

WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF WATER CONSERVATORS

RESPONSE TO THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON WATER (SPECIAL MEASURES) BILL BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS PUBLIC BILL COMMITTEE DECEMBER 2024

1. The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators ('WCWC') is a City of London Livery Company focussed on the long-term health of our water resources and the broader environment. Our members include senior professionals from water, environmental and related industries and regulators, along with others who share our concern for water and the environment. Our experience and knowledge ranges from the complexities of environmental sciences, through the application of engineering to deliver the goals identified by those sciences, and the subsequent management of the assets created. The WCWC's purpose is *promoting a diverse and sustainable environment*.

2. As part of that purpose, the WCWC has been responding to relevant consultations particularly on matters relating to water conservation. These are archived on its website. <https://waterconservators.org/policies-and-practices/>

3 The Government has laid The Bill before Parliament. The WCWC is responding to the Call For Evidence using the Bill with amendments proposed by the Lords as of 27 November 2024. It stands ready to provide further evidence on its submission as required. <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3751/publications>
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2024/december/water-special-measures-bill-call-for-evidence/>

THE RESPONSE

4. The WCWC suggests that several of the aspects of this Bill will be addressed by the Independent Commission established by Government to look at the future of the water industry.

5. The WCWC wishes to restrict its contribution to technical aspects and in doing so supports the following three Clauses.

Clause 2: Pollution incident reduction plans 24. This clause inserts provisions into the Water Industry Act 1991 ("the 1991 Act") that will require sewerage and water supply undertakers to publish an annual pollution incident reduction plan by 1 April each year and establishes the matters the plans must address.

Clause 3: Emergency overflows 33. This clause inserts new Chapter 5 (emergency overflows) into Part 4 (sewerage services) of the Water Industry Act 1991 after Chapter 4 (storm overflows). Chapter 5 includes two new sections to require reporting on discharges from emergency overflows and establishes the meaning of "emergency overflow".

Clause 4: Nature-based solutions 40. This clause inserts provisions into the Water Industry Act 1991 that will require sewerage undertakers to explain in their drainage and sewerage management plans, the use that is to be made of nature-based solutions, technologies and facilities within their drainage and sewerage systems.

