



Creating a better place

Our corporate plan summary
2014 to 2016

Welcome

In 2011 we published our corporate plan for the period 2011 to 2015. Many of the ambitions we set out then remain at the heart of our plans and work for the future. But a lot has happened over the last 3 years...

We are now the Environment Agency for England with some additional UK-wide responsibilities. A new environmental body has been created in Wales, Natural Resources Wales.

The government has carried out its first Triennial Review of the Environment Agency, jointly with Natural England. The review concluded that both organisations should remain as separate bodies, but should work together more closely as outlined in a joint action plan.

Our primary purpose remains to protect and improve the environment for people and wildlife.

The policy landscape

We make important contributions to the commitments set out in the government's new policies. These include the Natural environment white paper, the England biodiversity strategy, the Water white paper, the Waste policy review and the National flood and coastal erosion risk Management strategy.

In its drive to create growth in the

economy the government has also introduced policies to reduce the administrative burden of regulation on business and remove barriers to growth. The government has published a draft Deregulation Bill which will place a duty on non-economic regulators to consider how they can contribute to economic growth. The government has also introduced major reforms in the planning system. We have responded positively to these initiatives and modified the way we work and how we work with others accordingly.

Major challenges ahead

We also respond to the pressures we see on the environment that look set to increase over the coming years. The population in England will continue to grow, placing a greater strain on environmental resources and infrastructure. There could be more extremes in the weather with a changing climate, creating demands in responding to more frequent and more intense flooding and droughts. Low rainfall levels over many months meant that the first 5 months of 2012 were in drought. This was then followed by record rainfall and consequent repeated flooding in 2012,

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a North Sea tidal surge that flooded coastal areas in 2013 and sustained record levels of rainfall resulting in the wettest winter on record. 7,000 properties flooded between December 2013 and February 2014 while 1.4 million properties were protected. Sea levels will continue to rise placing more pressure on coastal habitats and communities, and flood and coastal erosion risk management structures.

The combination of a growing population, a changing climate and ageing assets will increase stresses on infrastructure including sewerage and water distribution systems, and flood and coastal risk management structures.

Our response to environmental challenges

There are a number of important areas of work we will contribute to over the next few years. We will continue to reduce the risk of flooding for more households. We will further develop our strategic overview role on flooding, working with our partners on the National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy. We will produce the flood risk management plans required by the European Floods Directive. We will

protect and improve the ecological status of more water bodies by developing and implementing a second cycle of updated river basin management plans required under the Water Framework Directive. And we will work with others to protect water bodies through a more integrated, catchment-based approach. We will work with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on reforming the water abstraction licensing system to support resilient economic growth while protecting the environment.

We will help support growth and investment through a risk-based approach to regulation that aids compliance, improves performance and encourages innovation. We will take tough action to stop waste crime, which undermines legitimate businesses. We will continue to seek ways of reducing the administrative costs of regulation on businesses, minimising bureaucracy, speeding up decision making and issuing permits quickly.

We will also implement regulatory frameworks for new sources of energy, including shale gas. And we will continue to improve the way we work as a regulator to support sustainable growth while protecting people and the environment.

We will have an increasing level of grant-in-aid funding for capital investment in flood and coastal risk

management schemes over the coming years. Investment in infrastructure is an important element of the government's strategy for economic growth. But revenue funding for our environment and business activities is reducing, placing pressures on some important areas of work.

How we will work

We will have to prioritise our actions and reduce some of our activities. But we will also keep our ambitions high. In doing all of this we are dependent on the dedication and professionalism of people working in the Environment Agency. We will continue to develop a skilled and diverse workforce that is flexible and able to adapt to the changes

ahead. We will invest in their personal development to support them in making both their individual and corporate contributions to creating a better place for people and wildlife.

We have developed this new corporate plan in response to these challenges and to ensure that our organisation is fit for the future. We have developed it in the context of the policy priorities and business plans of government departments and our expected funding position to 2016 and beyond. It recognises the importance of continuing to work in partnership to create better local environments that enhance peoples' lives and support sustainable growth.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Smith".

Lord Chris Smith
Chairman



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Leinster".

Dr Paul Leinster CBE
Chief Executive

Our priorities

Our corporate plan reflects the priorities and plans of government departments. It is structured around our 3 main business areas: flood and coastal risk management; water, land and biodiversity; and regulated business. This allows us to link our priority areas of work to the activities we carry out with the funding available, and to the results we need to achieve.

The plan highlights the important areas of our work that are cross-cutting and involve contributions from each of the main business areas. It addresses how we will develop more integrated ways of working with others.

The plan also outlines our priorities in developing our staff and the organisation.

Our work is based on the following priority areas:

- a changing climate
- increasing the resilience of people, property and businesses to the risks of flooding and coastal erosion
- protecting and improving water, land and biodiversity
- improving the way we work as a regulator to protect people and the environment and support sustainable growth
- working together and with others to create better places
- ensuring that we are fit for the future

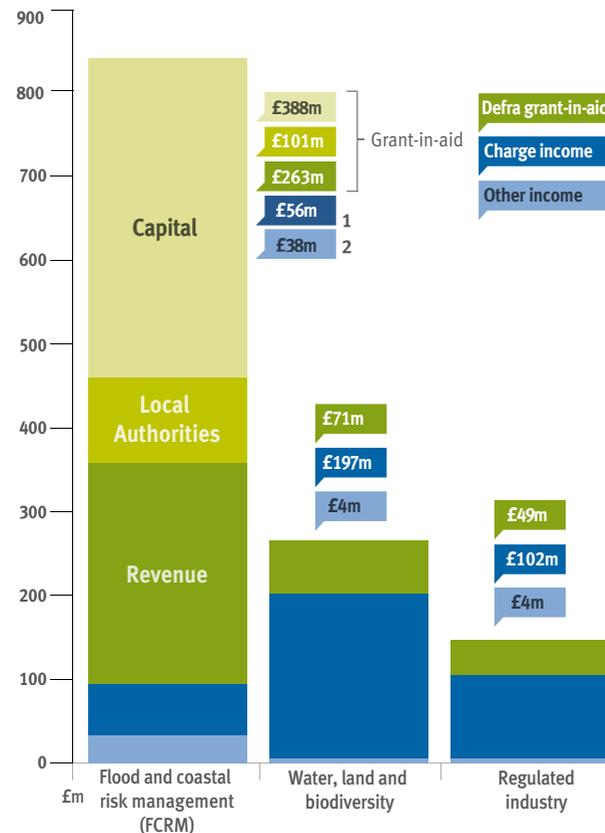
Our funding

Our total budget for 2014 to 2015 is £1.3 billion.

Government provides 68% of our funding. The remainder comes from charging schemes – including environmental permits, water abstraction licences, rod licences and boat fees (28% in total) – and other income, grants and contributions (4%). We spend around 66% of our income on flood and coastal risk management (FCRM), of which 37% is revenue and 63% is capital. Over £100 million of

this capital money goes directly to local authorities for their capital schemes and repairs. The largest proportion of revenue FCRM grant-in-aid is spent on asset maintenance. The rest funds mapping and modelling, monitoring, planning and local engagement. We spend 21% on water, land and biodiversity, and 12% on regulated industry. All income streams fund IT and support services in proportion.

Funding by business area



This includes additional money for the repair of flood risk management assets and their operation announced in the 2014 budget.

1. FCRM 'charge income' includes local levy, general drainage charges and Internal Drainage Board income
 2. FCRM 'other income' includes partnership funding

Our successes

By working with others we have helped to achieve significant results for people and the environment.

Successes since we published our previous corporate plan in 2011.

Working with others, we have:



reduced the risk of flooding for over 104,000 households.



protected the status of salmon fisheries with over 60% of rivers categorised as not 'at risk' (42 rivers out of 64).



reduced the administrative costs of regulation to businesses by £25 million.



maintained at least 90% of bathing waters at sufficient standard.



reduced waste crime by stopping illegal activity at more than 2,940 illegal waste sites since 2010. Between 2012 and 2013, we stopped illegal activities at over 1,270 sites, more than ever before in a single year.

Longer term successes achieved by working with others

More than 3,400 hectares of new wetland and salt marsh habitats between 2005 and 2012 have been created.

Water abstraction from all sources (except tidal) have been reduced by 17% between 2000 and 2012.

Our regulation of industry was a major factor in achieving significant reductions in emissions to air between 2000 and 2012. Sulphur oxides (SOx) levels were reduced by 69% (567,000 tonnes), and nitrogen oxides (NOx) by 31% (117,000 tonnes). We estimate that the benefit to human health since 2005 is worth £634 million.

The amount of material recovered from waste produced by the industrial sites we regulate has increased from 39% in 2000 to 56% in 2012.

The number of serious pollution incidents has been reduced by more than 50% between 2000 and 2012, from 1,127 to 504 incidents.

We have reduced our environmental footprint.

Between 2005 and 2013, we achieved a reduction of:

- 29% in water use from our office estate
- 85% of our waste sent to landfill
- 31% in the business miles we drive
- 31% in the total amount of water used

Between 2006 and 2013, we achieved a reduction of:

- 39% in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from our office estate
- 14% in total CO₂ emissions from all of our combined activities

Between 2010 and 2013, we achieved a 20% reduction in paper use.

What we do

A changing climate, a growing population, the economic situation, the need to secure future supplies of food and energy: these all place enormous pressures on the environment. Over the last 20 years there have been significant improvements in the quality of water, land and air. But there is still much to do. This is why we have to continue to find new and innovative ways of doing our work – doing more for people and the environment with every pound of funding.

We deliver outcomes for people and wildlife

Our overall objective is to protect and improve the environment for people and wildlife, and contribute to sustainable development by implementing the policies of government departments. In doing this we seek to take an integrated approach in which we consider all elements of the environment when we carry out our work.

We work closely, and in partnership with, other agencies in the Defra network, other government departments, and with local councils.

Our 3 main roles

We are an environmental regulator – we target our efforts on the highest risks and the poorest performers to maintain and improve environmental standards. We also seek to minimise unnecessary burdens on business.

We are an environmental operator – we work with people and communities across England to protect and improve the environment in an integrated way. We provide a vital incident response capability.

We are an environmental adviser and a conscience on behalf of people and the natural environment – we compile and assess the best available evidence. We provide technical information and advice to national and local government to support policy and decision making.

How we do things

In the future we will be a smaller and simpler organisation. We will continue to concentrate on achieving the most we can for people and the environment, managing our resources carefully and providing excellent services. We will continue the work we have started on creating effective partnerships, sharing resources, expertise and information, and encouraging people to get involved in our work as volunteers.

We will continue to protect and improve the environment by continuing to create a work environment in which we:

- **take a ‘yes, if’ approach in all we do**
- **do more for people and the environment with every pound**
- **focus on outcomes not processes**
- **seek and embrace opportunities to work with others**
- **develop people and benefit from diversity**
- **support and trust each other to do the right thing**

**It's how
we do things**



Working with others

To achieve our aims, we work in partnership with many different organisations, including government departments, other government agencies, local councils and communities.

Working with people, communities and local councils

We work with people, communities and local councils across England to protect and improve local environments. We actively seek to work with and through others, providing support where others are better placed to lead.

We will continue to improve our ways of working with people, communities and local councils by:

- Understanding what communities want to achieve – we will identify shared priorities and the best way of achieving them.
- Being an expert adviser while respecting the role of local councils – we will make our environmental data and information available to others and continue to advise local councils.
- Building strong relationships with communities – we will work with local communities to understand problems and concerns, develop ideas and find solutions.

- Looking for opportunities to work as a partner – we will agree shared objectives and ensure that together we achieve clear outcomes for people and the environment, while avoiding duplication.

Working with government departments

We are responsible to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and are part of Defra's network of organisations.

We work with a range of government departments to support priorities in departmental business plans. We support Defra and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). We work closely with other government departments, including the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Cabinet Office. We contribute to the government's policy development work, providing evidence, support and technical advice.

Working with other government agencies

We work closely with other organisations including Natural England, the Forestry Commission and the Marine Management Organisation to improve efficiency, effectiveness and customer services.

This includes joint working on how we:

- provide advice to others such as local planning authorities and farmers
- organise customer services
- plan operational activities, such as environmental monitoring
- share technical skills and expertise
- work with civil society



Increasing the resilience of people, property and businesses to the risks of flooding and coastal erosion

Our aims

- Help develop and encourage a better understanding of flood and coastal erosion risk.
- Target resources to reduce the risk of flooding to communities with the highest flood risk.
- Reduce the consequences of flooding and coastal erosion.
- Ensure that investments in flood and coastal risk management provide economic and environmental benefits wherever possible.

We will know we're succeeding when...

- no inappropriate new developments are located in areas at high risk of flooding from any source
- fewer properties are at risk of flooding from all sources
- more people are aware of the risk of flooding to themselves, their property and the communities in which they live
- our flood warnings reach more people, businesses and organisations at risk
- more communities at risk of flooding have flood action groups and more people know what to do when a flood occurs
- investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management increases from the private sector and other non-central government sources
- flood and coastal risk management assets meet their target condition
- more water and wetland priority habitats are created and enhanced
- more water and wetland SSSIs are in favourable condition and the status of aquatic priority species is improving

Key performance measures	Targets		Unit
	2014/15	2015/16	
We reduce the risk from flooding for more households	165,000*	tbc*	Number of households protected
We maintain our flood and coastal risk management assets at or above required condition	tbc*	tbc*	% of assets at required condition
More households and businesses at high risk of flooding can receive direct warnings	66%	Replace with new measure	% of properties able to receive warnings
We achieve a proportion of funding for capital projects through contributions made by others	Set baseline	15%	% of funding contributed by others

* We are reviewing these targets while we assess the implications of recent flooding on our assets and future investment programme.

Protecting and improving water, land and biodiversity

Our aims	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and improve waters so that they are clean and healthy. Make sure there is enough water for people, agriculture, business and the environment. Promote more sustainable and integrated management of land and water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance biodiversity in the water environment and ensure sustainable management of fish stocks. Promote opportunities for people to enjoy water and wetlands through angling and navigation.

We will know we're succeeding when...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> surface, ground, estuary and coastal waters and wetlands are protected, and more water bodies achieve 'good status' or 'good potential' under the Water Framework Directive bathing waters meet the requirements of the revised Bathing Waters Directive over-abstraction of water bodies is reduced and fewer abstractions cause environmental damage. More water bodies have sustainable fish populations more farms adopt practices that improve the management of nutrients, soils, water use, pesticides and waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more freshwater, estuarine and coastal waters, and wetland habitats are created and enhanced more water and wetland SSSIs are in favourable condition populations of threatened priority species which are dependent on water and wetland habitats are stable or recovering people continue to engage actively in angling and navigation pursuits our navigation assets are maintained in target condition

Key performance measures	Targets		Unit
	2014/15	2015/16	
We work with others to improve the quality of surface waters, groundwaters, coastal waters and wetlands	29% (1,818)	31%	% of water bodies at good ecological status
The quality of bathing water is getting better	93%	95%	% meeting revised Bathing Water Directive standards
We improve and protect rivers and wetlands damaged by unsustainable abstractions	88	86	Number of abstraction licence changes
We meet our commitments to the England Biodiversity Strategy by:	1000 ha by end 2015/16		Hectares (ha) created or restored
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating new habitat Restoring Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) 	300 ha	300 ha	
Fewer salmon river stocks are at risk	10	9	Number of rivers at risk
We maintain our navigation assets at or above the required condition	80%	80%	% of assets at required condition

Improving the way we work as a regulator to protect people and the environment and support sustainable growth

Our aims

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support sustainable growth by making it easier for businesses to know what they need to do to comply with regulatory requirements, without compromising environmental and public health protection and improvement. Play our part in helping the UK meet greenhouse gas emissions targets. Take action to improve compliance of poor performers and reduce their | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> impact on the environment. Reduce environmental crime, including waste crime, in order to protect both the environment and legitimate businesses that are affected. Work with businesses to reduce emissions, discharges and pollution incidents, and help to ensure that they use resources sustainably. |
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We will know we're succeeding when...

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> administrative costs of regulation to businesses are lower fewer sites have band D, E or F Operational Risk Appraisal (Opra) scores more regulated sites have suitable environmental management systems fewer regulated industry sites contribute to breaches of air quality objectives emissions of priority substances, including greenhouse gases, to air from sites we regulate are reducing in line with UK and EU targets there are fewer discharges to water, in line with environmental objectives and standards in EU Directives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there are fewer pollution incidents there are fewer complaints relating to nuisances such as odour, dust and litter caused by regulated businesses water company performance against look-up tables and absolute permit conditions improves sectors we regulate use resources more efficiently and send less waste to landfill more materials are reused, recycled and recovered, and the amount of waste produced is reduced there is less waste and other environmental crime the businesses that we regulate tell us that our guidance and advice are clear and easy to understand |
|--|---|

Key performance measures	Targets		Unit
	2014/15	2015/16	
We improve business compliance through supporting legitimate business to comply and by dealing with the deliberately non-compliant	5% reduction	5% reduction	Sites in lowest compliance bands (D, E and F) for more than 2 years
We reduce serious and significant pollution incidents	Oct-Dec 2013/14 baseline minus 1%	Jan-Mar 2014/15 baseline minus 1%	Number of incidents
We reduce the administrative costs of regulation to businesses	£317 million cumulative in Spending Review 2010 period	Revise in consultation with Defra	£ million savings in administration costs for the businesses we regulate
We reduce the overall risk presented by illegal waste sites targeting our efforts on the highest risk sites	2% reduction per quarter	2% reduction per quarter	Number of high risk illegal waste sites

Working together and with others to create better places

Our aims

- Work with partners to develop our incident management capability further.
- Take an integrated approach to our work.
- Contribute to creating better local environments that enhance people's lives and support a sustainable economy.
- Work with others to ensure that new and existing developments have a reduced environmental impact and a well-planned environmental infrastructure.
- Help people, the economy and the environment adapt to a changing climate.
- Put reducing and adapting to climate change at the heart of everything we do.

We will know we're succeeding when...

- communities are better prepared for, and become more resilient to, environmental and flooding incidents
- we achieve more benefits for people and wildlife with the funding available through more integrated planning and delivery of our work
- we develop and work on prioritised environmental outcomes with local councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships
- significant new development and regeneration sites have plans in place to address their environmental impacts
- more organisations have implemented Climate Ready actions
- the risks associated with a changing climate, and how to adapt to them, are integrated into our internal business plans and ways of working

Key performance measures	Targets		Unit
	2014/15	2015/16	
We respond to planning application consultations and pre-application enquiries within 21 days	95%	95%	% responded to within target time
We contribute to the delivery of priority development sites	80%	80%	% of planned actions completed

Ensuring that we are fit for the future

Our aims	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the best possible use of our funding to achieve more for people and the environment. • Equip and train staff to achieve their potential and maximise their productivity. • Provide a safe and healthy working environment. • Recruit and retain a diverse workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a first class, professional service. • Use evidence and knowledge to guide and inspire our own actions and the actions of others. • Minimise our own environmental impact.

We will know we're succeeding when...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we achieve more for the environment from every pound we spend • we manage our assets, including money, to the highest standards • we minimise lost time incidents and learn from every safety-critical incident • our staff are confident that we have a positive safety and wellbeing culture • we have a diverse workforce that reflects the wider population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our internal and external customers say we are providing a good service • stakeholders agree we are good at working with them towards shared goals • we have the right level of knowledge, expertise and experience • we have reduced the Environment Agency's environmental footprint • all our staff have personal objectives that are clearly linked to our corporate plan

Key performance measures	Targets		Unit
	2014/15	2015/16	
We reduce our carbon footprint	33% reduction from April 2006/07 baseline	We will set new targets in 2015/16 strategy	Reduction in CO ₂
We have a diverse workforce:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of staff recruited who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) 	3.9%*	3.9%*	% of staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of executive managers recruited who are female 	50%	50%	% of executive managers who are female
We provide a safe place to work:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost time incident (LTI) frequency rate 	Fewer than in 2013/14	Fewer than in 2013/14	LTIs per 100,000 hours worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety actions implemented in target time 	95%	95%	% of actions completed
We manage our money effectively	100%	100%	% spend to budget

*We will fix this target at the start of the year based on the % of BAME in post and a target that 5% of newly recruited staff will be BAME.

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