

UUW24

Customer Facing Document

October 2023

This document brings together customer focussed summaries of our 2025-2030 business plan. It consists of six documents - one of them being a summary for the entire North West region and the other five being individual summaries for each of the five counties of Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire.

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A regional summary of our Business Plan
2025–30



Picture: Haweswater Reservoir, Cumbria

Introduction

Welcome to the regional summary of our Business Plan

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive



The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play. We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the North West.

We've been listening to customers and communities right across our region to understand what really matters. What's clear is that we need to improve services for customers and the environment. That's why we are proposing the largest investment in water and wastewater infrastructure in over 100 years, with over £13.7 billion planned between 2025 and 2030 to build a stronger, greener and healthier North West for everyone.

It's a hugely ambitious plan that will support 30,000 jobs across the region, and we've engaged with 95,000 people in Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, to make sure we get it right, shaping our plans for each county to address the things that you've told us matter most. These include:

- Providing great quality water every time you turn on the tap
- Improving the region's natural environment and tackling storm overflows
- Doubling our financial support for those who need it, making sure nobody gets left behind
- Driving benefits for the North West's economy

We believe this regional approach to building the plan is unique. It's allowed us to consult and to listen to everyone's voice and secure record levels of customer support for the plan from homes, businesses and local government.

At the same time as improving services and investing in the security of infrastructure to respond to the challenges of climate change and population growth, we are also able to deliver real opportunities for the North West too, a chance to drive inward investment, provide great quality skilled jobs and ignite a regional economy.

It's a comprehensive plan – a plan that delivers on all our statutory obligations and on the things that matter most to regulators too.

“

We are proposing the largest investment in water and wastewater infrastructure in over 100 years.”

While we recognise that the plan necessitates an increase in bills, we also recognise the economic challenges facing our communities. That's why we're proposing an industry-leading support package of over £500 million, meaning that one in six customers will receive financial support so we reduce the risk of anyone being left behind by the costs of rising bills.

We are pushing ourselves to deliver better service while at the same time driving ourselves to realise greater levels of efficiency and we plan to finance all of this investment in the responsible and sustainable way that you expect from United Utilities,

Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Great quality water every time you turn on the tap

- Improving water quality for 1.4 million customers
- Safeguarding water supplies for over 2 million customers
- Investing £975 million in a programme to build a more resilient network, fixing leaks and replacing 950 kilometres of old pipes and mains
- Improving resilience so we can halve the chance of having a hosepipe ban in the future

Our largest ever environmental investment programme

- Improving the quality of our rivers by reducing storm overflow spills by 60% over the decade to 2030
- Protecting and enhancing over 500 kilometres of rivers and improving our bathing waters and shellfish beds
- Strengthening our network against increased rainfall to reduce flooding of homes and businesses
- Working with local authorities to separate rainwater from our systems so we build more resilient communities as we all respond to the impacts of climate change such as flooding

Doubling our financial support for those who need it

- ... making sure nobody gets left behind
- Providing £525 million of affordability support for one in six customers who may be struggling to pay their bill
 - Installing 900,000 smart meters to help homes and businesses use less water and save money

Driving benefits for the North West's economy

- Providing great quality skilled jobs, attracting much-needed and sustainable investment into the North West economy – we expect our plan would support 30,000 jobs across United Utilities and our supply chain

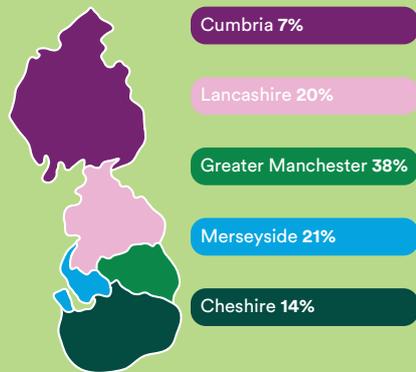
The fantastic region we serve

The North West has a thriving culture built on a world-renowned legacy across food, literature, sport, music and entertainment.

Our region is diverse and has been shaped by multicultural communities. It's the birthplace of Kendal mint cake and scouse, classic literature like Peter Rabbit and Alice in Wonderland. It boasts numerous world-renowned sports teams. It's the region that brought the world The Beatles, Oasis and Harry Styles as well as the bright colours of Manchester Pride and bright lights of Blackpool Tower Ballroom and Media City. It is underpinned by a rich diversity – home to Europe's largest Chinese community and Britain's oldest African community. The North West is somewhere we are proud to call home.

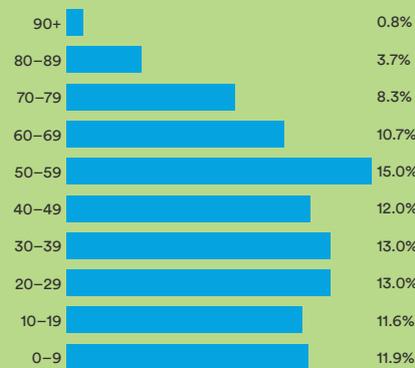
<p>Over 7 million people and 200,000 businesses – by 2050 we'll serve around 1 million more</p>	<p>The fourth smallest region by size, with the third largest population and home to 25% of England's dairy herds</p>	<p>Our communities are diverse and have different levels of prosperity and needs</p>	<p>Levelling up is a priority, and devolution is advanced with 2 city regions</p>	<p>12% of households are affected by water poverty, more than 50% higher than the national average</p>
<p>40% more urban rainfall than the industry average</p>	<p>New environmental requirements are driving unprecedented long-term investment</p>	<p>Over 90% of drinking water comes from surface water sources</p>	<p>A legacy of industrial heritage and heavy manufacturing based on Victorian infrastructure</p>	<p>A growing economy which contributes 10% of national GDP</p>

Regional population distribution



United Utilities customer data 2023

North West population by age range



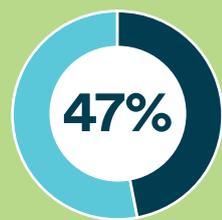
Plumplot data 2020

Urban population



ONS 2021

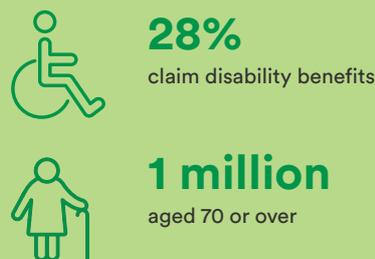
Deprivation



Indices of Multiple Deprivation September 2019

Indices of Multiple Deprivation September 2019

Identified vulnerability in the North West



Age statistics from Census 2021. Disability statistics from House of Commons library research July 2022

Ethnicity



Census 2021



Providing great water for a **stronger**, **greener** and **healthier** North West

STRONGER

We deliver an essential service, help customers in vulnerable situations, invest in local communities, and support jobs and the economy, giving the North West resilience in a changing world.

We protect and enhance urban and rural environments, and adapt to the challenges of climate change, allowing people, wildlife and nature to thrive, making the North West a better place to live now and for the future.

GREENER

We provide great quality water that people love to drink, safely remove and recycle used water, while taking care of beautiful landscapes in the North West every day.

HEALTHIER

How our plan provides a stronger, greener and healthier North West

STRONGER

We deliver an essential service, help customers in vulnerable situations, invest in local communities, and support jobs and the economy, giving the North West resilience in a changing world.



Helping people with their bills – doubling our support to

£525m



590,000

customers helped by our financial support schemes



Investing in our region, enabling growth by upgrading

950km

of water mains



22m

additional litres of water to ensure a reliable supply of water



13%

reduction in interruptions to your water supply



Reducing leakage by

13%



50%

reduction in the likelihood of a hosepipe ban



Helping homes and businesses save

9m

litres of water



Creating

7,000

new high quality skilled jobs



How our plan provides a stronger, greener and healthier North West

GREENER

We protect and enhance urban and rural environments, and adapt to the challenges of climate change, allowing people, wildlife and nature to thrive, making the North West a better place to live now and for the future.



Investing

£3.1bn

to reduce spills from over 400 overflows



Protecting and enhancing over

500km

of rivers, spending over £900m to reduce nutrients



Investing around

£660m

to improve bathing and shellfish waters



25%

reduction in the number of pollution incidents



Improving over

11,500

hectares of land to enhance biodiversity and water quality



Spending £196m to reduce carbon emissions by

43%

(against 2020 baseline)



How our plan provides a stronger, greener and healthier North West

HEALTHIER

We provide great quality water that people love to drink, safely remove and recycle used water, while taking care of beautiful landscapes in the North West every day.



Delivering a

32%

reduction in sewer flooding in homes and businesses



Replacing lead pipes at

30,000

homes



26%

reduction in water quality contacts



Upgrading

65km

of the Vyrnwy Aqueduct, improving water quality for over 500,000 people



Enhancing safety at

25

reservoirs for people to enjoy their visit



Improving bathing waters for recreation



Where your money goes

By 2030, to provide you with a supply of clean, fresh water and to take all your used water and sewage away, it will cost you an average of £1.52 per day.

But where does your money go?

Running our service

Costs associated with running and maintaining all of our assets, such as 43,000km of water pipes and 79,000km of sewers



Building new infrastructure

Costs associated with building and financing our investment programme to build new treatment facilities and tackle storm overflows



People and materials

To support 6,000 hardworking colleagues deliver services all day, every day



Paying our fair share

Our payment of taxes and licences, and providing for a return on investment



Performance incentives

Several items, including a reward mechanism if we exceed our performance targets



The numbers presented above are before inflation.



Further information

We've been working with stakeholders and customers to develop our understanding of unique needs across the North West's five counties. This means we can develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.



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Thank you . . .

We believe this plan reflects the priorities that customers and stakeholders have told us matter most to them. We are most grateful to the thousands of people, in either a personal or professional capacity, who have given their time to provide us with their views and insight on the delivery of water and wastewater services across North West England.

Listening to you isn't something we do just for our business plan – it's something we do all of the time. We have devoted a chapter of our business plan to explain how we gather your perspectives and opinions and we welcome ideas on how we can do this more effectively.

In November 2023, we are holding 'Your water, your say' sessions in each county to provide more details about our plan, in interactive meetings where the Chief Executive and her team will take questions from customers and stakeholders. Details can be found at unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/listening-to-our-customers/your-water-your-say

The water industry's economic regulator, Ofwat, will now examine our proposals and feed back to us in the middle of 2024, a process which is called a draft determination. This is an assessment of our business plan and offers a view on whether the plan meets regulatory requirements.



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Water for the North West

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A summary of our Business Plan
for Cumbria
2025–30



Pictured: Lake Windermere, Cumbria

Introduction

Welcome to the summary of our Business Plan for Cumbria

The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play.

We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the region. Adopting this approach means we will deliver outcomes which are tailored for customers in the places where they live.

Because delivering locally is important to you and us, we've been working with stakeholders and customers to better understand the unique needs for each North West county so we develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.

It's a hugely ambitious plan that will support 30,000 jobs across the region, and we've engaged with 95,000 people in Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, to make sure we get it right, shaping our plans for each county to address the things that you've told us matter most. These include:

- Providing great quality water every time you turn on the tap
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- Doubling our financial support for those who need it, making sure nobody gets left behind
- Driving benefits for the North West's economy

In this document, we have summarised the challenges and opportunities in Cumbria. We hope that by setting out our plan this way, we make our investment programme and the benefits it delivers more meaningful to customers.

We call it place-based planning. It involves us working in partnership with other organisations to develop cost-effective investment and planning in local areas. This approach means we can identify the right solutions and develop tailored outcomes which deliver for local people and the needs of the environment.

At the same time as improving services and investing in the security of infrastructure to respond to the challenges of climate change and population growth, we are also able to deliver real opportunities for the North West too, a chance to drive inward investment, provide great quality skilled jobs and ignite a regional economy.

While we recognise that the plan necessitates an increase in bills, we also recognise the economic challenges facing our communities. That's why we're proposing an industry-leading support package of over £500 million, meaning that one in six customers will receive financial support so we reduce the risk of anyone being left behind by the costs of rising bills.

Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities in Cumbria. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Supporting over 10,600 people who are struggling to pay their bills. Our support will double by 2030.

Investing £914 million to reduce spills from 158 storm overflows and improving 219 kilometres of rivers.

Restoring peatland across 2,144 hectares of land to improve water quality and reduce carbon emissions.

Employing 650 people across Cumbria. Our increased investment will create more green jobs.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Cumbria's unique characteristics

Cumbria is home to some of the wettest areas in England. Over one third of the North West's water supply originates in Cumbria, captured in reservoirs and transported across the region.

Cumbria is home to a wide variety of special landscapes: two national parks, two world heritage sites, three areas of outstanding natural beauty and hundreds of designated sites of special scientific interest. We will continue to invest, working alongside partners, including landowners, NGOs and community groups, to protect these landscapes and manage our owned catchment land.

Cumbria has finely balanced needs across the tourist economy, food production and delivering for protected environments, so preserving this balance is critical over the long term. We will provide services which respond to changing needs throughout the year and work with other partners to preserve the environment.

Keeping rivers and lakes clean and beautiful is hugely important for Cumbria. Our investment will ensure great river water quality, protect biodiversity and contribute to achieving bathing water standards across coastal and inland bathing waters in Cumbria. Beyond our own operations, we'll support sustainable agricultural practices by working with partners to maximise benefits for river water quality.

We will work to increase the resilience of supplies during dry weather events and ensure that in doing so the environment is protected. We will improve the catchments which protect raw water quality, delivering sustainable abstraction now and for the future.

Cumbria



 We support **9,000 customers** through affordability schemes and **21,000 people** with additional needs through Priority Services

 Over a third of the North West's water originates in Cumbria. We need to ensure that all of our assets are **resilient to drought and flooding**

Over **500,000 hectares** of land across Cumbria are farmed. We work with farmers to manage river water quality, such as in the River Petteril where our work with dairy farms is improving the rivers 

 Cumbria is home to **Britain's Energy Coast**, where 5.6% of the nation's electricity is generated. Our infrastructure is critical in supporting this and the growing **'green energy'** sector

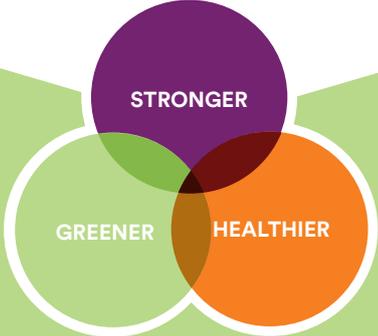
Much of Cumbria's environment is protected, nationally and internationally:

- two national parks;
- two world heritage sites;
- three areas of outstanding natural beauty; and
- hundreds of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



Providing great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West

Our plan protects the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and underpins the economy, enabling sustainable growth.



A plan that makes Cumbria Stronger, Greener, Healthier

STRONGER

Cumbria has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Affordability and supporting vulnerable customers

The working age population across Cumbria is forecast to decline by 15% between 2016 and 2036, so offering support for vulnerable customers in remote communities is important.

Jobs and growth

Cumbria's Energy Coast is home to over 20% of the UK's wind farm generation capacity, whilst offering potential for future nuclear and hydro-electric generation, resulting in additional water needs for the west coast.

There are pockets of significant growth including St Cuthbert's Garden Village in Carlisle as well as in Penrith, Whitehaven and Ulverston. Each of these comes with additional water needs.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Supporting over 10,600 people who are struggling to pay their bills. **Our support will double** by 2030.



Employing 650 people across Cumbria. Our increased future investment will create more green jobs.



Helping 21,300 customers with additional needs through Priority Services.



Investing in schemes to unlock development restrictions, as in Carlisle to support the development of St Cuthbert's Garden Village.



A plan that makes Cumbria Stronger, Greener, Healthier

GREENER

Cumbria has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Protecting rivers and catchments

Cumbria is home to almost 2,000km² of national park, two world heritage sites and 278 SSSIs, landscapes which are protected under legislation for their importance.

Cumbria has many industries from farming to tourism. A balance must be sustained to meet the needs of farming, the visitor economy and the environment.

The county receives some of the highest levels of rainfall in England. This can lead to flooding and widespread disruption, as experienced during storm Desmond in 2015 and Storm Arwen in 2021.

Partnerships

Cumbria has well established NGOs and community groups that are passionate about the environment. They want to be involved and support our activities.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Improving 219km of rivers, including removing barriers to **fish and eel migration** at Haweswater and spending **£38 million to return three sites to nature**, one of which is Crummock Water.



Working in partnership with stakeholders such as Wild Ennerdale, Love Windermere and the Catchment Partnerships for West Cumbria, Eden and South Cumbria to deliver **better outcomes for the environment**.



Working with stakeholder groups across Cumbria to **reduce pollution at nine locations** by promoting sustainable farming practices.



Investing **£914 million** to reduce activations of **158 storm overflows**.



A plan that makes Cumbria Stronger, Greener, Healthier

HEALTHIER

Cumbria has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Sustainable water supplies:

We look after many areas of countryside across Cumbria including the catchments surrounding Thirlmere and Haweswater. Our investment in the upland catchments will deliver improvements to the environment, benefit water quality and support continued free access to green space.

Access and recreation:

Cumbria supports a thriving tourism industry. Population fluctuates throughout the year, as 47 million tourists visit the area. Water and wastewater services need to be flexible to meet changes in demand.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Restoring peatland across 2,144km² across Cumbria. This will improve the quality of the raw water in our reservoirs and rivers, as well as capturing carbon.



Managing sites to ensure they are freely accessible in some of Cumbria's most beautiful countryside: Haweswater, Thirlmere and Ennerdale.



Further information

We've been working with stakeholders and customers to develop our understanding of unique needs across the North West's five counties. This means we can develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Thank you . . .

We believe this plan reflects the priorities that customers and stakeholders have told us matter most to them. We are most grateful to people across Cumbria, who have given their time to provide us with their views and insight on the delivery of water and wastewater services across the county.

Listening to you isn't something we do just for our business plan – it's something we do all of the time. We have devoted a chapter of our business plan to explain how we gather your perspectives and opinions and we welcome ideas on how we can do this more effectively.

In November 2023, we are holding 'Your water, your say' sessions in each county to provide more details about our plan, in interactive meetings where the Chief Executive and her team will take questions from customers and stakeholders. Details can be found at unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/listening-to-our-customers/your-water-your-say

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Water for the North West

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A summary of our Business Plan
for Lancashire
2025–30



Pictured: Blackpool, Lancashire

Introduction

Welcome to the summary of our Business Plan for Lancashire

The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play.

We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the region. Adopting this approach means we will deliver outcomes which are tailored for customers in the places where they live.

Because delivering locally is important to you and us, we've been working with stakeholders and customers to better understand the unique needs for each North West county so we develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.

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- Doubling our financial support for those who need it, making sure nobody gets left behind
- Driving benefits for the North West's economy

In this document, we have summarised the challenges and opportunities in Lancashire. We hope that by setting out our plan this way, we make our investment programme and the benefits it delivers more meaningful to customers.

We call it place-based planning. It involves us working in partnership with other organisations to develop cost-effective investment and planning in local areas. This approach means we can identify the right solutions and develop tailored outcomes which deliver for local people and the needs of the environment.

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Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities in Lancashire. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Supporting over 55,000 people who are struggling to pay their bills. Our support will double by 2030.

Reducing spills from 158 storm overflows and improving 35 kilometres of rivers.

Investing over £280 million to improve water quality at four shellfish and four bathing water sites in places such as Morecambe and Fleetwood.

Investing over £870 million to improve the river environment of Lancashire.

Employing 860 people across Lancashire. Our increased investment will create more green jobs.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Lancashire's unique characteristics

Lancashire's coastline and popular beaches mean that bathing water quality is a priority for both customers and visitors to the region. With multiple coastal towns and cities such as Blackpool, Morecambe and Southport relying on tourism-related revenues, it is important that we continue to invest and work with partners to ensure the right solutions to improve bathing water quality.

Lancashire is home to some of the region's most beautiful natural features. The county is carved by many rivers drained from the Pennines, including the Ribble, Wyre and Lune, all of which drain to the west of the county, and enter the Irish Sea. Protecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty of Lancashire remains a priority, as is ensuring damaged peatland is restored. We will work in partnership with environmental NGOs to deliver environmental benefits, and actively prevent the destruction of habitats.

Victorian sewer systems are particularly prevalent in the historic towns of East Lancashire, with higher proportions of sewer overflows. We're investing to reduce the number of storm overflow spills to improve water quality and amenity along the rivers Ribble, Lune and Wyre.

Lancashire



We support **55,300** customers through **affordability schemes** and **66,000** people with additional needs through Priority Services



Peatland in East Lancashire and the Pennines is an **important store of carbon** and critical for good water quality

Protecting our natural landscapes and **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty** from increasing threats from climate change including wildfires, flooding and drought



Storm overflow activations are a concern in Lancashire. We know it's important for us to **invest in reducing spills**, and we're bringing forward investment so we can start work on improving many of these sooner

Our priority is to provide a **sustainable supply of quality drinking water** that is resilient now and for future generations



Providing great water for a **stronger, greener and healthier** North West

Our plan protects the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and underpins the economy, enabling sustainable growth.



The coastline is a dominant feature of this area, so **water quality** directly impacts amenity value and local economies



Partnership working with landowners, local authorities, NGOs and local communities

A plan that makes Lancashire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

STRONGER

Lancashire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Affordability and supporting vulnerable customers:

There are a mix of socio-economic levels across Lancashire. It is important we make provision for those who may need more support.

Jobs and growth

There are pockets of significant growth in Lancashire, particularly around cities of Preston and Lancaster. Lancashire's economy is varied including agriculture, manufacturing and tourism, all of which rely on resilient water supplies.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Supporting **over 55,300 people** who are struggling to pay their bills, **doubling our support by 2030**, and helping **66,600 customers** with additional needs through Priority Services.



Employing more than **860 people** across Lancashire and increased future investment will create more green jobs.



Working with planners to **promote sustainable development** and ensure water needs are met.



A plan that makes Lancashire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

GREENER

Lancashire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Protecting rivers and catchments:

Lancashire has a diverse geographical landscape. The west has low lying coastal and estuary landscapes, where tidal influences and urban areas contribute to surface water runoff. The uplands in the east have extensive areas of countryside and moorland with two designated areas of outstanding natural beauty: Forest of Bowland and Arndale and Silverdale.

Partnerships:

Lancashire has a history of innovative partnerships that deliver benefits across a range of challenges.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing over **£870 million** to improve the river environment of Lancashire, including protecting and improving **35km** of rivers.



Working in partnership with the Fylde Hub, Turning Tides, Ribble Rivers Trust, Wyre NFM, RSPB and many more Lancashire stakeholders to improve rivers and coasts. Across Lancashire, we are working with partners to manage catchments and restore peatlands over an area of **620 hectares**.



Removing **barriers to fish and eel migration** at Stocks reservoir and the Calder River intake.



Investing **£729 million** to reduce activations of **91 storm overflows**.

A plan that makes Lancashire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

HEALTHIER

Lancashire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Sustainable water supplies:

Water sources in Lancashire are sensitive to compounds which affect the taste, smell and appearance of water.

Healthier coastlines:

The coastal waters of Lancashire are important for the economy, in particular tourism and fisheries.

Access and recreation

A mix of natural environments, including two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and traditional townscapes make Lancashire a popular tourism destination.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Continuing to provide **free access at nine sites** across Lancashire to deliver recreational benefits.



Investing **over £270 million** to deliver benefits at four sites for shellfish waters and four sites for bathing waters.



Investing to manage factors that can impact the taste, smell and appearance of water to **reduce the impacts on customers**.



Investing **over £1 billion** to improve the **Haweswater Aqueduct**, ensuring we can sustain resilient water supplies across the North West, including Lancashire, working in partnership with local stakeholders to minimise the disruption this programme could have on people and the environment.



Further information

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[PR24.unitedutilities.com](https://www.pr24.unitedutilities.com)



Water for the North West

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A summary of our Business Plan
for Greater Manchester
2025–30



Picture: Salford Quays, Manchester

Introduction

Welcome to the summary of our Business Plan for Greater Manchester

The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play.

We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the region. Adopting this approach means we will deliver outcomes which are tailored for customers in the places where they live.

Because delivering locally is important to you and us, we've been working with stakeholders and customers to better understand the unique needs for each North West county so we develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.

It's a hugely ambitious plan that will support 30,000 jobs across the region, and we've engaged with 95,000 people in Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, to make sure we get it right, shaping our plans for each county to address the things that you've told us matter most. These include:

- Providing great quality water every time you turn on the tap
- Improving the region's natural environment and tackling storm overflows
- Doubling our financial support for those who need it, making sure nobody gets left behind
- Driving benefits for the North West's economy

In this document, we have summarised the challenges and opportunities in Greater Manchester. We hope that by setting out our plan this way, we make our investment programme and the benefits it delivers more meaningful to customers.

We call it place-based planning. It involves us working in partnership with other organisations to develop cost-effective investment and planning in local areas. This approach means we can identify the right solutions and develop tailored outcomes which deliver for local people and the needs of the environment.

At the same time as improving services and investing in the security of infrastructure to respond to the challenges of climate change and population growth, we are also able to deliver real opportunities for the North West too, a chance to drive inward investment, provide great quality skilled jobs and ignite a regional economy.

While we recognise that the plan necessitates an increase in bills, we also recognise the economic challenges facing our communities. That's why we're proposing an industry-leading support package of over £500 million, meaning that one in six customers will receive financial support so we reduce the risk of anyone being left behind by the costs of rising bills.

Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities in Greater Manchester. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Supporting over 113,000 people who are struggling to pay their bills. Our support will double by 2030.

Reducing spills from 105 storm overflows and improving 82 kilometres of rivers along the Mersey, Irk and Irwell.

Spending £146 million to better manage rainfall and slow the flow into our sewers and reduce the need for huge storage tanks.

Employing 1,300 people across Greater Manchester. Our increased investment will create more green jobs.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Greater Manchester's unique characteristics

Flooding from rivers, sewers and surface water presents significant challenges for Mancunian homes and businesses. We will work with partners to deliver an integrated water management plan to minimise the risk of flood and disruption. Through using nature-based solutions we aim to deliver more green spaces.

River water quality in the Irwell and Mersey catchments requires significant improvement due to the legacy of the industrial revolution and the impact of transferring and treating wastewater from 2.8 million people. We will invest more than ever before to reduce our impact on rivers and drive improvements from others to protect the local environment and improve water quality.

We recognise that affordability is a challenge for many customers across Greater Manchester.

We will offer sector-leading support to customers who face difficulty when paying their water bill and have put in place extra support for vulnerable customers with additional needs.

Customers in and around Greater Manchester receive their water supply from Haweswater in the Lake District. This is supplied through a gravity fed pipe, the Haweswater Aqueduct, which is 110km long. We will invest in our water supply pipeline to secure a long-term resilient supply from Haweswater in the Lake District for future generations.

Greater Manchester



"A place for everyone"

This is Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) vision for Greater Manchester. We want to support it to achieve this for its diverse population of **2.8 million people and over 120,000 businesses**

37% of the North West's storm overflows are here; that's **over 800 storm overflows**

Greater Manchester is a **trailblazer for devolution**

Most of the area's **drinking water** is transported by gravity from the Lake District, a feat of Victorian engineering

Growth: Greater Manchester is booming. Through partnerships, we will provide the critical water infrastructure to support growth and develop the green economy

Innovation: there's a proud heritage of innovation in the county and we need to harness this to meet future challenges

Affordability: we support **113,800** customers through help to pay schemes and **96,700** people with additional needs through **Priority Services**

Providing great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West

Our plan protects the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and underpins the economy, enabling sustainable growth.

A plan that makes Greater Manchester Stronger, Greener, Healthier

STRONGER

Greater Manchester has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Affordability and supporting vulnerable customers:

Deprivation is an important issue for Greater Manchester, with significant variations throughout the city region.

Jobs and growth:

Greater Manchester is rapidly growing. An additional 2.8 million people are expected to live in the region by 2050. The city of Salford is the fastest growing metropolitan district in the UK, with the population growing by 15.4% since 2011.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Supporting over **113,000 people** who are struggling to pay their bills, and **our support will double by 2030**. We're helping **96,700 customers** with additional needs through Priority Services.



Investing over **£200 million** to improve Salford wastewater treatment works to meet fast growing demand and developing our cutting-edge, **low-energy carbon hub** at Davyhulme.



Investing over **£2 billion** to improve the river environment in and around Greater Manchester.



Employing **1,300 people** in Greater Manchester. Our investment will support the development of more **high-skilled green jobs**.



A plan that makes Greater Manchester Stronger, Greener, Healthier

GREENER

Greater Manchester has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Protecting rivers and catchments:

Greater Manchester's rivers are impacted by agriculture, industry, runoff from roads and sewage.

Above Greater Manchester, in the Pennines and Peak District, sits 18,000 hectares of catchment land, the quality of which impacts water quality and biodiversity.

The county receives an average of 1,047mm of rain a year, creating challenges for flooding from rivers, sewers and surface water.

Partnerships:

There are numerous organisations across Greater Manchester working to improve flood risk and water quality.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Protecting and improving **82km of rivers** along the Mersey, Irk, and Irwell.



Managing **58km² of catchment land** in the Pennine headwaters to improve biodiversity and raw water quality.



Investing **£740 million** to reduce activations of **105 storm overflows**. 24% of our action on overflows during AMP8 is in Greater Manchester.



Developing the **first city region Integrated Water Management Plan** through collaboration with GMCA, the EA and other local stakeholder groups.



Collaborating with the **National Trust and other landowners** to deliver improvements through partnerships across the Mersey Catchment.



Driving **£146 million** in sustainable rainwater management solutions to better manage rainfall.

A plan that makes Greater Manchester Stronger, Greener, Healthier

HEALTHIER

Greater Manchester has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Sustainable water supplies:

Some customers on the south east fringe of Greater Manchester are not well connected to the rest of the strategic integrated distribution network, increasing risk of supply interruptions.

Access and recreation

Manchester is largely urban. Green space provides social value and improves health and wellbeing.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing **over £1 billion** to improve the Haweswater Aqueduct, ensuring we sustain resilient water supplies for Greater Manchester. We're also **improving water supplies** from the Peak District, replacing water mains serving Wybersley and increasing available groundwater supplies.



Encouraging people to enjoy our **10 freely accessible sites**, including Dove Stone Reservoir, Jumbles Country Park and Davyhulme Millennium Nature Reserve.



Further information

We've been working with stakeholders and customers to develop our understanding of unique needs across the North West's five counties. This means we can develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.



Visit our microsite at PR24.unitedutilities.com

Thank you . . .

We believe this plan reflects the priorities that customers and stakeholders have told us matter most to them. We are most grateful to people across Greater Manchester, who have given their time to provide us with their views and insight on the delivery of water and wastewater services across the county.

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Water for the North West

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A summary of our Business Plan
for Merseyside (including Halton)
2025–30



Pictured: Salthouse Dock, Liverpool

Introduction

Welcome to the summary of our Business Plan for Merseyside (including Halton)

The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play.

We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the region. Adopting this approach means we will deliver outcomes which are tailored for customers in the places where they live.

Because delivering locally is important to you and us, we've been working with stakeholders and customers to better understand the unique needs for each North West county so we develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.

It's a hugely ambitious plan that will support 30,000 jobs across the region, and we've engaged with 95,000 people in Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, to make sure we get it right, shaping our plans for each county to address the things that you've told us matter most.

These include:

- Providing great quality water every time you turn on the tap
- Improving the region's natural environment and tackling storm overflows
- Doubling our financial support for those who need it, making sure nobody gets left behind
- Driving benefits for the North West's economy

In this document, we have summarised the challenges and opportunities in Merseyside. We hope that by setting out our plan this way, we make our investment programme and the benefits it delivers more meaningful to customers.

We call it place-based planning. It involves us working in partnership with other organisations to develop cost-effective investment and planning in local areas. This approach means we can identify the right solutions and develop tailored outcomes which deliver for local people and the needs of the environment.

At the same time as improving services and investing in the security of infrastructure to respond to the challenges of climate change and population growth, we are also able to deliver real opportunities for the North West too, a chance to drive inward investment, provide great quality skilled jobs and ignite a regional economy.

While we recognise that the plan necessitates an increase in bills, we also recognise the economic challenges facing our communities. That's why we're proposing an industry-leading support package of over £500 million, meaning that one in six customers will receive financial support so we reduce the risk of anyone being left behind by the costs of rising bills.

Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities in Merseyside. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Supporting over 86,000 people who are struggling to pay their bills. Our support will double by 2030.

Spending £166 million to reduce spills from 20 storm overflows and improving 26 kilometres of rivers.

Investing £85 million across the Merseyside coastline to benefit shellfish and bathing waters.

Employing 1,500 people across Merseyside. Our increased investment will create more green jobs



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Merseyside's unique characteristics

River water quality in the Mersey catchments requires further improvement. Liverpool has the highest proportion of combined sewers which means a high number of overflows. Reducing the frequency that these overflows operate requires re-plumbing the sewer system and we have a long-term plan for this.

Merseyside has a significant length of coastline, making parts of the coast vulnerable to coastal erosion and flooding which are forecast to become more frequent with climate change. We will invest to ensure assets are resilient to climate change and the impacts of coastal erosion and protect up to 169 homes.

Customers in Merseyside receive their water supply from sources in Cheshire and Lake Vyrnwy in Wales. We will invest in our water supply pipeline to secure long-term resilient supplies from Lake Vyrnwy for future generations.

Affordability is a real concern for some customers in Merseyside. There are concentrations of extreme deprivation and four of the ten most deprived areas in England are in this area. We will continue to offer sector-leading support to customers who face difficulty when paying their water bill and have put in place extra support for vulnerable customers with additional needs.

Merseyside



The Mersey is an iconic part of this increasingly vibrant region. The river water quality has transformed over the last 30 years, but there's still more to do

Liverpool City Region has a rich **industrial heritage** and world renowned **cultural identity**

The **estuary and coastline** are dominant features of this area, so **water quality** directly impacts amenity value and the local economy

A high proportion of **combined sewers** causes **surface water management** challenges

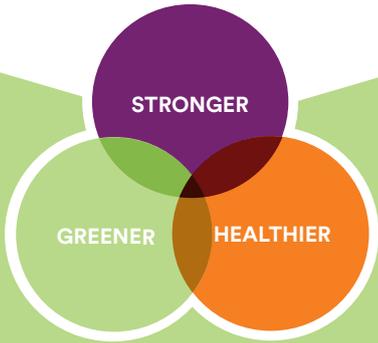
Our priority is to provide a **sustainable supply of quality drinking water** that is resilient now and for future generations

Providing great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West

Our plan protects the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and underpins the economy, enabling sustainable growth.

The population and economy of Liverpool are growing, we understand that our **water infrastructure needs to develop** to support this growth

We support **86,300** customers through **affordability schemes** and **63,900** people with additional needs through **Priority Services**



A plan that makes Merseyside (including Halton) Stronger, Greener, Healthier

STRONGER

Merseyside has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Affordability and supporting vulnerable customers:

People in Merseyside are concerned about the cost of living, with two of the top five deprived areas in the UK being in Merseyside. They want to know how we're supporting those most in need.

Jobs and growth:

Formerly known for its rich maritime history, the present day economy of Merseyside is diverse and growing quickly. People in Merseyside want high skilled jobs and a greener economy.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Supporting over 86,300 people who are struggling to pay their bills, and our support will **double** by 2030. We're **helping 63,900 customers** with additional needs through Priority Services.



Employing more than **1,580 people** across Merseyside and this increased future investment will create more green jobs.



A plan that makes Merseyside (including Halton) Stronger, Greener, Healthier

GREENER

Merseyside has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Coastal erosion:

The coastal location of much of Merseyside makes the county vulnerable to flooding and erosion. Crosby in particular is at risk from coastal erosion threatening homes and infrastructure.

Protecting rivers and catchments:

Merseyside is a predominantly urban area and such a densely urban composition can have implication on water quality.

The nature of the sewer system across Merseyside and the rapid development of the Liverpool City Region presents substantial challenges in reducing the frequency of storm overflow operation to further improve river water quality.

People in Merseyside care about the environment, and want to know what we're doing about water quality in the Mersey and Dee Estuaries and the coast.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing **£12.7 million** in coastal defences at Crosby to protect vital sewer infrastructure from erosion by the sea. Our investment with partners will also protect up to **169 homes** from flooding.



Investing **£210 million** to improve the **26km** of river environment in Merseyside.



Spending over **£11m** in 'Cleaner Mersey' to investigate the best way to deploy the much larger anticipated investments required in the next 10 to 15 years.



Carrying out catchment management across **58km²** of the upland headwaters of the Mersey catchment to deliver river water quality benefits in the Mersey Estuary.



Investing **£166 million** to reduce activations of **20 storm overflows**.



A plan that makes Merseyside (including Halton) Stronger, Greener, Healthier

HEALTHIER

Merseyside has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Sustainable water supplies:

People in Merseyside want confidence that we'll continue to provide great quality drinking water and that we'll be able to meet future demand.

Healthier coastlines:

The coastal waters of Merseyside are important for the economy, in particular tourism and fisheries. However, the urbanised landscape and population size of Merseyside means that local bathing waters are increasingly at risk of storm overflow operation.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing **£151 million** to improve 65km of the Vyrnwy Aqueduct so we can sustain resilient water supplies for people across Merseyside.



Investing **£85 million** across the Merseyside coastline to benefit bathing and shellfish waters.



Investing at two of our largest treatment works to protect the quality of drinking water for current and future generations.



Further information

We've been working with stakeholders and customers to develop our understanding of unique needs across the North West's five counties. This means we can develop plans that are more relatable to the communities we serve.



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Thank you . . .

We believe this plan reflects the priorities that customers and stakeholders have told us matter most to them. We are most grateful to people across Merseyside, who have given their time to provide us with their views and insight on the delivery of water and wastewater services across the county.

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Water for the North West

Stronger, Greener, Healthier: Our plan for the North West

A summary of our Business Plan
for Cheshire
2025–30



Pictured: Bollington, Cheshire

Introduction

Welcome to the summary of our Business Plan for Cheshire

The North West is an exciting and diverse region; it's where we live, work and play.

We've built a plan for the next five years which has been shaped by, and adapted to meet, the diverse needs of the region. Adopting this approach means we will deliver outcomes which are tailored for customers in the places where they live.

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At the same time as improving services and investing in the security of infrastructure to respond to the challenges of climate change and population growth, we are also able to deliver real opportunities for the North West too, a chance to drive inward investment, provide great quality skilled jobs and ignite a regional economy.

While we recognise that the plan necessitates an increase in bills, we also recognise the economic challenges facing our communities. That's why we're proposing an industry-leading support package of over £500 million, meaning that one in six customers will receive financial support so we reduce the risk of anyone being left behind by the costs of rising bills.

Now, more than ever, we need to rise to the challenge, deliver improved services for our customers, the environment and our communities in Cheshire. It matters to customers, to regulators, to shareholders and it matters to us, and we are determined to deliver the step change we all want to see. We look forward to the opportunity of delivering this ambitious plan.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

Highlights from our ambitious plan

Supporting over 20,000 people who are struggling to pay their bills. Our support will double by 2030.

Reducing spills from 63 storm overflows and improving 24 kilometres of rivers.

Investing £151 million to improve 65 kilometres of the Vyrnwy Aqueduct so we can sustain resilient water supplies for people across Cheshire.

Employing 1,500 people across Cheshire. Our increased investment will create more green jobs.



Visit our microsite at
PR24.unitedutilities.com

Cheshire's unique characteristics

River water quality is important for Cheshire. We will work with partners, building on our innovative Cheshire Hub partnership, to identify opportunities to work collaboratively and deliver nature-based solutions to improve our rivers.

With farming a dominant industry across both the Cheshire environment and economy, it is important that we work closely with local farmers to ensure practices do not impact on water quality. We employ our Catchment Systems Thinking approach, also known as CaST, to collaborate with farmers to take a joined-up and holistic approach to farming and protecting water quality.

With an ageing population across Cheshire, we recognise how important it is to have a service tailored to customers' individual needs. We will offer sector-leading support for vulnerable customers with additional needs through our Priority Services schemes.

Many customers in and around Cheshire receive their water supply from Lake Vyrnwy in Wales. This is supplied through the Vyrnwy Aqueduct. We will invest in our water supply pipeline to secure a long-term resilient supply from Vyrnwy for current and future generations.

Cheshire



Traditional carbon-based energy production has been a strength in Cheshire for many years. This expertise has paved the way for green energy and now the **North West's hydrogen energy** production and storage is centred in Cheshire

We support **20,000** customers through **affordability schemes** and **34,000** people with additional needs through **Priority Services**

Due to the **flat nature of the region**, some areas are vulnerable to flooding

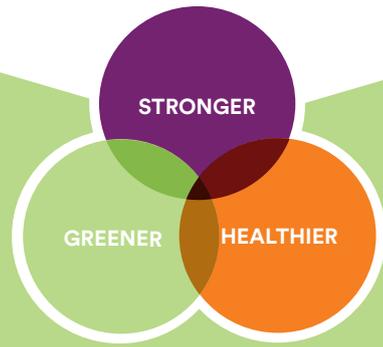
Agriculture plays a key part in the Cheshire economy. We'll collaborate with landowners and farmers to encourage **sustainable catchment management practices**

River water quality is important to Cheshire. The **river water quality** has transformed over the last 30 years, but there is still much to do

Providing great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West

Our plan protects the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment and underpins the economy, enabling sustainable growth.

Cheshire is home to internationally important **wetlands** and underground aquifers which are sensitive to nutrients



A plan that makes Cheshire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

STRONGER

Cheshire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Affordability and supporting vulnerable customers:

Cheshire has an ageing population and, whilst average incomes are higher than other parts of the North West, pockets of deprivation exist, particularly in urban centres.

Jobs and growth:

Population growth is 1.5% lower than the UK average, creating challenges with skills gaps in the area.

Cheshire is the centre for the North West's planned hydrogen production and storage.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Supporting over **19,900 people** who are struggling to pay their bills, doubling our support by 2030. We're helping **34,000 customers** with additional needs through Priority Services.



Employing **1,500 people** across Cheshire and our increased future investment will create more green jobs. In addition, we're providing **award winning training schemes** to drive skills development.



Planning ahead, to ensure the North West can support the water requirements for hydrogen production, **enabling economic growth.**



Improving 65km of the Vyrnwy Aqueduct to ensure **resilient water supplies** for people across Cheshire.



A plan that makes Cheshire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

GREENER

Cheshire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Protecting rivers and catchments:

Cheshire's rivers are impacted by many different activities including agriculture, industry and runoff from roads as well as sewage.

Partnerships:

Agriculture plays a key role in Cheshire's economy, and is important for North West food production.

Challenges of river water quality and flooding are complex and are impacted by the actions of many organisations.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing **£433 million** to improve **24km** of rivers in Cheshire, including removing barriers to **fish and eel migration** at one location.



Investing **£420 million** to reduce activations of **63 storm overflows**.



Working with the National Trust to trial leaky dams at Lyme Park, **improving water quality and slowing flows** to deliver natural flood management.



Partnering with local authorities to **reduce flood risk**, such as the Northwich flood defence scheme.



Collaborating with farmers and partner organisations to promote sustainable farming practices across the River Dee catchment to **protect drinking water quality**.



A plan that makes Cheshire Stronger, Greener, Healthier

HEALTHIER

Cheshire has a number of challenges and opportunities:

Sustainable water supplies:

Many customers in and around Cheshire receive their water supply from Lake Vyrnwy in Wales, this is supplied via the Vyrnwy aqueduct.

Access and recreation:

Whilst much of Cheshire is rural, we recognise the importance of green spaces for health and wellbeing for residents and visitors.

To manage these challenges, we're:



Investing in two water treatment works to ensure we continue to deliver **great quality water** into the future.



Delivering additional water from borehole supplies across Cheshire to ensure there is **sufficient water** in drier conditions.



Encouraging people to enjoy our **three beautiful sites** in Cheshire – Macclesfield Forest, Lamaload Reservoir and Errwood Reservoir.



Further information

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Thank you . . .

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Water for the North West

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Water for the North West