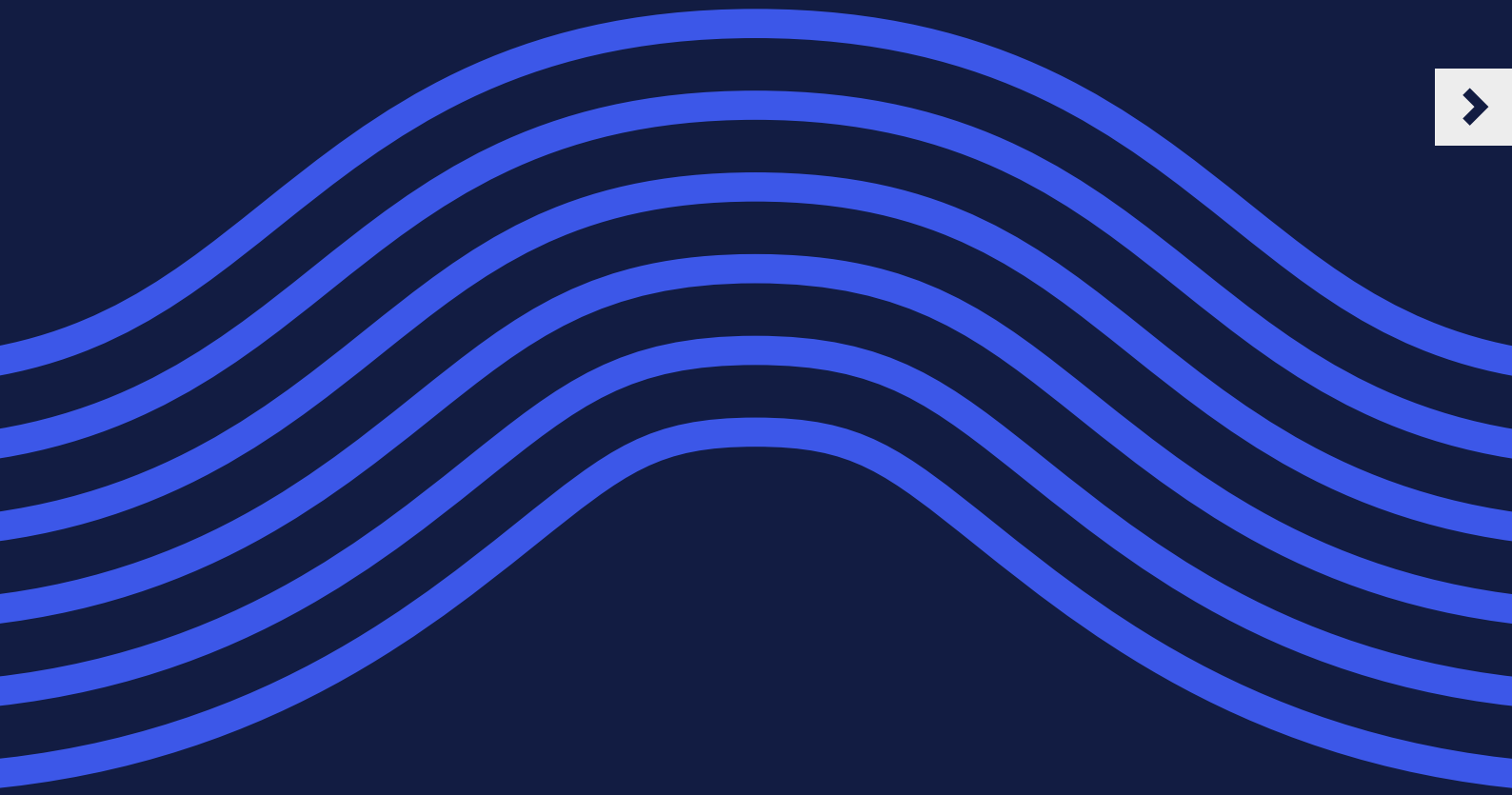
Drought Plan 2027



Published November 2026

YorkshireWater

How to view this document

Contents page

Our contents page links to every Section within this document. Clicking on a specific Section will instantly take you to it.

1. Click on the contents button to return to the contents page.
2. This button takes you to the previous page.
3. This button takes you to the next page.

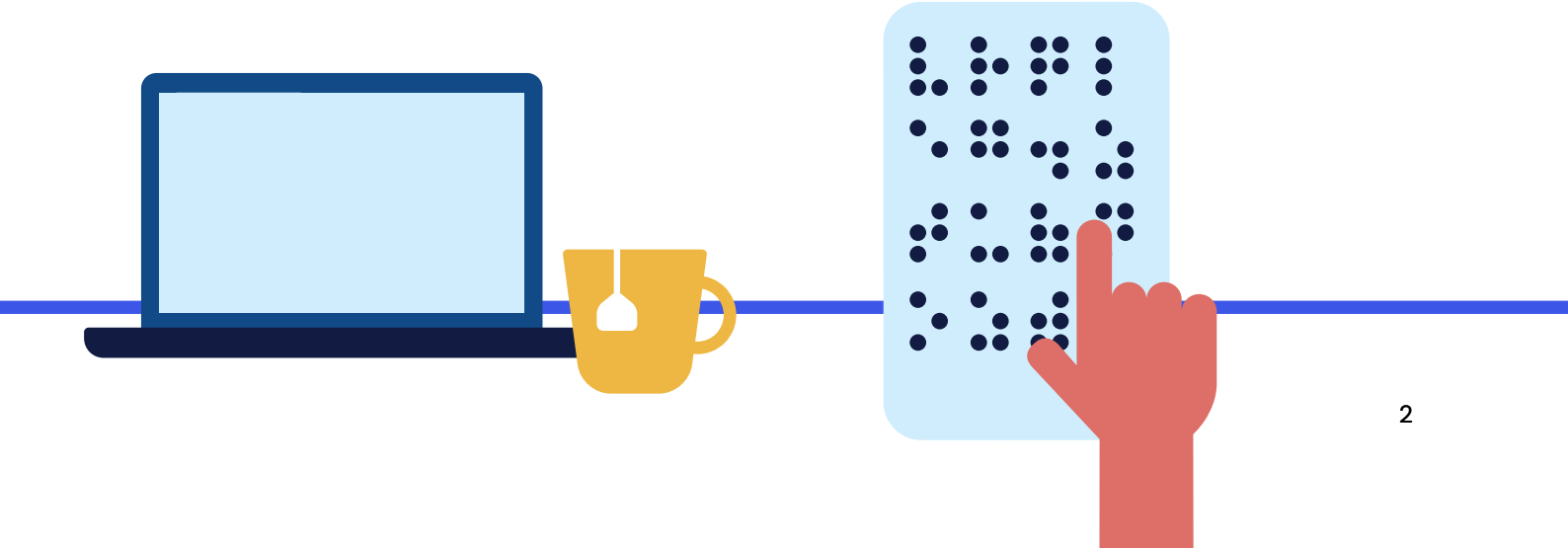
There are also many other clickable links within this document which we've made easy to spot by underlining and **highlighting** them in blue.

Accessibility matters. That's why we want all of our customers to be able to engage, navigate, and understand our Drought Plan.

By using assistive technology like screen readers, text-to-text speech programmes and braille displays, we can provide equal access to anyone with visual, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

We've taken steps to ensure this document supports additional accessibility needs:

- Screen readers will recite content in a logical order, as well as identifying headers and providing alternative text for images.
- Table of contents and bookmarks to aid navigation.
- Easy-to-read text that's structured using headings, clear paragraphs and tables.
- Comfortable colour contrast.



Executive Summary

Yorkshire Water provides clean and wastewater services to 5.5 million people and 140,000 businesses. Planning for droughts is an essential part of ensuring that our services remain resilient during extreme weather events.

This report is our revised draft Drought Plan 2027 (DP27), which has been presented to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and subjected to a public consultation. The DP27 is an operational plan, setting out our drought management framework including how we prepare for and implement drought actions, when required, in order to manage our water resources and protect the environment. The DP27 also details our drought recovery process.

Our Drought Plan 2027 (DP27) reflects the twin-track approach used in our Water Resources Management Plan 2024 (WRMP24), with a suite of demand and supply actions that we can implement to maintain security of water supply. Demand drought actions are usually implemented first in order to limit any environmental impacts.

During the development of our DP27 we have undertaken pre-consultation engagement with our statutory consultees:

- The Environment Agency or EA (our environmental regulator).
- The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).
- Ofwat (our economic regulator).
- Water retailers operating in our area.
- Natural England (our environmental regulator which specific responsibilities for protected sites).

We have also consulted numerous non-statutory consultees including the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater), neighbouring water companies, regional water resources groups, local authorities, environmental groups, angling clubs, fish farms, river trusts and local resilience forums.

This DP27 is an update of our Drought Plan 2022 and follows the 'Water company Drought Plan guideline 2025'[1] (DPG2025) and industry best practice approaches. We have incorporated lessons identified from the most recent droughts in 2022 and 2025.

We received representations from 11 stakeholders as a result of the public consultation. We have produced a **Statement of Response** to accompany this revised DP27.

As described in Section 1.3 (links to other plans) we have written this plan to be consistent with WRMP24, the Water Resources North (WReN) regional group and the levels of service that we provide to our customers.

[1] Water company Drought Plan guideline, 2025 - GOV.UK, published 16 June 2025.

This DP27 has been structured in line with Appendix D, DPG2025 as follows:

1. **Introduction** – High-level summary of our supply system, drought management areas/Water Resource Zones (WRZ), links to our WRMP, WReN regional plan and our emergency plan for drought.
2. **Drought triggers** – for each drought management area/water resource zone and how we have tested these (testing is detailed in the separate report '**Drought Plan 2027 – Drought Triggers and Worked Examples**').
3. **Drought actions** – Demand and supply actions for drought levels 1-3 and any other environmental or other sector actions.
4. **Extreme drought management** – including the triggers, implementation order and viability of each action.
5. **Communications** – our drought communication plan refers to the triggers for each drought level, including how we will coordinate campaigns across the sector, region, and with other interested groups and parties.
6. **Environmental assessment** – a summary of environmental assessments for drought actions.
7. **Recovery from a drought** – actions we will take during recovery from a drought including triggers, our modelling and assumptions.
8. **End of a drought** – our triggers that indicate the end of a drought and how we will review our performance during and directly after a drought.
9. **Additional information** – drought management structure, information relating to bulk supplies, links to other plans and compensation arrangements.

Section 10 of this plan provides a glossary of DP27 terminology, abbreviations and acronyms. Section 11 lists the appendices that accompany this plan.

The following reports accompany this main report:

- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – Non- technical Summary**
- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – Drought Triggers and Worked Examples**
- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – Appendices**
- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – SEA Environmental Report**
- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – SEA Environmental Report Appendix E**
- **Yorkshire Water Revised Draft Drought Plan 2027 – HRA**

Contents

Executive Summary 3
Contents 5
List of Figures 8
List of Tables 9
1 Drought plan overview 10
1.1 Introduction 11
1.1.1 What is a drought? 11
1.1.2 What is a Drought Plan? 11
1.1.3 How we keep our Drought Plan up to date 13
1.1.4 Pre-publication consultation 13
1.1.5 Public consultation 14
1.2 The Yorkshire Water Region 15
1.2.1 Our water resource zones 15
1.3 Links to other plans 17
1.3.1 Regional planning: Water Resources North (WReN) 17
1.3.2 Our Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) 19
1.3.3 Our Emergency Drought Plan 19
1.4 Drought stages 20
1.4.1 How our plans link to the drought stages 21
1.4.2 Our levels of service 22
1.5 How we manage our water resources 23
1.5.1 Managing our water available for use 23
1.5.2 Our reporting and monitoring processes 23
2 Drought triggers 24
2.1 Assessing our drought vulnerability 25
2.2 Reservoir control line triggers 26
2.2.1 Drought trigger levels 26
2.3 Reservoir group triggers 28
2.4 Linking triggers to actions 30
2.5 Drought trigger scenario testing 35
2.5.1 Our data sources: historical and stochastically modelled reservoir inflow datasets 35
2.5.2 Forecasting drought and drought scenarios 35
2.6 Environmental triggers 38

3 Drought actions 40
3.1 Drought management actions that we may take 41
3.1.1 Drought action sequencing 41
3.2 Options to reduce demand 43
3.2.1 Level 1 demand actions 43
3.2.2 Level 2 demand actions 43
3.2.3 Level 3a demand actions 44
3.2.4 Code of Practice and Guidance for Water Companies on Water use Restrictions 46
3.2.5 Our approach for imposing restrictions on water use 46
3.2.6 Demand savings 47
3.2.7 Customer views 48
3.3 Options to increase supply 49
3.3.1 Level 1 supply actions 49
3.3.2 Level 2 and 3 supply actions 49
3.3.3 Supply action benefits 49
3.4 Drought action authorisations 50
3.4.1 Level 3a supply-side drought action authorisations 50
3.4.2 Non-essential use ban authorisation 50
3.4.3 Permit and order application process 51
3.4.3.1 Drought ready applications 52
3.4.4 Level 4 Emergency Drought Order authorisation 52
3.5 Private suppliers 53
4 Extreme drought management actions 54
4.1 Introduction 55
4.2 Level 3b demand extreme drought actions 55
4.3 Level 3b supply extreme drought actions 55
4.4 Level 3b extreme drought action triggers and phasing 56
4.5 Alternative pathways 56
4.6 Level 4 drought actions 57
5 Communications plan 58
5.1 Communications at different drought levels 59
5.2 Stakeholder communications 61
5.2.1 NAVs and retailers 61
5.2.2 Regulators and other stakeholders 62
5.2.3 Communications with the Environment Agency 63
5.3 Communication activities 63
5.4 Adapting our communications 64
5.4.1 Non-household drought communications 64
5.4.2 Welfare for vulnerable customers 64
5.5 Co-ordinating our communications regionally and nationally 65
5.5.1 Regional co-ordination 65
5.5.2 National co-ordination 66
5.6 Monitoring the effectiveness of our communications 66
5.6.1 Future Strategy 66
5.6.2 Getting in touch 66

6 Environmental assessments 67
6.1 Overview 68
6.2 How we assess the environmental impacts of a drought measure 68
6.3 Environmental Monitoring Plan (EMP) and data provision 70
6.3.1 Monitoring 70
6.3.2 Mitigation 70
6.4 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening 70
6.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) 72
6.6 How we used SEA in developing this Drought Plan 74
6.7 SEA findings 74
6.7.1 Ordinary supply-side drought options 74
6.7.2 Extreme Drought Options 74
6.7.3 Cumulative Assessment 75
6.7.4 Summary 75
7 Recovery from Drought 76
7.1 Lifting of actions 77
7.1.1 Prolonged dry weather and managing water quality 78
7.1.2 Communicating the lifting of actions 78
8 End of a drought 79
8.1 Ongoing environmental monitoring 80
8.2 Reviewing our plan performance after a drought 81
8.3 Updating our Drought Plan and related plans 82
9 Additional information 83
9.1 Drought management structure 84
9.2 Agreements and arrangements 86
9.2.1 Bulk supply from Severn Trent Water 86
9.2.2 Bulk supplies to NAVs 86
9.3 Compensation arrangements 86
9.3.1 Compensation for adverse impacts from implementation of supply- side drought actions 86
9.3.2 Compensation for water use restrictions 86
9.4 Updates following the 2025 drought 87
10 Glossary of Drought Plan terminology, abbreviations and acronyms 89
11 Appendices and supplementary reports 96

List of figures

Figure 1-1
Timeline of historical drought events and summary of impacts/learning **12**

Figure 1-2
Our water resource zones (WRZs): Grid surface water zone and East Surface Water Zone **15**

Figure 1-3
Yorkshire Water grid system **16**

Figure 1-4
WReN region **18**

Figure 1-5
Drought stages linked to our WRMP, Drought Plan and emergency plan (source DPG2025) **21**

Figure 2-1
Drought level trigger bands **27**

Figure 2-2
Regional reservoir group triggers and actions **32**

Figure 2-3
Regional reservoir group stocks 2025 and forecasts with 1995 flows **37**

Figure 3-1
Drought levels of severity and associated actions **42**

Figure 4-1
Potential alternative pathways **56**

Figure 6-1
Application of SEA Directive to plans and programmes **73**

Figure 9-1
Dry weather incident management team **85**

List of tables

Table 1-1
EA Drought Stages **20**

Table 1-2
Yorkshire Water levels of service mapped to EA drought stage and related drought actions **22**

Table 2-1
Yorkshire Water drought management reservoir groups for the Grid SWZ WRZ **30**

Table 2-2
Drought plan triggers and associated actions **33**

Table 3-1
Activities banned under a temporary use ban as set out in Section 76 of the1991 Water Industry Act **44**

Table 3-2
Water use restrictions imposed by a non-essential use ban **45**

Table 3-3
Estimated savings from demand options **47**

Table 5-1
Drought communication at different drought levels **59**

Table 7-1
Recovery from drought triggers and actions **77**

Table 9-1
Learning from the 2025 drought and timescales for updating our Drought Plan **88**

In accordance with Drought Plan guidance, this statement certifies that Yorkshire Water's Drought Plan 2027 has been reviewed by our security team. This 'public' version has some information redacted or edited out for reasons of national security. It does not contain any commercially sensitive information.

1. Drought plan overview



1.1 Introduction

Yorkshire Water provides clean and wastewater services to 5.5 million people and 140,000 businesses. Planning for droughts is an essential part of ensuring that our services remain resilient during extreme weather events.

1.1.1 What is a drought?

A drought is a naturally occurring prolonged period of dry weather that can last for a few weeks to several years. A lack of rainfall reduces the volume of water available in rivers, reservoirs and aquifers, which has the potential to create water supply problems and harm the environment. Prolonged dry weather can have social and economic impacts if it causes shortages of supply for public water supply, the environment, agriculture, or businesses. The impact of a drought varies depending on when a drought develops and how long it persists. For example, short periods of below average rainfall during the growing season can impact a farmer's crops, whereas it would take a longer dry period for a drought to affect water supply. Hot temperatures can make a drought worse by evaporating moisture from the soil, increasing water use, and reducing both water and oxygen in waterbodies to levels that are harmful to aquatic life.

1.1.2 What is a Drought Plan?

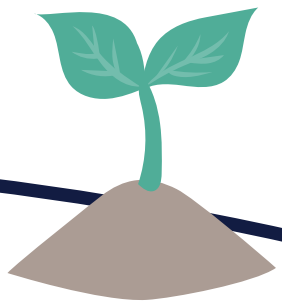
Our Drought Plan 2027 (DP27) details our operational response to a prolonged period of dry weather in order to maintain the security of our water supply. It identifies the actions we will take before, during and after a drought. It sets out how we will assess the effects of droughts, including the potential environmental impacts of any actions we might take and what we will do to monitor and prevent or mitigate the impacts.

As a water undertaker, we have a duty to prepare, publish and maintain a Drought Plan under the Water Industry Act 1991[2] and in accordance with the Drought Plan Regulations 2005 and the Drought Plan (England) Direction 2025. Our DP27 builds on our previous drought plans, incorporating both learning from recent dry weather events and the latest guidelines and government expectations. The most recent Environment Agency (EA) 'Water Company Drought Plan Guideline, 2025' (DPG2025) was published in June 2025. In July 2025, the Government stated its expectations for drought planning for water companies operating wholly or mainly in England (see Appendix 2).

In March 2026 we submitted our draft DP27 to the Secretary of State for the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) prior to publication in accordance with the Drought Plan (England) Direction 2025 (Appendix 1). We held an eight-week public consultation and made some revisions to our plan to address representations. This is our revised draft DP27 and on receipt of permission from Defra, we expect to publish a final version in 2027.

This DP27 is based on drought planning experience that we gained during previous drought events and formalises a process that has been successfully used in practice. Every drought is different and can challenge us in new ways to the last.

Figure 1-1 summarises the most significant droughts experienced in our region. Further information can be found in our supplementary report **Drought Plan 2027 – Drought Triggers and Worked Examples**.



[2] Sections 39B and 39C of the 1991 Water Industry Act (as amended by the Water Act 2003).

1900

1933–1934: Summer drought and dry winter throughout the region, but worst in south and west. This drought had a much more pronounced impact on surface water than groundwater in Yorkshire.

[The Locked Pump Drought - 1933 to 1935 | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology]

1929: Intense summer drought throughout the region.

1959: The months of February, May, August and September were particularly dry, and the summer and autumn were broadly warmer and sunnier than average; only from November onwards did rainfall amounts recover. Drought throughout the region, but not as severe in the west.

[Testing the Water Act - 1959 | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology]

1976: Intense summer drought throughout the south of England, and effects seen in southern Yorkshire reservoirs. The concept of 'grid management' was developed following lessons identified from this drought.

1990s: Several dry years in the east of Yorkshire-impacting groundwater levels.

1995–1996: Was the only two-year drought experienced in our supply area- most extreme in the west. Customer demand was restricted and drought permits/orders were in place through the region. This instigated considerable investment and by the end of 1996 around 95 % of customers were linked to a robust integrated grid water supply network (See figure 1.2). 99% of customers are now connected. Developments in computer modelling enabled the optimisation of water supplies together with centralised production planning, management and control.

2003: Drought conditions became established over most of the UK during the late winter and early spring of 2002/2003. The spring period saw a lack of rainfall and gave way to a long, hot summer with no significant reservoir refill until November.

[The Hot Summer - 2003 | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology]

2010–2011: We experienced uncharacteristically dry springs, preceded by cold winters, led to earlier than usual reservoir drawdowns. Control lines were recalculated.

2018: Unprecedented levels of peak demand in June and July due to heat wave conditions were sustained for several days at a time, and low rainfall continued into the autumn. We applied for and were granted two winter drought permits as a precautionary measure, but neither were implemented.

2020: Exceptionally low rainfall in April and May led to high summer demand peaks exacerbated by the impacts of COVID 19 as more people were at home during the day during lockdown. Rainfall in June led to a return to normal conditions.

2022: Rainfall was significantly below long-term average in March and April. The dry weather continued into June as temperatures increased to unprecedented levels, leading to high customer demand and rapid depletion of reservoir stocks.

2025: Driest February to August for 137 years resulted in an unprecedented early onset of severe drought that continued to the end of the year.

2025

Temporary use ban implemented

Drought permits/ orders implemented

Figure 1-1: Timeline of historical drought events and summary of impacts and learning

This DP27 has been prepared with reference to:

- Our WRMP24 - **Yorkshire Water - Water resources management plan**.
- WReN Regional Plan.
- WReN drought statement of intent - **waterresourcesnorth.org/globalassets/water-resources-north/wren-drought-group-statement-of-intent---v2-final.pdf**
- UKWIR 2023 - **Update to the Drought Code of Practice 2013**.
- EA/Defra guideline (2025) - **Water company Drought Plan guideline, 2025 - GOV.UK**.
- EA (2025) **Drought: how it is managed in England - GOV.UK.**
- EA (2025) Water resources framework for England: **National Framework for Water Resources 2025: water for growth, nature and a resilient future - GOV.UK**.
- Drought Plan (England) Direction 2025 – Reproduced in Appendix 1.
- Government expectations letter, July 2025 - Reproduced in Appendix 2.
- The Drought Plan Regulations 2005 - **The Drought Plan Regulations 2005**.
- Our Emergency Plan for Drought – this document is not in the public domain, which aligns with the approach set out in the DPG2025.

1.1.3 How we keep our Drought Plan up to date

We will revise and re-publish our DP27 in accordance with statutory requirements (to review every five years, or earlier, if required due to a material change to the plan or direction from Defra). This DP27 has been revised in line with the common submission dates for all water companies.

Each drought we experience tests our supply systems and processes, providing new learning that enables us to strengthen our resilience to future events. We will review our DP27 annually and following a drought event to determine if it is still fit for purpose and if any changes are needed. We will provide details of these reviews to the EA in an Annual Drought Health Check. If there is a material change that affects our plan, we will inform Defra, revise our plan and reconsult. If changes are non-material, we will provide an update via the WRMP Annual Review Process and consider publishing an addendum explaining the changes on our website. Details of any non-material changes will be incorporated into the next iteration of our Drought Plan.

We have assessed our learning from the most recent drought experienced in our region in 2025. We provide a summary of the outputs of our 2025 lessons identified in Section 9.4 and more details in Appendix 9. At the time of producing this revised draft DP27 the EA declared the Yorkshire region as being in drought status on 9th October 2026. We have not made any updates to our plan because of this event. However, as it is still ongoing, we will consider again as part of the DP27 annual review process.

During non-drought years we will undertake drought exercises to test our drought response and incorporate the lessons identified from recent droughts. This will take place in the form of workshops with key stakeholders such as the EA.

1.1.4 Pre-publication consultation

In line with the DPG2025, statutory and non-statutory consultees were invited to comment prior to publication of this draft DP27.

Our statutory consultees are:

- The Environment Agency (EA).
- The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).
- Ofwat.
- Water retailers[3] operating in our area.
- Natural England.

Our non-statutory consultees are those who have an interest in our DP27 or are likely to be affected by actions within our plan. They include:

- Consumer Council for Water (CCWater).
- Our neighbouring water companies: Anglian Water, Northumbrian Water, Severn Trent Water and United Utilities.
- Regional water resources groups.
- New Appointments and Variations (NAVs).
- Local authorities, environmental groups, angling clubs, fish farms, and river trusts.
- Representative bodies such as National Farmers' Union (NFU), Internal Drainage Boards and Mining Remediation Authority.
- Historic England.
- The National Trust.
- The Canal and River Trust (CRT).
- Local resilience forums.
- National parks.

[3] open-water.org.uk/for-customers/find-a-retailer/suppliers/english-water-and-wastewater-retailers/

We consulted with water retailers who supply premises in the Yorkshire Water supply area using the public water networks we operate in our area and NAVs.

At the time of writing this DP27 there are six NAVs in our area, all providing water and wastewater services.

> NAVs are companies that provide a water and/or sewerage service to customers in an area previously supplied by the incumbent water company (Yorkshire Water is an example of an incumbent).
>
> Water retailers are companies who supply water to non-domestic customers and either hold a retail supply licence, which allows them to supply non-domestic premises, or a combined supply licence, which allows the holder to introduce water into the supply system for supplying its own customers.

At the time of writing this DP27 there are 30 water retailers operating in our region.

Our pre-publication consultation took place between December 2024 and January 2025 and was in the form of an email and information pack, sent to all of the above consultees, explaining that we were revising our Drought Plan in accordance with regulatory requirements. They were provided with the opportunity to respond in writing or meet with us to discuss the content of the Drought Plan.

We have also consulted the EA, Natural England (NE) and Historic England on our Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) scoping report (SEA Report[4]).

We thank the following organisations for responding to our pre-consultation and SEA Report consultation:

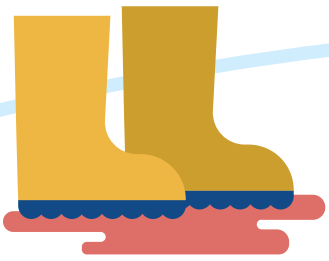
- Anglian Water.
- Canal & Rivers Trust.
- Derbyshire County Council.
- Environment Agency.
- Historic England.
- Natural England.
- National Farmers Union.
- North Yorkshire Council.
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

We took account of these responses when preparing our draft DP27 for public consultation.

1.1.5 Public consultation

In accordance with statutory requirements[5] a draft version of our DP27 was published on our website for consultation. We held an eight-week consultation period starting from 22nd May 2026.

We have responded to representations received by issuing a statement of response and incorporating changes into this revised draft DP27. A final version of the DP27 will be published once we receive authorisation from Defra.



[4] We are consulting regulators on this SEA Report in line with Regulation 12(5) of the *'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'*.

[5] The Drought Plan Regulations 2005 and the Drought Plan (England) Direction 2025.

1.2 The Yorkshire Water Region

1.2.1 Our water resource zones

To provide clean water for our customers, we collect 1.3 billion litres of water from more than 100 reservoirs[6], 9 river and 50 groundwater sources every day. We have 50 water treatment works and a 32,000km clean water pipe network. For water resource planning purposes our supply system is divided into two water resource zones based on network connectivity: the Grid Surface Water Zone (SWZ) and the East SWZ (Figure 1-2). These zones are used to manage drought as well as being the WRMP Water Resources Zones.



Figure 1-2: Our water resource zones (WRZs). Grid surface water zone and East Surface Water Zone

[6] Some of these reservoirs are not for supply but provide compensation flow to the downstream watercourses.

Over 99% of our customers are supplied from the Grid SWZ. Figure 1-3 shows the current grid system. This provides customers with a robust supply system, capable of maintaining our levels of service during severe, localised droughts.

The interconnectivity enables the drought action benefits to be spread across the zone.

The East SWZ supplies the remaining 1% of customers. It is supplied by a river abstraction and moorland springs. Water from the springs is stored in a local reservoir which provides resilience to this zone if the river water is temporarily unavailable.

During droughts we operate at water resource zone level but actions such as communications are applied across both zones. Level 3a supply actions are applied at a sub water zonal level as they are grouped geographically, as described in **Section 2.3**.



Figure 1-3: Yorkshire Water grid system

1.3 Links to other plans

Our DP27 is aligned with our other water resource plans which include our water resource management plans (WRMPs) and the Water Resources Regional Plan. The '**National Framework for Water Resources 2025: water for growth, nature and a resilient future**' (EA, 2025) sets out how regional water resource planning brings together multi-sector water users and informs company WRMPs to ensure long-term water supply resilience.

Our five yearly business plan includes funding required to deliver WRMP solutions and improve drought resilience. Our latest business plan can be viewed at **Yorkshire Water - Our plans for 2025-2030**.

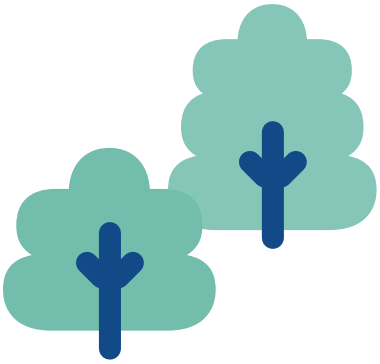
Our DP27 also aligns with our neighbouring company Severn Trent Water's Drought Plan regarding a transfer of water into the South Yorkshire area (see **Section 9.2** and **Appendix 4**).

1.3.1 Regional planning: Water Resources North (WReN)

Yorkshire Water is part of the WReN group together with Northumbrian Water Limited and Hartlepool Water (which is part of Anglian Water Limited). **Figure 1-4** summarises the WReN region and water company boundaries. The WReN Final Regional Plan[7] was published in June 2025.

During droughts a WReN Drought Group, consisting of regulators, stakeholders and water companies, would convene and meet regularly. Further information on regional co-ordination in droughts is provided in **Section 5.5.1**.

A 'lessons identified' exercise was undertaken in April 2026 to understand how the WReN Drought Group can best support its members and wider abstractors in the region during a drought. This included a review of activities undertaken during the drought, understanding what worked well, what did not work well, and what the group can improve the next time it is needed. The workshop covered the group's processes, communication methods, drought impacts, resource constraints, and data availability.



[7] WReN final regional water resources plan

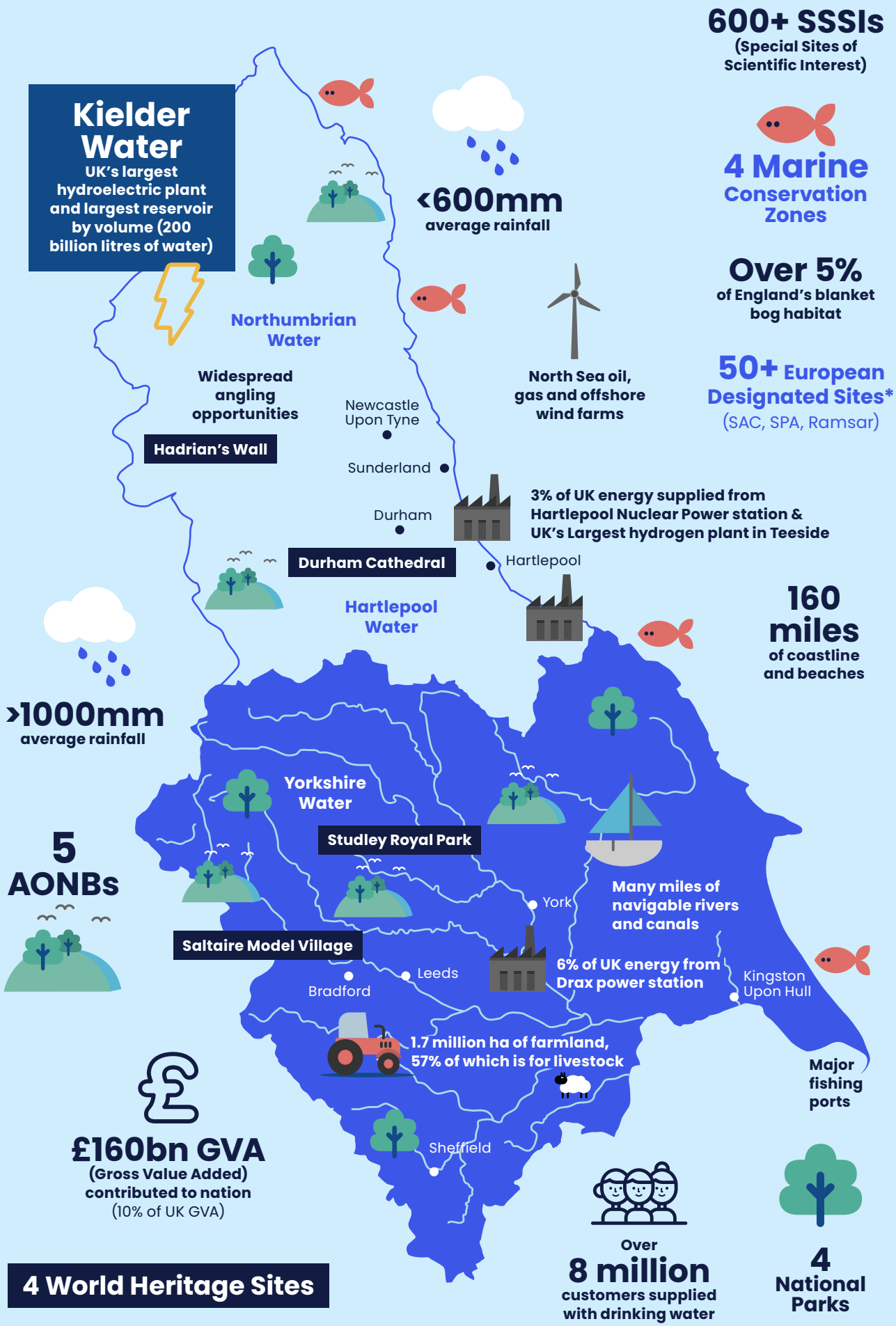


Figure 1-4: WReN region

1.3.2 Our Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)

All water companies have a legal requirement to produce a Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) every five years. Our current plan is **WRMP24** and covers the 60-year period from 2025 to 2085. Our WRMP24 outlines our twin-track approach to deliver water demand reduction and increased water supply. Our approach addresses the challenges of population growth and climate change whilst ensuring environmental protection and long-term water supply sustainability and drought resilience.

Our WRMP24 is an adaptive plan, with different pathways that represent our most likely future scenario and alternative scenarios. Under all pathways we will invest to address the challenges, but the final decision on the exact mix of solutions we will deliver is dependent on the scenario we encounter. The plan includes defined triggers and actions for diverting to an alternative pathway in the future if new information indicates we are following a different scenario pathway. We may divert to an alternative plan once the risks are certain and we are able to identify with confidence the pathway we are following.

Our WRMP24 scenarios represent extreme dry weather and drought actions will be needed in some years. Over the life of our plan, we will become less reliant on drought actions as we invest in new supplies and demand reduction interventions.

1.3.3 Our Emergency Drought Plan

In England, a Drought Plan will cover the drought levels of prolonged dry weather (drought level 1), drought (drought level 2) and severe drought (drought level 3). A drought emergency (drought level 4) occurs when there is serious threat of restrictions to public water supply (which would necessitate, for instance, using standpipes or rota cuts)[8]. Our DP27 covers actions up to the classification of an emergency.

Our Emergency Drought Plan provides an operational framework to safeguard public health and maintain essential water services during an emergency drought. The plan outlines a staged, risk-based approach to managing acute water shortages through controlled disconnection of piped supplies whilst prioritising vulnerable customers and critical infrastructure. It integrates regulatory guidance, operational feasibility, and customer impact mitigation, whilst ensuring compliance with the 'Water company security and emergency measures: 2024 ministerial direction'. The plan also details the deployment of alternative water supplies, coordination with Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), and strategies to support affected communities throughout the incident lifecycle.

[8] gov.uk/government/publications/drought-management-for-england/drought-how-it-is-managed-in-england

1.4 Drought stages

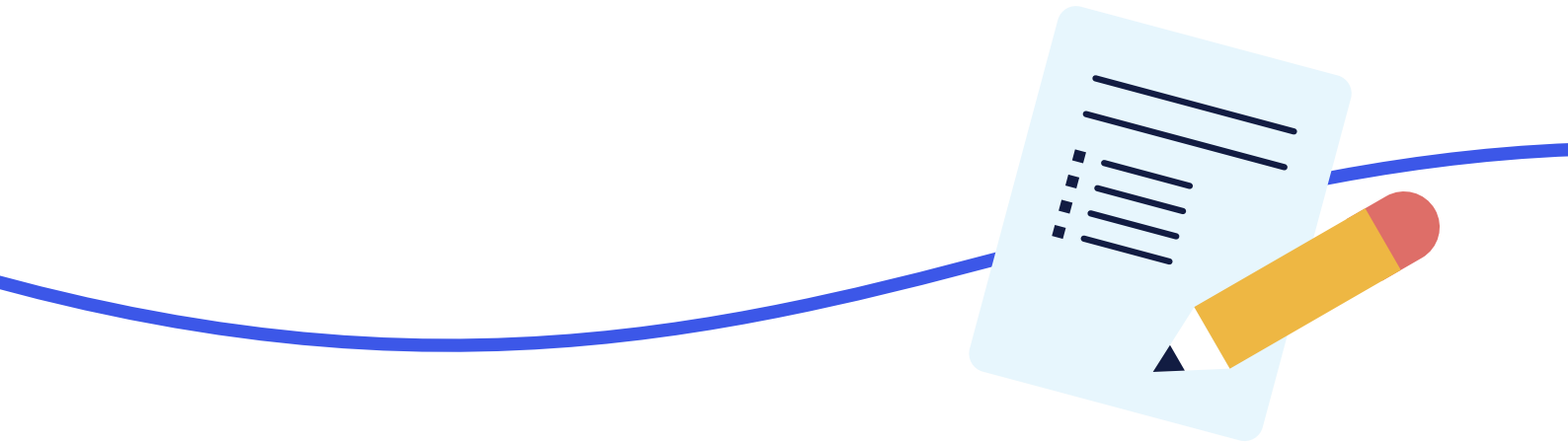
The EA defines drought stages and levels in its policy paper on drought management[9] and describes its role in a drought in our region in its Yorkshire Area Drought Plan[10]. The EA's drought stages and levels represent the drought status escalating from "normal" (not in drought) to "severe drought" as summarised in Table 1-1.

As rainfall starts to replenish water supplies the status moves to "recovering drought" before a return to normal.

This DP27 details our triggers for drought levels 1 to 4 and actions for drought levels 1 to 3. Our Emergency Drought Plan sets out our incident management response and actions if we reach level 4 of a drought.

Drought Stage	Drought level	Indicators
Normal stage (green)	Business as usual	Small incidents during a short summer heat wave
Prolonged dry weather stage (yellow)	1	Established period of low indicators for the time of the year
Drought stage (amber)	2	Prolonged and notably low indicators for the time of year
	3a	
Severe drought stage (red)	3b	Exceptionally low indicators over a long period of time
	4	
Recovering drought stage (amber)	Some actions may still be in place	Returning within low or normal ranges for time of year

Table 1-1: EA Drought Stages



[9] gov.uk/government/publications/drought-management-for-england/drought-how-it-is-managed-in-england

[10] The EA provides water companies with its Drought Plan but does not publish this on its website.

1.4.1 How our plans link to the drought stages

Figure 1-5 shows how our WRMP, DP27 and Emergency Drought Plan support drought management. Our WRMP24 plans for level 1 to level 3a actions being required in future droughts. Our DP27 provides information on when each drought level is triggered and details actions up to level 3b.

At drought level 4 we would implement the actions set out in our Emergency Drought Plan. This would only be needed in a very severe, unprecedented drought situation.

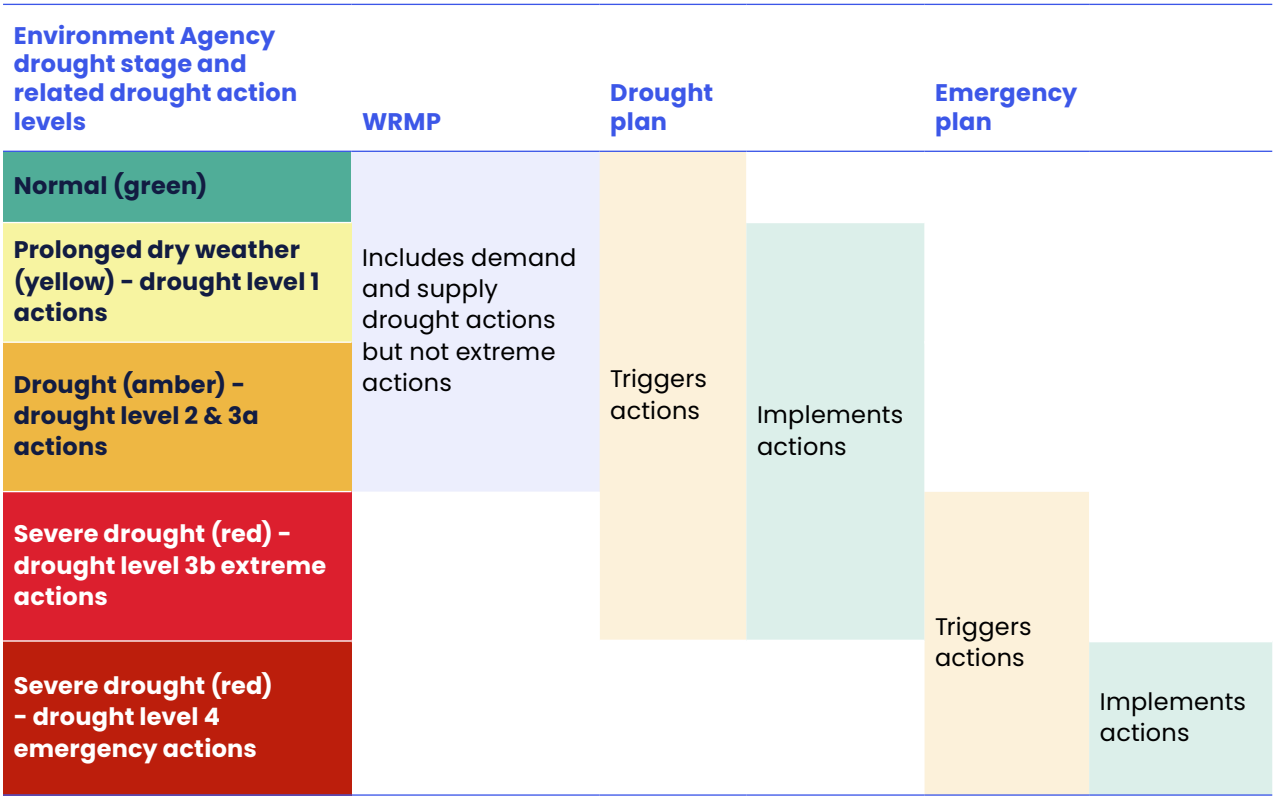


Figure 1-5: Drought stages linked to our WRMP, Drought Plan and emergency plan (source DPG2025)

1.4.2 Our levels of service

Our levels of service for drought return periods are defined in **Table 1-2**. This is an average over a long period of time and does not preclude a more frequent occurrence if we experience multiple dry years within a short time period.

The level of service for drought actions is the standard of service that customers can expect to receive from their water company. These are expressed as a frequency of implementing different drought actions which are often shown as a return period, for example, 1 in 25 years for a temporary use ban (TUB). This is an average value calculated over a long period.

This doesn't mean that we would expect a temporary use ban (TUB) to be implemented once every 25 years but that we are likely to experience times when the number of restrictions are more frequent. This will be countered over the long-term by periods of time when the restrictions are less frequent, resulting in a 1 in 25 year return period on average.

EA Drought Stage	Drought Actions	Target Level of Service for drought actions	Grid SWZ Level of Service for drought actions
Normal	No drought actions, business as usual operational activities.		Not applicable (N/A).
Level 1	Communications campaign, voluntary reductions in use, increased leakage control, optimisation of supply network.		N/A - These early drought actions are delivered to some extent in most years as part of normal operations and practices.
Level 2	TUB, drought permits and orders with minor environmental impacts.	No more than 1 in 25 years on average.	No more than 1 in 25 years on average.
Level 3a	Water supply drought permits and orders with moderate to major environmental impacts and non-essential use ban (NEUB).	No more than 1 in 80 years on average.	1 in 50 years until 2026/2027. 1 in 80 years or greater from 2027/2028.
Level 3b	Extreme drought actions.		(N/A)

Table 1-2: Yorkshire Water levels of service mapped to drought actions

A temporary use ban or TUB restricts domestic water activities such as using a hosepipe to water your garden, wash your car or fill a paddling pool. A non-essential use ban or NEUB allows us to restrict specific non-household activities such as operating a mechanical vehicle washer, cleaning non-domestic premises, or watering outdoor plants at a commercial location. See Section 3 for more information.

Levels of service stated in this DP27 are aligned with our WRMP24 and are categorised according to the EA drought status and drought levels defined above. Each of our water resource zones have the same target levels of service. Our East SWZ is currently meeting these levels and we are investing in our Grid SWZ to achieve these levels.

Previously, we calculated our levels of service using extreme value analyses of our historical data, however, for WRMP24 we have used an improved methodology based on stochastic time series, in line with the latest guidance. The stochastic modelling shows greater frequency of extremely dry years, revealing vulnerabilities in our water supply system, which has resulted in lower levels of service for our level 4 restrictions than those stated in our WRMP19 and Drought Plan 2022.

The National Framework for Water Resources (2025) requires drought resilience for a 1 in 500-year drought for public water supply by 2040. Our **WRMP24** explains in detail how we will increase our levels of service to meet this requirement. Prior to the use of stochastic modelling, our level of service already met the 1 in 500-year requirement, however, the improved methodology, using a 19,200-year stochastic data series, gives us a more detailed understanding of the frequency of extreme drought and enables us to better define our resilience.

1.5 How we manage our water resources

1.5.1 Managing our water available for use

We take a fully integrated, source to tap, approach to planning and managing water resources across Yorkshire. Our primary objective is to ensure that excellent quality water is reliably supplied at minimum cost to customers and the environment.

We use reservoirs, rivers, and groundwater as our primary sources of water. Having diversity in our water sources increases our water supply resilience because we are not dependent on only one type of source. This allows us to operate a conjunctive use system that balances our use of different sources across the year to meet demand and maintain security of supply within operating rules and licence constraints.

Our conjunctive use system works on the principle that we can use available river resources in the winter and spring to preserve reservoir and groundwater storage. Maintaining high reservoir and groundwater storage levels in the spring enables us to balance abstractions across all sources during the summer period when at times there is lower availability at some river sources.

1.5.2 Our reporting and monitoring processes

We utilise our routine reporting and resource management processes to monitor resources during droughts. These processes increase in frequency during dry periods to support drought action decision making. Key reports and plans include:

Water Situation Report (Watsit): This report provides current data on rainfall, river flows, groundwater levels, reservoir storage, and demand for the Yorkshire region. It monitors storage against control lines that are used to define our drought status.

Water Production Planning Report: The water production planning report determines resource flow targets for the week ahead. We optimise use of these sources each week subject to demand and licence constraints.

Water Resource Allocation Plan (WRAP): As part of our weekly production planning process, we use the WRAP model to allocate resources for the upcoming week based on forecast demand, river flows, reservoir and groundwater operating rules, and licensing constraints. It considers factors such as abstraction licence conditions and temporary constraints and incorporates data from the Water Resources Planning Report to align operational plans with longer-term risks.

Water Resources Planning Report: We use a water resources simulation model to forecast the development of a drought in different scenarios. The water resource planning report is an output of the simulation model showing the historical rainfall, rainfall scenarios and high demand of various scenarios using historical rainfall and high demand on our water resource system. This helps us identify areas and reservoirs at risk, assess the need for mitigating activities, and evaluates the likelihood of control lines being crossed.

Drought prospects reporting: The EA request water companies forecast drought risks every year. We do this by using water resource models which utilise stochastic inflow data to forecast the impact of different percentage of long-term average (for example, 60%) rainfall scenarios over the next 6 months. The risk depends on the actual reservoir stock levels at the time of forecasting, and if lower than average the risk of drought is greater. If we are in 'recovering from drought' status, our drought prospects report helps with the decision-making on the lifting of drought actions.

Further details on our reporting and monitoring are provided in Appendix 4.

2. Drought triggers

Drought indicators are used to determine when we need to prepare for and implement drought actions. This Section details how we define our drought triggers and use them to monitor our water resources situation to understand when drought actions could be needed. The drought actions available to us are defined by drought levels and are detailed in Section 3.

2.1 Assessing our drought vulnerability

We have assessed our drought resilience using the UKWIR Drought Vulnerability Framework (DVF) (17/WR/02/12) as part of our WRMP24 development. This approach uses operational, hydrological, climate, demand and stochastic inflow data to run scenarios which provide an indication of how vulnerable a water resource zone is to drought. The outputs include drought response surfaces which show how a water system behaves under different combinations of drought conditions.

A summary of the main findings is provided below and more details on drought vulnerability and drought response surfaces, can be found in Appendix 3.

Grid SWZ scenarios were run at a 1 in 200 deployable output demand of 1356Ml/d. The main conclusions of the assessment were:

- The Grid SWZ is vulnerable to droughts lasting 6 to 12 months.
- Stochastic droughts represent far worse events than have been seen in the historical record, which means we are preparing for worse events than those that have already been experienced.
- The analyses have been carried out on the stochastic inflows for fixed drought durations. Extreme events such as long duration droughts are likely to become more common as the impacts of climate change worsens.
- The worst historical droughts in our 132-year rainfall record would not have required level 4 restrictions. The stochastic data shows a 1 in 200 return period drought scenario lasting for 12-months could trigger level 4 actions for one week.
- The DVF illustrates the resilience of our supply system both to droughts we have experienced historically and to droughts of up to 200-year return periods.

The DVF demonstrates our drought resilience, but it has not been used to define our drought triggers because the stochastic data generated far more extreme droughts than we have experienced historically. Historical rainfall data indicates that our 1995-96 drought was an outlier in the 132-year dataset, whereas the stochastic dataset generates a drought of the same severity with a return period of 1 in 50 years. Therefore, our drought triggers have been defined by analysis of historical inflows (control lines) and historical demands (demand triggers).

The first stage of the DVF is a high-level screening. The results of this for the East SWZ showed no further detailed assessment was needed for this zone.

2.2 Reservoir trigger bands

We use our regional reservoir stock levels as indicators of a drought developing and when we need to implement drought actions. Every drought is different, and the triggers provide our drought teams with a guide to aid decision-making. In a drought we will be monitoring the situation against predicted rainfall and declining reservoir stocks, and the exact timing of actions may be brought forward or delayed if there are benefits of doing so.

Regional reservoir stocks represent the combined storage of all our impounding reservoirs that provide water supplies in the Grid SWZ however, the triggers apply to both our WRZs.

Our East SWZ is a small area and depends on a single river and spring-fed reservoir. It is important to take early actions and conserve supplies in the spring-fed reservoir so that demand can be met if the river supply becomes unavailable. Therefore, drought actions such as appeals for constraint and a TUB are implemented on crossing level 1 and 2 triggers in the Grid SWZ. There are no level 3a supply options for the East SWZ.

Our drought action sequencing is linked to the drought levels defined by the EA and described in section 1.4.1. We use reservoir control lines to provide upper and lower boundaries of each drought level which means each level is represented by a "reservoir band".

A control line (CL) represents a reservoir storage level that we use operationally. Each control line defines a different operation cost based on time of year. We continually monitor and assess our reservoir storage levels against these control lines as explained in Section 1.5. We have 10 control lines in total and several of these are used to inform the trigger bands for each drought level. These are CL 3 referred to as the normal control line (NCL), CL 4 which represents reservoirs entering prolonged dry weather status or level 1. Levels 2 to 3b are defined relative to CL 5, 6, 7 and 8, and CL10 represents reservoir emergency storage or a level 4 drought.

We have calculated our control lines using historical reservoir inflow sequences from 1900 (the start of our period of record) and we have designed them to minimise the risk of reservoir stocks falling below the emergency storage level (CL10).

The development of these control lines is described in more detail in the supplementary report, **DP27 – Drought Triggers and Worked Examples**. Please refer to our **WRMP24** for more detailed information on control lines.

New control lines have been derived using historical inflows updated to incorporate the drought inflows of 2025. This update also includes a re-assessment of dead storage and unusable storage in our reservoirs, allowing revised assumptions for our level 4 trigger band.

Below we describe our drought trigger bands developed for moving from normal status to drought levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. The triggers are also used in reverse during drought recovery as stocks replenish and to indicate the end of a drought, when stocks have recovered sufficiently for drought actions to cease.

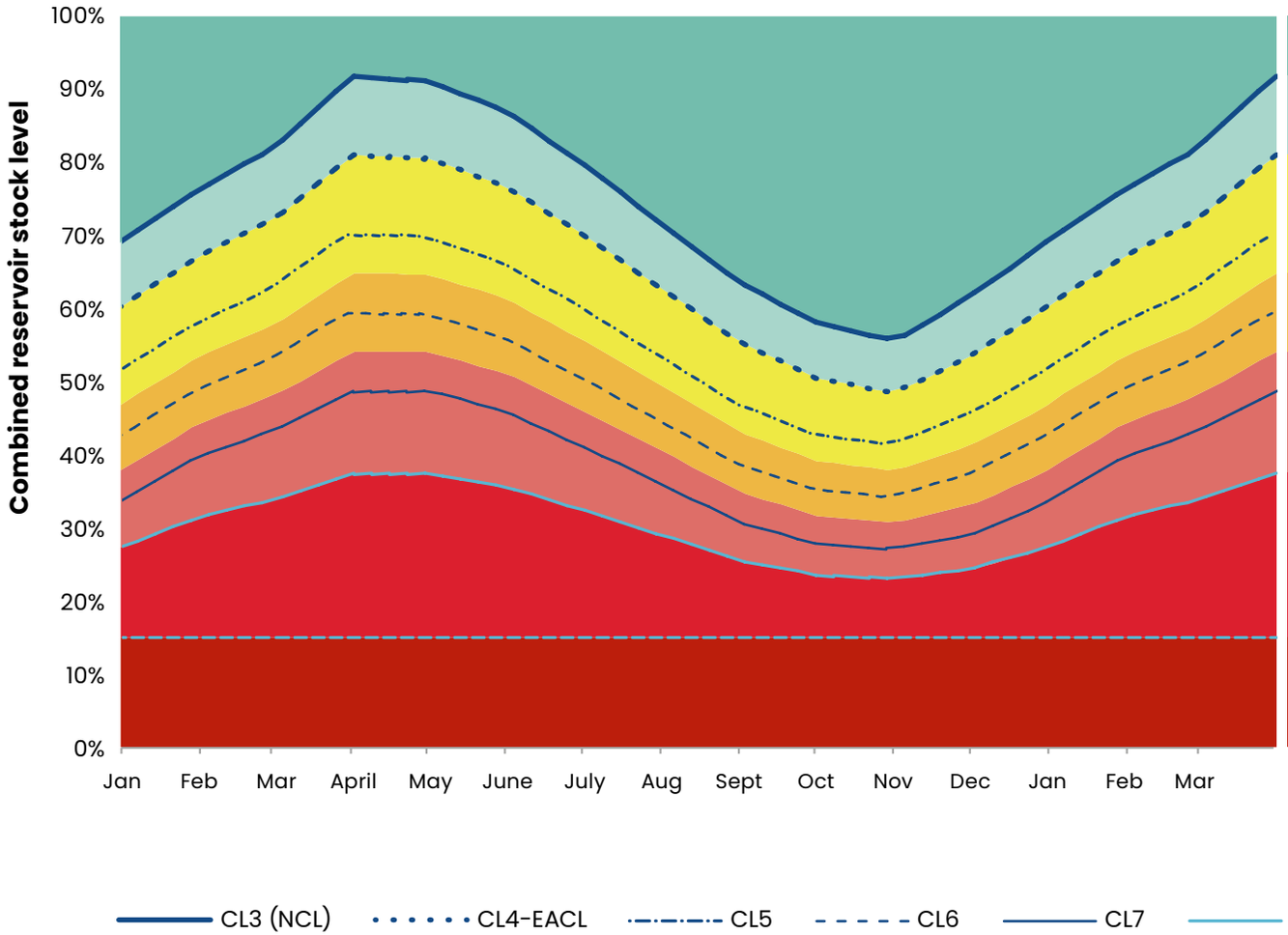
2.2.1 Drought triggers

We have updated our approach to triggers as part of our lessons identified from the 2025 drought. This change moves away from absolute triggers dictated by single control lines and the forecasting of crossing each control line. Drought status is now defined by actual reservoir levels and the decision to implement actions is based on reservoir stock levels combined with modelling of historical drought events and weather factors such as predicted rainfall and temperatures.

Our drought trigger bands for each drought Level are shown in Figure 2-1. The drought bands are aligned with the drought levels 1 to 4 and when stocks are above level 1 we are not in drought. Figure 2-1 shows the upper and lower boundary of the bands for each drought level in relation to the reservoir control lines. This approach better aligns our worked examples to the example in Appendix B of the DPG2025.

Entering each band triggers specific actions but the exact timing of implementation within the band is dependent on a range of drought indicators including reservoir stock levels, scenario modelling and weather data. Our scenario modelling will be used to assess the likelihood of stocks reaching the next band across a range of rainfall scenarios based on previous droughts. Weather data will be used to assess the risk based on the current situation. We will use this information in combination to support decision making on when to implement actions when stocks are in each trigger band.

Regional reservoir group triggers and actions



Band name	Upper boundary	Lower boundary
Above NCL	100% stocks	Normal Control Line (NCL; CL3)
Below NCL	NCL (CL3)	Environment Agency Control Line (EACL; CL4)
Level 1	EACL (CL4)	Midway between CL5 & CL6
Level 2	Midway between CL5 & CL6	Midway between CL6 & CL7
Level 3a	Midway between CL6 & CL7	CL8
Level 3b	CL8	15% stocks (CL10)
Level 4	15% stocks (CL10)	0% stocks

Figure 2-1: Drought level trigger bands

Normal (green)

We are in normal (green) status when regional reservoir stocks are above control line. Within this band we include NCL. When stocks are above this line our operations are considered business as usual (BAU). Crossing the NCL does not indicate a drought risk, but we will make operational changes to conserve reservoir supplies as an early measure in case a drought does develop. We will already be promoting water saving to customers as part of our annual campaign and will consider enhancing messages as part of our agile communications strategy (see **Section 5**).

Level 1 (yellow)

The upper boundary of drought level 1 is control line 4. When reservoir stocks reach this level, it is indicative of lower than usual reservoir stocks due to prolonged dry weather that could lead to supply issues if dry weather continues.

Level 2 (amber)

Reservoirs enter the level 2 band (amber) trigger as being when stocks are midway between control lines 5 and 6. It is at this stage our region is likely to be classed as in drought.

Level 3a (amber)

We enter the level 3a band when regional reservoir stocks are midway between control line 6 and control line 7. The drought risk is still classed as amber when reservoir stocks are in this band but further actions may be needed to conserve supplies for customers and the environment in case the drought worsens.

Level 3b (red)

Reservoir stocks enter level 3b when reservoir stocks are at control line 8. At this stage we are in a severe drought situation but would not be implementing emergency measures.

Level 4 (red)

We enter level 4 if regional reservoir stocks reach 15% of the total reservoir storage. Emergency storage is estimated to be at 15% of total reservoir stocks but at this stage water quality is uncertain. A proportion of the emergency storage will be "dead storage", which is the unusable water that is either untreatable or below the lowest draw-off point of any particular reservoir. The emergency storage has been calculated to provide approximately 30 days of supply and compensation flows above the unusable storage.

When reservoir stocks enter level 4 we will transition from our Drought Plan into our Emergency Drought Plan. Crossing into this level does not automatically trigger emergency restrictions, which are subject to receiving an emergency drought order. We would implement emergency actions after crossing the level 4 trigger and before reaching dead storage. The extent of the restrictions would be based on local risks and mitigation measures.

Preparing for actions

As well as delivering drought actions in each trigger band we will start to prepare for later actions should they be needed. If reservoirs are continuing to decline, and our modelling shows a risk of entering the next band, we will make customers and stakeholders aware of the situation and plan for entering the next band.

Drought recovery triggers

We use reservoir level and weather data to monitor the recovery of drought and trigger when we should consider ceasing drought actions. However, we would only cease implementing drought actions if our modelling showed the risk of re-entering drought status was no greater than a "normal year". More information on this is provided in **Section 7**.

Figure 2-1 in Section 2.4 illustrates the regional trigger bands and actions.

2.3 Reservoir group triggers

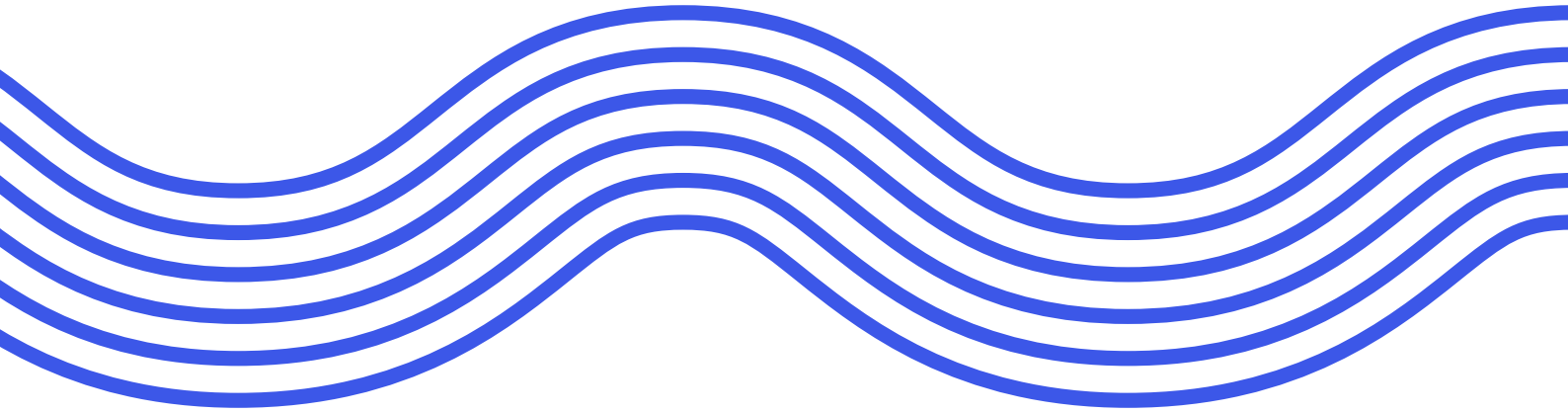
We have grouped the Grid SWZ reservoirs into five reservoir groups linked to the catchment areas that make up the zone. These five groups in combination make up the regional reservoir group.

As we have a large number of reservoirs in the Grid SWZ, we use the groups to allow us to streamline supply-side drought actions that temporarily reduce compensation water flows from relevant reservoirs. These actions require authorisations (drought permits or orders) from the EA or Defra, and it is more efficient to group applications than to submit one by one (Section 3.4).

A compensation water flow (or release) is a minimum discharge released from a reservoir to the downstream river to maintain natural flow conditions and / or support water users and in-river ecology where impoundment would otherwise reduce the river's flow. In some circumstances the legal requirement is to maintain a minimum downstream flow level rather than release a prescribed volume. Compensation water flows are legally prescribed in a historical act of parliament, an abstraction licence or an impoundment licence. In some instances, we have an agreement with the EA to alter the compensation flow requirement where the prescribed flow is no longer appropriate for the site. This is known as a Local Enforcement Position (LEP).

The reservoir groups are summarised in Table 2-1.

Reservoir groups including the regional reservoir group are relevant to our Grid SWZ only. The East SWZ is a much smaller area with a single reservoir that has no compensation flow requirements.



Drought management reservoir group	Number of reservoirs in group	Number of Drought Options in group
North Reservoir Group	**Total reservoirs - 9 made up from:** 6 reservoirs used for public water supply; and 3 reservoirs used for (i) public water supply and (ii) compensation water flow compliance. Note: There are a further 3 compensation only reservoirs that are not included in the groupings for stock level comparisons.	5
North West Reservoir Group	**Total reservoirs - 17 made up from:** 10 reservoirs used for public water supply; and 7 reservoirs used for (i) public water supply and (ii) compensation water flow compliance. Note: there are also 7 compensation only reservoirs, which are not included in the group for stock level comparisons.	11
South Reservoir Group	**Total reservoirs - 17 made up from:** 13 reservoirs used for public water supply; and 4 reservoirs used for (i) public water supply and (ii) compensation water flow compliance. Note: there are also 7 compensation only reservoirs, which are not included in the group for stock level comparisons.	8
South West Reservoir Group	**Total reservoirs - 28 made up from:** 17 reservoirs used for public water supply; and 11 reservoirs used for (i) public water supply and (ii) compensation water flow compliance. Note: there are also 5 compensation only reservoirs, which are not included in the group for stock level comparisons.	18
East Group	**Total reservoirs – 3 made up from:** 2 bankside storage reservoirs, and the Hull borehole group that is modelled as a reservoir (supply only).	0*

Table 2-1: Yorkshire Water drought management reservoir groups for the Grid SWZ WRZ.

* Comprises the Hull Borehole Group and reservoirs that store water abstracted from the River Hull. No compensation related supply-side drought actions required in this group. However, there are supply side options on the rivers Hull and Derwent that can support the area supplied by the East Group.

We determine scheduling of applications for drought permits or orders by monitoring the reservoir stock levels for each of our five reservoir groups. Compensation water flow reductions are not applicable to the East Group as this area of the Grid SWZ has no impounding reservoirs releasing compensation water flows.

Five of the 'compensation only reservoirs' have no direct or indirect link to public water supply. These are monitored in the same way as public water supply reservoirs and drought actions will benefit the environment but there is no water supply benefit. Drought triggers and actions are linked to the individual reservoir stocks and control lines. The EA is responsible for applying for drought orders to reduce the compensation at these reservoirs in a drought. The other compensation only reservoirs would require drought permits to reduce the compensation flows as they can either be supported by other reservoirs or are mentioned in licences.

More information on reservoir stock levels and control lines for the regional reservoir group are included in the supplementary report, **DP27 – Drought Triggers and Worked Examples.**

2.4 Linking triggers to actions

Figure 2-1 shows regional stocks and provides an example timeline of the drought triggers and actions we would take leading up to implementation of level 3b actions.

The timing of actions will vary depending on the rate of falling stocks. We use previous droughts to create worked examples for drought triggers and associated actions based on historical droughts. We have also created examples of droughts more extreme than historically experienced. This helps us test the triggers and timescales for taking action. When in an actual drought the developing situation will also influence decisions on when to implement actions.

In **Figure 2-1** triggers are crossed in one year, whereas in a real drought not all triggers will necessarily be crossed in a single year and in some months reservoir stocks may increase before declining again. It's also possible future droughts could be worse than previously experienced.

If our drought indicators show a risk that drought actions could be needed, we will start to prepare well in advance. The timing of actions is influenced by the evolving situation, for instance, if we experience a rapid reduction in reservoir levels as in 2025, we may accelerate our preparatory actions and convene our drought management team earlier.

Alternatively, we may delay if sufficient rainfall is forecast for the actions to be delayed or not required.

Regional reservoir group triggers and actions

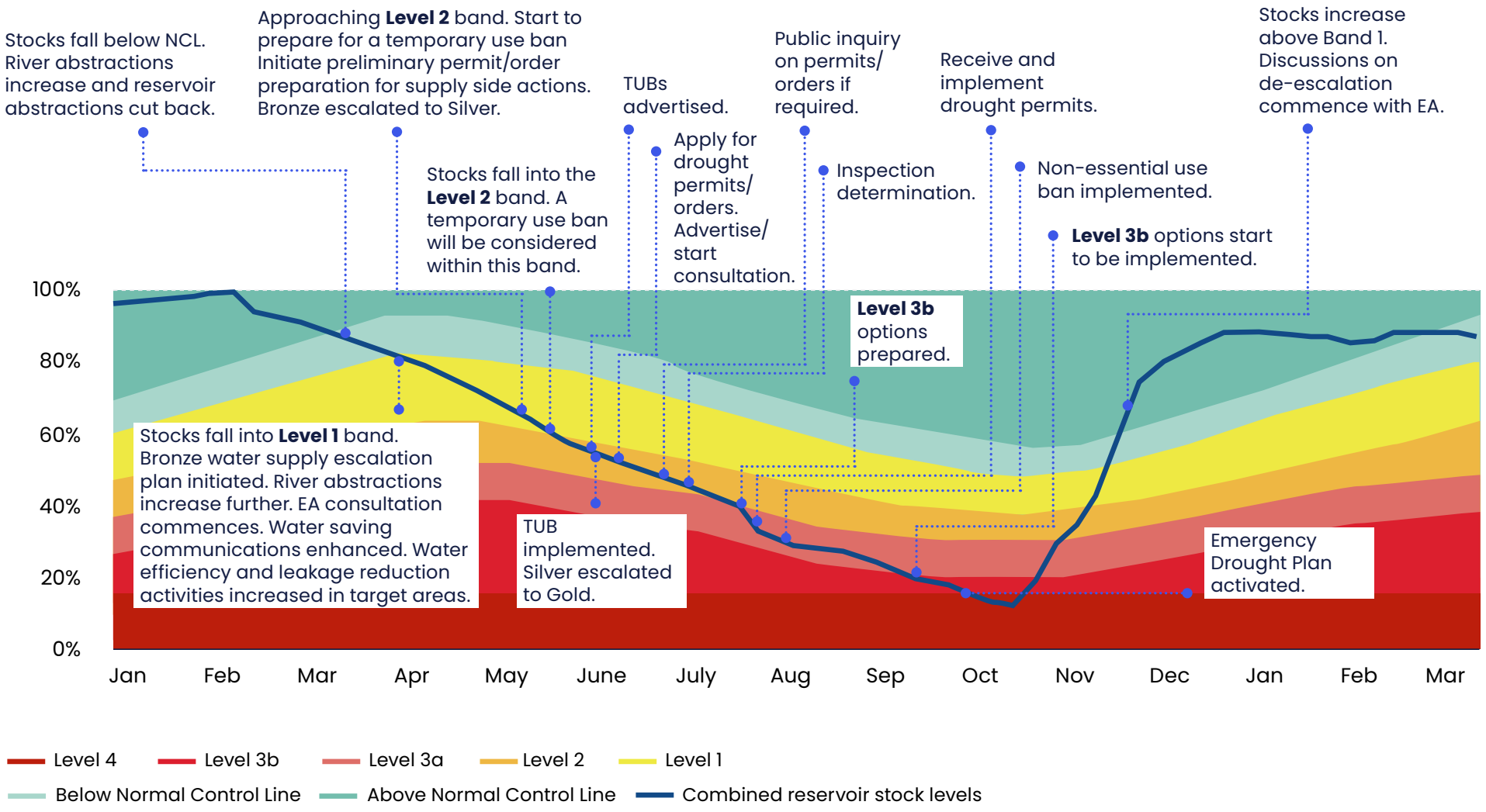


Figure 2-2: Regional reservoir group triggers and actions

Table 2-2 lists the drought options available when reservoir stocks enter each drought level. The actions in each successive band are accumulative and will continue until we see signs of recovery. Preparatory activities start in the preceding drought level, helping us to be ready for when actions need to be implemented. When reservoir stocks are in level 3b we will prepare to transition from our Drought Plan to our Emergency Drought Plan.

Trigger	Action
Normal (green)	
Non-drought actions	River, reservoir and groundwater sources will be operated flexibly within permitted abstraction levels to balance use of water sources across the region. If reservoir stocks fall below the NCL, reservoir output is reduced where feasible to do so and river and groundwater abstractions optimised subject to licence conditions. Annual water conservation messaging and activities will be ongoing. Communications will take into account the short-term weather forecasts, enhancing messages if the forecast is dry with high temperatures, and adapted if heavy rain is forecast.
Preparation for entering level 1 band	Communication team prepare to enhance customer water saving messages to raise awareness of the prolonged dry weather and additional need to conserve water.
Level 1 Prolonged dry weather (yellow)	
Actions delivered in band	Start drought liaison with local Environment Agency team. Escalate to Bronze Risk (as defined in Company Incident Management Plan) and key YW teams meet to ensure that appropriate water supply escalation activity is implemented. Initiate drought communications and appeal for voluntary reductions in use via a range of media. This activity will continue at all levels with the tone and scale of messaging increasing at each level. Consider and prioritise demand reduction activities such as increased active leakage control, pressure management and water saving audits in areas where there is a likely to be most benefit. Enhance communications with key stakeholders e.g. NAVs, retailers, NFU and regional planning groups.
Preparation for entering level 2 band	Bronze Risk escalated to Silver (as defined in Company Incident Management Plan). Initiate preparative actions for level 2 temporary use ban (TUB) and level 3a demand-side drought orders to restrict non-essential use e.g. brief YW teams, prepare adverts for a temporary use ban. Start preliminary permit/order preparation for level 3a supply side actions. Reservoir storage will be closely monitored and applications prioritised based on the risk to individual groups.

Trigger	Action
Level 2 Drought (amber)	
Actions delivered in band	Silver escalated to Gold (as defined in Company Incident Management Plan). If in this level between 1st April to 30th September advertise/consult on temporary use bans for a minimum of 72 hours before imposing the ban. Assess the benefit of a demand-side drought order to impose a non-essential use ban (NEUB) and consider whether to apply. Preparation of Environmental Assessment Reports and ordinary supply side drought order / permit applications as required. Start permit pre-consultation with key downstream abstractors and stakeholders (e.g. angling groups or local environment groups) where required. Contact NE on any potential supply side drought permits/orders that could impact sites designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended or Wildlife and Countryside Act. Start pre-application process for drought permits with EA. Advertise / provide notice of drought permit / order applications, start the public consultation and submit applications to EA / Defra. Applications will be phased and, in most circumstances, we expect the first application to be submitted at least seven days after formally advertising a TUB (between 1st April to 30th September). Review any representations and objections received on drought orders / permits. Start public inquiry / hearing process if applicable. If a public inquiry or hearing is required, then the timescales for receiving authorisations would be delayed.
Preparation for entering level 3a band	Prepare for implementation of drought permits and orders that have been determined. Start consideration of extreme drought options and consult teams who would be involved in the delivery.

Trigger	Action
Level 3a Drought (amber)	
Actions delivered in band	Request non-households voluntarily save water in line with the activities included in a NEUB. If a NEUB is granted, communications will be updated to explain a NEUB is in place. Start to implement supply-side drought permits/orders if authorisations are granted. Implementation will be phased and may only be permitted if specific conditions defined in the authorisations are met.
Preparation for entering level 3b band	Determine which extreme drought actions will be progressed and engage with key stakeholders. Prepare for permits/orders, planning permissions, environmental assessments and all necessary authorisations for implementing extreme options. Start to prepare communications materials for removal of TUB and NEUB exceptions and a campaign notifying customers of the extreme drought risk.
Level 3b	
Actions delivered in band	Commence implementation of extreme drought actions – exact activity and stakeholder engagement is dependent on the actions selected when in drought. Communications escalated with a "day zero" style campaign introduced.
Preparation for entering level 4 band	Prepare level 4 actions (this is emergency planning and not part of drought planning).

Table 2-2: Drought plan triggers and associated actions

2.5 Drought trigger scenario testing

We have used data from historical droughts in our region to create and test our triggers, as well as stochastic data.

2.5.1 Our data sources: historical and stochastically modelled reservoir inflow datasets

Our experience of historical droughts has helped us to develop and refine the processes and actions described in DP27. Our modelling uses historical inflows which date back to 1900. This enables us to model our current system on significant droughts such as those that occurred in 1929, 1933/1934, 1959, 1995/1996, as well as the more recent events in 2018, 2022, and 2025. We have also now incorporated results and analyses from the stochastically generated inflows representing 400 possible realisations of the 1950-1997 period used for our WRMP analyses.

The supplementary report, **DP27 - Drought Triggers and Worked Examples**, shows a number of drought scenarios of different durations, magnitudes and demands, and how we would expect to deal with them. The examples show the development of the drought triggers and when they are reached, and drought actions we might take. These examples include droughts worse than those we have experienced historically, as well as historical droughts.

2.5.2 Forecasting drought and drought scenarios

When in a drought we use our water resources simulation model to run our WRPR to test different dry weather scenarios to understand the impact these would have on current reservoir stocks. We can model scenarios with variations in rainfall, demand, and operational constraints. This enables us to understand the likelihood of the drought status changing (Section 2.2, **Figure 2-2**) and assess the risk of needing to implement drought actions.

Figure 2-2 shows the measured reservoir stocks during 2025 for the five reservoir groups and the Yorkshire regional group, as well as reservoir stocks forecast from 2nd June. This forecast, based on 1995 inflows, showed stocks falling into the level 3a band in all areas during the July-September period. The actual stocks show that the north west, south and north areas fall into the 3a band. The north west area, which is forecast to fall below the level 3b trigger, stayed above this band, although falls very close to it in September. Actual stocks deviate from the modelled stocks because the spatial pattern of rainfall, is different in every drought, and the conjunctive use system is operated to balance stocks out as much as possible, so that an area which had been forecast to be in a worse position is supported by other areas. A TUB was implemented on 11th July after a slight recovery of reservoir stocks in early June. It should be noted that during the 2025 drought we were operating and managing the drought based on the previous trigger lines. The blue arrows indicate the dates the TUBs triggers had been predicted based on the early June forecast using the historic drought 1995 inflows, and show that regional stocks would have crossed into the level 2 band a couple of weeks in advance of this, indicating that the new bands would have triggered level 2 actions at a similar time.

Regional Reservoir group stocks 2025 and forecasts with 1995 flows

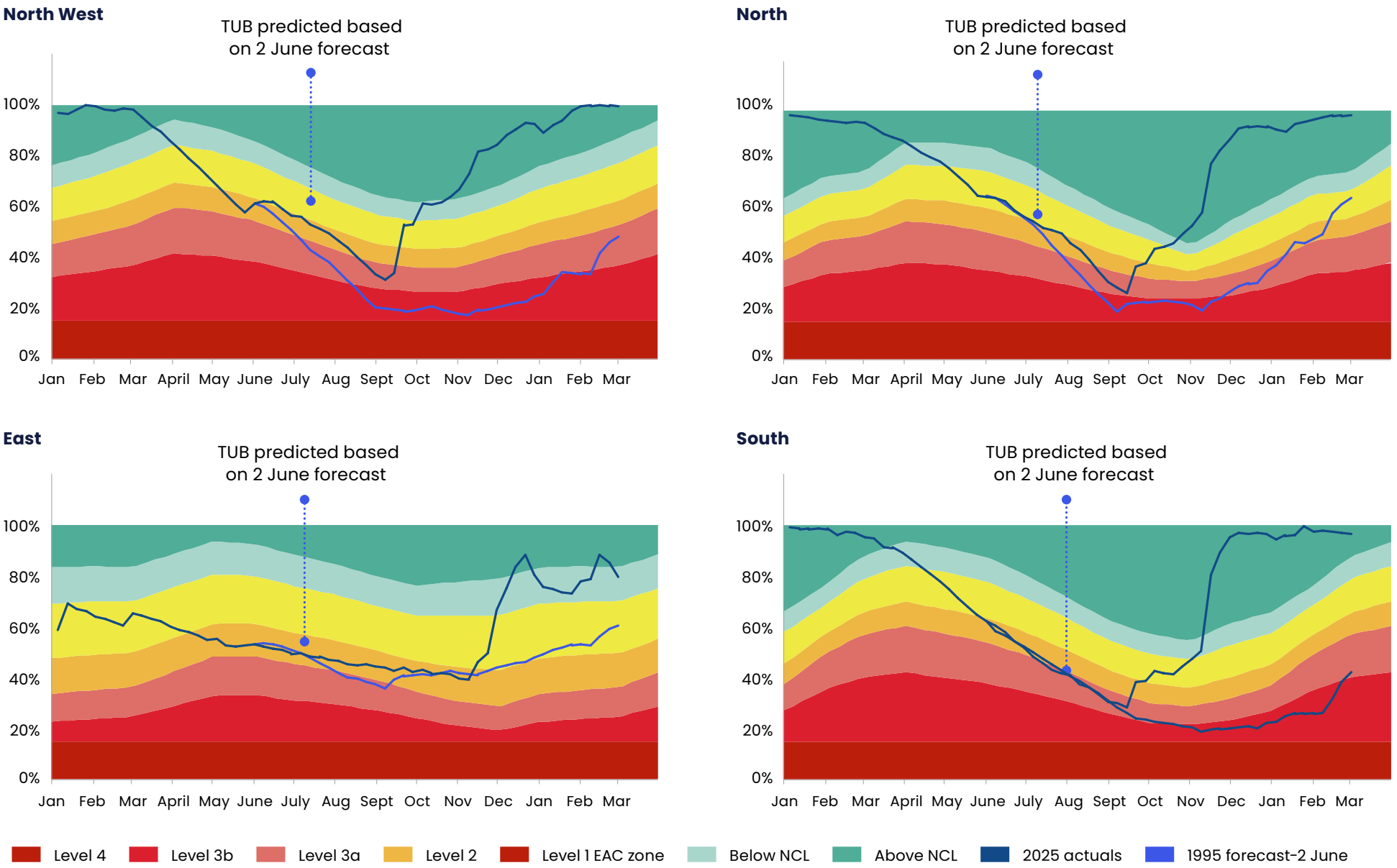


Figure 2-3: Regional reservoir group stocks 2025 and forecasts with 1995 flows

Regional Reservoir group stocks 2025 and forecasts with 1995 flows

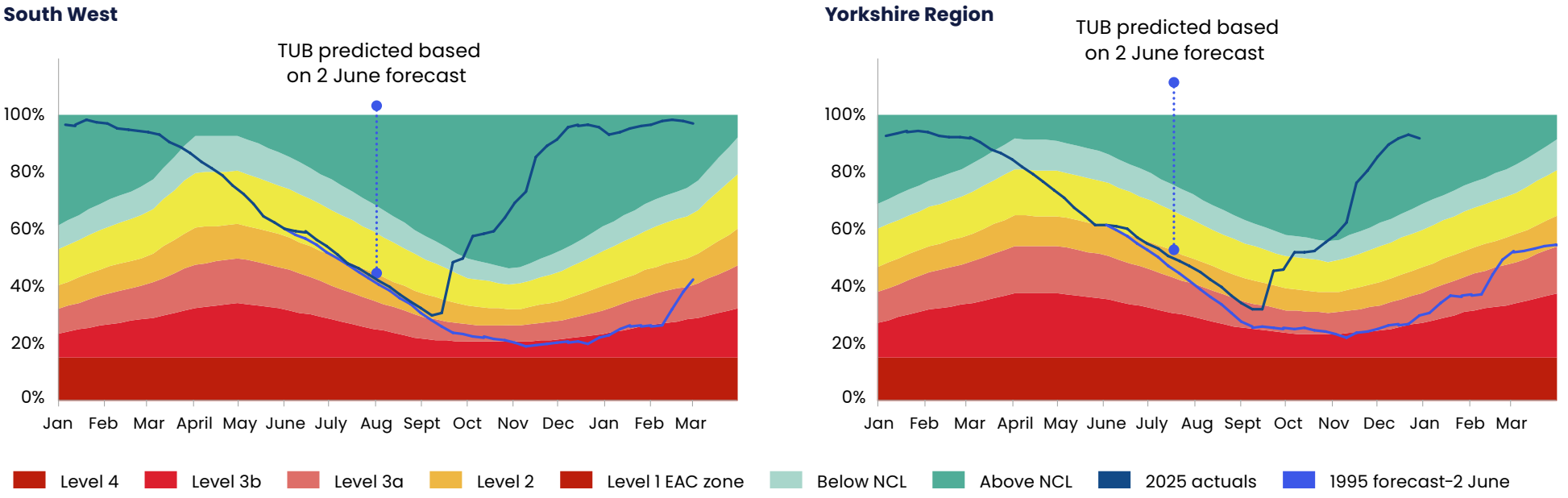


Figure 2-3: Regional reservoir group stocks 2025 and forecasts with 1995 flows

2.6 Environmental triggers

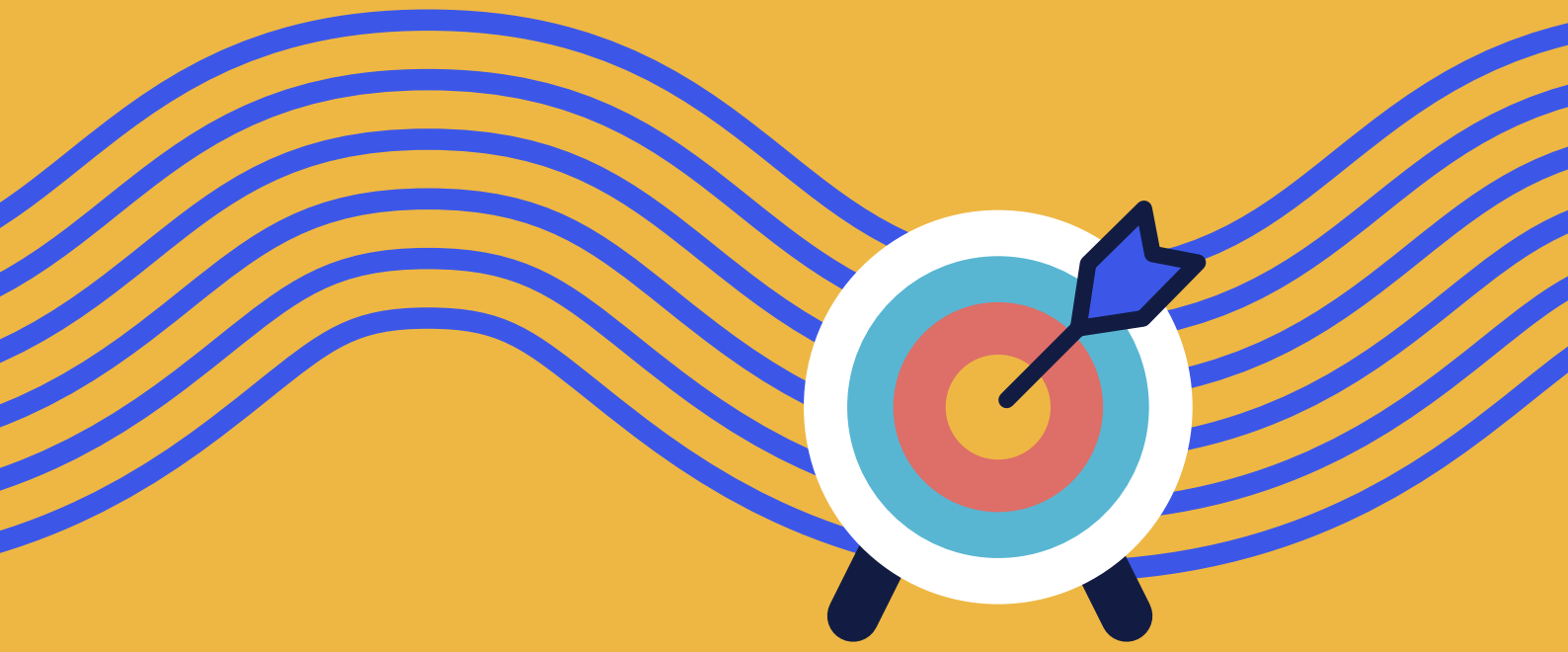
We have a responsibility to mitigate the potential environmental effects of actions that we take during drought. We help protect the environment through balancing our water abstractions and reservoir levels. This helps conserve reservoir levels for the environment as well as water supply.

However, the environment may show signs of drought stress before water supplies are affected. We consider the use of environmental triggers during the onset of drought period, looking at rainfall, reservoir stocks, river flow, low flow/groundwater levels which we report to the Environment Agency. While we do not have any sites that are national or locally sensitive to dry weather operationally, we record any reports of distress in fish through our customer contact centre; whilst tenants (specifically angling clubs) and local environmental groups are also encouraged to notify us should they identify any signs of distress. If a call were to come through, we would investigate and deploy monitoring and mitigation as required.

The majority of our level 3a supply-side drought actions are to reduce the compensation water flow from reservoirs. Although we may need to do this to conserve supplies for customers, these actions also conserve compensation flows for the downstream watercourse, albeit at a lower volume than during normal conditions. This provides a benefit to the environment longer term.

3. Drought actions

We have a range of drought actions available to us for reducing demand for water or increasing available supplies should we need to. The implementation of drought actions is phased as a drought progresses and reservoir stocks decline as explained in Section 2. This section describes our drought actions in more detail.



3.1 Drought management actions that we may take

This DP27 describes the actions we will take up to severe drought level 3b. Drought level 4 actions are part of our Emergency Drought Plan and would only be required in an emergency situation.

Our drought actions are implemented sequentially and accumulatively as a drought becomes more severe, and reservoir supplies decline. In most years, dry weather periods will not last long enough to be classified as droughts, but we will take early action so that we are better prepared if a drought does develop.

Some of our drought actions do not require any additional permissions whereas others require legal authorisations. We discuss the types of actions available to us and where authorisation is needed in the following Sections. Further details are provided in Appendices 4 to 6.

3.1.1 Drought action sequencing

The sequencing of actions as outlined in **Table 2-2** is designed to limit impacts on customers and the environment as much as possible by prioritising operational changes and appeals for voluntary reductions above restrictions on use and options to increase supplies. There is likely to be intense interest in the activities we implement, and the benefits achieved. We will continuously communicate our use of drought actions to customers and stakeholders (Section 5) and collate data on demand savings and environmental metrics when actions are implemented as this helps us improve our plans for future droughts.

Level 1 (yellow) drought actions

Our initial response to dry weather is to implement our level 1 actions which include meeting weekly with the EA. We will also escalate our incident management to Bronze Risk and convene a drought management team as described in Section 9.1.

We will already be maximising use of available river and groundwater sources within our permitted abstraction limits, which allows us to use less reservoir supplies conserving stocks as much as possible. We will continually review our operations and adapt to the situation as it progresses. To help reduce the demand for water we will raise awareness of the situation and request voluntary reductions in use whilst enhancing our leakage activity.

Level 2 (amber) drought actions

If the dry weather continues into level 2 during the months of April to September[11], we will begin the process of implementing a TUB. TUB restrictions predominately impact on household water uses with limited restrictions applied to some non-household uses. We may not implement a TUB if, for example, heavy rainfall is forecast in the very near future.

During winter (October to March) we would not implement a TUB but would maintain appeals for water conservation.

Level 3a (amber) drought actions

In level 3a we will implement actions permitted by supply-side drought permits and orders to increase river abstractions and reduce compensation water flow releases from reservoirs at level 3a. We have a total of 47 such actions and, as such, it is not practical to apply and implement these simultaneously and they have to be phased as authorisations are received (see Section 3.4.1).

We will also consider imposing a NEUB when in level 3a. The decision will be based on the risk of moving into a severe drought and whether imposing a NEUB will be beneficial. Such analysis will include (but not be limited to) costs to the impacted customers, and demand saving benefits (UKWIR, 2025[12]).

[11] The EA DPG2025 instructs that a TUB be in place before drought permits from 1st April to 1st October.

[12] Assessing the costs and benefits of non essential use drought orders – a feasibility study, UKWIR (25/WR/02/21), 2025.

Level 3b (red) drought actions

Drought actions required at level 3b are our extreme drought actions which will be considered once level 3a actions are implemented. They include actions to increase supply that require greater permissions than level 3a and demand reduction actions including lifting any non-statutory exceptions applied to a TUB and a NEUB.

At this stage we will also consider the potential to enter level 4 and start to prepare for the transition from this Drought Plan to our Emergency Drought Plan.

Level 4 (red) drought actions

Only in a very severe drought would we implement emergency drought restrictions at level 4. These actions include emergency restrictions on use such as standpipes, rota cuts and extreme pressure reduction. At this stage we would be implementing our Emergency Drought Plan.

Figure 3-1 summarises the actions we will take at each drought level. The geographical extent of a particular drought will influence which of the supply-side actions we implement (Section 3.3).

Severity of drought	Level	Action summary
Drought Plan	Level 1	Communications campaign.
		Operational response (optimising sources, redistributing supplies, reducing outage).
		Increased leakage control, pressure management and water efficiency activities.
	Level 2	Temporary use ban.
		Drought actions with minor environmental impacts.
	Level 3a	Moderate - major environmental impact drought permits and drought orders.
		Non-essential use bans under a drought order.
	Level 3b	Extreme drought actions - all possible actions to avoid emergency drought orders.
Emergency Plan	Level 4	Emergency drought orders to permit activities such as pressure reduction, rota cuts and standpipes.

Figure 3-1: Drought levels of severity and associated actions

3.2 Options to reduce demand

Our level 1 to 3a demand reduction drought options are discussed below and level 3b (extreme options) in Section 4.

3.2.1 Level 1 demand actions

We always promote water saving to our customers at any time of year, even during non-drought weather conditions. Initiatives include advice on how to reduce consumption in the home or workplace, free water saving self-fit packs available to order from our website or a household water efficiency audit and fit service offered to customer groups or specified areas and our education outreach programme. For further information visit our website Yorkshire Water - Save water.

If we experience prolonged dry weather (level 1) demand-side actions include:

Appeals for constraint - we will enhance our water conservation messaging and initiate our dry weather communications. At this stage we are making customers aware of drier than average conditions and appealing for voluntary reductions on water use. Stakeholder and customer communications play a key role in implementing all our actions and are a demand-side drought action in their own right. Our communications campaign strategy is discussed in Section 5 with further detail in Appendix 7.

Water efficiency initiatives – we offer household and non-household customers water efficiency audits and retrofit devices as part of our annual water saving initiatives. We will aim to accelerate and focus on areas that will provide the greatest potential benefit. See Appendix 4 for further details.

Additional leakage activity – we are continually striving to reduce leakage year on year. At level 1 we will increase our find and fix leakage control activity beyond business as usual to counteract any breakouts that occur as a result of dry weather and ground movement. See Appendix 4 for further details.

Pressure reduction – reducing water pressure to 15m static pressure (at the highest property in the location impacted) helps reduce leaks within our network. This action must be carefully managed to provide the minimum regulatory pressure standard for our customers[13]. At level 1 we will use advanced pressure controllers in target areas where leakage can be reduced without compromising our duty to maintain pressure standards. See Appendix 4 for further details.

3.2.2 Level 2 demand actions

If a drought develops (level 2), we will continue and enhance our level 1 actions encouraging voluntary reductions and offsetting leakage breakouts. Additional actions include:

Further pressure reduction during off peak hours - where possible we will reduce to 10m static pressure (at the highest property in the location impacted) during "off peak" water use hours. Off peak hours are midnight until 4am. This would be in a carefully controlled manner and only in areas where there was both a benefit and no risk to priority and production services. (See Appendix 4.)

Temporary use ban – Table 3-1 lists the types of water use that we are permitted to restrict[14]. These restrictions are predominantly to reduce domestic use but are also applicable to non-households.

A temporary use ban or TUB is commonly used to refer to water use restrictions water companies can impose without a drought permit/order. A TUB may be implemented if we consider that we are experiencing, or may experience, a serious shortage of water for distribution.

[13] This pressure standard is measured at the customer property boundary.

[14] We are allowed to restrict these activities under Section 76 of the *Water Industry Act 1991*, as substituted by Section 36 of the *Flood and Water Management Act*, and *detailed in the Water Use (Temporary Bans) Order 2010*.

Activities restricted when a temporary use ban is in place:
Watering a garden using a hosepipe.
Cleaning a private motor-vehicle using a hosepipe.
Watering plants on domestic or other non-commercial premises using a hosepipe.
Cleaning a private leisure boat using a hosepipe.
Filling or maintaining a domestic swimming or paddling pool.
Drawing water, using a hosepipe, for domestic recreational use.
Filling or maintaining a domestic pond using a hosepipe.
Filling or maintaining an ornamental fountain.
Cleaning walls, or windows, of domestic premises using a hosepipe.
Cleaning path or patios using a hosepipe.
Cleaning other artificial outdoor surfaces using a hosepipe.

Table 3-1: Activities banned under a temporary use ban as set out in Section 76 of the 1991 Water Industry Act

3.2.3 Level 3a demand actions

All level 1 and 2 demand-side activities continue at level 3a.

When in level 3a and prior to a NEUB we will request non-households save water where possible in line with the activities included in the NEUB on a voluntary basis.

Additional actions include:

Non-essential use ban - Additional restrictions that impact on non-households could be imposed at this stage, but we must seek authorisation.

A non-essential use ban or NEUB is commonly used to refer to activities restricted by an ordinary drought order that is subject to approval by Defra. We would need to submit an application and evidence a serious deficiency of supplies of water exists or is threatened.

Table 3-2 summarises the restrictions of non-essential use that we are permitted to impose.[15]

Water use activities that may be prohibited on successful application of an ordinary drought order:
Watering outdoor plants on commercial premises using a hosepipe (does not include watering plants that are: grown or kept for sale or commercial use; or part of a National Plant Collection or temporary garden or flower display.)
Filling or maintaining a non-domestic swimming or paddling pool.
Filling or maintaining a pond.
Operating a mechanical vehicle-washer.
Cleaning any vehicle, boat, aircraft or railway rolling stock.
Cleaning non-domestic premises.
Cleaning a window of a non-domestic building.
Cleaning industrial plant.
Suppressing dust.
Operating cisterns in any building that is unoccupied and closed.

Table 3-2: Water use restrictions imposed by a non-essential use ban

[15] We are permitted to make these restrictions under Sections 73 to 81 and Schedules 8 and 9 of the *Water Resources Act 1991* and detailed in the *Drought Direction 2011*.

3.2.4 Code of Practice and Guidance for Water Companies on Water use Restrictions

When implementing restrictions on water use we will align with the UK Water Industry Research (UKWIR) voluntary Code of Practice (CoP)[16]. Further information including the CoP principles and actions, and details on restrictions and exemptions are provided in Appendix 4.3.

When imposing restrictions, we will align with statutory exceptions included in legislation and the common approach to non-statutory exceptions proposed in the CoP for water companies to adopt.

Notifications will be published in advance of a TUB or NEUB stating the purposes of use that are restricted, and all exceptions related to each purpose. The notifications will include details on where to send representations, and we will consider any received. At level 3b, we have an option to withdraw non-statutory exceptions to further reduce demand.

3.2.5 Our approach for imposing restrictions on water use

Our approach for implementing demand-side drought actions aligns with legislation and the UKWIR CoP and is as follows:

- Before and during imposition of drought restrictions, we will ensure all available sources are maximised within licence constraints, whilst ensuring that security of supply, drinking water quality and safety are not compromised.
- We will only impose a TUB if we consider that we are experiencing, or may experience, a serious shortage of water for distribution and a NEUB if by reason of an exceptional shortage of rain a serious deficiency of supplies of water exists or is threatened.
- Between 1st April and 1st October, we would implement a TUB before drought order or permit (level 3a) related actions.
- No TUB restrictions will be imposed between the months of October and March. This would include times when drought orders or permits were in place in winter months. Water use is lower in the winter months and a TUB is therefore not an effective way of further reducing usage during winter. Should the drought be prolonged for two years or more, we would review our approach on the benefits of TUB restrictions during winter months.
- As a NEUB requires Defra to grant an ordinary drought order, we will advertise the application and include details for submitting representations and objections. A hearing or public inquiry may be held before the application is determined (see Section 3.4.3 for details on the application process).
- Prior to implementing any restrictions, we will raise awareness through our media and communication channels (see Section 5) as well as publishing notices on our website and in newspapers specified by legislation. A NEUB will only be imposed if the application is successful.
- We will adhere to the legal minimum period of 72 hours between publishing a notice of an impending NEUB and imposing those restrictions.
- There is no legal minimum time duration for advertising TUB restrictions before implementing those restrictions but the CoP recommends adopting 72 hours which we aligned with in 2025. The final decision on the appropriate notice period for the purpose of a TUB will depend on the situation at the time.
- We will notify our customers and stakeholders when restrictions are lifted through the same channels used to give notice of the restrictions starting.
- We will ensure key stakeholders including NAVs, retailers, customer groups and the NFU are informed prior to notifications being published. The Retail Wholesale Group Good Practice Guide requires water companies to provide retailers with a minimum of one business day notice for imposing restrictions and where feasible we will aim to provide more advanced notice.
- We will provide NAVs and retailers with information to help them answer any queries they may receive from their own customers in the Yorkshire area who will be required to comply with the restrictions.
- NAVs have their own drought plans and will be required to impose restrictions on any customers they serve in the areas impacted by restrictions we put in place.
- Commercial customers will also need to comply with restrictions, and we will ensure both retailers and NAVs are fully informed on the restrictions and exceptions.

[16] Update to the Drought Code of Practice 2013

3.2.6 Demand savings

Table 3-3 provides indicative ranges of savings from demand-side actions. Savings will accumulate as we progress through a drought and move from voluntary reductions to a TUB and then a NEUB. The savings will vary in each drought and for TUB and NEUB benefits are partly dependent on voluntary savings. If customers chose to reduce hosepipe use or other activities the savings are already achieved, and further reductions are limited at level 2 and 3a.

More information on demand-side drought action savings can be found in Appendix 4.1.

These savings are estimates only and actual savings can vary in each drought situation depending on factors such as rainfall, temperature and if applied during school holidays. To quantify how effective a TUB and voluntary water savings from communications campaigns are we contributed to the 2025 UKWIR project 26/WR/02/22-1 *'A Review of the Impacts of Communications Campaigns and Temporary Use Bans In 2025'*, Summary Report. One conclusion of this report was that "it is not possible to provide a single estimate of the savings from either TUBs or communication campaigns." This reinforces the point above that savings are only estimates and suggests that ranges can be more useful than single estimates.

Demand saving option	Estimated accumulative savings	Comments
Voluntary calls for restraint and additional household and non-household water efficiency campaigns and initiatives.	Savings are estimated to be up to 1% of Distribution Input[17].	Savings are highly variable.
Additional leakage reduction and pressure management.	Increases savings to up to 2% of Distribution Input by level 3.	This is expected to vary depending on the specific nature of the drought.
Temporary use ban.	Increases savings up to 5% reduction in Distribution Input.	Inclusive of impact of voluntary calls for restraint and additional level 1-2 leakage reduction. Based on 2025 TUB in Yorkshire.
Appeals to non-households and direct engagement with industry and public sector bodies requesting voluntary reductions in non-essential use.	Increases total savings to up to 5.25% Distribution Input.	Based on analysis carried out during/ following the 2025 drought in Yorkshire and assumes business will make savings on a voluntary basis.
Non-essential use ban.	Increases total savings to up to 5.5% of Distribution Input.	Based on analysis carried out during/ following the 2025 drought in Yorkshire.

Table 3-3: Estimated savings from demand options

[17] DI is the total quantity of treated water (potable water) that a water company puts into its distribution system, measured at the point of production.

3.2.7 Customer views

Evidence shows that customers are more likely to accept and comply with restrictions where the company clearly demonstrates that actions are a proportionate and responsible response to a genuine water shortage and focus on activities that deliver the greatest water savings.

Customer surveys and engagement undertaken prior to the 2022 regional drought, alongside feedback gathered during and after drought events, continue to inform our approach to drought restrictions and communications. More recent feedback reinforces that customers want clarity around the purpose of a TUB and consistency in how it is applied. Research also indicates limited support for winter restrictions, with compliance less likely outside the main summer period. Full details of the customer surveys and research findings are provided in **Appendix 7.3**.

The 2026 draft report 'Perceptions of temporary use bans (Hosepipe Bans)' shared with us by the Environment Agency collected views from 1,800 nationally representative individuals and an additional 300 in areas affected by a TUB in 2025. This report showed two thirds of respondents either strongly support or tend to support TUBs when water levels fall in rivers and reservoirs. However, roughly 1 in 5 respondents felt TUBs had a moderate or major impact on their daily life.

3.3 Options to increase supply

When in normal conditions but reservoir stocks are below the NCL we will optimise our river and groundwater abstractions and reduce reservoir output where possible, in order to preserve stocks for later in the year. This action will depend on the resources available, which will be less in a drought compared to a 'normal' year. Rivers and groundwater will be maximised within licence conditions and reservoirs will only be reduced if insufficient resources are available from river sources.

During our weekly production planning (Section 1.5), we monitor reservoir stocks against the forecasts, and against reservoir control lines. If the level of one reservoir or group of reservoirs is falling more than another, we operate to rebalance use to ensure that stocks in different areas fall through control lines at the same rate. This fits with our aim of ensuring supplies, and ensuring no area suffers at the expense of another.

Operational optimisation continues as a drought develops and during recovery. In more severe droughts it may be necessary to reconfigure parts of the distribution network to redirect or rezone supplies to areas which are most vulnerable. This does not provide any additional water but does provide additional drought resilience.

Our level 1 to 3a supply-side drought options are discussed below and extreme options in Section 4.

3.3.1 Level 1 supply actions

During normal weather and demand conditions, it is not necessary to fully utilise our existing abstraction licences. In the early stages of a drought, we would review our operations and, where existing abstraction licence conditions allow, increase the amount of water taken from our available resources. This is carefully managed to ensure we balance the use of resources and do not deplete any annual licence limits or reservoir levels too quickly.

At the same time, we will reschedule planned outage events if there is a supply benefit and escalate actions to remove unplanned outages.

When there is a lack of rainfall, the resources we rely on under normal operating conditions may be depleted or constrained by conditions defined on our licence agreements. For example, there is a limit to the volume we can take from each individual water source, and "hands-off flow" conditions mean we must take less from rivers as the flow recedes below predefined thresholds. This means we have less resources available when demand is higher than usual.

3.3.2 Level 2 and 3 supply actions

Our level 2 and 3 supply-side drought actions include increasing the volume of water we take from rivers and reducing the volume we release from reservoirs (known as compensation water flow). Increasing river abstraction means we can put more water into supply whereas reducing compensation water flow releases means we slow the rate of reservoir stocks declining to conserve water during the dry period.

The DPG2025 categorises drought permits and orders with minor environmental impacts as level 2 actions and those with moderate to major as level 3a actions. We have two river abstraction supply side actions that have minor environmental impacts and potentially could be implemented at level 2. The rest were found to have moderate to major impacts although during winter, depending on the drought conditions, impacts may be minor. The decision to implement supply actions is dependent on where additional resources or compensation reductions are needed. We would therefore only implement the river abstraction actions in level 2 if there was a need and during the summer months (April to September) after a TUB was in place.

As river abstractions and compensation releases are defined by legal agreements that we hold with the EA or the Canal and River Trust (CRT), who have agreements with the EA, we must seek permission before implementing these drought actions. See **Section 3.4**. We describe our level 2 and 3 drought options in more detail in Appendices 4 and 5.

3.3.3 Supply action benefits

The benefits of our supply-side drought options are specific to each individual action. The compensation option benefits are provided in Appendix 5.1 to 5.5 and are 50% of the legal prescribed release increasing to 67% unless otherwise stated. The river option benefits are related to the abstraction limitations and are explained in the option description provided in Appendix 5.5. The level 3b supply-side benefits are also option specific and the estimated benefit is explained in Appendix 5.6.

3.4 Drought action authorisations

Our level 1 actions do not require any special permissions to implement. At level 2, a TUB can be imposed by a water company without authorisation if it considers that it is experiencing, or may experience, a serious shortage of water for distribution.

Any drought actions that alter supply permissions or restrict non-essential use require authorisation via a drought permit or order. We will be required to demonstrate delivery of level 1 and 2 demand management activities in our drought permit/order applications.

> Requests for authorisation to alter existing abstraction permissions, reduce reservoir compensation releases or abstract from sources for which we currently do not hold any abstraction rights (supply-side actions) can be granted through a drought permit or ordinary drought order. Authorisation to restrict non-essential use can only be granted through an ordinary drought order. A drought permit application is submitted to the EA and a drought order application to Defra.

Our level 3b supply side actions are more complex than level 3a and could require drought permits or orders but also additional permissions such as planning consent. Level 4 actions require an emergency drought order.

3.4.1 Supply-side drought action authorisations

Supply-side drought actions that temporarily modify or suspend conditions on an abstraction or impoundment agreement require a drought permit or ordinary drought order application to be submitted.

In total we have 47 ordinary supply-side actions we could implement when in a drought. The options either reduce compensation releases from reservoirs or increase flow we can take from rivers.

The changes can be authorised by a drought permit except for those that require a change to our River Ouse abstraction permissions, which require a drought order.

Drought orders or permits are issued for individual sites and relate to abstraction/impoundment licences, an Act of Parliament or a Local Enforcement Position. Due to the connective use of our reservoirs and the potential cumulative environmental impacts, we would usually submit group applications according to which of the five areas (north, north west, south, south west and east) in our supply region they are located. The river applications will be applied individually.

Both the applications and implementation of the options will be phased taking into account prioritisation of need based on reservoir levels. We will be monitoring reservoir stock levels to identify the order of applications then implementation. The prioritisation would be constantly reviewed to take into account any rainfall or local demand increases that impact the drawdown of reservoirs or the flow in rivers.

The majority of our supply-side options are to reduce compensation flows. This conserves resources for public water supply but also means we can provide a compensation flow for longer, albeit at a lower volume, which would tend to happen naturally during dry weather and drought. The selection of supply side options we implement will take into account the need for conserving compensation flow for both supply and the environment.

Details on the reservoir and river options including the changes we would request are provided in Appendix 5.

3.4.2 Non-essential use ban authorisation

A NEUB can only be imposed if an ordinary drought order is granted by Defra. We would follow the EA's guidance[18]. The application would include a cost-benefit assessment and prior to submitting we would discuss with the EA and Defra.

[18] Drought permits and drought orders supplementary guidance provided to water companies as part of the EA DPG2025

3.4.3 Permit and order application process

Below is a summary of the application process and further details are provided in Appendix 4.2.

Pre-application

Pre-applications allow the EA to assess if all relevant information is provided before we submit applications and give formal notice to third parties. We will also liaise with third parties directly impacted by the actions in advance of submitting the formal applications (see Section 5.2).

Applications are only granted if a water company is able to prove there is a deficiency or risk of deficiency in supply and that it is due to exceptional shortage of rain. We also need to demonstrate we have taken action to reduce demand and leakage. Between April and September there is an expectation temporary use bans will be in place before a permit application is submitted.

We would discuss our intended applications with the EA well in advance of submitting applications and provide evidence of an "exceptional shortage of rainfall" prior to making any applications. Supply option applications will be prioritised based on the urgency for reducing compensations and/or the benefits to supply and the environment.

We will combine the supporting information for permit applications relating to a particular reservoir group to include all reservoir operations, associated releases and maintained flows in the group. The reservoirs in each group will have the same exceptional shortage of rainfall case and justification of need because the groups are based on geographical catchments.

In advance of submitting we would consult Defra, local authorities, water undertakers (including NAVs), the Drinking Water Inspectorate, Natural England and other groups as appropriate. This includes any downstream abstractors, CRT and any local groups such as anglers or trusts who have an interest. We will also offer to meet them to discuss the application.

Submission

Permit applications and supporting evidence (including system operation, justification of need for permits, actions carried out to mitigate drought impacts, and demonstration of exceptional shortage of rainfall (ESOR) will be submitted to the EA's National Permitting Service Centre Manager and ordinary drought orders submitted to Defra. An example of an ESOR is included in Appendix 4.4.

We will advertise the applications and send formal notification at the point an application is advertised to anyone who may be directly impacted by the proposed action, including downstream abstractors. Representations and/or objections to the application can be made within seven days of the notice being served. More information on notifications is provided in Section 5.1.

Determination

The applications will be determined based on the supporting evidence and taking into account any objections from third parties. The Secretary of State may hold a public inquiry, or hearing, whether or not there are objections to the ordinary drought order. Where there are objections, a hearing is normally held in preference to a public inquiry.

We will advertise successful applications and notify stakeholders. A claim for compensation can be made by parties at any time not later than six months after the end of the period which is authorised by the drought permit/order who consider they have suffered loss of damage as a result of the permit/order[19].

The authorisations are granted for up to six months with possibility to extend a further six months. Any renewal of drought orders for restricting non-essential use will require a cost-benefit analysis and demonstration of demand management to date.

[19] This is as set out in the Water Resources Act 1991, Schedule 9.

3.4.3.1 Drought ready applications

During a drought the situation can change rapidly, and it is important we can react effectively in the time available. Regulators have stipulated the information they expect to see in drought order/permit applications, and we have prepared draft application documents for our level 2 and 3a compensation release and river abstraction drought actions. These draft documents compile the information that is available in support of an application when we are not in drought. This speeds up the process if permit applications are needed and ensures the necessary environmental mitigation measures are pre-agreed with the EA.

The draft documents include supporting information and environmental assessment reports. Prior to applying, environmental assessment reports would be updated to include details specific to the drought situation. The permit applications also provide the basis for drought order applications if required.

The supply side drought order or permit application will provide information on the following:

- Existing authorisations for abstracting or impounding water.
- The location of the site(s) impacted, and the area directly supplied by a river or reservoir resource.
- Details of the drought management actions we will have taken before applying for a drought order/permit. This will include the demand management actions taken, as discussed in Section 3.2.
- Justification of the need for the drought permit/order including evidence of exceptional shortage of rainfall.
- An environmental assessment to show the likely impact the actions will have on the environment. A summary of the environmental approach taken is provided in Section 6.2, and potential impacts of individual actions, where applicable, are summarised in Appendix 5.
- Details of environmental monitoring and mitigation requirements. A summary of the approach is provided in Section 6.3 and details, where applicable, are included in Appendix 5.
- Actions undertaken to reduce demand and conserve supplies in-line with Drought Plan, including customer engagement on enhanced water efficiency, implementation of Temporary Use Ban (TUB), enhanced Leakage control, effective management of outage.
- Other options considered and risks if permit is refused.

As mentioned in Appendix 9 - Lessons identified, during the 2025 drought we reviewed the costs and benefits (including demand savings) of a NEUB and created a template for a potential NEUB application. This makes us more drought-ready should a NEUB be needed in the future.

3.4.4 Level 4 Emergency Drought Order authorisation

To implement level 4 emergency drought actions, we would require an emergency drought order to be granted by Defra. This authorisation allows companies to impose restriction such as extreme pressure reductions (below regulatory standards), rota cuts or standpipes. It is valid for three months and can be extended for a further two months. We would follow the EA's 2025 Drought permits and drought orders supplementary guidance[20].

Our drought modelling using historical data shows we would not require emergency drought actions in a repeat of any of our previous historical drought events and the risk of needing them is between 1 in 500 years (from analysis of our historical record), to 1 in 200 years (from analysis of the stochastic time series used for WRMP24). In accordance with EA guidelines, drought plans only include actions up to level 3b, however, this includes emergency drought actions that could be implemented if there was a serious risk of emergency drought orders being required. See Section 4 for further information.

[20] Drought permits and drought orders supplementary guidance provided to water companies as part of the EA DPG2025

3.5 Private suppliers

Not everyone in Yorkshire is a Yorkshire Water customer. Some will have their own supply for either domestic or commercial use or both. Agriculture can be particularly vulnerable in a drought as their farming practices require increased water use during times of warm and dry weather when their own private supplies may also be depleted. The NFU provide advice to agricultural water uses when in drought, see **NFU news – NFUonline**.

In a drought, or period of prolonged dry weather, anyone in our area with a private supply may contact us to request support in circumstances where their own supplies (for example, springs and boreholes) may be running dry and they are at risk of having no supply.

In accordance with Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) guidance[21] and the Water Industry Act 1991, anyone with a private supply in our region should establish their own contingency plans in case their supply is depleted by drought conditions. Where a contingency plan is not yet in place, they may seek advice from the local authority or Yorkshire Water as the incumbent water company. However, there is no obligation on either to provide an alternative supply of water (irrespective of the supply type and volume consumed), except where the local authority considers the circumstances to pose a danger to life or human health.

Where the local authority considers there to be a danger to human health, it has powers to require Yorkshire Water, if practicable, to supply water by means other than pipes at reasonable cost for a specified period (for example, a supply of bottled water, or water supplied in tanks or bowsers). The costs can be recovered from any relevant persons.

We will consider such requests for those who are considered most vulnerable via the local authority. Our ability to provide such support will depend on resources available and ensuring that we can continue to meet our own customers' demands.

[21] Guidance on the enforcement powers of local authorities in relation to private water supplies - Drinking Water Inspectorate



4. Extreme drought management actions

In severe droughts we may need to take more extreme actions after we have delivered level 1 to 3a actions. The purpose of these actions is to do all we can to avoid reaching level 4 restrictions.

4.1 Introduction

Our extreme drought actions include actions to further reduce water use but do not impose any further restrictions on water use. They also include additional actions to increase supply such as new supplies and interconnecting infrastructure. These actions would require greater permissions than level 3a supply-side actions (for example, planning permission) or are actions that only become necessary (for example, tankering) once available supplies in some areas of the region have become severely depleted.

In determining which actions would be beneficial to the Yorkshire Water region in an extreme drought, we have considered:

- The type of action (supply increase or demand reduction).
- The water resource zones in which it would apply.
- Feasibility of the action in a drought situation and the likely trigger for implementing it.
- The potential benefit or saving from implementing the action.
- Any significant barriers.
- Environmental impact.
- Timescale for implementation.

4.2 Level 3b demand extreme drought actions

Our level 3b demand-side drought actions are described in Appendix 5.6 and summarised below.

- Removing all remaining non-statutory exceptions on temporary use ban and non-essential use restrictions.
- A much more powerful drought communications campaign either at a regional or national level. This would be equivalent to the day zero messaging used in South Africa for the Cape Town drought of 2017/2018.
- Work with retailers to escalate an enhanced programme of water efficiency device installations in non-households.
- More significant levels of pressure management actions.
- Consult commercial and agricultural water users on any actions they would consider to help reduce water supply or find alternative sources, for example, reducing production output. This would be voluntary only.

4.3 Level 3b supply extreme drought actions

We have 16 extreme supply-side options and we describe these in Appendix 5.

In summary our supply-side extreme drought actions include;

- Wide scale tankering to those areas where local sources have depleted and infrastructure limits internal transfers to a level that does not meet demand (tankering may also be used at a much smaller scale earlier in a drought but this would be very localised and for short periods of time, for example, if outages occurred or there were some temporary periods of very high demand).
- Network changes potentially through installation of overland pipes to those areas where local sources have depleted and infrastructure limits internal transfers to a level that does not meet demand.
- Options to install new assets and infrastructure (would only be considered in a drought lasting more than a year).
- Mobile package plants (desalination, micro-filtration or ultrafiltration) for use with a variety of small surface water or groundwater sources to provide water to constrained areas in an extreme drought.
- New transfers from within Yorkshire or from outside that have not previously been deployed.

4.4 Level 3b extreme drought action triggers and phasing

As part of our scenario planning (Section 1.5), we will begin to consider the need for extreme drought options once we reach level 2 (Section 2.4). We will continue to review the need as the drought develops using our modelled forecasts to support decision making.

If the level 3b trigger is crossed, we make an assessment on the benefits of implementing extreme drought options. The crossing of this trigger would not lead to an extreme drought option being automatically implemented. The decision to implement these options would be based on reservoir stock predictions and the risk of them not recovering. At this stage, we would assess the feasibility of extreme drought options.

We have developed suitable triggers to ensure the extreme actions are available at the point required in a drought. We are using a phased approach of preparation, mobilisation and implementation for the options. The extreme options are phased in a priority 1 – 3 approach accounting for the complexities of implementation which can have an impact on timescales. These triggers and timescales are detailed in Appendix 5.6 and take into account the different phases required during the implementation process.

4.5 Alternative pathways

As described in Section 3 our drought actions are accumulative as the drought stages escalate from business as usual to level 3a. We may not need to implement all level 3a actions as the supply-side level 3a actions are dependent on reservoir levels and a NEUB on cost-benefit analysis.

As a drought worsens and we begin to consider our extreme drought options, we may pursue several of the options, making progress with any that could yield a benefit and had a realistic chance of being completed in time to do so.

During this phase, some options may ultimately not be feasible in the circumstances meaning some options progress and others do not, creating alternative pathways. Pathways more likely to be followed would provide large water supply yields, have fewer and less significant adverse environmental impacts and be able to be completed in a shorter time.

In a serious drought situation, it is likely that a number of pathways would be partially followed until others were revealed as more beneficial or were better placed geographically to aid the situation. Figure 4-1 illustrates some potential alternative pathways.

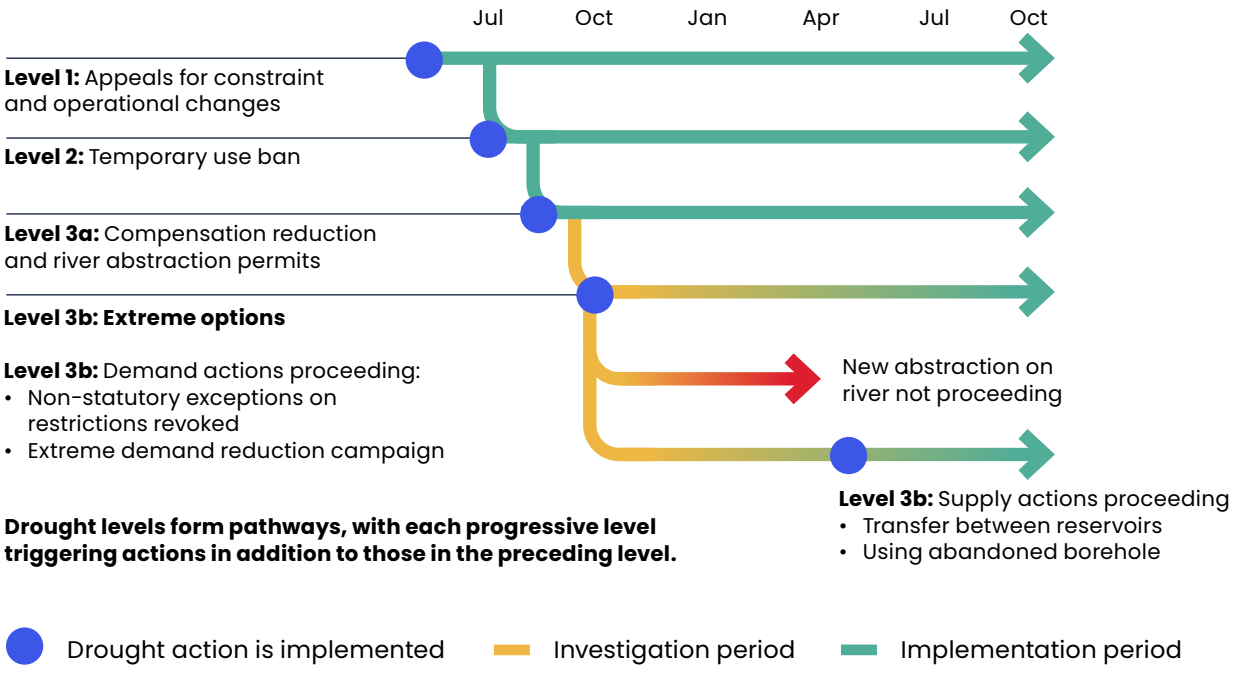


Figure 4-1: Potential alternative pathways

4.6 Level 4 drought actions

In the event of an emergency drought, water companies can consider emergency drought orders. An emergency drought order requires authorisation from Defra and allows a water company to limit the use of water to such purposes as it considers necessary. The legislation for emergency drought orders is provided in the Water Resources Act 1991. If granted, it provides a water company with greater powers to limit the use of water than permitted through ordinary drought orders.

Emergency drought orders can allow a company to:

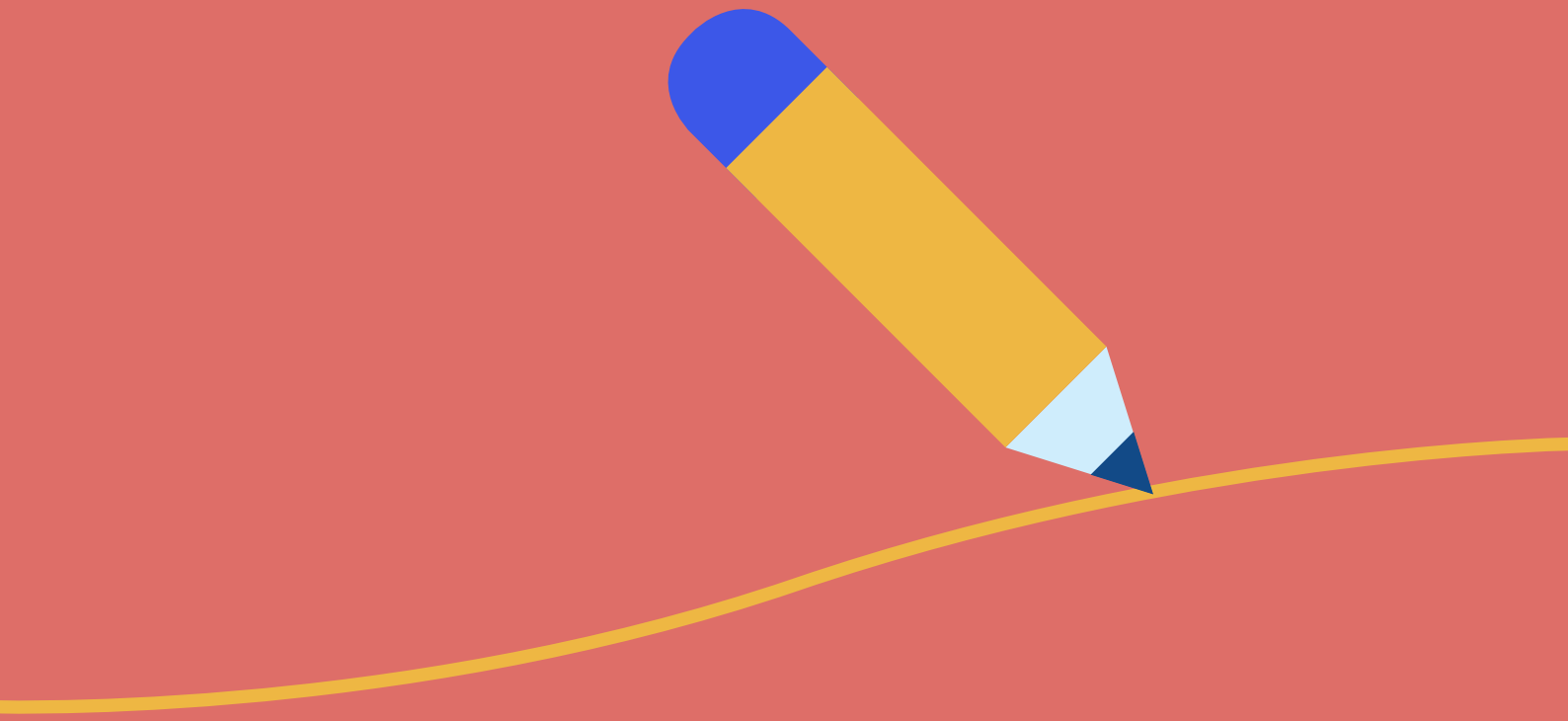
- Prohibit or limit uses specified by the water company.
- Set up and supply water by means of standpipes or water tanks in a water company area.
- Restrict supplies to customers through measure such as rota cuts.

In accordance with EA DPG2025, level 4 actions are part of emergency planning and not included in DP27. Our DP27 is devised to implement feasible drought actions in a timely manner to avoid the need for such extreme measures.



5. Communications plan

This Section of our plan sets out how we will communicate clearly and in a timely way during the onset of a drought, during the drought and after it has finished. It covers communications with customers, government, regulators and other stakeholders.



To support efficient water use, we promote water efficiency to customers throughout the year, both in drought years and non-drought years. During dry weather our communications are enhanced to encourage greater savings, and to inform customers and stakeholders on the drought actions described in Section 3. We provide customers with information on our stock levels all year round through our Water Situation "Watsit" Report (see Section 1.5.2)[22].

Our drought communications apply to the whole Yorkshire region, but we tailor and adapt our messaging to local areas if appropriate (see Section 5.4.). We provide additional information and examples of our drought communications in Appendix 7.

5.1 Communications at different drought levels

We help customers understand there is a need to conserve water at all times, but this need is escalated during dry weather. To deliver the appropriate messaging for each drought level. As well as the tone of messaging, our media plan is scaled up and down in reaction to dry weather and water usage. If demand returns to normal and/or rainfall is forecast we will adapt the messages or may even return to our normal campaign level of communication.

During periods of above average or normal rainfall, we will tend to be in green status and demand will be close to average. While in this normal status we will provide our usual level of communication that promotes water saving messages to customers and providing tips on how to do this.

In reaction to prolonged dry weather and entering level 1 drought status we alter our communications so that customers are aware there is additional need to reduce water use. This helps conserve reservoir supplies, reduces pressure on the environment and can delay or even avoid implementation of drought measures that impose restrictions on use or take more water from the environment.

As the drought progresses, we will enhance the media channels and inform customers on the actions we are taking and how they are affected. If we approach severe drought stage, we will enhance both the type of message and media channels. **Table 5-1** summarises our communications at drought levels 1 to 3b.

For more information on our current water saving initiatives please visit our website **Save water**

Drought status	Action
Level 1	Review current water efficiency activities and opportunities to increase customer engagement. Request voluntary reductions in household and non-household water use via key messages and communication channels. Consider joint messages with EA, other water companies, retailers and other stakeholders. Prepare adverts for temporary bans on water use.
Level 2	Advertise/consult on temporary bans on water use. Impose temporary bans on water use. Distribute adverts and use the YW website and multiple media channels to notify customers. Advertise and start application on ordinary drought orders and permits.
Level 3a	Give notice on ordinary drought orders/permits are implemented and engage with interested parties.
Drought level 3b	Strengthen and sustain messaging on drought drivers and restrictions ahead of level 4. This will include a "day zero" style campaign. Review messaging and channel mix; consider an all-Yorkshire door drop.

Table 5-1: Drought communication at different drought levels

[22] Available on our website Yorkshire Water - Watsit Report

Level 1

When it is dry, we react to this weather by increasing the level of communications across owned channels and paid for channels to help customers understand the severity of dry weather and therefore the additional need to save water. This becomes even more acute if reservoir stock levels, scenario modelling and weather forecasts indicate a TUB could be triggered in the summer months, and we will heighten our level of communication. We do this by adding more channels and spend to our multi-channel campaign. We give more detail on all of these channels in Section 5.3 and Appendix 7. We will also start communications with customers and key stakeholders including NAVs and retailers.

Level 2

If temporary use bans are needed, notifications will be published in advance. These notices will explain the restrictions permitted under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Water Industry Act 1991 (see Section 3.2.2). In accordance with the legislative requirements, we will publish notifications on our website, in at least two newspapers circulating in the area it will be applied and in the London Gazette[21]. In addition, we will publicise through other media channels such as television, social media, billboards and local radio. They will state the date the ban will commence and where it will be applied. We will provide notice of the lifting of a temporary use ban using similar channels of communication.

Level 3a

We would advertise the applications of any drought permits or ordinary drought orders in at least one of the local newspapers circulating within the area affected and in the London Gazette[23]. In addition, we will serve notice of applications to specified bodies. This is a legal requirement, and the specified bodies include the local authorities and, for supply options, the affected navigation authority. We include the full list of organisations we will send written notification to in Appendix 4.2.

Advertising our intention and the potential hearing or inquiry provide stakeholders opportunities to provide feedback to ourselves and the Government. Should any non-household customers or their retailers have comments or question we would engage with them on their concerns. We discuss our communications with non-household customers, retailers and NAVs in Section 5.2.

Level 3b

At level 3b our communications would make it clear to media, customers and stakeholders we are in a severe drought. This could include what is often referred to as a day zero drought campaign. Messaging would be escalated to encourage major reductions in water use before supplies reach a critical point known as “Day Zero”. This is the point at which water storage levels become so low that normal water supplies are at risk of not being maintained and we would enter level 4 drought status. The campaign would request savings to help extend reservoir storage and avoid entering level 4. We would maximise use of available media channels and consider an all-Yorkshire door drop. We would also liaise with non-households and retailers to discuss where there was potential to make additional savings.

[23] Advertising in the London Gazette is a legal requirement of the Water Resources Act 1991.

5.2 Stakeholder communications

As well as communicating the need for drought actions to our household customers we will be in contact with retailers, NAVs, our regulators (Environment Agency, Natural England and Defra) and organisations such as Historic England, rivers trusts and the National Farming Union (NFU).

5.2.1 NAVs and retailers

Retailers are the organisations that bill English non-household customers for their water and wastewater services. We work with NAVs and water retailers to promote water conservation in our region and notify them in advance of any communications we send out that are outside of our annual water conservation campaign activity. In drought we will provide appropriate information to NAVs and retailers to ensure they are equipped to answer any queries they receive from their non-household customers. We will ensure all NAVs and retailers are made aware of our communications to raise awareness of the situation, promote water efficient behaviours or, if necessary, inform them in advance of impending water use restrictions.

During droughts we meet with both NAVs and retailers more frequently as the drought escalates. From drought level 1 onwards we will provide monthly emails and webinars. On entering level 2, emails will be provided more frequently, and additional webinars will be held at specific points such as in advance of introducing a TUB or NEUB. Appendix 7 provides further information on our approach to retailer and non-household communications.

We will take a similar approach to communicating with NAVs as we take with retailers. For example, we would provide NAVs and retailers with advance warning of introducing any restrictions on use. Under the Water Industry Act 1991, as water undertakers, NAVs are responsible for their customers in a drought and are required to prepare their own drought plan.

Retailers

The Retailer Wholesaler Group (RWG) provides a forum to share best practice to non-household customers and is supported by the Market Operator Services Limited (MOSL). MOSL is the market operator of England's non-household water market. Communicating via the RWG means that retailers do not have to attend lots of separate meetings.

We collaborate with RWG Groups including the Drought Subgroup, and take into consideration RWG *Good Practice Guide* **guidance** and MOSL guidance on how communications should take place in a drought between wholesalers and water retailers. For example, we provide a link to the MOSL drought playbook in Appendix 10 - References and we will align with the RWG Drought Subgroup *Good Practice Guide* **Drought Communications** when in a drought.

During droughts such as the 2025 drought, we will provide retailers and MOSL with a completed Drought Trigger Communication Template each time the drought level status changes. Once drought level 1 is reached we will provide communications to retailers once a month as a minimum in the format and channel deemed most appropriate, for example, emails, webinars or FAQs. If multiple wholesalers were to reach drought level 1, the RWG Drought Group would be activated, meeting once a month as a minimum. Any wholesaler in drought level 1 or above would attend these meetings.

As part of our drought response, we would provide advance warning to retailers before restrictions are publicly announced to allow retailers time to prepare and brief their contact centre teams. In some cases, we may have a short time scale between the decision being made and it being publicly announced so it is recommended that retailers are given a minimum of one business day advance warning. To drive consistency in drought Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) we align with the *UKWIR Drought 2023 Code of Practice* (CoP)[24] and other guidance, for example, the *RWG Good Practice Guide where possible*.

Any material deviation from the FAQs provided in guidance would be highlighted to retailers with details and justification. We will review FAQs before publication to incorporate any lessons from previous droughts. We will provide retailers with a list of supply point identifications affected by restrictions unless the full region is affected by such restrictions. We will also seek to answer any urgent retailer questions not covered by the FAQs within one working day.

[24] ukwir.org/update-to-the-drought code-of-practice-2013)

NAVs

When managing drought, we will email NAVs a completed Drought Trigger Communication Template each time the drought level status changes. Once drought level 1 is reached we will provide communications to NAVs once a month as a minimum in a format and channel as deemed most appropriate. We will provide advance warning to NAVs before restrictions are publicly announced to allow time to prepare and arrange their own restriction notices and contact centre management. We will aim to give NAVs a minimum of five business days advance warning of restrictions but in some cases we may have a shorter timescale between the decision being made and it being publicly announced, and five days may not be possible.

To drive consistency in restriction FAQs, we align with the *UKWIR Drought 2023 CoP* and other guidance where possible. As described above for retailers, we highlight any material deviation from the FAQs to NAVs and provide details of the area affected by restrictions. We will aim to answer any urgent NAV questions not covered by the FAQs within one working day.

5.2.2 Regulators and other stakeholders

We will provide details of areas where restrictions are being considered to the Environment Agency (EA), Consumer Council for Water (CCWater), local authorities, health authorities and other interested parties using appropriate means, for example, meetings, email, telephone, media and press releases.

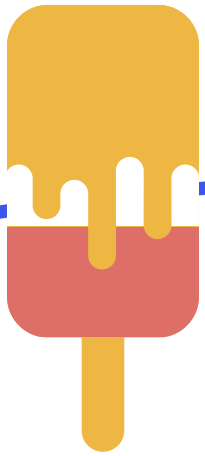
We will consider joint press releases and advertising campaigns with the EA, CCWater and other water companies affected by drought. This will help enhance the water saving messages and may be more cost effective. Yorkshire Water is part of the Water Resources North (WReN) regional group, and we align our drought communications using this regional group. We discuss how we co-ordinate our drought communication more in Section 5.5.1.

We will be in regular contact with the EA and, as a number of our drought options have a potential to impact on the environment, we will consult Natural England regularly during a drought and fulfil our statutory requirement to contact Natural England on any drought permits/orders with potential to impact sites designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 or Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

We would also contact other stakeholders who could be impacted by permit/order applications, such as river trusts and recreational water users. This is to seek views of any groups with an interest in the affected area and, if time allows, notify any individuals such as downstream abstractors prior to the applications being made. We would always prefer to create awareness of applications in advance of the legal requirement to provide formal notices, however in some circumstances the situation may change quickly and limit the pre-notification time available.

Some of our level 3b extreme drought options require new assets or infrastructure to be installed. Under these circumstances we would be subject to the same planning requirements as under non-drought conditions. This would include seeking planning consents if applicable and the relevant bodies for each individual application would be notified.

As the situation develops, we will provide regular updates to our customers and stakeholders (including gardening, horticultural and sports groups that are likely to have a strong interest in water use restrictions). We will also provide notification of when stocks recover and the removal of any restrictions if required. We describe the arrangements for drought recovery and the end of drought in more detail in **Section 7** and **8** respectively.



5.2.3 Communications with the Environment Agency

Each week, the EA receives our weekly Water Situation Report. In addition, as part of our 'business as usual' activity, we have regular discussions with the EA where matters related to water resources are discussed, including drought planning.

When we enter level 1 drought status, we instigate additional communication between Yorkshire Water and the EA's Area Drought Co-ordinator. We will establish liaison meetings to keep EA staff appraised of the water supply situation and our drought management measures.

The frequency of the liaison meetings will be established following the first contact with the EA Area Drought Co-ordinator and may increase as the drought worsens. Liaison will reduce when reservoir stocks have recovered and upon mutual agreement between the EA and Yorkshire Water (see Section 7).

The EA will provide information on its assessment of the severity of the drought. This is based on several statistics including rainfall and river flows and the Drought Severity Index methodology. This information would be for each of the catchments in our supply region together with the Severn Trent catchments (the Derwent and the Idle and Torne).

We will agree with the EA when there has been an "exceptional shortage of rain" if this is required.

If a potential need for level 2 restrictions or level 3a measures is identified, then we will meet the EA more frequently. Through this liaison process we will consult on the sequence of any demand restrictions, and the sequence and prioritisation of drought orders or permits. The process will cover the following areas:

- Environmental assessment, mitigation and monitoring.
- Data and information to be shared.
- Relevant works in progress or works planned, including demand management measures.

5.3 Communication activities

To encourage water efficient behaviour, we use various communication channels to raise awareness to customers. This is likely to include the following:

- briefing updates on the water supply situation
- information about water supply improvement schemes including leakage control measures
- briefing on the weather for awareness of potential drought sequences
- water saving advice for household and non-household water users
- if applicable, water use restrictions and drought permit or order advertisements.

We will select the channels of communication based on the severity of the situation. Key channels we will use included owned and paid for advertising. This provides a varied mix of channels, including both digital and non-digital to reach a wide audience.

Our wide range of owned channels include our website, bills, organic social media channels. Paid-for channels include social media adverts, radio, out of home ads, newspaper adverts, media press releases, broadcast advertising (radio/TV), digital advertising, video on demand , Spotify, out of home advertising (billboards/digital 6 sheets[25] /buses). We have some of these channels on at all times, but not others, as we build the plan according to severity of the situation, channel availability and audience reach. We will also hold local meetings as appropriate, such as with stakeholders impacted by a drought permit.

It is likely that the level of calls to the customer contact centre will increase during a period of drought, especially if any restrictions on use were imposed. Provision will be made to ensure that all staff in the contact centre are fully aware of the situation and are able to provide comprehensive information and advice to customers.

[25] A digital 6 sheet is a high-definition digital screens, typically used for high-impact outdoor advertising.

5.4 Adapting our communications

We use an 'agile' approach to customer communications, scaling messaging up or down as the drought situation changes. We do this by tailoring messages to the severity of the situation (see example graphics in Appendix 7), the risk of requiring more extreme drought measures later in the year and the short-term weather forecast. We reinforce messages to avoid behaviour 'fade' through changing graphics, increasing frequency and reach, and enhancing the tone if the drought severity increases. We have multiple creative variants to avoid ad fatigue and serve sequential messaging to make sure customers understand the need for water saving.

We choose appropriate and relevant messaging based on weather and water resource model forecasts, as well as reacting to reservoir control lines. If we were experiencing dry weather and predictions suggested there was a risk of crossing the control line, we would increase our level of messaging. If conditions switched to rain, we would be able to reduce the frequency of our communications or alter the level and type of messages in a matter of days to ensure the communications were appropriate.

5.4.1 Non-household drought communications

Although communications about options like TUBs are focused on domestic customers our general drought communications are designed to also apply to non-household customers. We will tailor messaging and use channels including LinkedIn, display, audio and out-of-home (for example billboards), alongside email and print advertising We described how we communicate with NAVs and retailers in Section 5.2.1.

5.4.2 Welfare for vulnerable customers

All communications from Yorkshire Water are accessible to a minimum of AA standard. The AA is a recognised standard that requires digital content to be perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust for users with disabilities.

We will consider the needs of Yorkshire Water household customers in vulnerable circumstances, such as those on our Priority Services Register (PSR), when implementing supply restrictions on use. For example, these customers may have a medical or health condition which means that they need a constant supply of water.

Customers on our **Priority Services Register (PSR)** may use a hosepipe if they are physically unable, or cannot make reasonable adjustments for health reasons, to use a watering can or bucket safely. Customers who meet these criteria but are not on the PSR, including Blue Badge holders, should contact us to register.

Consideration will also be given to the needs of sensitive non-household customers who are included in our PSR, once we have been notified by their retailer that they are defined as vulnerable for the purposes of the Security and Emergency Measures Direction (SEMD). We will give priority to maintaining water supply to these PSR customers during a drought or period of prolonged dry weather.

If you are older, have a disability, a long-term health condition, young children, or need extra help communicating with us, you may be eligible for our **Priority Services Register (PSR)**. Joining the Priority Services Register is free and will not affect your water bill. As a PSR customer, you can receive:

- Priority support during water supply interruptions.
- Alternative water supplies in emergencies.
- Information in accessible formats such as large print, Braille or audio.
- Additional help during severe weather and other incidents. Tailored communications and support when needed.

5.5 Co-ordinating our communications regionally and nationally

To ensure our communications are as effective as possible we coordinate our messaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including Government, regulators, customers, partners, local authorities, parish councils, local resilience forums, fire and rescue services and other groups including retailers, the NFU and Canal and River Trust (CRT), who may also be experiencing shortages of supply. Also see Appendix 7.

As described in **Section 5.2** we will work with NAVs and retailers to promote water efficiency messages to their customers. We will also work in collaboration with regulators, the National Drought Group (NDG), which coordinates national drought communications, other water companies, Water UK, and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board to ensure other water use sectors are kept informed.

5.5.1 Regional co-ordination

To ensure regional co-ordination of drought messaging we work with other organisations in our WReN regional group. The purpose of WReN is to ensure co-ordination of water resources discussions across the north of England. In the event of a drought the group would be instrumental in facilitating planning and communication for the north of England depending on which areas were impacted.

A WReN Drought Group would be established to serve as a regional forum to facilitate collaboration between different sectors (public water supply, agriculture, energy and navigation), regulators and wider stakeholders to support regional drought preparation, response and recovery. The group would meet regularly until stocks recovered. The WReN Drought Group Statement of Intent[26] provides further details.

We and the other water companies in WReN (Northumbrian Water and Hartlepool Water) would be in regular contact to understand the extent of the dry weather impacts on each company's supply systems. In the event of restrictions on use being required for two or more of the WReN companies we would be in close communication and aim to align communications, restrictions and exceptions. However, restrictions will be subject to a public consultation, and differences may arise if company's consultations result in variations.

Due to the geographical locations of the three companies and the hydrological and hydrogeological nature of each companies' water resources, it is unlikely the three companies would be at the same stage of drought at the same time. This limits the likelihood of regional drought actions, but there could be benefits of joint communications with WReN companies as well as with our neighbouring water companies (United Utilities, Severn Trent Water[27] and Anglian Water). We would work closely with these water companies bilaterally if required. For example, because there is a bulk supply from Severn Trent Water to Yorkshire Water we work closely with their drought management team. We describe how our bulk supply arrangements operate during drought in **Section 9.2**.

[26] This statement of intent is available online at wren-drought-group-statement-of-intent---v2-final.pdf

[27] Severn Trent Water is a member of both the Water Resources West and Water Resources East regional groups.

5.5.2 National co-ordination

Water companies, during times of prolonged dry weather and drought, will meet collectively as part of a cross-sectoral group including regulators (England and Wales) and other impacted bodies as a National Drought Group (NDG). The NDG is chaired by an EA Director and is made up of senior decision makers from the EA, government, water companies and key representative groups. It meets to discuss the drought position and any actions required. It also considers the associated risks and impacts of drought and explores collaborative work across sectors to balance water needs, protect the environment and conserve water. Being cross sectoral, the NDG accounts for the views of other sectors that use large volumes of water such as agriculture, the power generation sector and data centres.

We shall collaborate communications on a national level through our participation in NDG initiatives. We will proactively contribute to the group to ensure that the water resources position in Yorkshire is clearly communicated at the national level, and that any collaborative communications are aligned with our own. As well as the main NDG there are also sub-groups which can be useful to discuss more specialist or technically detailed elements of drought management.

The level of Yorkshire Water's involvement will depend on the overall national picture for water resources, the group's agenda and priorities, and the position in our own region at the time. In addition to the NDG, Water UK[28] can also provide a coordination role for joint water company planning and communication, particularly if the drought impacts on multiple water companies.

5.6 Monitoring the effectiveness of our communications

All drought communication activities will be monitored to assess which are most effective and to evidence our actions to support any drought permit or order applications we submit.

A media communication schedule would be agreed in the event of a drought and would be revised as the situation progressed or recovered. As the drought develops, we will obtain feedback on which messages and communication channels customers prefer.

This will include recording website hits, social media reach, customer and stakeholder engagement and comments, and number of phone calls. We will request feedback on our communications from our online customer community, customer focus groups and CCWater.

A range of techniques will be used to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign:

- Response to surveys.
- Website click through rates.
- Digital advertising performance.
- Social media engagement.
- Feedback from our online community panel.
- Feedback from customers in affected areas.
- Stakeholder feedback.
- Media coverage.
- Colleague feedback.
- Recall measurement from our monthly brand tracker.

We have done extensive testing of our 'save water' communications and track the effectiveness of this monthly through a domestic customer tracker. Customers have helped shaped the messages to be more effective year in year out.

5.6.1 Future Strategy

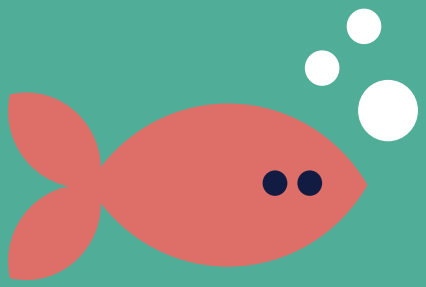
With the introduction of smart meters into our network we will be working to understand which communication channels have the biggest impact on reducing consumption over the next five years and targeting our communications accordingly. We review campaign performance and test messages with audiences too, so we tweak and change messaging depending on engagement and feedback.

We have considered international examples of drought communication and in Section 4.1 one of the extreme demand side options listed is more powerful messaging such as that used when Cape Town was approaching 'day zero' in 2017/2018.

5.6.2 Getting in touch

Should you have any questions or feedback on drought actions and messages please refer to: **yorkshirewater.com/contactus**

[28] The drought planning guideline says that "Where a drought affects customer supplies in more than three company areas across England and Wales, a representative from Water UK will make best endeavours to act as a communication co-ordinator to ensure consistent up-to-date messages and briefings are issued across the water industry, and to liaise with key stakeholders."



6. Environmental assessments

This section of the plan sets out the environmental methodology we have followed to assess our drought management options. More detailed information is also available in the environmental documents appended to this plan.

6.1 Overview

A full environmental assessment is carried out on all supply side drought options to ensure environmental risks and impacts are understood. An environmental monitoring plan details pre-, during and post-drought monitoring requirements, and identifies measures that could be implemented to avoid, reduce or mitigate any potential environmental impacts.

The Drought Planning Guidelines 2025 (DPG2025) sets out how a company should assess and mitigate the impacts of its supply-side drought management options on the environment, how it should monitor and measure these impacts, and outlines the requirement to consult relevant bodies where potential environmental impacts have been identified.

In preparing the environmental components of the DP27, we have worked closely with the EA, following the recommended approach set out in the DPG2025. The guidelines require a comprehensive level of environmental assessment of each supply-side drought option, whilst weighting the level of detail against the risk posed by the potential drought action.

Drought planning is a continuous process. We continually review reservoir stocks, rainfall data, river flows and demand on a weekly basis. The Environmental Assessment Report updates commence approximately 14 weeks prior to us crossing our DCL (or earlier if appropriate), in accordance with our triggers referred to in Section 2. In the summer months this will also be eight weeks before the possibility of a TUB.

We have extensive experience of the monitoring and mitigation of drought and drought measures, and of assessing the environmental effects of river abstractions, river transfers and reservoir compensation releases. In considering the environmental requirements of the DP27, we have drawn on this considerable experience including:

- Applications for drought permits and orders during the 1995-1996 drought.
- Applications for time limited abstraction licences on the Rivers Ouse, Ure and Wharfe 1998, 2003 and 2017.
- Drought walkovers, and preparation of in-river works permits during the extended period of dry weather in 2020 and the droughts of 2022 and 2025.
- Preparations of, and applications for, drought permits during the 2018, 2022 and 2025 droughts.
- Attendance of two planning inspectorate hearings, in 2022 and 2025 due to objections received on our North West Area permit applications.
- Monitoring (and mitigation where necessary) of permit and order implementations in 2022 and 2025.
- River Wharfe abstraction licence variation, 2023.
- Heavily Modified Water Bodies schemes and investigations: Modification of compensation flows at numerous reservoirs in AMPs 5, 6 and 7 to meet Water Framework Directive (WFD) compliance. Included extensive ecological monitoring, flow model development and research, following an adaptive management approach.

6.2 How we assess the environmental impacts of a drought measure

In order to understand the effects of any proposed drought measure, we have carried out an environmental assessment for each supply-side drought management option. We have also carried out an assessment on five EA drought orders. The environmental assessments consider the potential impacts of each proposed measure on a range of receptors. The overall scope of the environmental assessment meets the requirements of the DPG2025; specifically, **Section 2.6** of the EA's "Environmental Assessment for Water Company Drought Planning Supplementary Guidance".

Our supply-side drought options involve a reduction in compensation flow from a reservoir or an increase in abstraction from a river. These options result in a reduction in flow in the river downstream and the majority will require a drought permit or order. Each supply-side option has been subject to a detailed environmental assessment.

For the purposes of reporting, the supply-side drought options considered for environmental assessment are grouped as follows:

Compensation release reductions:

- North area reservoir drought options.
- South area reservoir drought options.
- South west reservoir drought options (split into Upper Calder and Middle Calder).
- North west area reservoir drought options.

River abstractions:

- River Ouse drought option (order).
- River Ure drought option.
- River Hull drought option.
- River Wharfe drought option.
- River Derwent drought option.

Cumulative impacts of options both within groups and across groups have also been considered. A summary of the environmental impacts identified within each Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) can be found in Appendix 5.

Extreme supply-side options are those that could be implemented in an extended period of drought and strengthen the resilience of measures available to the company should a very severe and prolonged drought event occur. Such options include increases to borehole, reservoir and river abstractions; increasing water treatment capacity; transfers; tankering and network changes. These options require additional construction elements, as well as changes to the operational regime of the water resource and in some cases a drought order or permit. Thus, a detailed environmental assessment report has not been completed for each of the extreme strategic options at this stage. Further assessments will be completed when schemes are more developed, post draft DP27 submission.

The DPG2025 indicates that efforts should be focussed on understanding, and where possible mitigating for the environmental impacts of the supply-side drought options which are most likely to be implemented. As such, the majority of the extreme supply options have been subject to an environmental screen which provides sufficient information to inform the potential environmental risks and mitigation requirements for these options. The outcomes of the screening are summarised in Appendix 5.

We have developed an Environmental Assessment Methodology, in consultation with the EA, which provides a detailed approach to the specific requirements of the DPG2025 which are:

1. Setting out the likely changes to the hydrology (or hydrogeology) due to a proposed action.
2. Identifying the key features of the environment which are likely to be affected by these changes and assessing their sensitivity.
3. Assessing the likely impact on these features, allocating a level of confidence in the assessment and setting out the actions we will take to reduce uncertainty.
4. Mitigating against the potential impacts and where datasets are considered insufficient it is our responsibility to implement environmental monitoring to generate the information required.

Appendix 5 provides further information on the approach environmental assessment approach.

All EARs were updated for the drought permit applications of 2025 and 2022 in consultation with the EA and NE. As part of DP27 these EARs have been further revised and updated in consultation with the EA to incorporate lessons identified from 2025 and 2022. The EARs are not published as part of this Drought Plan but are completed as far as is reasonably practicable in advance of a drought, in parallel with the preparation of this Drought Plan. The EARs are finalised during the onset of a drought and submitted alongside an application for a drought permit or drought order.

This approach ensures that much of the environmental information is collated in advance of a drought, whilst ensuring that the environmental assessment is based on the specific environmental and hydrological conditions occurring at the time, which cannot be predicted in advance. This enables the EA to make a swifter determination of drought orders or permits and ensures that any issues may be dealt with early.

6.3 Environmental Monitoring Plan (EMP) and data provision

6.3.1 Monitoring

In line with the DPG2025 we have prepared an EMP that sets out the following information:

- On-going baseline monitoring to inform sensitivity and impact assessments:

  The baseline monitoring programme (BMP) ensures that sufficient baseline data is available for the environmental features associated with each hydrological reach to inform the sensitivity and impact assessment and to define the need for further monitoring to reduce uncertainty. The BMP has also considered the EA's monitoring programme, third-party monitoring programmes and any monitoring programmes required by Yorkshire Water to fulfil the commitments of the Water Industry National Environmental Programme (WINEP).
- The monitoring that we will implement to reduce uncertainty identified in the assessment of either the sensitivity of the environment or impacts on features considered in the detailed assessment; and
- The in-drought and post-drought (recovery) monitoring that will be carried out to understand the actual impact of a drought option.

  The plan has been designed to differentiate the impacts of the drought measure from those of natural drought. This is achieved using a Before-After-Control-Impact approach. Paired control and impact sites monitored under baseline, in-drought and post-drought (recovery) stages assist with understanding the differences between the impacts of natural droughts and drought options.

A data exchange process has been agreed with the EA, through which baseline monitoring data from work carried out by either the EA or Yorkshire Water is made available to the other organisation on a regular basis. We collate this baseline data to ensure the data set remains up to date.

We meet with the EA to discuss their routine monitoring programme, the data exchange process and to review our baseline monitoring programme, to ensure their effectiveness. This baseline data schedule in the EMP is also reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date.

6.3.2 Mitigation

The DPG2025 specifies that any serious impacts on the environment that are predicted to occur through the implementation of any drought management actions are mitigated against. The environmental assessments undertaken (described in Section 6.2) identify the sensitive features for which mitigation may be required and also specify associated monitoring requirements.

Discussions were held with the EA to identify serious impacts and to agree appropriate mitigation measures that are both available and practicable. Details of these are documented in the EARs and EMP and summarised in Appendix 5. The EA and other relevant parties will also be consulted further, prior to applying for an individual drought permit.

A suite of potential mitigation measures, from which specific measures would be selected subject to the nature and timing of a particular drought permit, are outlined in the EMP.

6.4 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

As set out in the DPG2025, each water company is required to ensure that its Drought Plan meets the requirements of the Habitats Regulations (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) through undertaking a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Through our WReN customer engagement and research, we understand that conserving and enhancing habitats and ensuring biodiversity is very important to customers; it ranked in 4th position behind leakage, keeping costs low and providing a continuous water supply (Water Resources North Customer Engagement, June 2021).

The purpose of the HRA is to determine whether implementing the plan will have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites which are designated under the Habitats Directive. Such sites include:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA).
- Candidate Special Protection Areas (cSPA).
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).
- Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC).
- Ramsar Sites.
- Candidate Ramsar sites.

The HRA Screening report is a separate document which is published alongside our Drought Plan for consultation on our website.

Stage 1 HRA screening of the drought permit options concluded that likely significant effects on the Humber Estuary SAC could not be ruled out for the North Area Reservoir 1 drought option. Consequently, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment was undertaken. The assessment concluded that implementation of the option would not adversely affect the integrity of the Humber Estuary SAC. Although potential effects on the SAC's qualifying lamprey features were identified, the most upstream potentially affected part of the SAC is approximately 95 km downstream of the option's affected reaches, and significant barriers limit fish passage under both normal and drought conditions. While reductions in available aquatic habitat could occur within limited sections of the impacted reaches, these are relatively short in extent and there are no historic or recent records of river lamprey or sea lamprey within them. Furthermore, hydrological effects within the Ouse catchment (River Ure) are predicted to be minor. Therefore, the Appropriate Assessment concluded that the option would not adversely affect the conservation objectives, qualifying features, or overall integrity of the Humber Estuary SAC.

The extreme drought options were also subject to Stage 1 HRA screening, which identified that likely significant effects could not be ruled out for a number of European sites, including the North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Thorne Moor SAC, River Derwent SAC, Lower Derwent Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar, and Humber Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar. Consequently, Stage 2 Appropriate Assessments were undertaken to determine whether implementation of the relevant drought options would adversely affect the conservation objectives and integrity of these designated sites.

The Appropriate Assessment concluded that implementation of the Catterick Groundwater Option 1, York Groundwater Option 1, and Pickering/Thirsk Groundwater Option 1 would not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

However, adverse effects on site integrity could not be ruled out for Doncaster Groundwater Option 1, Doncaster Groundwater Option 2, Doncaster Groundwater Option 3, Optimisation of York WTW 2, and Selby Groundwater Option 2. Further investigation and assessment would be required to address the uncertainties identified before these options could be implemented.

Full details of the assessment process and conclusions are provided in the Final HRA Report.

In-combination or cumulative effects of the drought options, and with other relevant plans and projects, have been identified and assessed; however, these effects are not predicted to result in likely significant effects or an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site.

The HRA screening assessments will be reviewed as part of updating the EARs at the time of triggering the need for any particular drought option, recognising that the environment is not static and changes could take place that influence the assessment.

6.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report is a separate document which is published alongside our Drought Plan for consultation on our website.

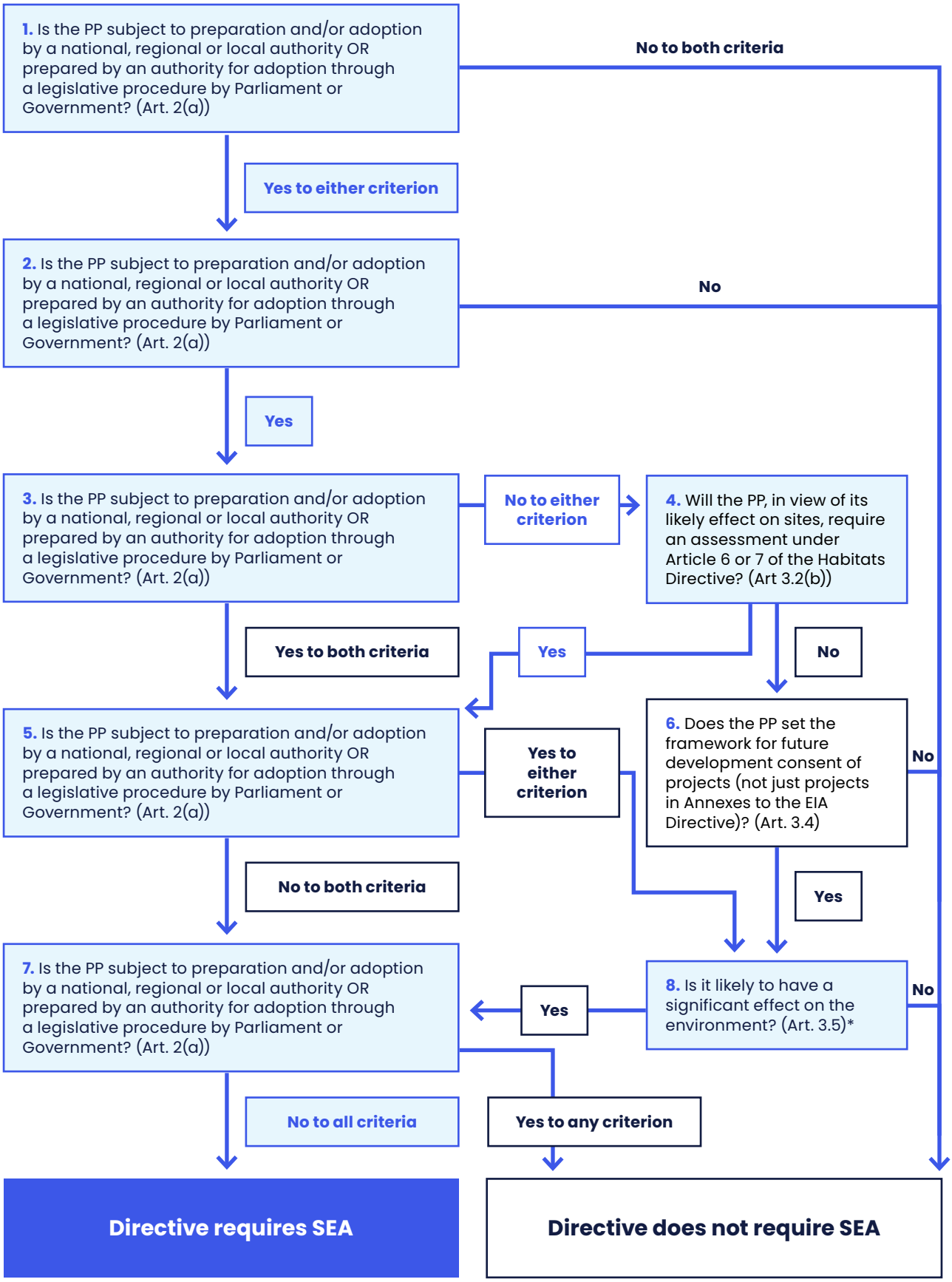
SEA is a statutory requirement, under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (referred to as the SEA Regulations), for plans or programmes which could have significant environmental implications and helps to identify where there are potential impacts and how any negative impacts might be mitigated. The objective of the SEA is "to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, with a view to promoting sustainable development".

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005). A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment was used to evaluate whether SEA should be undertaken on this Drought Plan, in accordance with the flow diagram shown in **Figure 6-1**. It was determined that SEA should be undertaken on a precautionary basis as the plan may have significant adverse effects on the environment.

The SEA Environmental Report presents the findings of the assessment. The SEA was informed by the HRA Screening Report, the Environmental Assessment Reports (EARs), environmental screening reports, the Environmental Monitoring Plan and consultation feedback on the SEA Scoping Report and draft SEA Environmental Report.



This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Figure 6-1: Application of SEA Directive to plans and programmes

6.6 How we used SEA in developing this Drought Plan

We actively consulted with the SEA statutory consultees during the SEA Scoping phase and subsequent development of the SEA Environmental Report.

Using objective-based criteria, the SEA assessment of each of the demand and supply-side drought options and their cumulative impacts provides a consistent and relative assessment of the impact of each option. This informs the consideration of the appropriate sequencing of option implementation, alongside other factors such as practicability and risks to drinking water quality. It is noted that some drought options may have different environmental effects depending on the season of implementation (for example, a summer drought compared to a winter drought). As drought measures can theoretically be required and implemented at any time of year, overall impacts are assessed on a worst-case basis in the SEA.

6.7 SEA findings

6.7.1 Ordinary supply-side drought options

The assessment of ordinary supply-side drought permit/order options found that the majority of options would have a major adverse effect on surface water flows and levels in the receiving watercourses; with the exception of the river abstraction options where only Hull increased abstraction experiences major adverse effects.

Impacts would be restricted to the low flow regimes of the watercourses and would be short-term and temporary. Associated impacts on water quality vary from negligible to major; with the Derwent annual abstraction increase showing least impact on this SEA objective and North Area Reservoir 1, North Area Reservoir 4, and Hull increased abstraction, showing most impact. All options are anticipated to experience moderate adverse effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna aside Derwent annual abstraction increase which may experience negligible effects and North Area Reservoir 4 which may experience major effects. Adverse effects on recreation and landscape associated with lower water levels in the impacted watercourses would be minimal, ranging from none to minor across all options.

All the drought permit/order options would deliver minor to major beneficial effects on human health and economic activity through maintaining water supply during drought conditions, as well as air and climate, through their ability to bolster resilience to the effects of climate change. The options require no construction activities, so there would be minor beneficial effects associated with use of existing infrastructure. The options would also be associated with minor beneficial effects associated with the appropriate and sustainable management of water supplies.

The Ouse increased abstraction, Wharfe reduced regulated flow and Hull increased abstraction options have the greatest beneficial effects, as they would deliver large volumes of water during drought events. These options provide moderate to major beneficial effects with respect to SEA objectives regarding protecting and enhancing human health and well-being, enabling access to essential services and providing a resilient water supply for customers and the economy.

6.7.2 Extreme Drought Options

The supply-side extreme drought options cannot be implemented without prior construction and planning activity which may include obtaining the necessary regulatory permitting and approvals. As such, these extreme options are not directly comparable with the ordinary drought permit/order options. The SEA process has been used to carry out strategic environmental impact comparison of the extreme options that might be required if an extended drought was to develop. The assessments have taken account of the HRA assessments where appropriate, along with findings from environmental reports.

The construction activities required for most of the long-term options have adverse effects relating to the consumption of resources, air quality and impacts on terrestrial species and habitats. Catterick Groundwater Option 1, Selby Groundwater Option , Selby Groundwater Option 2 perform best across these objectives as they do not require large scale construction activities and make use of existing infrastructure.

These options are also associated with the lowest adverse effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna.

Many of the extreme options are not sufficiently developed to allow the definition of a works area or confirmation of pipeline routes. As such, a precautionary approach has been applied, which results in some options displaying greater adverse effects than others.

In addition, options involving recommissioning of boreholes (e.g. Doncaster Groundwater Option 1, Doncaster Groundwater Option 2 and Doncaster Groundwater Option 3) are associated with multiple moderate adverse effects on objectives relating to biodiversity, population and human health, material assets, and water. This is due to the uncertainty surrounding the extent and precise location of the proposed infrastructure, as well as its proximity to sensitive environmental features or built up areas. Furthermore, these options involve abstraction from groundwater bodies that are subject to existing pressures and ongoing regulatory review. A WINEP AMP8 No Deterioration investigation is underway within the Doncaster Wellfield, and the current Environment Agency position is that abstraction licences will be capped from 2030. Whilst abstraction associated with the options would not be expected to exceed the no deterioration baseline under this scenario, uncertainty remains regarding future licensing arrangements and the long-term implications for groundwater resources and WFD objectives. As a result, a precautionary approach has been applied in the assessment.

However, these options also have beneficial effects, as they would deliver large volumes of water during drought events. These options provide beneficial effects associated with protecting and enhancing human health and well-being, enabling access to essential services and providing a resilient water supply for customers and the economy. The option Optimisation of York WTW 2 demonstrates the most significant beneficial effects in this regard.

These conclusions will need to be weighed against other factors, such as practicability, spatial distribution of drought intensity, supply-demand needs and potential risks to drinking water quality (including Drinking Water Safety Plan risk assessment regulations) in determining which option would be implemented first. None of the options are of sufficient environmental impact to exclude them from our Drought Plan as options for a continuing drought.

6.7.3 Cumulative Assessment

In accordance with the DPG2025, a cumulative, or in-combination, assessment has also been undertaken which involved examining the likely significant effects of each of the drought options in combination with each other and in combination with the implementation of other relevant plans and programmes.

The potential of Yorkshire Water's Drought Plan to interact with other plans, programmes or large projects was reviewed and it was determined that no cumulative effects will occur. However, there is potential for a number of Yorkshire Water's supply-side options to produce cumulative effects.

Detailed assessments are provided in the SEA Environmental report.

6.7.4 Summary

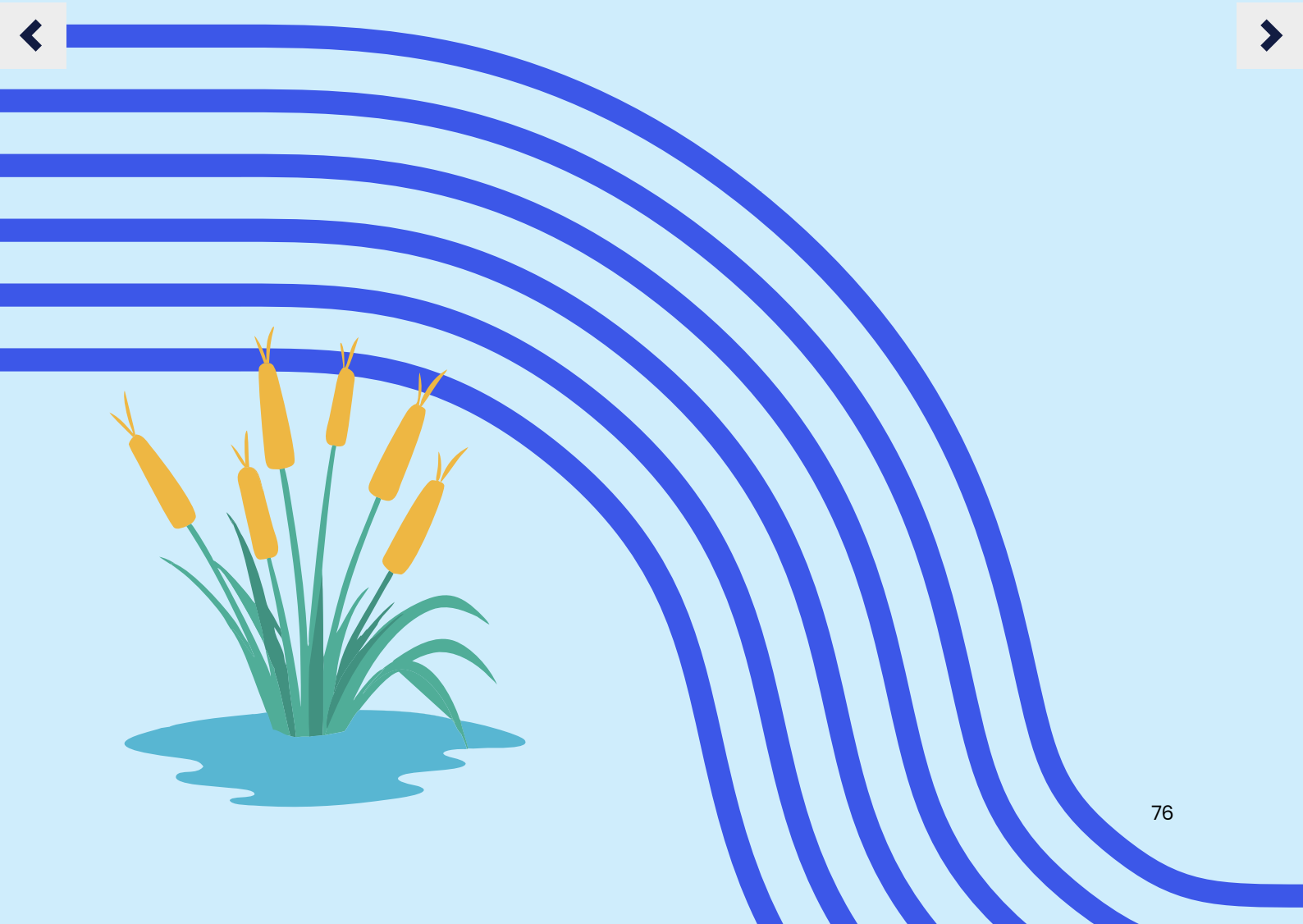
The purpose of the SEA is to provide high level and strategic protection of the environment by incorporating environmental considerations into the preparation of plans and policy. In the context of drought planning, SEA assists in the identification of the likely significant environmental effects of Yorkshire Water's drought management options and how any adverse impacts might be mitigated.

The assessment showed that a distinction can be made between options that would be considered more sustainable than others and this can be used to inform the order in which they would be implemented. Sequencing of implementation will, however, be dependent on the spatial distribution of drought, prevailing supply-demand conditions and the available infrastructure to move water to areas of greatest need within the integrated grid system.

7. Recovery from drought

Once our reservoirs receive sufficient rainfall to start to refill, we will move from 'drought' status to 'recovering from drought'. A return to 'normal' conditions can be difficult to determine, and it is possible we could be experiencing a short, wet period in a prolonged drought. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and carefully manage the lifting of drought actions.

As we recover from drought, we will phase the removal of drought actions in response to reservoir stocks increasing. The timing would be dependent on a variety of factors including time of year, rate of recovery, predicted rainfall and our drought prospects reporting (described in Section 1.5).



7.1 Lifting of actions

As reservoir stock levels replenish, we use our drought trigger levels in reverse when considering ceasing drought actions. We would not automatically cease actions as there is a risk dry weather returns and stocks start to decline again. Our decisions will be based on our drought indicators, using reservoir levels, scenario modelling and weather data to provide information on the likelihood of the situation worsening again. The triggers and associated actions for drought recovery are described in Table 7-1.

Trigger	Actions
Reservoir stocks increase to level 1	• Model a range of rainfall scenarios to assess the risk of reservoir stocks falling below this control line again. • Start discussions with the EA on de-escalation timetables for removing TUB and any supply and demand drought permits/orders that are in place.
Reservoir stocks recover to a level where modelling is no longer showing a likely need for drought permit related actions or non-essential use bans. Depending on the time of year this may be when stocks are above level 1 or not until stocks cross the normal control line	• Update customer communications to promote the continued need to conserve water although it may be raining. • Withdraw any submitted permit/order applications not yet determined. • Reservoir refill is often rapid following a drought (for example, 2025, 2022 and 2018) and we will use model forecasts to determine if all actions can be lifted simultaneously or should be phased. • During the summer months any phasing for lifting actions would be the reverse of implementation, that is, a NEUB, followed by supply-side permits then the TUB. • During winter months we would not impose a TUB. We may therefore lift the TUB and retain supply-side permit/order subject to any conditions stated on the permit/order. • We would generally retain a drought order or permit for its duration although we may not be required to implement it; however, it may expire due to pre-determined de-escalation triggers within the authorisation.
Drought permit actions have been removed, and operations have reverted to operating conditions as stated in the relevant abstraction permissions and legal agreements.	Carry out post drought monitoring of the sites impacted as outlined in our Environmental Monitoring Programme (see Section 6 for more information). The duration and content of the post-drought monitoring will depend on the severity of impacts detected during the implementation of drought measures, the characteristics of the drought itself, and the recovery time for the various receptors. This flexibility is essential during a drought as no two droughts are the same and environmental conditions change over time, necessitating a robust and flexible approach. All additional monitoring and mitigation measures would be agreed through liaison with the EA Area Drought Co-ordinator and Fisheries and Environment Teams.

Table 7-1: Recovery from drought triggers and actions

7.1.1 Prolonged dry weather and managing water quality

Extended periods of dry weather and drought can cause soil desiccation, which ultimately results in cracking of the ground. These cracks create pathways for rapid water flow which often results in poor raw water quality, primarily in reservoirs when heavy rainfall occurs. This is mitigated by adjusting reservoir draw-offs, balancing the use of sources, optimising treatment processes and adjusting WTW outputs to maintain treated water quality.

This mitigation means the maximum throughput of water from our WTWs is temporarily reduced. The actual impact varies with the volume and intensity of rainfall and the minimum level the reservoir reached. Historically, rapid refill has not impacted on our ability to meet demand as during periods of heavy rainfall demand is lower and we do not require the works to reach maximum production capacity. These water quality risks do not delay drought recovery as the water is impounded and therefore not "lost".

River water quality can also be impacted after heavy rainfall. This is mainly after flash storm events or late autumn after extended periods of heavy rainfall when demand is suppressed. Maximising river flows supports reservoir recovery so poor water quality could slightly delay reservoir refill by reducing river abstractions immediately after heavy rainfall. However, reservoirs would refill and the natural settlement occurring would mean water quality in reservoirs soon improves.

7.1.2 Communicating the lifting of actions

Customers and stakeholders will be informed when drought actions are no longer in place through press releases, our website and direct communications as appropriate. We will continue to promote water saving messages for voluntary water reductions.

We will publish notices and notify interested parties when a TUB, supply-side permits/orders and a NEUB end using the same channels as used to notify implementation and applications. This will include notices on any submitted permit/order applications we withdraw before determination.

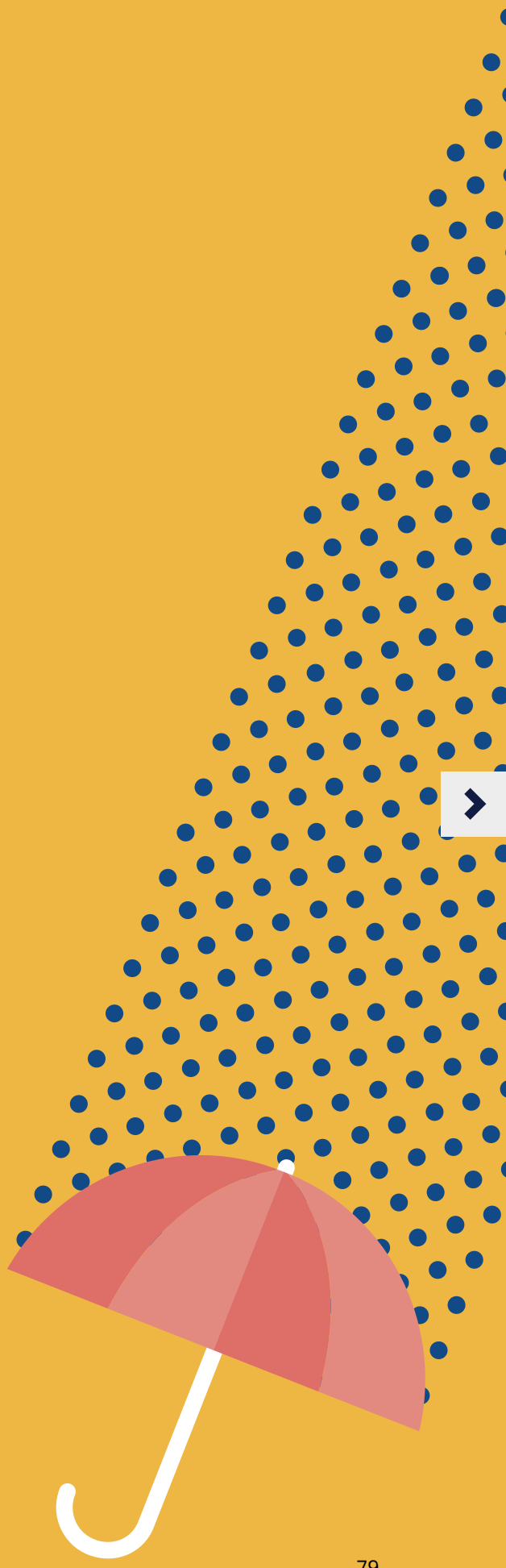
We will communicate the ending of implemented drought actions when permits or orders expire or sooner if reservoir levels have crossed triggers as explained in **Table 7-1** and a decision has been made to cease the action.

We will communicate with the affected parties through the same channels used to communicate the implementation of actions. Where formal notices in newspapers are required, we would communicate the date of cessation through other media channels ahead of the notice publication.

We would be speaking regularly with Retailers and NAVs during escalation and recovery to keep them informed of the situation. Other water companies and regional groups would be kept informed through regular meetings and via the National Drought Group.

8. End of a drought

We would declare an end of a water supply drought in our region when the risks to security of supply and the environment from drought are no greater than they would be during a normal year and normal conditions have resumed for a period of time.



The end of a drought is dependent on the risk of drought conditions going forward and we do not use a definitive end of drought trigger but instead consider a range of indicators.

Our indicators for the end of a drought include:

- No level 1 to 4 drought actions in place.
- Reservoir stocks are above the level 1 band and showing signs of stabilising in the normal band.
- Rainfall scenario modelling is showing no greater risk than we experience in an average year.

We would use our water resource model to forecast future reservoir stocks under a range of rainfall scenarios to assess the risk of a return to drought conditions and if it is appropriate to declare the drought has ended. Initially when reservoir levels recover, river levels can continue to be low and limit the volume of water we can abstract for supply to customers. This has potential to lead to a more rapid decline in reservoir stocks in the following year, particularly if rainfall is below average and our drought prospects would be key to the decision-making.

Our indicators and decision making on the end of drought is based on our own resource position and not that of Severn Trent Water who provide an import to our supply area.

We would present model outputs to the EA and seek confirmation it was in agreement that the water resource situation and associated threat to public water supply have returned to normal.

Customer communications would return to 'normal' level messages (Section 5). We would be in regular contact with neighbouring companies, regional water resources groups and Defra through the National Drought Group and would update them on our drought prospects and the end of a drought. Retailers and NAVs would be informed of the end of drought via email, which could coincide with the lifting of actions if we receive rapid reservoir refill.

8.1 Ongoing environmental monitoring

As part of our drought commitments, we carry out a comprehensive baseline monitoring programme, delivering macroinvertebrate and fisheries monitoring at selected sites across Yorkshire to maintain an environmental baseline on waterbodies that may be impacted by implementation of Drought Plan activities.

In addition to this, we have scheduled in a significant post drought monitoring programme for a period of three years (2026-2029 to include macroinvertebrate, fisheries and also White Clawed Crayfish, Lamprey, Fine-lined pea mussel (where required). This will target sites where permits were implemented and where flows were most significantly impacted. This will help us to establish whether any long-term environmental impact has occurred as a result of drought.

8.2 Reviewing our plan performance after a drought

After a drought, we will review our plan's performance during the onset of the drought, during the drought and directly after the drought. The extent of the review will depend on the severity of the drought, and which parts of the plan had been tested. We will carry out some or all of the below activities:

- Review our reservoir control lines and recalculate our minimum inflows analyses.
- If applicable, we would produce new control lines, if the minimum inflows during the drought were lower than previous droughts, and update our trigger bands.
- Review the drought action implementation within the drought trigger bands and if any changes are needed.
- Analyse demand data for customer water use and leakage to assess the actual reductions and cost efficiency of demand side actions and compare with current estimates of reductions.
- Review the effectiveness of our communications strategy through customer research which will include surveys, stakeholder feedback, social media engagement, attendance at "drop ins", drought permit/order consultation responses and direct customer contact during a drought.
- Review the effectiveness and cost efficiency of supply-side drought management actions by analysis of hydrological data and scenario modelling.
- If the drought resulted in restrictions on use or drought permit/order implementation, we would review our levels of service and determine if the drought led to any changes to the plan.
- The environmental impacts of the level 3a supply-side actions will be assessed, together with the effectiveness of any mitigation measures, through undertaking environmental monitoring. As river flows recover after a drought, the intensity of the associated environmental monitoring will reduce, extending into the drought recovery period. The duration of this post-drought monitoring will depend on the severity of the impacts and the recovery time for the various receptors. All additional monitoring and mitigation would be agreed with the EA, and any monitoring associated with the impacts and recovery of designated sites would be agreed with Natural England.
- Review if any options or solutions that are not currently identified in the plan were identified during the incident and if they should be added to the plan.
- Review if any long-term options required temporarily in a drought could become permanent solutions. The costs and benefits, including environmental impacts, to convert the assets to permanent resources would be considered in the next iteration of our Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP). The options would be considered alongside other feasible options as part of the WRMP process and funding requested in our next business plan.

The drought actions will be discussed internally and externally to identify where improvements can be made. This could include discussions with external stakeholders such as the CCWater, the EA and NE. Feedback will be sought from stakeholders in those areas most affected by drought actions, such as where supply-side drought permits/orders have been in place.

8.3 Updating our Drought Plan and related plans

We will provide the EA with a "lessons identified" report, including recommendations for drought planning improvements, within three to six months of conditions returning to normal. Our lessons identified following the 2025 drought are provided in Appendix 9 of this DP27.

We will provide evidence that recommendations have been acted on in annual reviews of DP27 (see Section 1.1.3). In accordance with legislation, we will produce a revised Drought Plan if material changes are required as a result of a drought.

We may alter our triggers and actions based on modelling and analysis of our most recent drought experience. Our drought scenarios will be revised to take into account any changes to the timing and effectiveness of drought actions.

If material changes are not identified the outputs of the lessons identified report will be incorporated into the next iteration of our Drought Plan, which will be produced within timescales specified by legislation (currently every five years).

Updates to DP27 and actions we take in a drought situation may impact on our WRMP. When producing our next WRMP we will consider the impact of the drought on our resource availability, demand forecasting, planning scenarios, water efficiency activities, option identification, asset health and future investment that would be carried through to our next Business Plan.



9. Additional information

This section provides further information relevant to our drought management, bulk supplies and in extreme droughts compensating customers. We also include a summary of our learning from the 2025 drought.

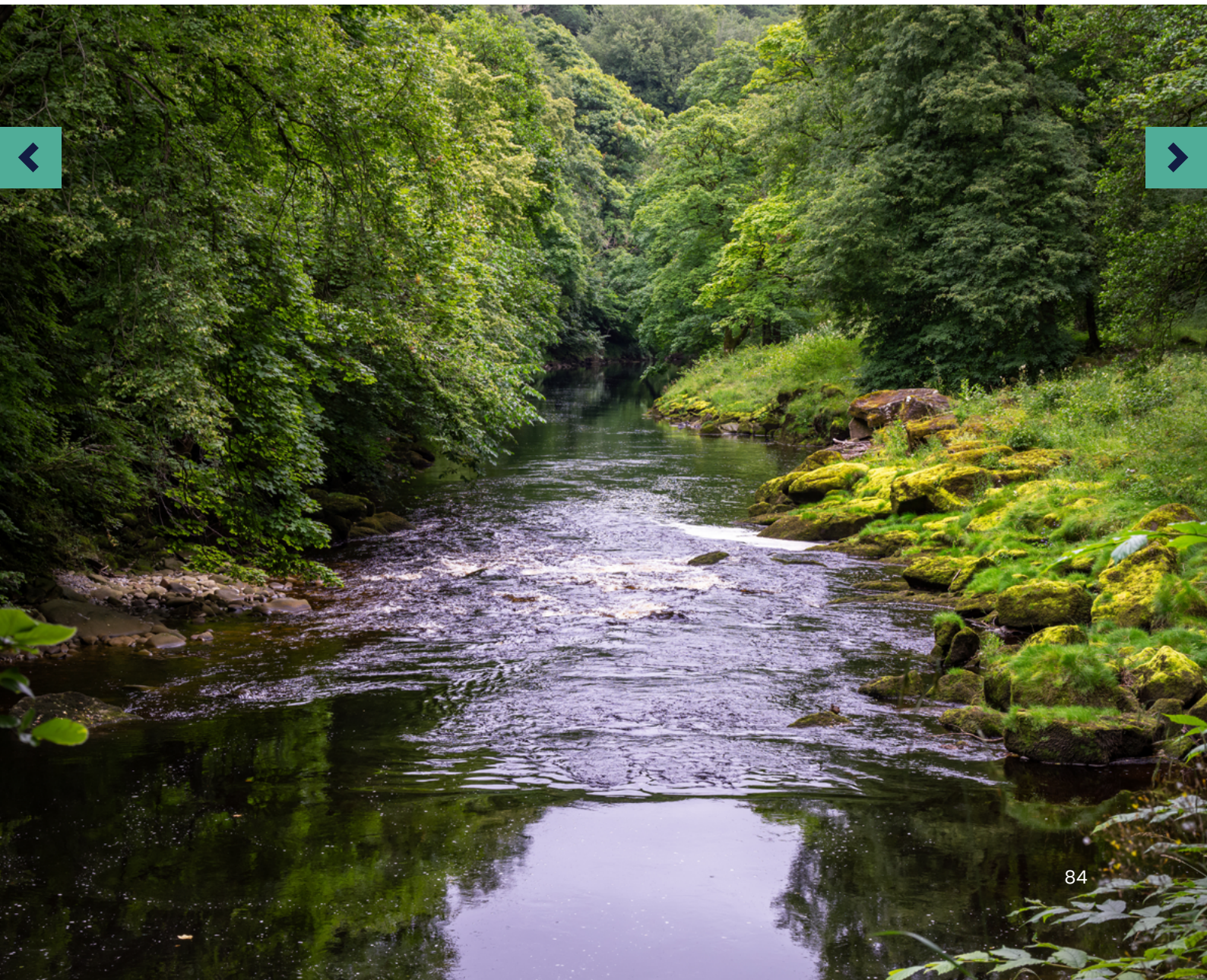
9.1 Drought management structure

We incrementally escalate our drought management teams in reaction to the developing situation. The first water supply escalation team to be convened is Bronze Risk, which is escalated to Silver then Gold as a drought becomes more severe. These categories are aligned with our Company Incident Management Plans. **Figure 9-1** shows an example drought management structure at the Gold level.

The Bronze Risk Team will include representatives from each of the teams responsible for managing implementation of our Drought Plan, our operational response to dry weather and our customer and stakeholder communications.

As the drought develops additional teams become involved and the seniority of the chair escalates at Silver then Gold. In some situations we may go straight to Silver or from Bronze to Gold if our drought indicators are indicating the drought is progressing rapidly.

Further Information on the roles of the drought team and the triggers for convening the Bronze team and escalating to Silver then Gold is provided in **Appendix 8**.



Dry weather Incident Management Team

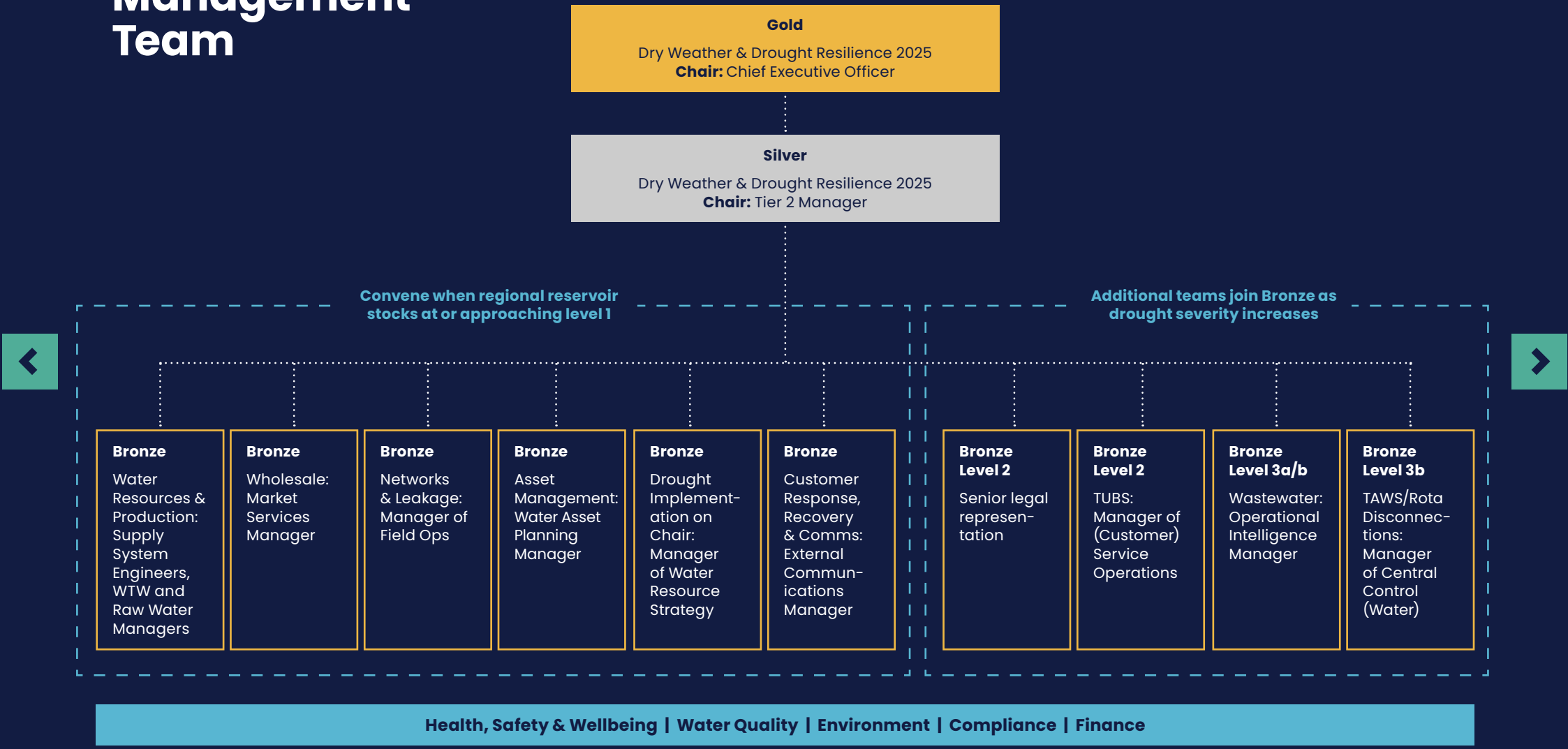


Figure 9-1: Dry weather incident management team

9.2 Agreements and arrangements

We hold bulk supply agreements with Severn Trent Water and six NAVs. The arrangements are summarised below with further information provided in **Appendix 4**.

9.2.1 Bulk supply from Severn Trent Water

Under the bulk transfer agreement we currently hold with Severn Trent Water, we are entitled to 24.1 per cent of yield available in the reservoir. This provides a maximum daily volume of 68Ml/d, but we cannot take more than 21,550Ml per calendar year. There are also control lines that reduce the permitted import volume dependent on the quantity of water stored in the Derwent Valley reservoirs. This means the quantity we are permitted to import reduces as reservoir storage declines. The control lines for the import are independent of our drought trigger levels. If either party imposes any restrictions on its customers during a drought the other party is not obliged to impose the restrictions on its customers.

9.2.2 Bulk supplies to NAVs

At the time of creating this DP27 there are six NAVs operating in our region. The combined contractual bulk transfer volume for these NAVs is 7,748Ml per a year, which is 21Ml/d. Under the terms of the agreement NAVs are required to apply any drought related restrictions we have in place to their customers.

9.3 Compensation arrangements

Some of our supply-side drought actions can impact on other catchment users. In an extreme event (level 4), water supply could be temporarily unavailable. Under these circumstances we could be required to provide financial compensation.

9.3.1 Compensation for adverse impacts from implementation of supply-side drought actions

Under the Water Resources Act 1991, Schedule 9, people who suffer loss or damage as a result of a drought order/permit are entitled to compensation. Those who may claim are (1) the owners of the source and (2) other persons interested in the source of water or injuriously affected by the taking of the water.

Under the Act, claims must be made within six months of the date of expiry of the order/permit. Where a claim is "made during the continuance of the ordinary drought order, the Lands Tribunal may, if it thinks fit, award a sum representing the loss or damage which is likely to be sustained by the claimant" in respect of each day the claimant is affected.

When we advertise and consult on drought order/permit applications, to provide us with additional supply in a drought, we will reference the above to ensure abstractors potentially impacted by the drought measures are made aware that they may make a claim for compensation to the Lands Tribunal.

We have a record of abstractors downstream of drought permit sites that may be at risk of derogation due to drought orders/permits being implemented. We will check for any additional abstractors with the EA at the time of making a permit application. We will send notices of permit/order applications to all third parties we identified as potentially impacted.

9.3.2 Compensation for water use restrictions

Water companies may be required to make payments/give credits to customers if their supply of water is interrupted or cut off under the authority of a drought order in accordance with condition Q of our Instrument of Appointment. If payable, the payments for each day (or part day) during which a supply is interrupted or cut off would be, (1) £10 per day for household customers subject to a maximum of our average domestic water charge in the previous year and (2) £50 per day for non-household customers subject to a maximum of the amount of water charges payable by the customer for the premises for the previous charging year. If the non-household customer has not paid a full year's water charge, or a third party is responsible for the water charges, a maximum of £500.

9.4 Updates following the 2025 drought

Our Drought Plan has been updated to reflect learning from the 2025 drought.

We have updated our plan to reduce the time between TUB notices and imposing the ban. The EA DPG2025 states that between April and September a TUB should be in place long enough to have a measurable impact before permit applications are submitted. In the 2025 drought, the EA stipulated that we could not submit a permit application until a TUB was in place for two weeks. Our experience from 2025 showed we were able to demonstrate an immediate benefit through the use of smart meter technology (Appendix 9). As a result, we have updated our DP27 worked examples to allow an estimated 7 days between advertising a TUB and starting to submit drought permit/order applications.

A further reason for making this change is due to the large number of level 3a supply-side permit actions we have in our region combined with the protracted nature of the permit application process, creating the need to expedite the process where possible. During the 2025 drought, the EA permit application process was unable to overlap the handling of permits causing delays which is a major risk to drought management. We have raised this risk in joint lessons identified sessions with both EA Yorkshire and National teams and are continuing to work with the EA on this in order to expedite where possible.

To illustrate this, in drought we may need to apply for and, if granted, implement up to 48 permits/orders. We group and phase the applications (see Section 3.4.1) each of which takes an average of four weeks between the date of application and the permits being granted. In practice, the implementation of the permit actions is then phased over a further time period, typically one to two weeks, to allow for operational changes and subsequent environmental monitoring of potential impacts. This is based on our experience in the 2025 drought. Reducing the time between TUB implementation and first permit application to 72 hours would typically allow 5 weeks for determination and implementation.

Figure 9-1 summarises all the changes we have made based on lessons identified from the 2025 drought. Additional information on lessons identified and the changes made in producing our DP27 can be found in **Appendix 9**.

Drought plan component	Description of change
Drought scenarios	Updated our water resource simulation model to include 2025 data, and revised our worked examples.
Triggers	Represented the drought levels using reservoir bands to better align with the worked example included in Appendix B of the DPG2025 and how we operated in recent droughts.
Triggers	The time between publishing a temporary use ban (TUB) notice and imposing the restrictions has been reduced to 72 hours.
Triggers	Identified actions for the transition between level 3b and level 4. See table 2-2.
Triggers	Assess data on emergency storage and updated the level 4 trigger. This has been reduced from 20 percent of reservoir stock levels to 15 percent.
Permit/order applications	The estimated time between imposing a TUB and applications starting to submit drought permit/order applications has been reduced to 7 days.
Actions	The benefits of level 1 to 3a demand side actions have been reviewed and estimated to provide an accumulative benefit of up to 6.5% of the daily volume of water put into supply.
Actions	Reviewed non-household drought actions and developed a non-household communications strategy.
Extreme drought actions	Reviewed extreme drought actions.
Extreme drought actions	Reviewed extreme drought actions and carried out further modelling and environmental assessments of supply side actions requiring additional infrastructure.

Table 9-1: Learning from the 2025 drought

10. Glossary of Drought Plan terminology, abbreviations and acronyms



Abstraction	The removal of water from any source, either permanently or temporarily.
Abstraction Licence	The authorisation granted by the Environment Agency or EA (England) or Natural Resources Wales (for sites in Wales) to allow the removal of water from a source.
AMP8	The eighth Asset Management Plan – used to refer to the period from 2025 to 2030.
Baseline	Information on the environment that details conditions prior to implementation of a drought action.
BAU	Business As Usual.
Bulk Transfers	A legal agreement for exporting and importing water between a donor and recipient operator.
Business Plan	The business plan sets out a water company's business strategy and how they will provide value-for-money water and if applicable wastewater services to their customers.
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis.
CCWater	Consumer Council for Water.
Civil Emergency	Civil emergency is defined in the Water Industry Act Section 208 (point 7) as any natural disaster or other emergency which, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, is or may be likely, in relation to any area— (a) so to disrupt water supplies or sewerage services; or (b) to involve such destruction of or damage to life or property in that area, as seriously and adversely to affect all the inhabitants of that area, or a substantial number of them, whether by depriving them of any of the essentials of life or otherwise.
CL	Control line.
Compensation Water Flow	As defined by Section 77 of the Water Resources Act 1991 "compensation water" means water which a water undertaker or the [F1appropriate agency] is under an obligation to discharge— (a) in accordance with the provisions of a licence under Chapter II of this Part into a source of supply; or (b) under any local statutory provision, into any river, stream, brook or other running water or into a canal; and • "inland navigation" includes any canal or navigable river
Control Curves	A diagram or graph presenting drought triggers levels.
CoP	Code of Practice.
CRT	Canal and River Trust.
DCL	Drought Control Line.
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.
Demand Management	The implementation of policies or measures which serve to manage control or influence the consumption or waste of water.

Demand-side Measures	Include any drought actions that lead to a reduction in the volume of water we are required to put into supply.
DI	Distribution Input - the total quantity of treated water (potable water) that a water company puts into its distribution system, measured at the point of production.
DP27	Drought Plan 2027.
DPG2025	Drought Planning Guidelines published in 2025.
Deployable Output	The output of a commissioned source or group of sources or of bulk supply as constrained by: • Environment. • Licence, if applicable. • Pumping plant and/or well or aquifer properties. • Raw water mains and/or aquifers. • Transfer and/or output main. • Treatment. • Water quality.
Drought Order	An authorisation granted by the Secretary of State (England) or Welsh Ministers (Wales) under drought conditions. Drought orders can go further than drought permits and temporarily authorise a water company to: • Take water from a source specified in the order. • Prohibit or limit the use of water for any non-essential purposes. • Discharge water to a place specified in the order. • Prohibit or limit the taking by the EA of water from a source specified in the order. • Modify or suspend restrictions or obligations to taking, discharging supply or filtering/treating of water held by others (including EA). • Suspend or modify restrictions or obligations to which the water undertaker or any sewerage undertaker or anyone else is subject with regard to taking, discharging, supplying or filtering/treating water.
Drought Permit	Drought permits are a requirement for some of our supply-side actions to be implemented. They are temporary authorisations granted by the EA (England) or Natural Resources Wales (for sites in Wales) to: • authorise a water company to take (more) water from specified sources; and/or, • modify or suspend any restrictions or obligations to which a water company is subject that relate to the (existing) taking of water from any source, for example reducing compensation releases.
Drought Trigger	A measure or threshold of a drought indicator (like a low reservoir level) that activates a predefined management action in a Drought Plan.
DVF	Drought Vulnerability Framework.
DWI	Drinking Water Inspectorate – the DWI is our water quality regulator.
EA	Environment Agency.

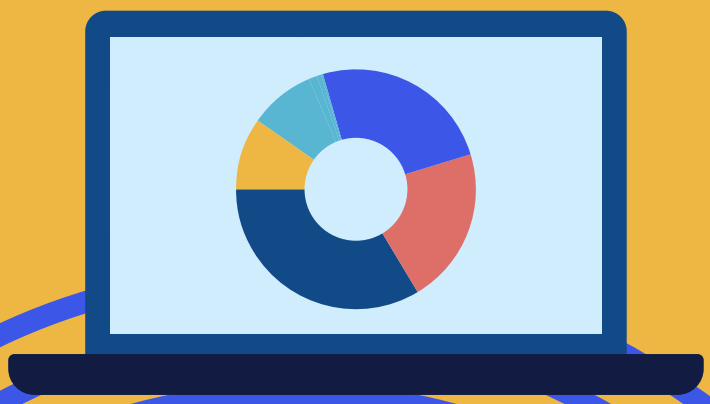
EACL	Environment Agency Control Line.
DI	The EA may also apply to Defra for a drought order to: • Prohibit or limit the taking of water from a source specified in the order. • Suspend, vary or attach conditions to any consent for the discharge of effluent by anyone.
Environmental Assessment	An assessment of environmental sensitivity and likely impacts from implementing drought management actions.
Environmental Assessment Report (EAR)	A report that assesses the potential environmental impacts of a drought option or options.
Environmental Monitoring Plan (EMP)	The plan of how the company will address: • gaps in the environmental assessment of the supply-side drought management action. • baseline monitoring (including pre drought monitoring). • in-drought monitoring. • post drought monitoring.
Environmental Report	The report that accompanies an application for a drought order or drought permit. It should be based on the information from within the environmental assessment and updated with any additional information.
Emergency Drought Order	An authorisation granted under drought conditions to allow a water company to limit the use of water for further measures not permitted under a non-essential use drought order. These further measures are level 4 actions and includes the imposition of rota cuts, phased pressure reduction and/or supply through standpipes or water tanks. The Secretary of State for the Environment (Defra) determines and grants drought order and emergency drought order applications from water companies, using advice provided by the EA.
Extreme Drought Actions	Actions we would consider if we have carried out level 1 to 3a actions and the severity of the drought meant that there was a risk that we may require level 4 actions if no further measures are implemented. They are sometimes referred to as 'more before 4' actions. Our long-term drought options are also considered extreme actions and would be consider alongside the other extreme actions.
FAQs	Frequently asked questions
Feature	A way of describing an ecological, chemical, habitat or morphological element to be assessed. For example, a species of plant or animal, habitat type or sub-habitat type.
Government	In this document Government refers to central Government (Defra).
Habitats Regulations	The Habitats Regulations (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The domestic legislation which transposes the EU Habitats and Wild Birds Directives into UK law and replaces the Conservation (natural habitats &c) Regulations 1994.
Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	A HRA will identify whether actions will have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites which are designated under the Habitats Directive.

In-drought Monitoring	Monitoring that is undertaken during the implementation of a drought management action.
Levels of Service	The standard of service that water company customers can expect to receive from their water company, commonly setting out the frequency of restrictions that a company expects to apply to its customers.
N/A	Not applicable.
National Drought Group (NDG)	The NDG is a national (England and Wales) cross-sectoral group that meets during times of prolonged dry weather and drought. It is chaired by the EA and membership includes sectors with an interest in water resources and drought, including water companies, the NFU, CRT, the Met Office, and representatives from environmental and angling groups, as well as Government (Defra, Welsh Assembly), regulators (EA, Ofwat, DWI and National Resources Wales) and customers representative groups (CCWater). The purpose of the group is to share information regarding dry weather and drought risks, and to ensure that all members have a common understanding of the water resources position nationally and any known or emerging risks.
NAVs	New Appointments and Variations. NAVs are limited companies that provide a water and/or sewerage service to customers in an area that was previously provided by the incumbent monopoly provider (e.g. Yorkshire Water).
NE	Natural England.
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council.
NFU	National Farmers Union.
Non-Essential Use Ban (NEUB)	In this Drought Plan we refer to a drought order that prohibits or limits the use of water for any non-essential purposes as a "non-essential use ban". This is different to a temporary use ban in that it imposes further restrictions, which a water company can only impose through a drought order granted by the Secretary of State. Section 3 and Appendix 4 include details of the water use activities restricted or prohibited by a NEUB.
Normal Control Line (NCL)	When reservoir stocks are above this line, our operations are considered business as usual and drought management actions are not required.
Ofwat	Water Services Regulation Authority. Ofwat is the economic regulator of the water and sewerage industry in England and Wales.
Ordinary Supply-side Options	This is a Yorkshire Water term applied to options that modify our existing abstraction permissions or reservoir compensation obligations. These are options we would implement, if required, in a short-term drought, typically up to two years. They do not require any additional assets or infrastructure but may require authorisation through a drought permit or order, depending on whether or not the action would contravene statutory requirements or constraints. Ordinary supply-side options are likely to continue to be in place during a longer-term drought, provided any necessary authorisations could be extended.
PSR	Priority Services Register.
Ramsar Site	Internationally important wetland site.

RBD	River Basin District - This is an area of land and sea, made up of one or more neighbouring river basins together with their associated groundwaters and coastal waters.
RBMPs	River Basin Management Plan– these are plans that aim to protect and improve the water environment for the benefit of people and wildlife. The plans set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to achieve an improved water environment for each RBD.
Resilience Options	Additional options to deal with plausible droughts worse than those in the recorded record. A case should be made for these in the Drought Plan but they should be included and funded through your next WRMP.
Resource Zone	The largest possible zone in which all resources, including external transfers, can be shared and hence the zone in which all customers experience the same risk of supply failure from a resource shortfall.
Retailers	Companies who supply water to non-domestic customers and either hold a retail supply licence, which allows them to supply non-domestic premises, or a combined supply licence, which allows the holder to introduce water into the supply system for supplying its own customers.
SAC	A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is the land designated under Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.
SEMD	Security and Emergency Measures Direction.
SPA	Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are protected areas for birds in the UK classified under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
Stochastic	Stochastic is the property of being well-described by a random probability distribution. In this plan we use stochastic techniques to generate information on droughts that could potentially happen in the future.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive	The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive ensures significant environmental effects arising from proposed plans and programmes are identified, assessed, subjected to public participation, taken into account by decision-makers and monitored.
Supply-side Measures	Include any drought actions that increase the volume of water available to put into supply or modify existing operations related to the taking of water for supply to customers.
SWZ	Surface water zone.
Temporary use ban (TUB)	A TUB restricts or bans certain types of water use. They can be imposed by water companies on customers without the need for any special permissions if a company thinks that it is experiencing, or may experience, a serious shortage of water for distribution. Details on the water use activities restricted or prohibited by a temporary use ban are provided in Section 2.7 and Appendix 4.
UKWIR	United Kingdom Water Industry Research – an organisation that produces research papers for the UK water sector.
UKWIR Drought 2023 CoP	United Kingdom Water Industry Research Drought 2023 CoP
Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP24)	A WRMP is a water company long-term strategic plan for water supply and demand over 25 years. WRMP24 is the WRMP produced in 2024.

Water Resource Zone (WRZ)	The largest possible zone in which all resources, including external transfers, can be shared and hence the zone in which all customers experience the same risk of supply.
Watsit	Water situation report.
WRAP	Water Resources Allocation Plan.
WReN	Water Resources North – a regional group for collaborative use of water resources. The other water companies in WReN are Northumbrian Water and Hartlepool Water (part of Anglian Water).
WRPR	Water Resources Planning Report.
WTW	Water Treatment Works. These are facilities that clean raw water from sources like rivers and reservoirs, making it safe to drink. This is done by removing contaminants through steps like coagulation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection (usually with chlorine).

11. Appendices and supplementary reports



The following are available in separate documents.

Non-technical summary

Appendix 1: The Drought Direction 2025

Appendix 2: Government expectations 2025

Appendix 3: Drought response surfaces

Appendix 4: Drought management actions

Appendix 4.1: Drought permit and order application process

Appendix 4.2: Demand-side drought management actions

Appendix 4.3: Water use restrictions in a drought and exceptions

Appendix 4.4: Temporary use bans consultation

Appendix 5: Supply-side drought management actions

Appendix 6: Extreme drought options

Appendix 7: Communications plan

Appendix 8: Drought management escalation procedure

Appendix 9: Lessons identified 2025

Appendix 10: References

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Supplementary Report: Drought Plan 2027 Drought Triggers and Worked Examples

Thank you for reading

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