

From: EIR Compliance <EIR@yorkshirewater.co.uk>

Sent: 02 February 2026 15:38

To:

Subject: 20260202 - EIR

Dear

We refer to your request for information submitted to Yorkshire Water dated 8 December 2025 which is set out below:

*"I am writing to request information under the **Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)**. This request concerns your company's use of plastic bio-media such as but not limited to (**BAFF (Biological Aerated Flooded Filter)**), associated operational practices, incident history, and future planning. As this information concerns environmental protection, water treatment operations, and pollution risk, it clearly falls within the definition of environmental information under Regulation 2.*

I request disclosure of the following:

A) Plastic Bio-Media Use in Your Treatment Facilities

1. *Confirmation of whether plastic bio-media is used in any of your company's water or wastewater treatment facilities.*
2. *A complete list of all sites using plastic bio-media technology including site name, location, and facility type.*

B) Type and Specification of Plastic Bio Media

3. *The type(s) of plastic bio-media used at each site, including but not limited to:*
 - a. *Media product type (e.g. BioBeads)*

b. *Manufacturer*

4. *The volume or quantity of plastic bio-media installed at each site.*

C) Duration and History of Use

5. *The date plastic bio-media was first installed at each site.*

6. *Whether the media has been renewed, replaced, topped-up or upgraded since its initial installation.*

7. *Future plans for each site where plastic bio-media is present including expected date of decommissioning or improvements.*

D) Spill, Loss, or Release Incidents

7. *Records of any plastic bio-media spills, losses, or escape incidents since installation. For each incident, please provide:*

a. *Site location*

b. *Date of incident*

c. *Discharge pathway (e.g., river, land, sewer system)*

d. *Volume/extent of media lost*

e. *Cause of the incident*

f. *Environmental impact assessments (if undertaken)*

g. *Any remediation or cleanup undertaken*

h. *Correspondence with environmental regulators relating to the incident*

E) Response Protocols

9. *Internal procedures, protocols, or standard operating processes for responding to plastic bio-media spills, losses, or operational failures.*

10. *Any training materials or operational guidance documents related to plastic bio-media handling, containment, or emergency response.*

F) Future Planning

11. *Whether your company has a strategy, plan, or timeline for continuation, extension of life or transitioning away from plastic bio-media.*

12. *If such a plan exists, please provide:*

- a. *Strategic rationale*
- b. *Expected replacement technology or media type*
- c. *Proposed implementation timeline*
- d. *Any pilot trials or feasibility studies already completed*

Format Request

Please provide the information in digital format (PDF, Excel, or Word). If any documents are publicly accessible, please provide direct links.

Public Interest Statement

Given the environmental risk associated with the loss of plastic bio-media and the public interest in water treatment transparency, disclosure strongly supports the public interest test required for any potential exemptions under the EIR.

Administrative Notes

*I request that this information be provided within **20 working days**, as required by Regulation 5(2).*

Please confirm receipt of this request.

Thank you for your assistance. "

Please find below the data you have requested. We have adopted the headings contained in your initial email for ease of reference.

1. Plastic Bio-Media Use in Your Treatment Facilities

Yorkshire Water operates three WwTW with BAFF treatment processes containing plastic bio bead media.

There are a further five WwTW with MBBR (Moving Bed Biofilm Reactor) treatment systems that utilise a different form of plastic media.

B) Type and Specification of Plastic Bio Media & C) Duration and History of Use

See attached information, this covers the question and those in section B and C.

Where the attachment says 'no record' following discussions with the business we have determined we do not hold the information requested. As such for the purposes of paragraph 12(4) a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that (a) it does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received.

D) Spill, Loss, or Release Incidents

No recorded incidents of loss of media to the environment from these assets.

E) Response Protocols

If an incident were to occur, our comprehensive business incident response and escalation procedures would be enacted to protect impact to the environment. Yorkshire Water currently does not have a specific process for responding to bio media spills, losses or operational failures but any incident would be covered by our comprehensive business incident response.

The current training material and operational guidance documents do not cover bio-media handling, containment or emergency procedures specifically. We have a current ongoing programme to enhance our existing training provision and documentation.

We have good operational controls and monitoring protocols in place which applies to our sites using Bio-beads. These include but are not limited to:

- Routine inspections of the bio-bead tanks and associated filter systems
- Performance monitoring to detect early signs of wear or potential media loss
- Enhanced site specific contingency plans to mitigate risks and protect the environment

With our future plans and existing maintenance & inspection regime, we feel confident of preventing Biobeads being released to the environment on our sites.

As such for the purposes of paragraph 12(4) a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that (a) it does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received.

F) Future Planning

Yorkshire Water's remaining two BAFF plants will remain in operation as they are key to achieving the consent effluent compliance at those locations. No further BAFF installations are planned however the use of MBBR technology maybe required where future reduction in ammonia consent parameters are stipulated by our regulators. MBBR's will be

considered alongside emerging technologies in any future feasibility development within our capital investment programmes.

We trust that the provision of this data satisfies your request. In accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, if you are not satisfied with this reply to your request you can ask for an internal review. A request for an internal review must be submitted within 40 working days by contacting the Data Protection Team.

Thank you for contacting Yorkshire Water.

Yours sincerely,

Data Protection Team

Email: EIR@Yorkshirewater.co.uk