

**WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE**

# **ARTERIAL INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY**

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## **OPERATIONS**

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**Review date: December 2026**

**To be reviewed every 5 years**

**Next review date: January 2031**

**Reviewed by: WMA Consortium Management Committee**

**Adopted by:**

Broads (2006) Internal Drainage Board

East Suffolk Water Management Board

King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board

Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board

South Holland Internal Drainage Board

Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland Internal Drainage Board

Pevensy and Cuckmere Water Level Management Board

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## 1. BACKGROUND

The Board will carry out their drainage/water level management responsibilities through the designation of certain Drainage Infrastructure as 'Arterial Drainage Infrastructure' or 'Arterial Watercourses'. Arterial Watercourses are also frequently known as 'Main Drains' or 'Adopted Watercourses'.

Drainage Infrastructure is defined by the Board's Byelaws as any watercourse, culvert, pumping station, water control structure, sustainable drainage system, attenuation pond, flood storage area or any other structure or feature which relates to, provides for or is associated with any of the following purposes:

- a) securing the efficient working of the drainage system in the Board's District
- b) regulating the effects on the environment in the Board's District of a drainage system
- c) securing the effectiveness of flood risk management work within the meaning of section 14A of the Land Drainage Act 1991

This policy outlines what it means to designate drainage infrastructure as 'Arterial Drainage Infrastructure', and how the Board may make changes to any designation.

## 2. DESIGNATION MEANING

The status of 'Arterial Drainage Infrastructure' or 'Arterial Watercourse' is an acknowledgement by the IDB that the structure or watercourse is of arterial importance to the drainage of the Internal Drainage District and is to be considered (for the time being) as being under the control of the Board.

'Arterial Watercourses' will normally receive maintenance from the Board however maintenance is not necessarily carried out on an annual basis but on a recurrence deemed necessary to meet water level management requirements.

Arterial Drainage Infrastructure and Arterial Watercourses are protected to a greater extent by the Board's Byelaws in accordance with Byelaw 2.

Arterial Drainage Infrastructure / Watercourse designations are made under permissive powers; there is no change in the ownership or liability associated with the structure or watercourse. Only an ordinary watercourse can be designated as an Arterial Watercourse. Main Rivers are under the control of the Environment Agency.

Maps showing Arterial Drainage Infrastructure / Watercourses will be published on each Board's webpages.

### 3. DESIGNATION CHANGES

From time to time drainage infrastructure / watercourses may be designated as Arterial Watercourse ('en-mained') and vice versa ('de-mained'). The criteria listed within the policy statement below will be used to inform ad-hoc changes to the designation of a watercourse. It should be noted that every case will have to be judged on its own merits, as the complexities and peculiarities of individual cases cannot be encompassed within a standard set of criteria. Consideration should also be given to the availability of access to the watercourse to carry out maintenance works

Watercourses which fulfil the following criteria should be considered for designation as an arterial watercourse ('en-mained'):

*A watercourse with more than one riparian owner/occupier, or that caters for more than one owner/occupier within its catchment, which causes persistent drainage problems (or would do if a change in circumstances was to take place) where effective maintenance would prevent these problems from occurring.*

If an improvement scheme is required to be undertaken to make it an effective drainage route, then the benefit of this must outweigh the cost. The landowner, or developer should finance the improvement to the specification of the Board before the drain is designated as an arterial watercourse.

Watercourses which fulfil the following criteria should be considered to be 'de-mained':

*A watercourse which either has (or serves) one riparian owner, or is redundant for its original purpose, or would not cause a drainage problem if it the Board's regular maintenance ceased.*