



**NRA**

*National Rivers Authority  
Yorkshire Region*



**GUARDING YORKSHIRE'S WATER ENVIRONMENT**



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

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ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

September 1 1989 represented a turning point in the history of environmental protection in England and Wales.

On that date, the National Rivers Authority took up its duties. Overnight the NRA became the strongest environmental protection agency in Europe, invested with extensive powers and responsibilities by Parliament.

The Authority comes into existence at a time when there has never been more concern about the damage mankind inflicts on the natural systems on which we all depend.

The responsibilities of the NRA are far-reaching. Foremost amongst them is to control pollution and improve the quality of our country's river systems and coastal waters.

The NRA will do this by raising environmental awareness within industry, commerce, farming and among the public, and enforcing strict standards of environmental control.

We have both the resources and the expertise to be effective, and to strike a balance between all the competing interests that use our rivers, at the same time providing the strongest protection for their plants, and wildlife.

In carrying out its duties, as a tough and effective regulator, the NRA will ensure that its standards take full account of European Community guidelines. We will operate openly by publicising our policies and publishing available information.

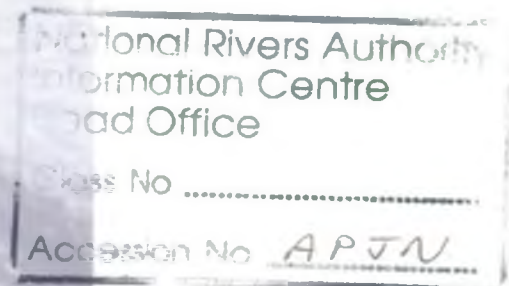
The existence of a powerful, impartial and independent organisation with a clear statutory responsibility to carry out its duties transforms the way in which our water environment is guarded. It is an immense improvement on the arrangements that have existed before.

The strength of the NRA goes beyond the authority invested in it by Parliament and the assurances of the Government that it will give us all the necessary support. It taps, as well, the vast reservoir of public opinion, with its strong feelings about the importance of the environment. In the years to come, the NRA will use these strengths to ensure that the rivers, lakes, coasts and underground waters of England and Wales are protected and improved for the sake not only of this generation – but of those to come.



*Crickhowell*

The Rt. Hon. the  
Lord Crickhowell  
Chairman





## **GUARDING YORKSHIRE'S WATER ENVIRONMENT THE WAY AHEAD**

**Our region is blessed with a wonderful variety of rivers, lakes and coastline, and an abundant supply of water.**

**We are here to ensure that the majority of rivers are maintained at their current high standard and the remainder improved to a good healthy quality.**

**In addition, our job is to ensure sufficient water is available to provide the water companies, industrial and agricultural users, as well as maintaining sufficient flows in the river for fish, wildlife and enjoyment.**

**During times of flood, we provide early warning and our flood defences need to be strong.**

**Our valuable fisheries need to be protected and conserved.**

**Conservation of the rivers requires the reconciliation of many different interests and conflicting demands by good management.**

**Throughout our work, we will seek to consult our customers and people on their needs. In this consultation, we will be helped by our Regional Committees on Flood Defence, Rivers Advisory and Fisheries Advisory.**

**With support from representatives, customers and the public, Yorkshire's rivers will be well guarded for the future.**



# T H E W A Y A H E A D FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

We have a key task to protect and enhance the quality of Yorkshire's rivers, estuaries, coastal and underground waters.

## **The Challenge**

Most of the county's rivers are of good quality. We give high priority to safeguarding sources of water for public supply, fisheries and wildlife. There is, however, a challenge to improve and restore some of the rivers in the densely populated parts of the region. The Humber is one of the country's largest estuaries and is of international importance for birdlife. The coastline has great beauty and we work to safeguard the water quality of the bathing beaches.

## **How we do it**

To do this, we set standards for effluent discharges and have a comprehensive programme for monitoring rivers and other waters. Our Pollution Control Staff regularly inspect discharges of effluent, give advice on how to prevent pollution and take the necessary legal action when standards are not met. They are geared up to deal quickly with pollution incidents, when they unfortunately occur.

They are backed up by teams of biologists, chemists and other scientists, who have modern laboratories with state of the art instruments. There is an extensive computer data base and mathematical modelling plays an important part in the management of water quality.

## **Our commitment**

We will be a tough and effective regulator, although realistic in our approach and expectations.

We are committed to improving the rivers of Yorkshire and will work to educate and advise on the importance of clean waters.





## T H E W A Y A H E A D FOR FLOOD DEFENCE

We are at the forefront in providing a first-class range of services for flood alleviation, sea defence, flood warning and planning advice. These services have already dramatically reduced the risk to life and property from flooding in Yorkshire, and our future activities will further enhance the quality of life in flood prone areas.

### **A full programme**

An ongoing programme of works throughout the Region provides tangible evidence of the quality and volume of activity undertaken. Culvert reconstruction in Dewsbury and Huddersfield, river channel improvements in Todmorden and Keighley, and flood embankments and walls along the rivers Hull and Wharfe, are just a selection of the many schemes under construction using both our own people and contractors. There is a full process of consultation with conservation groups and all schemes are designed to maximise the benefits to conservation and the environment.

### **Maintenance and Operations**

A full maintenance programme ensures that flood defences are kept in good order, river channels have adequate capacity and our pumping stations, flood control gates and tidal barriers are fully operational in the event of any flood flows in the Region. Installations are connected to a Region-wide telemetry system through which data is collected and analysed centrally to ensure maximum operational efficiency. The Region's fixed and mobile mechanical plant and electronic equipment is maintained by our own skilled craftsmen and technicians.

### **Flood Warning**

The operational role of the Region in flood defence is far reaching. There is a comprehensive flood warning service, which utilises state of the art technology, including weather radar, telemetry and flow forecasting models. This service provides the earliest possible warning of impending floods to local police forces, who warn the public of imminent dangers of high river levels, or threats of flooding from the sea. Simultaneously, flood defence installations within the Region are manned and flood defences patrolled.

The flood warning service is continually being improved through the efforts of a team of Information Technology Specialists, to ensure that Yorkshire remains one of the leading organisations in this field.

### **Regional Overview**

Less high profile, but nonetheless crucial areas of activity include the provision of land drainage advice to all local planning authorities in relation to industrial and residential development and a general supervision within Yorkshire of works by other bodies affecting flood defence and land drainage.



# T H E W A Y A H E A D FOR WATER RESOURCES

Managing water resources involves a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. From the collection of data to the publication of records, we are responsible for the management and control of the use of surface and underground water throughout Yorkshire.

## **Resource Planning**

We work closely with water companies to develop plans to meet future needs for water.

Records are collected and collated from a network of rainfall and climate stations, together with flow measurement of the rivers.

## **Aquifer Management**

Our hydrogeologists have built up a comprehensive understanding of the behaviour of aquifers. Regular monitoring of groundwater levels, borehole logging and test pumping, provides vital data for managing and planning the development of underground water.

An aquifer protection policy has been developed to safeguard groundwater quality. Increasing concentration of nitrate in groundwater has highlighted the need for pilot studies in sensitive areas to assess the effects of agriculture on groundwater quality.

Abstraction of water from surface and underground sources for public supply, industry and agriculture, is controlled to conserve water and ensure adequate levels in rivers and underground aquifers.





## T H E W A Y A H E A D FOR FISHERIES

We have a most challenging role in maintaining, improving and developing this valuable resource.

Yorkshire has a wonderful variety of freshwater fish in its area. In the upper reaches of the rivers, many of which are in National Parks, wild brown trout and grayling abound. Lower down, where the rivers flow through flatter, fertile land, coarse fish like the chub, barbel, roach and bream, thrive. There is a commercial eel fishery in the Humber Estuary and salmon and sea trout are taken by net off the coastline. They are already well established in the River Esk, but salmon are returning in increasing numbers to the other rivers of Yorkshire through the Humber Estuary.

We maintain, improve and develop this unique fishery resource, and have a professional team including bailiffs and scientists, with considerable expertise in fisheries management. Their work includes patrolling to enforce laws and byelaws, and stopping poaching on the valuable salmon fisheries, fish population monitoring, disease diagnosis, fish rescues, giving management advice, and administering the licensing and consents system.

We run a fish farm near Pickering, that not only produces thousands of rainbow and the native brown trout, but specialises in breeding grayling and the rare and beautiful arctic charr, which it is hoped will become established and breed in Yorkshire.

But, we do not and indeed cannot, work in isolation. The close working links with angling clubs, fishery owners and other interests are vital in achieving the common goal of a better aquatic environment.





# T H E W A Y A H E A D FOR CONSERVATION & RECREATION

## **Conservation**

The hills, valleys and rivers of Yorkshire are of great beauty, rich in wildlife and historical places. We have a crucial role to play in conserving this heritage.

In all our work, we must, where possible, enhance the conservation of natural beauty, plants and animals. The protection of archaeological, historical and architectural features is equally important.

Extensive ecological surveys are undertaken, so that the impact of developments on the environment can be determined. Arrangements have been made for effective consultation with conservation and other groups, with whom we are pleased to work.

We are committed to protecting and enhancing the beauty and wildlife of Yorkshire's Rivers, and will promote the importance of conservation through the provision of advice, education and practical projects.

## **Recreation**

We have a vital role to play in all areas of recreation on and around Yorkshire's rivers. With increasing leisure activities and access to the countryside, we are fully aware of our responsibility to provide for the future.

There are already car parks, picnic areas and bird-watching hides, in addition angling and boating are catered for on many of the waters.

Many people like to escape to the countryside and walk, or simply be near water. We shall be looking for every opportunity to develop facilities for people, in harmony with our conservation aims and with other recreational interests.





# NATIONAL RIVERS AUTHORITY

## YORKSHIRE REGION

**GENERAL MANAGER**  
**FLOOD DEFENCE MANAGER**  
**ENVIRONMENT MANAGER**  
**FISHERIES & RECREATION MANAGER**  
**WATER RESOURCES MANAGER**  
**FINANCE MANAGER**  
**SECRETARY & SOLICITOR**  
**PERSONNEL & PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER**  
**PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER**  
**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER**

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*Bernard Marsden*  
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