




# Overview of 'Our Plan' 2025–2030

United Utilities' business plan, 'Our Plan', for 2025 to 2030 is focussed on the company investing to improve the core services it provides to customers and to improve the region as a whole with more jobs and greater investment in the local environment and economy. 'Our Plan' is centred around three key ambitions for the North West, all of which have been identified by customers and communities in the region as important to them. By working together to address the challenges the region faces, United Utilities hopes to make the region **stronger**, **greener**, and **healthier**.







<p><b>A STRONGER NORTH WEST:</b></p> <p>Proactively protecting our service against future challenges like climate change</p> 	<p><b>A GREENER NORTH WEST:</b></p> <p>Reducing water wastage and protecting and enhancing the North West's nature and ecosystems</p> 	<p><b>A HEALTHIER NORTH WEST:</b></p> <p>Proving additional social benefits to North West communities</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing £150m in pipes that are fit for the future</li> <li>Employing an inclusive and diverse workforce with 5,700 jobs</li> <li>Investing now to reduce the future impact of storms on the network...</li> <li>...reducing the likelihood of future water restrictions</li> <li>Providing optional smart meters to help customers reduce water usage and bills. Smart meters also help towards detecting leaks and reducing wastage to protect the environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing water wastage by 25% on our network and reducing usage</li> <li>Significantly reducing sewage water spills into water courses by 39%</li> <li>Investing in green, sustainable infrastructure that improves the lives of our communities in the long-term</li> <li>Protecting 200km of cleaner rivers to promote biodiversity and wildlife</li> <li>Planting a million trees</li> <li>Investing £162m to reduce carbon emissions by 40% through upgrading to processes with lower emissions and using renewable energy sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to provide great quality drinking water across the North West</li> <li>Restoring six coastal water areas in the North West used for wild swimming and water sports</li> <li>Restoring peatland and ecosystems for 500 hectares of land (equivalent to 700 football pitches)</li> <li>Leading the utility sector on supporting vulnerable customers with services tailored to their health needs</li> <li>Providing £500m of support to households so those struggling to pay have a discounted water bill. This is the largest amount of support ever offered by any water company</li> </ul>

## Service improvements





All of these investments from 2025 to 2030 are expected to deliver significant improvements to many of the day-to-day services that United Utilities' customers rely on. In support of this wider vision, United Utilities intends to commit to ten specific improvements to its service that affect its customers' everyday lives.

The first six of these ten are improvements that the water regulator, Ofwat, says water companies must include in their business plans. The last four, are voluntary targets that United Utilities wants to set itself, but these aren't required by Ofwat.

## United Utilities targets for 2030

 <p>Reducing the amount of water leakage</p> <p><b>25% improvement</b></p>	 <p>Reducing interruptions to your water supply</p> <p><b>45% improvement</b></p>	 <p>Reducing the number of water quality issues customers experience</p> <p><b>61% improvement</b></p>	 <p>Reducing the number of pollution incidents</p> <p><b>37% improvement</b></p>	 <p>Reducing the number of properties affected by sewer flooding inside their property</p> <p><b>36% improvement</b></p>	 <p>Reducing the number of properties affected by sewer flooding outside their property</p> <p><b>27% improvement</b></p>
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## Voluntary improvements set by United Utilities: targets for 2030

<p>Smart meters to help reduce usage &amp; lower bills</p>  <p><b>670,000 new smart meters</b></p>	<p>Reducing the chances of a hosepipe ban</p>  <p>Halving the chance of experiencing a hosepipe ban or other water restrictions in dry weather</p>	<p>Carbon reduction to improve the environment</p>  <p><b>40% reduction</b></p>	<p>Affordability support</p>  <p><b>£500 million for support with bills</b></p> <p><b>More than any other water company</b></p>
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## Wider statutory responsibilities

As part of its business plan for 2025 to 2030, United Utilities must adhere to the laws and regulations in place that affect how all water companies in England and Wales must act. These cover environmental legislation, as well regulations regarding their drainage, wastewater, and storm overflow infrastructure.

### Environmental laws:

**The services that water companies provide must comply with environmental laws in England and Wales, as well as UK or Welsh Government policy.**

All water companies have a programme of work to meet these laws, including a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) and the Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP). These include:

- Reducing pollution of seas and rivers by sewage overflows.
- Not taking too much water from rivers and the ground.

- Making sure there is enough water available to protect the natural environment as well as providing a public water supply.
- Treating water and wastewater to a standard that does not harm the natural environment.

All water companies must produce a Water Resources Management Plan every 5 years which forecasts water supply and demand over a minimum period of 25 years.

Water companies must also meet legal requirements for the quality and safety of drinking water and protect reservoirs, treatment works and other sites to ensure they are safe and secure.

### Storm overflow infrastructure:

When there is too much rainfall for sewers to handle, storm overflows allow rain water, mixed with sewage, to escape into a separate pipe which eventually flows into a river or the sea.

This helps to reduce the risk of properties being flooded with sewage.

There are around 15,000 storm overflows in England, of which 2,191 are in the United Utilities region.

**Each company (in England) has a target set by Government to reduce the use of storm overflows:**

- By 2035, water companies will have: improved all overflows discharging into or near every designated bathing water; and improved 75% of overflows discharging to high priority sites.
- By 2050, no storm overflows will be permitted to operate outside of unusually heavy rainfall or to cause any adverse ecological harm.

### Drainage & wastewater:

The Environment Act requires sewerage companies to produce Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans, which are set over at least 25 years. The plans consider how things like climate change and population growth affect current and future capacity of sewage and rainwater drainage networks. The plans require a lot of collaboration between sewerage companies and other organisations which work around flood risk, and river management.



## Financial support provided by United Utilities

Our preferred business plan proposes that at least £500m of direct financial support be provided to help low income households afford new water charges. This includes at least £200m of direct company contributions.

Help will be delivered through discounted tariffs and grants to individuals and families via the United Utilities Trust Fund.

Support like this aims to help customers out of debt and helping people avoid falling behind on payments in the first place.

Promoting awareness of this support, and working with partners such as Citizens Advice means that we forecast that over 200,000 customers in the North West will receive financial support towards their water charges.

### Reduced bill: Back on Track...

If you're experiencing financial difficulties and are worried about paying your water bill, United Utilities may be able to offer you some extra help with their 'Back on Track' scheme.

The scheme is suitable for customers either receiving benefits, or on a low income and finding it difficult to pay their bill following a recent change in financial circumstances (such as redundancy or a reduction in current income).

Depending on your individual circumstances your water bill will be capped at a lower amount for the year.

### Discount for low income pensioners

United Utilities Help to Pay scheme provides a bill discount for low income pensioners receiving Pension Credit. Customers can receive a discount of around £60 on their water and/or sewerage bill.

### Debt support scheme – Payment Matching

If you need debt support, United Utilities Payment Matching scheme means that for every £1 you pay, they'll match it with £1 too, with their contribution increasing to £2 if you continue to make payments until your debt is cleared.

### Bill cap scheme: WaterSure

WaterSure helps reduce water bills if the household uses a lot of water for reasons beyond their control (e.g. households with 3+ children or someone in the household has a higher than average water usage due to a certain medical condition). Recipients must be in receipt of a means tested benefit or tax credit and be on a water meter. Bills are capped in-line with the average metered bill so customers don't pay more for reasons they cannot help.

### Payment break

If you're struggling with your bill due to losing your job or having to pay out for an unexpected household emergency, United Utilities Payment Break scheme can help by delaying your payments for an agreed period of time.



Water for the North West