

Introduction

Water is finite and precious. That's why we plan ahead to balance water supply and demand, protect the environment and provide wider benefits to the communities we serve.

Our Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) sets out how we'll continue to supply high-quality drinking water to our customers between 2025 and 2075. We currently supply 750,000 customers and this number is set to rise by 17% over the next 50 years.

The plan is focused on making better use of the water available by reducing leakage, on our pipes and from customer-owned pipes, and helping customers to use less water. This will reduce the amount we need to take from the environment and lower the emissions produced from the energy and chemical-intensive water treatment and distribution process.

Over the course of this plan, we will also increase our drought resilience and reduce the risk of emergency water use restrictions.

This plan reflects customer and stakeholder feedback, as well as Government policy. It aligns with the regional plan produced by Water Resources South East (WRSE), an alliance of six water companies in the South East, who all operate in an area of serious water stress.

This summary explains how we produced our WRMP and details the actions we will take to secure customers' water supplies and protect the environment.

To find out more and read our detailed technical documents, visit seswater.co.uk/wrmp.



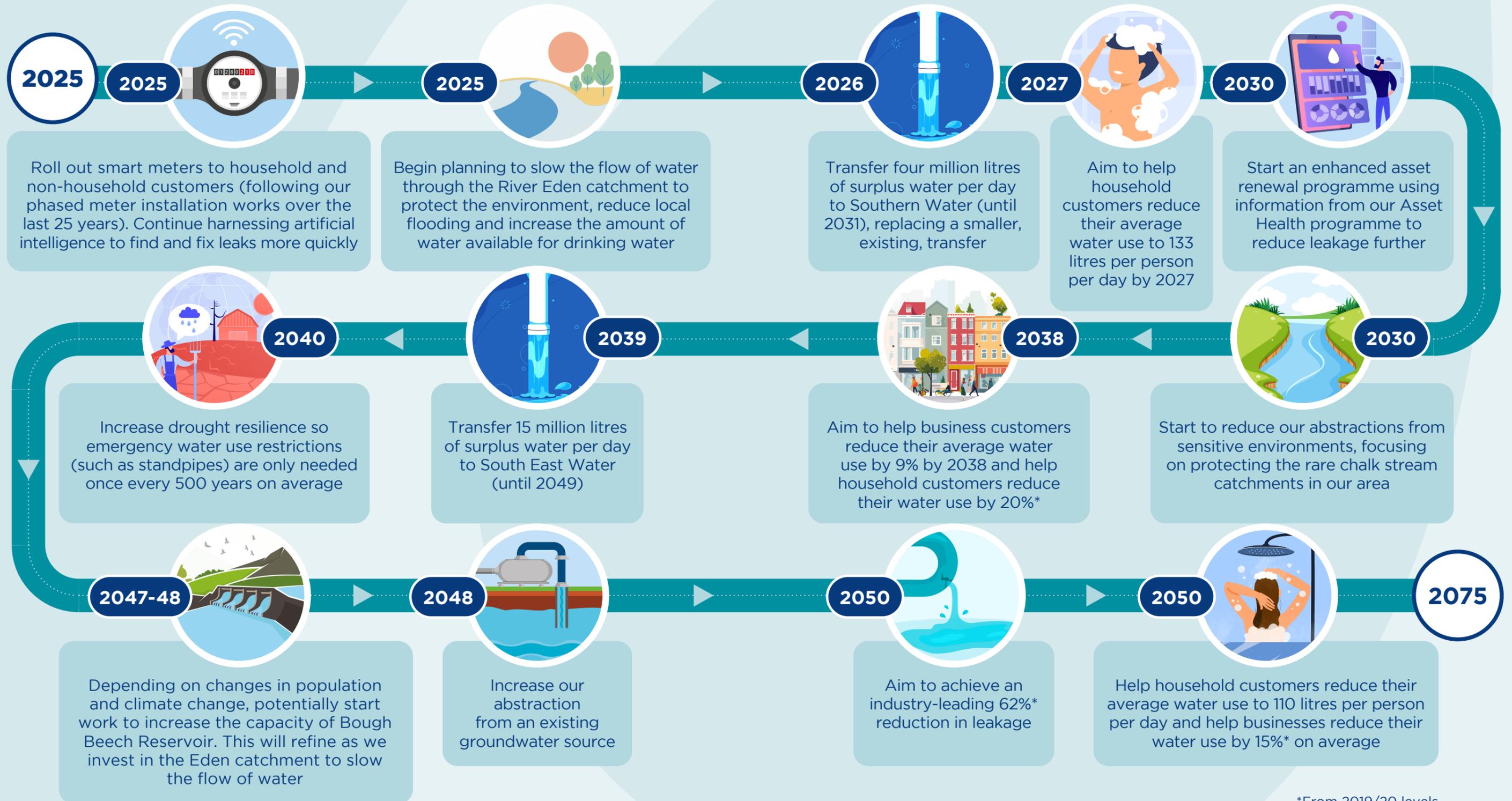
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Our plan on a page

The graphic below summarises the water supply schemes, demand reductions, and water transfers included in our 2025 to 2075 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP).



*From 2019/20 levels

About SES Water

Our purpose is to harness the potential of water to enhance nature and improve lives by placing customers and the environment at the heart of our decision-making.

160 million litres of tap water supplied per day

750,000 customers



KEY
 — River
 ◆ Water Treatment Works

322 square mile supply area

85% of water sourced from underground aquifers



1 reservoir at Bough Beech



2,000 miles of water mains



8 treatment works



6 river catchments

15% abstracted from the River Eden

23 pumping stations



31 clean water storage tanks & water towers

In January 2024, we became part of the Pennon Group, which provides water and wastewater services to customers across the South West. This allows us to continue to deliver high-quality, resilient water supplies while continuing to operate independently, reflecting the geography of our supply area and the wants and needs of our customers.

You said, we did

Our WRMP reflects the feedback received from regulators, customers, stakeholders and other industry experts.

You said

We did

You prefer a plan which balances leakage reduction and support for customers to reduce water use with new supply schemes and water transfers

Our plan will reduce leakage and demand for water and move water around the South East region before we develop new water sources

Tap water supplies should be resilient against drought, climate change and population growth

Our water supplies are already resilient to many of these factors, and we've planned for extra resilience in future

Bill increases should be minimal and any increase should bring extra resilience rather than being used to reduce customers' water use

Our proposed bill increases for 2025 to 2030 are among the lowest in the industry

You expect us to reduce leakage further and faster than the Government target to halve leakage levels by 2050

We will halve leakage by 2041 and reduce it by 62% by 2050

Smart water meters should be rolled out as quickly as possible

Smart water meters are being trialed in 400 households, ready to roll them out to all homes and businesses from 2025

Protecting and enhancing the environment and local chalk streams is important to you

Leakage and customer water use reductions will help leave more water in the environment. We're also working to improve the flow of water through the River Eden to benefit nature and futureproof tap water supplies

We should improve the way we engage with customers and stakeholders about our plans

Every year, we will publish a customer-friendly report to show how we've delivered this plan and continue to work our customers and stakeholders to review our plans. We will play an active part in our community by working closely with local councils and attending roadshows and events

Developing our Water Resources Management Plan

Every five years, water companies must develop a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) to safeguard customers' water supplies, while protecting the environment and providing wider societal benefits.

We considered a wide range of options to develop our plan, evaluating the amount of water each scheme could provide, the financial cost, environmental impacts and wider societal benefits, to find the best-value solution.

Our plan aligns with Water Resources South East's (WRSE) regional plan for South East England. This allows us to work with neighbouring water companies to make the best use of the water we have across the entire region.

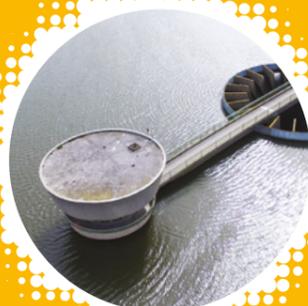
We will start delivering this plan in 2025, produce an annual progress report and fully update it again by 2030.

WRSE is made up of the following 6 water companies in South East England

AffinityWater



south east water



The WRMP process

What's happened so far and what happens next in this process

2022 - 2025

2022 - We developed our draft Water Resource Management Plan and submitted it to Defra, based on WRSE's regional plan

November 2022 - February 2023 - we carried out a statutory consultation on our draft WRMP, which ran alongside WRSE's consultation on the regional plan

Spring 2023 - WRSE carried out additional customer research

August 2023 - we published our revised draft WRMP with updates based on our consultation feedback, updates from WRSE's revised draft regional plan and the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan targets

October 2023 - we published our Long-term delivery strategy, which sets out our wider company ambitions and targets from 2025 to 2050

August 2024 - Defra gave us permission to publish our final WRMP

October 2024 - our final WRMP is published

WE ARE HERE

April 2025 - we start delivering our plan and report on our progress every year

2025 - we will start developing our next plan for 2030-2080.

Our track record

Water resource planning is an ongoing process. Between April 2020 and March 2024, we have:

- Reduced leakage by 15%, achieving one of the lowest leakage levels in the industry
- Published our **Climate Adaptation Report** and started work to improve water quality at source and the quality and biodiversity of local habitats
- Increased the number of properties with meters to 76% and piloted smart water meters in 400 properties
- Supported our household customers to reduce their water use to 146 litres per person, per day. During the Coronavirus pandemic and periods of hot weather, we saw water use peak to 163 litres per person per day
- Started work with businesses to develop plans to help business customers save water from 2025 and beyond.

Long-term ambitions

Our WRMP forms part of our **Long-term delivery strategy** (LTDS) which sets out our goals and the extra investment needed for the next 25 years and beyond.

The LTDS sets out four long-term ambitions, which are reflected in our WRMP and other long-term plans, such as our five-year **Business Plan**:

- Provide high-quality water from sustainable sources
- Deliver resilient water supplies from source to tap, with minimal wastage
- Reduce your water footprint and charge a fair and affordable price for what is used
- Improve the environment and have a positive impact on the local area.

As well as securing supplies, the strategy sets out how we will comply with new legal and regulatory requirements, make our water supply sites more resilient to changing weather patterns and improve our performance.

Government and regulatory requirements

Our 2025 to 2075 plan will meet, or exceed, the targets set out in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP), published in January 2023.

Leakage - Water companies should halve the amount of water lost to leaks by 2050, also achieving a 20% reduction by March 2027 and a 30% reduction by March 2032. We plan to exceed this, reducing leakage by 62% by 2050.

Household water use - Household customers should be empowered to reduce their average water use to 110 litres per person, per day, by 2050 - a 30% reduction compared to our customers' current daily average use. There are also three interim targets: 136 litres by March 2027, 128 litres by March 2032 and 119 litres by March 2038. We plan to meet the interim and 2050 targets.

Non-household water use - The EIP set a new interim target to reduce business customers' water use by 9% by 2038, before reducing it by a total of 15% by 2050. We plan to meet both these targets.

However, reaching these targets relies on the Government introducing water-efficient policies, such as water consumption labels for water-using products, minimum standards for water-using products and water-efficient building regulations for developers. These are referred to as 'Government interventions' and if these policies are not introduced, additional water supply schemes will be required.

Planning for uncertainty

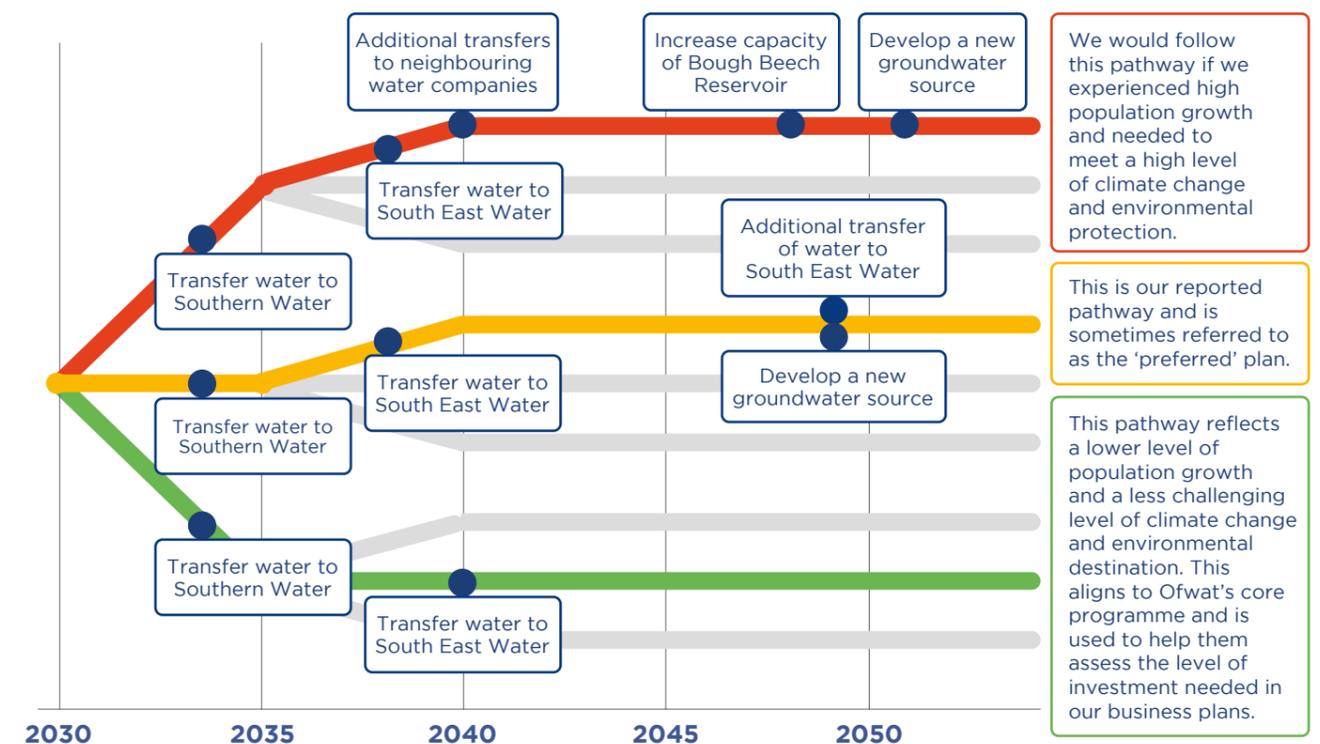
When developing our WRMP, we considered the following factors which affect how much water we will need to supply in future and where that water will come from.

- **Climate change** - changing weather patterns could reduce the quality and availability of water sources, increase the number of water main bursts and leaks, increase customers' water use during hotter weather and cause more power outages at our treatment works.
- **Protecting the environment** - the amount of water we take from the environment is closely regulated by the Environment Agency. We may need to reduce the amount of water we take by almost 20% from sensitive catchments to protect the environment. That's around 30 million litres per day, more than the water supplied by Bough Beech Reservoir.
- **Population growth** - by 2075, the amount of people living in our supply area is expected to increase by around 17% and the number of homes is projected to grow by up to 36%.

To allow us to plan for the challenges these factors could bring, we use adaptive planning to set out a range of pathways we could move to in the future. These are based on how quickly climate change, population growth and customers' water use changes, and to what extent - as well as the amount of water we need to leave in the environment.

Each of the nine pathways we plan for are equally likely to happen. For this plan we, and the other WRSE member companies, have focused on the reported pathway but we'll monitor climate change, population growth and water use forecasts closely and update our plan every five years to reflect the latest information - and any new legislation.

The graphic below shows some of the actions we will take in our 2025 to 2075 WRMP for three of the nine pathways.



Our 2025 – 2075 Water Resources Management Plan

Our Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) meets Government requirements and incorporates feedback from customers and stakeholders. This includes feedback from our Customer Scrutiny Panel and Environmental Scrutiny Panel, who act as a ‘critical friend’ to make sure our plans and policies meet the needs of our customers and the environment. It also aligns with WRSE’s regional plan.

It focuses on reducing leakage and helping our customers reduce their water use by almost 40 litres of water per day by 2050, compared to a current average of 146 litres per person, per day. This will help customers save money and allow us to protect the environment, including rare chalk streams.

We will start delivering this plan in 2025, produce an annual progress report and fully update it again by 2030.



Reducing leakage

We already have one of the lowest leakage levels in the industry but will reduce it further to meet our customers’ expectations.

- By 2041 we will halve leakage levels, then reduce them further by 2050 so they are 62% lower than 2019/20 levels. This goes beyond the Government’s target to halve leakage by 2050
- In 2022 we became the first UK water company to roll out smart technology across our pipe network to find and fix leaks and bursts more quickly and minimise water loss. This includes using Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Leaks on household and business private water pipes make up a third of total leakage, so our smart meter rollout will help us, and our customers, quickly find and fix any leaks, reducing water waste
- We already use technology to analyse the condition and performance of our pipes; we will increase its use to more accurately predict which pipes we need to replace before they burst or leak
- We will work with specialists to find new and innovative ways to find and fix more leaks
- We will invest in technology to control the water pressure within our mains, reducing the likelihood of burst pipes and responding more quickly to any outages.



Smart water meters



Our smart meter rollout is central to our plans to reduce leakage and help business and household customers reduce the amount of water they use.

- We will begin fitting smart meters to nearly all households and businesses from 2025, to give customers access to more information about their water use and help identify leaks on their pipework
- The real-time data the meters provide will allow us to trial tariffs to incentivise customers to reduce their water use at peak times and tailor our water efficiency advice and messaging based on customers’ real-time water use.

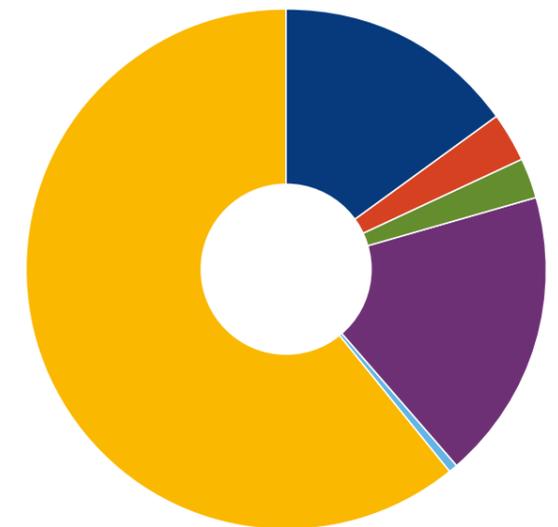


Reducing household water use

We may need to supply up to 125,000 more properties by 2075.

- Our customers currently use around 146 litres of water per person per day but we will help them reduce this to 110 litres per person per day by 2050, to meet the Government target
- We also need to meet three interim targets: 136 litres by March 2027, 128 litres by March 2032 and 119 litres by March 2038
- To meet this target, we’ll roll out smart meters, introduce smarter tariffs and expand our advice programme to reach even more people through community events, home visits, school talks and our Flow Zone education centre at Bough Beech Reservoir
- We will also continue to provide free water-saving devices, in-home help and access to online advice (such as our water-use calculator).

Water demand reductions by 2075



Key: Litres of water saved per person per day

- Smart metering
- New tariffs
- Online water use advice
- In-home advice and water-saving goods
- School education programme
- Government interventions*

*See page 7



Reducing non-household water use

Water use varies greatly across our 14,000 business customers, although the number of business customers we serve, or the amount of water they each use, is not predicted to increase overall during the lifetime of this plan.

- Our plan will meet the Government target to reduce non-household water use by 15% by 2050 and the interim target of a 9% reduction by 2038
- From 2025, we will start rolling out smart meters to all businesses and work with water retailers who bill businesses for their water use on our behalf to deliver targeted water efficiency advice and introduce tailored tariffs for different business types and levels of water use
- We will work with Gatwick Airport, our biggest water user, to find innovative ways to help it monitor its water supplies and reduce its water use, by using smart network technology and investigating techniques to store and re-use rainwater and runway runoff.



Protecting and enhancing our environment

Our water supply area benefits from a diverse geography. The north is home to rare chalk streams which rely on a base flow from underground aquifers. We support these chalk streams with a constant flow of water when river levels reach a low threshold. The groundwater aquifers account for 85% of the water we supply. In other areas, we have access to more water than we currently need.

- Taking water at our current rate may not be sustainable in the future, so we will carry out investigations as part of the Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) over the next five years to identify where we should leave more water in the environment
- The River Eden is an important water source used to refill Bough Beech Reservoir, but water levels and flows change quickly, causing flooding, poor water quality and low flows
- We will work with regulators, industry partners and land managers to slow the flow of water through the River Eden catchment to make the environment more resilient to drought and flooding and help improve water quality at the source
- We will also continue to protect precious habitats by driving down leakage and helping customers reduce their water use – these could save 48 million litres per day by 2050.



New supplies

In the future, we may need to develop new water sources to replace those which are more sensitive to abstraction or will be negatively affected by climate change impacts.

- This could include increasing abstraction from a groundwater source near Chipstead in Surrey
- We may need to increase the capacity of our Bough Beech Reservoir, but this depends on how much water customers use and how quickly the population grows.



Maintaining water supplies during drought

The leakage and water use reductions in this plan will help us maintain more resilient water supplies during drought and reduce the chance of supplies being severely restricted.

- By 2040, our plan will reduce the risk of emergency water use restrictions, such as standpipes, from being needed during a drought from once every 200 years on average to once every 500 years on average, in line with Government policy
- This plan includes limited use of hosepipe bans (also known as temporary use bans) and non-essential use bans to help reduce water use during droughts when we typically see an increase in customer water use bans to help reduce water use during droughts when we typically see an increase in customer water use
- We have reduced our reliance on drought permits to take more water from the environment than we are usually allowed. By 2040 we would only expect to use these in a severe drought
- You can find out more in our **2022 Drought Plan**.



Transferring water around the South East

Where we have additional surplus of supplies, we will transfer water to other parts of the South East where it's needed to play our part in supporting the wider region.

- From 2026 to 2031 we will increase our current water transfer to Southern Water to four million litres per day and may provide a separate transfer of 10 million litres of water per day from 2034
- From 2039 to 2049, we will transfer 15 million litres of water per day to South East Water.

Next steps

This plan has been approved by Defra and the first five years will be funded and delivered through our **2025 to 2030 business plan**.

It will be reviewed every year and refreshed by 2030 for 2030-2080, alongside the WRSE regional plan for the South East.

You can read the full, technical document via our website - www.seswater.co.uk/wrmp