

Standard rules consultation number 30

Proposed standard rules permits for new cemetery developments and closed-loop ground source heating and cooling systems

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We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment.

We help people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts, including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

We improve the quality of our water, land and air by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. A healthy and diverse environment enhances people's lives and contributes to economic growth.

We can’t do this alone. We work as part of the Defra group (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), with the rest of government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and local communities to create a better place for people and wildlife.

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# Introduction

The Environment Agency is responsible for regulating ‘groundwater activities’ as set out in [Schedule 22](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/1154/schedule/22) of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 (the EPR). These can be defined as activities that take place on or below the ground surface with the potential to impact upon the quality of groundwater.

Groundwater activities require an environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency unless an exemption from permitting applies. In October 2023 the EPR was amended meaning that, as an alternative to only issuing ‘bespoke permits’, the Environment Agency can also choose to regulate groundwater activities using a ‘standard rules permit’ approach.

The Environment Agency has now developed four proposed standard rules permits for some groundwater activities. The purpose of this consultation is to introduce these permits, which are intended to cover certain cemetery developments, and some closed-loop ground source heating and cooling systems.

The rules are supported by a generic risk assessment to ensure that the environmental risks posed by these activities are reduced to an acceptable level when operated in accordance with the rules.

## About this consultation

This document describes:

* what we are consulting on
* an overview of the relevant documents
* the standard permitting process
* the proposed new standard rules
* how you can respond to the consultation
* how we will gain your consent and use your information
* the principles we follow when running this consultation

This is to help you understand our proposals and provide you with sufficient information to enable you to comment on them. We will consider your answers and comments to revise our proposal and finalise the standard rules.

The consultation will run for a period of 12 weeks from 1 April 2025 and will close at 23:59pm on 24 June 2025. We will publish our response, together with the new standard rules and risk assessment, on GOV.UK.

## What we’re consulting on

The EPR allows us to develop standard rules for certain activities. We base the rules on our understanding of the risks from the proposed activity. This consultation is to seek your views on the proposed new standard rules for:

* new cemetery developments proposing moderate burial rates
* new cemetery developments proposing burials into unweathered bedrock
* new natural burials grounds
* new closed-loop ground source heating and cooling systems in certain settings

We will also seek your views on the generic risk assessments associated with each standard rules set.

This is to help us understand:

* whether the new standard rules permit ensures that the environmental risks posed by this activity are reduced to an acceptable level
* the positive and/or negative impacts this could have on businesses
* what charges to apply to these proposed permits

## What this consultation means to you

This consultation will be of particular interest to the following audiences:

* operators, trade associations and businesses
* other regulators
* the public
* community groups
* non-governmental organisations with an interest in environmental issues

This is your opportunity to make sure that the rules work for you and your industry, but also provide the necessary protection to the environment.

# How standard rules work

## What standard rules are

Standard rules are a fixed set (or sets) of rules that an operator must comply with. The standard rules:

* define the activities that an operator can carry out
* specify necessary restrictions on those activities

[Standard rules are published on GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/standard-rules-environmental-permitting) following public consultation.

Any operator who wishes to carry out a particular activity at a particular site or sites can look at the standard rules and, if they can comply with them, can apply for a standard rules permit.

We can issue the standard rules permits more quickly and cheaply than bespoke permits because we have no decisions to make on site-specific permit conditions. There is no right of appeal against the standard rules because applying for them is voluntary.

Operators must [apply for a bespoke permit](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/water-discharge-and-groundwater-activity-environmental-permits) for any regulated activities not covered by an exemption, or these standard rules. These activities generally:

* have a higher potential impact on the environment
* require more complex controls than activities which can follow standard rules
* require a bespoke (site-specific) risk assessment to be undertaken and approved.

When developing sets of standard rules, we carry out a single assessment of risk for a common activity. This enables us to define the risk boundary within which the rules can be used. This boundary comprises several restrictions such as size, location, and operational controls. The restrictions will be those necessary to enable a consistent set of rules to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. The rules are the same for each operator carrying out that activity. Rules and risk assessments are published in advance so that operators and the public know precisely what controls we will apply to a proposed activity.

In developing the risk boundary for each set of standard rules, we must protect some specific sensitive receptors from unacceptable pollution risks.

The rules specify the standards we want operators to achieve, but do not tell them how to achieve them. That is their responsibility.

## The generic risk assessment for these activities

We have produced a generic risk assessment for each standard rules set. These list the potential risks and how to properly manage them. We did this by identifying possible pathways which link sources of the risks to the receptors. The risk assessment is split into three sections.

### **Data and information**

This section is made up of receptor, source, harm, and pathway information that is relevant to the activity under consideration.

### **Judgement**

This works out the likelihood of the receptors being in danger from the hazard, the consequences of the hazard occurring and the overall size of the risk.

### **Action**

Risks will be controlled by setting standard rules. We will control residual risks by undertaking compliance assessment, such as site inspections, to ensure that operators comply with the rules.

# Proposed set of rules and risk assessments

## Cemeteries

### Regulatory background

A new cemetery is defined as either:

* a cemetery development requiring planning permission under [section 57](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/57) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which was granted on or after 2 October 2023
* an extension to a cemetery requiring planning permission under section 57 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which was granted on or after 2 October 2023

Following legislative amendments made in October 2023, new cemeteries developments must do one of the following:

* meet all the criteria in the [exemption for low environmental risk cemeteries](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-environmental-risk-cemeteries-exemption-conditions)
* operate under a standard rules permit (when made available)
* operate under a bespoke permit

Cemeteries which pre-date 2 October 2023 are ‘existing cemeteries’ and should follow our guidance on [Existing cemeteries: permitting requirements](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-groundwater-from-human-burials/protecting-groundwater-from-human-burials#existing-cemeteries-permitting-requirements).

Our approach to the creation of standard rules permits for new cemetery developments was to focus on common proposals which are unable to meet the exemption criteria but can be managed via a generic risk assessment.

Three standard rules sets have been developed for new cemetery developments, which reflect different scenarios. These are explained in more detail in sections 3.1.2 to 3.1.4 below.

### Cemeteries with moderate burial rates

The number of burials that take place at a cemetery per year is called the burial rate. We acknowledge that some new cemetery developments have burial rates which exceed those set out in condition 12 of the exemption conditions (set out in [low environmental risk cemeteries: exemption conditions](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-environmental-risk-cemeteries-exemption-conditions#burial-numbers)). This standard rules permit adopts similar constraints as set out in the exemption, with the exception of condition 12, where higher burial rates are proposed. The burial rates in the rules must be less than:

* 200 when located on a Secondary B aquifer or Secondary undifferentiated aquifer
* 100 when located on a Secondary A aquifer
* 50 when located on a Principal aquifer

The rules will contain the requirement for operators to have a written management system, and for the inspection of water features within the cemetery. In addition to this, sites located within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 1 or 2 are not eligible because we require site specific groundwater risk assessments to be undertaken in such sensitive settings.

Stand-off distances from protected sites and ancient woodlands are the same as those set out in the exemption.

The rules set and generic risk assessment can be accessed in full via the ‘related’ section of the [consultation page on Citizen Space](https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/standard-rules-consultation-no-30-gw-activities) (bottom of the page).

### Question 1. Do you agree with our proposal to use standard rules permits for new cemeteries with moderate burial rates?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 2. Do you agree with the rules and constraints in the proposed standard rules for cemeteries with moderate burial rates?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 3. Would any of the requirements prevent prospective operators from using the proposed standard rules?

* Yes
* No
* Don’t know
* No opinion

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 4. Do you agree that the risks associated with the activity are identified by the generic risk assessment?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 5. Do you agree that the measures under these standard rules to manage, mitigate or reduce the environmental risks are appropriate?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Cemeteries including burials directly into unweathered bedrock

Condition 5 of the exemption conditions (set out in [low environmental risk cemeteries: exemption conditions](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-environmental-risk-cemeteries-exemption-conditions#a-grave-must-not-be-dug-in-unaltered-or-unweathered-bedrock)) sets out that graves must not be dug in unaltered or unweathered bedrock. This is because the purifying powers of the soil zone are bypassed when burials are placed directly into bedrock.

We acknowledge however that bedrock in some areas of England is close to the ground surface such that there would be an insufficient soil thickness to allow appropriate burial depths. This standard rules permit adopts the same constraints as set out in the exemption, with the exception of condition 5, where burials into unweathered bedrock are allowed.

To ensure that operators will only pursue this option where it is necessary, the permit will include a condition that burials into bedrock must only occur where the soil zone is less than 2 metres in thickness (ie traditional burial depths).

Operators must have a written management system, and must also inspect water features within the cemetery. Because of the lack of soil zone, sites located within any SPZ are not eligible. Stand-off distances from protected sites and ancient woodlands are the same as those set out in the exemption.

The rules set and generic risk assessment can be accessed in full via the ‘related’ section of the [consultation page on Citizen Space](https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/standard-rules-consultation-no-30-gw-activities) (bottom of the page).

### Question 6. Do you agree with our proposal to use standard rules permits for new cemeteries with burials into bedrock?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 7. Do you agree with the rules and constraints in the proposed standard rules for cemeteries with burials into bedrock?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 8. Would any of the requirements prevent prospective operators from using the proposed standard rules?

* Yes
* No
* Don’t know
* No opinion

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 9. Do you agree that the risks associated with the activity are identified by the generic risk assessment?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 10. Do you agree that the measures under these standard rules to manage, mitigate or reduce the environmental risks are appropriate?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Natural burial grounds

Natural burial grounds generally pose a lower risk to the environment when compared to conventional cemeteries. This is because their burial practices:

* do not use embalming fluids
* utilise biodegradable coffins
* tend to have less burials per unit area (burial density)

Natural burials grounds often incorporate environmental conservation features, and may therefore be designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Where this is the case, they would not meet condition 8 of the exemption conditions (set out [in low environmental risk cemeteries: exemption conditions](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-environmental-risk-cemeteries-exemption-conditions#a-burial-must-not-be-in-or-within-50-metres-of-a-protected-site-and-must-not-be-in-an-ancient-woodland)) which requires a 50 metres stand-off distance from LNRs.

As these groundwater activities are only likely to pose a risk to protected receptors via a groundwater pathway, we have adapted the wording of the condition relating to protected sites such that the stand-off distances only apply to ‘water-based’ LNRs. This protects LNRs with water features that could be fed by groundwater, but allows natural burial grounds designated as non-water-based LNRs to benefit from the standard rules permit (if the rest of the associated criteria can be met).

The burial rates are higher than in other rule sets because the burial density is less, meaning the overall risk to the environment is low. This creates a level playing field between conventional cemeteries and natural burial grounds. The rules also include a condition restricting the use of embalming fluids, which are not usually used on bodies buried at natural burial grounds.

The rules set and generic risk assessment can be accessed in full via the ‘related’ section of the [consultation page on Citizen Space](https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/standard-rules-consultation-no-30-gw-activities) (bottom of the page).

### Question 11. Do you agree with our proposal to use standard rules permits for new natural burial grounds?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 12. Do you agree with the rules and constraints in the proposed standard rules for natural burial grounds?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 13. Would any of the requirements prevent prospective operators from using the proposed standard rules?

* Yes
* No
* Don’t know
* No opinion

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 14. Do you agree that the risks associated with the activity are identified by the generic risk assessment?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 15. Do you agree that the measures under these standard rules to manage, mitigate or reduce the environmental risks are appropriate?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 16. Do you agree with the proposal to restrict the use of embalming fluid in these standard rules?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 17. To what extent do you agree that natural burial grounds will benefit from this proposed standard rules permit?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

## Closed-loop ground source heating and cooling (CL-GSHC) systems

### Regulatory background

Following legislative amendments made in October 2023, heat was reintroduced into the EPR as a pollutant with respect to groundwater activities, to align it with the existing approach to the regulation of heat for surface waters (water discharge activities). In reinstating this pollutant to groundwater, previously unregulated activities such as the heat transfer between CL-GSHC systems and groundwater came under the regulatory scope of the EPR. We must therefore put in place measures to regulate these systems where it is appropriate to do so.

CL-GSHC systems use the stable temperature of the ground and groundwater to heat (or cool) buildings. A sealed underground pipe system, called an array (usually loops), are installed into the subsurface, and a thermally sensitive fluid is then circulated through the array. The fluid equilibrates to the temperature of the groundwater and a heat exchanger then extracts that heat for use in warming buildings. The (now cold) fluid is then re-circulated. A building can also be cooled using the reverse of this process, which adds heat to groundwater.

Our online guidance ‘[Closed loop ground source heating and cooling systems: when you need a permit](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/closed-loop-ground-source-heating-and-cooling-systems-when-you-need-a-permit)‘, published in October 2023, sets out our regulatory approach and requires operators who intend to install and run a new CL-GSHC system to do one of the following:

* meet all the criteria in the exemption conditions set out in [‘Closed loop ground source heating and cooling systems: exemption conditions](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/closed-loop-ground-source-heating-and-cooling-systems-exemption-conditions)‘
* meet all the conditions set out in ‘[Discharge of heat to ground from a single closed loop ground source heating and cooling system supplying residential premises: RPS 307](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/discharge-of-heat-to-ground-from-a-single-closed-loop-ground-source-heating-and-cooling-system-supplying-residential-premises-rps-307)‘
* operate under a standard rules permit (when made available)
* operate under a bespoke permit

Systems that were installed before October 2023 are not subject to this regulatory approach and do not need to meet any of the above bullet points, but must nonetheless not cause pollution.

### 3.2.2 Standard rule permit for CL-GSHC systems

Our approach to the creation of a standard rules set for CL-GSHC systems is develop rules which adequately manage and mitigate the environmental risks posed by systems which are unable to meet the exemption criteria. In particular, the rules will cover:

* systems located within a Source Protection Zone 1 (SPZ1), but must be at least 50 metres from any water abstraction borehole associated with that SPZ1
* systems located in close proximity to protected sites (but must still be at least 50 metres away)

To manage the risks associated with the system, the SRP will include a number of conditions which must be met, including installation requirements (eg fully sealed and grouted), and adherence to relevant industry standards.

In addition, an annual ‘net heat energy input’ limit is proposed. The limit is proportionate to the size of installation, meaning that larger heat inputs are allowed when spread over a larger volume of aquifer. This condition (0.5 kilowatt hours per cubic metre of aquifer per year) will reduce the risk of impact from heat plumes within groundwater.

The figure has been considered on the basis of a system with typical installation details with a maximum power output of 100kW operating for three months of the year. This has drawn upon research and analysis work published in 2024 on [Environmental impacts of temperature changes from ground source heating and cooling systems](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-impacts-of-temperature-changes-from-ground-source-heating-and-cooling-systems), as well as advice from industry stakeholders.

The permit will also include a monitoring requirement to ensure compliance with the net heat input limit, and warn against possible leaks from the system.

The rules set and generic risk assessment can be accessed in full via the ‘related’ section of the [consultation page on Citizen Space](https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/standard-rules-consultation-no-30-gw-activities) (bottom of the page).

### Question 18. Do you agree with our proposal to use standard rules permits for CL-GSHC systems?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 19. Do you agree with the rules and constraints in the proposed standard rules permits for CL-GSHC systems?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 20. Would any of the requirements prevent prospective operators from using the proposed standard rules?

* Yes
* No
* Don’t know
* No opinion

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 21. Do you agree that the risks associated with the activity are identified by the generic risk assessment?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 22. Do you agree that the measures under these standard rules to manage, mitigate or reduce the environmental risks are appropriate?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

### Question 23. Do you agree with the proposal to limit the net heat energy input into the environment (0.5 kWh per m³ per year) in these standard rules (as described in section 3.2.2 of the consultation document)?

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree
* Not applicable

Please provide details to explain your answer.

## Proposed charges

The application charges and annual subsistence fees associated with these standard rules permits are set out in sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 below.

### Application charges

We’re proposing charges for the new standard rule sets as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Application charge |
| Standard rules permit for cemeteries with moderate burial rates | £1,229 |
| Standard rules permit for cemeteries including burials into unweathered bedrock | £1,229 |
| Standard rules permit for natural burial ground | £1,229 |
| Standard rules permit for closed loop ground source heating and cooling systems | £1,229 |

These charges aim to recover the regulatory costs incurred by the Environment Agency in processing and determining the application. These permits cannot be varied, and so no variation fee is applicable.

### Subsistence charges

Operators will have an annual subsistence charge associated with their permit. These charges aim to recover the regulatory costs incurred by the Environment Agency in undertaking compliance work associated with these permits.

We are proposing the following subsistence charges:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Subsistence charge |
| The burial of up to and including 1,430 human remains a year | £288 |
| Transfer of heat to or from the environment via closed loop ground source heating and cooling systems, from domestic households or community buildings | £103 |
| Transfer of heat to or from the environment via closed loop ground source heating and cooling systems from non- domestic households or community buildings | £143 |

Our charges are subject to periodic review and are adjusted down where efficiencies have been identified and processes have been developed to enable us to reduce costs.

# General consultation questions

## Questions on business impacts

You only need to complete this section if your business activities could be covered by these proposed standard rules.

The Growth Duty requires us to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth, alongside our other statutory duties. As part of this duty, we are carrying out an assessment of the economic impacts of the proposed standard rules.

**Question 24. Are there any potential economic impacts, either positive or negative, that the introduction of the standard rules could have on your business?**

* Yes
* No
* Don’t know
* No opinion

Please provide details to explain your answer.

## Further comments

**Question 25. Please provide any further comments or observations that you would like us to consider as part of this consultation.**

## About you or your organisation

To help us analyse and assess the consultation responses, we would like you to answer a few questions about:

* you
* your organisation or business

**Are you providing an individual or personal response, or a response on behalf of an organisation?**

* responding as an individual
* responding on behalf of an organisation, group or trade association
* other

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, group or trade association, or selected other, please specify.

**If you are responding on behalf of an organisation how many people work there?**

* sole trader
* fewer than 10
* 11 to 49
* 50 to 249
* 250 to 999
* more than 1,000

**What is your main area of business?**

* Bereavement sector
* Heating sector
* other

If you selected 'other' please specify.

**How did you find out about this consultation?**

* from the Environment Agency
* from another organisation
* through an organisation, group, or trade association you are a member of
* press article
* social media, for example, Facebook, X
* through a meeting you attended
* other

If you selected ‘other,’ please tell us how you found out about the consultation.

# Responding to this consultation

## Important dates

The consultation will run for a period of 12 weeks from 1 April 2025 and will close at 23:59pm on 24 June 2025.

## How to respond

You can view the consultation documents and questions online on the Environment Agency’s Citizen Space [consultation website](https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/standard-rules-consultation-no-30-gw-activities).

### Respond online

Please submit your response on our Citizen Space consultation website, as it helps us to:

* gather all responses in one place
* summarise responses quickly and accurately
* reduce the costs of the consultations

### Respond by email

If you prefer, you can submit your response by email by using the response form, which you will find under the ‘Related’ section of the consultation on Citizen Space. Please email your response form to: [national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk).

### Ask for a printed version

Please contact us if you need a printed version of the document to be posted to you. You can do this by contacting our:

National Customer Contact Centre  
Telephone: 03708 506 506   
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

## Publishing our consultation response

We will publish our response on GOV.UK within 12 weeks of this consultation closing and before we implement the standard rules permits. It will include a summary of the comments and queries we receive. We will add a link to this document on the consultation page on Citizen Space.

If you have asked us to tell you when the consultation response document is available to view, we will send a link to the email address you provided to us within Citizen Space. Or you can ask to be kept updated by emailing [national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk).

## Privacy notice

The Environment Agency would like to keep you informed about the outcomes of the consultation. If you would like to receive an email acknowledging your response and telling you when we’ve published the consultation response document, please provide your email address with your response.

By giving us your email address, you consent for us to email you about the consultation. We will keep your details until we have notified you of the response document publication.

We will not share your details with any other third party without your clear and full consent unless required to do so by law.

You can withdraw your consent to receive these emails at any time by contacting us at [national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:national.groundwater@environment-agency.gov.uk).

The Environment Agency is the data controller for the personal data you provide. For more information on how we deal with your personal data please see our [personal information charter](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency/about/personal-information-charter) on GOV.UK.

You can email our Data Protection team: [dataprotection@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@environment-agency.gov.uk).

## How we will use your information

After the consultation has closed, the Environment Agency will summarise responses in a consultation response document and make this publicly available on GOV.UK. We may include comments or quotes, unless you specifically request that we keep your response confidential.

We will not publish names of individuals or personal data, but we will publish the name of the organisation for those responses made on behalf of organisations. We will not respond individually to responses. If you have asked to be notified, we will contact you to let you know when the consultation response document is published.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we may be required to publish your response to this consultation but will not include any personal information. If you have requested your response to be kept confidential, we may still be required to provide a summary of it.

## Consultation principles

We’re running this consultation in line with the guidance set out in the [government's Consultation Principles.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance)

If you have any queries or complaints about the way in which this consultation has been carried out, please email [consultations.enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:consultations.enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

Otherwise, if you have a general enquiry or question in connection with the content of this consultation, please email [enquiries@environment.agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment.agency.gov.uk).