



The Oxford Canal at Thrupp.



At Derryvore on Lough Erne.

On Lough Neagh, source of half of Belfast's drinking water.

Toxic blue green algae spreads

Toxic blue green algae, generally thought to result from farm chemicals being washed into water in warmer weather, is becoming an increasing problem. Samples show here are on the Oxford Canal at Thrupp and in Northern Island at Derryvore on Lough Erne and on Lough Neagh, the UK's largest lake, which supplies half of Belfast's drinking water.

And I quote...

... a publicity slogan, 'We are the Environment Agency. It's our job to look after your environment and make it a better place - for you, and for future generations.

'Your environment is the air you breathe, the water you drink and the ground you walk on', nothing about the water on which you go.

Bevan joins CRT

Sir James Bevan is one of the new trustees to the CRT board. During his eight years as Chief Executive of the EA he achieved nothing at all in improving the river access situation in England and Wales, the worst in the world.

The CRT are seeking council members including four from private boating, two from boating business and two from volunteers. The group of 50 meet twice a year, starting from 1st March. Nominations close on Nov 17th, details on the CRT website.



Klamath dams being removed

Next year should see completion of removal of the last of the dams from the Klamath River in Oregon and California. This is the largest ever such clearing of dams, for which native people have been campaigning for over a century. A native youth team hope to undertake the first source to sea descent once the work has been completed.

Flood prevention schemes

The EA are to spend £25,000,000 on flood prevention projects with bids being received until Nov 10th. Subsidiary benefits claimed include improved air and water quality and green (but not blue) spaces for communities. Between 2017 and 2021 £15,000,000 was spent on pilot projects which created 1,600,000m³ of water storage protecting 15,000 houses, 610km of river altered and 40km² of wildlife habitat created (from what?), including 1km² of trees planted.



Question

 **Caroline Lucas**
Green Party
Brighton, Pavilion 

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the commitment in the Environmental Improvement Plan that everyone should live within 15 minutes' walk of a green or blue space, what assessment she has made of the implications for that policy of the proportion of (a) waterways and (b) inland blue space in England that has a statutory right of public access.

[^ Hide full question](#)

Answer

 **Trudy Harrison**
Conservative
Copeland 

Answered on


28 June 2023

We know that there are significant health and wellbeing benefits to spending time in nature. That is why we announced in our Environmental Improvement Plan in January our intention to work across Government to ensure that everyone lives within a 15 minute walk of a blue or green space. We also committed to work in parallel to reduce barriers to access.

Achieving delivery of these cross government commitments, to bring nature closer to people and reduce barriers to accessing it, is a long term goal. We are currently focused on developing the right modelling tools and indicators to allow us to accurately measure the baseline, identify where to target efforts and to track future progress, engaging closely with stakeholders as we do so. At the same time we continue to deliver existing work across Government in this area, such as the Access for All programme, the Green Infrastructure Framework, the Levelling Up Parks Fund and the Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Strategy.

Access on waterways, and other inland blue spaces such as lakes, where there is no established public right of navigation should be arranged with the relevant landowners through local voluntary access agreements, to ensure the interests of all parties concerned are taken into account.



Question

 **Caroline Lucas**
Green Party
Brighton, Pavilion 

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the success of her Department's policy on voluntary access arrangements on inland waterways as a means to increase access on unregulated waters; and how many kilometres of new access has been secured for recreation in this Parliament.

[^ Hide full question](#)

Answer

 **Trudy Harrison**
Conservative
Copeland 

Answered on

11 July 2023

Given the wide range of local circumstances, the Government does not have a role in making voluntary access agreement arrangements, nor do we monitor or hold information on them, since they are tailored to local situations enabling the needs of different users to be balanced both with each other and with the property rights of landowners.