



Water Resources in the Alt Crossens Catchment

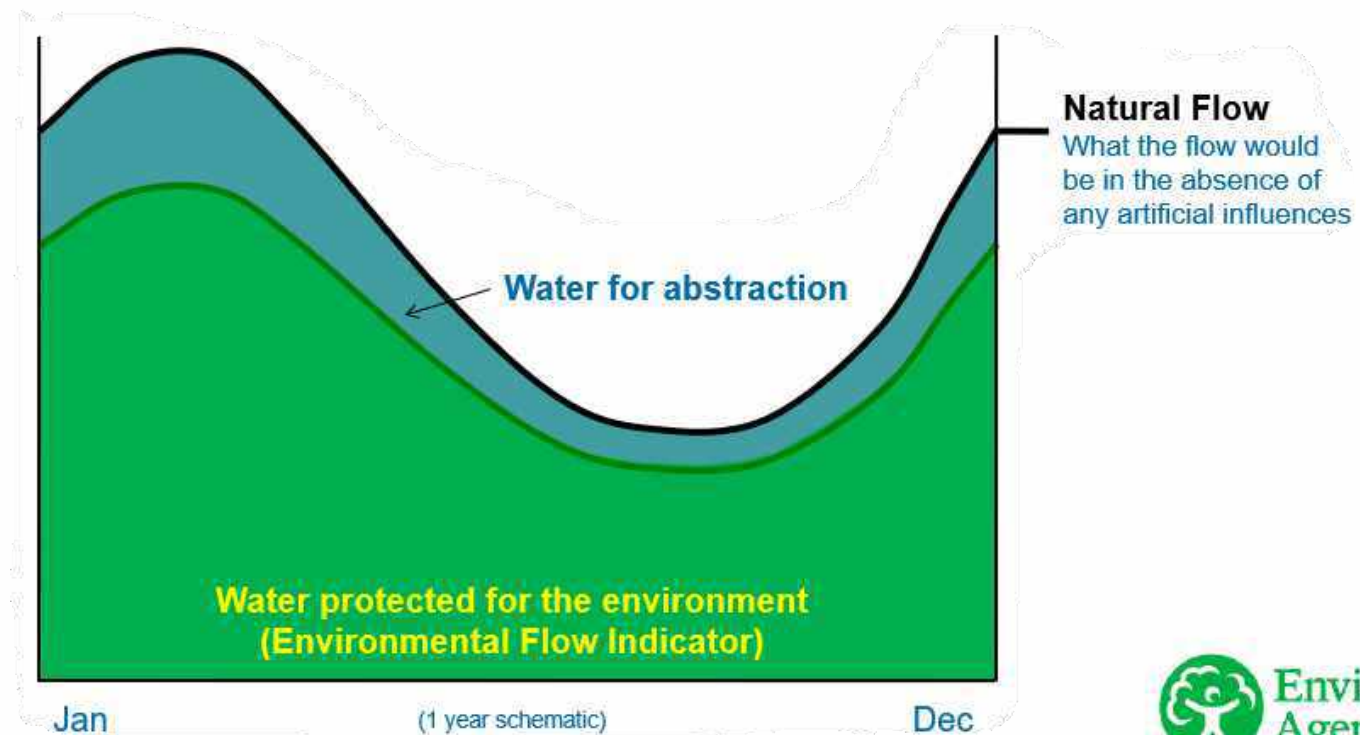
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Date: November 2023

Water Resources

Environment Agency's role is to manage water use sustainably by:

- providing water for abstraction
- protect the environment



Why do we need permits to abstract (take) or impound (store) water?



To protect the environment:
rivers, lakes & groundwater



To adhere to legislation



To protect designated
species



To protect designated sites



To ensure water
availability for other users

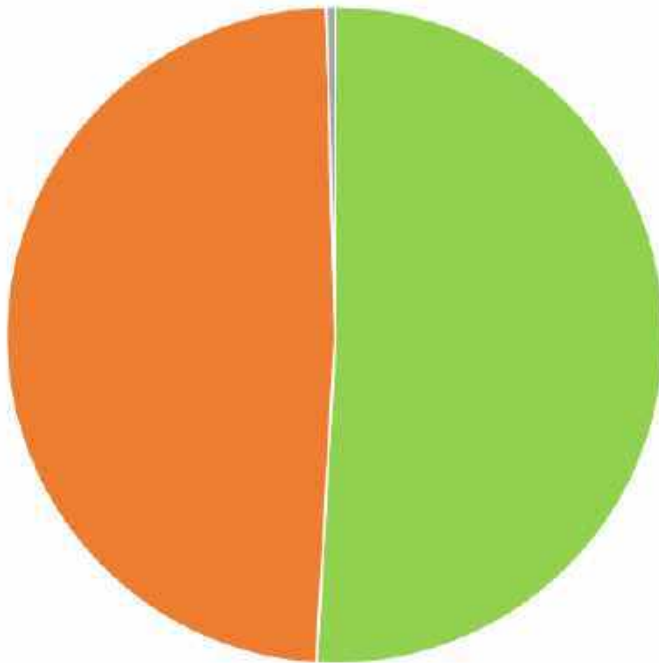


To manage UK
water resources

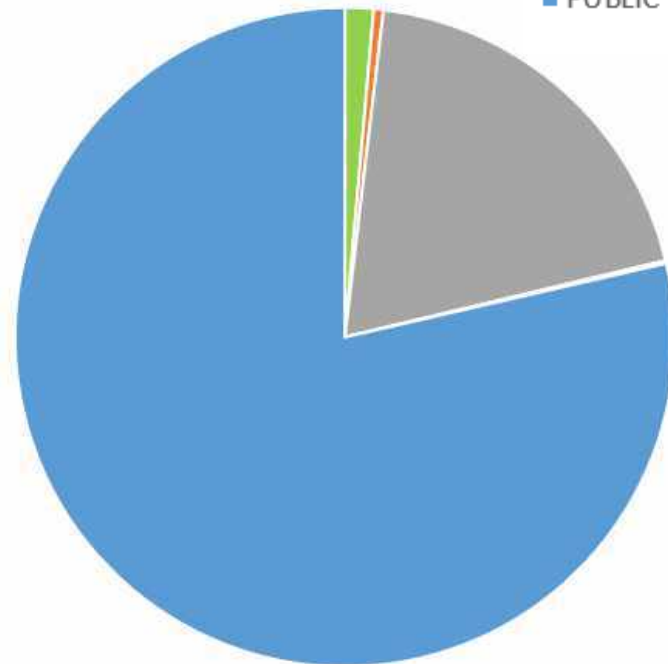
Water Use - Fully Licenced Abstraction

- 248 abstraction licences

- AGRICULTURE
- AMENITY ENVIRONMENTAL
- INDUSTRY
- OTHER POTABLE USES
- PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY



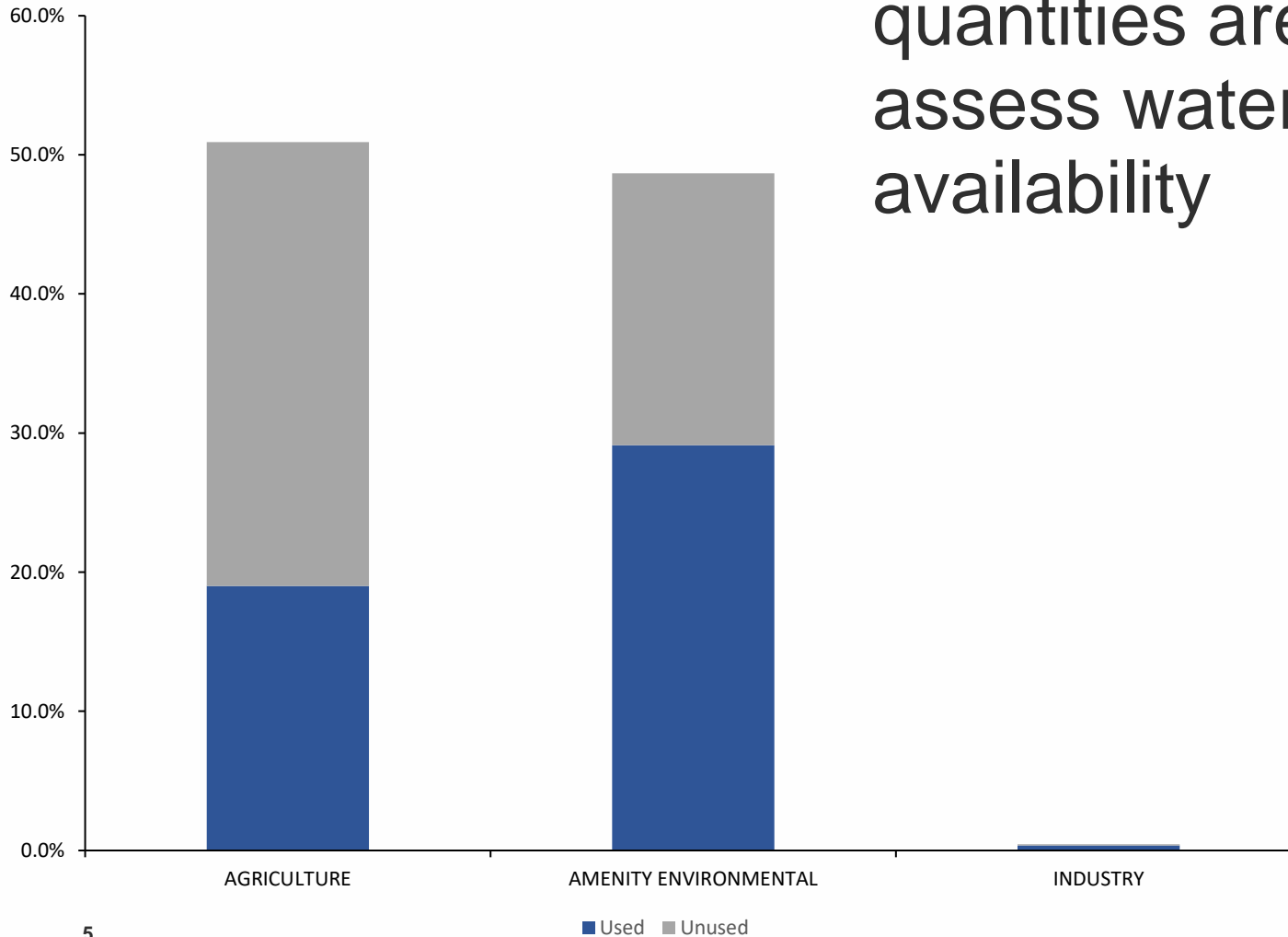
Surface Water



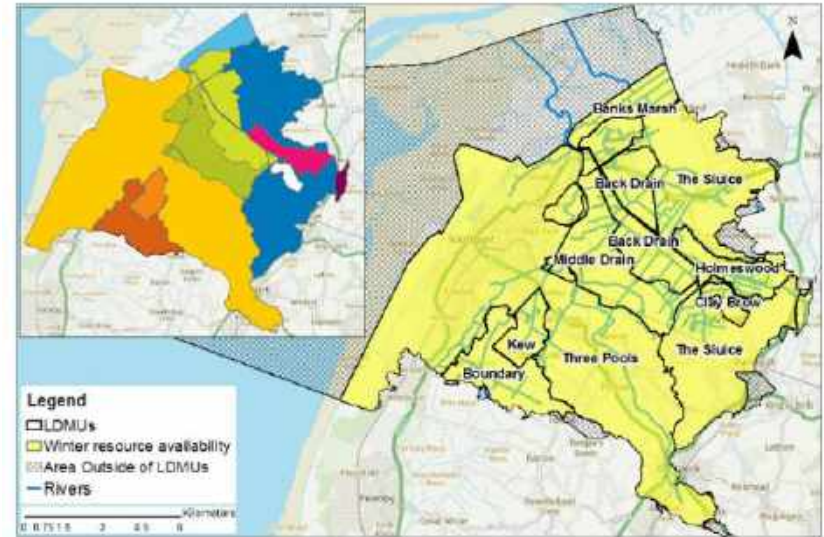
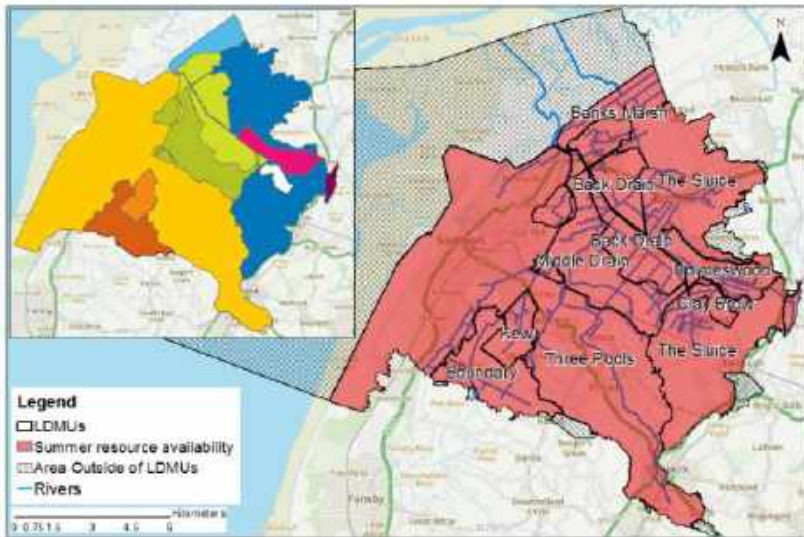
Groundwater

Surface Water - Actual vs Licenced

Fully licenced quantities are used to assess water availability



Abstraction Licence Strategy: Crossens Surface Water



No water available in the summer
(April to September)

Restricted water available in the
winter (October to March)

Abstraction Licence Strategy: Alt Surface Water

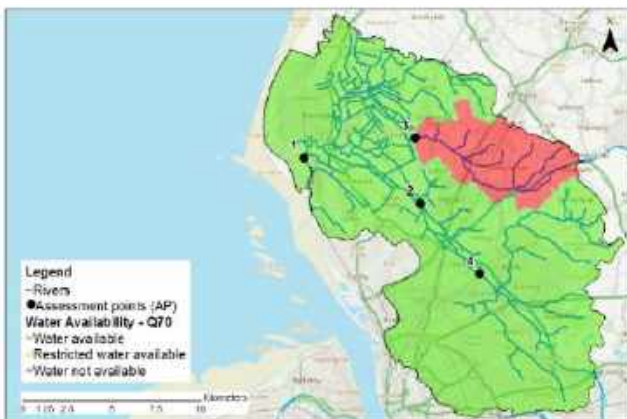
Map 2: water resource availability colours at Q30 for the Alt catchment (high flows)



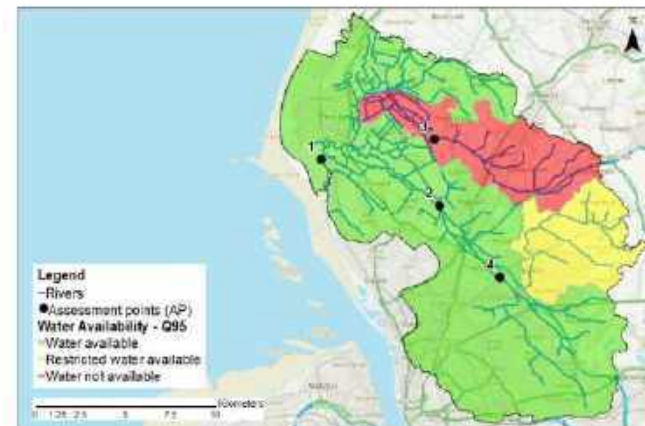
Map 3: water resource availability colours at Q50 for the Alt catchment



Map 4: water resource availability colours at Q70 for the Alt catchment

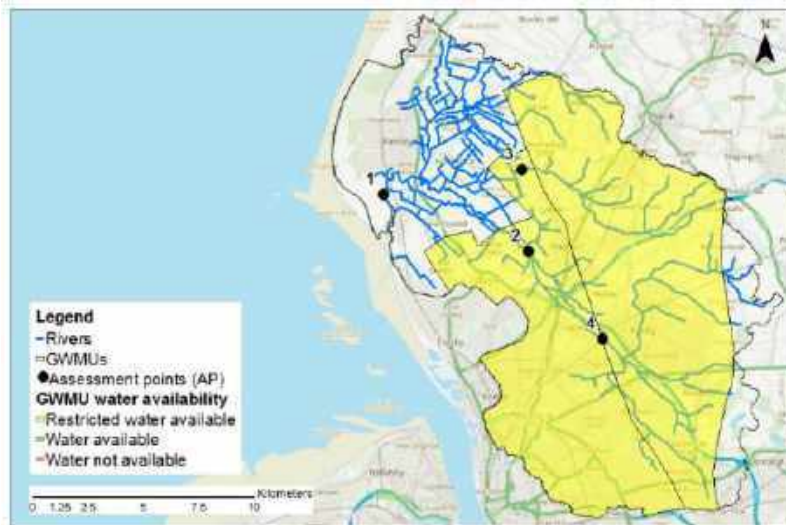


Map 5: water resource availability colours at Q95 for the Alt catchment (low flows)



Abstraction Licence Strategy - Groundwater

22% of the Crossens is underlain by principal aquifer
69% of the Alt is underlain by principal aquifer



Alt Restricted Groundwater Available



Crossens Restricted Groundwater Available

Winter Storage

- Winter storage allows a reservoir to be filled in the winter months when water isn't available in the summer
- Winter is 1st October to 31st March
- Needs abstraction licence from EA
- Strongly encourage talking to us

Winter Storage



- [5187 - Water Reservoir Brochure](#)
publishing.service.gov.uk
- Self destruct clause if not built reservoir by certain date (to allow reallocation of water)
- Very likely to have a Hands off Level
- Transfer to reabstract where large land coverage (put and take)



Spray and Trickle Irrigation

- Requests to add trickle irrigation to existing spray irrigation licences
- Case by case basis, but likely EA position would be that 2 meters are required, and quantities would be aggregated. E.g.

Spray Irrigation		Spray Irrigation	Trickle Irrigation	Max Total
100 m ³ /h	→	100 m ³ /h	100 m ³ /h	100 m ³ /h
1,200 m ³ /day		1,200 m ³ /day	1,200 m ³ /day	1,200 m ³ /day
120,000 m ³ /year		120,000 m ³ /year	120,000 m ³ /year	120,000 m ³ /year

Crossens Pumping Station

<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/station/9546>

The Sluice level at Crossens Pumping Station

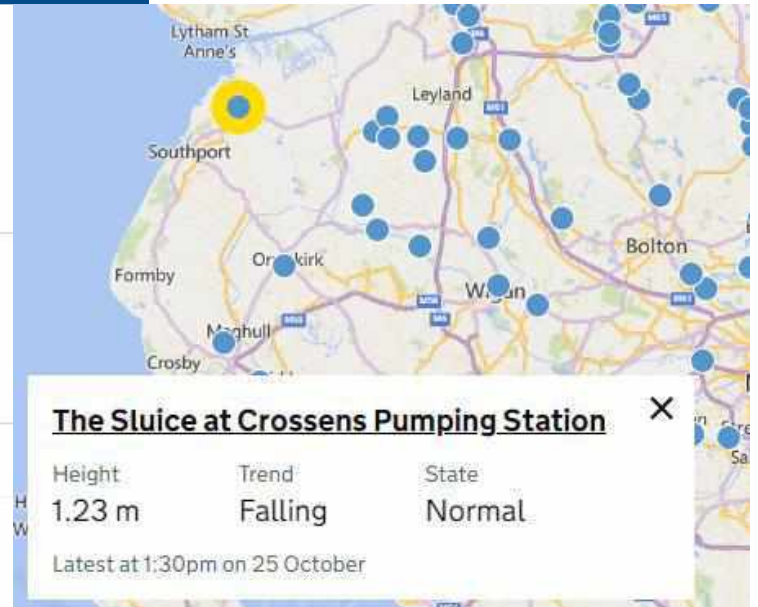
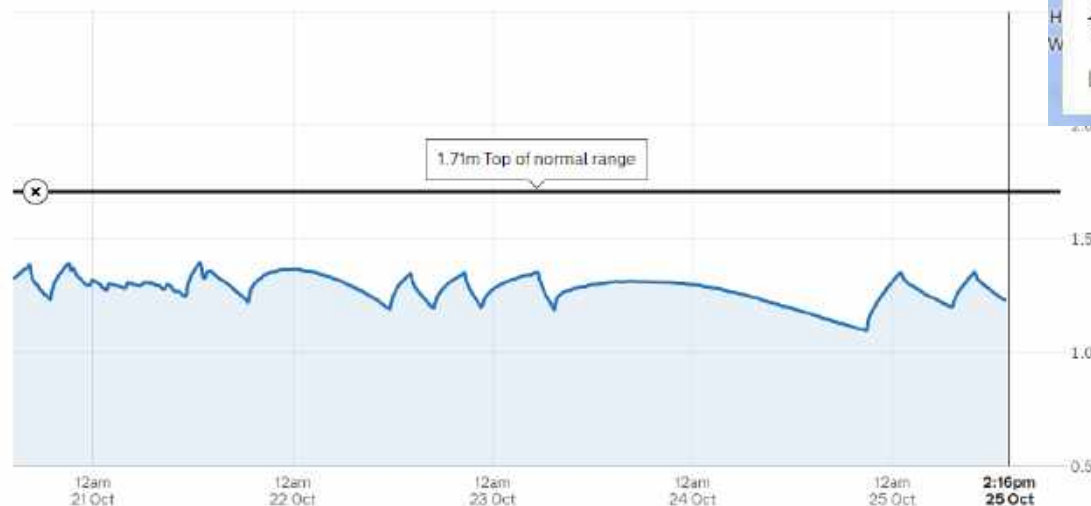
[Map](#) [Nearby levels](#)

Latest at 1:45pm on 25 October

Height 1.23m Trend Steady State Normal

Normal range 1.12m to 1.71m

Height in metres over the last 5 days



Manage your water abstraction licence online



Use this service to:

- view and share your licence information
- submit abstraction returns

www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-your-water-abstraction-or-impoundment-licences-online

Alt Crossens Catchment: Water Resources Engagement 2019-2024



Case Study: Alt Crossens Water Resources Communication & Engagement 2022-2023

Background

The water resources communication and engagement project has been delivered across the Alt Crossens catchment since 2019. The aim of the project during 2022-23 was to build on our previous engagement activities from the past two years, and particularly the levels of trust now established with the local farmers and growers to reach as many of this community as possible in the catchment.

Project

Throughout 2022-2023 Mersey Rivers Trust delivered and took part in:

- In person conferences and workshops to communicate updates and share best practice.
- Farm walks to identify water quality improvement interventions and natural flood management measure to support downstream flood pressures.
- Presence at local industry events.



Opportunity to enhance and improve hedgerow.



Water Friendly Farming Hub



Outcomes

Lasting impact: We have diversified the delivery of engagement activities on offer, including Demonstration Farm visits, plus arranging sessions with other organisations such as the NFU North West and Lancashire Wildlife Trust to widen the discussions with farmers and growers. We can confidently say that

Environment Act 2028

- Engagement. We want to work with abstraction licence holders to ensure their abstractions are ‘sustainable’.
- Two new provisions that give EA more scope to change **permanent** abstraction licences to address unsustainable water abstraction and the damage caused by it. From 1 January 2028, we will be able to make changes to abstraction licences without compensation where:
 - it is necessary to protect the water environment from damage
 - at least 25% of the licence volume is unused for at least the preceding 12 years
- Only permanent licence holders will be affected by these new provisions
- We are identifying these licence holders and contacting them from 2023
- We have regular meetings with NFU to keep them up-to-date
- [Future changes to abstraction licences - what you need to know – NFUonline](#)
- Between now and 2035 we will be undertaking **catchment reviews** in England.
- We are currently designing a process to do this and aim to keep all abstractors updated on progress



What are Catchment Reviews?

- Rolling programme of reviews to address all remaining damaging abstractions in a catchment. Early stage of development
- Ambition to complete reviews by 2035 based on common end dates
- Equitable. Review of water industry and non-water industry licences at same time – as much as possible
- Fair. Time limited and permanent licences reviewed at the same time
- Collaborative. Enable sector derived solutions for sustainable abstraction
- Alt and Crossens - unique catchments

• Prioritisation of catchments



Questions?

Any water resource queries or questions please talk to us

Email:

IEP_CLA@environment-agency.gov.uk

Email your query with your contact details and we'll call/
email you back.

Catchment reviews

- We are in the early stages of designing a process for catchment reviews which we intend to trial during early 2024 and then roll out nationally.
- What do you want to see (or not see) in catchment reviews?
- If a catchment is identified as having damaging abstraction, we want to give abstractors an option to work collaboratively to find ways of stopping the damage. Does collaboration work and what 's needed to ensure it works well?