

You Said, We Did

Feedback Summary: SVWMS Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation

On behalf of the project, we would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in our first Severn Valley Water Management Scheme consultation.

We asked for your thoughts and feedback on a Vision Document, which set out a broad approach to water management for the catchment that will form the basis for the development of a more detailed Strategy, and a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which outlined how sustainability will be incorporated into the decision-making process supporting the development of that Strategy.

Overall, participants responded positively to a catchment-based approach to water management, the exploration of nature-based solutions and the sustainable objectives the partnership is seeking to achieve.

The consultation, which ran from 9 April – 21 May 2024, received **66 responses** from a range of individuals and organisations representing different interests across Wales and England.

Thank you to:

- Bausley with Criggion Community Council
- Cadw
- Country Land and Business Association
- Cyngor Sir Powys County Council
- Gorge Parish Council
- IDD Management Group / ADA Wales
- Kinnerley Parish Council
- Meverley Flood Forum
- Meverley Internal Drainage Board
- Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust
- National Farmers Union
- Natural Resources Wales
- Pool Quay / Clywedog / Vyrnwy Liaison Group
- Protect Hafren and Glaslyn
- Save our Severn
- Severn Trent Water
- Severn Uplands Forum
- Shrewsbury Business Chamber
- Water Resources West
- Natural England
- Various – private individuals and business owners
- The communities across Shropshire and Powys

Common themes and our response

We have set out some of the common themes that you raised with us and the way in which we will incorporate your feedback as we progress with the development of the Strategy.

Theme	You Said	We Did
Increased engagement across the catchment	Respondents welcomed engagement to date and look forward to being a part of the conversation and the development of proposals, particularly across Welsh communities within the catchment.	In September we are planning to launch a single bi-lingual online engagement hub for communities and stakeholders across Wales and England. This will be supported by dedicated social media channels and a programme of engagement where you will have the opportunity to come and meet the team and find out more about the strategy development.
Consideration of local and regional plans, policies and guidance	Respondents positively responded to the guidance and policies listed in the consultation material (such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015)). A number of respondents provided lists of additional policies and guidance documents for water resources, flood alleviation, agriculture, wellbeing indicators etc. that they believe should be considered in more detail.	The team have now received all comments and are updating the Sustainability Appraisal where relevant, ensuring key strategic plans, policies and strategies are taken into consideration.
Cumulative impacts	Several stakeholders asked that the project ensures it is aware of, and working with, those responsible for a number of key schemes being developed across the catchment, particularly large-scale wind farms proposed in Powys.	The project team will be undertaking a series of engagement workshops with statutory consultees as well as those with land interests across the catchment to consider both constraints and opportunities. Our local authority partners, Powys County Council and Shropshire Council also have a detailed understanding of key developments coming forward, particularly with regard to energy. Potential cumulative impacts with other projects and strategies will be assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal.
Focus on agriculture	The project area contains a significant portion of farmland and a wide variety of farm businesses including arable, dairy, poultry and livestock production. Stakeholders ask that agriculture, food security and the rural economy are deemed priorities in finding	The project is looking to undertake dedicated engagement with the farming community to understand opportunities and constraints. The <u>Demonstrator Programme</u> is already supporting the project to build relationships with the farming

	solutions to local flood risk management.	community and understand what works well and where.
Quality of consultation documentation	A majority of respondents noted their appreciation of the level of detail provided. The Storymap in particular, was viewed as an engaging introduction to the project. This is balanced with feedback from some interested individuals who found some of the documentation a little too technical in places and requested information be simplified for a broader audience in future consultations.	New engagement channels will be developed to better communicate project progress and inform stakeholders. We will ensure non-technical summaries provide direction to technical documents for those who wish to examine the information in more detail. Future consultation materials will be created with this feedback in mind to ensure broad participation across the catchment.

Next steps

There is lots of activity taking place in the coming months including:

- The team are updating the Sustainability Appraisal methodology for the next phase of the project in line with feedback received
- We will launch a new online engagement hub and social media channels in September 2024
- We will launch a new project newsletter to keep you up to date on the latest developments
- We will hold a number of workshops with key stakeholders to test early thinking around the scale of potential interventions from nature-based to engineered
- We will be out and about in your communities talking about the project and giving you an opportunity to find out more and meet some of the team – we'll publish a calendar of events on the new online engagement hub.