

# ACCESS TO WATER



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SEVERN

TRENT

WONDERFUL ON TAP

# AGENDA

1. Background to water access on ST reservoirs
2. Why we want to increase managed water based activities
3. Managed Open Water Swimming
- 4 Introduction of Paddlesports to Ladybower
5. Q&A

# BACKGROUND

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- ✓ Severn Trent owns **43** raw water storage reservoirs **19** of these allow some kind of water based recreation.
- ✓ The majority of these being sailing clubs and fisheries with some commercially operated watersports centres.
- ✓ None of these operators are managed directly by Severn Trent and are managed through a licence or a lease.
- ✓ Need to balance water operations with recreation. Our sites have added dangerous due to operational assets, underwater features and flooded landscapes.
- ✓ All our water based activities are actively managed and we do not allow 'free access' due to the added dangerous of operational assets, underwater features and flooded landscapes.
- ✓ Activity operating standards our tenant partners have to sign up to.

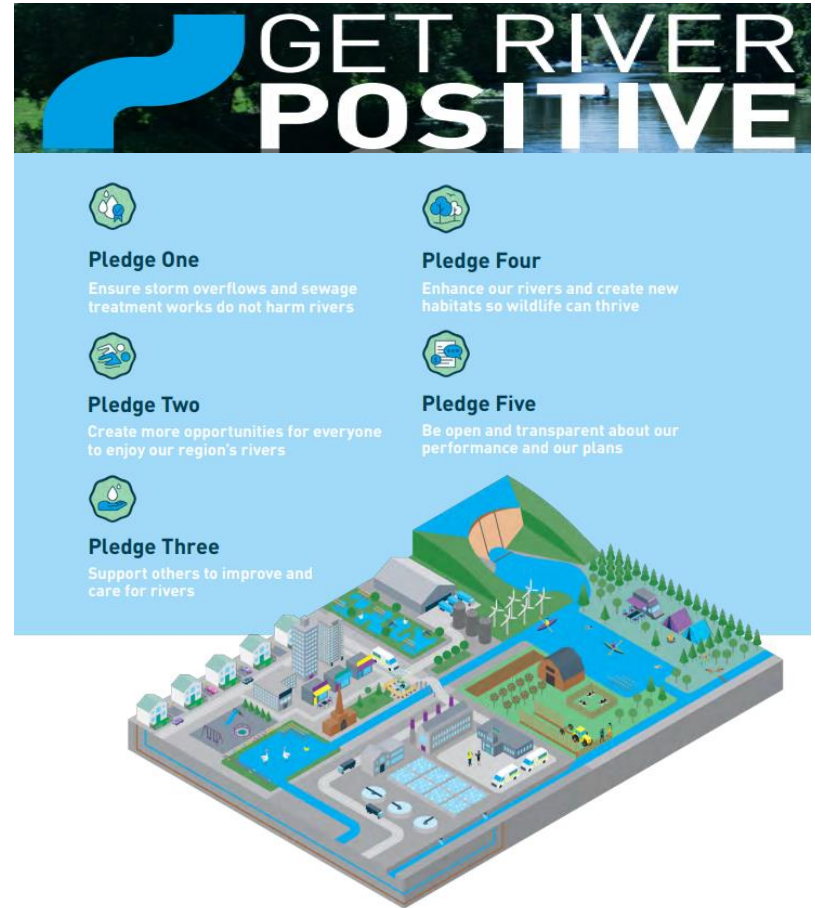


# WHY DO WE WANT TO INCREASE 'MANAGED ACCESS TO WATER'

- ✓ Severn Trent's 'Get River Positive' commitment.

Part of pledge 2 is that *"We will work with local clubs to increase opportunities for water-based activities at our reservoir sites"*

- ✓ Water based activities are increasingly becoming more popular in the UK due to a rise in activities such as Paddleboarding and open water swimming. Severn Trent recognises the benefits and opportunities that authorised access to water can offer through enabling activities such as open water swimming to take place on its reservoirs.
- ✓ Open water swimming is one of the fastest growing water sports in the country largely driven by the inclusion of both the triathlon and marathon swim in the Olympic programme. The subsequent media coverage has helped to raise the level of interest and awareness fuelling a demand for opportunities to train and compete.
- ✓ New user groups and adds to our existing offer.



# MANAGED OPEN WATER SWIMMING

We have historically had a no swimming rule across all of our visitor sites. Swimming has very different risks than other water based activities and in the past it was thought to be too challenging to mitigate these risks. There is a move towards allowing managed swimming across the wider water industry and more is known about how to manage this safely.

Our ambition was to trial an event in 2024 with the hope we can start to grow this opportunity in a safe way.

## The process we went through.....

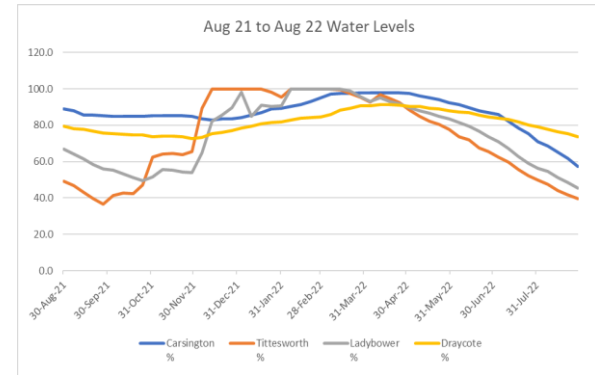
**Step 1** - The Visitor Experience Team collaborated with internal departments to gain an understanding of the risks and opportunities to the business. H&S, Water Quality, Operations, Property, Legal, Insurance and External Communications were all involved.

**Step 2** – Review which sites were most suitable to host open water swimming.

- ✓ Visitor site infrastructure
- ✓ Water quality (EU bathing water standards)
- ✓ Water levels
- ✓ Operational assets
- ✓ Current visitor offer

Carsington was chosen as our test venue for 2024

Site	Staffed?	Number of car park spaces	Overflow parking available?	Other onsite activities
Carsington	Yes	800+ across the full site	Yes	Sailing club and watersports centre onsite.
Tittesworth	Yes	c.200	Yes	Watersports centre onsite but located on opposite side of reservoir to parking, so very limited parking available.
Draycote	Yes	400 (expansion due in September which will give another 400 spaces)	Yes	Sailing club and fishery.
UDV (Ladybower, Derwent and Howden)	Yes	180- Fairholmes, 80- Heatherdine, plus smaller car parks next to Derwent Lane	No	Fishery, due to start offering paddleboarding this summer on Ladybower. Visitor facilities located at Fairholmes between Ladybower and Derwent but no easy access to water.
Lake Vyrnwy (HD)	Yes	60 at main car park, an additional 30 at Rhiwargor	No	Watersports centre with limited parking
Linacre	No	c.45	No	No activities.
Shushtoke Water	No	c.40	No	Fishery and sailing- members only clubs.
Thornton Water	No	c.30	No	Fishery
Trimpley Water	No	No main car park, very limited on road parking	No	Sailing club and fishery.
Clywedog (HD)	No	No main car park, very limited on road parking	No	Sailing club and fishery.
<b>Key</b>				
Easy to manage either events or regular swims				
Could be managed but may need some investment to enable easy access or parking				
Significant investment needed to allow swimming				



EC BATHING WATER DIRECTIVE 2006/7/EC				
RATING	EXCELLENT	GOOD	SUFFICIENT	POOR (FAIL)
Escherichia Coli (cfu/100ml)	<500	<1 000	<900	>900
Intestinal Enterococci (cfu/100ml)	<200	<400	<330	>330

# MANAGED OPEN WATER SWIMMING

**Step 3** - Creation of policy on how we would manage 'Managed Open Water Swimming' on our sites. Creating a best practice document.



**Step 4** – Tendered the opportunity to work with one event partner with a good proven track record to deliver open water swimming events.



**Step 5** – Onsite communications plan

- Key message is still 'No Swimming' in line with all other water companies.
- Swimming is only allowed as part of an organised event where safety can be managed.



# STEP 6: TRIAL EVENT

- On July 11<sup>th</sup> 2024, the trial event took place at Carsington.
- Swim only event. Participants had 2 hours to complete the mile loop.
- Well attended with just over 300 participants.
- Safety cover provided through a number of safety kayaks, paddleboards and safety boats.
- Swimmers adhered to wetsuit and swim float policy
- Received great feedback from participants.



## SWIMMER FEEDBACK

**100% felt the event was well managed**

**100% felt safe**

**100% enjoyment rate**

An amazingly well run event – everyone answered all my questions which was a massive reassurance

The weather and choppy water were out of your control but an enjoyable event

“Well organised and friendly event, would definitely do this again!”

“I’ve done quite a few events but this one felt special – total elation in car on the way home!”

“The safety team were absolutely brilliant and super vigilant especially around anyone struggling”

# SWIMMING NEXT STEPS

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The next steps for us on managed swimming are:

- ✓ Continue to work with Pacesetter as a partner to deliver the managed swimming events under their license arrangements.
- ✓ Plan to complete a maximum of 4 managed mass participation swimming events during Summer 2025 at Carsington
  - We will consider morning events as well as evenings and review the feasibility of this.
  - Our first triathlon
- ✓ Implement regular weekly managed swim sessions at Carsington with our existing tenant. To become a 'Beyond Swim' accredited venue.
- ✓ Continue with our strong "No unauthorised swimming" at all others.
- ✓ We will also look at the feasibility of Tittesworth Water and possibly the Upper Derwent Valley as the next option for hosting a managed swimming event. The key success criteria to this will be understanding the water quality and testing process and results.



# LADYBOWER PADDLESPORTS

## Background

- Due to the growing demand for paddlesports we were keen to look at ways we could introduce paddlesports safety to the Upper Derwent Valley
- In October 2023 we worked with Ladybower Fisheries to launch Ladybower paddlesports.
- Agreed locations, safety provisions in the form of an activity standards and licence.

## Successes

- Over around 1600 paddlers in first year
- Became an affiliated club through Paddle UK and Paddle UK delivery partner
- At the beginning of November 2024 they installed a new pontoon with kayak launch, which helps able bodied and disability customers to safely enter the water.
- High Peak Borough Council Rural Business Grant funded 12 Sit on top kayaks and 2 Trident 12v electric kayaks

## Challenges

- Limited ability to grow due to lack of parking facilities and changing areas.
- Investment needed to expand Heatherdene car park and develop a building to house changing facility, storage, classroom
- Managing anti-social and unauthorised access to water.
- Running costs to manage safety on a reservoir.



Picture taken by Ladybower Paddlesports

# ANY QUESTIONS

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