

Meg Hillier MP
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Date: 16 December 2020

Dear Chair,

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to your committee on 3 December on long term environmental goals. Please see below the additional information requested by the committee with details on where reductions in water abstraction has taken place across the country.

In response to a question from Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, Sir James Bevan agreed to write to the Committee with details regarding over-abstraction and where water reduction has taken place. As per Q42.

The Abstraction Plan (2017) sets out how the Environment Agency will deliver sustainable water abstraction by changing unsustainable abstraction licences.

The significant reduction in water abstraction achieved to date has been delivered through the following programmes:

- Reviewing and changing unsustainable abstraction licences through the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction Programme (Figure 1);
- Revoking and reducing unused and underused licences (Figure 2);
- Renewing time limited licences on a sustainable basis.

Figures 1 and 2 below show the geographic distribution of licence changes and illustrate the countrywide focus of this work.

Figure 1 shows where licences have been changed as part of the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction Programme.

Figure 1

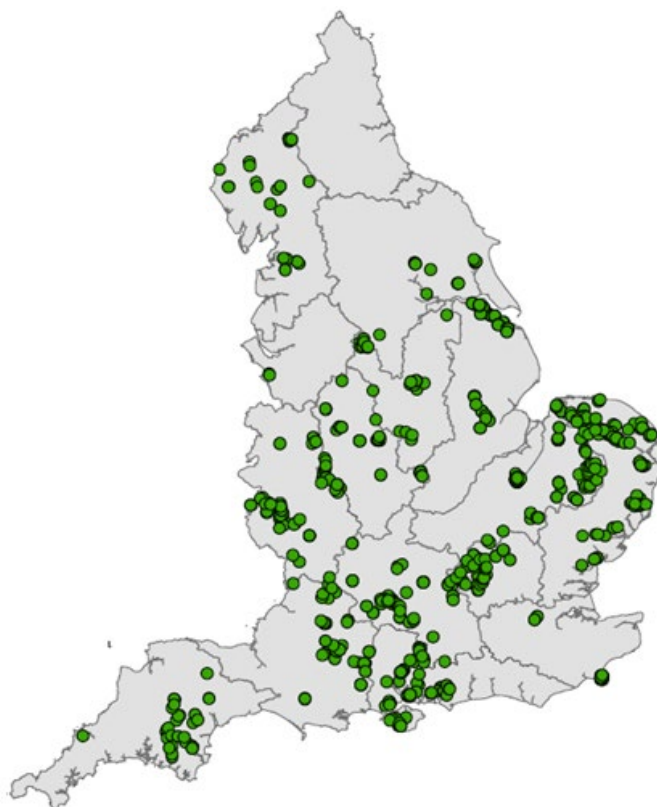
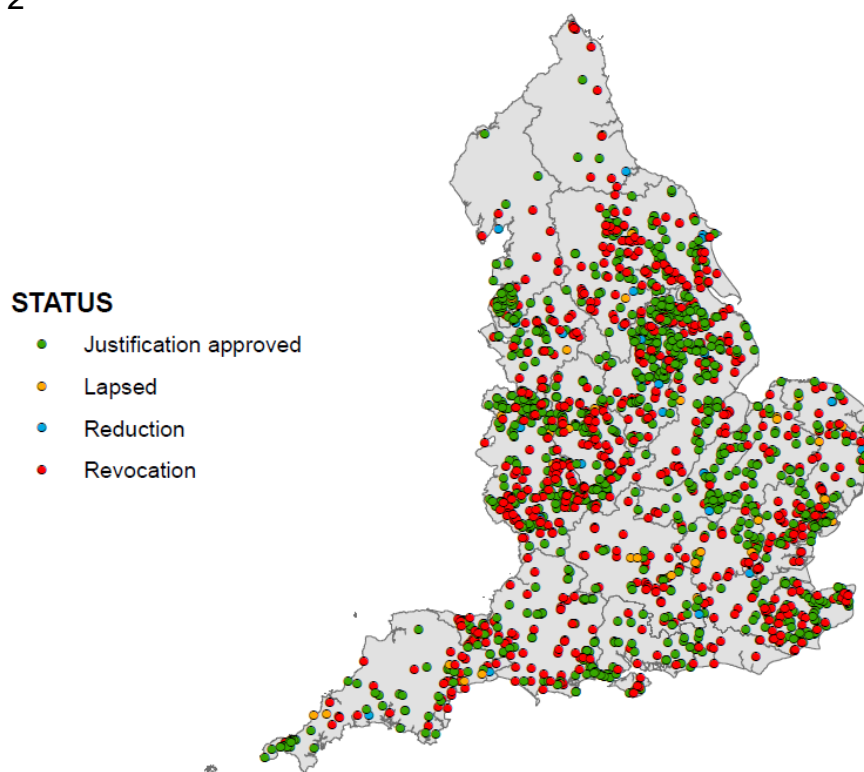


Figure 2 shows where licences have been re-justified, reduced or revoked as part of the underused and unused programme.

Figure 2



More information on the Abstraction Plan can be found online at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-abstraction-plan-2017/water-abstraction-plan>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J.D. Bevan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sir James Bevan
Chief Executive

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