



An introduction to Water Resource Management Planning

In 2020 the Environment Agency published a national framework for water resources to explore the long term need of all sectors that depend on a secure supply of water.

The framework brings together two of the government's pledges that were set out in its 25-year environment plan, that is:

- **to leave the environment in a better state than we found it; and**
- **to improve the nation's resilience to drought and minimise interruptions to water supplies**

The framework established regional planning groups to understand the water needs across a range of users and ensure the right strategic solutions are developed for the nation.

The regional planning groups will develop regional plans that set out at a strategic level how a supply of water for people, business, industry, navigation and agriculture will be managed in the region. The regional plan should aim for resilient water supplies for all users for 25 years or more while protecting and enhancing the environment. Water Resources East (WRE) are currently developing the regional plan for the East of England. These regional plans are a fundamental change of approach for this round of planning.

What are Water Resource Management Plans?

Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs) are statutory documents that all water companies must produce at least every five years. WRMPs set out how the water company intends to achieve a secure supply of water for their customers while protecting and enhancing the environment.

The plan must forecast the expected water supply and demand (for public water supply) over, at least, 25 years and determine a preferred programme to meet the water resource deficit by identifying and appraising a range of options.

Our current Water Resource Management Plan, published in 2019 is addressing our supply demand balance, which, if we took no action, would see our region experience significant water shortages within the next five years.

We are taking steps to manage demand by driving water efficiency through reducing leakage, behavioural change and installing smart meters. While on the supply side we are investing in a network of strategic pipelines to better join up our network and move water from areas of relative abundance to areas of deficit.

We lead the water sector on tackling leakage, with water loss per kilometre at half **the national average.**



We're installing up to

1 million

smart meters in the next five years.



We're delivering the **biggest infrastructure programme** in Anglian Water history. By 2025 will create a network of **hundreds** of kilometres of vast interconnecting pipelines.



Why are they important?

Water resources are already scarce, and climate change will reduce them further. It is therefore paramount that we plan for the long term. We are guided by our 25-year Strategic Direction Statement to meet developing priorities and identify the investment needed for a sustainable future.

Water Resource Management Plans play a crucial role in securing the public water supply for the region. The plan identifies the investment required to secure public water supply for the region whilst protecting and enhancing the environment. This is then projected into water company business plans.

Our goals

1. Make the east of England resilient to the risks of drought and flooding
2. Enable sustainable economic and housing growth in the UK's fastest growing region
3. Be a carbon neutral business by 2030
4. Work with others to achieve significant improvement in ecological quality across our catchments.



What are the key challenges?

We face a number of key challenges in the region;

Climate Change:

We operate in the driest region in the UK, and are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. We must deliver a plan that provides resilience to a 1 in 500-year drought event. This is a significant step change from previous plans, where we planned to 1 in 200-year drought events.

Environmental Protection:

We are committed to reducing the amount of water we abstract in order to protect and enhance the environment. These sustainability reductions are made by the Environment Agency to our abstraction licences.

Population and economic growth:

Our region is one of the fastest growing in the country. Growth projections exceed 175,000 new homes over the next five years - without factoring in the proposed OxCam Arc. By 2050 the region's population may grow by a further million people. This coupled with the effect of Covid-19 will continue to change the demand for water.

How are WRMPs produced?

When developing our Water Resource Management Plan we will;

- Comply with the relevant legislation
- Consider what has changed since the development of the previous Water Resource Management Plan
- Forecast how much water on a sustainable basis we have available
- Forecast how much demand there will be for water each year for a minimum of 25 years
- Allow for uncertainty in calculations and forecasts
- Identify options to reduce demand and/or increase supply to achieve an environmentally sustainable secure supply of water
- Outline the risks uncertainties of the future planning
- Produce a best value plan
- Explain how the regional plan has informed each stage of our Water Resource Management Plan as we develop these plans in parallel





How do the Regional Plan and draft WRMP interact?

The Regional Plan will determine the strategic solutions required for the region. These will be validated by our modelling processes. WRE will also work to gain a consensus on the region's 'environmental destination', which will aim to go above and beyond statutory reductions.

How can I get involved?

Our Water Resource Management Plan will be developed over the next nine months with a draft submitted to Defra in October 2022.

In line with statutory requirements we will be holding a public consultation on this draft WRMP in November 2022.

Our statement of response on how we've addressed the feedback we've received will be published in May 2023. The final plan will be published in August 2023.

If you would like to get involved and support us in developing the plan you can get in touch at public.affairs@anglianwater.co.uk.

We will be hosting three webinars in January and February to set out our approach to our next Water Resource Management Plan and how you can get involved.

