

Water summit: 'Joined up' local level action to deliver enhanced catchment management

Moreton in Marsh, 29 May 2018

The Water Catchment Summit saw over 120 experts and thought leaders from business, agriculture, regulation, academia, government, the public sector and civil society come together to explore innovative ways to address the challenges of catchment management. Participants included household names such as M&S, Nestlé, Coca Cola and Asda, eleven water companies and some major players in the sector including the Chief Executive of Ofwat, Chair of the Environment Agency, Chief Executive of Water UK, Richard Benyon MP and Lord Gardiner of Kimble.

A call to action by His Royal highness The Prince of Wales

The Summit was convened at the direct request of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. Chaired by Mr. Peter Simpson, CEO, Anglian Water, the Summit explored the positive steps already been taken by many different stakeholders, including water companies, to improve the management of major water catchments; despite this more needs to be done to move beyond 'end of pipe' solutions to problems. Water is a shared resource that is critical to the success of many sectors and everyone, from customers and their communities through to companies and regulators; each has a role to play. The Summit showcased the latest best practise examples of catchment partnerships and water management, enabled insight into catchment management in action, and provided a forum to discuss future innovative solutions that value water in its full perspective.

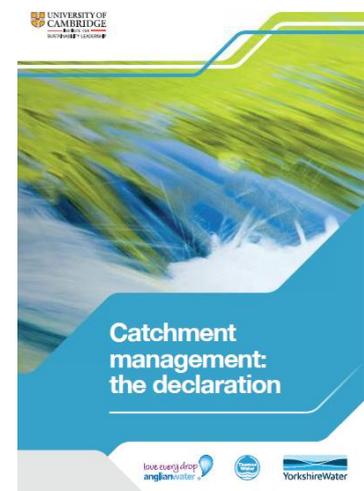
In the lead up to the Summit, a cross sector of companies¹ were supported by the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, The Rivers Trust and Business in the Community to develop a Declaration.

The purpose of the Declaration was to:

- encourage collaboration across multi-sectors and stakeholders
- respond positively to the 25 Year Environment Plan
- create connections between existing initiatives
- and to create real practical actions

The Declaration consists of six principles. It acknowledges that change cannot be achieved by a few regulatory tweaks, nor can any single sector or government agency, working in isolation, deliver change. It is a call from business, civil society organisations and the public sector to commit to the water catchment-related ambition of the 25 Year Environment Plan and support collective activities that will deliver successful catchment management.

Companies and a number of public and third sector organisations were encouraged to sign the Declaration both before and during the event. By the end of the event more than 77 organisations had signed the Declaration. To sign up please use this [link](#).



¹ Anglian Water, M&S, Nestlé, Thames Water and Yorkshire Water

Experts and thought leaders share their views on catchment partnerships and water management

Water companies are able to cite many different examples of how they are working at a catchment scale. Increasingly, customers are coming to understand the limitations of 'end of pipe' solutions to problems and water companies are responding by engaging more directly in catchment management to address the root cause of problems. During the Summit a number of speakers from different sectors shared their views on what was needed to galvanise different stakeholders and promote greater action across different river catchments in the UK.

Richard Benyon, MP spoke of the challenge when Government is seen as the only stakeholder capable of addressing large, complex problems that relate to water. Mr. Benyon explained the need to engage an "army of new actors" who could address these issues drawing on examples where partnerships have delivered real results.

Richard Aylard CVO, External Affairs & Sustainability Director, Thames Water addressed the increasing focus in the water sector on delivering 'green' infrastructure solutions rather than focusing solely on traditional, hard engineering approaches. These new approaches present an opportunity to reduce costs whilst realising a wider range of social and environmental benefits.

Nevil Muncaster, Director of Asset Management, Yorkshire Water cited a number of different examples where Yorkshire Water has worked with farmers to promote better management of soils, demonstrating what a natural capital approach looks like in practise.

Mike Barry, Director of Sustainable Business, Marks and Spencer provided his perspective on the role of major consumer goods companies in the water sector, drawing attention to the embedded water in many products and the need to drive solutions at a farm level to truly make a difference.

Arlin Rickard, Chief Executive, The River Trust helped explain the scale of the challenge, citing a number of alarming statistics on the current state of ecosystems in the UK. Mr. Rickard also highlighted some examples of partnership between The River Trust and major water companies.

Showcasing examples of good practise

Throughout the day, participants were encouraged to visit a number of market stalls that were set up to showcase examples of the pioneering work happening in the catchment management space and to inspire individuals to take action. The market stalls were organised broadly in line with the themes of the declaration and included displays on catchment management tools for farmers, great examples of community engagement and digital innovations in support of better management.

Key note address: Lord Gardiner of Kimble on behalf of DEFRA

Lord Gardiner of Kimble expressed his thanks, both to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and those present at the Summit. Lord Gardiner spoke of the 25 year plan for the Environment and the ambitious goal of handing the environment over to the next generation in a better state than it was previously. As a farmer himself, Lord Gardiner was deeply conscious of the need to get food and farming arrangements right and that good catchment management needed to contribute to the type of farming that the UK would need in future. Lord Gardiner praised His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales for his early awareness on a range of pressing issues and the work that had gone into the Declaration. DEFRA are firmly behind this initiative and in support of the leadership group that has now emerged from this Summit.

Speech by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales joined the Summit for the afternoon session to share his views and was enormously encouraged to see such a distinguished gathering take place. His Royal Highness's speech can be viewed [here](#).

Next steps

Throughout the day's proceedings, a number of key themes were echoed by different stakeholders. The need for *partnership*. The need for greater *collaboration*. The *collective responsibility* of everyone who uses water. And the need to create *connections* between existing initiatives. There was strong agreement that any top down visions of water management that come out of the Summit must make sense to those who actually manage land.

Over the next 12 months, a Leadership Group will explore a number of longer term ambitions including:

1. The potential for minimum, locally appropriate water stewardship standards
2. The benefits of an open framework to represent all data, evidence and best practice to drive continuous improvement and facilitate pooling of resources
3. Reviewing the existing governance frameworks for delivery of catchment management and promoting improvements that provide opportunities for working together at a strategic level to deliver multiple stakeholder benefits from single interventions
4. Establishing a common narrative to be used across sectors and stakeholders to improve understanding of the importance of water stewardship
5. Opportunities to share best practice across catchments

The Declaration is still open for [signing](#) and we encourage all institutions to get involved.

For further information on the Declaration visit: <https://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/publications/natural-resource-security-publications/catchment-management-the-declaration>

Special thanks to those who supported the development of the Declaration:

- Anglian Water
- GLA
- M&S
- Nestlé
- Thames Water
- The Rivers Trust
- Yorkshire Water

The partners behind the event

The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership

For 800 years, the University of Cambridge has fostered leadership, ideas and innovations that have benefited and transformed societies. The University now has a critical role to play to help the world respond to a singular challenge: how to provide for as many as nine billion people by 2050 within a finite envelope of land, water and natural resources, whilst adapting to a warmer, less predictable climate.

The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) empowers business and policy leaders to make the necessary adjustments to their organisations, industries and economic systems in light of this challenge. By bringing together multidisciplinary researchers with influential business and policy practitioners across the globe, we foster an exchange of ideas across traditional boundaries to generate new solutions-oriented thinking.

Anglian Water

As the company charged with supplying drinking water to the driest part of the UK, Anglian Water understands the value in every drop. We also know that if we are to make the most of this most precious resource others need to value it too.

Love Every Drop is a movement to put water at the heart of a whole new way of living. We have committed to stopping pollution, cutting carbon, and eliminating waste. We want to lead the way in raising awareness of the value of water, reducing the amount we all use and helping our region to become the most water-efficient in the UK. It working too, despite our population having grown by a third in the last thirty years, today we still only have to put the same amount of water into supply as we did in 1990.

In 2015, Anglian Water was awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise: Sustainable Development, and in 2017 Business in the Community's Responsible Business of the Year award.

Thames Water

Thames Water is the UK's largest water and wastewater services provider, covering the urban landscape of our capital city through to the rural reaches of the Cotswolds. We supply almost one third of the 9 billion litres of water used by people and businesses in the UK each and every day, while removing and treating over four billion litres of sewage for 15 million customers.

Delivering excellent services to these customers is at the heart of our company's culture. We are committed to protecting and enhancing the natural environment we rely on to deliver these services, acting as a socially responsible and sustainable business, now and in the future.

Yorkshire Water

Yorkshire Water provides some of life's most essential services to the 5 million people and 140,000 businesses in the Yorkshire and Humberside region. The Company plays a key role in the region's health, wellbeing and prosperity by supplying water and waste water services, and being custodians of essential infrastructure and the natural environment. This is all done for just over £1 a day for the average customer, amongst the lowest water and waste water bills in the country.

Yorkshire Water is leading the practical application of a range of catchment management programmes across its 28,000 hectare estate and by working in partnership with other land owners and managers. By working differently and in partnership, Yorkshire Water has a track record of delivering exciting and impactful programmes that are protecting and restoring many parts of Yorkshire's iconic landscape. For example, the Beyond Nature programme to introduce more sustainable farm tenancies and its work to plant 1 million trees as part of the Northern Forest which has already started in the Calder Valley

Signatories to the declaration



In partnership with

