



# London's Sewage Crisis

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# What do London's wastewater services look like?

8 wastewater treatment works within the M25 serve 99% of the GLA population



**153<sub>gWh</sub>**  
renewable  
energy  
in total from  
wastewater assets

Some London  
Sewers are over  
**150**  
years old

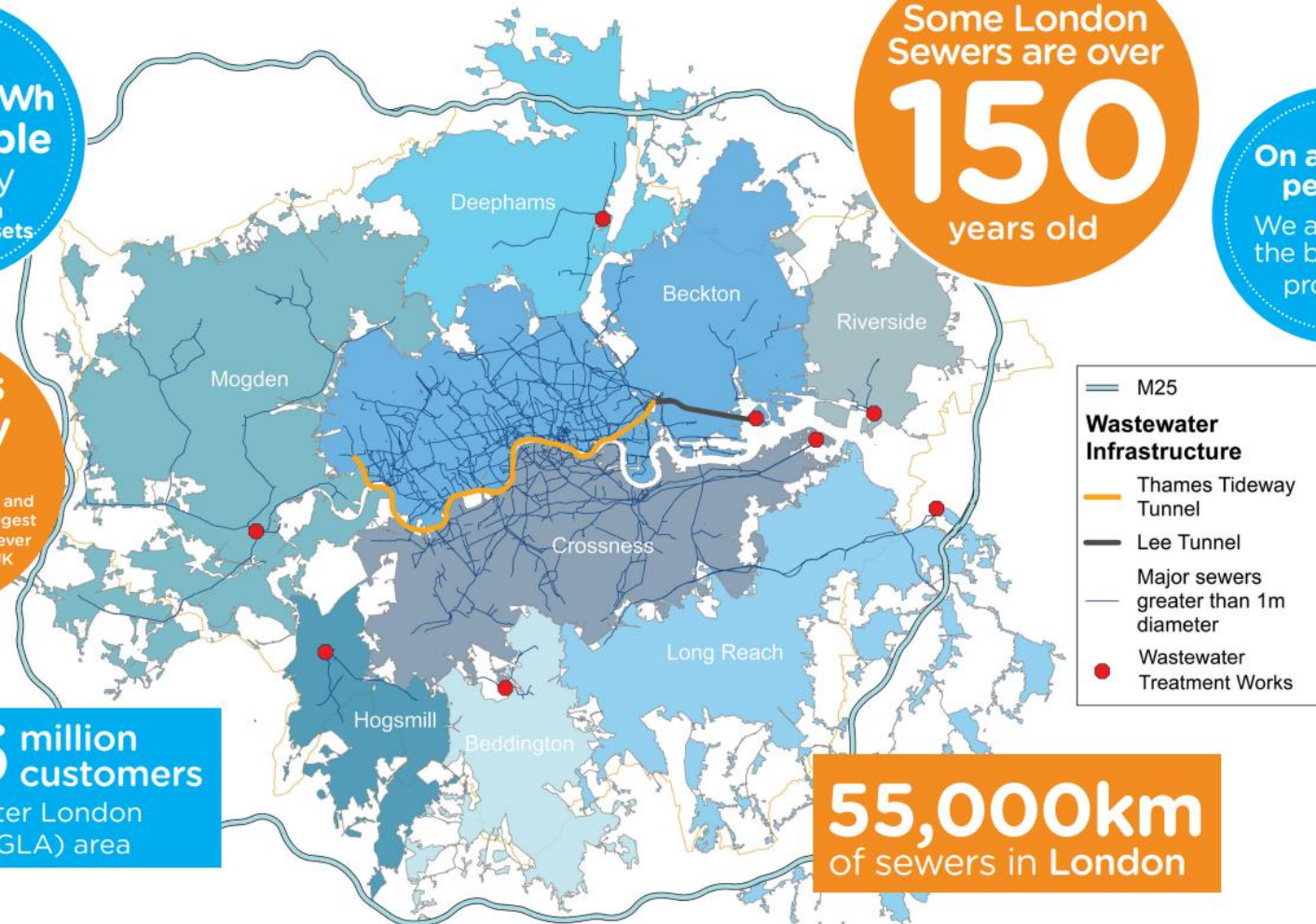
On average  
per day  
We are one of  
the best value  
providers

**Thames  
Tideway  
Tunnel**

15 miles long, 7m wide and  
upto 65m deep the biggest  
infrastructure project ever  
undertaken by the UK  
water industry

**8.75** million  
customers  
in the Greater London  
Authority (GLA) area

**55,000km**  
of sewers in London



Sewage from toilets, washing machines etc. goes to a water treatment plant





Enfield, England

Google Street View

Sept 2022

[See more dates](#)



Google







IMAGE: <https://www.pavingexpert.com/drain10>

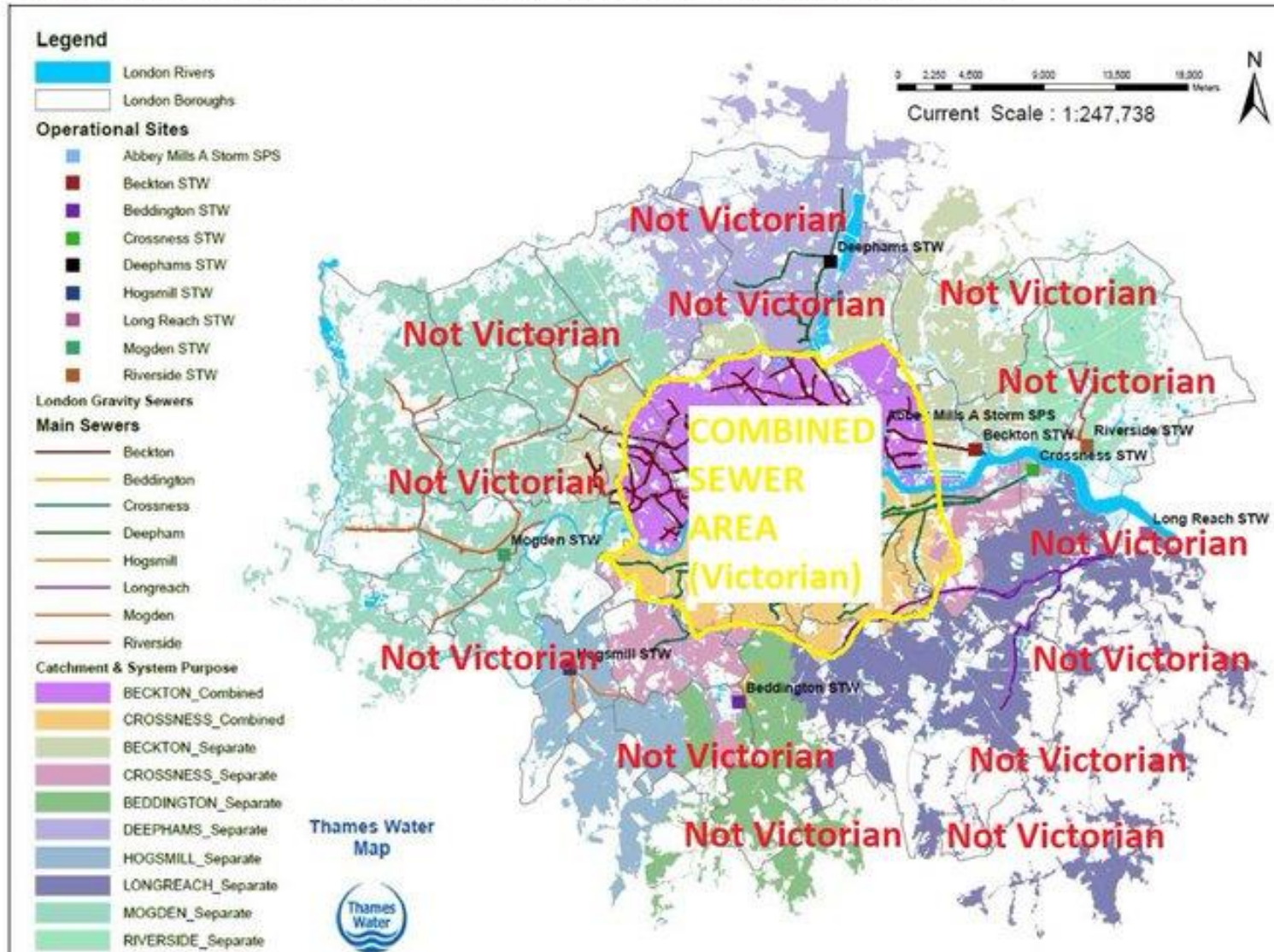
IMAGE: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/highways-maintenance/drainage/>







**Figure 1: Combined and separated sewer systems. Source: Thames Water**



Many assume every sewer is Combined, with sewage & rain going into them. But in London only a third are Combined.

The vast majority are separate, one pipe for sewage which goes to the treatment plant...

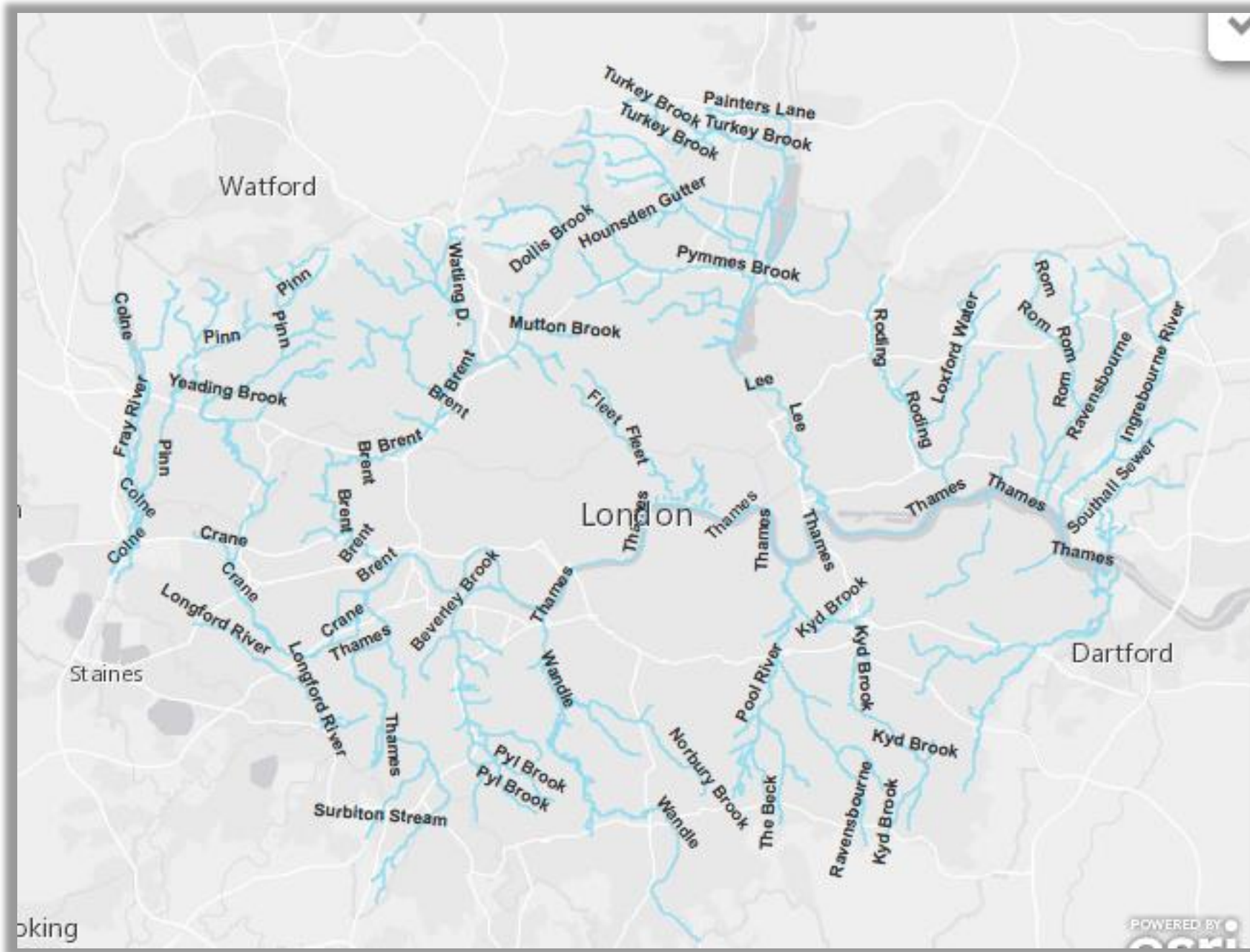
... and another for rain which goes straight into rivers - a problem as road run-off pollution is washed in.



# Beckton Sewage Works in East London







<https://thelostbyway.com/2016/03/map-of-london-rivers.html>

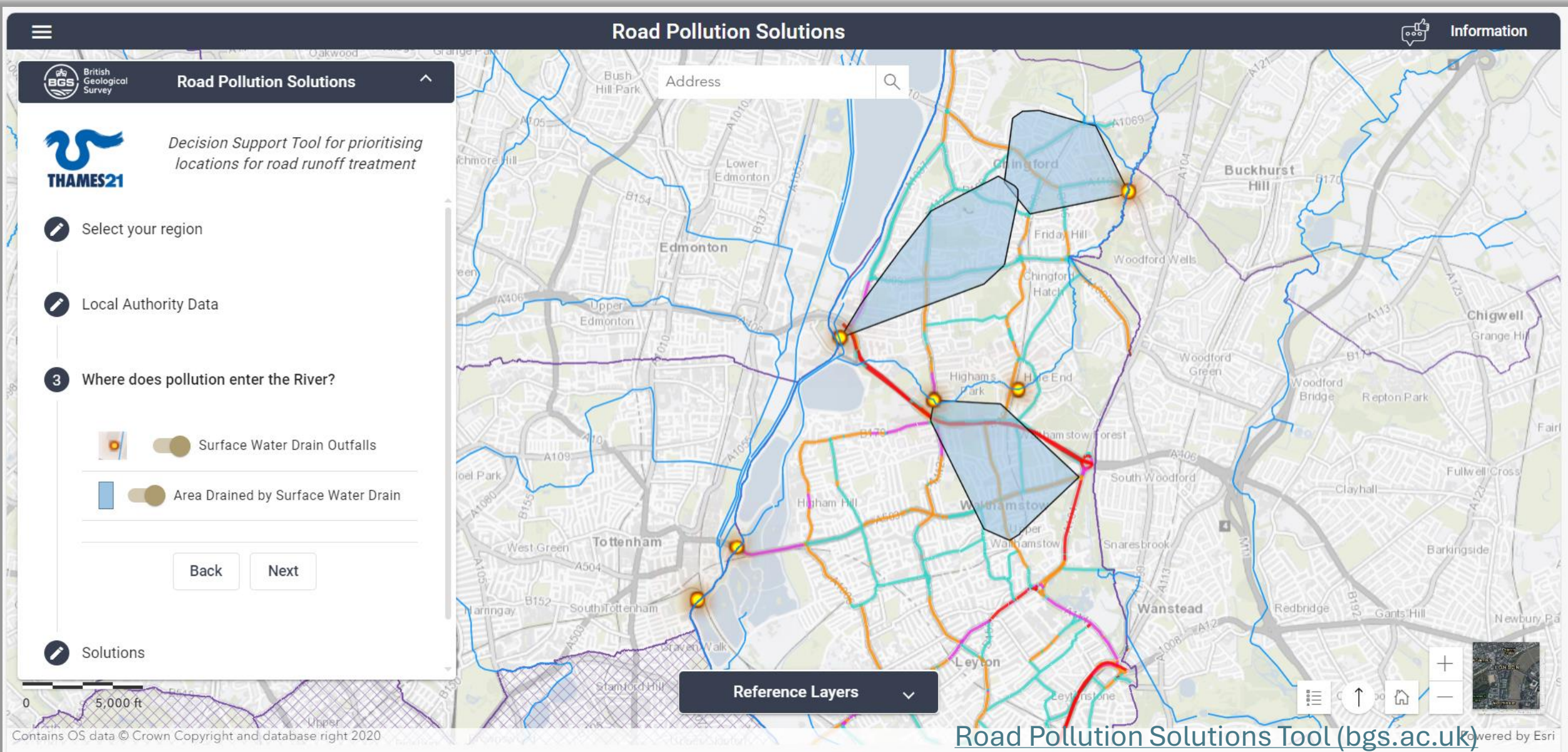




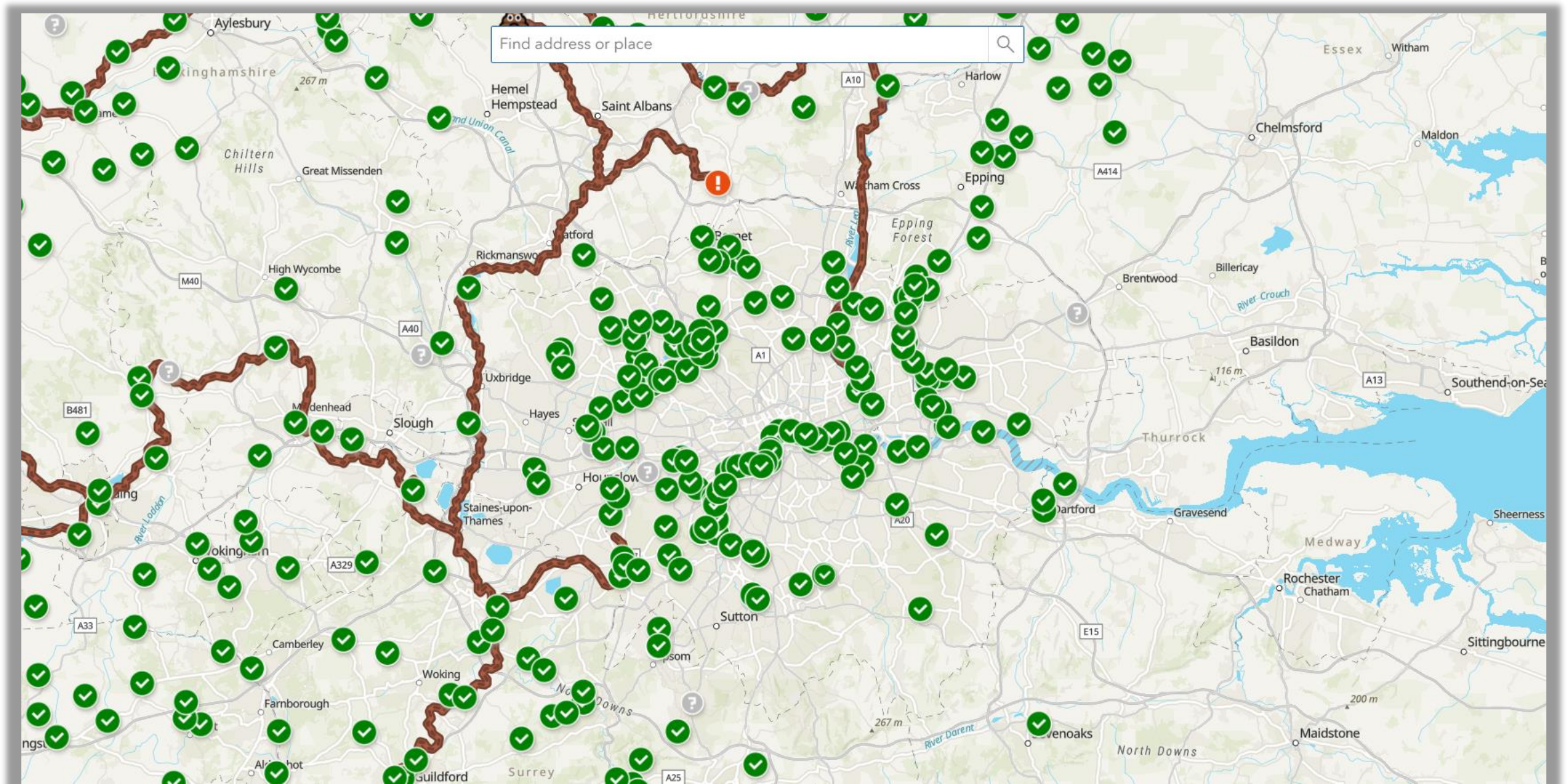
<https://vividmaps.com/lost-rivers-of-london/>



# Network of 'outfalls' – take rainwater from drains into a river.





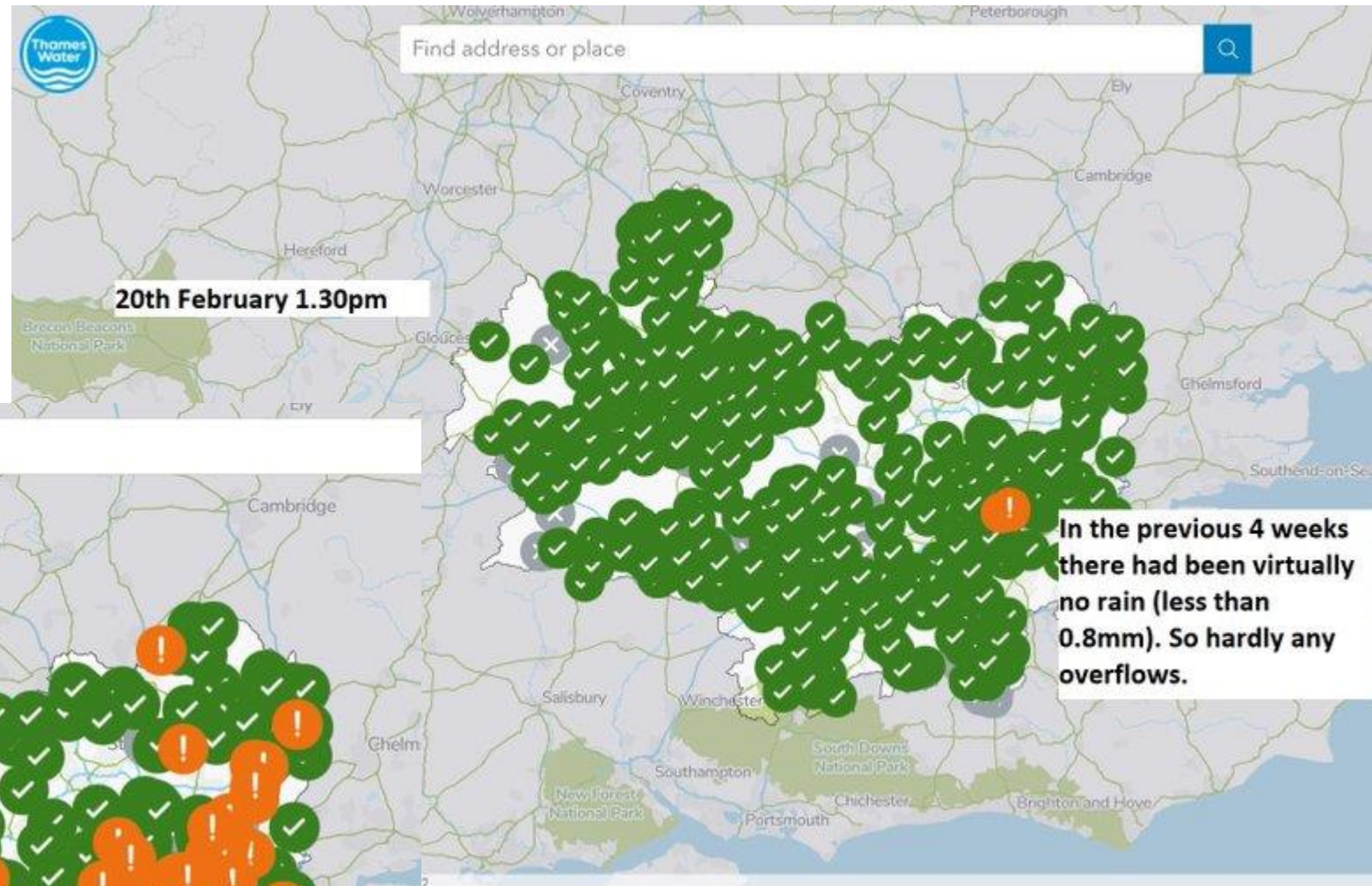


<https://www.sewagemap.co.uk/> Watch live sewage spills



# CSO = Combined Sewer Overflow

<https://x.com/LDNWaterkeeper/status/1674748000931921921>

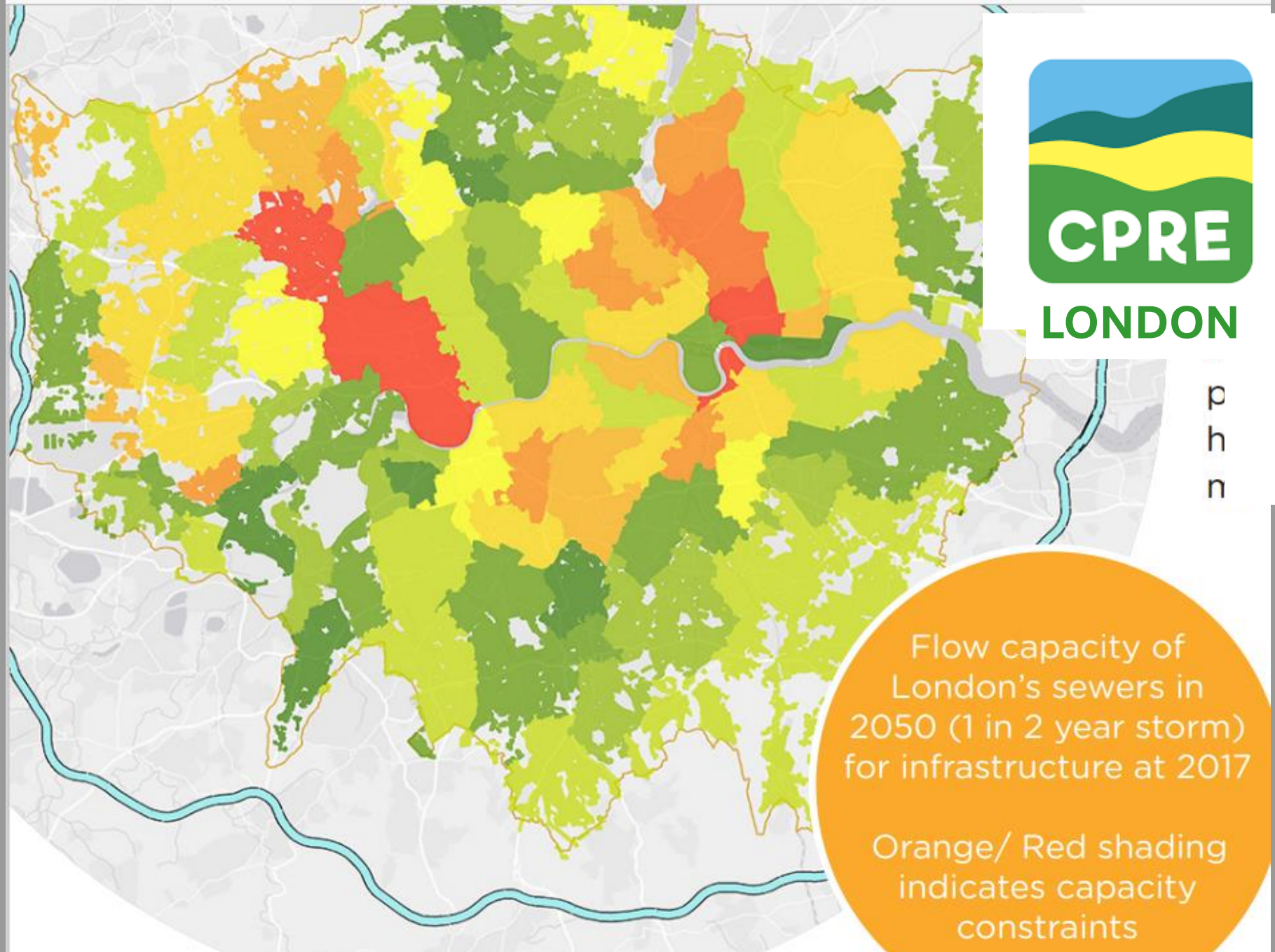




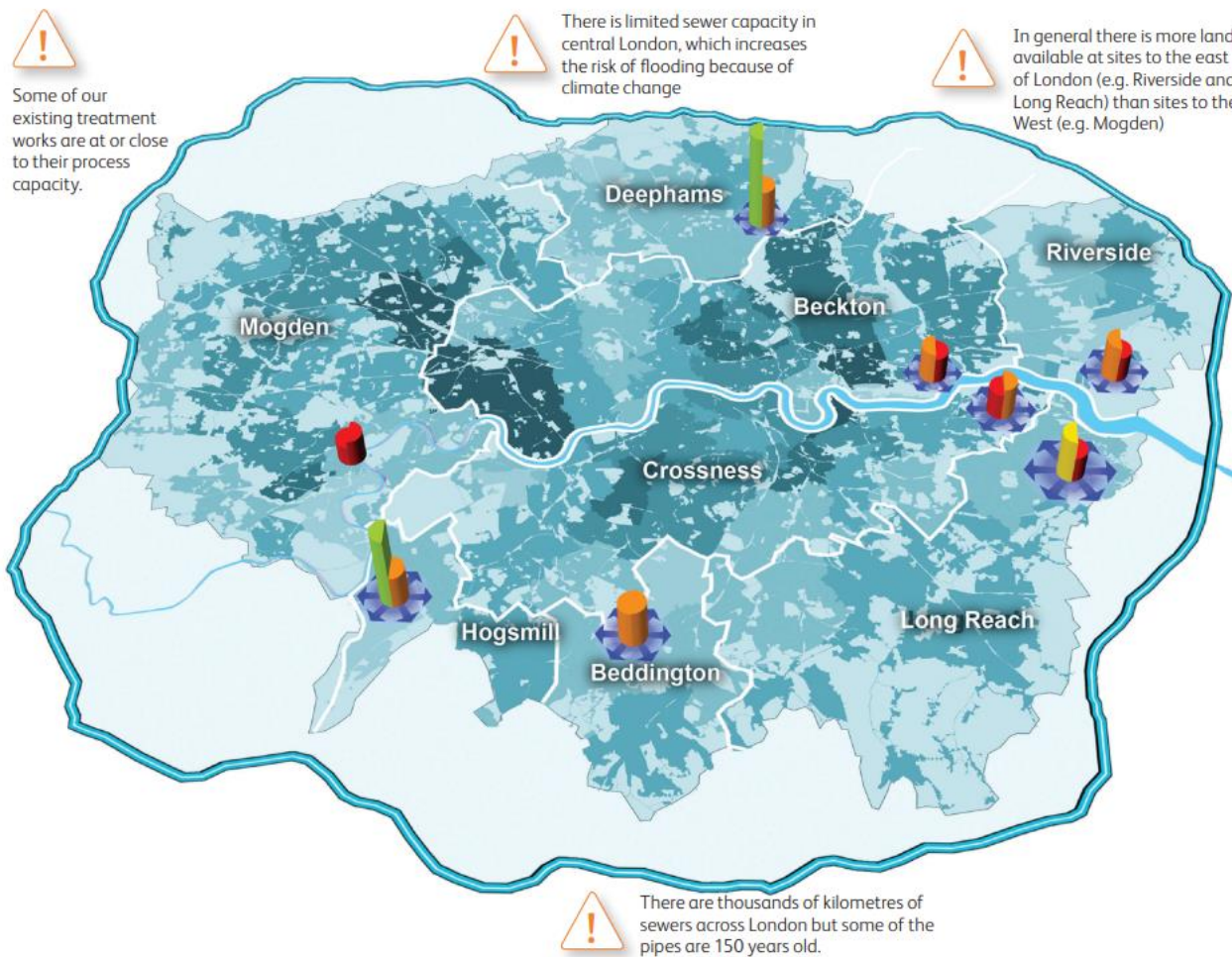
# Flow capacity of London's sewers in 2050

(2017 infrastructure)

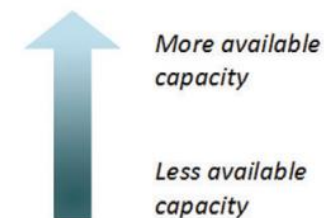
**Orange / red**  
indicates capacity  
constraints







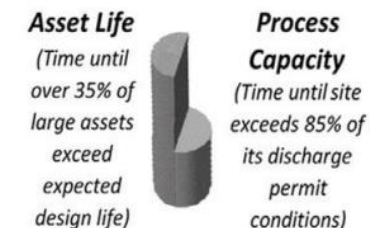
### Modelled Sewer Network Hydraulic Capacity for infrastructure at 2017



### Sewage Treatment Works Site Expansion Potential



### Sewage Treatment Works Capacity and Asset Life



Before 2025

2025 - 2034

2035 - 2044

After 2044

The map shows that there are a number of existing sites with limited spare capacity and little room for expansion: most notably Mogden in the west of London and Beckton in the east. Process intensification such as the recent upgrades at our Deephams works can provide medium-term solutions, but these will not address long-term challenges. This, coupled with an increase in flood risk in central London, demonstrates why we need to think differently about wastewater services in London.



How is pollution getting into rivers?  
The enforcement system: is it working?  
What can the public do?



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