# Scottish Water installs 1,000 sewer monitors to boost water quality and reduce pollution



Work is advancing on a series of engineering projects as part of Scottish Water’s £500 million initiative aimed at environmental enhancement and improving local recreational areas. This effort falls under the umbrella of the Improving Urban Waters programme, which is designed to address water quality issues, reduce sewer-related debris, and mitigate spill incidents across its networks.

As part of this initiative, Scottish Water has fulfilled its commitment to the installation of 1,000 monitors on its sewer system, which now provide data available on a near real-time interactive online map. Karen Dee, Scottish Water’s General Manager for Waste Water Strategy, emphasised the importance of these advancements, stating: “We are committed to enhancing our precious natural environment and are investing more than ever before in our wastewater network, through increased monitoring and targeted improvement projects.”

The current civil engineering projects are focused on upgrading and improving the functionality of the sewer network. Plans include the installation of new screened overflows, which are designed to minimise the entry of sewage-related debris, such as wet wipes, into natural watercourses, especially during periods of rainfall. By December 2027, more than 70 improvements are scheduled to be completed, enhancing water quality across various locations in Scotland, with further initiatives planned beyond that timeframe.

Dee noted, “Scotland’s water quality is at its highest level for over 15 years with 87% of water bodies rated as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ condition.” She also highlighted the challenges posed by climate change, a reduction in green spaces, and the improper disposal of items through toilets, all of which exert increasing pressures on the sewage system. Scottish Water's approach has been strategic, prioritising investment in locations that promise significant community and environmental benefits rather than applying blanket measures observed in other parts of the UK.

The investment strategy has been shaped in collaboration with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), which has helped identify storm overflows requiring improvement. In addition, existing overflows will also be enhanced to cope with both aesthetic and environmental concerns.

One of the first completed projects under this initiative is the newly installed screened storm overflow near Lord Ancrum Woods in Midlothian. Further projects are already underway in Stewarton, East Ayrshire, as part of a £16.5 million investment aimed at alleviating local flooding.

Dee reiterated the importance of community support in these initiatives, referring to the Nature Calls campaign that encourages the public to dispose of waste responsibly by only flushing the “three Ps” – pee, poo, and toilet paper.

Moreover, the operational function of overflows remains critical in protecting properties from flooding during heavy rain events. Although these overflows are programmed to activate during such times, the proportion of discharge originating from toilets is minimal, accounting for less than 1% of total overflow volumes, which are further diluted in the environment.

Scottish Water's strategic monitoring approach diverges from methodologies adopted in other UK regions, allowing a dedicated team to focus on preemptive measures against flooding and pollution incidents. The overall quality of Scotland's water reflects the efficacy of this targeted approach. With last year's achievement of installing 1,000 Event Duration Monitors, the utility aims to install an additional 700 monitors this year, further enhancing operational efficiency and environmental protection.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/08/070824-Investment-in-Sewers> - This article discusses Scottish Water's £500 million investment in the Improving Urban Waters programme, focusing on enhancing water quality and reducing pollution incidents.
2. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/12/131224-Lord-Ancrum-Woods-IUW-Outfall> - This piece details the installation of a new screened storm overflow near Lord Ancrum Woods in Midlothian, part of Scottish Water's initiative to upgrade the sewer network.
3. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/12/131224-Lord-Ancrum-Woods-IUW-Outfall> - The article highlights the completion of a £2 million project to install a new screened storm overflow near Lord Ancrum Woods, enhancing water quality and sewer network resilience.
4. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/12/131224-Lord-Ancrum-Woods-IUW-Outfall> - This report emphasizes the importance of community support in Scottish Water's initiatives, referencing the Nature Calls campaign that encourages responsible waste disposal.
5. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/12/131224-Lord-Ancrum-Woods-IUW-Outfall> - The article discusses the operational function of overflows in protecting properties from flooding during heavy rain events, noting that less than 1% of total overflow volumes originate from toilets.
6. <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/News-and-Views/2024/12/131224-Lord-Ancrum-Woods-IUW-Outfall> - This piece outlines Scottish Water's strategic monitoring approach, which focuses on preemptive measures against flooding and pollution incidents, differing from methodologies adopted in other UK regions.
7. <https://news.google.?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data