

Save our Streams

In April 2021, we launched the 'Save Our Streams' (SOS) movement to rescue our precious chalk streams from the brink of extinction and ask our customers to help us in this endeavour.

Our chalk streams are globally rare – 10 times rarer than the Black Rhino or Bengal Tiger. 85% of the world's chalk streams are found in South East England, and Affinity Water is privileged to have some of them in their supply area. We know that Affinity Water customers use 9% more water per person per day than the national average, so we wanted to encourage less water wasting.

The campaign compass has created the UK's biggest water saving initiative. A multi-channel approach using online and event experiences meant that by August our message had reached customers eight times. Channels included social media postings, radio adverts, a heavy-weight billboard campaign, press and media advertorials and articles, emails, and a dedicated website. Our experiential events included a giant bathtub tour across eight towns, and our comedy gig in a chalk stream – Stand-Up For Our Streams – headlined by Sandi Toksvig.

We undertook other awareness raising e.g., released 'From Chilterns to Champions' our Euro cup advert linking Affinity Water's supply to the Wembley area, with over 1.2 million views in 48 hours.

SOS recently won the prestigious Drum Award for Social Purpose in the category of Best Integrated Campaign, and was recognised by our investors, InfraRed, as best practice in ESG environmental category awards.

We raised awareness of the plight of chalk streams to our customers, and described the problem, linking the water in our local environment to the water in customer taps.

We think providing customers with the products, tools and information needed to make the changes required will

help change awareness, attitudes and behaviours.

We aimed for 120,000 Affinity Water customers signing up. Some stretch targets have included an additional 70,000 website visitors at the crescendo of our activity, a conversion rate of 9% and reaching an additional 200,000 customers per month.

One thing we have learned over the last year is that you must not tell customers what to do, instead we need to provide them with information on the problems and the tools and solutions. We have tried to raise awareness by delivering messages in a fun, engaging way, and using our sense of humour to build engagement.

The project results have exceeded our expectations. By year end 31 March 2022 over 191,000 customers have signed up to join the movement (exceeding our target by 70,000). This makes SOS the UK's biggest water-saving campaign ever.

Most importantly, the campaign and the huge effort of our customers has helped to save over 21 million litres of water a day!

Sandi Toksvig, our headline act during our comedy gig, 'Stand-Up For Our Streams', in May 2021, said about SOS:

"I do think this is the weirdest gig, but it (SOS) is the most laudable thing that you are doing. And I am so impressed."

Sir Charles Walker, previous chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Chalk Streams, and MP for Broxbourne, Herts. A keen fisherman, Sir Charles formed the group with Oliver Heald, the MP for North East Hertfordshire, with around 40 active members from across all parties and the House of Lords:

"I'm impressed with the leadership role Affinity Water is taking on these campaigns on the environment to save water, such as #SaveOurStreams and we need to realise that, more generally, water companies are not the enemy. We need a joined-up approach to looking after our rivers and streams, and Ofwat should take a leading role in this and support water companies in their environmental objectives."

Listen to the [Affinity Water podcast](https://www.soundcloud.com/user-39816632/sir-charles-walker-mp-chair-appg-on-chalk-streams) at [soundcloud.com/user-39816632/sir-charles-walker-mp-chair-appg-on-chalk-streams](https://www.soundcloud.com/user-39816632/sir-charles-walker-mp-chair-appg-on-chalk-streams)

Customer feedback at the Bath Tub Tour in St Albans, May 2021:

"I think it's amazing. It really catches attention with the big bath, and I think it's a really good idea. I think the only way you can change things is to raise awareness!"
[Customer 1]

"I saw the bath on Facebook, because it was announced there last night, so I'd seen it [the bath tub] before and I knew that it was talking about reducing water waste, which is fantastic."
[Customer 2]

Our Genes

- Stewards of the local Environment
- Helping customers use water better
- Giving customers an exceptional service

Customer outcomes

- Supplying high quality water you can trust
- Making sure you have enough water, whilst leaving more water in the environment
- Providing a great service that you value
- Minimising disruption to you and your community

UNSDGs

