

How is water quality managed in the UK?

Legislation- The UK and EU have strict laws which ensure that factories and farms are limited in the amount and type of discharge they put into rivers. Water companies which provide our drinking water and sewage systems have very clear regulations and penalties

Education Campaigns - These inform the public about the damage caused by putting inappropriate items into the sewage systems, such as engine oil and baby wipes, and advise how to dispose of them correctly.

Waste water treatments- Local water treatment plants remove suspended solids such as silt and soil, bacteria, algae, chemicals and minerals, to produce clean water for human consumption.

Building better treatment plants and investing in new infrastructure- Better Sewers and water mains can prevent spills and accidents, but they can lead to higher water and sewage bills to pay for the investment. For example, Thames water in London is investing heavily in its sewage works, and new tunnels to prevent the overflow of the current sewers.

Pollution traps - For example, when new roads and motorways are built close to rivers and watercourses, pollution traps such as reed beds are often installed to catch and filter out the pollution.

Green roofs and walls- in cities, new buildings often have green roofs, which filter out the pollutants and naturally in rainwater. Green roofs also offer sustainable water management. This reduces the risk of flooding by reducing runoff from the roof. Green roofs can also help to combat climate change by increasing the absorption of CO₂ from the atmosphere.