



The Wye Waterway Plan

2023 - 2028

Date: April 2022

Version: 1

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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Forward

Creating a better place

[EA2025 Creating a better place](#) sets out the Environment Agency's priorities from 2020 to 2025. It sets out our ambition for how we plan to create better places for people, wildlife and the environment.

We will protect and enhance the environment as a whole and contribute to sustainable development. Through this we will contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and help protect the nation's security in the face of emergencies.

The EA2025 plan translates our vision for the future into actions and sets out 3 long term goals:

- A nation resilient to climate change.
- Healthy air, land and water.
- Green growth and a sustainable future.

These goals will drive everything we do today, tomorrow and to 2025. They champion sustainable development, support our work to create better places and challenge us to tackle the climate emergency and deliver a green economic recovery for everyone.

The Environment Agency is committed to creating better places for people and wildlife - because a healthy environment, including our navigable rivers and waterways, enhances all of our lives and contributes to resilient communities and sustainable economic growth.

We are custodians of over 1000km of navigable waterways and 2 harbours, with a statutory duty to manage these national assets for all manner of boats and waterway recreation. The opportunities provided by our waterways makes them popular visitor destinations, with over 15 million visits per year and many communities and businesses benefitting from sustainable tourism and waterway activity. Above all our waterways connect people with nature. The simple pleasure of being on or beside water, surrounded by a thriving environment and wildlife, is something people truly value.

The Wye Waterway Plan sets out our priorities and targets that will contribute to creating a better place. It explains our responsibilities for navigation on the Rivers Wye and Lugg and the wider responsibilities for the unique conservation of these rivers.

Introduction

We are the navigation authority responsible for the Rivers Wye and Lugg. It's our job to look after the environment and the navigation for these rivers. We have produced this waterway plan, which addresses our responsibilities and aspirations for recreation and navigation on these rivers (referred to below as 'the waterway').

Our vision...

... to develop and promote appropriate navigation and recreational activities for all waterway users, while protecting and enhancing the unique conservation status of the waterway.

To achieve our vision we aim to:

- protect, maintain and enhance the unique conservation status of the waterway;
- manage, improve and enhance navigation opportunities for the waterway;
- protect the interests of those navigating and using the principal rivers;
- encourage the appropriate use and enjoyment of the waterway by walkers, anglers and other recreational users;
- promote better access and information for canoeists, rafters and users of small craft;
- contribute to enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape values of the waterway;
- develop the health, economic and social benefits of navigation, to the advantage of everyone;
- enable more people to enjoy the natural environment.

We will do this by:

Working in partnership across all sectors to enhance the quality of the waterway and the services it provides – for business, anglers, the boating community and other waterway users; meeting our conservation responsibilities to protect the environment.

We cannot achieve our vision alone – this plan says what we will do and how we will work with others over the next five years.

We have produced this plan in partnership with the many people who have an interest in the waterway. We are very grateful for this support and are well aware that achievement of many of the plan's objectives will only be possible through the actions of our partners many of whom are represented on the [Wye Navigation Advisory Committee](#) (WyeNAC).

Context

The river

The Wye is recognised internationally for its landscape and conservation values, and as an important salmon fishery. The waterway is an important local and national resource for many forms of recreation including canoeing and angling bringing economic growth to the area. A public right of navigation extends from Bigsweir Bridge upstream to Hay Town Bridge on the main River Wye, and on the River Lugg between its confluence with the Wye and Presteigne Town Bridge. The combined length of the non-tidal navigation on the Rivers Wye and Lugg (the part for which we are the navigation authority) is approximately 185 kilometres. The Gloucester Harbour Trustees are the navigation authority for the tidal section of the River Wye downstream of Bigsweir Bridge.

The River Wye has been used for navigation for many centuries. In the past the Wye was an important commercial waterway, but any infrastructure to support navigation, such as locks and weirs, has long since been removed. Today, boating is almost entirely recreational. Most is canoeing and rowing but there are also passenger sightseeing boats that operate around Symonds Yat.

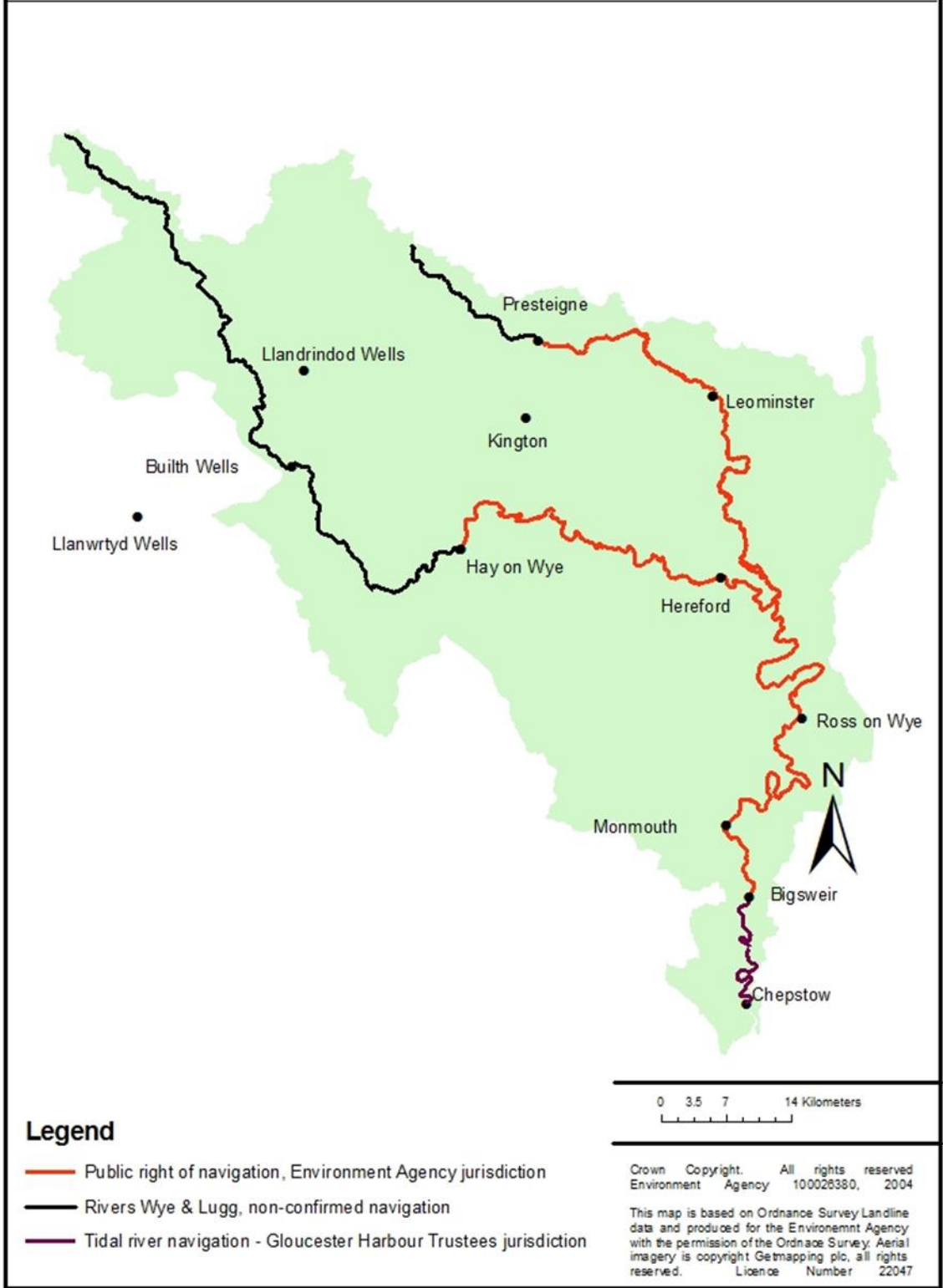
Map 1 provides an overview of the Rivers Wye and Lugg navigation.

The entire River Wye is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The river flows through the Wye Valley of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which extends from the River Lugg downstream to Chepstow.

Cross border rivers

The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have a Memorandum of Understanding for effective coordination of cross border working on the River Wye and for the broader working relationship between the two bodies at national and local levels. When NRW was set up the Wye Navigation Order 2002 (WNO) was not amended and so the Environment Agency remains responsible for implementing the Order in Wales. Both organisations are committed to working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for people and the environment, efficient and effective operations delivery, well-coordinated preparation and response to incidents and emergencies and a first-class customer service.

Map 1: The Rivers Wye and Lugg navigation



Achieving sustainable development

Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations to come. The years ahead will bring new challenges. A bigger population will put more stress on the environment; we will need to protect our natural capital while promoting prosperity. This means making sure that our waterway is managed in a way that maintains a fair balance between the various uses whilst protecting the environment. We recognise the full range of benefits that rivers can provide, for boaters, water supply, fisheries, walkers and cyclists and for the wildlife that depends on the natural river environment.

The Environment Agency's document "Creating a better place - our ambition to 2025" sets out our contribution to sustainable development. This outlines fundamental goals that we want to help achieve. Included in these is for 'more people to enjoy the natural environment' and 'increased biodiversity and improved habitats'. People will have peace of mind from knowing that they live in a healthier environment, richer in wildlife and natural diversity – an environment that they will care for and can use, appreciate and enjoy. We have developed this plan in a way that contributes to our long-term aspirations.

On the Rivers Wye and Lugg, sustainable development will mean working with others to make improvements for the benefit of wildlife and people. It's our job to promote waterside and water-based recreation and to promote sustainable use of our waterways. It will mean balancing the sometimes conflicting demands between different uses of the waterways and encouraging communities to value and care for them.

Social inclusion

Government policy is to make waterways accessible to all parts of society. It supports the greater recreational use of waterways (including the waterside paths where practical) for all. As the navigation authority, we are encouraged to increase access to the waterways for the young, disabled and disadvantaged.

The Environment Agency is fully committed to the above. This is reflected in our policy statements that support initiatives for greater social inclusion.

Implementing the plan

Some of the actions that we plan to carry out over the next five years can only be achieved in partnership with others. There is a small budget available for this work but current funding is insufficient to carry out all our planned actions. Part of future partnership work will therefore concentrate on developing projects and associated funding, designed to meet the multiple objectives of different funding partners.

Our planned actions can be subdivided under the headings 'maintain', 'improve' and 'develop'.

Maintain

We will work with landowners to ensure that the waterways are free from obstructions and potential hazards.

We will continue to produce the [Calendar of Major Events on the River Wye](#). This aims to promote annual events that take place on or alongside the waterway and minimise conflict between them.

Improve

The successful promotion of leisure use of the Rivers Wye and Lugg needs to take account of customer expectations. The waterway has distinctive features and characteristics that are particularly suited to canoeing, rafting and other non-powered craft; however, where the waterway is not limited by width, depth and environmental sensitivity, rowing activity and recreational motor boating do take place. We will determine through experience, consultation and research a consensus of what is right for this navigation.

Develop

We recognise the contribution that waterways can make to leisure and recreation, tourism and sport. The Government encourages greater use of waterways for recreation; increased access for the young, disabled and disadvantaged; and better communication with the widest possible range of users. We wish to maximise the opportunities that our waterway offers for all, in a sustainable way while protecting its unique conservation status.

Sport and recreation

Angling

The salmon and coarse fishery is an important contributor to the rural economy of the catchment.

The enjoyment of privately owned fishing rights and the apparent disturbance created by some boating practices has the potential to cause conflict. It is clear, however, that both can co-exist. For example, on the upper rivers and tributaries, the Wye & Usk Foundation have negotiated various [access arrangements](#). These seek to encourage both anglers and boaters to enjoy their recreation in a mutually considerate way. The success of previous arrangements, some of which are still in use, leads us to believe these are the way forward to minimise potential conflict between users. We will consider formal arrangements such as the concordat if they help to ensure that river use is shared in a fair and equitable way.

Canoeing

On the main river above Hay-on-Wye, the boating activity is almost exclusively canoeing. The ability to canoe continuously for approximately 133 kilometres (the length of the public right to navigate from Hay Town Bridge to Bigsweir) makes the Wye popular for long-distance touring. For this reason, it is popular with Duke of Edinburgh expeditions as well as the many canoe enthusiasts.

White-water canoeing is a popular activity on parts of the upper river catchment. The rapids at Symonds Yat are a nationally important canoeing site owned by the British Canoeing (BC). There are a number of commercial canoe hire firms and adventure holiday companies based on the Wye, offering canoe and kayak trips.

Paddle boarding

During recent years there has been a gradual increase in stand-up paddle boarding SUP on the River Wye. Although low in numbers, paddle boarders can be seen on the more popular stretches of the river. There is also an element of commercial activity with companies offering board hire, guided tours and group tuition particularly at Monmouth.

Commercial and motorised boating

All commercial navigation is linked to tourism, with passenger carrying boats at Symonds Yat and canoe hire and adventure enterprises at several locations. In the past, large commercial craft have also operated at Ross-on-Wye and Hereford.

Most boating on the waterway is non-motorised. However, sea-going motor cruisers may occasionally navigate the tidal section to Tintern under appropriate conditions and sometimes another 8 kilometres upstream to Bigsweir. The tidal section downstream of Bigsweir is managed by the [Gloucester Harbour Trustees](#). Smaller craft use various lengths between Bigsweir and Hereford. The River Wye's natural physical state means that navigation by larger vessels is not normally practicable. Navigators with local knowledge occasionally make passages as far upstream as Hereford, depending on the river conditions.

There is currently only one location on the River Wye between Hay-on-Wye and the Severn estuary, at Chepstow, where trail boats and other heavy rowing boats can be launched. However, use of this ancient slipway is restricted due to the build-up of mud and the presence of flood gates; consequently such boating is limited.

Due to the nature of the River Wye, there is little, if any, sailing activity. However, sailing does occur in many of the still waters within the catchment.

Rafting

The River Wye is ideal for rafting, because of the extensive length of navigable water available. Most rafting on the waterway is done for organised charity events.

Rowing

There are three principal rowing stretches on the River Wye. These support rowing clubs based at Monmouth, Ross-on-Wye and Hereford. All three clubs hold major annual regattas.

Swimming

Open water swimming has taken place along the River Wye for generations. In recent years there has been an increase in popularity with members of the public enjoying a 'dip' or going for an extended swim. The Wye is not a designated bathing water; the Environment Agency does not regulate wild swimming but guidance on health risks can be found on [Gov.uk](#).

Heritage

The lower Wye valley contains a significant number of historic features and is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. These landscapes, monuments, artefact scatters and buildings reflect the continued human exploitation of the river valley since the last Ice Age.

The Rivers Wye and Lugg were thriving industrial rivers until about 150 years ago and were used for transporting cargo down to the Bristol Channel from several populated centres including Hereford and Monmouth.

A number of wharves, dating back several centuries, have been identified in books and documents. Some of the main sites can still be clearly seen today. They offer an historic perspective but also represent a potential opportunity for future generations of boaters to access the river legitimately from a public landing place.

Walking, cycling and other recreation

There are many footpaths near and alongside the waterway, although public access to some of the Wye tributaries is quite limited. Often visitors walk these paths to further their interests in bird watching and wildlife appreciation.

There are two long-distance trails, the [Wye Valley Walk](#) and sections of the [Offa's Dyke Path](#), which together give the public access to the Wye between Hereford and Chepstow. The Wye Valley Walk is 218 kilometres long and follows the river valley from Chepstow to the slopes of the Plynlimon. The Offa's Dyke Path, classified as a National Trail, starts at Chepstow and follows the Wye valley to Monmouth before heading north-west along the edge of the Black Mountains. Between Chepstow and Monmouth, the Offa's Dyke Path runs parallel to the Wye Valley Walk.

One project developed by Sustrans in the Wye valley is the creation of a cycle route called the [Peregrine path](#) which links Monmouth and Symonds Yat. The route has provided a safe and sustainable alternative to the busy main roads through this area of the Wye valley.

Climate change

Climate change is happening now.

We will experience:

- higher rainfall in shorter periods;
- longer droughts;
- frequent heat waves.

Warmer, drier and sunnier summers could benefit domestic tourism, but they could also result in low river flows, hampering recreation and damaging wetlands and aquatic habitats. Temperature increases will result in growing demand for water-related recreation activities – this may have a negative impact on the resource with greater demand, congestion, competition for water space and pressure on services. A reduction in dilution of effluents could cause poor water quality and increase the likelihood of harmful algal blooms. Hotter weather will lead to increased importance of green spaces as people seek open-air recreation. Heavier rainfall would increase the risk of flooding and make dangerously strong stream conditions more frequent.

We will work to influence businesses, citizens and communities to increase their resilience by helping them to adapt to future climate risks. This means being prepared for incidents when they happen.

Our 5-year Action Plan (EA2025) sets out what we will do to face these challenges.

Visitor safety and satisfaction

Visitor safety is important to us. We also want visitors to the river to return home happy and satisfied with their experiences.

We have a legal and moral obligation to consider visitor safety and protect them from unnecessary or unreasonable risk. Successful risk management demands a partnership between the manager, the visitor and other groups (such as governing bodies of sport), recognising that each carries a share of the responsibility for safety, dependent on the type of activity and location.

River users have a broad range of expectations: from white-water canoeists seeking adventure, difficulty and challenge, to parents of young children wanting safe picnic and play areas. In guarding against risks, we must avoid implementing safety measures that conflict significantly with our access, recreation, landscape, heritage and environmental responsibilities. Our aim is to provide people with information and guidance which will help them to safely enjoy their recreation without taking away the sense of freedom and adventure the waterway offers.

Targets, monitoring and review

It is important to be able to judge over time how successful we are in meeting the plan's core objectives to:

- protect, maintain and enhance the unique conservation status of the waterway;
- manage, improve and enhance navigation opportunities for the waterway;
- protect the interests of those navigating and using the principal rivers;

- encourage the appropriate use and enjoyment of the waterway by walkers, anglers and other recreational users;
- promote better access and information for canoeists, rafters and users of small craft;
- contribute to enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape values of the waterway;
- develop the health, economic and social benefits of navigation, to the advantage of everyone
- enable more people to enjoy the natural environment.

In our last plan we identified the need to establish good baseline data and measure changes. Key areas of uncertainty or areas that require further data include:

- levels of current use in terms of areas used, types of use and numbers of users;
- identification of sensitive areas where restriction of access might need to be considered.

Planned actions

The table lists our prioritised action plan for the navigation team; these are actions that we will aim to complete within the next five years. Some actions will require us to work with partners in order to achieve them.

	Wye Waterway Plan actions	Target date
1	produce calendar of events	annually
2	monitor craft numbers and assess impact	annually
3	promote and encourage use of Paddlers' Code	annually
4	raise awareness of protected species and habitats	annually
5	raise awareness of invasive aquatic species and promote good biosecurity 'Check Clean Dry'	annually
6	respond to navigation incidents in accordance with Environment Agency national guidance	annually
7	record all navigation 'incidents' on the Navigation Incident Log and present summary to WyeNAC	annually
8	work with landowners to promote and improve tree management	annually
9	assess commercial canoe hire companies for customer health and safety and compliance with the Paddlers' Code . In collaboration with British Canoeing and licensing authorities	annually
10	support, encourage uptake and promote the British Canoeing Delivery Partner scheme	annually
11	support and encourage uptake of local licensing schemes where in place	annually

12	work with partners to maintain and improve sustainable access provision	annually
13	manage navigation on the Welsh section of the Rivers Wye and Lugg in accordance with the Natural Resources Wales Memorandum of Understanding	annually
14	provide a progress report on the Wye Waterway Plan actions to the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee	annually
15	Review the River Wye Paddle Guide to help ensure accurate and consistent guidance for river users on the River Wye	as required
16	review and revise the waterway plan summary document within 5 years	2027
17	seek to manage navigation during exceptional dry weather periods in line with the Dry Weather Protocol	as required

Appendices

Policy statements

Navigation policies

These policies have evolved from our Wye Navigation Order duties. They apply to the principal rivers.

We will:	
N1	manage the principal rivers for the purposes of protecting the interests of those navigating and using them and promoting their navigation and use whilst protecting their unique status;
N2	maintain the principal rivers for the purpose of their navigation and deal with any issues that inhibit navigation, in line with Environment Agency standards;
N3	preserve, manage and improve the principal rivers for their appropriate navigation and use;
N4	apply the principles of the Environment Agency's Enforcement and Prosecution Policy when enforcing the powers within the Order;
N5	aim to make vessels adrift safe and seek owner as required;
N6	seek to remove vessels that represent a health and safety risk to other users or are a hindrance to navigation. Appeals will be dealt with as outlined in the Order. We may enter vessels to inspect their safe condition. If vessels are considered unsafe, a notice will be served requiring remedial works to be undertaken. Such vessels should not be used until deemed to be safe;
N7	require the marking, modification or removal of significant obstructions subject to environmental constraints:

	<p>this would be if the obstruction has a significant impact on the public right to navigate, or;</p> <p>it hinders an access facility ,or;</p> <p>if in the opinion of an Environment Agency Officer, it represents a risk to safety of other users.</p> <p>assess the significance of any proposals in line with guidance provided. An appropriate Habitats Risk Assessment to be undertaken if significant impacts are identified.</p> <p>Appeals will be dealt with as outlined in the Order;</p>
N8	<p>protect as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of those who navigate and use the rivers;</p> <p>carry out regular health and safety risk assessment surveys with respect to existing structures and embankments and general navigational use of the principal rivers. We may give notice requiring structures and embankments to be repaired.</p>
N9	<p>seek to manage events such as regattas and races by the production of ‘The Wye Calendar of Major Events’;</p> <p>we will keep under review the need for additional byelaws for:</p> <p>preventing obstructions to the navigation or use of the principal rivers;</p> <p>prescribing navigational rules controlling vessel dimensions;</p> <p>regulating the launching of vessels;</p> <p>regulating the passage of vessels. We currently have no intention to seek byelaws as collision regulations apply;</p> <p>for the purpose of safety;</p> <p>we will not be seeking byelaws for the following:</p> <p>prescribing precautions for the prevention of fire;</p> <p>preventing or controlling pollution. We will use the Water Resources Act 1991 as amended by the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016;</p> <p>for regulating the display of advertising – this may be affected under the Transport and Works Act Order;</p> <p>consult and consider through the period of the plan whether the registration of vessels is required – subject to the Transport and Works Act Order;</p>
N10	<p>develop a policy on the use of our powers to control unsafe vessels working in collaboration with other enforcement agencies;</p>
N11	<p>minimise the impact of temporary closure of the principal rivers on navigation through the Wye Calendar of Major Events and use of the website;</p>
N12	<p>seek to limit interference to the navigation using the powers to direct vessels as and where necessary;</p>
N13	<p>only consider dredging that is localised and for the purpose of safe navigation;</p>

N14	regulate the construction of works and/or dredging through a combined licence approach such that a works licence as well as a flood defence consent will be required;
N15	will keep under review the need to introduce a charging scheme within the next 5 years;
N16	periodically review the need for navigation byelaws in consultation with the advisory committee;
N17	work in partnership with local authorities, landowners and action groups to improve existing services and develop new facilities where desirable;
N18	try to ensure that river users consider the interests of other activities competing for time and space. We will seek to facilitate an amicable solution for all parties should conflict arise;
N19	monitor the impacts from implementing the Wye Waterway Plan (WWP) and report any significant issues to the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee;
N20	work with the Gloucester Harbour Trustees to ensure effective management of navigation on the River Wye between the tidal and non-tidal waters.
N21	manage navigation on the Welsh sections of the principal rivers in accordance with the Natural Resources Wales arrangement

Waterway policies

These policies apply to the entire waterway.

We will:	
W1	support initiatives aimed at encouraging environmentally friendly access to the waterway whilst protecting the unique conservation status of the catchment;
W2	support initiatives aimed at encouraging adequate provision for those needing access to the waterway by car whilst protecting the unique conservation status of the catchment;
W3	support initiatives to improve access to the waterway for the disabled and where we have control, we will ensure access is available to all whilst protecting the unique conservation status of the catchment;
W4	support initiatives aimed at encouraging land-based recreation alongside the waterway where permitted whilst protecting the unique conservation status of the catchment;
W5	support initiatives aimed at improving sporting and recreational opportunities for young people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and women;
W6	support initiatives that increase the sustainable use of the waterway for participation in sport, recreation and physical activity;
W7	encourage angling along the waterway;
W8	aim to encourage low-cost non-motorised boating;
W9	aim to improve the experience for the visitor;

W10	maintain and enhance the biodiversity along the Wye and its corridor, working with local biodiversity groups and other organisations;
W11	support initiatives to control invasive plant species in accordance with the code of practice;
W12	maintain and improve quality standards where feasible whilst ensuring no significant increase in water, noise or air pollution (including litter);
W13	facilitate use of the upper rivers and tributaries by seeking voluntary arrangements between the riparian owners and waterway users;
W14	use soft bank protection, with hard edge works introduced only as a last resort;
W15	protect valuable in-stream features such as gravel shoals;
W16	manage river levels to ensure key water dependent sites are protected;
W17	ensure that works and activities do not result in the transfer and colonisation of invasive non-native plants, animal species and diseases;
W18	where we facilitate access outside of the Principal Rivers, we will promote safety information and guidance.

Paddlers' Code

The [Paddlers' Code](#) is intended to help people enjoy the river without reducing the enjoyment of others or damaging the environment. This guidance is subject to periodic reviews to ensure it accurately reflects best practice.

General guidance for all river users

- Be courteous to other river users at all times.
- Look after the environment - avoid damaging the banks and bankside vegetation.
- Take special care not to disturb beds of waterweed and gravel beds.
- Avoid dragging equipment over rock slab and boulders.
- Don't disturb birds or wildlife - keep clear of nesting birds, areas important for breeding fish, and salient otter sites.
- Protect native species and habitats – use dry or disinfected equipment if used in other freshwater bodies.
- Don't trespass on private banks or moorings.
- Never throw rubbish into the river or leave it on the banks.
- Park sensibly without causing obstruction.
- Get changed out of public view.
- Be patient with those new to a sport, as you would for learner drivers on the road.
- Hail to draw attention to a situation which might result in inconvenience, damage or collision. Treat a hail as a friendly warning and not an insult.
- Be as quiet as possible - don't spoil the enjoyment of others.
- Be friendly and polite to local residents and try to avoid arguments.
- Competitors and organisers should take into account the effects on other river users

- Event organisers should display warning notices at each end of a stretch of river being used for competitions.
- Observe the [countryside code](#) and have regard for others' property.

General guidance for boaters

- All boaters must use the river in a safe fashion and have appropriate safety equipment.
- Park vehicles and trailers responsibly so that they do not cause a nuisance.
- Except in an emergency, launch or land only at recognised access places.
- Don't land on gravel shoals and islands between 1 April and 31 July when birds may be nesting.
- Avoid trampling and launching / landing on or near sensitive otter sites, especially in the Clifford and Whitney sectors of the river.
- From October to April inclusive, trampling and launching on gravels used by salmon and trout may damage unhatched eggs and young fry. This is of particular concern upstream of Glasbury and when the water level is low.
- Obey the general rules of navigation and local byelaws.
- Give way to those engaged in organised competitions and have regard to any instructions given by officials.
- Groups of young and inexperienced boaters should be led by a suitably experienced responsible person – preferably a qualified instructor.
- When boating in a group try to keep together, especially when passing anglers.
- Don't get in the way of other craft by suddenly changing course.
- Remember that larger boats are less manoeuvrable and cannot use such shallow water as canoes, rafts and rowing boats.
- Upper Wye access arrangement - there is a public right to navigation downstream of Hay-on-Wye, and on the upper river there are a number of negotiated access points for canoeing. Details can be found at: [The Wye and Usk Foundation](#).

Guidance for boating near anglers

- Look out for all anglers. Whilst assuring your own safety keep a good distance from them and avoid their lines.
- Pass anglers quickly and quietly, creating as little disturbance as possible and do not loiter in fishing pools.
- Keep well clear of wading anglers or anglers in boats and leave enough room in front and behind for them to cast.
- Comply with any signals anglers make to indicate whether they wish you to pass by or to wait a moment. Hail if you think your approach has not been noticed. It is an offence to wilfully disturb breeding fish or spawning beds. Please leave the water if an Environment Agency Officer asks you to. Such a request will only be made where there is a real risk of disturbance.

- Fishing from a boat is not allowed unless you have a valid rod licence and permission from the owner/tenant of the fishery rights. If you are boating upstream of Hay-on-Wye you also need permission from the riparian owner.
- The following descriptions can help you identify the various types of fishing and how best to share the river with anglers:

Types of fishing:

Coarse fishing - These anglers are often seen with an umbrella. Look out of the float 5-10m out and try to avoid their area called a 'swim'.

Fly fishing - Usually standing, wading or on bank. Avoid area opposite and, as they keep moving downstream, avoid downstream in particular. Watch out for end of line.

Game / fly fishing - Sometimes best to paddle behind them after acknowledgement.

Fishing seasons:

Salmon and Sea Trout - 3 March to 17 October, except above Llanwrthwl Bridge where the season runs from 3 March to 25 October. Non Migratory Trout - 3 March to 30 September.

Coarse - 16 June to 14 March.

List of abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BC	British Canoeing
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
WyeNAC	Wye Navigation Advisory Committee

Glossary

Term used	Explanation/definition
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Area designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 with the primary purpose of designation to conserve natural beauty.
Biodiversity	The common term for 'biological diversity', the variety of life and the natural processes of which living things are a part.
Byelaws	Regulations made by a local authority or other government body.
Catchment	The area of land draining to a defined point.
Coarse fish	Freshwater fish other than salmon and trout, many belonging to the carp family (cyprinids).
Defra Group	33 agencies and public bodies including Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England.
Habitat	Place in which a species or community of species live, with characteristic plants and animals.
National Trail	Routes based on Public Rights of Way through the nation's finest and most characteristic countryside, allowing an extensive journey on foot, horseback or by bicycle.
Natural capital	Our natural assets including forests, rivers, land, minerals and oceans
Principal rivers (Wye Navigation Order 2002)	That part of the River Wye from the downstream face of Bigsweir Bridge (reference point SO 538051) to Hay Town Bridge (reference point SO 228426); and that part of the River Lugg from its confluence with the River Wye to Presteigne Town Bridge (reference point SO 316646).
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Area identified by Countryside Council of Wales and English Nature under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 for protection by reason of the rarity of its nature conservation, wildlife features or geological interest.
Sustainable development	Usually defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
Sustrans	A sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport in order to reduce motor traffic and its adverse effects.
Upper rivers	The River Wye upstream of Hay Town Bridge and the River Lugg upstream of Presteigne Town Bridge.
Waterway	A navigable channel.
Weir	A dam built across a river to raise upstream water levels.

Wharf	A level quayside area to which a boat may moor.
Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	One of the 50 AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Covers 326 square kilometres of south Herefordshire, eastern Monmouthshire and western Gloucestershire.

Term used	Explanation/definition
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Area designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 with the primary purpose of designation to conserve natural beauty.
Biodiversity	The common term for 'biological diversity', the variety of life and the natural processes of which living things are a part.
Byelaws	Regulations made by a local authority or other government body.
Catchment	The area of land draining to a defined point.
Coarse fish	Freshwater fish other than salmon and trout, many belonging to the carp family (cyprinids).
Defra Group	33 agencies and public bodies including Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England.
Habitat	Place in which a species or community of species live, with characteristic plants and animals.
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Associated information

Owner	Source
Environment Agency	Creating a great place: EA2025 - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-ea2025-creating-a-better-place
Canoe Wales	River access - https://www.canoewales.com/go-paddling 'White water' for the higher reaches - http://www.canoewales.com/white-water 'Canoe tours' for Glasbury down - http://www.canoewales.com/canoe-trails
Wye & Usk Foundation	Upper Wye access arrangements: https://www.wyeuskfoundation.org/upper-wye-access-arrangements
British Canoeing	General information - https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk River Wye information – https://gopaddling.info https://paddlerscode.info/

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