

Essex Water Strategy

Briefing July 2023

Lucy Shepherd (CAM)



Objective

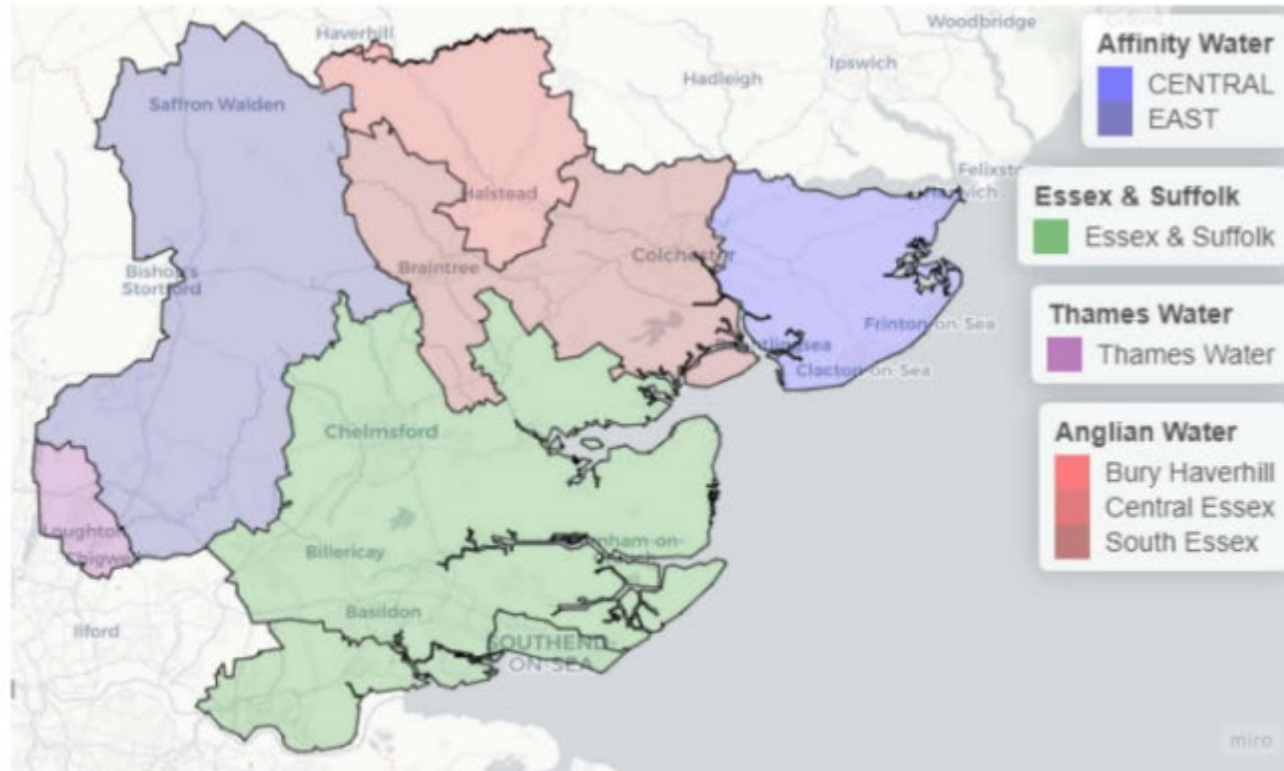
To look more closely at the water scarcity and quality challenges for this County, and provide recommended actions we collectively need to take.

Aim to provide a more detailed, place based understanding of the issues and the impact on Essex's communities, businesses and council services.

Links to:



Key Partners

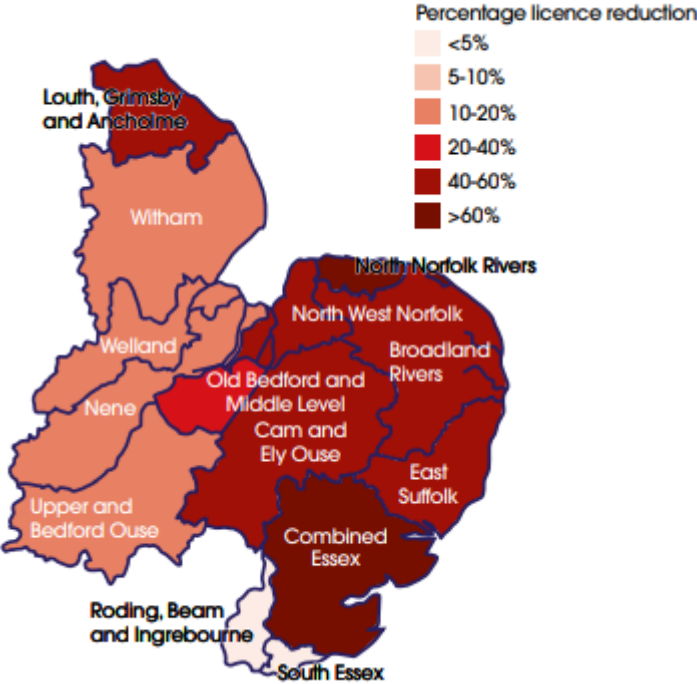
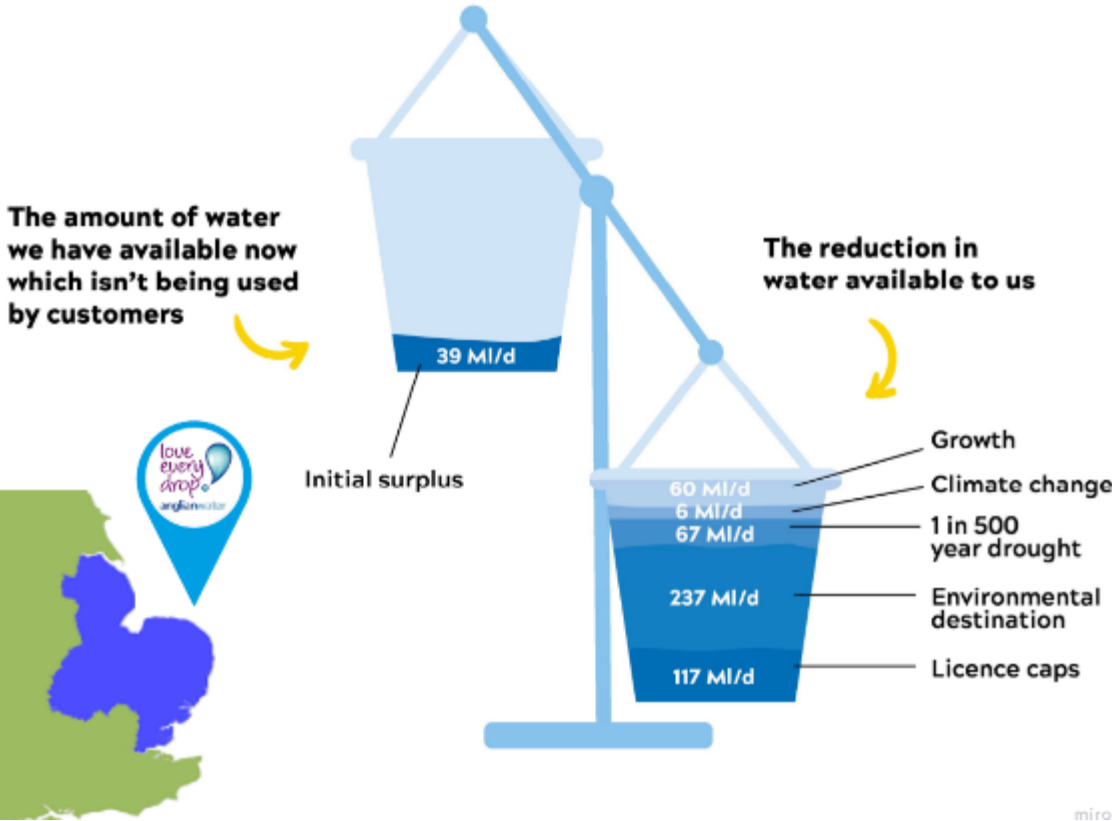


- 4 water supply companies
- 6 Water Resource Zones
- 2 drainage/wastewater
- WRE and WRSE
- 3 Environment Agency RFCC Areas
- 12 Local Planning Authorities
- 2 unitary authorities

The Challenge – Water Resources

- For Public Water Supply with projected growth, climate change and environment needs:

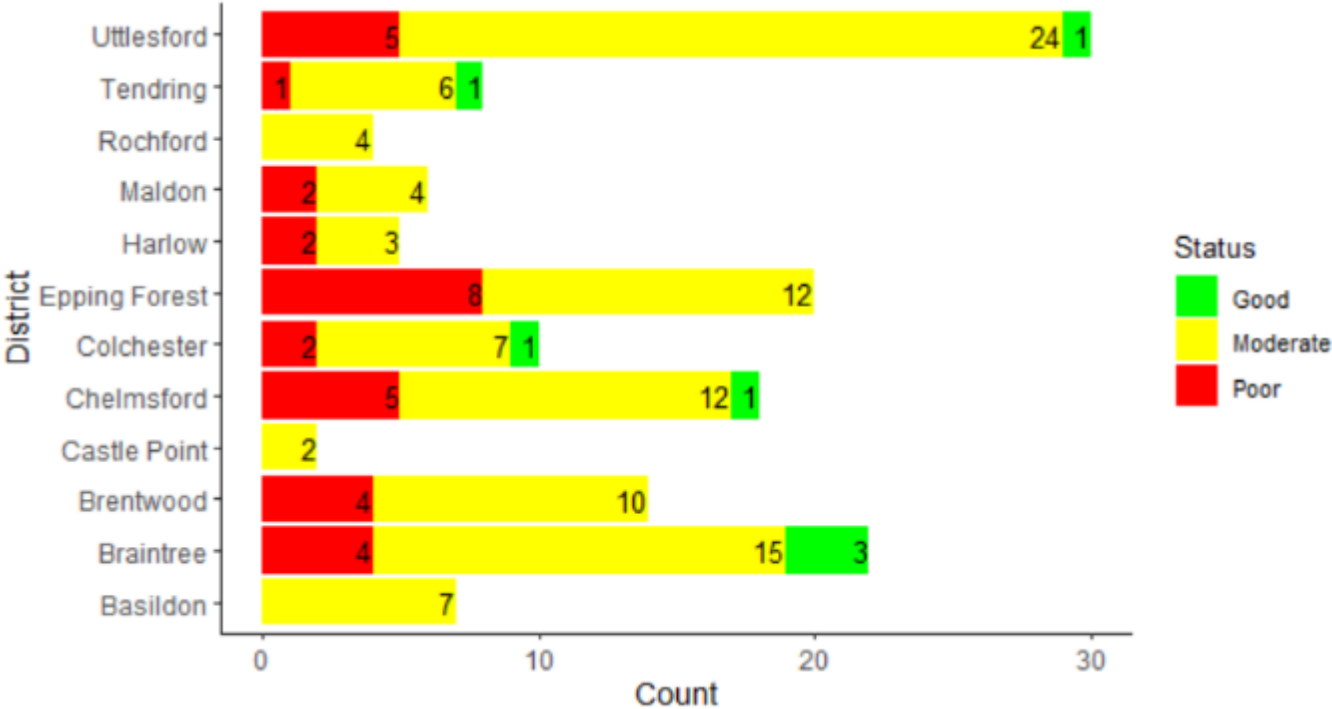
- For Regional Agriculture in an ‘enhanced’ environmental scenario (protecting flow for recovery of the most environmentally sensitive sites)



Percentage reductions in licenced abstraction volumes by 2050

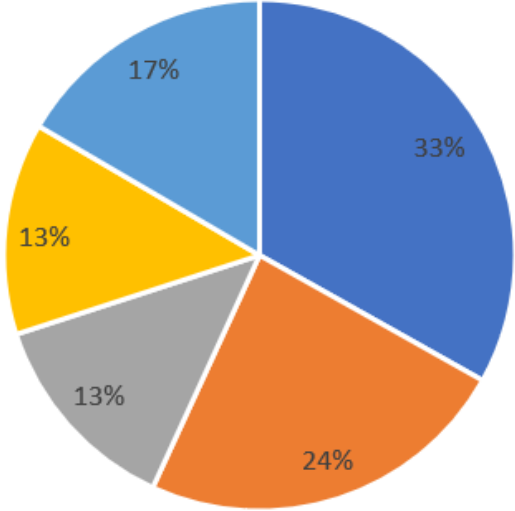
The Challenge – Water Quality

Waterbody status by Local Authority area



• Why moderate and poor?

Top 5 known reasons for not achieving GOOD status



6 out of 91 water bodies in Essex (7%) achieve 'GOOD' status (England 16% overall)
 33 out of 91 water bodies in Essex (32%) are POOR status (England 17% overall)

- Water Industry - Sewage discharge
- Agriculture - Poor nutrient management
- Agriculture - Poor Livestock Management
- Transport Drainage
- Urbanisation - Urban development

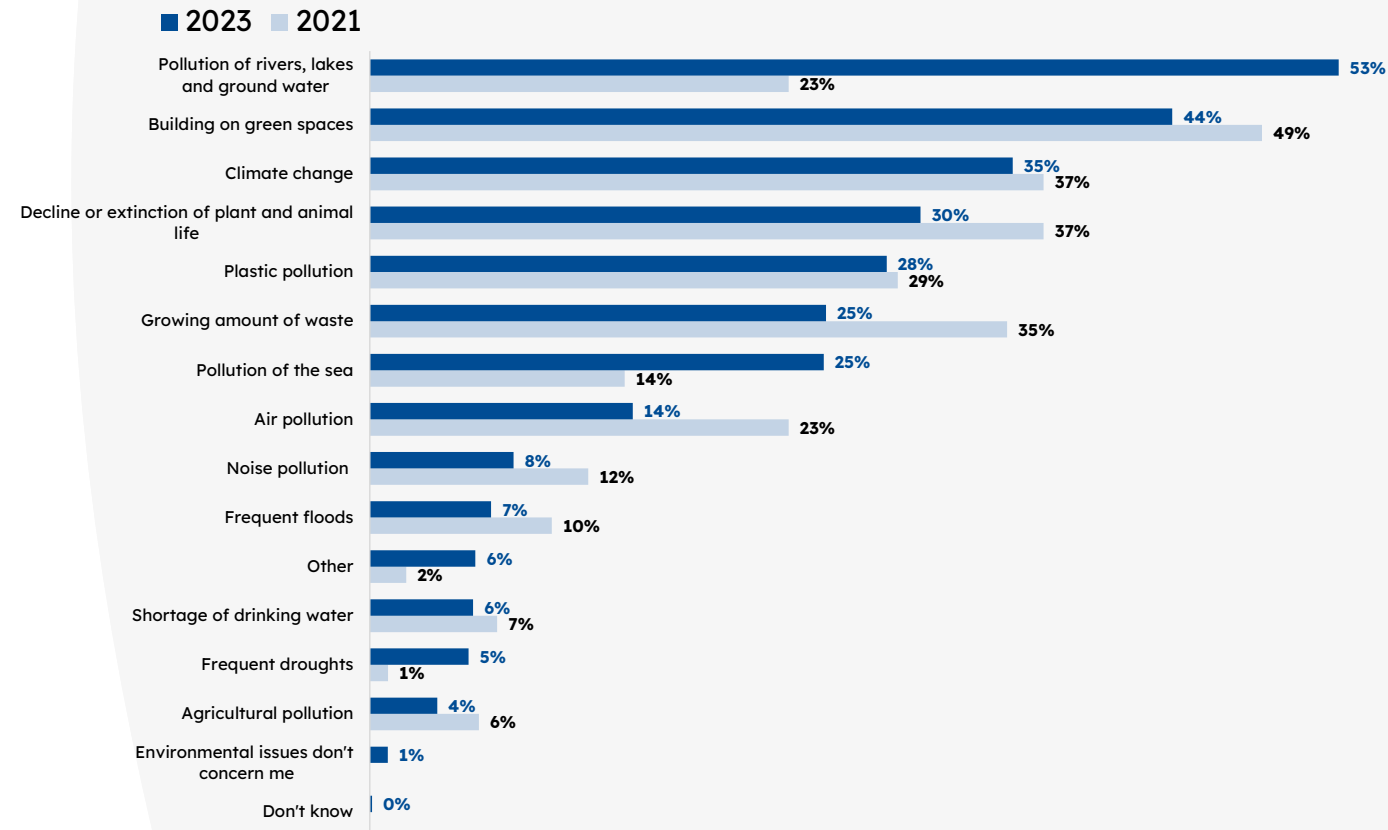
Essex Residents Panel Water Survey

Headline findings:

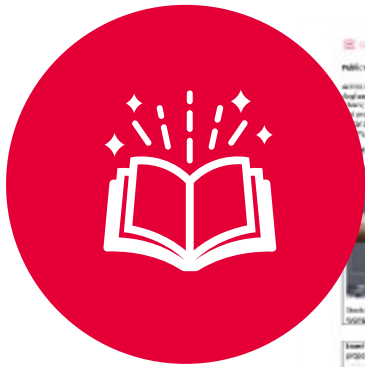
Of the **810 people** that responded:

- **53%** of people rated water pollution in their current top 3 environmental concerns, and it rated **highest of all**.
- Residents said it was ranked lower in 2021 because they are not informed (58%) or think it's not their issue (52%)
- **95%** did not know the detail of the governments target to reduce each person in England's use of the public water supply by 20% by 2038.
- **83%** did not know that Essex is classed in a 'seriously water stressed area'.
- **81%** did not know that only 7% of our water bodies are classed as 'good' status.
- Although, **67%** of respondents felt they knew the main reasons for poor water quality in Essex.

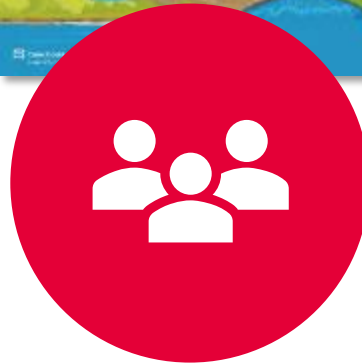
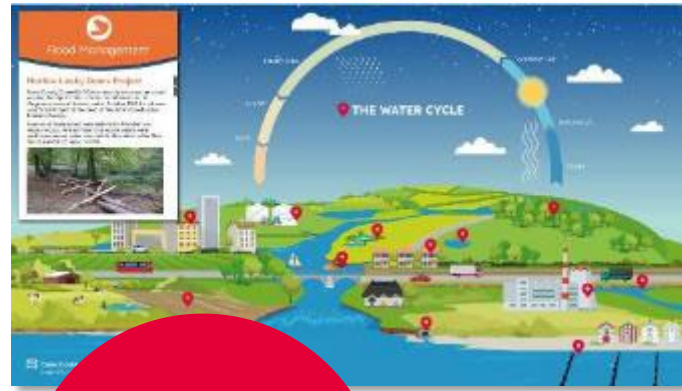
53% of people rated water pollution in their current top 3 environmental concerns (increasing from 23% in 2021, and it rated highest of all.



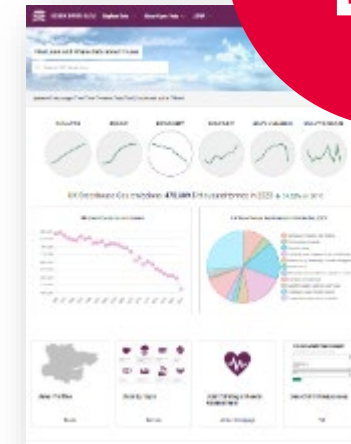
Project Deliverables and Progress



Essex Water Strategy document and recommendations published **March 2024** following key stakeholder engagement



Engagement Campaign involving new microsite water explorer to get everyone 'water literate' and drive behaviour change



Key data from our water companies and partners to be tracked and published on our **Essex Open Data** portal

The Essex Water Strategy

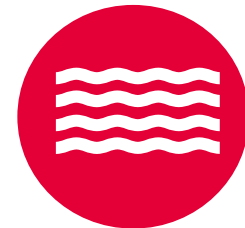
- The strategy will be available via Essex County Council websites and <https://floods.essex.gov.uk/>
- The content will tell a complete story of how we use water now, what the challenges will be in the future, and what needs to be done. Supported by locally relatable data and fully accessible.
- ‘What needs to be done’ and recommendations to focus on 3 key themes.
- Recommendations support goals of the Environment Improvement Plan for clean and plentiful water.
- Other goals to achieve are those of our Essex Climate Action Commission (75% NFM and 30% Green Infrastructure), Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Sustainable Drainage requirements.
- Stakeholder engagement through a series of webinars for feedback on and commitment to our recommendations.



Reducing our
demand for
water



Changing land
use for water

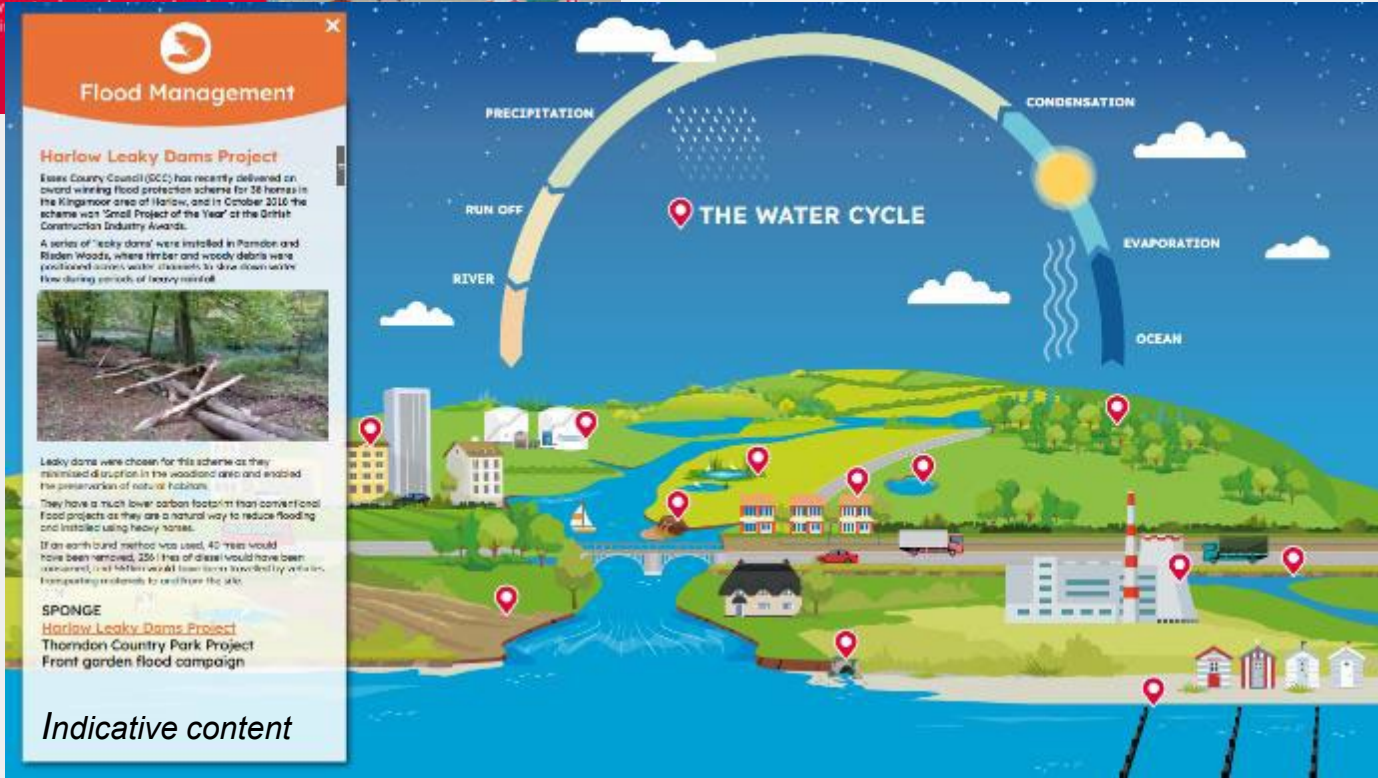


Our future
water
supply

Essex Water : Your Future



- The microsite allows users to explore water with a holistic view.



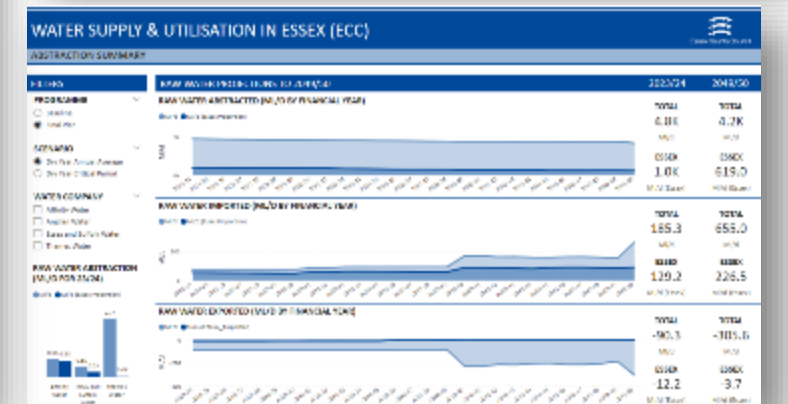
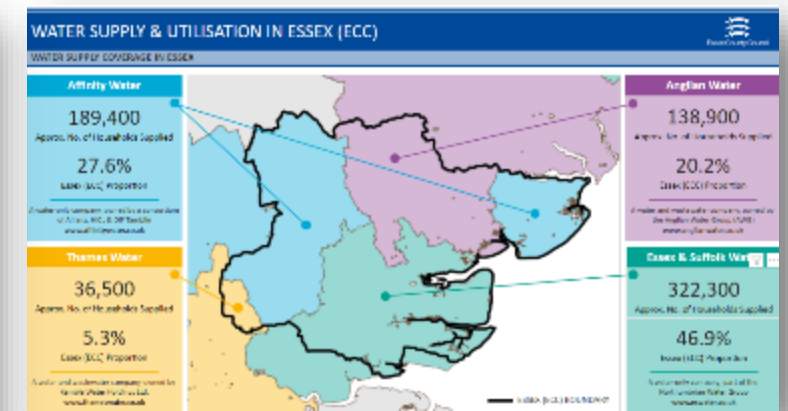
- Featuring data on the water challenges in Essex and explaining how we can **all** mitigate them.
- Icons will reveal 'popup' info boxes with further detail, links to other publications, and local case studies.

Essex Open Data

Sources of information will be the published Water Resource Management Plan and Environment Agency Abstraction Data.

Key stats may include:

- Leakage performance
- Essex household usage
- Smart metering rollout
- Reuse and Desalination options
- Drought and growth projections



This information is issued by:
Essex County Council

Contact:
Lucy Shepherd
Essex Water Strategy Manager
lucy.shepherd@essex.gov.uk

Climate Adaptation and Mitigation
Essex County Council
County Hall, Chelmsford
Essex, CM1 1QH

 **Essex_CC**

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