

# Thames Water – a corporate approach to delivering biodiversity and environmental net gain

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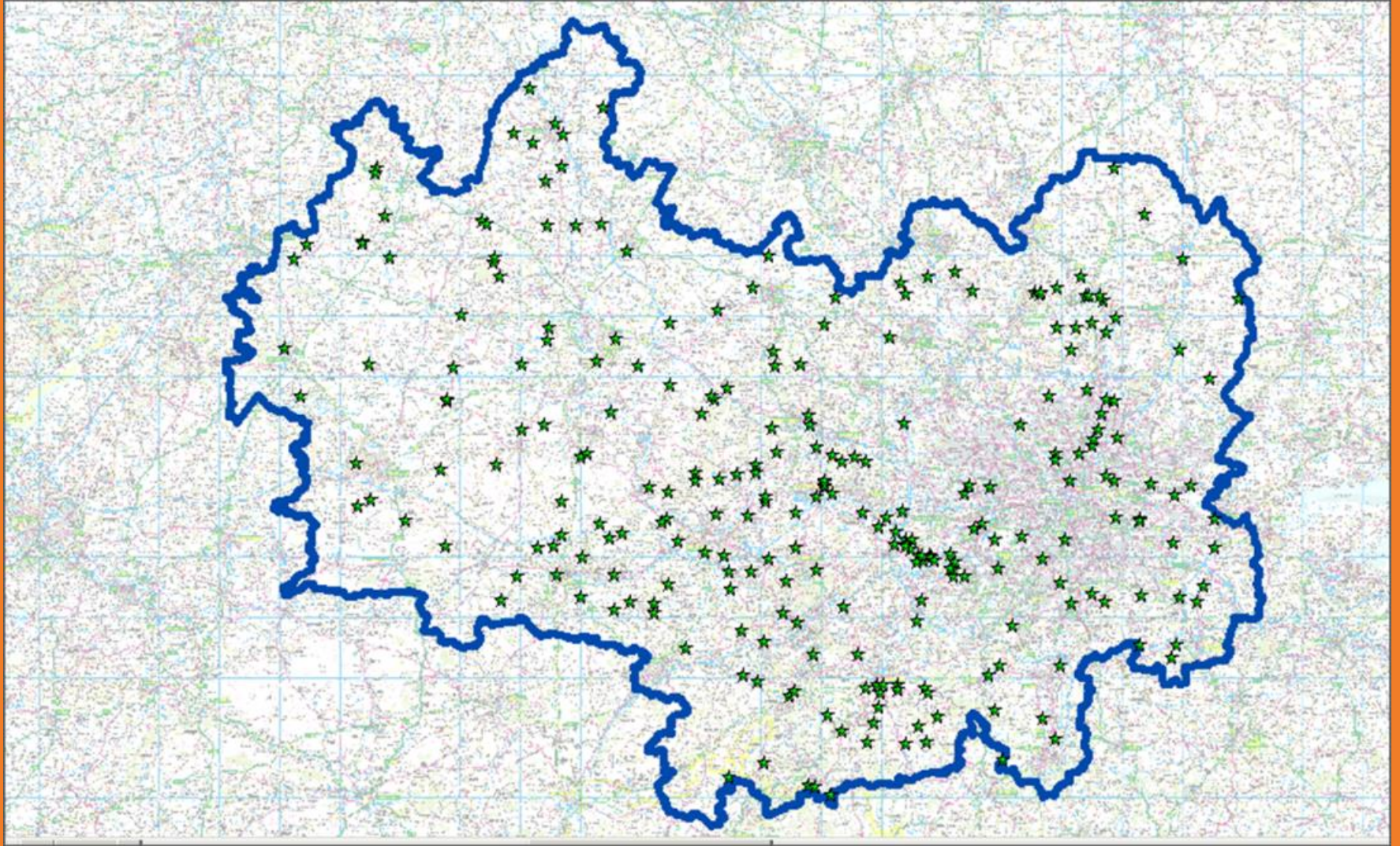
# Our current biodiversity programme



- Being a socially responsible business means we have policies and strategies in place to enhance biodiversity, educate and engage customers, invest in communities - e.g. Walthamstow Wetlands
- 253 of our sites as Sites of Biodiversity Interest – e.g. have rare orchids present
- 12 of our sites are SSSIs; five AONBs within catchment
- Directly manage five nature reserves; 22 managed by our leaseholders
- Site Enhancements for Biodiversity and Access to protect and enhance biodiversity



# 250+ sites of biodiversity interest...



# Example - grassland

## Kempton Water Treatment Works

- Grass cutting regime changed to support small tortoiseshell butterfly, whilst still meeting operational needs.



## Walton Water Treatment Works

- Bee orchids and array of wildflowers found all around the bank around admin building



# Wild about Thames Events



- Raise awareness about the ecological importance of our sites
- Open to employees and customers.

## Wild about Woodlands

Volunteers coppiced woodland at Bracknell STW



## Wild about Butterflies.

Identification workshop followed by a site survey at Winchester Wood



## Wild about Birds.

Bird ringing demonstration by licenced experts at Swindon Lagoons



# Biodiversity on our sites - customers' views

Customers are generally impressed by the information about Thames Water's current biodiversity strategy.

Thames Water customers care about biodiversity and expect the company to take action to preserve it.

Customer support for Thames Water's biodiversity plan remains high, even when presented in the context of a potential bill increase.

Learning about Thames Water's biodiversity plans generally makes customers more positive about the organisation.

# Plans for 2020 - 2025

- **New performance commitment** agreed by Board and Ofwat
- We will invest to deliver the biodiversity net-gain target
- Also enhance sites for customer health & well being (wider environmental net gain)
- Plan to open up access to more sites



Business Plan 2020 – 2025:  
September 2018

Performance Commitment Summary

Performance commitment: EWS01  
Enhancing biodiversity



# Biodiversity Net Gain

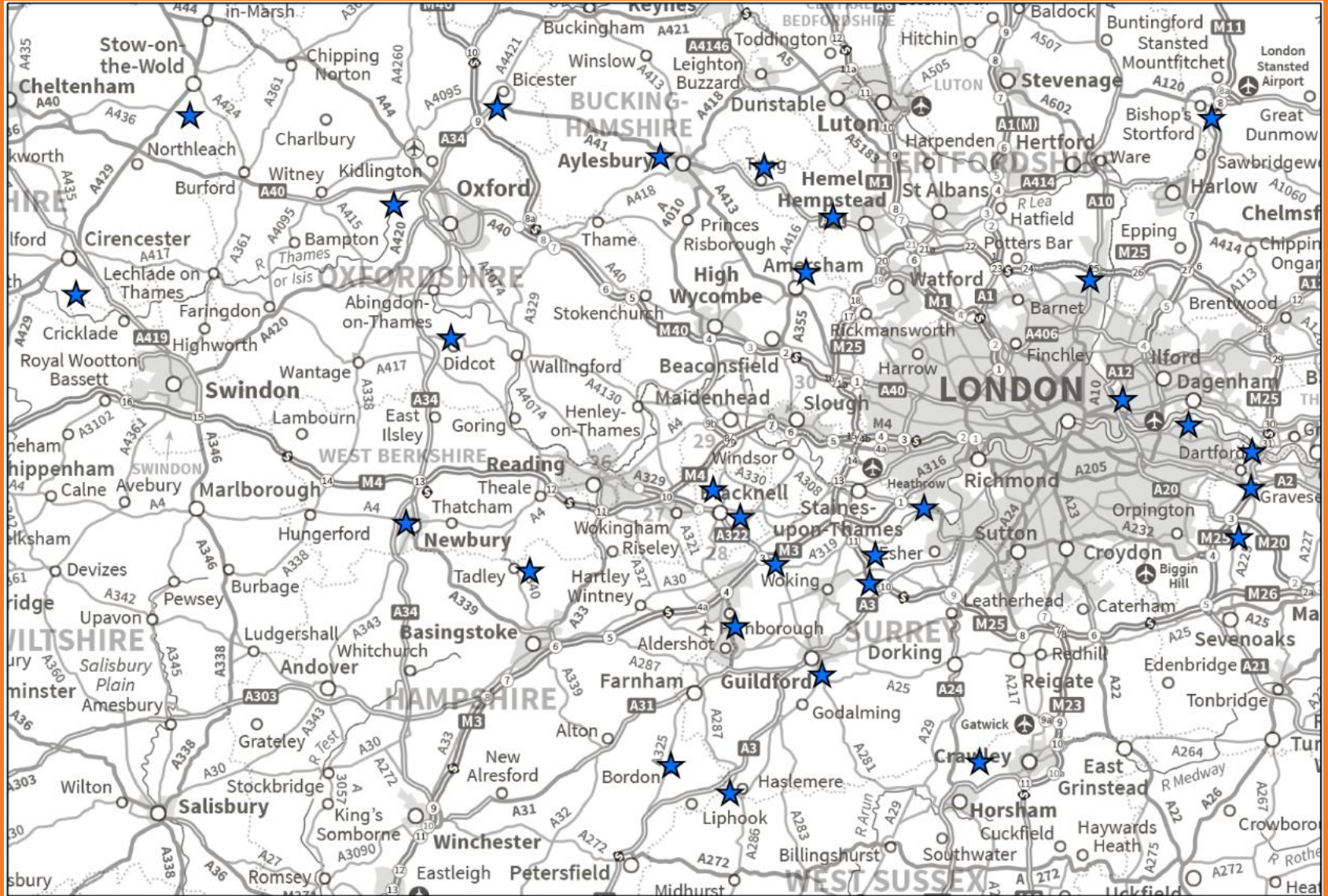
“Easy wins” relating to improvements in condition

Key sites are being identified for more intensive study in 2019 and delivery over five years from 2020





# Site Selection.



# Site selection for ecosystem services

## Cultural Services

Recreation,  
Aesthetic  
Values/sense of  
place, Health  
benefits

## Provisioning Services

Food, Raw  
Material, Fresh  
Water, Species  
Diversity

## Regulating Services

Climate regulation,  
Moderation of  
extreme events,  
Water and air  
quality



# Considerations and criteria

Good working relationships with site managers

Customer and stakeholder involvement

Funding and ongoing management and maintenance

Antisocial behaviour e.g. vandalism

Catchment wide

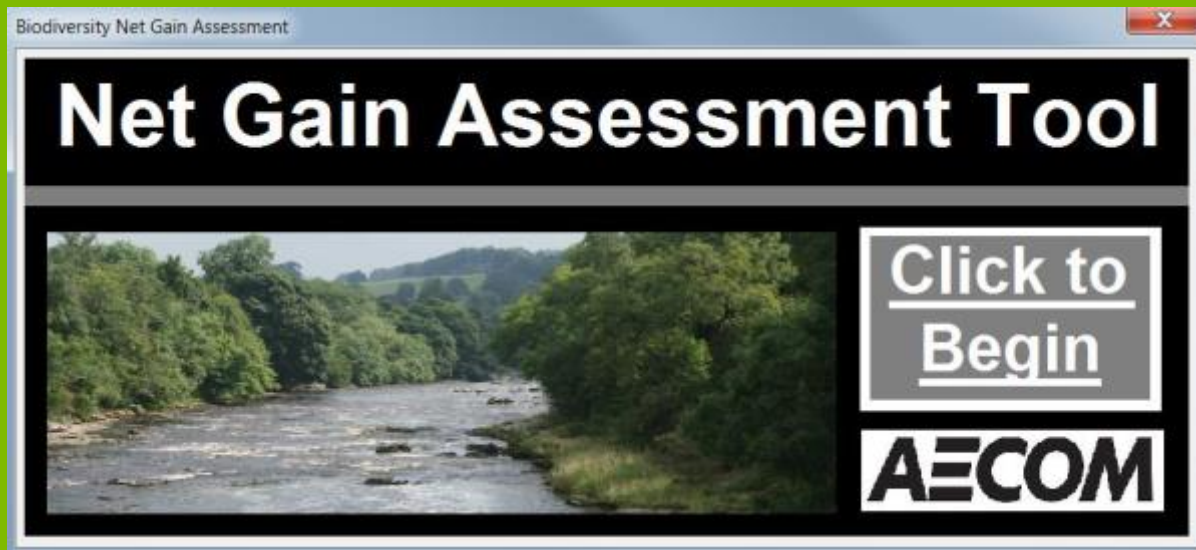
Climate change and adverse weather

Available landholdings – sales and growth projects



# Biodiversity Net Gain - Tool

- Phase 1 habitat data to biodiversity units
- Excel tool based on Defra metric v1 to calculate baseline biodiversity units for each site

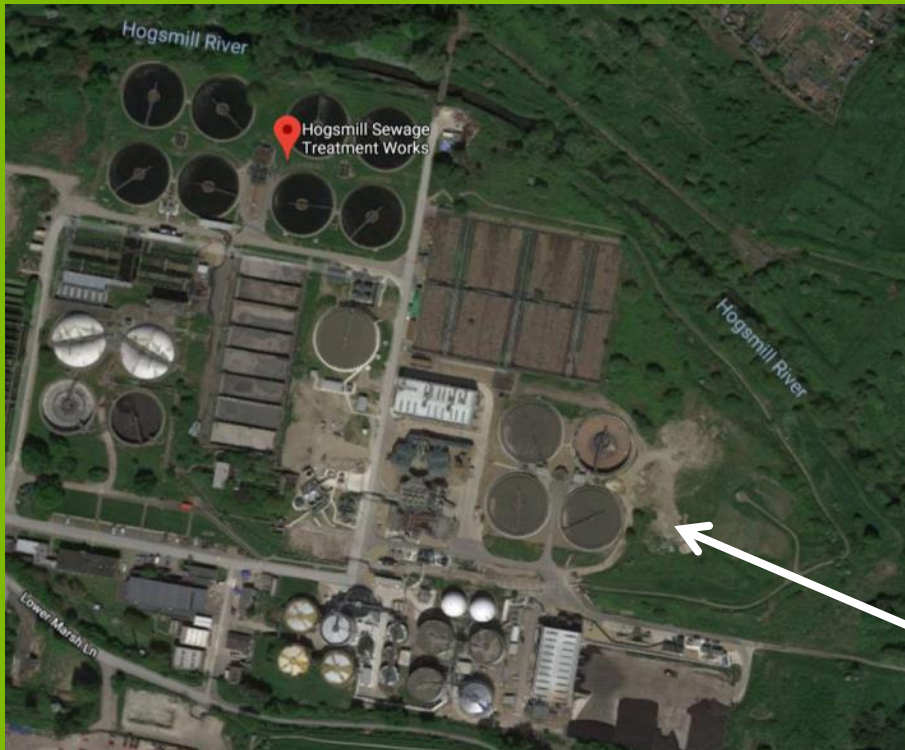


# Measuring biodiversity

- AECOM have calculated biodiversity units at Thames Water's 253 key sites
- Thames Water are targeting a average 1% increase in biodiversity units each year 5% cumulative increase by March 2025
- 5% target based on what is achievable within operational constraints
- Enhancement required needs to be undertaken early in the investment cycle



# Example of enhancement – Hogsmill STW



# Improvements undertaken

- Re-profile the landscape for better visibility of the STW from the educational visitors viewing platform.
- Spread 540 tonnes of low nutrient sandy loam soil to a depth of 50mm
- Spread of wildflower seed mixture (meadow mixture for loamy soils) at 6-8g per m<sup>2</sup>
- Creation of 3 ponds to be planted with native aquatic plant species





During enhancement





## The vision!

(Photo credit: Maydencroft – Gosmoor Hill, Herts)



# The Ridgeway – From biodiversity net gain to environmental net gain



# Thank you

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