



From: EIR
Sent: 05 February 2026 15:27
To: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]
Attachments: Plastic media request.xlsx; Pollution Incidents - Handling, Assessing & Self Reporting.pdf; Dealing with Spillages and Contaminated run off.pdf

Dear Requester

Thank you for your request for information about plastic bio-media use, which we received on 8 December 2025. Thank you for your patience. Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

You requested:

- 1) Confirmation of whether plastic bio-media is used in any of your company's water or wastewater treatment facilities.
- 2) A complete list of all sites using plastic bio-media technology including site name, location, and facility type.
- 3) The type(s) of plastic bio-media used at each site
- 4) The volume or quantity of plastic bio-media installed at each site.
- 5) The date plastic bio-media was first installed at each site.
- 6) Whether the media has been renewed, replaced, topped-up or upgraded since its initial installation.
- 7) Future plans for each site where plastic bio-media is present including expected date of decommissioning or improvements.
- 8) Records of any plastic bio-media spills, losses, or escape incidents since installation.
- 9) Internal procedures, protocols, or standard operating processes for responding to plastic bio-media spills, losses, or operational failures.
- 10) Any training materials or operational guidance documents related to plastic bio-media handling, containment, or emergency response.
- 11) Whether your company has a strategy, plan, or timeline for continuation, extension of life or transitioning away from plastic bio-media.
- 12) If such a plan exists, please provide:
 - a) Strategic rationale
 - b) Expected replacement technology or media type
 - c) Proposed implementation timeline
 - d) Any pilot trials or feasibility studies already completed

EIR Response: Provision of Requested Information

Please find below the answers for the specific questions requested in the Environmental Information Request and we have provide information as

Please find enclosed:

- Plastic media request.xlsx
- Pollution Incidents – Handling, Assessing & Self Reporting.pdf
- Dealing with Spillages and Contaminated run off.pdf

Item 1 is held by Anglian Water

Confirmation of whether plastic bio-media is used in any of your company's water or wastewater treatment facilities.

Plastic media is used in several treatment processes at Anglian Water. Fine plastic media is used in submerged aerated tertiary nitrification processes (SAF, BAFF, HSAF) as they are the best available technology for very low ammonia permit limits. The use of the fine media in submerged aerated filters is advantageous as they provide a high biomass retention, small footprint and continue to treat in cold weather. MBBRs have a moving bed of aerated submerged media and is used as pre-treatment, secondary or tertiary treatment.

Plastic microbeads are used at Anglian Water in Biologically Aerated Flooded Filter (BAFF) treatment processes. This is a tertiary treatment process designed to achieve ammonia and solids removal on small- to medium-sized works. The process includes plastic beads, about 2-3 mm in diameter, that are mixed by the aeration process in the waste stream. The beads' small size provides a high specific surface area, providing a small reactor volume in relative terms. The beads act as a filter during clarification, followed by backwashing and desludging.

Item 2 is held by Anglian Water

A complete list of all sites using plastic bio-media technology including site name, location, and facility type.

The information has been provided in **Plastic media request.xlsx** document.

- Site Name (Column F)
- Location (Column G)
- Facility Type (Column E)

Item 3 is partially held by Anglian Water

The type(s) of plastic bio-media used at each site.

We do not have the specific type of plastic media recorded in our SAP corporate system, but we have provided the following information in the **Plastic media request.xlsx** document for each site, where available:

- Type of plastic media process (Column A)
- Manufacturer (Column B)
- Manufacturer Part No. (Column C)
- Manufacturer Serial No. (Column D)

Anglian Water has 11 operational sites with a BAFF treatment process that utilises Bio-Bead media. We have provided the details of the type of biobead media below.

Site Name	Location	Biobead Media Type
Sible Hedingham WRC	Essex	Plastic
Over WRC	Cambridgeshire	Plastic
Harleston WRC	Norfolk	Plastic
Framlingham WRC	Suffolk	Plastic
Hempnall WRC	Norfolk	Plastic
Wymondham WRC	Norfolk	Plastic
Manby WRC	Lincolnshire	Plastic
Sible Hedingham WRC	Essex	Plastic
Flag Fen WRC	Cambridgeshire	Stone

Burrough Green WRC	Cambridgeshire	Glass
High Roding WRC	Essex	Glass
Stisted WRC	Essex	Glass
March WRC (Decommissioned)	Cambridgeshire	Plastic
Bourne WRC (Decommissioned)	Lincolnshire	Plastic

Item 4 is not held by Anglian Water

The volume or quantity of plastic bio-media installed at each site.

We do not hold the volume or quantity of plastic bio-media recorded at each site.

Item 5 is held by Anglian Water

The date plastic bio-media was first installed at each site.

We have provided the date of installation, where it is available, in the **Plastic media request.xlsx** document on Column H (EQ Installed Date).

Item 6 is not held by Anglian Water

Whether the media has been renewed, replaced, topped-up or upgraded since its initial installation.

We do not hold central records on whether and when media has been renewed, replaced, topped-up or upgraded since its initial installation.

Item 7 is held by Anglian Water

Future plans for each site where plastic bio-media is present including expected date of decommissioning or improvements.

The sites are currently in the early stages of design development. Proposed treatment solutions under consideration include the potential use of plastic bio-media, such as Moving Bed Biofilm Reactor (MBBR) units. At this stage, no final decisions have been made, and there are no confirmed schedules for implementation, upgrades, or decommissioning.

On two BioBead sites (March WRC and Bourne WRC) we have mothballed these process streams as part of upgrade works and have no plans to return them to service. In AMP 8 additional filtration treatment processes are being installed as part of our phosphate reduction programme, which will further mitigate any risk to the environment.

Item 8 is held by Anglian Water and is provided below

Records of any plastic bio-media spills, losses, or escape incidents since installation.

Anwick WRC (2233798)

Site location: Anwick WRC, NG34 9SP

Date of incident: 20/02/2024

Discharge pathway (e.g., river, land, sewer system): Water recycling centre was flooded with river water from the Soke Dyke following 2 severe storms. Once the flood waters had receded a member of the public observed the deposit of Kaldness media on the adjacent field

Volume/extent of media lost: Unknown

Cause of the incident: River flooding inundating the site

Environmental impact assessments (if undertaken): The EA assessed the event as a category 3 (minor) pollution to land, category 4 (no impact) to water and category 4 (no impact) to air

Any remediation or cleanup undertaken: The media was removed and a full clean-up of the area occurred 27 to 29/01/2024 once it was safe to access the area following the flooding.

- h. Correspondence with environmental regulators relating to the incident – Our usual processes for reporting, assessing and handling pollution incidents were followed. Our processes were designed in line with EA's 16_02 operational guidance in place at the time of the event. An event was recorded for this incident on the EA's National Incident Recording System. The EA will hold records of communications and assessed impact on the environment on this system.

Item 9 is held by Anglian Water

Internal procedures, protocols, or standard operating processes for responding to plastic bio-media spills, losses, or operational failures.

Our processes are designed in line with the Environment Agency's operational guidance.

A copy of our **Pollution Incidents Handling, Assessing & Self Reporting** procedure and **Dealing with Spillages and Contaminated run-off** procedure have been provided.

Item 10 is held by Anglian Water

Any training materials or operational guidance documents related to plastic bio-media handling, containment, or emergency response.

Our design standards specify that mesh screens and physical barriers must be installed to prevent any escape of media from the process and our operational teams are trained and assessed as competent to operate, inspect and maintain these treatment processes and to report any issues or concerns immediately.

Our approach to screening all sludges to 6 mm in 2 dimensions also enables us to screen out media larger than this size before we take sludge to land.

Our **Pollution Incidents Handling, Assessing & Self Reporting** and **Dealing with Spillages and Contaminated run-off** procedures ensure that we respond to any risks or environmental events. We have provided a copy of the **Doing the Basics Brilliantly** operational guidance document that specifies key actions on sites with media (Tertiary Basics - Key Checks section).

Item 11 is held by Anglian Water

Whether your company has a strategy, plan, or timeline for continuation, extension of life or transitioning away from plastic bio-media.

We continue to innovate around ammonia reduction technologies, including the use of nature based solutions. Our first treatment wetland site, at our Ingoldisthorpe treatment works near Kings Lynn in Norfolk which discharges to a nearby chalk stream, the River Ingol, was designed and constructed to remove ammonia due to a permit change in AMP6 and continues to operate highly effectively. In AMP 8 we are installing 18 constructed wetlands as part of our environmental programme. We will always consider the use of nature-based solutions within our optioneering hierarchy.

Item 12 is not held by Anglian Water

If such a plan exists, please provide:

- a) Strategic rationale*
- b) Expected replacement technology or media type*
- c) Proposed implementation timeline*
- d) Any pilot trials or feasibility studies already completed*

We will be working with Water UK with an industry approach for plastic media sites.

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If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request an internal review, you should email EIR@anglianwater.co.uk or write to:

General Counsel, Anglian Water Services, Lancaster House, Lancaster Way, Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon PE29 6XU

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this email, please contact us via EIR@anglianwater.co.uk .

Yours sincerely

EIR Team

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