

If you are unsure about anything within these notes then please contact the Flood Risk Management (FRM) team using the details at the end of this document.

What is the Water Framework Directive?

There has been an increasing demand across Europe for cleaner watercourses, rivers, lakes, groundwater and coastal beaches. To reflect this demand, in 2000 the European Parliament restructured all European water quality policy and created the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

The WFD provides an overall framework to ensure the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater across the European Union.

The WFD aims to ensure that all aquatic ecosystems, riparian ecosystems and wetlands reach 'good status'. To achieve 'good status', a waterbody must be observed to be at a particular level of ecological and chemical quality.

To find out more about WFD please visit the Central Government [website](#)¹.

River Basin Districts and River Basin Management Plans

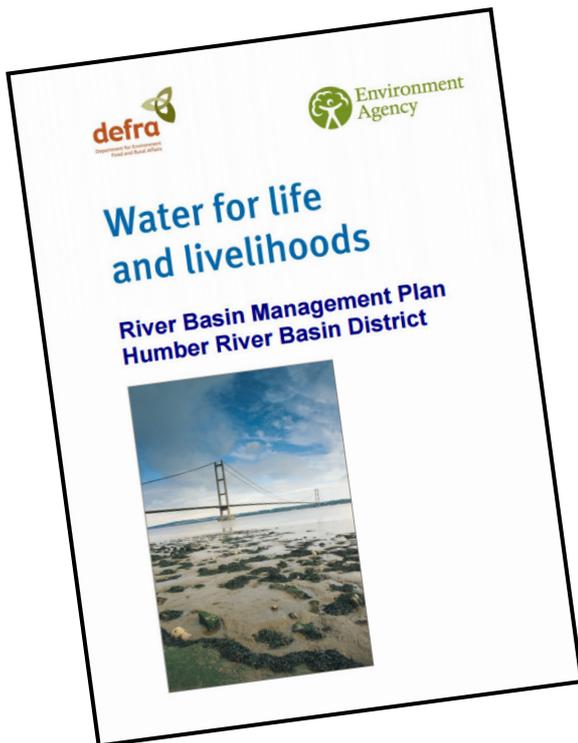
The WFD required all European Member States to establish River Basin Districts, therefore England and Wales was split into sections for the creation of a number of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP). A RBMP is a plan with a programme of statutory objectives for how the RBDs waterbodies will be protected and enhanced into the future.



River Basin Districts in England and Wales

¹ www.gov.uk/government/policies/water-quality

RBMPs are prepared, implemented and reviewed for each RBD every six years by the Environment Agency. A revision of the 2009 RBMPs are to be published in 2015.



The majority of Derbyshire sits within the Humber RBD. To further understand the requirements of the WFD for the Humber RBD you can access the document **online**².

Who has the responsibility for delivering the WFD?

It is the overall responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA) to monitor and report on the WFD status of all waterbodies in England and Wales and to generate and revise the RBMPs for each RBD on a six year cycle.

Although the EA take the lead for the implementation of the WFD, all Risk Management Authorities and relevant bodies/organisations including the County Council have a responsibility to act consistently with the objectives of the WFD. Members of the public also have a responsibility as riparian landowners etc. when works near to or within close proximity to a waterbody could have a detrimental impact on the wider riparian environment. For more information regarding riparian responsibilities please refer to the **Riparian Responsibilities Guidance Notes**.

What defines good WFD status of a watercourse?

The WFD status of a watercourse or waterbody is measured by ecological and chemical health. To be of 'good status' the watercourse or waterbody must be achieving at least a 'good' rating for both ecology and chemical.

Ecological health can be assessed by looking at the range of plants and animals that are supported and the different habitats available (such as shaded and unshaded sections, deep and shallow sections etc). Chemical health can be determined by the levels of damaging chemicals in the water and also good chemicals such as oxygen. For further details please refer to the RBMP.

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plan-humber-district

The link between the WFD and flood risk management

Flood risk management can have positive and negative impacts on the water environment and therefore the WFD status. Environmentally sensitive works within the riparian environment for flood risk management (such as river restoration and meander enhancement) can improve the ecological health of a watercourse and thus improve the WFD status. Whereas hard engineering techniques such as creating a concrete flood wall can harm the WFD status of a watercourse by restricting natural processes and reducing good habitat.

What can affect the WFD status of a watercourse?

There are many pressures that can lead to a detrimental impact on the ecological and chemical health and therefore leading to the status of a water body being assessed as less than 'good'.

These can include:

- Point source pollution (such as a sewage treatment works or old mine shaft).
- Diffuse source pollution (run-off from agricultural land or spillages).
- Over-abstraction (removal/diversion) of water.
- Invasive non-native species (plants and animals).
- Physical changes such as culverts.
- Flooding.



Livestock can cause isolated bank erosion and introduce excessive siltation into the watercourse

Human alterations

Amendments to the natural state of a watercourse or waterbody such as concrete lining, culverting, straightening or installing hard engineered bank erosion control measures can all affect the WFD status of a watercourse. The County Council actively discourage engineered modifications to any watercourse/waterbody except in extreme circumstances. For more information please refer to the **County Councils Culvert Policy**.

Agriculture and development

Any works within or in close proximity to a watercourse/waterbody can potentially introduce contaminants and pollutants into the watercourse. Excessive siltation can deteriorate the quality of a watercourse by smothering the habitats of plants and animals within the watercourse or waterbody. This in turn can also lead to reduced oxygen levels in the water and thus a decline in

chemical status. Pollutants can also be easily transported into a watercourse/waterbody with silts.

Lead mining

Across Derbyshire there are numerous abandoned lead mines which now discharge minewater containing heavy metals and other pollutants into local watercourses at an uncontrolled rate. This uncontrolled release of pollutants and heavy metals is a significant problem contributing towards the failure of the receiving watercourses to reach 'good status'. For further information please refer to the Central Government **website**³.

If you're planning any engineering works in or within a watercourse it is always worth checking whether Land Drainage Consent (1991) or a WFD Assessment is necessary. For more information please refer to the website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/flooding or contact the FRM team.

How can you support the objectives of the WFD?

Below presents a list of actions (not exhaustive) that could be undertaken which could help to support the objectives of the WFD:

- Use water more efficiently.
- Be aware – any waste entering a drain may go directly to the nearest watercourse or waterbody and result in pollution.
- Keep watercourses clean and clear of litter and pollutants (where possible).
- Removal or re-adjustment of disused structures such as weirs, sluices or walls and river restoration (may require Land Drainage Consent).
- Protection of eroded banks with sustainable techniques (may require Land Drainage Consent).
- Modifying farming practices to prevent water pollution (such as creating livestock drinking points and decreasing runoff - for more information please refer to the [Rural Land Management Guidance Notes](#)).
- Report pollution events to the Environment Agency.

If you observe a pollution incident then it is advised that you contact the Environment Agency incident hotline on **(0800) 80 70 60** (24hr service)

For more information please contact the FRM team. For further guidance on sustainable riparian corridor management please refer to the [Environmental Best Practice Guidance Notes](#).

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/abandoned-mines-and-the-water-environment>

What are the DCC FRM team doing to help implement the WFD?

The FRM team look to support the implementation of the WFD objectives in all aspect of their work including:

- Conditioning Land Drainage Consents to undertake works in accordance with Pollution Prevention Guidelines⁴.
- Increasing communication and engagement with riparian landowners (please refer to the [Riparian Land Management Guidance Notes](#)).
- Encouraging new development to observe SuDS principals and the SuDS management train (please refer to the [Environmental Best Practice Guidance Notes](#)).
- Encouraging the use of softer engineering for watercourse alterations.
- Restricting, where reasonable practicable, the implementation of culverted sections of watercourses.
- Encouraging and supporting catchment partnership work.

Frequently asked questions

Do all watercourses have a WFD status?

All smaller watercourses eventually discharge to larger watercourses/streams which in turn eventually discharge to the sea. In many instances it is the larger watercourses/streams that have a defined WFD status and many smaller tributaries are not individually designated. No works should deteriorate the status of any watercourse or waterbody.

I have a watercourse in my backyard. Does that mean that I have to regard for the WFD?

Members of the public have a responsibility (as riparian landowners etc.) to act consistently with the objectives of the directive when works near to or within close proximity to a waterbody could have a detrimental impact on the wider riparian environment. For more information regarding riparian responsibilities please refer to the [Riparian Responsibilities Guidance Notes](#).

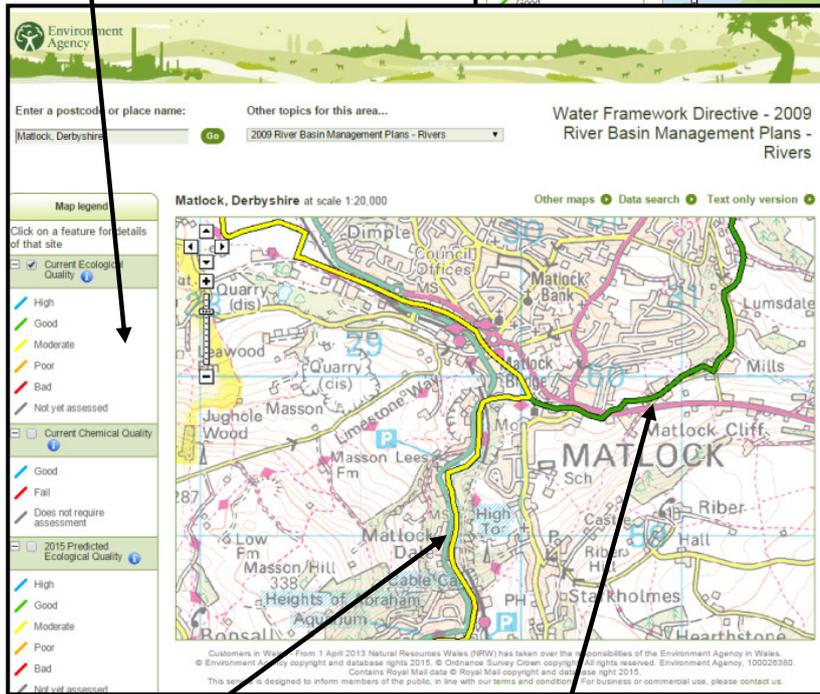
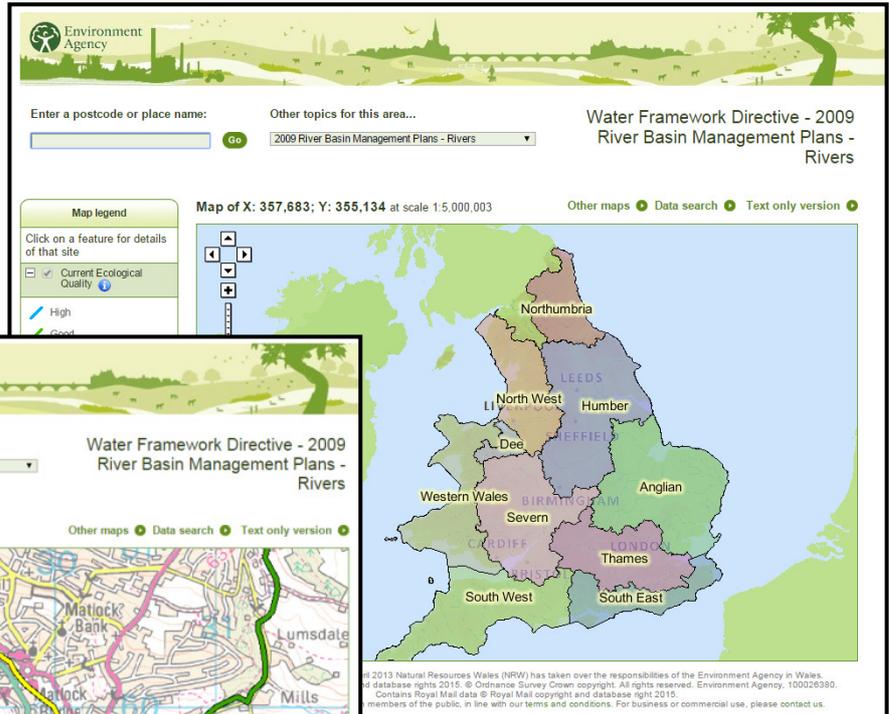
Is my watercourse assessed within a specific RBMP and what is its WFD status?

The Environment Agency host a web based tool which is publically accessible which can be used to determine which watercourses have been assessed under the WFD. Please visit the Environment Agency's **'What's in your**

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg

backyard’ facility⁵ and select the ‘2009 River Basin Management Plans – Rivers’ topic before entering a postcode.

Ecological and chemical health classifications



Moderate ecological status

Good ecological status

**Environment Agency
‘What’s in your backyard’
mapping layout search
function**

What are the sewerage and water companies doing to help improve water quality and support the WFD objectives?

Water companies can play an important role in assisting with the objectives of the WFD as they generally treat and manage the majority of water originating from development before eventual discharge to waterbodies. Water companies are obliged to produce Asset Management Plans to provide a forecast into infrastructure investment. This is also an opportunity for water companies to demonstrate how they will assist in improving water quality and produce targets.

⁵ <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby>

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