

Appendix 10

Drought communications strategy



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1. Introduction

Experience from previous droughts in our region has outlined the importance of effective internal and external management and communication. This appendix provides details on the management structure that would be mobilised at the onset of a drought and outlines the continuation of our Communications Plan to encompass the necessary urgency and targeting of communications to have an effective impact on customer behaviour.

The Plan sets out the actions we would undertake during a drought event, how they would escalate, how we would operate in an agile and targeted way and how we would communicate actions with our customers (both household and non-household), regulators and key stakeholders. Everything we propose builds on experiences and learning following periods of prolonged dry weather in 2012 and 2014 as well as periods of exceptionally high demand during 2018 and 2020, but also takes into account guidance published by UKWIR¹, CCW² and the Environment Agency.

¹ UKWIR (2014) *Managing through drought: code of practice and guidance for water companies on water use restrictions - 2013*

² CCW (2013) *Understanding drought and resilience*

2. Communications during normal conditions



Our region faces unique water challenges; it's the driest region in the UK, receiving only two thirds of the national average rainfall and it's also one of the fastest growing regions. This means that talking to our customers about water as a precious resource, which should be used wisely, is something we do all year round, not just in times of drought.

It's inherent in our brand purpose, our values, and our organisational strategy - Love Every Drop.

As a result, we have a history of encouraging water saving, and to good effect. We still supply the same amount of water today as we did at privatisation despite a significant increase in the number of customers we serve - about 1.1 billion litres every day.

With our customer's support, and focused communications activity around supply pinch points, we managed to keep water consumption per person low despite being one of the driest regions in the country. This is in part due to the significant investment we've made in our network to reduce leaks and bursts, but also because customers in the east of England are increasingly water efficient. In the more recent times of increased hand washing and with the vast majority of our customers now at home every day, the average person usage has increased significantly. Operationally we have worked to keep our customers' taps flowing and drains draining throughout this time. With the highest percentage of voluntarily metered customers in our region and the rollout of our smart meter programme we will be better placed in the future to continue to target relevant communications to continue the important, ongoing water-wise narrative.

With the established platform of connecting water saving with saving money we can keep this focus when communicating with our metered customers. Our upgraded water meter roll out programme also demonstrates our commitment to Love Every Drop. This provides a rich source of data for us to quickly adapt and learn from to educate our customers on usage and also use the data to better inform our communications.

Where appropriate, we will also reference our longer-term plans and investment for managing drought and water resilience across the region e.g. the strategic grid.

It is this robust water efficiency context which underpins all our communications activity prior to, during and after a drought.

Our ongoing customer water efficiency narrative provides benefits for our drought communications strategy:

- Regular communications with a broad range of stakeholders, our people, our customers and other interested parties demonstrating the role we can all play means we have a strong platform to build on.
- With our strategic storytelling around the importance of water and why we need to be mindful of use we already have a receptive audience - a helpful baseline for drought communications.
- Whatever the weather, we already have ongoing 'business as usual' agile, tactical communications to build on during periods of dry and wet weather with channels for targeting at the ready.

Table 2.1: Drought communications response matrix (normal)

Drought management level	Audience	Purpose	Key message	Outcome
Normal	Customers / Our people / Stakeholders	Educate, all year round, small changes that will save every drop of water to protect us for our future needs.	Communicate the importance of water to provide an appreciation of it and showcase how small changes can have a big impact. Demonstrate how customers can provide a helping hand by saving it where possible. Providing examples and tips on how to. Focusing on regional targeting and insights to deliver effective communications. Channels such as TV, radio, social media, media, email and via our website.	Ongoing presence in people's lives explaining about how to save every drop. Reaching far and wide with our core message, targeting where data dictates.
	Retailers / NAVs / Non-household (NHH)	Provide consistent and all year round messaging on the importance of water stewardship and efficiency within the NHH sector.	Provide relevant and timely information to allow retailers to have constructive discussions on demand reduction with their NHH customers.	Maintain awareness and provide context for the importance of water efficiency and demand management within the NHH sector.

Examples of normal communications

Consider every drop / Save every drop

Normal

Have buckets of fun in the garden. Reuse every drop.

We all want to beat the heat this summer. So cool down in the garden, but use water wisely. Our water is precious. If we reuse it, we can save it and respect it, our splash of summer lasts longer.
Let's make every drop of summer go further.
To find out more visit anglianwater.co.uk/savewater



love every drop
anglianwater

Keep fun flowing with speedy showers. Save every drop.

We never want the summer fun to run out. If you're filling up your paddling pool, cut down your time in the shower. Our water is precious. If we reuse it, recycle it and respect it, our splash of summer lasts longer.
Let's make every drop of summer go further.
To find out more visit anglianwater.co.uk/savewater



Get your butts out this summer. Squeeze every drop.

Summer's here so it's time to get a little cheeky rainwater go bag. Our water is precious. If we reuse it, recycle it and respect it, we can all enjoy summer, before the party weather returns.
Let's make every drop of summer go further.
To find out more visit anglianwater.co.uk/savewater



love every drop
anglianwater

Consider every drop / Save every drop

Normal

Consider every drop.



Visit anglianwater.co.uk/savewater to find out how you can help

love every drop
anglianwater

love every drop
anglianwater

If recent events have taught us anything, it's how precious our water supply is. And how it's never been more important to save every drop we can. At Anglian Water, we're working hard to help you save water. There are many ways to do it - from shorter showers, to only washing full loads of laundry. Saving water now means you're protecting it for the future.

To find out more visit Anglianwater.co.uk/savewater

Keep fun flowing with speedy showers.

Save every drop.

love every drop
anglianwater



3. Communications during prolonged dry / drought conditions



3.1 Communication objectives

We have developed clear objectives for our communications during prolonged dry and drought conditions:

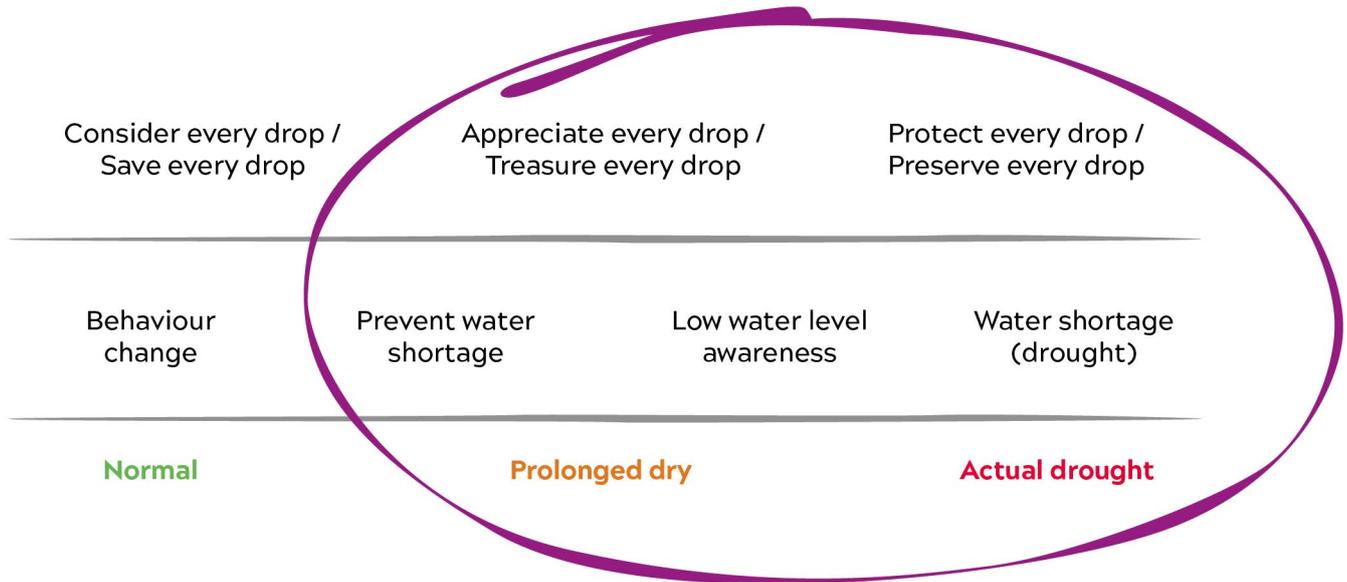
- Save water through behaviour change and consideration with household and non-household (NHH) customers.
- Show leadership and build customer confidence in our ability to work towards avoiding water shortages. Provide early information and context to help shift behaviours around what we all can do, for both customers and Anglian Water - escalating phases in a timely manner, as required.
- Celebrate water and 'why' it is important that customers use less as part of the ongoing aim to shift customer behaviour to using less water.
- Foster a mentality in which we all play important individual roles.
- Provide tailored communications for business customers and recognise bespoke information for businesses is an important aspect of the Plan.
- Encourage our people to become ambassadors for water saving behaviour.
- Address head-on any perceived weaknesses, e.g. leakage, to minimise the risk to our credibility of our response being criticised or disregarded. To leverage marketing activity to influence behaviour within prolonged dry / drought conditions so unnecessary water use is avoided (such as flushing pipes caused by blockages).
- Where appropriate, what we're doing and how we're investing to manage water shortages in the future, i.e. strategic grid and smart metering.
- Encourage the use of smart meter data (where available) to identify water savings.

3.2 Management of our communications

In accordance with our normal incident management protocol there will be a dedicated Drought Communications Lead during a drought period (from prolonged dry through to post-drought) to manage and deliver all communications. The Drought Communications Lead will sit in the Drought Management Team (DMT). More information about the DMT is provided in **Section 3.5, Main Plan**.

This lead role will be responsible for managing all communications, and for working with Water UK's Drought Liaison Coordinator, and other industry representatives, as well as other water companies, to ensure messages are consistent where appropriate, and there is a joined-up approach - particularly where an area receives its water recycling services from one supplier and its water supply from another. They will have the full support of the communication team and wider business. Anglian Water has a tiered approach to managing incidents. The Drought Communications Lead will play an active role in all drought management forums and meetings, including working closely with the emergency planning team as an incident develops.

3.3 Communication continuum execution and delivery in prolonged dry / drought conditions



Our communications messaging to customers will follow the progression of a drought, moving from normal (non-drought) through to prolonged dry phases and actual drought conditions. The benefit that a year-round 'love every drop' messaging strategy brings is the ability to have a presence in customer minds about the value of water. It allows us to dial up the tone and urgency in the communications to ensure we recognise the reality of water restrictions. Using customer insight and knowledge around language, tone and targeting we can aim to make our communications as effective as possible.

This is broader than just customers too. It includes stakeholders, influencers, visitors (to our water parks), NHH customers, retailers and NAVs. They're all important. Everyone should know why saving water is important at this crucial time.

4. Details on our communications approach



The development of our communications approach uses our drought management curves as a guide for what communications we may need at different points of a drought. These apply to reservoir levels, groundwater levels and advanced expectation of high demand. Our reservoirs and groundwater sources have drought management curves which we use to track resources and indicate when resources are depleting due to low rainfall and we may need to instigate demand management to maintain security of supply.

The Water Resources team is responsible for tracking our water resources and will provide full and timely updates to the Drought Communications Lead and DMT, to enable decisions on the best method of communications. To facilitate the decision making process, we have developed a communication response matrix (Table 4.1). This matrix is a guide only and the DMT will consider the specifics of the drought situation before commencing any communications activity.

Drought management curves

There are four drought management curves on our reservoirs, Levels 1 - 4 (Figure 4.1) which indicate the actions we are likely to implement as part of our drought response. We also have three drought management curves on our groundwater sources (Figure 4.2) which include indicative Level 1 and 2 and a Historic Minimum Level (for further information see [Appendix 4](#) and [6](#)).

Figure 4.1: Example drought management curves for our reservoirs

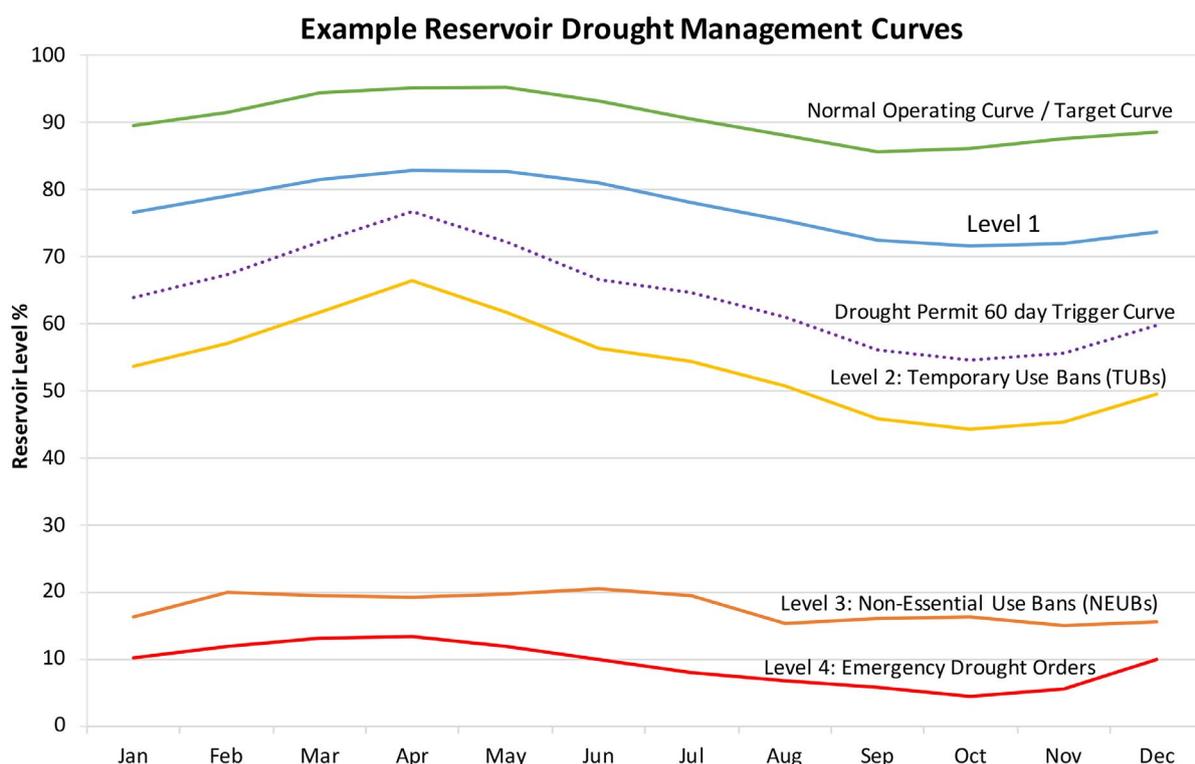
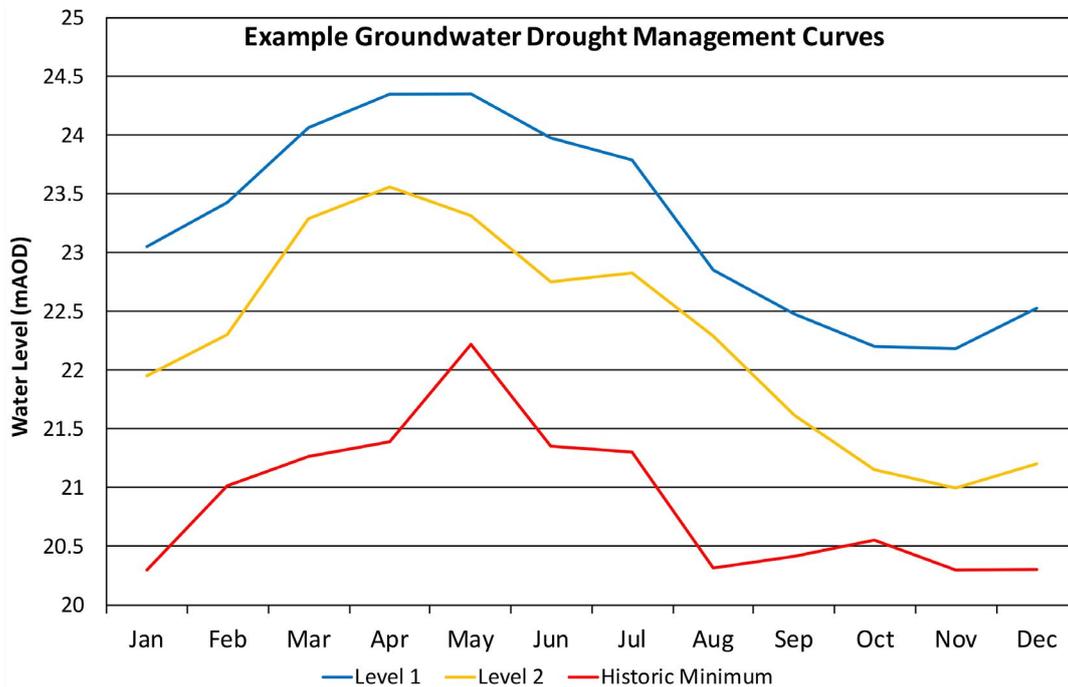


Figure 4.2: Example drought management curves for our groundwater sources



Representations for temporary restrictions

An appropriate period of time will be given for representations to be received and considered prior to implementation of any temporary restriction (TUB and NEUB restrictions, exemptions and representation detail can be found in **Appendix 11**). This time will be proportionate to the scale of the proposed implementation and the customer base likely to be affected by the restrictions but will always be for a period of at least three weeks. The period of representation will be clearly detailed in our public notice and will ensure a balance between the urgency of demand restrictions with the anticipated public interest in the restriction.

4.1 Communications response

Targeting affectively at each stage will be key to success in communications at this time. We already carry work out regionally and there is a lot of great work that started pre Covid-19 with outreach at a much more local level. Recent responses from our targeted email activity is further evidence that customers respond very well to activity that is clearly relevant to them and their location. Many of our channels can be optimised for targeting so we can evolve our communications to quickly get to the key regions as and when required.

The period leading up to a drought, which we refer to as ‘prolonged dry’ in the Drought Plan, is therefore an essential time for communications preparation and sharing early context and information, not just during the drought itself. It is vital this is done so in a way that explains ‘why’ to a customer and what they can do to support as opposed to what they shouldn’t do. Proactive positive engagement will remain key to our strategy.

Our Communications Plan will be flexible enough to plan for imposing Temporary Use Bans (TUBs) or Non-Essential Use Bans (NEUBs), should they be required. The implementation of any of these restrictions would be preceded by messaging that explains exactly what they mean for customers and businesses.

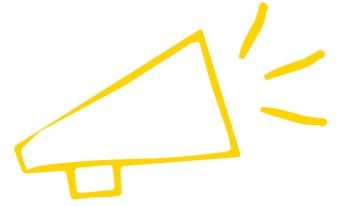
Table 4.1: Drought communications response matrix

Drought management level	Audience	Purpose	Key message	Outcome
Level 1	Customers	Continuum to explain and educate on the need for water saving, reporting leaks and why both are important.	Communicate the importance of water and saving it where possible and the importance of reporting leaks. Also let our customers know that any savings we can implement now will benefit the environment which will start to become stressed at this point. Sign up to our Priority Services Register if needed. Check out the water saving tips on the AW website. Clear, simple and consistent communications. Focusing on regional targeting using data, insight and learnings to build more effective communications in channels such as social media, media, email and on the website.	More needs to be done. Small changes can make a big difference. Water is important and we need to save every drop, consider every drop.
	Our people		Continued focus on providing internal advocates across AW with the tools and knowledge to champion water saving at homes and to share the message with family and friends in the area.	
	Regulators / stakeholders		We have crossed Level 1 - the risk of drought is higher than normal. Assessment of current water resources situation. Routine liaison with EA / stakeholders on role of AW and the ask of communities at a hyper local level. Request to promote water efficiency to contacts in the community to raise awareness further.	
	Retailers / NAVs / NHH		Provide more frequent, relevant and timely information to allow retailers to have constructive discussions on demand reduction with their NHH customers. Assessment of water situation shared. Toolkit of assets deployed to retailers for consistent guidance to plan business activity.	
Level 2 (TUBs)	Customers	Start enacting activity that dials up tone on urgency and need to conserve water and why. Inclusion of actions being taken to manage possible drought.	Level 2 is crossed - Implementation of drought actions to manage drought conditions including TUBs. Arrange information flow to answer FAQs regarding TUBs. Increase the urgency of messaging to preserve and treasure every drop. Explain the weather has been drier than normal and reservoirs are lower than normal. Bring to life the facts through content and real life examples. Increase targeting of communications using relevant data in channels such as email, social media and presence on the ground. Utilising the website as a key place to find out the right information, improving SEO. Highlight water saving tips and importance of reporting leaks. Sign up to Priority Services Register if needed. Preparation of volunteers for on the ground support.	We need to save water. Things are now urgent. Understanding on why and how they can help.
	Our people		Raising awareness of current situation with internal colleagues and lines to take with friends and family to champion change. Business bulletins, lighthouse internal engagement on relevant facts and figures.	

Drought management level		Audience	Purpose	Key message	Outcome
Level 2 (TUBs)	Regulators / stakeholders			Level 2 is crossed - Implementation of drought actions to manage the possible drought including TUBs. Assessment of current water resources situation. Updates on the actions being taken. Clear explanation of the dynamics between weather and environment on situation. Request support by sharing information within network and communities.	
	Retailers / NAVs / NHH			Assessment of situation explained. Action to be taken communicated. Toolkit available to be water efficient and spot leaks. Arrange information flow to answer questions especially focused on any businesses affected by TUBs implementation. Regular updates and webinar to communicate drought position and shared messaging for dual branded messaging.	
Level 3	3a (NEUBs)	Customers	Continue and build the frequency of activity that dials up urgency and need to conserve water and why, so action is taken.	Level 3 is crossed - Implementation of NEUBs. Update on what actions are being taken as part of any NEUBs and arrange information flow to answer FAQs. Increase the urgency and frequency of messaging to preserve and treasure every drop. Importance to use water wisely, report leaks and sign up to the Priority Services Register if needed. Visualise key facts and figures. Increase targeting of communications using data to inform channels such as email, social media and presence on the ground. Utilising the website as a key place to find out the right information. Preparation of volunteers for on the ground support. Encourage customers to report leaks and avoid flushing items that belong in the bin.	We need to save water in our area. A lot of communications are saying this from lots of different places. We need to act now.
		Our people		Increase frequency and presence of lines to take with friends and family to champion change. Business bulletins, lighthouse internal engagement on relevant facts and figures.	
		Regulators / stakeholders		Level 3 is crossed - Implementation of NEUBs. Assessment of current water resources situation. Updates on the actions being taken (including water use restrictions and Drought Order or permit applications if appropriate). Introduce experts and influencers in this area to support landing key messages. Request support by sharing information within network and communities.	
		Retailers / NAVs / NHH		Level 3 is crossed - Implementation of NEUBs. Update on what actions are being taken as part of any NEUBs and arrange information flow to answer FAQs about how this affects businesses. Comms Plan shared with key messages. Targeted activity for toolkit on nature of organisation. Assessment of water situation and urgency shared. Arrange support with how to help by way of audit / guidance.	

Drought management level		Audience	Purpose	Key message	Outcome
Level 3	3b (Extreme drought management actions)	Customers	Preparation for emergency planning.	Dial up the tone to urgent, this is the last stage before emergency actions need to be taken. Assessment of the current situation. Explain the extreme drought management actions that may be taking place to remove the need for Level 4 restrictions. Introducing new channels to customers including impactful DM. Providing customers with avenues to ask questions including increased presence and support online, postcode checkers. Further support offered and sign up to Priority Services Register promoted.	Anticipation of critical need. Action is being taken. It isn't forever. Understand why and want to help to support the community.
		Our people		Providing support and reassurance on managing difficult conversations with customers. A clear and consistent why and how help can be given. Provide examples to share on what we are doing to help.	
		Regulators / stakeholders		Preparation for the anticipation of Level 4 being crossed. Assessment of current water resources situation. Updates on the actions being taken (including water use restrictions, extreme drought management actions and Drought Order or permit applications if appropriate). Request support by sharing information within network and communities.	
		Retailers / NAVs / NHH		Further update on NEUBs actions and explanation of any extreme drought management actions that might impact businesses. Assessment of water situation and urgency shared. Preparation for the anticipation of Level 4 being crossed. Comms Plan shared with key messages. Targeted activity for retailers with customers in our region, including retailer toolkit. Arrange support with how to help by way of audit / guidance.	
Level 4		ALL audiences	EMERGENCY PLANNING	National governance takes priority and alignment to key initiatives.	Things are critical. Action is being taken.

5. Example communications to be deployed during prolonged dry / drought conditions



Our approach to early and informative communications throughout the year means we will ensure it is not a surprise to our customers if there is a water resource situation developing. This foundation enables us to move through the phases of communications and land messages with more success. With the insight available we can ensure Anglian Water remains a steady and reassuring voice in the media hype that can surround restrictions in place during a drought. With an established reputation with customers for protecting the environment we can leverage this to further validate our communications and ask of customers.

We have to be able to escalate messaging to convey the severity of the situation so customers understand it isn't a 'normal' dry year; without scaremongering and referencing language we know customers are desensitised too.

Communication and sharing of information in advance is particularly important if the periods of dry weather and drought occur during the winter. This adds an extra challenge for landing messages as our customers may be less tuned into the water resource situation.

Examples of prolonged dry and drought communications

Appreciate every drop / Treasure every drop

Prolonged dry – Below normal/low levels

Get your butts out this summer. Squeeze every drop.

Summer's here so it's time to get a little cheeky and water on tap. Our water is precious, if we reuse it, recycle it and respect it, we can all enjoy summer, before the party weather returns.

Let's make every drop of summer go further. To find out more visit anglianwater.co.uk/summerwater



love every drop
anglianwater

You can help save every drop in your garden.

This handy kit will help you get stuck into saving water.

We'd love to hear about your water saving stories on our gardening community page. Visit facebook.com/thisgettingsheds for more tips and advice.

love every drop
anglianwater



Don't get hung up on your brown lawn.

Treasure every drop.

love every drop
anglianwater



5.1 Audience

The following table summarises the key audiences and the media used to communicate with them in times of drought.

We will communicate to all audiences across the spectrum in an honest and transparent way, explaining why it is important and in the context of each role the audience has. This should never appear to be a 'tell and do' strategy.

The list of audience groups identified is not exhaustive or mandatory and will evolve and develop dependent on the condition of the developing drought situation.

Table 5.1: Ways to communicate with various audiences

Audience	Media
Our people	Lighthouse (internal intranet), business bulletins, talkback and Team talk.
Customers	Our website, our social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) organic posts, emails, text messages, local events, direct mail, water efficiency product offers. Paid for radio and press advertisements. Paid digital activity on social media (Facebook).
Media	Proactive and reactive press statements; organising media interviews with senior managers; provision of media packages for use by media and online.
Environment Agency	Phone calls, emails, meeting collaboratively.
Defra	Phone calls, emails, meeting collaboratively.
Ofwat	Phone calls, emails, meeting collaboratively.
Consumer Council for Water	Phone calls, emails.
Drinking Water Inspectorate / Public Health England	Phone calls, emails.
Water UK	Phone calls, emails, meeting collaboratively.
Local authorities / MPs	Letter, phone calls, emails, newsletters.
Local Resilience forums	Newsletter cascade via LA contacts.
Local environmental and stakeholder groups including local businesses / National Parks / neighbouring water companies	Workshops, letter, phone calls, emails, newsletters.
Retailers / NAVs / NHH	Working collaboratively with retailers and NAVs and provision of dual branded communications, tailored toolkit, website, social media channel extended reach.

Table 5.2: Organisations that we may contact following the movement through the drought management levels (managed using incident management procedures to confirm ownership of activity as appropriate)

Group	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Our people	x	x	x	x
Our customers	x	x	x	x
Vulnerable customers	x	x	x	x
Regulators / Government		x	x	x
Neighbouring water companies		x	x	x
Retailers / NAVs / NHH	x	x	x	x
Local councils and MPs	x	x	x	x
Local resilience forums		x	x	x
Fire service			x	x
Local environment organisations and interested stakeholder groups		x	x	x

6. Working with others



6.1 Retail and NAV companies

Anglian Water works with 22 retailers who offer valuable insight about our NHH customers. Anglian Water fosters close relationships with them all year round, not just at a time of crisis. Activity includes regular updates throughout the year and meetings with key retailers and NAVs every month.

This rhythm of communications means there is a strong existing relationship and points of contact in place between the water company and the retailer or NAV. We will adopt a communications approach which is appropriate and relevant for the individual retailer or NAV, rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach; strategies will include:

- Early consultation with retailers and NAVs on water resources position within our region and invitation to provide feedback.
- We share a quarterly update of water resources position at SPID level for each Water Resource Zone in our region via a dedicated Retailer Information Hub (SharePoint). We will be adding an autumn and spring forecast to provide retailers and NAVs with data to provide context and frame discussions with their NHH customers.
- Invite retailers and NAVs to an annual water resources and drought webinar with our subject matter experts to provide an update on current water resource position and provide an opportunity for questions to be answered.
- An undertaking to share other relevant information around abstraction reform and climate change to provide retailers with wider context on water use within the NHH sector.
- Provide updates and feedback to retailers and NAVs on areas of water stress as a result of peak summer demand. This will provide NHH customers an opportunity to review pattern of water use and potential to reduce demand for non-critical use (e.g. adjust production cycle that has process water use).
- Provision of dual branded (retailer and wholesaler) NHH water efficiency material to targeted customer segments to ensure clear and consistent messaging to NHH customers on water use.

- Working collaboratively with retailers and their NHH customers on potential water saving initiatives.
- Provide retailers with easy and timely access to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) data (via Retailer Data Exchange) to facilitate benchmarking of consumption, leakage detection and identification of water saving opportunities.
- Provide a dedicated section on our wholesale website for 'Saving Water' targeted to retailers and their NHH customers.

We recognise that NHH customers will also pick up messaging from the broader media communications so messages must be aligned to the regional and national picture. Whatever approach we deploy, engagement will start early on, operating in accordance with our culture of no surprises and as part of our ongoing and pragmatic working relationship. This will be especially true if we ever have to implement any temporary restrictions or NEUBs that will impact businesses. Anglian Water is closely involved in Defra and other key stakeholder workshops around dry weather and drought; the insight gleaned from these workshops demonstrated our existing relationship and approach to retailer communications is effective.

6.2 Collaborative communications

During a drought we would maintain close liaison with Local Resilience Forums via our emergency planning team, to increase awareness and engagement with local category 1 (blue light services) and category 2 responders.

During the 2011-12 drought the Secretary of State set up the National Drought Group in which Anglian Water took a leading role. This provided a single coherent, cross-sector team to manage coordinated delivery of drought management activities, communications and risk management. In addition, a Strategic Communications Group was set up through Water UK to include those water companies that were introducing temporary use restrictions.

Moving forward, the reinstatement of the weekly calls will provide an effective means of ensuring a collaborative approach is taken by the water industry as a whole, and that our messages are all aligned to avoid any confusion for our customers and the media.

Working together as a group, we will agree an aligned message grid that can be easily integrated into all Anglian Water communications to provide synergy at the highest level. In addition, we will proactively share coordinated messages so customers see it is a national and regional effort to impact change given the severity of the circumstances.

Timing would also be aligned to ensure mixed messages are not given that could confuse across all audiences, communications managers and those at the Environment Agency, at both regional and national levels. We will also work with water companies on an individual and regional basis through Water Resources East, Water Resources North and Water Resources South East.

6.3 Schools engagement

Our education team work with schools all year round to share a variety of water efficiency and environmental messages, reaching thousands of children every year. During the drought of 2011-12, we developed a bespoke schools engagement programme, using new and original resources available to support the campaign at the time. This was promoted to key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 via the Anglian Water team themselves, and by teachers through a range of materials available for download.

These assets now exist, and we would approach schools through our regular engagement with them to offer this bespoke lesson plan should it be required. We have seen good success with adapting to virtual learning so a combination of all approaches would be used.

6.4 Stakeholder engagement

We recognise that it is vital to ensure our stakeholders and opinion formers are aware of what is being done to address the challenges posed during a drought. Our key stakeholders include, amongst others, farmers, local authorities, MPs and businesses.

Through the unprecedented times of 2020 we worked closely with our local council communications teams to share our messages more broadly through their own channels. This proved effective to reach more people in a targeted way, delivered with a credible voice supported by the local authority. These relationships, and this way of working, is now well established and we would deploy this way of working again in time of drought. This also proved effective in 2018 so is now a tried and tested method.

Previous to that, during the 2011-12 drought, we developed a 'Drought Matters' briefing leaflet, and sent it along with a personalised letter to Chief Executives and Leaders of Councils, MPs, Parish

Councils, Local Enterprise Partnerships and a number of other external stakeholders. In total, this was sent to approximately 3,600 contacts. We would apply the same approach at the time of a drought, ensuring that we talk early to our key stakeholders so we are able to use those individuals or organisations as additional conduits for information to our end user and, to create useful third party spokespeople should we require an outside voice as part of our communications.

6.5 Marketing optimisation

Nearly all our wider engagement programmes, such as our Keep It Clear campaign, Pollution watch, messaging at each of our seven water parks and the work of our education team, carry our standard BAU water efficiency messaging.

We would continue to push the relevant messages as we identify that different levels have been crossed within the drought management plan. As a way to signal the importance of saving water so we are not unnecessarily flushing pipes of blockages. Through continued education of what can be flushed (versus what not to flush) and positive reinforcement we can continue to explain the value of water and why we need to protect every drop.

7. Channels for communications



Communication channels

Below is a summary of our key channels that have been featured within Table 1, 2 and 3 and an explanation of the key importance and the role each will play in our overall drought communications strategy.

Measurement

We'll track engagement and measure effectiveness of communications generally by:

- Engagement stats on social media i.e. likes / shares / watches
- Social sentiment and paid for reach including regional and hyper local targeted activity
- Social impressions, referral traffic and click through rate
- Levels of release coverage picked up by Meltwater (our media monitoring platform)
- Website traffic to critical pages, SEO performance on key search terms
- Email open rate, click rate, unsubscribes, reach and engagement
- Number of media enquiries / interviews given to the press office following stories

Media

The proactive use of the media from the very early 'warning sign' stages to the conclusion of a drought is fundamental to a successful awareness campaign. Media provide valuable channels for promoting our response to the drought and subsequent risk to water shortage, in terms of affording exposure for capital projects to improve our resilience and our approach to dealing with leaks. Moreover though, the media is an essential means to ensure customers are aware of how the drought and subsequent restrictions affect them, any restrictions in place, and what they can do to help. It is important for Anglian Water to play a valuable role providing key information to the media to encourage proactive engagement and involvement. Demonstrating what impact, the drought situation could have on them and showcasing the role we can both play in avoiding water shortages. The messages should explain why we find ourselves

in this situation and explain how it is a product of the weather and environment versus a broad approach that does not resonate with customers as they are desensitised to the language and tone of activity used.

Research conducted following the 2012 drought showed 58% of customers received their water saving information from TV and Radio. Furthermore, 25% of customers had seen an advert from a water company, 18% of people said they'd been made aware of water saving messages from talking to friends and family, 13% said social media and 10% said they had seen government messages.

Whilst the media will play a key role, our approach would be to retain our position as an authoritative and trusted source of information. Also relying on third party experts and influencers to communicate with us to provide additional credibility on the topic. We would ensure sufficient material is prepared in advance to 'fill the void' in the near-continual narrative around a drought, and work with the media to share this content with the right people at the right time. We will be proactive and agile with media well ahead of the onset of any water shortage and continue our ongoing narrative about water conservation. In readiness for this we will identify and offer up key locations like our reservoirs, boreholes and water towers as sites for media interviews, as well as identifying and training our spokespeople in advance. The seniority / subject expertise will vary and increase as the situation escalates.

1. PR & Media Managers (core, day-to-day spokespeople)
2. Water Resources Management subject expert
3. Water Resources Management (Director level)
4. CEO

Social media

Since our previous Drought Communications Strategy was developed in 2014 our social media channels (namely Twitter, Instagram and Facebook) have grown significantly. These social platforms are now a core day-to-day customer communication channel. This means we already have an active communications channel and engaged organic audience.

Supporting stats on Anglian Water's social channels:

- In December 2020, we had a total of 354,840 Facebook post reach and 33,240 video views.
- Over 30,000 followers on Facebook, more than any other water company, an increase of 30% on a year ago (and nearly three times our following in 2016).
- On Twitter, our December 2020 reach was 195,000 and we currently have a following of 30,300. Increasing circa 100 followers a month.
- On LinkedIn we currently have 29,800 followers, reaching up to 6,000 people with organic posts.
- We are the most followed water company on Instagram and regularly use the 'stories' feature to give customers a behind the scenes glimpse of the work we do.

These channels will be essential in being agile, delivering targeted messages to specific audiences and also allow us to signpost customers to our website, reaffirming ourselves as the source of credible information. We will also use run live Q&A sessions and targeted advertising where further, more intense communication is needed.

We can also reach approximately 3 million of our customers regionally through paid for reach on social media. This provides an opportunity to quickly deliver key messages at scale. We can also target social media to a region. Work is also underway, as part of our hyper local approach within our customer strategy, to identify key community social groups to use as an 'on the ground' customer communication channel to provide valuable insights and information when the need arises. Insight shows that providing relevant information to customers in a way that feels local to them, outperforms a more generalised approach.

Advertising

Using paid-for channels is integral to provide reach and engagement to customers when cut-through is required. It also enables us to provide local information which we know resonates strongly with customers. We know from Touchpoints IPA 2019 that the largest channels of consumption of advertising include: TV (34%), internet browsing (17%), Radio (16%), social media (11%) with all other channels following below 10%.

Examples we will use include:

- Print, broadcast and digital advertising - spread depending on geography affected
- Radio

- Outdoor / out of home advertising (e.g. buses, billboards, high visibility / footfall locations)
- Paid for social

Internal communications

Making sure that our 5,000 members of staff are well equipped to talk to customers, partners, and suppliers is vital during any period of drought shortage. Through the use of our internal engagement platform Lighthouse we have the opportunity to reach all of our people with the key messages for sharing with friends and family in their local communities. Briefings would equip employees to be brand and water saving advocates able to answer queries in their local neighbourhoods and reinforce campaign messages. It would include sharing our latest data with them on water levels as well as keeping them up to date via our existing, established internal communications channels.

During the heat wave of 2018 we shared regular updates with staff internally, through their managers, to explain our situation, in relation to what they might have been reading in the news, and to share water-wise tips to protect every drop. This communication was aligned to our external messaging giving colleagues confidence to talk to friends and family about the situation.

Our people would also have a key role to play should the need arise for us to develop a more specific outreach programme in targeted communities. This approach worked well in 2018, although it should be noted that price per customer contact is high for this method.

Outreach / hyper local

Face-to-face engagement has proved valuable in landing more complex messages, placing water saving devices in the hands of customers, and unearthing common myths and misconceptions that may need addressing as outlined in the campaign approaches earlier. 2020 was a difficult year for the delivery of outreach activity but with the rapid growth of virtual channels and the importance of refining engagement in these circumstances, we have a wealth of learning to build on to make this activity as effective as possible in a situation of drought.

Examples might include:

- Liaison with key community groups to enable community outreach activity, both safely in person or virtually, to deliver water saving guidance to targeted affected areas or high profile / relevant 'events' in the region

- Customer door-drops to share practical information with customers and answer questions
- Use of our Customer Support Unit (CSU) and Incident Support Managers (ISMs) where it is safe and relevant to do so

We also have the ability to utilise the Incling online community (an online community of Anglian Water customers) to test ideas.

Direct customer communications

We will use text messages and emails to customers, targeted to areas that are water stressed or where we anticipate water restrictions, sharing any information pertinent to drought status and actions they might be able to take in order to reduce demand.

Email is an important channel for communicating our water saving messages and this is a channel we would use for targeting and an increased urgency of message on the importance of this message in the time of drought. Email templates already exist that meet both service and marketing email guidance, these are ready to edit with relevant messages depending on the specific phase.

We will also seek to utilise the smart meter network as it comes online between 2020 and 2030, utilising this enhanced capacity to communicate with our customers in a much more direct and dynamic way.

Our website

Many of our customers use our website as the first port of call for information. As well as www.anglianwater.co.uk our In Your Area site offers operational information by postcode. During the summer of 2020 at a time of unprecedented increase in demand for water, we utilised both the main website and the In Your Area site to provide a dedicated space for water saving information, to easily signpost people from the homepage, and to provide hyper-local information, where relevant.

A postcode checker is now an established part of all our incident communications and this would also be utilised at time of drought. To enable customers, who are unsure if they are affected by any restrictions, can quickly establish if they are. In Your Area now fulfils this function on a day-to-day basis.

Ensuring our communications are cost effective will be a key part of our channel planning. We will target communications to areas of most need based on the local water resource situation. We will also look at cost per individual contact when planning channels to allow us to make informed decisions as to what to use and when.



Cover photo - Anglian Water's Grafham Water reservoir, an 806-hectare biological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), southwest of Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire. It was designated a SSSI in 1986.