Dear Sir/ Madam,

We welcome the opportunity to comment on NI Water's 2010-13 PC10 Business Plan, which will determine NI Water's priorities for 2010-2013.

East Belfast has suffered from decades of underinvestment in infrastructure and will commence the construction of the Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) / Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) in September 2010. The joint project includes the construction of a combined Community Greenway and in partnership with Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Rivers Agency, major Flood Alleviation works. The Community Greenway has a value of approximately £23m and consists of 19km of shared pedestrian and cycle paths, approximately 26 bridges, riverside paths, cantilevered boardwalks, lighting/CCTV, miscellaneous public realm and river enhancement works. The Flood Alleviation scheme with a value of up to £16m consists of replacing a number of major road culverts, construction of flood walls, flood earth embankments and river realignment. The total estimated value of the contract is between £33m-£39m.

We request that the regulator prioritises the Loop, Knock and Connswater rivers in East Belfast in order to maximise and build on the investment from other stakeholders, including government agencies, during this period: Big Lottery Fund £23.5m, Belfast City Council £4.2m, the Department for Social Development £3.3m, Rivers Agency £16m, Queens University Belfast £1m.

The implementation of the East Belfast Drainage Area Plan should be given the highest priority and a programme of works for the area must be developed to address the internal sewer flooding and unsatisfactory discharges and spills from combined sewer overflows.

NI Water should work in Partnership with us and others in the area, complying with Government 'joined up working' policies by 'working together to deliver mutual objectives and achieve value for money', obtaining project advantage for all parties involved and minimising the disruption caused to the local communities affected.
Works undertaken by NI Water will have a considerable impact on the sustainability of the CCG project and the ongoing management and maintenance costs, incurred by Belfast City Council / rate payers.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on NI Water’s 2010-13 PC10 Business Plan.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Richard O’Rawe
Chair
Connswater Community Greenway