies that promote sustainable water management and raise awareness amongst land use planners of water management issues.
- Commit to public/developer awareness-raising and education campaigns, in association with the water industry.
- Use planning checklists to ensure effective consultation.
- Co-ordinate formal stakeholder participant lists and contact details.
- Ensure land allocation fully considers water issues. Consider constraining development in areas of water stress and/or ensure appropriate mitigation measures are implemented for necessary development.
- Initiate and organise Regional Stakeholder Forums and Local Committees to ensure maximum understanding of relevant water management issues.
- Commit to facilitating long-term operation and maintenance solutions for water conservation/sustainable drainage solutions.
- Ensure consistent interpretation of national guidance within regional plans.

Appendix 1

Executive Committee

Membership as at January 2005

Rupert Ashby	Country Land and Business Association
Caroline Bird	Hampshire County Council
Edward Dawson	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Wanda Fojt	English Nature
James Grinnell	South East Water
Rob Harrison	Thames Water
Elaine Hayes	Sussex Wildlife Trust
Stuart Homann	Environment Agency
Richard Lemon	Government Office for the South East
Ed Maltby	Liverpool University
David Payne	South East England Regional Assembly
Simon Richardson	South East England Development Agency
Sandra Ryan	Environment Agency
Graham Setterfield	Chairman, South East Water Resources Forum
Ian Shrubsall	Berkeley Community Villages



Thoughtful planning will encourage wildlife to flourish

Member Organisations

Action in Rural Sussex
Arun District Council
Ashford Borough Council
Ashford's Future
Association of Councils of the Thames Valley Region (ACTVaR)
B&Q
British Airports Authority (BAA)
Babtie Group
BAE Systems Plc
Barratt South London
Beacon Press
Bellway South East
Berkeley Group Plc
Blake Laphorn Solicitors
Bovis Homes Ltd
Brighton & Hove City Council
British Chambers of Commerce
British Retail Consortium
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire Economic Partnership
Business Link Kent
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Cap Gemini plc
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Wallingford
Chiltern District Council
Civic Trust South East
Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Country Land and Business Association
Countryside Agency
Crawley Borough Council
Dartford Borough Council
Department of Trade & Industry (DTI)
DHSC South: SE Public Health Group
East Sussex County Council
Eastbourne Borough Council
Eastleigh Borough Council
Ecosys Environmental Management & Education
English Nature
Environment Agency
Enviros
Envirowise
Folkestone & Dover Water Services Ltd
Friends of the Earth (FoE)
GlaxoSmithKline
Government Office for the South East (GOSE)
Guildford Borough Council
Guildford Environmental Forum
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Business Environment Forum
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Authorities
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Flood Defence Committee
Hampshire County Council

Hartlake Developments Ltd
Institute for Public Policy Research
Institute of Community Studies
Institute of Directors (IoD)
Isle of Wight Council
Joint Strategic Planning Unit for Berkshire
Kent County Council
Langmead Farms
Lewes District Council
Lewes Flood Action
Medway Council
Mid Kent Water plc
Mole Valley District Council
National Federation of Small Businesses
Natural Step
Normandy Community Therapy Garden
Office of Water Services (Ofwat)
Oxford Brookes University
Oxfordshire County Council
Oxfordshire Economic Partnership
Pfizer
PHA Group
Portsmouth Water Ltd
Ramblers' Association
Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board
Royal Holloway Institute for Environmental Research
Royal Town Planning Institute
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
South East Climate Change Partnership
Seeboard plc
South East Forum for Sustainability (SEFS)
Shepway Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Society of British Aerospace Companies Ltd
Society of Maritime Industries
Sony United Kingdom Ltd
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
South East England Regional Assembly
South East Water
Southampton City Council
Southern Water
Stour Fishery Association
Surrey County Council
Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Sussex Enterprise
Sussex Local Flood Defence Committee
Sussex Wildlife Trust
Sutton and East Surrey Water Plc
Tandridge District Council
Telecommunications Industry Association
Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
Thames Valley Economic Partnership
Thames Water
Thanet District Council

Tomorrow's Technologies
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Unilever Bestfoods UK
Unipart Group of Companies
University of Oxford
University of Kent at Canterbury
University of Liverpool
University of Portsmouth
Vivendi Water Partnership
Vosper Thornycroft
Water UK
WaterVoice
West Berkshire Council
West Sussex County Council
West Sussex Economic Partnership
Wey and Arun Canal Trust
Wiggins Group Plc
Wildlife Trusts in the South East



Wild water courses help to improve flood management and encourage wildlife to flourish

Contact Details

The South East Water Resources Forum is jointly sponsored by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the Environment Agency.

We welcome feedback from our members and anyone who has an interest in sustainable water management.

If you would like further information about the Forum and its activities, you can visit our web pages at

www.seeonline.net/naturalresources/waterresources

You can also email us at

Waterresourcesforum@environment-agency.gov.uk or
seeda@seeda.co.uk

This Report has been published by:

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