

Catchment Based Approach Urban Water Management Group (CUWG)

2023-24 Work Programme

The role of CUWG is to act as an agent for change in urban water management.

The focus of the CUWG is on supporting Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) partnerships nationwide by helping them to build capacity and expertise and to engage more effectively with key stakeholders, including local authorities, communities, businesses and developers, on urban water management issues.

CUWG's aim is to facilitate local engagement and drive collaborative delivery of integrated water management on the ground.

Following the Group's meeting on 19th October, three workstreams have been agreed for CUWG's 2023-24 work programme:

1. A national SuDS retrofitting strategy:

- i. Joining with CIRIA in the retrofit roundtable that CIRIA is holding on 4th December;
- ii. Following from the CIRIA roundtable, a face-to face workshop in early 2024, informed by outcomes from the CIRIA round table and current studies. It will aim to draw a wider audience than the round table, and present current retrofit projects at different scales as well as results of studies into retrofitting issues to stimulate discussion. This workshop will bring together representatives of the key stakeholders to explore enablers, blockers and opportunities for retrofitting SuDS in urban areas.
- iii. The output will be a joint CUWG/CIRIA/CIWEM summary paper on issues, challenges and possible solutions for the establishment of a national retrofit policy to be presented to Defra officials.

2. Tackling urban diffuse pollution

An awareness-raising webinar, organised jointly with CIWEM on the same lines as the joint CUWG/CIWEM 2022 webinar on nutrient neutrality, to be held in early 2024.

Urban diffuse pollution appears to be an intractable problem at present, due to the wide range of sources, the number of landowners and bodies involved and the extent of current and legacy pollution.

This webinar will focus on arriving at a common definition; types and causes; interactions; responsible bodies. There will be a series of presentations on the main issues, challenges and options/solutions, with examples of what is happening on the ground, including Thames21's work. There are a number of different issues in addition to highways runoff, including how implementation of Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans should be building partnerships to manage diffuse pollution. The event will explore current and possible future ways of tackling diffuse

pollution and what would be required to enable a coordinated and effective strategy to manage it.

The webinar would take place in February/March 2024, but there would be engagement with National Highways and possibly other players prior to the webinar.

The output from the webinar would be a joint CUWG/CIWEM position paper on the issues and the current situation, to be presented to Defra officials.

3. Developing the vision for urban catchments

CUWG will run two or three regional workshops with CaBA Partnerships in early 2024, aimed at helping them develop a vision for their urban catchment with a view to using that vision to prioritise interventions and engage with bodies making statutory plans as well as business and corporate investors to get the vision implemented.

The format would be some short presentations to set the scene followed by breakout groups to explore how to develop the vision, reporting back to bring together the thinking.

The outputs from the workshops would be brought together into CaBA guidance on developing a vision for urban catchments and using that vision to engage with those that can make it happen.