

YORKSHIRE WATER SERVICES LIMITED

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR DROUGHT PERMITS

River Wharfe Catchment

TAKE NOTICE that due to the threat of a serious water shortage in the **Yorkshire area** caused by an exceptional shortage of rain, **YORKSHIRE WATER SERVICES LIMITED (company number 02366682)** whose registered office is at **Western House, Halifax Road, Bradford, BD6 2SZ** is applying to the Environment Agency for drought permits under section 79A of the Water Resources Act 1991 in the River Wharfe catchment.

The drought permits are intended to apply for a period of up to six months and propose amendments to the Grimwith Reservoir releases during low flows.

Yorkshire Water is authorised to abstract water from the River Wharfe at Lobwood, North Yorkshire for supply to customers under abstraction licence number 2/27/19/129/R01 ("the Lobwood Licence"). Yorkshire Water is also entitled to abstract water from the River Wharfe at Arthington, West Yorkshire under abstraction licence number 2/27/20/196/R01 ("the Arthington Licence"). The permits being applied for will, if granted, vary both of these licences.

Lobwood Licence

The Lobwood Licence entitles Yorkshire Water to abstract a maximum of 5,060 cubic metres per hour, 93,200 cubic metres per day and 27,392,000 cubic metres per year, at an instantaneous rate not exceeding 1,406 litres per second, from the River Wharfe at Lobwood.

The daily abstraction limit varies depending on flow conditions ('bands') in the River Wharfe and upstream releases from Grimwith Reservoir. Under the conditions of the Lobwood Licence, during periods of low flow in the River Wharfe, Yorkshire Water is required to support its abstraction at Lobwood by releasing water from Grimwith Reservoir. When river flows are above 389 megalitres per day (Ml/d) (Bands A and B in the licence), Yorkshire Water does not have to provide any support. When river flows are between 252 and 389 Ml/d (Band C in the licence), Yorkshire Water is permitted to abstract the volume of water being released from Grimwith Reservoir plus an additional 6.8 Ml/d. When river flows are below 252 Ml/d (Band D in the licence), Yorkshire Water is permitted to abstract the volume of water being released from Grimwith Reservoir less 22.7 Ml/d, up to a maximum of 88.6 Ml/d.

The drought permit would amend the Lobwood Licence to allow Yorkshire Water to abstract the full volume released from Grimwith Reservoir when river flows are in Band D. In Bands A, B and C there is no change to the permitted abstraction rates. The abstraction rates (hourly, daily and instantaneous maxima) specified in the licence for differing flow bands in the River Wharfe are not affected by the drought permit application. The maximum abstraction rate of 88.6 Ml/d in Band D is also unchanged.

Arthington Licence

The licence conditions for the Yorkshire Water abstraction at Arthington also impose an obligation to support abstractions from Lobwood and / or Arthington with releases from Grimwith Reservoir that are 22.7 Ml/d greater than the abstracted volume when river flows are in Band D. This clause will be amended in the Arthington Licence for the duration of the drought permit, if granted, to allow the full volume released from Grimwith Reservoir to be abstracted from Lobwood when river flows are in Band D.

We will not use Arthington in the lowest flow band (Band D), because this would require a release from Grimwith depleting Grimwith reservoirs stocks. Therefore, this application for the River Wharfe only applies to the abstraction at Lobwood, but this requires an amendment to the Arthington licence because the special conditions for abstraction in Band D also state the requirements to abstract at Lobwood.

The anticipated effect of the drought permits, if granted, will be to reduce the rate of draw down on Grimwith Reservoir and increase the volume of river water Yorkshire Water can abstract for public water supply. This will allow Yorkshire Water to reduce its use of other reservoirs in the region and allow stocks to recharge over the winter period, to help maintain supply to customers. Yorkshire Water, in consultation with the Environment Agency, has carried out an assessment of the potential environmental impacts resulting from the changes to the current operations under the terms of the permit. This includes an environmental monitoring plan and mitigation measures to reduce the impacts on the downstream ecology.

Anyone may inspect the proposals at the following locations, free of charge, during normal working hours for a period of at least seven days from the date of formal submission (Friday 25th July);

- Yorkshire Water, Western House, Halifax Road, Bradford, BD6 2SZ
- Bolton Abbey Post Office, High Street, Bolton Abbey, Skipton, BD23 6EX
- Pool-In-Wharfedale Post Office, Main Street, Pool-In-Wharfedale, Otley, LS21 1LH
- Environment Agency, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT.

Copies of the proposals are also available to view on the Yorkshire Water website (www.yorkshirewater.com/drought-permits) and further information on the drought plan can be found at: <https://www.yorkshirewater.com/about-us/our-vision-and-plans/resources/drought-plan>

Objections may be made in writing to the Environment Agency quoting the name of the applicant and reference NPS/DP/250002 at:

Water Resources Permitting Support Centre, Environment Agency, Quadrant 2, 99 Parkway Avenue, Parkway Business Park, Sheffield, S9 4WF or psc-waterresources@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Objections should be made by close of play on Friday 1st August 2025. The response should outline if you are making a formal objection to the proposal and the grounds for the objection.

Objectors may also send a copy of their objection to:

Western House, Halifax Road, Bradford, BD6 2SZ or publicaffairsteam@yorkshirewater.co.uk.

Dated: 24th July 2025

Signed:	Dave Kaye	Perminder Kaur
	Director of Water and Wastewater Services	General Counsel