



Notice of Meeting of

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - CLIMATE AND PLACE**

**Friday, 26 April 2024 at 1.30 pm**

**John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE**

To: The members of the Scrutiny Committee - Climate and Place

Chair: Councillor Martin Dimery

Vice-chair: Councillor Adam Boyden

Councillor Steve Ashton

Councillor Bente Height

Councillor Henry Hobhouse

Councillor Dave Mansell

Councillor Harry Munt

Councillor Alan Bradford

Councillor Edric Hobbs

Councillor Marcus Kravis

Councillor Matthew Martin

Councillor Tom Power

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For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact Democratic Services [democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk).

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings and ask questions or make a statement **by giving advance notice** in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring Officer at email: [democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) by **5pm on Monday, 22 April 2024**.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Thursday, 18 April 2024

# AGENDA

Scrutiny Committee - Climate and Place - 1.30 pm Friday, 26 April 2024

**Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe (Pages 7 - 8)**

**Click here to join the online meeting**

## Microsoft Teams meeting

**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 338 137 684 648

Passcode: QTHzLF

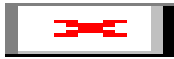
[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

**Or call in (audio only)**

[+44 1823 772277,,203645248#](#) United Kingdom, Taunton

Phone Conference ID: 203 645 248#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)



[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

To receive and note any declarations of interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The other registrable interests of Councillors of Somerset Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes: [City, Town & Parish Twin Hatters - Somerset Councillors 2023](#) )

### **3 Public Question Time**

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

We are now live webcasting most of our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, please see details under 'click here to join online meeting'.

### **4 Overview of the nutrient pollution problem on the Somerset Levels and Moors designated sites**

To receive a presentation from Natural England.

Further reading:

[Predicting Lemna growth based on climate change and eutrophication in temperate freshwater drainage ditches](#)

[Restoration management of phosphorus pollution on lowland fen peatlands: A data evidence review from the Somerset Levels and Moors \(sciencedirectassets.com\)](#)

### **5 Citizen Scientist research from the river catchments and the Ramsar sites**

To receive a presentation from Dr Andrew Clegg

### **6 How is the water level controlled on the Somerset Levels and Moors?**

To receive a presentation from Somerset Internal Drainage Boards.

### **7 Wessex Water improvements driving phosphate reduction on the Somerset Levels and Moors (Pages 9 - 20)**

To receive a presentation from Wessex Water

**8 The contribution of agricultural pollution to the nutrient problem on the Somerset Levels and Moors - in terms of scale and the known unknowns.**

Item for discussion

**9 Summing up and next steps**

The Chair to summarise the discussion and any next steps.

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## Guidance notes for the meeting

### Council Public Meetings

The legislation that governs Council meetings requires that committee meetings are held face-to-face. The requirement is for members of the committee and key supporting officers (report authors and statutory officers) to attend in person, along with some provision for any public speakers. Provision will be made wherever possible for those who do not need to attend in person including the public and press who wish to view the meeting to be able to do so virtually.

#### Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at

[democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) or telephone 01823 357628.

They can also be accessed via the council's website on [Committee structure - Modern Council \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

### Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: [Code of Conduct](#)

### Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

### Public Question Time

If you wish to speak or ask a question about any matter on the Committee's agenda please contact Democratic Services by 5pm providing 3 clear working days before the meeting. (for example, for a meeting being held on a Wednesday, the deadline will be 5pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting) Email

[democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:democraticserviceteam@somerset.gov.uk) or telephone 01823 357628.

Members of public wishing to speak or ask a question will need to attend in person or if unable can submit their question or statement in writing for an officer to read out, or alternatively can attend the meeting online.

A 20-minute time slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been agreed. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to address the committee.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with many people wishing to attend the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

### **Meeting Etiquette for participants**

Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.

Mute your microphone when you are not talking.

Switch off video if you are not speaking.

Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)

If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called turn on live captions which provides subtitles on the screen.

### **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed.

### **Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording, and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting.



# Somerset Council Climate and Place Scrutiny Committee

Wessex Water improvements driving phosphate reduction in the  
rivers near the Somerset Levels and Moors

26<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Wessex Water**  
YTL GROUP



# Water recycling centres (WRCs)

- Physical, physico-chemical and biological processes to treat sewage to a standard that the environment can accommodate and assimilate
- The discharge standards required are set and enforced by the Environment Agency





# General approach to cost effective P removal

## 1. Upfront chemical dosing

- Coagulant such as ferric sulphate causes phosphorus associated with solids to settle out in the primary settlement tanks
- Gets P concentration down from c5mg/l to <1mg/l (i.e. 80% removal)

Page 11



## 2. Back-end filtration

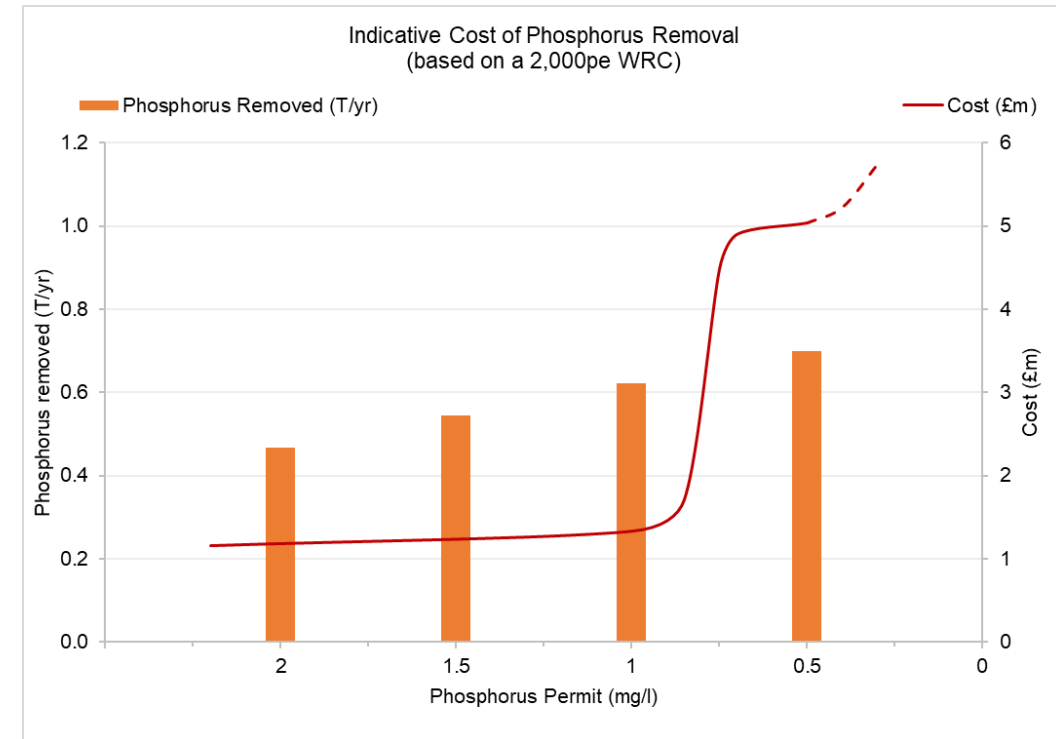
- Often requires upsizing whole upstream process due to impact of backwashing
- Gets P concentration down from c1mg/l to <0.25mg/l (i.e. 15% removal)



# Relationship between costs and benefits

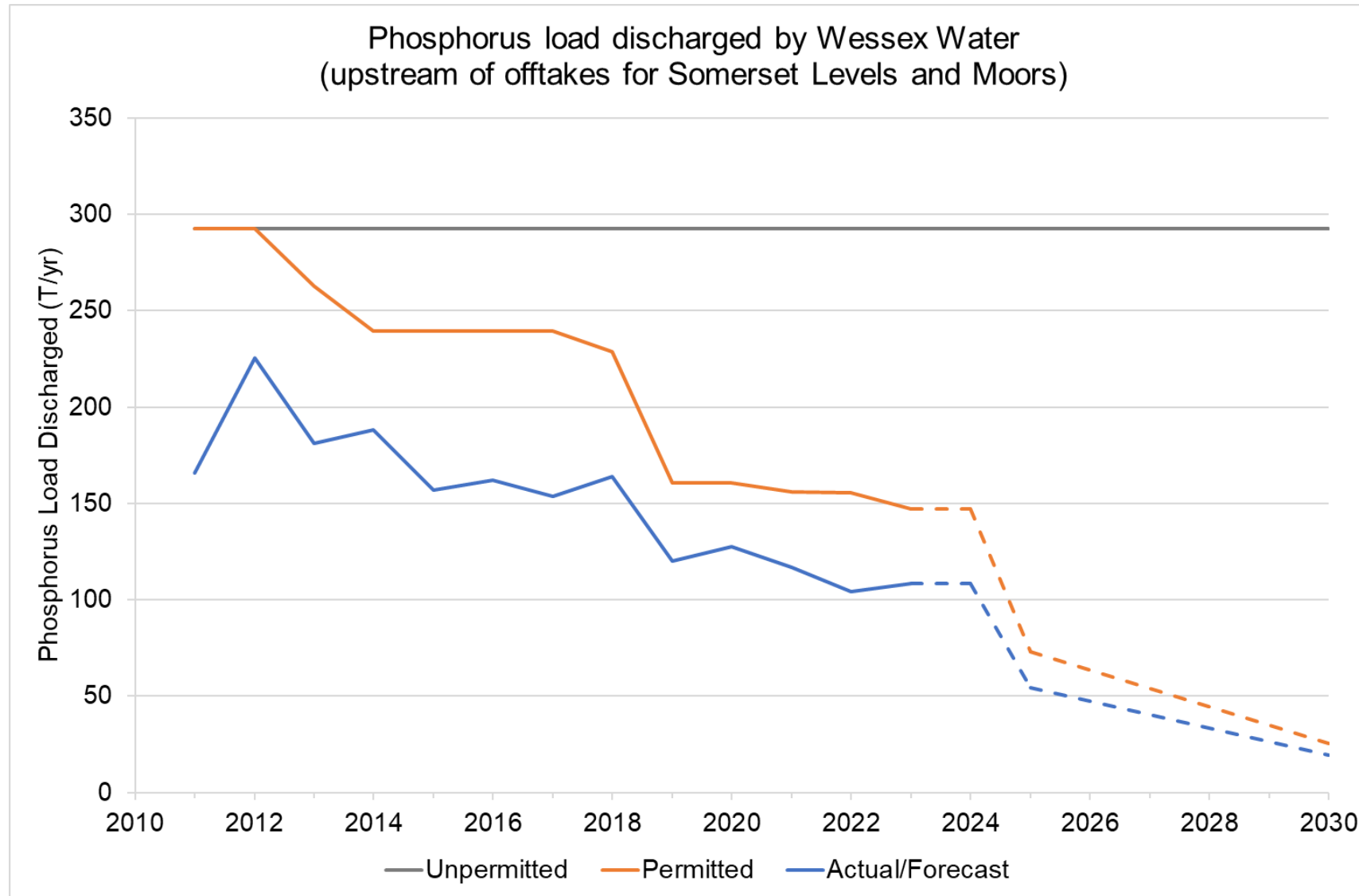
- The law of diminishing returns...
- Costs to reach lower concentrations (i.e. <1 mg/l) increase significantly for far less benefit

Page 12



- We try to look at other ways of removing the same amount of P in more cost-effective ways
  - e.g. catchment permitting (stretch targets) or catchment nutrient balancing (offsetting)

# P load reduction from WRCs to rivers upstream of SL&M offtakes



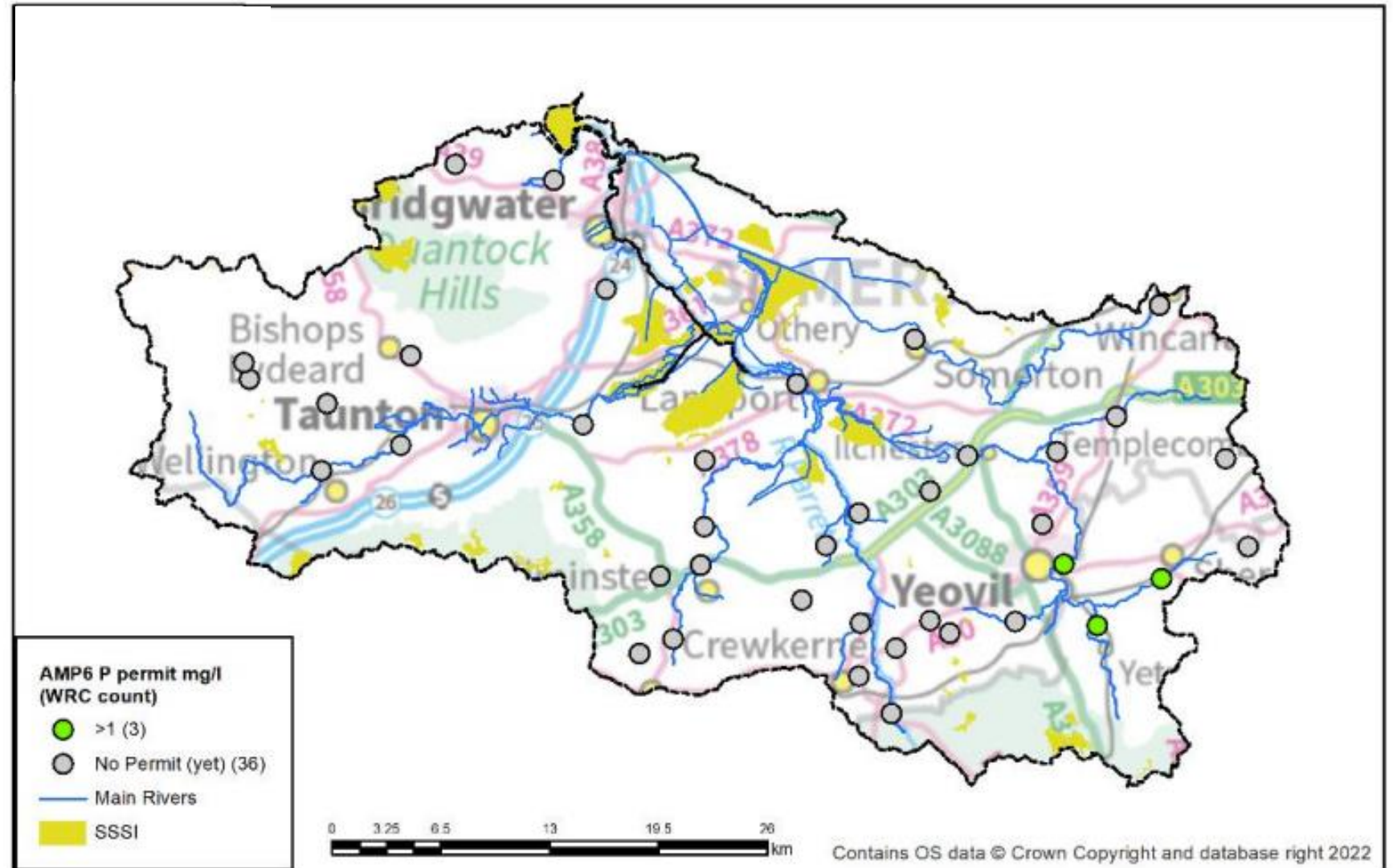


# Phosphorus removal PAST investment (Before 2019)

- e.g. river Parrett and Tone catchments

Page 14

- More info [Business plan 2025-2030](#)
- Document: WSX16
- Page 135pp

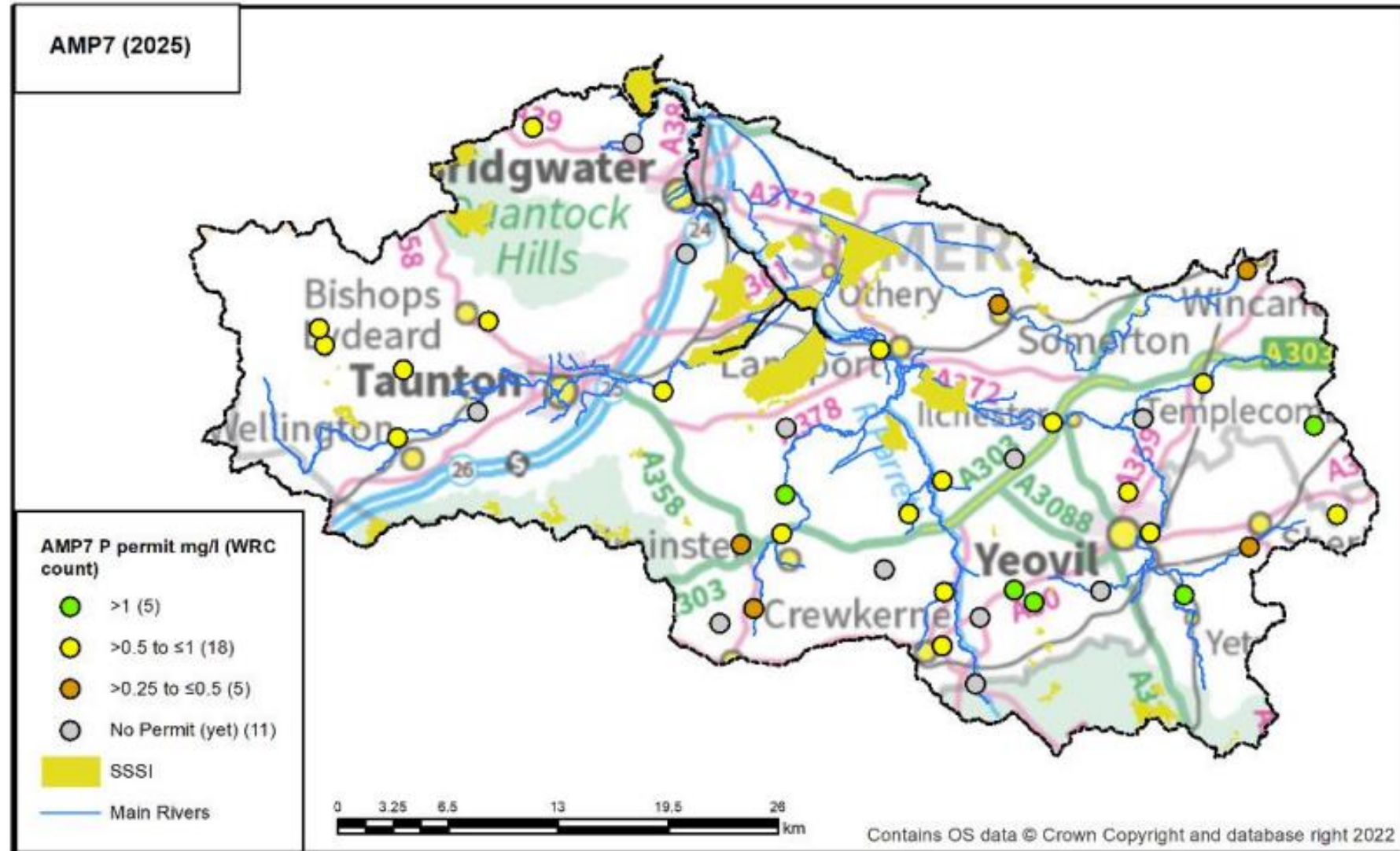


# Phosphorus removal CURRENT investment 2020-2025

- e.g. river Parrett and Tone catchments

Page 15

- More info [Business plan 2025-2030](#)
- Document: WSX16
- Page 135pp



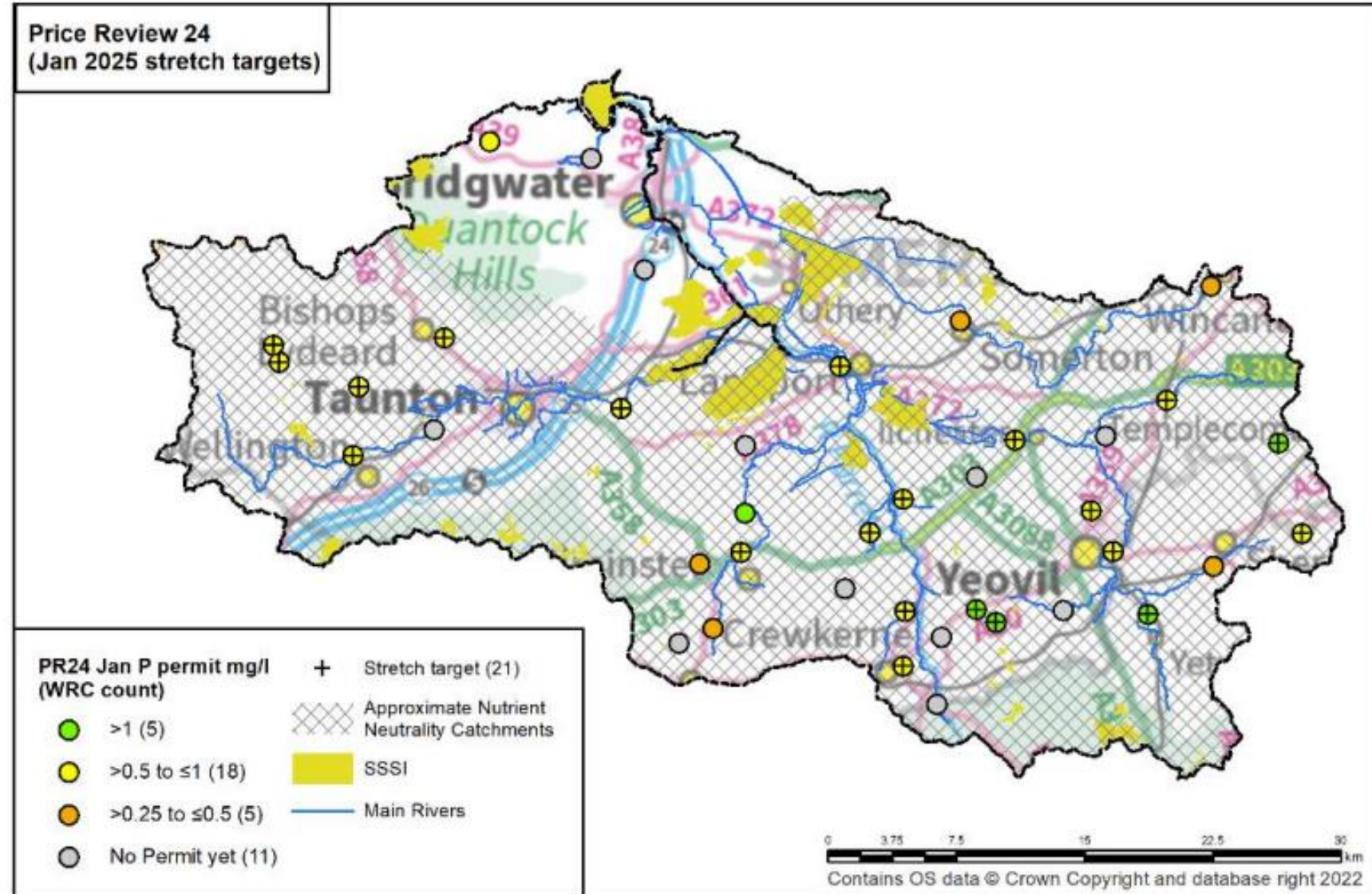


# Phosphorus removal CURRENT investment 2025

- e.g. river Parrett and Tone catchments

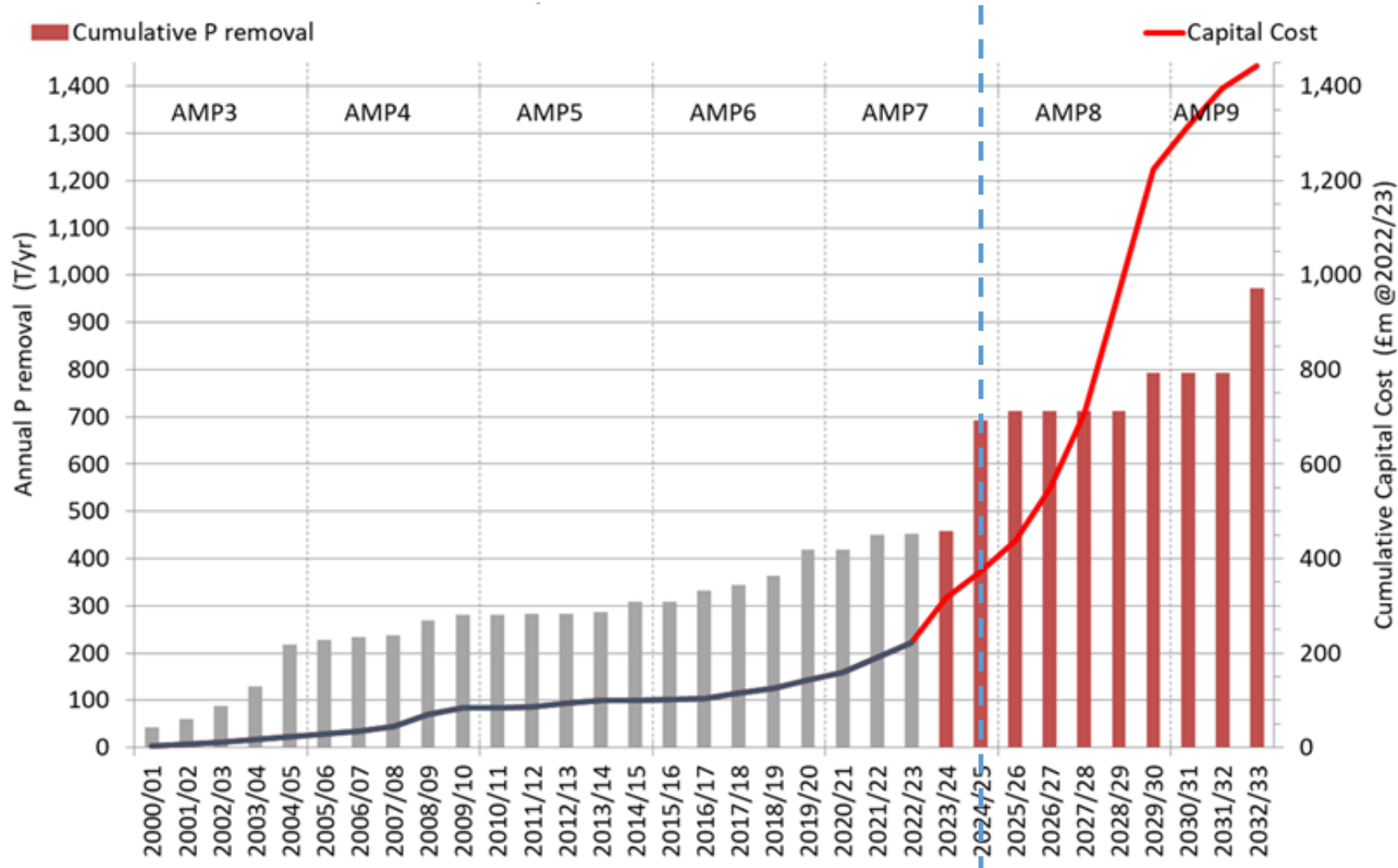
Page 16

- More info [Business plan 2025-2030](#)
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- Page 135pp





# P removal (tonnes/yr) vs capital cost (£m) Past and future

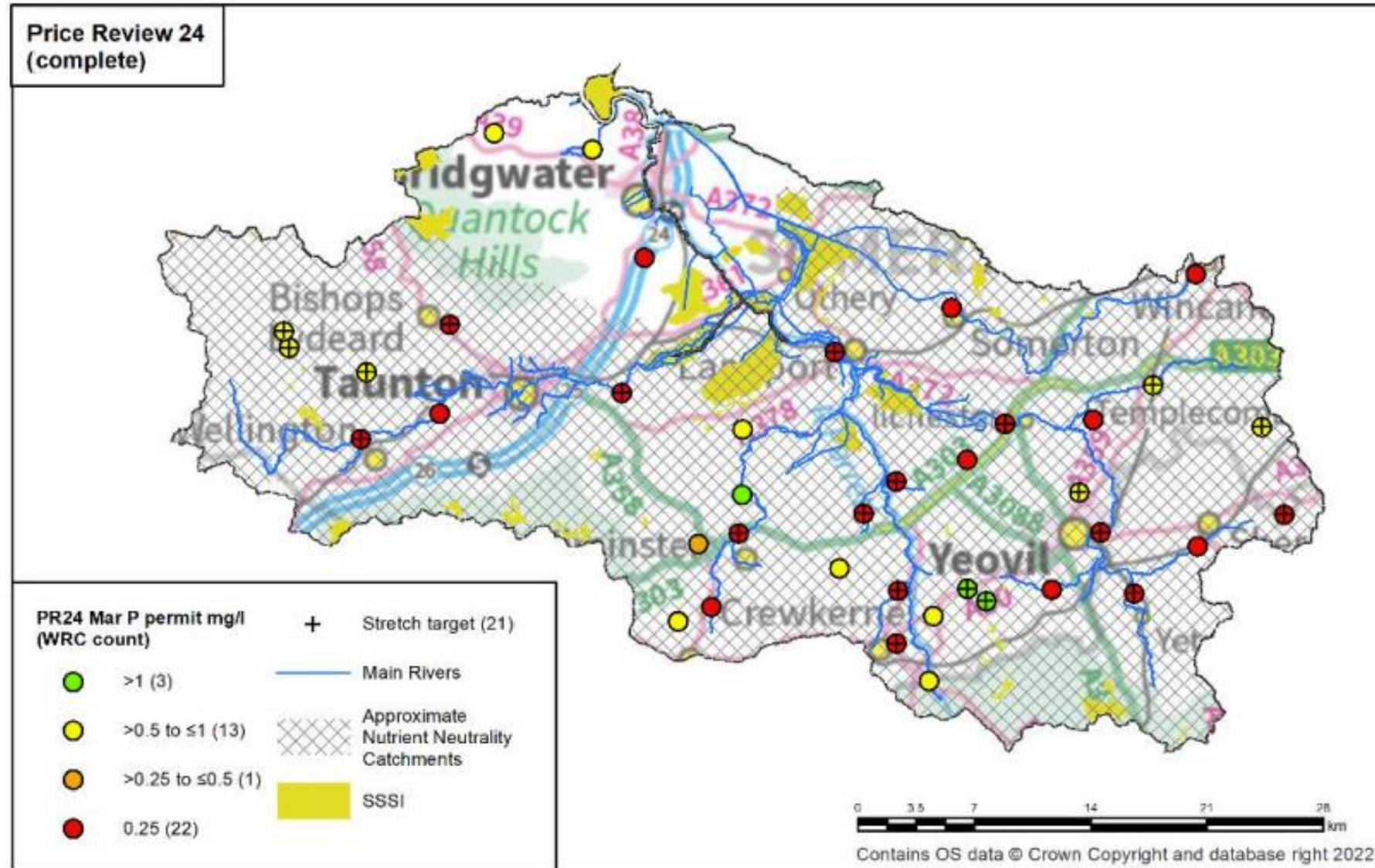


# Phosphorus removal FUTURE investment 2025-2030

- e.g. river Parrett and Tone catchments

Page 18

- More info [Business plan 2025-2030](#)
- Document: WSX16
- Page 135pp





# Environmental Investigations

- There are two environmental investigations in S&LM to be delivered by April 2027
- Partnership group to discuss aligning projects including RSPB, NE and IDB and potentially Somerset Wildlife Trust

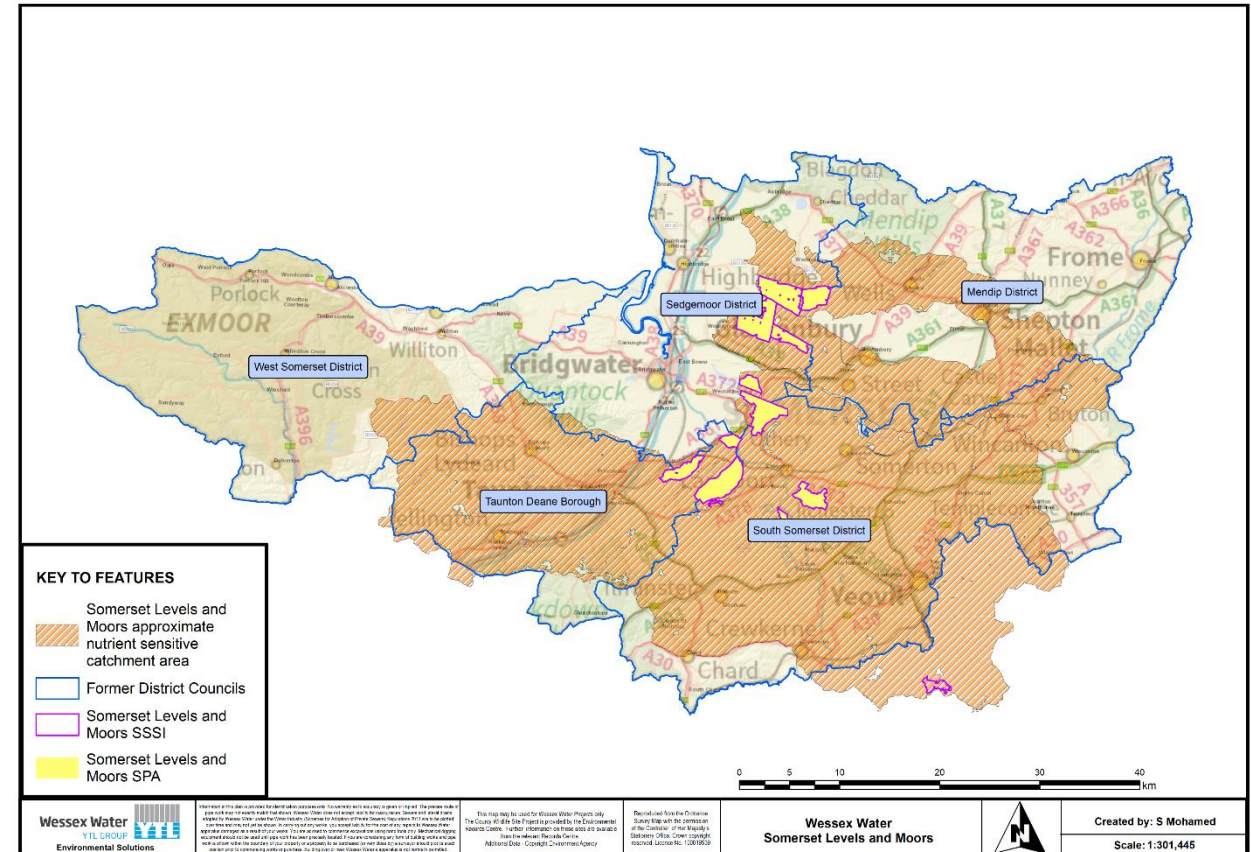
## 1. Somerset Levels and Moors Seasonal Nutrient Investigation – the aims include:

- Assess the proportion of nutrient loading from water recycling centres (WRCs) and storm overflows to the Somerset Levels and Moors (SL&M) sites of scientific special interest (SSSI)
- Assess the feasibility of seasonal permitting to be implemented at WRCs discharging upstream of the SL&M SSSI

## 2. Nutrient legacy and cycling in the Somerset Levels and Moors Partnership Project – the aims include:

- To understand the fate and behaviour of legacy phosphorus in the SL&M Ramsar site
- To explore options for increasing the rate of nutrient export from the site

Page 19



# Thank you for listening

**Wessex Water**  
YTL GROUP

