

# *Annual Environmental Activity Report 2004*



## ***Introduction***

This report is published annually in accordance with the Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation. The Code requires water companies to report on those aspects of their work which bear on the environment, with particular regard to conservation, access and recreation.

Although the Company manages no areas of "open land" such as forest, downs or lakes, it carries out works in the countryside each year and follows well established procedures to ensure environmental interests are protected. The procedures involve consultation in the planning and design of any pipeline or other works; and care taken during construction, when work is under way on site.

## ***Developments in 2003/2004***

### ***Repair and Maintenance Contract***

Focus on the distribution function of the Company's operation remains with our term contractor, Norwest Holst. This year's mains renewals programme saw a greater proportion of mainlaying in urban locations, thus limiting the use of "no-dig" techniques. Despite this, Norwest Holst still managed to lay approximately 50% of mains renewals by "no-dig" techniques – notably directional drilling. In total, 8km of mains were renewed with care taken to minimize their impact on residents, schools, commercial activity and traffic flows.

### ***Abstraction Sites Programme***

Work has now concluded on a study to monitor the effects of groundwater abstraction on two local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): Fowlmere Watercress Beds and Dernford Fen.

During test pumping of the Company's Fowlmere, Melbourn and Sawston public water supply abstraction sources, groundwater and surface water levels in and around the sites were carefully monitored. In addition, stream flows in

the nearby River Shep and the Guilden Brook (both of which are fed by locally occurring springs) were monitored by the Environment Agency at gauging stations.

A number of important hydrological and groundwater features have been identified, from which a better knowledge of the potential impact on the sustainability of the SSSIs' flora and fauna has been gained.

Similar work at a third SSSI, Sawston Hall Meadows, has again been delayed. Monitoring works required at Sawston Hall Meadows have been hampered by an inability to gain access to the site due to the ongoing sale associated with Sawston Hall.

### ***Leakage***

Since their introduction in 1999/2000, the Company has met mandatory leakage targets set annually by the water industry regulator, Ofwat. In 2003/04, the challenging target of 14 MI/d was achieved despite the increased number of burst mains, resulting from ground movement due to the prolonged hot dry summer of 2003.

## ***Metering***

1,469 domestic customers opted to have a meter installed and be charged for the actual volume of water they used. With a similar number of new domestic connections, all of which are metered, 52.6% of our domestic customers are now metered - one of the highest levels of domestic metering in the United Kingdom. In common with most other UK water companies, the vast majority of our commercial customers are metered.

## ***Large Diameter Mains Diversion Near Addenbrooke's Hospital***

A major project to divert a large diameter water main at Addenbrooke's Hospital – to accommodate further expansion of its research and patient care facilities – was achieved with minimal disruption to the hospital. Careful consideration was given to the planning of the works to minimise noise levels, disruption to traffic and to safeguard the general operation of the hospital.

## ***Green Energy***

Green energy is produced from renewable sources such as wind (both on- and offshore), the sun, water (both conventional hydro and the new technologies tidal stream and wave) and biomass, the growing of energy crops.

In view of the environmental benefits, the Company has taken the decision to move to green energy wherever possible. More than 40% of the Company's electricity is now supplied by a

contract with London Energy, using electricity produced from renewable sources.

Green energy is fairly scarce in the UK at the moment and actually costs more than standard electricity. This price increase is, however, offset by the fact that the Company is then exempt from paying the Government Climate Change Levy on that electricity. This has meant, therefore, that the Company has been able to go green without increasing costs.

## ***Drought Plan***

Water companies' drought plans are regarded by the Environment Agency as an important element of prudent water resources management. By planning the various actions to be taken in the event of different drought situations there is time to consider potential impacts and mitigation measures. The Company's drought plan, first produced for the Agency in 1999, and updated in early 2003, has been undergoing further revision this year. The latest updated version will be submitted to the Agency towards the end of 2004. A synopsis of the plan is published on the Company's web site.

## ***Water Efficiency***

The Company continued to provide services aimed at helping customers use water efficiently. Tap re-washing, water audits, underground pipe repairs and other services proved popular. The efficient use of water plays a vital role in the Company's strategy to supply the rising population in the region for the foreseeable future.

# ***Looking Forward To 2004/2005***

## ***Mains Renewals***

Mains renewals will continue to be undertaken using a mix of open-cut and "no-dig" techniques. A novel technique called CemPipe is to be applied to a severely leaking, but structurally sound main at Warboys. Using this technique, which utilises a tight fit cement mortar bonded polyethylene liner, the old main will be given a new lease of life with virtually no detriment to the environment.

## ***Relocation of Company's Head Office***

Spring 2005 will see the Company move its head office to a more energy efficient building on the outskirts of the city. The Company's new

headquarters will in fact be in a building it has owned for some years – a former water-softening station. The Company's current site, which is located in a residential part of Cambridge, is now bigger than is required for its current and future purposes, and the move will release land for development more in keeping with its surrounding area and more pleasing for the residents.

### ***Grand Arcade, Cambridge***

Extensive alterations, through diversions and extensions to the network, will be necessary to accommodate this major scheme in the historic centre of Cambridge. Close liaison with the developer, out-of-hours working and trench sharing will help to minimise the impact of our works on the local area.

## ***General Information***

### ***Consultation And Liaison***

When planning work in an environmentally sensitive area the Company liaises with relevant bodies so that, for every scheme, the best environmental results are achieved. These bodies may include the local planning authority, The Ramblers Association, The Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, English Nature, The Environment Agency, the County Archaeologist and the owner(s) of land in which the work takes place. In addition, standing arrangements for consultation exist in the form of the Company's Joint Consultative Committee, which meets twice each year. The Committee comprises elected representatives of local authorities in the area served by the Company. Matters of environmental concern are included on the agenda for all meetings.

### ***Statistical Information***

The Company owns 58 sites on which are situated variously pumping stations, service reservoirs, booster stations and water towers. Together the area of land amounts to 29.5 hectares. The Company's licensed area for water supply totals 117,300 hectares. The Company manages no land having recreational value but owns one site to which access is available. That is land at Fowlmere Watercress Beds (see Abstraction Sites Programme above), shown as location 16 on the map overleaf, which is managed by the RSPB.

### ***Staff Training and Awareness***

In view of the absence of open land under management, no formal staff training programme exists in this area. However, when a need is perceived, training is given to managers, supervisors or operatives, as appropriate.

### ***Land Acquisitions and Disposals***

There were no acquisitions or disposals of land having any conservational or recreational value during the year.

### ***Circulation of this Report***

This report is displayed and available to all visitors to the offices of the Company at Rustat Road, Cambridge. A copy is sent to each of the following: members of the Joint Consultative Committee mentioned earlier; environmental health officers for the three local authorities in the Company's licensed area; Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire & Peterborough Wildlife Trust; the Office of Water Services; WaterVoice Eastern; Water UK; the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Customers and others who wish to raise any issue in connection with conservation or related matters should contact the Company's Planning Engineer, Mr Bob Hardy, in the first instance.

# Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the Cambridge Water Company Area of Supply

1. Warboys & Wistow Woods & Warboys Clay Pits
2. Berry Fen Earith
3. Ouse Washes
4. Papworth Wood
5. Elsworth Wood
6. Overhall Grove
7. Gamlingay Wood
8. Hayley Wood
9. Kingston Wood & Outliers
10. Buff Wood & St Denis Churchyard
11. Eversden Wood
12. Orwell Church Pit
13. Barrington Pit
14. L-Moor Shepreth
15. Holland Hall Railway Cutting
16. Fowlmere Watercress Beds
17. Dernford Fen
18. Whittlesford Thriplow Hummocky Field  
Thriplow Meadows & Peat Holes
19. Sawston Hall Meadows
20. Alder Carr
21. Furze Hill
22. Hildersham Wood
23. Langley Wood
24. Over & Lawn Woods
25. Balsham Wood
26. Carlton Wood
27. Roman Road
28. Gog Magog Golf Course
29. The Beechwoods
30. Fleam Dyke
31. Fulbourn Fen
32. Great Wilbraham Common
33. Wilbraham Fen
34. Cherry Hinton Pits
35. Stow-cum-Quy Fen
36. Histon Road
37. Traveller's Rest Pit
38. Madingley Woods
39. Hardwick Wood
40. Caldecote Meadows
41. Cam Washes

