

DRAFT

River Wye Statutory Officers Group Meeting Slide Deck



25 June 2025

River Wye SOG

Purpose

A collaboration of the statutorily responsible organisations operating within the catchment to restore the Conservation Status for the River Wye Special Area of Conservation.

The group as a whole does not have any formal powers or resources and as such cannot make any decisions collectively but it's members can on behalf of their individual organisations and Government. The purpose of this group is for members to reach agreement (subject to ratification within their own organisations as necessary) on how they will collectively use their powers and resources to improve the catchment condition. The SOG will share this via a revised Nutrient Management Plan.

Operating Principles

- Meetings will be held quarterly (monthly initially) in order to allow the SOG to task work resulting from its discussions. Ad-hoc meetings can be called if needed.
- Meetings will be held privately with updates and progress against the plan being shared publicly – this will be reviewed after 6 months.
- The group will work openly and collaboratively with the NMB, seeking and taking into account the NMBs views in its decision making and seeking collaboratively discussion.
- Individual officers will make decisions on behalf of their organisations in line with delegated powers for specified remits and spend.

River Wye SOG

Membership

Voluntary forum made up of officers from the bodies with relevant statutory responsibilities within the catchment.

- Bannau Brycheiniog Brecon Beacons National Park
- Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales
- Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
- Environment Agency
- Forest of Dean District Council
- Herefordshire Council
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Natural England
- Powys County Council

SOG - Meeting Headlines

Date of latest meeting: 25 June 2025

Headlines

- Updates provided on both DWPP and Welsh evidence work by EA and NRW respectively.
- Discussed how both these elements will form basis for the NMP.

Date of next Meeting

24 September 2025

River Wye SOG – June Updates

Updates from:

- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
- Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales

Natural England Update

Farming Advice – Ongoing catchment Sensitive Farming advice visits across the Wye catchment. These are expected to increase significantly when the Capital Grants are re-launched by Defra. Proactive visits have focused on the Arrow catchment looking at river restoration/ Higher Tier opportunities. In-depth audit of farm infrastructure are being carried out on every farm in Ridge to River project. Engagement from farmers in both cases has been really encouraging, with many keen to discuss making environmentally positive changes to their businesses and land use.

Landscape Recovery – ongoing support for the development of Wyescapes and Ridge to River projects including bespoke advice on farm infrastructure and water quality and options for river restoration options at the Flits. Both projects gathering baseline data and developing their 6 Plans ready for submission to Defra in December 2025 and January 2026 for assurance review.

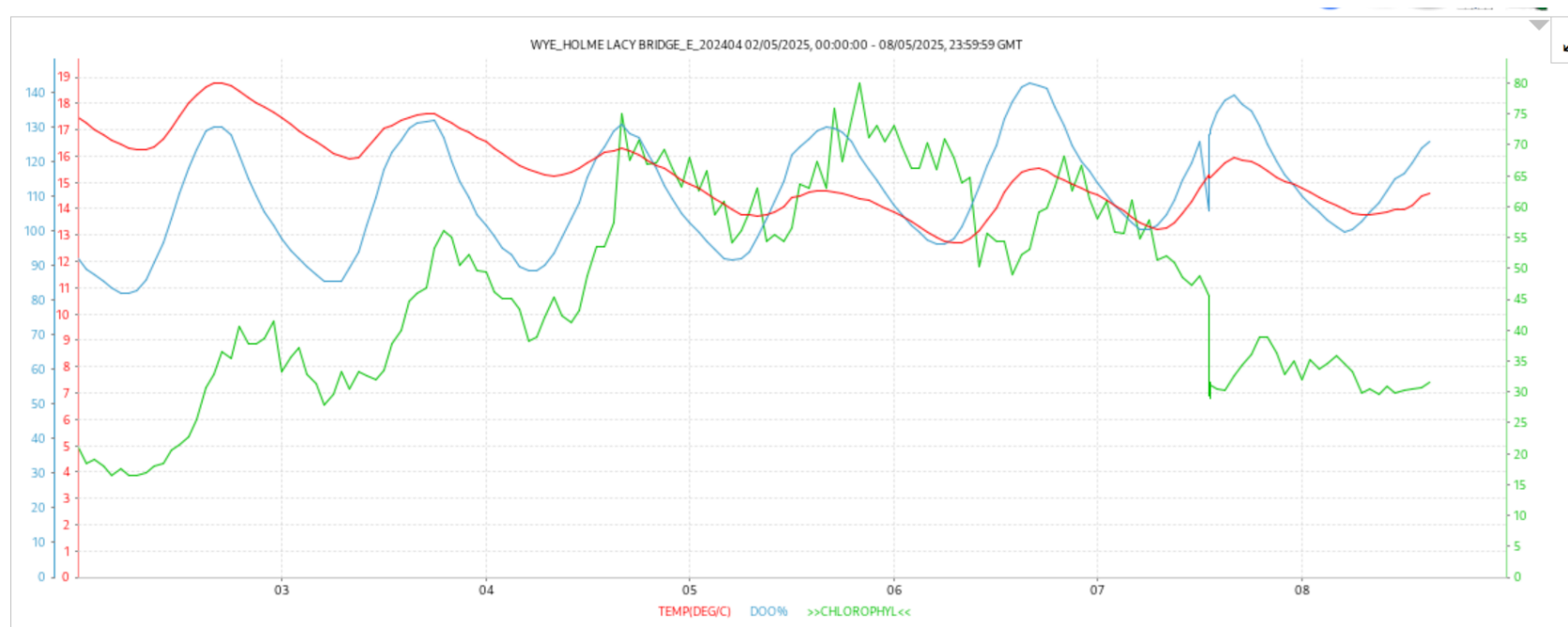
DWPP – Ongoing support and close working with EA on the DWPP

LNRS – ongoing work with Herefordshire Council, supporting development of LNRS, attendance at LNRS farmer engagement events and supporting Mandy Neill the new Principal Natural Environment Officer overseeing the LNRS.

SSSI Monitoring – Preparations for Lugg site monitoring later this summer working with landowners to gain permissions to access necessary sites

Advice on Sustainable Development and Nutrient Neutrality - Ongoing advice to the planning department regarding the need to demonstrate that growth proposed in the new local plan and related plans can be accommodated without causing nutrient targets on the River Lugg and the River Wye to be exceeded.

- We have worked with farmers to produce a film to guide them through our inspection process [How to Prepare for an Inspection from the Environment Agency \(EA\): A Farmer's Guide – Creating a better place](#)
- Our sondes (remote monitoring device) have been deployed since April (4 Wye / 1 Lugg) and these provide continuous water quality data, including chlorophyll. The public can view the live data at [MDC - Meteor Data Cloud](#). The following graph shows recent readings from the Wye and Holme Lacy Bridge.

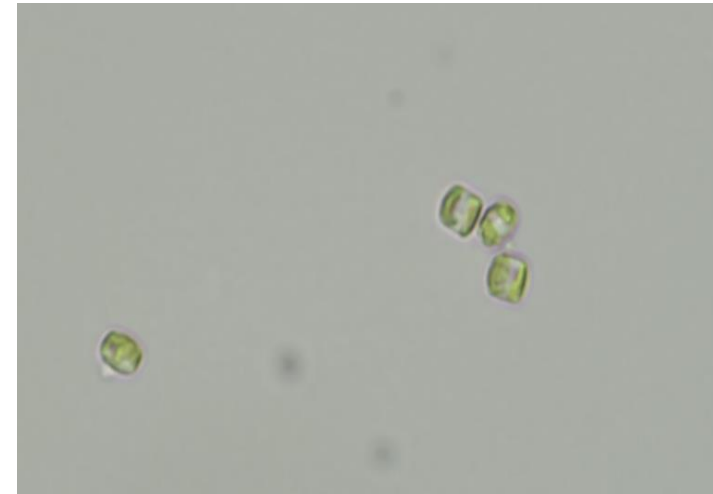


Algal bloom surveys

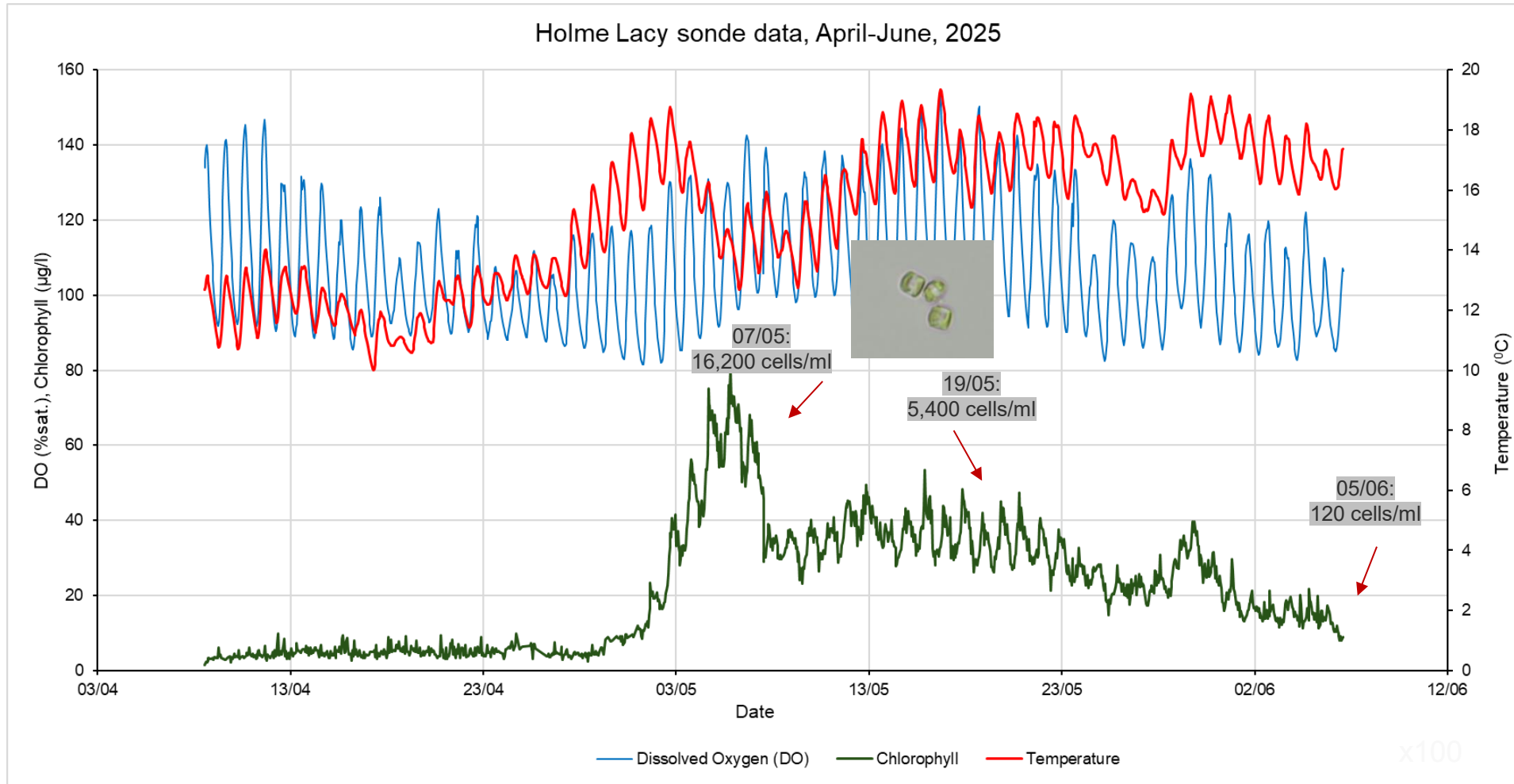
The Environment Agency surveys algae monthly (April-September) by surveying for:

- Free floating phytoplankton; usually microscopic single-celled algae and diatoms.
- Filamentous algae on the riverbed, which are multi-cellular, these can smother stones and submerged plants.

Algal abundance appear to be associated with temperature and river flow. Nothing toxic identified to date.



Algal bloom survey findings



Crayfish disease outbreak

We have been investigating reports of unexpected deaths of native white-clawed crayfish in the River Arrow, between Kington and Pembridge.

The disease can be transferred via water and mud on damp clothes, footwear, by dogs, horses, bike tyres, fishing or boating equipment, vehicle tyres or any machinery. Plague fungal spores can live for 22 days on damp clothes or equipment.

- Report any sighting of dead or distressed crayfish to the Environment Agency [Report an environmental problem - GOV.UK](#).
- Avoid entering the River Arrow, between Kington and Pembridge.
- Check, clean dry, biosecurity measures should be taken when visiting any watercourse, particularly through check, clean dry.



Check your equipment, clothing, PPE before leaving site for mud, faeces and other material.

Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can. Disinfectants won't work on heavily soiled objects. Remove visible dirt with warm water first. Virkon S tablets are an approved disinfectant for avian flu.

Dry everything as long as is possible/feasible before using elsewhere

- Initial testing has confirmed that it is not likely to be crayfish plague, or white spot disease. All evidence presently points to the mortalities only affecting White-clawed Crayfish.
- The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) is now conducting further investigations to identify the specific virus involved. We are currently awaiting additional test results from submitted samples, and we are also exploring options such as DNA analysis.
- We have placed posters up in and around the area asking the public to take the necessary precautions.
- Environment Agency staff are currently undertaking field surveys to determine the likely extent of the outbreak.

Phosphorous (P) programme

AMP 7 (2020 – 2025), higher investment was made at prioritised Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW), with an estimated 81 kg/day of phosphorous (TP) removed following schemes at 12 WwTW's in the Wye catchment. Approximate spend of £80 million.

In AMP8 (2025 – 2030), lower cost solutions will take place. 13 Phosphorous removal schemes identified in the English Wye catchment. 20 WwTW in the Welsh Wye will receive a combination of P removal schemes (14 WwTW's), and acceptance of backstop limits set at 5 mg/l (6 WwTW's). Estimated over £55 million investment.

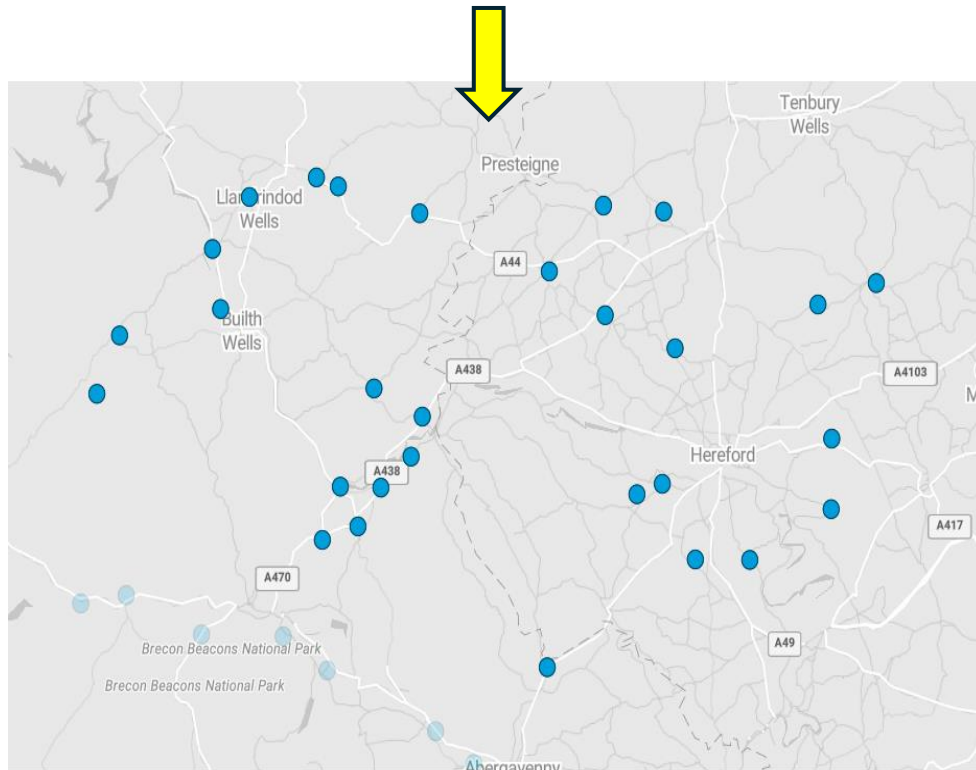


Figure 1 – DCWW investment related to Phosphorous in AMP8 (does not include backstop limits not requiring investment)

Sanitary Determinands (Ammonia, Biological Oxygen Demand and Suspended Solids) programme

There are 14 WwTW's identified in the Wye that will receive circa £10 million of additional improvements for this element of wastewater treatment.

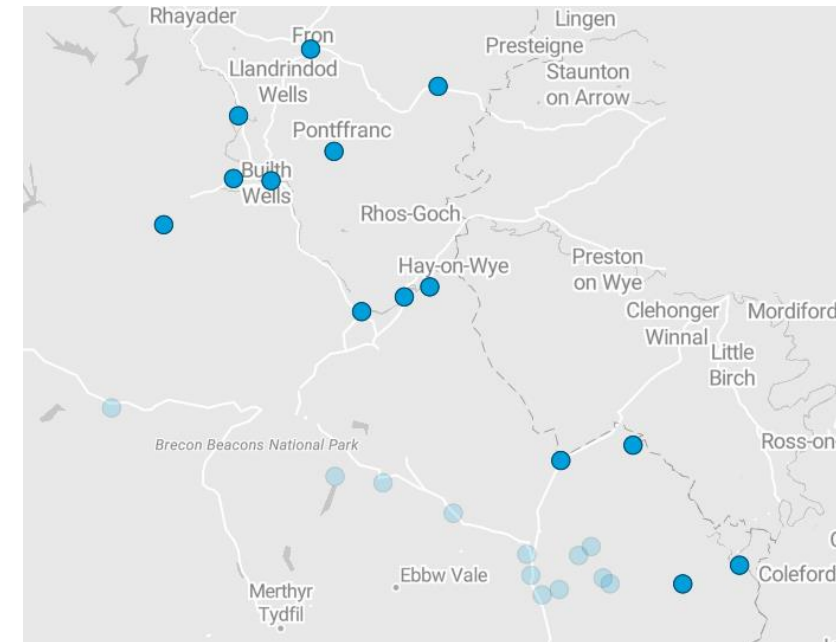


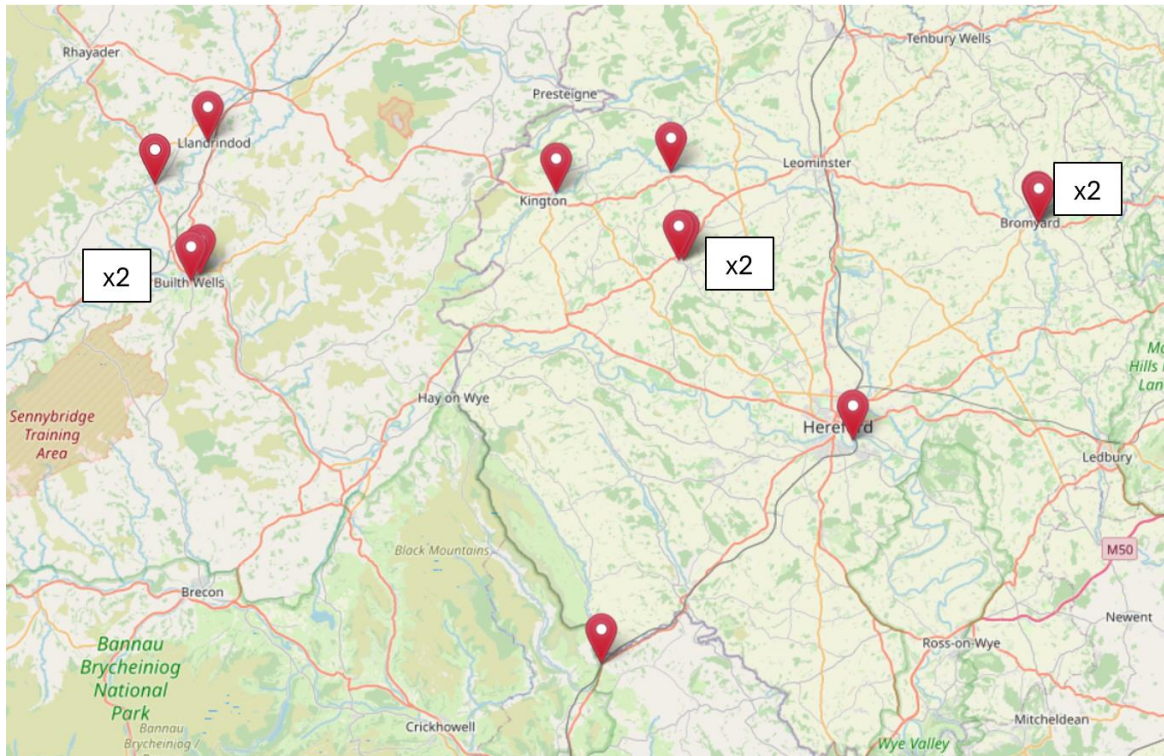
Figure 2 – investment related to San Dets in AMP8

Storm Overflow (SO) programme

12 Storm overflows have been identified that will receive improvement schemes to reduce ecological harm and number of spills.

This will cost over £55 million.

All remaining SO's will be investigated during AMP8, to build a prioritised programme in future investment cycles.



Very successful codelivery event held in April, all outputs are being pulled together looking at how Dwr Cymru can collaborate and co-deliver with partners in the catchment for this coming 5-year period, and how we can co-design future AMP cycles.



NRW's SAC Nutrient Project (previously SAC Rivers Project)

- Now includes work on Marine SACs as well as Riverine SACs [Natural Resources Wales / Further action needed to protect Wales's marine protected areas](#)
- The actions allocated to NRW have been completed in the First Minister's Action Plan - [River pollution summit action plan | GOV.WALES](#)
- Key documents associated with the completed actions are:
- [mitigation-measures-menu.xlsx](#) , [NMB Evidence Pack_Final v1.pdf](#) , [Natural Resources Wales / Constructed wetlands](#) ,

Nutrient Calculator

- The all-Wales Nutrient Calculator has now gone live on the WG website, links to the Welsh and English webpages below:
<https://www.gov.wales/nutrient-budget-calculator>
<https://www.llyw.cymru/cyfrifiannell-cyllideb-maetholion>

Intensive Poultry Units (IPU's)

- Last week NRW announced it was resuming the determination of permits for new or expanded IPU's under Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR).
- We previously paused all work on these whilst we reviewed off site manure management from permitted sites.
- Following this review and recent caselaw we have no legal grounds to not determine these applications.
- We have consulted on 3 applications for expansions of existing IPU's in Powys as we are minded to issue these permits.
- Further information can be found on our [Public register - Customer Portal](#)

Site:	Neuadd Isaf Farm	Llanshay Farm	Rhosddu Farm
Reference:	PAN-016447, EPR/HP3836MG	PAN-018463, EPR/AB3593ZL	PAN-025564, EPR/AB3095HL

Wye Nutrient Management Plan

- NRW are continuing to support the development of the new evidence base to inform the NMP

Upper Wye Restoration Project [Link to latest newsletter](#)

- Newsletter 4 Cy: [Cylchlythyr Prosiect Adfer Dalgylch Gwy Uchaf - Rhifyn 4](#)
- Newsletter 4 En: [Upper Wye Catchment Restoration Project Newsletter #4](#)

Incident Response

- From 1 July, we are shifting to a more risk-based approach to incident response.
English [Natural Resources Wales / A new approach to how we respond to pollution incidents](#)
Cymraeg [Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Dull newydd o ymateb i ddigwyddiadau llygredd](#)

No further updates

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