

Call for Evidence: Environmental Audit Committee (EAC)

WildFish proposal: "Planning and Capacity"

The issue:

Rivers are under threat from over-abstraction and pollution.

That is because demands on the sewage and water supply from new development are out of step with the capacity of the water companies to deliver. That means more pollution and dried out rivers.

At the same time, the Government is calling for more homes,

The cause:

The relevant water company plans (WRMPs DWMPs) are not good enough at predicting demand. They are also not co-ordinated properly with Local Development Plans and with local development.

Most importantly, water companies are not statutory consultees for planning applications and so consultation by planning authorities is discretionary.

Addressing the problem:

1. Planning policy in the (NPPF) and the Government's Planning Guidance should be revised;
2. Strategic policies and plans should take into account natural resourcing based on water company plans.
3. The Water Industry Act 1991 should be amended to allow an exception to the duty to connect where there is insufficient capacity;
4. Water and sewage companies must be made statutory consultees by amending the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
5. Developers should be made to pay for the upgrade of local sewage works to meet demand through secondary legislation as it is in Scotland (Provision of Water and Sewerage Services (Reasonable Cost) (Scotland) Regulations 2015).

Justin Neal

For and on behalf of WildFish