

Delivering our strategic priorities



Ballyronan wastewater treatment works, County Derry/Londonderry.

The world in which we operate

Our global world

We live in a resource constrained world and have a responsibility to ensure that our planet earth is sustainable for those who come after us. The United Nations has developed 17 goals to deliver a more sustainable world by 2030 and we are proud to play our part in supporting delivery of at least 12 of these goals:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Sewer relining works to help protect customers against bursts and out-of-sewer flooding, Belfast, County Antrim.

Strategic areas of focus



Sustainable development goals



Principal threats/opportunities



Page 76 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

Customer	Unit of measurement	Target 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Pass/Fail	Target 2025/26
Reduction in customers reporting service failures	Number	56,000	44,461	Pass	55,100
First point of contact resolution	%	84	85	Pass	84
More customers singing our praises (Net Promoter Score)	Number	40	52	Pass	41

Customer Delivering an exceptional customer experience

Right place, right time, right channel

Our social media and digital channels provide us with fantastic platforms to keep our customers informed of the challenges we face delivering great tasting, clean drinking water and recycling wastewater back to the natural environment. Our Website, Facebook and X accounts allow us to reach out to our customers when there is an incident impacting the services we provide and to change how they think about water to help reduce the pressure on our infrastructure and nature.

Facebook and Web Chat boost

Our customers are continuing to embrace our social media platforms with our social media followers now surpassing 61,000 followers. Web chat continues to grow, culminating in our busiest ever day in March 2025 when we handled 689 web chats (around 10 times the daily average) due to a burst trunk main in Belfast. We offer our social media and web chat services until 11pm, seven days a week. A range of telephony and self-service channels are also available to suit our customers' needs, including our waterline service, which operates 24 hours a day.

During weather related incidents, such as Storm Éowyn in January 2025, we kept our customers informed on our response, including bottled water collection points.

Feedback from customers on the choice of contact channels continues to be very positive with both web chat and social media consistently registering high consumer advocacy scores. We continue to expand our customer base for web self-serve. Through the Developer Services web self-serve portal developers and customers can apply for a new water and/or wastewater connection to our network, track progress and pay online.

Customer feedback is collated on a near real time basis following a customer contact. The insight garnered from this is shared each month with colleagues across the business to provide an understanding of what is working well and highlight areas for improvement.

We have undertaken the annual omnibus survey to ensure we have a representative view from those customers who may not have needed to engage directly with us about our services.

In 2025/26, the design of the new customer, billing, and contact contract will go live. This will include the delivery of new automated telephony, texting, and online chat customer channels. We will explore all opportunities this presents to enhance the customer experience.

NI Water appeared in the UK Customer Satisfaction Index Results published in July 2024 and January 2025. We were listed as the fourth highest performing water company for overall customer satisfaction in July 2024 in the Utilities Sector Report. We have undertaken a benchmarking exercise against other water utilities across the UK, to help formulate our contact channel strategy going forward. This will allow us to make the most out of new technologies with the aim of identifying more digital opportunities and introducing more choices for our customers. Over 2025/26, we plan to improve our Incident Management System, which feeds our website with supply interruption information and prompts customer updates via text messaging.

Customer Delivering an exceptional customer experience

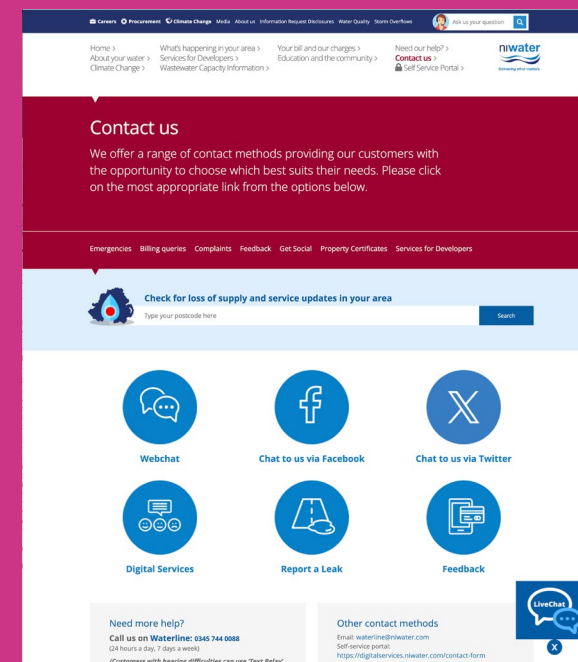
Right first time

Our improvement initiatives over 2024/25 focused on minimising the need for customers to contact us and for those customers who do need to contact us, ensuring that their issues are resolved first time. We carried out a number of end-to-end customer journey reviews to enhance and help drive first point of contact resolution including interruption to supply and billing for non-domestic customers.

Over 2024/25 we exceeded our targets for unwanted customer contacts (44,461 against a target of 56,000), First Point of Contact Resolution (85% against a target of 84%) and Net Promoter Score (52 against a target of 40). We enhanced our web self-serve portal for customers to book their septic tank desludge, resulting in increased portal usage of 7%.

We continue to send early warning text notifications for metered non-domestic customers experiencing high water consumption, which can help customers quickly identify and address potential leaks or other issues that could lead to increased water usage and costs.

We are deploying robotics to automate manual processes, removing non-value added activities, allowing us to work more intelligently on value added work.



Extract from NI Water's Contact us page from the website showing various ways for customers to make contact.

Customer Delivering an exceptional customer experience

Caring for you

Our Customer Care Register offers a range of free additional services for those customers who need extra help, such as an alternative water supply when supplies have been interrupted for a prolonged period. We partner with the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland (CCNI), Health Trusts, Councils, and other Utilities to promote our Customer Care Register. We engage with the Utility Regulator, CCNI and other utilities on the Best Practice Framework: Code of Practice for consumers in vulnerable circumstances, which standardises the approach to consumer vulnerability across the Northern Ireland utility sector.

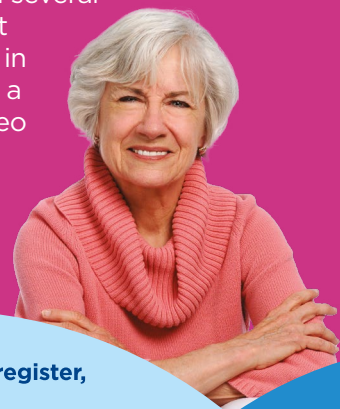
We have undertaken an independent review of our Customer Care Register service and will work to increase the profile of this in 2025/26. We are also engaging with the Utility Regulator on BS ISO 22458 Consumer Vulnerability accreditation.

The Utility Regulator published the Consumer Protection Programme (2024 – 2029) Final Decisions Paper in March 2024, which contains a suite of bespoke projects aimed at enhancing consumer protection for all consumers including both domestic and non-domestic, consumers in vulnerable circumstances and ‘future’ consumers across all utilities. During 2024/25 NI Water worked

with the Utility Regulator and other utilities to help deliver the future outputs as outlined in the Final Decisions Paper.

We also undertook a bespoke piece of research in 2024/25, which included engaging with our customers on the Customer Care Register, reviewing the current activities, communications materials and awareness of the Register.

We have identified several improvements that we will implement in 2025/26 including a customer care video for our website.



If you wish to register,
please call

Waterline
03457 440088

or visit www.niwater.com
for more information

Major Incidents

During 2024/25 NI Water invoked its major incident plan in response to several incidents, including Storm Darragh in December 2024 and Storm Éowyn in January 2025. Teams from across different business areas, supported by contractors, focused efforts on minimising impact on our customers and the environment.



Damage from Storm Éowyn at Silent Valley reservoir, County Down.



NI Water staff distributing bottled water during Storm Éowyn.

Following Storm Éowyn, a comprehensive post incident review was undertaken, which included feedback from colleagues and stakeholders. This feedback will be used to strengthen our response to future incidents.

Customer Delivering an exceptional customer experience

Getting smarter

In 2024/25, we commenced the use of Copilot's generative artificial intelligence. We have started to build a smart bot that delivers instant, accurate information and elevates the customer experience. We are planning on launching this on our website in 2025/26.



NI Water's Intelligent Operations Centre.

 **Copilot**

Protecting you

At NI Water, cyber security is a top priority as the threat landscape becomes increasingly complex. We are focused on protecting service delivery and business performance by improving information governance and cyber resilience. This includes investments in advanced technology, comprehensive training, and raising awareness across the business. A Cyber Resilience Programme has been established to protect operational technology. The programme includes collaboration with the UK National Cyber Security Centre and other key stakeholders to stay informed of cyber events and emerging cyber risks. Regular activities such as simulated phishing campaigns, independent penetration testing, and thorough audits are undertaken. We are committed to protecting our critical infrastructure and maintaining customer trust.



Help NI Water be Cyber Watertight



Avish water pumping station,
County Derry/Londonderry

Strategic areas of focus



Sustainable development goals



Principal threats/opportunities



Page 76 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

Water	Unit of measurement	Target 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Pass / Fail	Target 2025/26
Water quality compliance*	%	99.83	99.88	Pass	99.83
Leakage	Million litres/day (Ml/d)	153.00	152.32	Pass	151.00
Reduction in supply interruptions in excess of: **					
• 6 hours	%	0.654	0.405	Pass	0.620
• 12 hours		0.080	0.146	Fail	0.077
• 24 hours		0.009	0.068	Fail	0.010

* Calendar year target.
** The >12 hr target is a Final Determination target. The >6hr and >24hr targets feed into the Supply Interruptions Overall Performance Score, which is also a Final Determination target.

Improve at source

Sustainable Catchment Area Management (SCaMP)

The aim of SCaMP is to protect and enhance the water environment through managing the surrounding land. We have a long history of doing just that on the 11,000 hectares of catchment land we own around our reservoirs – many of which you can visit and enjoy for yourselves.

We plan and implement catchment management measures as well as nature-based solutions to help manage our landholdings sustainably and improve water quality at source, prior to treatment. Our risk-based approach reduces contaminants at source through catchment management solutions rather than traditional high energy

treatment, which is often a more cost-effective and energy efficient way of tackling water quality issues.

We work with key stakeholders to help improve water quality from land we don't own, as well as leading by example on the land owned by NI Water. Our greatest opportunity for successful catchment management is in areas which are often upland and dominated by peat and heathland.



Delivering in partnership

Our catchment-based projects involve a range of work, in partnership with public authorities, environmental NGO's, land managers and other key stakeholders, as well as local community engagement.

NI Water is a core partner in the recently formed Forever Lough Neagh Partnership. This entails collaborating with multiple other key stakeholders through the aim of achieving long-term improvement in water quality in Lough Neagh, especially following the blue-green algae problems in recent years. Lough Neagh is an invaluable resource providing over 40% of NI's drinking water and structures are now in place to carry out measures to improve water quality in line with the DAERA Lough Neagh Report published in July 2024.

Agriculture continues to be a key pressure on our water resources. Our Farming for Water scheme focuses on reducing the amount of the herbicide MCPA, as well as excess nutrients and soil getting into the watercourses connected to Clay Lake water treatment works. Clay Lake provides drinking water for Keady, County Armagh, which is also hydrologically part of the Lough Neagh catchment. The scheme provides funding for farmers within the catchment to make improvements in their farm business to improve raw water quality. We have 33 farms currently signed up for the scheme, with watercourse fencing installed, pesticide storage cabinet and spill kits provided, mains drinkers and solar installed, weed wiping and liming undertaken.

We have provided several free farm chemical disposal schemes. Land managers in Carmoney (Faughan River), County Derry/Londonderry and part of Ballinrees (Lower Bann), County Derry/Londonderry catchments were invited to register for the scheme. These schemes will reduce the risk of accidental chemical pollution incidents and the use of banned chemicals in these catchments, which have experienced pesticides in raw water. Large amounts of unwanted or out-of-date chemicals have been removed and will no longer be a risk to water quality.

We attended several farming education meetings hosted by the College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) and other rush control events hosted by DAERA. These events provide an opportunity to engage with farmers on local water treatment, water quality protection and pesticide best practice. We also promote best practice pesticide use in our catchments as members of the Water Catchment Partnership.

Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/about-your-water/watercatchment/activities-within-catchments/pesticides/the-water-catchment-partnership>



Restoring our peatlands

Peatlands are one of nature's superstars. Not only are they the upland source of many of our drinking water supplies, they can act as carbon sinks, support biodiversity and river catchment hydrology, reduce flood risk and create our distinctive landscapes. However, many of our peatlands are in poor condition through actions such as turf cutting and drainage and face biodiversity loss from pollution sources such as agricultural ammonia.

Our peatland restoration programme has been ongoing since 2014 and includes the restoration of over 500ha of blanket bog in our Dungonnell catchment in the Antrim Hills. The restored peatland provides a natural filter for the raw water entering our impounding reservoir. Improved raw water quality in terms of colour, turbidity and organic carbon has been evidenced, providing cost efficiencies and improved resilience for Dungonnell water treatment works. A management plan for a further phase of peatland restoration work at Garron Plateau has been completed, which we aim to complete via an externally funded project in partnership with RSPB NI over the

next five years. This will focus on repairing peat hags and gullies formed by natural processes and will reduce the erosion of peat material from these areas into the reservoir. This was the first peatland in Northern Ireland to be registered under the IUCN Peatland Code and will cover four compartments in an area of almost 2,000 hectares. Over a 30-year period this site has the potential to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gases of around 48,000 tCO₂e.

Another example is the restoration of 28 hectares of previously forested peatland adjacent to Lough Bradan reservoir, County Tyrone. The £143k project is funded through the Peatland Challenge Fund, under the Shared Island Initiative; a partnership between NIEA, National Parks and Wildlife Ireland and NatureScot. This funding application marks another successful collaboration between NI Water and project partners RSPB.



NI Water's Catchment Team working in partnership with RSPB and Forest Service carried out an innovative peatland restoration project in Lough Bradan catchment, County Tyrone.

PEACEPLUS projects

We have secured €7.5M PEACEPLUS funding from the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) for the Protecting Shared Waters Project. The project will be led by NI Water in partnership with Uisce Éireann, The Rivers Trust, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, Ulster University, Ulster Wildlife and The James Hutton Institute. It seeks to address the challenge of high nutrient, pesticide and sediment concentrations in sub-catchments of the Strule/Foyle cross-border river catchment and the Fane cross-border river catchment. The project will also raise awareness of the importance of protecting water quality/quantity and share learnings with communities and stakeholders.

We have also applied for funding for a programme of large scale peatland restoration through the Peace Plus 'Nature' and Peace Plus 'peat plus', in collaboration with a range of stakeholders. If successful this will deliver peatland restoration at Killylane, Dungonnell, Altnahinch and Silent Valley catchment areas.

NI Water takes the lead on €32 million PEACEPLUS project to tackle water pollution

During 2024/25 funding was secured for a €32m programme of work that will tackle

water pollution in Counties Fermanagh, Tyrone, Leitrim, Sligo, Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal.

The cross-border project known as WEST (Water Enhancements through Sustainable Treatment) is supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the SEUPB. It will see NI Water working in partnership with Uisce Éireann to improve water quality in Lough Erne, Lough Melvin, and Donegal Bay – areas of the North-Western International River Basin District which face water quality issues from agriculture, forestry, urban runoff, and urban wastewater treatment discharges. NI Water and Uisce Éireann will work collaboratively to identify where investment should be made to address pollution, regardless of origin. Outputs from the WEST project will include the development of two strategies and action plans using robust catchment modelling and sustainable treatment solutions, for acceptance by environmental regulators on both sides of the border. At the heart of the project will be four capital wastewater treatment upgrades within Northern Ireland (Belleek and Garrison) and Ireland (Ballybay and Blacklion), to provide improved treatment for at least 5,000 people, with treatment capacity for an additional 1,000.



Garrison wastewater treatment works, County Fermanagh which is due to be replaced with a sustainable solution under the PEACEPLUS programme.

Mournes catchment management

The Mournes catchments are NI Water's largest land holding. While the raw water quality from our Mournes catchments is high quality, the size of the catchment faces threats such as erosion, extreme weather, visitor pressures, wildfire and habitat degradation.

Sheep grazing is one way to mitigate these threats. Optimum grazing in upland habitats helps reduce wildfire fuel load in the form of gorse and large heather plants, maintains soil integrity, which in turn reduces erosion of soil into our reservoirs, and allows for important upland species like heathers to flourish. Ensuring optimal grazing in our Mournes catchments also achieves measures set out as part of the High Mournes Management Plan and the Eastern Mournes Conservation Management Plan, due to be published by the Mourne Heritage Trust in 2025. After more than a year holding a trial conservation

grazing regime licence for the Silent Valley and demonstrating high quality grazing and habitat management practices, the Mourne Conservation Graziers Ltd. were granted an extended sheep grazing licence until December 2030. Working with NI Water and the Mourne Heritage Trust, the graziers use the right number of sheep moved around the region to evenly graze some areas and protect other areas.

The Forever Mournes Partnership is continuing our work in promoting cohesive management of the Mournes across our collective landholdings for people, land and nature.

Working together...



Sheep grazing at Silent Valley reservoir, County Down.



NI Water's Chair and CEO along with the Woodland Trust Northern Ireland, DAERA Minister and children from the local primary schools at the tree planting near Woodburn reservoir, County Antrim.

Planting one million trees

We are approaching the halfway mark to plant one million trees across Northern Ireland by 2030 in partnership with The Woodland Trust Northern Ireland and DAERA Forest Service. More than 470,000 local native trees are growing across our sites which will benefit the local habitats as well as helping to improve water quality for future supply. Regreening our lands at Dunore, Stoneyford and Woodburn in County Antrim; Fofanny and Annalong in County Down will have long lasting benefits for our local communities and future generations. In the 2024/25 planting season, we planted around 250,000 trees across 140 hectares of land near Woodburn reservoir, which is the largest woodland creation site in Northern Ireland for three decades. Work is progressing across several sites to identify suitable locations during the 2025/26 planting season.



<https://youtu.be/PURU1bbwCSI?si=E1NtzLqZKZjIOS-A>

Enough water for all

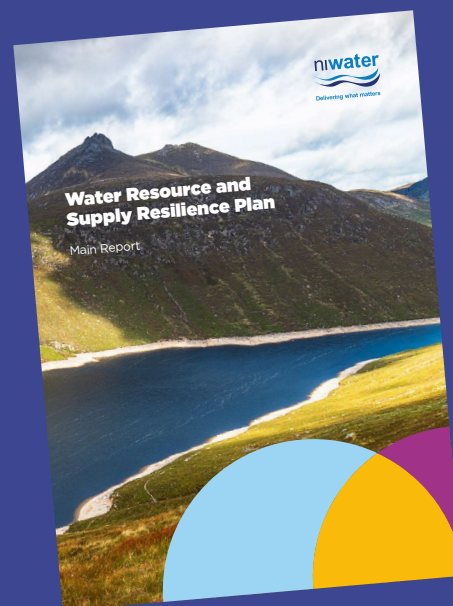
Planning for the long-term

The Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan sets out how NI Water intends to sustainably maintain the balance between supply and demand for water over the long-term, and the operational and management options and activities available to respond to short-term critical events such as droughts and freeze/thaw issues. The latest Plan was published in April 2025. This has forecast there will be supply demand deficits over the 50-year planning period in five of the ten water resource zones during summer peak conditions, with four of the zones identified as currently in deficit today.

The Plan has identified a number of mitigations to resolve these deficits, and these include the upgrade of both Moyola and Clay Lake water treatment works and new boreholes near Dungannon (Gortlenaghan) and Lisburn (Lagan Valley).

Several new projects and operational interventions were completed in 2024/25, which have improved current supply/demand and resilience issues. These were driven by both the outputs of the last plan, review into hot weather incidents, potable levels of service and achieving Drinking Water quality Standards.

This includes among other activities, the construction of new Granular Activated Carbon filters at Ballinrees water treatment works, the delivery of a number of treatability improvements including at Glenhordial and



Seagahan water treatment works and also the upgrade of filters at Drumaroad and Killyhevin water treatment works. Ongoing work includes the progression of the strategically important Castor Bay to Ballydougan project, which will facilitate transfer of additional flow from Castor Bay to Ballydougan.

Read more about our Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan at



<https://www.niwater.com/managing-northern-irelands-water-resources/>



<https://youtu.be/6RSuOLuU898>

The impact of climate change

Extreme weather, hot or cold, can have a major impact on assets, causing increased leakage within our network and on customer properties. Our changing climate is bringing more frequent and severe weather events such as heavy rainfall, heatwaves and extreme cold. These events can affect the quality and quantity of our water sources, placing pressure on our water treatment works.

In January 2025 there was a freeze/thaw event, resulting in an increased volume of burst mains with associated water demand temporarily increasing by around 15%. This was followed by Storm Éowyn later in January 2025, which was the most powerful windstorm since 1998. This storm caused widespread power outages across NI Water

sites, impacting our water treatment works and water pumping stations. We were able to minimise customer impacts through our major incident response, which included widespread tankering.



Tankering during the freeze/thaw event in January 2025.

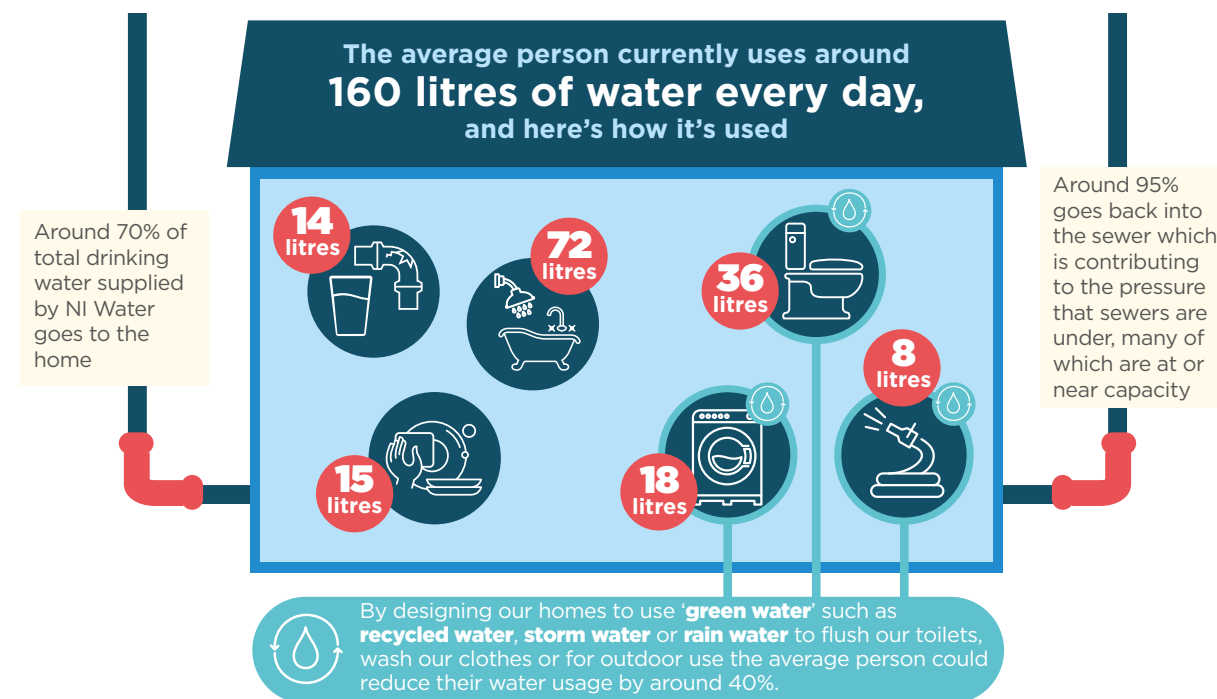
Using less drinking water

By better designing our homes we could reduce the total demand for drinking water by around 25%. Further reductions in demand can be achieved by installing more water efficient appliances in the home and changing our behaviours e.g., shorter showers. By using less, we can lower our

carbon footprint, improve biodiversity, reduce leakage, increase resilience, and ease pressures on our sewerage infrastructure.



Find out more at www.niwater.com/water-saving/



£3.5m water pumping station to enhance water quality in the North West

NI Water completed a £3.5m investment to replace Avish water pumping station, located within our Carmoney water treatment works in Derry/Londonderry. The Avish water pumping station forms a key part of the first phase and is an integral part of the overall Carmoney to Strabane strategic trunk main. This is an essential water supply system, including a new ongoing 28km pipeline between Carmoney water treatment works in Eglinton and Castletown service reservoir in Strabane, that will ensure the resilience and ongoing provision of high-quality water to customers in the North West.



NI Water's Director of Infrastructure Delivery pictured with the project team at Avish water pumping station, County Derry/Londonderry.



<https://youtu.be/2Rv8CIKA9tM>

Tasty, clean and safe

Delivery of great tasting, clean and safe drinking water is central to what we do. It underpins the public health and economy of Northern Ireland.

World class on tap

The water we supply for domestic use or food production must comply with the standards in the Northern Ireland Water Quality Regulations, which incorporate European Union standards and more stringent UK national standards. The standards cover bacteria, chemicals such as aluminium, lead and pesticides, and how water looks and tastes. To make sure that your drinking water supply is tasty, clean and safe, we take samples for testing. Sampling and analysis of drinking water is carried out 365 days per year. Our sampling programme covers raw waters, water at various treatment stages, treated water going into supply from our treatment works, drinking water in the distribution system and at the customer tap. Samples are analysed by our scientists based in laboratories at Belfast and Altnagelvin. Overall drinking water quality compliance in 2024 was 99.88%, above the target of 99.83%.



Find out more by reading our annual Drinking Water Quality Report at <https://www.niwater.com/publications/>

Drinking water supplied from the water treatment works, which use Lough Neagh as their raw water sources, are designed with the potential for algae to be present and there are robust multi-barrier treatment processes in place to manage this effectively. These processes include filtration, ozonation

and granular activated carbon. We increase the frequency of algae monitoring in Lough Neagh over the summer months when the risk for algae in the raw water would generally be higher. This helps us to optimise our treatment plants and ensure that water is clean and safe. We also take samples of the treated drinking water for algae monitoring and algal toxins. The results of these samples clearly demonstrate that the treatment processes in place effectively remove the risk in the raw water source and that the treated drinking water is safe to drink and meets the strict regulatory requirements.

We continue to engage with DWI on potential changes to the Drinking Water Regulations in line with the Recast Drinking Water Directive. We have put in place a monitoring programme of sampling and analysis for the potential new parameters to assess the implications of these new requirements, should new drinking water regulations come into force.



Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/bga/>

Tackling lead pipes

Replacing
11,000
lead communication
pipes in PC21

The water leaving our water treatment works and in the distribution systems contains only trace amounts of lead. However, where lead has been used for supply pipes between the water main and the kitchen tap or in domestic plumbing, there is a risk of non-compliance at the customers' tap. So even with the removal of all lead pipes within our network there will be a risk to lead compliance from lead pipe remaining within customer properties. Our aim is to deliver water, which meets the lead standard and regulations, whilst working towards a lead-free water supply. We tackle the problem by chemical treatment to reduce the amount of lead that dissolves from lead pipes into the water and the replacement of lead communication pipes that connect customer properties to the watermain in our distribution network. Information for customers on lead in drinking water and lead pipe replacement is available through our website and in our lead leaflet. We continue to engage with stakeholders concerning the potential options for consideration in relation to addressing lead in private supply pipes.



Find out more about reducing the risk of lead at: www.niwater.com/lead-pipes/



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9k9FI0_FcZE

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/NC0kobnjwl>

1,864
replacements in 2021/22

1,873
replacements in 2022/23

2,016
replacements in 2023/24

1,851
replacements in 2024/25

Is your house older than 1970? Then you might have lead water pipes

Lead pipework was used in many houses built in Northern Ireland before 1970 and much of it still exists.

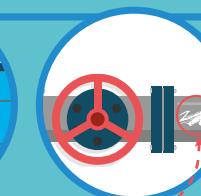
Lead pipework may result in lead levels in your drinking water which are above the limits set out in drinking water regulations.

How you can find and deal with lead pipes?

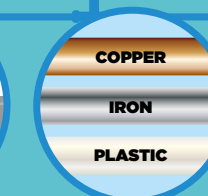


Look in or behind the cupboards in your kitchen; Find the pipe leading to the kitchen tap;

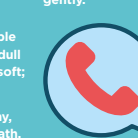
Check if it is lead along as much of its length as possible - unpainted lead pipes are dull grey, and the surface feels soft; If you scrape the surface gently, you will see the shiny, silver-coloured metal beneath.



Open the stop valve box outside your property. If you can, scrape the surface of the pipework inside the box gently.



Other pipe materials which are normal and don't need replaced include copper, iron and plastic.



If you are still unsure, ask a plumber for a second opinion.

Drive down leakage

NI Water is committed to driving down leakage across its water network. Our expert leakage detection teams monitor approximately 27,000 km of water mains and 24,000 km of smaller diameter pipes that supply homes and businesses throughout Northern Ireland.

In 2024/25, our teams identified around 18,000 leaks, including 3,400 on private properties. Reported leakage for the year was approximately 152 million litres per day - our lowest level on record. This achievement comes despite the growing impact of extreme weather, which causes soil movement that can damage underground infrastructure.

We continue to enhance our capabilities through skilled teams and advanced detection methods, including acoustic listening sticks, ground microphones, acoustic loggers, drones, correlators, satellite imagery, and specially trained detection dogs.



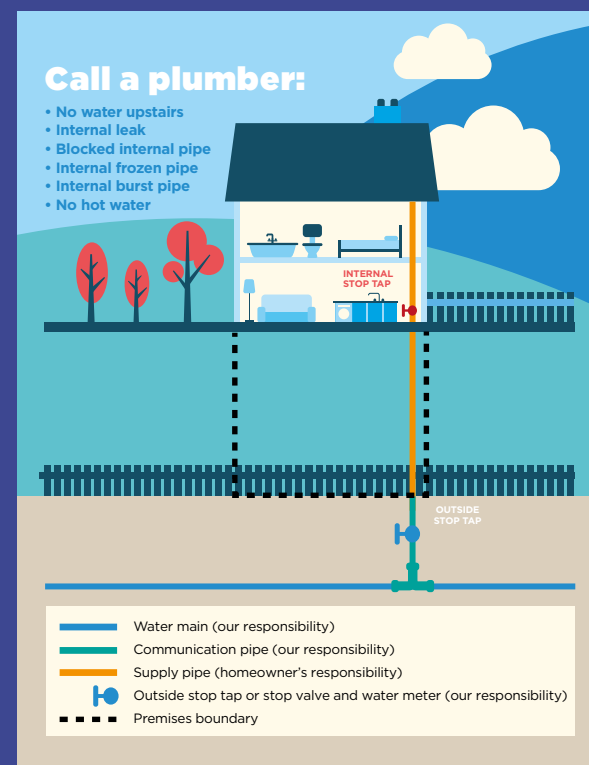
Detecting leaks utilising satellite imagery, handheld devices and ground microphones.

Our leakage capital investment programme supports this work by focusing on pressure management and real-time monitoring of flows and pressures across the network. We are using both traditional and innovative approaches to further reduce leakage over PC21.

We aim to reach the economic level of leakage from our water network - 150 million litres per day - by 2027. This is the point at which the cost of further reductions would outweigh the benefits.

If you see a leak on the road or footpath, NI Water needs your support in reporting leakage by visiting <https://www.niwater.com/report-a-leak-or-burst-pipe/> or by calling our dedicated Leakline number on 0800 028 2011, open 24 hours a day, every day. Calls are free of charge.

Approximately one-quarter of all leakage occurs within the boundaries of customers' properties, rather than on NI Water's network. If there is a leak on your property, then please get it fixed. You can ask your home insurer for assistance or NI Water for advice.



Always on

With a network of 27,000 km of water mains, bursts and faults are an ongoing challenge. These incidents can lead to supply interruptions or reduced water pressure for our customers - and that's why every minute counts. Our 'every minute counts' ethos continues to drive our efforts to reduce the impact of unplanned interruptions and enhance supply resilience. In 2024/25, we remained focused on improving our response times and minimising disruption, working across teams to deliver better performance and explore new, innovative solutions to keep customers in supply.

We built on the success of our Interruption to Supply strategy, delivering another strong year of performance. While overall performance remained good, it's important to note the significant impact of Storm Éowyn during the year. The extreme weather event placed exceptional pressure on our network and teams, resulting in unavoidable interruptions that led to under performance against the >12hour and >24hour supply interruption targets. Despite this, the underlying trend showed robust progress and resilience across our systems and operations. Our third Mobile Booster Trailer - now fully equipped with smart control technology - was purchased and is already playing a vital role in managing planned shutdowns and limiting the impact of supply interruptions.

This smart-enabled mobile booster is regularly deployed during planned works, helping us maintain water supply and reduce customer disruption.

We also made significant strides in our SMART Networks programme. By continuing to invest in and expand this platform, we've increased our ability to manage pressure and improve control across our assets. A more responsive and data-driven approach allows us to maintain a calmer network, reducing harmful transients that contribute to bursts and supply issues.

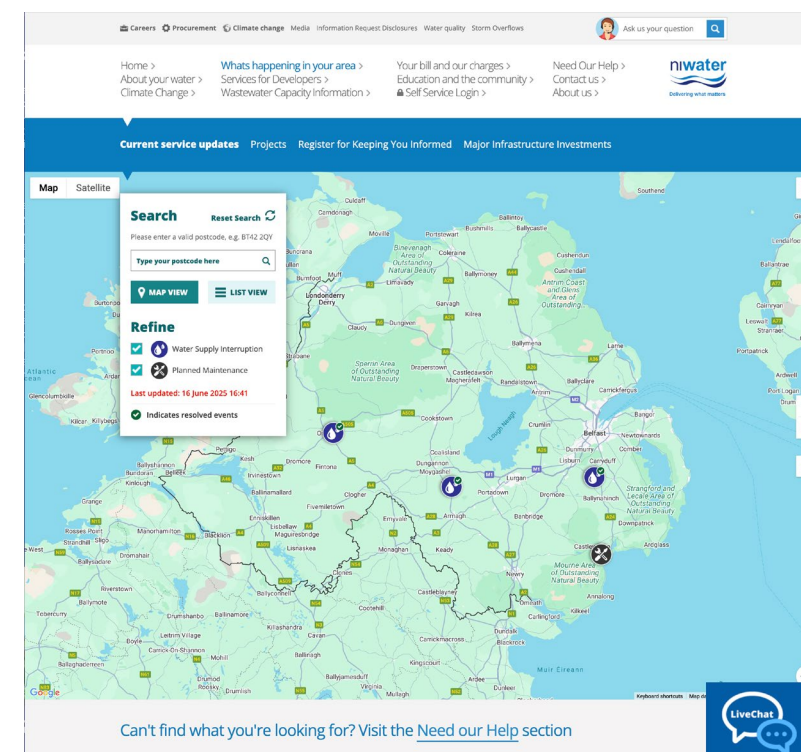
We enhanced control at Water Booster Stations and used digital tools and analytics to improve field operations. In 2024/25, we expanded telemetry and real-time pressure control to more sites, further strengthening our visibility and operational control over key parts of our water network - helping us proactively manage and protect supplies.

NI Water remains committed to doing everything possible to minimise interruptions, protect our network, and keep customers in supply.

Visit <https://www.niwater.com/current-service-updates/>



Current service updates
Real-time information on repairs and supply interruptions across our network, updated daily.
[Learn More](#)





Ballyronan wastewater treatment works, County Derry/Londonderry

Strategic areas of focus

Funding world class economic infrastructure

Efficient and affordable services

Sustainable growth

Sustainable development goals



Principal threats/opportunities



Page 76 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

Economy	Unit of measurement	Target 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Pass/Fail	Target 2025/26
Increase/(decrease) in customer tariffs*	%	5.3	4.7	Pass	3.6
Number of economic constraint areas eased (cumulative over 2021-27 period)	Number	3	0	Fail	4
Number of serious development restrictions eased (cumulative over 2021-27 period)	Number	14	11	Fail	22
Bathing water quality**	Excellent	Majority excellent or good ***	22	Pass	Majority excellent or good ***
	Good		2		
	Sufficient		2		
	Poor		0		

* Non-domestic customers only.

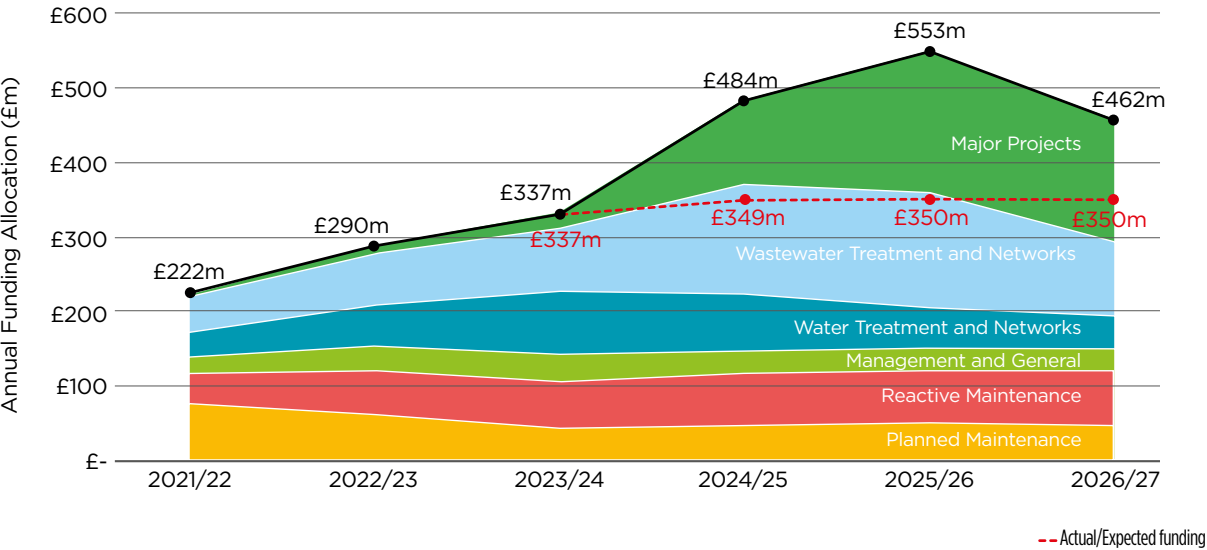
** Bathing water at 26 sites is monitored weekly from May to September each year.

*** Other major contributors to bathing water quality include agriculture, wider industry, and consumer behaviour (flushing inappropriate items).

Funding world class economic infrastructure

Largely unseen, our infrastructure is the foundation for all economic activity in Northern Ireland as almost every new home and business requires a connection to the public water and sewerage system. We share the government’s ambition for Northern Ireland to have the infrastructure that enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive, and

fulfilling life; supports sustainable economic development; and protects our environment. But this ambition can only be realised if we can secure multi-year funding in line with that determined by the independent Utility Regulator, supported by a mechanism to deal with financial shocks.



Funding Gap to PC21 Mid-Term Review (reindexed Mar-25 OBR RPI forecast).

Unlocking development constraints

The level of public expenditure allocated by Government for wastewater services has not kept pace with the growing demand for capacity to support development or meet water quality targets. As a result, many of Northern Ireland’s sewerage networks and wastewater treatment works are operating at or beyond their design limits, restricting new connections and constraining economic growth in over 100 towns and cities, including Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

Our PC21 Business Plan outlines the scale of investment required to begin addressing these capacity issues. However, resolving development constraints across the region will require a sustained increase in investment over the next 18 years or more.

Following confirmation of the 2024/25 capital investment budget from DfI, NI Water was required to adjust developer processes in areas affected by high-polluting Unsatisfactory Intermittent Discharges - locations where developer-funded solutions are not viable. These Unsatisfactory Intermittent Discharges impact 35 areas across 21 towns, all of which

require significant capital investment before new connections can be made. As a result, approximately 19,000 development enquiries are currently unable to connect to the public sewerage system. A fully funded PC21 would enable around 4,500 to be connected.

Throughout the year, NI Water has engaged extensively with stakeholders, government agencies, and developers to communicate the implications of funding constraints on new development. These are adversely impacting on our targets to ease economic constraint areas and development restrictions. Ongoing engagement with customers is now focused on areas where connections remain feasible, ensuring transparency and support for future planning.

NI Water continued its proactive engagement with local councils and key stakeholders to address wastewater capacity constraints across Northern Ireland. As part of this effort, we updated wastewater system capacity data for all council areas and worked closely with local development planning teams to ensure alignment with future growth and infrastructure needs.

To support more informed decision-making, we are advancing the development of decision support tools, including Esri ArcGIS and Power BI dashboards. These tools are designed to help prioritise and target investment where capacity issues are most critical.

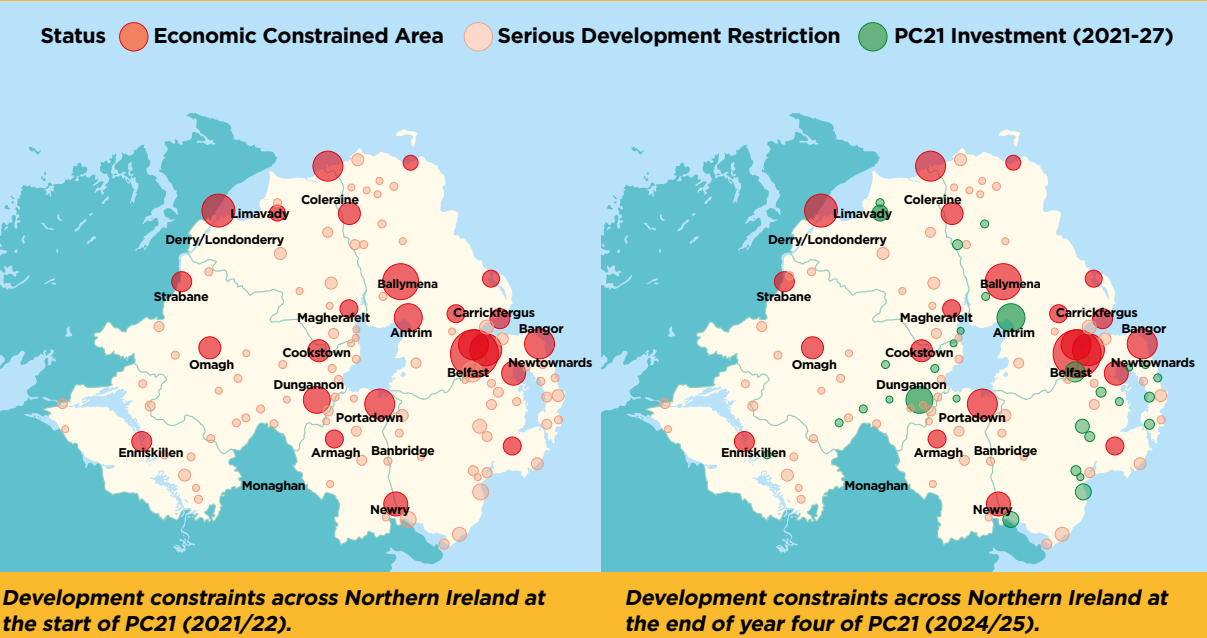
A key strategic initiative has been the restructuring of our pre-planning process, aimed at identifying and mitigating potential site restrictions early in the development cycle. This approach is helping to facilitate timely and efficient connections to the wastewater network, supporting sustainable development across the region.

We are actively identifying and trialling innovative wastewater technologies while optimising existing wastewater processes. These efforts may unlock some economic growth in the catchments served by wastewater treatment works across Northern Ireland, which are currently operating at or near their capacity. We will conduct technology pilot trials at wastewater

treatment works which are currently constrained as well as trialling new innovative approaches at wastewater assets, in our networks and a test bed.

In parallel, we are developing more holistic capital interventions in drainage areas where potential developer delivered solutions are not possible, with several catchments being used as Pilot Projects. Progression and delivery of these schemes will be dependent on the availability of capital investment funding.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we are committed to participating in the Local Development Plan Independent Examination process for the remaining NI Councils. We are also working with Councils who have approved Plan Strategies following the process and are at the Local Policies Plan stage. This involves discussions on the zoning of land such as for strategic employment and holding discussions on the phasing of development to facilitate sustainable growth.



Development constraints across Northern Ireland at the start of PC21 (2021/22).

Development constraints across Northern Ireland at the end of year four of PC21 (2024/25).

Sustainable Water Connect Event

NI Water in partnership with Invest Northern Ireland hosted a Supplier Engagement Event in Belfast. The event saw participation from over 350 representatives spanning local, national, and international businesses, who gathered to connect with NI Water buyers and key suppliers.

Attendees had the chance to engage in one-to-one appointments with leading industry experts, participate in inspiring workshops, and gain valuable insights on topics such as innovation, social value, and AI. The event also offered numerous networking opportunities and training workshops, while providing essential knowledge on procurement processes and public procurement law.

We are planning to undertake pilot projects in the remainder of PC21 to examine the

use of a multi-capitals approach to support decision making and delivery of economically sustainable solutions, which incorporate the social and environmental costs and benefits not presently captured in market prices.



NI Water and Invest NI representatives at the Sustainable Water Connect event.

Efficient and affordable service

PC21 funding

NI Water continues to face a significant gap between the PC21 output targets set by the Utility Regulator and the Capital DEL funding indicated by DfI for the remainder of the PC21 period. In its PC21 Mid-Term Review Final Determination, published in September 2024, the Utility Regulator made only limited changes to the original targets and estimated that £1,465m in Capital DEL - an average of £488m per year - would be required from 2024/25 to 2026/27 to deliver planned outputs. In contrast, NI Water received £349m in Capital DEL for 2024/25, with DfI proposing £350m for 2025/26. To address this funding gap, stakeholders convened throughout 2024/25 to develop a Capital Reasoned Submission aimed at adjusting PC21 outputs; however, no agreement was reached after four meetings.

NI Water's Operating Plan and Budget for 2025/26 - the fifth year of PC21 - sets out a requirement of £172m in Resource DEL and £405m in Capital DEL, reflecting the Mid-Term Review and accounting for slippage in 2024/25. On 27 February 2025, the DfI Minister advised indicative allocations of £149.2m in Resource DEL, increasing to

£150.2m on 4 June 2025, and £350m in Capital DEL, leaving shortfalls of £22m and £55m, respectively.

The tension between regulatory output expectations and constrained public funding creates material uncertainty and conflicting obligations for NI Water. Failure to deliver the PC21 programme could result in enforcement action from the Utility Regulator, including potential licence revocation or legal challenge. Conversely, overspending to meet targets would breach Accounting Officer responsibilities concerning budgetary control and the proper use of public funds.

These risks materialised during 2024/25. On 20 December 2024, the Utility Regulator issued a Notice of Initial Enquiry into NI Water's compliance with certain obligations, followed by a formal Article 261 Notice on 27 March 2025. NI Water submitted the requested information on 22 May 2025 and awaits further engagement. Separately, on 6 February 2025, the Utility Regulator raised concerns regarding the 'Directors' certificate of going concern' in NI Water's 2023/24 Regulatory Accounts, with additional information submitted on 6 March 2025.

In March 2025, NI Water advised DfI that maintaining essential services could result in a potential overspend on its 2024/25 Resource DEL budget. The DfI Minister allocated additional budget and appointed a forensic accountant to review NI Water's financial practices investigate the reasons why NI Water has been unable to live within its Resource DEL budget allocation.

DfI and the Utility Regulator have statutory duties under Article 6 of the Water and Sewerage Services (NI) Order 2006 to ensure that NI Water can finance the proper carrying out of its functions. We welcome continued efforts to identify a sustainable solution for funding Northern Ireland's water and wastewater infrastructure. The DfI Minister is actively working with Executive colleagues to increase investment, including the launch of a public consultation in March 2025 to explore developer contributions and the introduction of The Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Risk Management Bill to facilitate future guidance on Sustainable Drainage Systems. In April 2025, the DfI Infrastructure Committee reviewed the NI Audit Office's report on infrastructure funding, which identified significant

weaknesses in existing arrangements, forecasted worsening conditions, and called for an independent, expert-led review of alternative funding and governance models. The NI Fiscal Council's Sustainability Report on Water was published in June 2025 and highlights a growing crisis in the provision of water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. The NI Fiscal Council states that without greater and sustained investment, NI Water risks falling further behind its peers in service quality and environmental standards. This underinvestment is also constraining economic development, particularly in areas requiring commercial and residential growth. The NI Fiscal Council considers that resolving these issues will require new sources of funding. Decisions on the funding model are a matter for Government Ministers.

Amid this ongoing and unprecedented funding uncertainty, securing a multi-year government commitment to fully fund the PC21 programme remains the highest priority. Such a commitment is essential to safeguard service delivery, support the wider supply chain, protect the environment, and contribute to Northern Ireland's economic prosperity.

Wider developments in the water sector

We continue to monitor developments across the UK and Ireland to inform our strategy, planning, and risk management. Ofwat's PR24 Final Determinations, published in December 2024, outline a record £104 billion investment package for 2025-30 - double the previous period - aimed at driving improved services, environmental outcomes, and resilience. However, several companies have appealed to the Competition and Markets Authority, citing concerns over funding adequacy and performance deliverability. These appeals come amid increasing scrutiny of financial resilience, ongoing environmental investigations, and rising pressure for stronger governance and transparency in the sector.

Regulatory reviews have reinforced these concerns. The National Audit Office's April 2025 report criticised the regulatory framework in England and

Wales for failing to incentivise sufficient infrastructure investment, contributing to underperformance and environmental degradation. The ongoing Independent Water Commission review, commissioned by Defra, set out its preliminary conclusions in June 2025 on reforms to the water system in England and Wales. The final report is expected in the summer.

Elsewhere, Scottish Water launched a consultation in February 2025 projecting annual investment needs of £2bn through 2050 - a fivefold increase on current levels. In Ireland, Uisce Éireann's Strategic Funding Plan (2025-29), published in December 2024, outlines a near threefold increase in funding to €16.9bn compared to 2020-24.

 Find out more about our funding at page 52.

Major Professional Services Framework provides a £800m boost to the local economy

After a successful, year-long public procurement competition, NI Water awarded a Professional Services Framework, valued up to £800m, which will support the planning and delivery of its capital investment programme, including the sustainable delivery of key water and wastewater infrastructure projects across Northern Ireland. The framework will run for an initial four-year term, with options to extend to 2032 and the spend can flex up and down, depending on the capital investment budget available for that period.

A wide range of professional services will be provided by local companies appointed to the framework, including project management, network modelling, digital innovation and plans to strengthen climate resilience, while reducing carbon emissions and improving the overall efficiency of capital delivery.



NI Water's Director of Infrastructure Delivery, Director of Engineering and Sustainability with staff at the announcement of the Professional Services Framework.

Customer tariffs

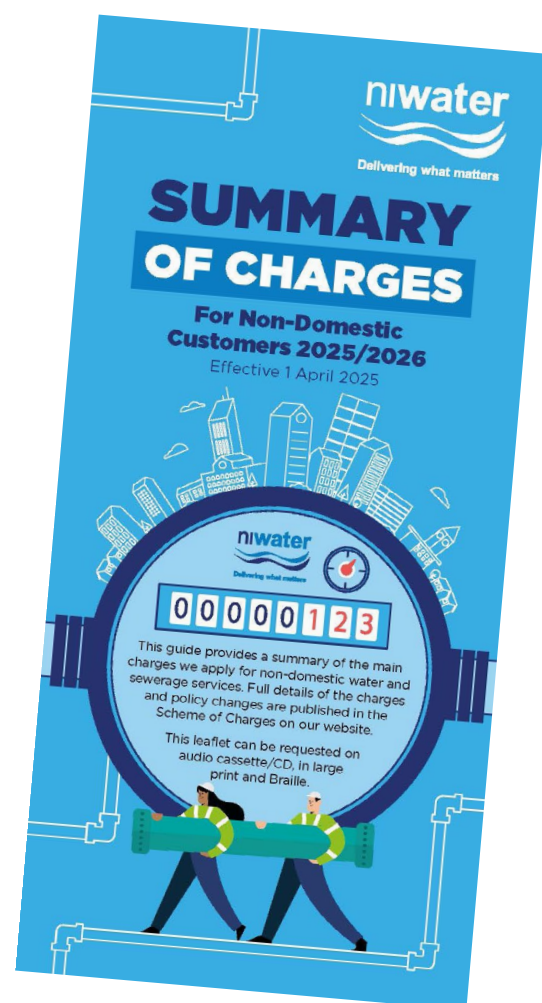
We are aware this is a challenging time for businesses and the local economy. Like many of our business customers, we continue to face significant financial pressures from continued high energy prices and other cost increases.

Whilst any increase is of course unwelcome, the revenue from bills will support necessary investment in infrastructure, benefiting the local economy and environment. Specific bill changes operate according to a formula agreed with the Utility Regulator.

From 1 April 2025, non-domestic water and sewerage charges increased by 7.7% on average. Measured customer bills increased by 7.0% on average, while unmeasured and trade effluent bills increased by 8.6% and 9.6% respectively.



Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/media/f5ziewub/niwschemeofcharges202526.pdf>



Sustainable growth

Every aspect of life in Northern Ireland relies on the water and wastewater services we provide, so it is important that any investment we make in our infrastructure is built with the future in mind. To improve our long-term resilience, we need to ensure our infrastructure can withstand pressures created by climate change; can accommodate growth in the economy and helps protect and restore nature. We believe that our future infrastructure investment can support not only the transition to a more sustainable and resilient business but also help create an affordable, low carbon and green economy for Northern Ireland.

Advances in our investment management processes are helping us ensure we deliver our services for the lowest possible cost. These processes are also helping us choose more integrated sustainable solutions to address climate change. Our Investment Planning and Costing tool allows estimates of standardised costs and recommend lowest whole life cost solutions to be calculated for PC21 projects. We are expanding our carbon accounting to capture whole life carbon and land carbon. Pilot projects are being undertaken over the remainder of PC21 to examine the use of a multi-capitals approach to support our decision making. This approach incorporates the social and environmental costs and benefits not presently captured in market prices.

We are working closely with NIEA on the review of consenting method and source apportionment techniques, which will contribute towards ensuring discharge standards at our wastewater treatment works are proportionate, whilst delivering on the best environmental outcome for the investment delivered by NI Water. We have an established Water Regulatory Investment Group, which provides a forum with NIEA to facilitate negotiation of discharge standards, enabling open and transparent decision making, supported by appropriate scientific evidence.

Reducing Energy Usage

As part of the Energy Reduce Use Programme, we are undertaking several innovative initiatives to reduce our electricity consumption and carbon emissions. We've optimised the efficiency of our pumps across 16 sites, delivered energy efficient LED lighting, implemented real-time

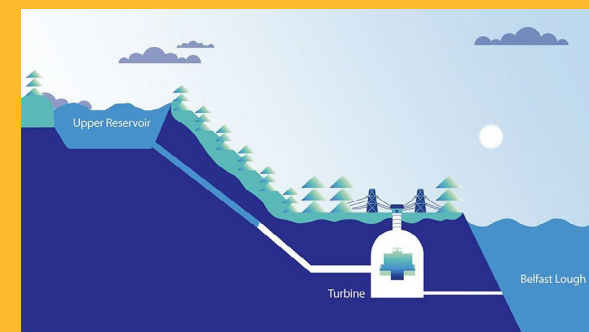
control technology and reduced the energy requirement of odour control fans at several of our wastewater treatment works.

The pump optimisation represents an investment of £7.3m, delivering 5.7m kilowatt hours of annual benefits. With every best-in-class energy efficient pump that we install, we are reducing the energy required to deliver water to our customers. This contributes to our sustainability goals, whilst resilience and customer supplies are protected into the future.



Pump replacement work at Whiteabbey water pumping station, County Antrim.

Looking ahead, we're exploring hydro turbine opportunities across three sites facilitated, by the Department for the Economy's 'Invest to Save' Scheme. The hydro turbines will enable NI Water to generate electricity at these sites to reduce grid consumption and/or export electricity to the grid to generate an income for the business and add further resilience to the energy network.



Hydro turbine illustration.



Find out more in our TCFD section on page 105.



Tree planting at Fofanny water treatment works, Newry, County Down.

Strategic areas of focus



Sustainable development goals



Principal threats/opportunities



Page 76 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

Nature	Unit of measurement	Target 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Pass/Fail	Target 2025/26
Reduction in pollution incidents - sewage (high and medium)*	Number	9	8	Pass	8
Wastewater compliance (% population equivalent served)**	%	95.6	99.3	Pass	95.6
Reduction in number of properties at risk of out of sewer flooding (cumulative over 2021-27 period)	Number	26	31	Pass	36
Reduction in carbon footprint. Relates to reduction in carbon emissions measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO ₂ e)	%	***	***	***	***

* Calendar year target.

** Calendar year target. Based on pre-announced rather than un-announced regulatory sampling at the treatment works and the reported wastewater compliance doesn't incorporate flow compliance for the wastewater treatment works or the sewer network. It is recognised that wastewater regulation reform will result in new evidence, which will highlight non-compliance across our wastewater infrastructure.

*** Annual targets to be set in 2025/26 aligned with our new Climate Transition Plan.

More resilient network

Reducing pollution and sewer flooding

In 2024/25, NI Water recorded eight medium severity pollution incidents, which is one incident below our target. Following this, we conducted a comprehensive review of our Pollution Management Strategy and identified several enhancements to further improve performance. These include the expanded installation of event and duration monitors and the implementation of a more robust end-to-end process for incident management.

Flooding and the associated risks continue to pose significant challenges. They can hinder economic development, raise insurance costs, and harm the natural environment. Much of Northern Ireland's urban infrastructure relies on combined sewer systems, which carry both wastewater and surface water - a design that would not be considered best practice today.

The impact of climate change, particularly the increased intensity and frequency of rainfall, has placed additional strain on these systems. During heavy rain, sewers can become overwhelmed, leading to sewage backups. To mitigate this, many traditional systems include combined sewer overflows, which are designed

to discharge excess water directly into rivers or streams, bypassing treatment works to prevent property damage and out-of-sewer flooding.

As part of our PC21 Business Plan, we have set ambitious targets for stormwater removal. These efforts aim to reduce the risk of property flooding, enhance environmental quality, and support sustainable economic growth. The programme is already underway, with investigation studies and hydraulic modelling in progress.

We removed 270,644 m² of impermeable surface area by the end of 2024/25 through direct capital investment projects such as storm separation and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. This exceeds our target, marking a significant milestone in our commitment to climate resilience and infrastructure improvement.



Find out more about climate resilience at <https://www.niwater.com/climatechange/strategy/>

Hat-trick for Ravenhill Avenue Flood Alleviation Project

The project team for the Ravenhill Avenue Flood Alleviation Project has recently been awarded three major awards - a hat-trick! at the Construction Employers Federation Excellence Awards. The team were honoured to collect a Social Value Award, Infrastructure project of the year, and a Judges' bonus award - Achieving Excellence in Partnering. The £7m Flood Alleviation Project for the Ravenhill Avenue Area of South Belfast was recently delivered as part of the Living with Water in Belfast Plan, which aims to help protect against flooding, enhance the water environment and provide the increased capacity needed for economic growth.



NI Water project team collecting three major awards at the CEF Excellence Awards.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVovASjUqc0&t=19s>

Completing the picture on wastewater compliance

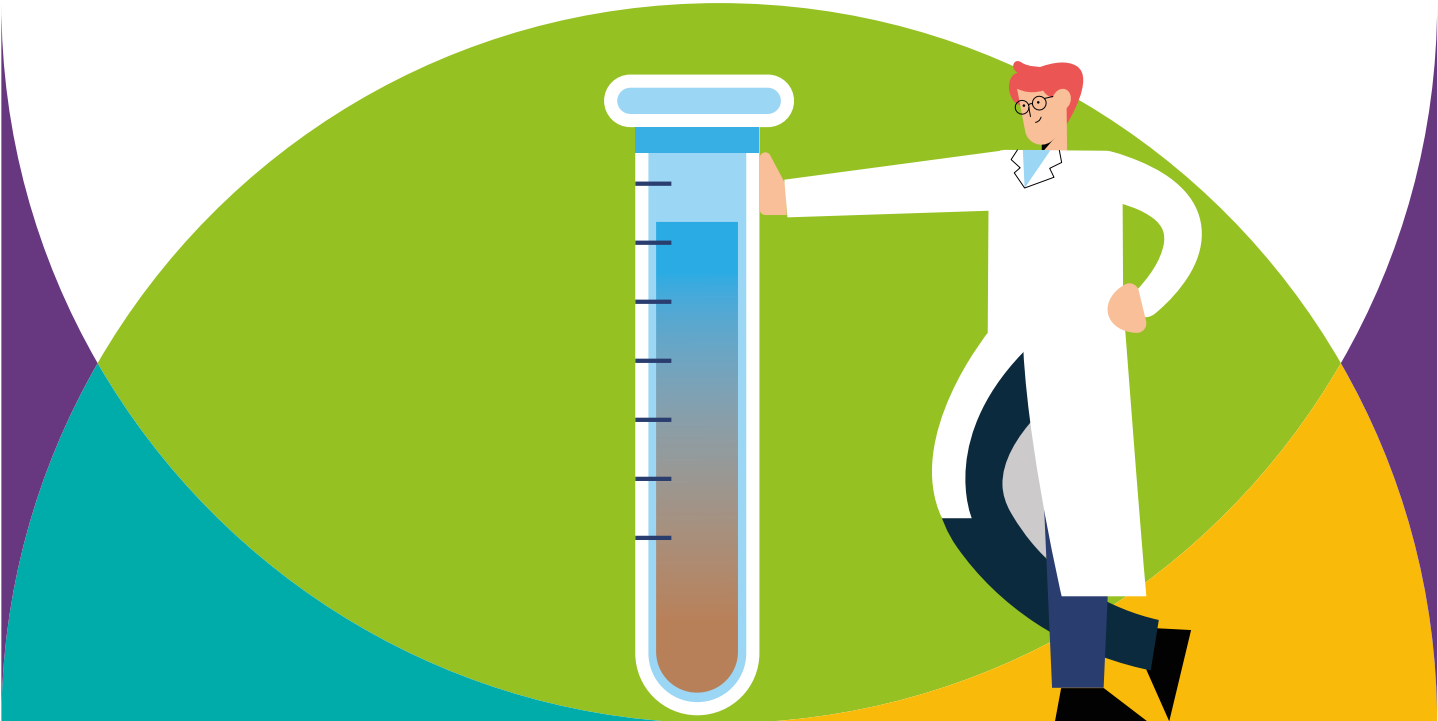
NI Water recognises the urgent need to modernise how wastewater compliance is assessed. The current regulatory framework relies on pre-announced sampling at treatment works and does not account for flow compliance across treatment facilities or the wider sewer network. As a result, it offers only a partial view of environmental compliance and protection. To address this, we are collaborating with the NIEA and other key stakeholders through the Water Regulation Reform Programme. This initiative aims to deliver a more holistic and transparent compliance model that reflects the performance of the entire wastewater system-enhancing visibility for both regulators and customers.

A Wastewater Regulation Compliance Reform Group has been established, comprising senior representatives from NI Water and NIEA. This group will serve as the central interface for delivering the reform programme over PC21. It is acknowledged that the introduction of a more comprehensive regulatory model will likely reveal new areas of non-compliance across our infrastructure.

Ongoing work with NIEA includes the development of updated compliance assessment methodologies, such as guidance on Flow and Event Duration Monitoring, priority substances, and catchment-based outcomes. Investment requirements to support these reforms are also being considered as part of the PC28 Business Plan.

In parallel, NIEA has proposed withdrawing from the current Statement of Regulatory Principles and Intent and has initiated a consultation with NI Water and DfI. This consultation is ongoing, and NI Water is actively considering its response.

Throughout 2024/25, we continued our wastewater regulatory monitoring programme, which is helping to build a robust dataset on treatment works performance. Additionally, we have begun establishing an independent wastewater compliance team to provide assurance on the effective management of our wastewater assets.



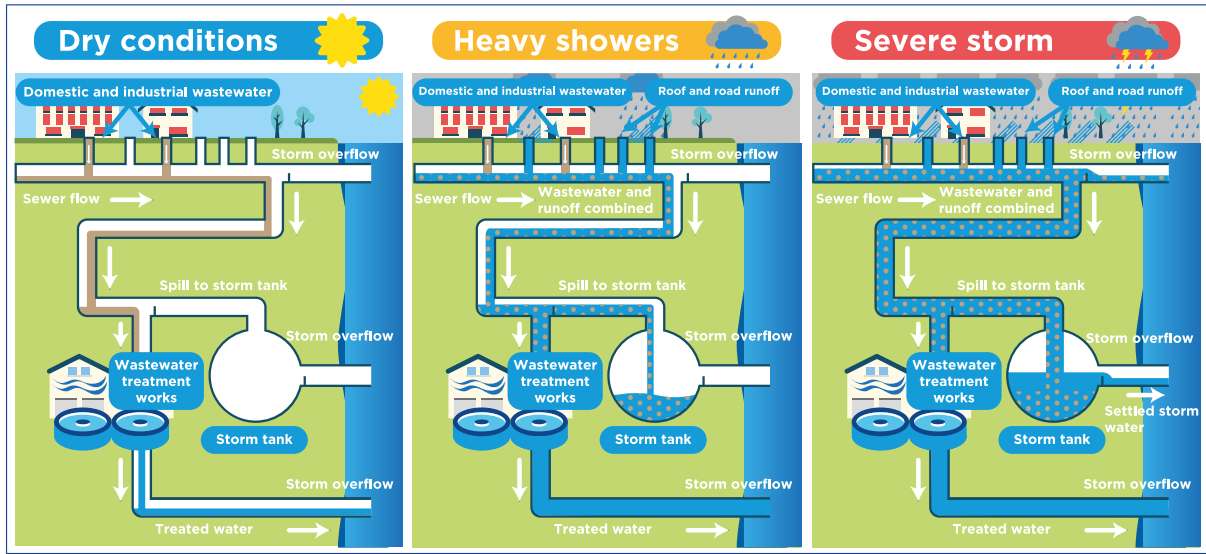
Storm overflows

During periods of heavy rainfall, highly diluted wastewater may be discharged from storm overflows - a designed feature of the wastewater system that acts as an emergency relief mechanism. These overflows are essential for preventing flooding in homes, businesses, and schools, which would otherwise pose serious public health risks.

Northern Ireland has a higher number of storm overflows per capita than many other parts of the UK. Historically, it was more cost-

effective to install additional overflows than to invest in diverting rainwater at the source or constructing larger pipes and storage tanks. While this approach has contributed to the lowest rate of internal sewer flooding in the UK, it has also resulted in higher volumes of wastewater entering rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

The diagram below shows how the combined sewerage system operates and how spills can occur as rainfall intensifies:

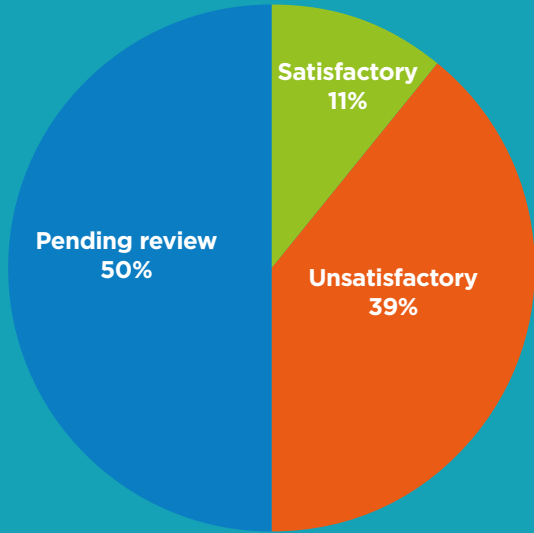


As rainfall becomes more intense and frequent due to climate change, many overflows are operating more often, leading to increased pollution. This is compounded by new housing and commercial developments that have not been matched with corresponding investment in wastewater infrastructure. As a result, significant volumes of wastewater are lost from the network before reaching treatment works.

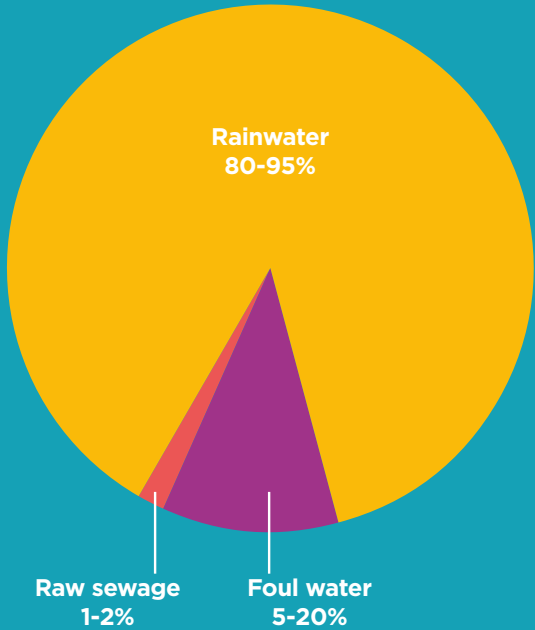
The NIEA sets standards for storm overflows, allowing discharges of diluted wastewater during prolonged heavy rainfall - typically when receiving waters are fast-flowing. Stricter standards apply to sensitive areas, such as bathing and shellfish waters, to prevent ecological damage, protect public health and support economic growth. However, modelling shows that many overflows exceed these limits, contributing to the decline in water quality across rivers, lochs, and coastal areas.

NI Water manages approximately 2,500 storm overflows. Over PC21, we are rolling out Event Duration Monitors to better understand the frequency and duration of these discharges. By 2027, we aim to have over 700 monitors installed, covering around 30% of all storm overflows. Initial assessments reveal that around 75% of evaluated overflows do not meet NIEA standards. It's important to note that pollution sources vary by catchment, with agricultural practices and private drainage systems also contributing significantly in some areas.

Status of NI Water's 2,500 storm overflows



Make-up of typical wastewater spill during storm conditions



Through collaborative modelling of drainage systems and catchment environments with the NIEA, NI Water is gaining valuable insights into where future investment should be prioritised to reduce wastewater spills. Our predictive models estimate that between 16 and 20 million cubic metres of wastewater are discharged annually from storm overflows. This figure is expected to increase by approximately 10% as modelling is completed across all catchments. While these discharges are primarily composed of rainwater, they typically contain 1-2% raw sewage during periods of heavy rainfall. Initial cost estimates suggest that between £3bn and £4bn would be required to address all unsatisfactory storm overflows. An additional £3bn may be needed to meet the enhanced regulatory standards currently being introduced in England. These findings underscore the scale of investment needed to modernise Northern Ireland's wastewater infrastructure and align with evolving environmental expectations.

Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/storm/overflow/>

Living with Water Programme (LWWP)

The Living with Water Programme is a multi-agency initiative focused on delivering integrated and sustainable drainage and wastewater infrastructure. It promotes holistic solutions that deliver multiple benefits - including environmental protection, flood resilience, and urban regeneration - while minimising cost and disruption.

Following endorsement by the Northern Ireland Executive, DfI published the detailed £1.4bn Living with Water in Belfast Plan in November 2021. NI Water subsequently began the delivery phase. By the end of 2024/25, several early-stage projects had been completed or substantially progressed. These included a £7m investment in the new Kennedy Way Hub in West Belfast, providing a modern base for over 90 operational staff. This enabled the closure of the Bretland Hub, freeing up space to double the capacity of the Belfast wastewater treatment works. We appointed teams to design and deliver major infrastructure upgrades, including wastewater treatment works for Belfast, Kinnegar and Whitehouse along with the replacement of Sydenham Wastewater Pumping Station. Outline designs for each of these major projects were completed. However, in late 2024, DfI informed NI Water that a strategic review had concluded the original 12-year delivery timeline for the Belfast Plan was no longer achievable. As a

result, the Plan will no longer proceed as a formal programme. Instead, delivery will be undertaken by individual partners, including NI Water, at a scale and pace aligned with available budgets. Given the significant and sustained investment required for the major projects - resources that are currently unavailable - these projects have been largely paused. NI Water commenced a programme of essential maintenance in April 2025 to ensure that the existing facilities operate as effectively as possible until they have been upgraded. NI Water has outlined the implications of this pause in its publication, The Story of Belfast Lough.

Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/siteFiles/resources/pdf/2024/StoryofBelfastLoughV13221024.pdf>

A more high-level Living with Water plan has been published for Derry/Londonderry, which NI Water plans to support.

Find out more at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/living-water-derry>

Find out more at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/living-water-programme>

Sustainable solutions

Hydrogen and Oxygen Demonstrator Project

The results of our interim report on exploring the use of oxygen-enriched air in the secondary phase of wastewater treatment suggest that this approach could lead to increased treatment capacity, reduced energy consumption, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. These findings build on the success of the proof-of-concept oxygen trial at Kinnegar wastewater treatment works, which demonstrated the potential for oxygen to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the treatment process. The interim report is part of NI Water’s broader Hydrogen and Oxygen Demonstrator Project, which ultimately aims to install a 1MW electrolyser at Belfast wastewater treatment works. This electrolyser will showcase how electrolysis - the process of splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen using electricity - can use oxygen to improve wastewater treatment performance and produce green hydrogen by harnessing renewable electricity,

supporting NI Water’s decarbonisation goals. These developments mark a significant step forward in integrating innovative, low-carbon technologies into wastewater operations.



Hydrogen and Oxygen Demonstrator Project at Belfast wastewater treatment works, County Antrim.

Wastewater treatment using wetland system

To mark World Environment Day, NI Water proudly announced the start of a £4.1m sustainable upgrade to the Aghanloo wastewater treatment works, located just outside Limavady, County Derry/Londonderry. Originally constructed in the early 1970s to serve a population equivalent of 550, the existing facility had been operating well beyond its design capacity - treating wastewater for nearly 900 people. This overcapacity had begun to place development constraints on the surrounding catchment area.

The upgrade introduces an innovative, nature-based solution using Phragmifilte technology, a green system based on reed beds. This cutting-edge approach treats raw sewage entirely within a single wetland system, requiring minimal to no energy, resulting in ultra-low operational costs. The new system is designed to serve the area sustainably through to 2044. Key features of the project include over 10,000 reeds planted across more than 3,000 m², creating a fully natural treatment environment. There

will be six reed beds in total - covering an area equivalent to 16 tennis courts - delivering a powerful green solution to wastewater management. The new Aghanloo Wastewater Treatment Works is on track for completion and commissioning in autumn 2025, representing a major step forward in NI Water’s commitment to sustainable infrastructure and environmental stewardship.



Construction of reed beds at Aghanloo wastewater treatment works, County Derry/Londonderry.

Nature Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

Keep it clear

We deal with around 10,000 blockages of our sewers each year. The most common cause of these blockages is the flushing of items which do not dissolve down the toilet such as wet wipes and the disposal of fats, oils, and grease down the sink. These combine to form a solid mass in the pipes underground, meaning less waste can pass through the pipe. If enough waste cannot pass through, it leads to flooding in homes, business, or our natural environment.

The UK has launched a concerted effort to phase out wet wipes containing plastic. In November 2024, Northern Ireland officially notified the World Trade Organization of its

intention to prohibit the sale and supply of these products. Similar measures have been introduced in Scotland and England, with regulations expected to take full effect within 18 months after its publication. Regulations were expected by the end of 2024 but are not published yet. This ban covers a wide range of single-use wet wipes, including those commonly found in personal care items such as baby wipes, facial wipes to remove make-up, and sheet masks. The primary aim is to mitigate the severe environmental damage caused by plastic-based products, which contribute significantly to pollution and harm aquatic ecosystems.

What Lies Beneath! Innovative FOG Technology

NI Water is now operating innovative FOG technology, which allows us to identify properties where foul drains, which include drainage from bathrooms and washing machines, are misconnected to

the stormwater drains/sewers. Stormwater drains should only carry rainwater from roofs and driveways and this misconnection can cause environmental pollution in watercourses downstream.



NI Water staff member using FOG technology to identify sewer misconnections.

 <https://youtu.be/LbcAL6nHjog>

Nature Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

Bin it

NI Water's ongoing 'Bin it' campaign remains a key part of its environmental outreach, strategically timed around high-risk periods such as Christmas and Easter. These times often see increased issues with fats, oils, and grease being improperly disposed of due to holiday cooking and gatherings.

To amplify the message, NI Water runs targeted initiatives in known problem areas. These include issuing press releases and sharing impactful images of out-of-sewer flooding. These visuals are repurposed into social media content and distributed to local media outlets to raise awareness.

We deliver tailored presentations to Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils, community groups, and attendees at major public events. These include the Foyle Maritime Festival, W5 Science event, NI Civil Service Environmental Day, Citibank Green Day, and numerous local fairs.

In 2024/25 approximately 19,000 school pupils received education on the environmental and infrastructural consequences of flushing inappropriate materials. Over 10,000 individuals engaged

at community events were informed about NI Water's core environmental initiatives, including the 'Bin it' and fats, oils, and grease campaigns. These efforts continue to reinforce the importance of responsible waste disposal and protect Northern Ireland's wastewater infrastructure and natural environment.



NI Water's Outreach and Learning Officer with pupils from Donegall Road Primary School Belfast, County Antrim.

Towards net zero

Refer to our TCFD section on page 105.

 Find out more about protecting and enhancing the natural environment in our TNFD section on page 119.



NI Water staff at a wastewater treatment works.

Strategic areas of focus

- Powered by talent
- Safe, happy and healthy workplace
- Creating a legacy for our communities

Sustainable development goals

- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Principal threats/opportunities

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Page 76 Read more about principal threats and opportunities.

Strategic performance indicators

People	Unit of measurement	Target 2024/25	Actual 2024/25	Pass/Fail	Target 2025/26
Employee attendance	%	96.5	96.0	Fail	96.5
Health and safety incidents	Number	≤6	4	Pass	≤5

People Providing a great place to work

Powered by talent

We are committed to making NI Water a great place to work and ensuring we are fit for the future by attracting, developing, and retaining top talent. Our people strategy is focused on driving customer performance by building organisational capability and ensuring we have the right people with the right skills, empowered to perform at their best.

We are creating a safe, healthy, and inclusive workplace that inspires pride across our organisation. Our tailored people strategies address complex business challenges while preparing our future workforce, strengthening skills and leadership capability, and enhancing the overall employee experience.

This approach is delivering real impact. Staff turnover remains low at approximately 5%, average tenure is over 16 years, and 11.5% of our workforce has been promoted in the last 18 months. Our strong employer brand continues to attract talent, with nearly 1,000 applications received for our Entry Level and Reskilling programmes in 2024/25 - Accelerated Craft Electrician (ACE) and Fast-Track Learning for Operational Wastewater (FLOW).



Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/aceprogramme/>



Find out more at <https://www.niwater.com/news-detail/12709/Find-your-FLOW-Fast-track-programme-to-become-a-Wastewater-Assets-Technician/>

Our LEAD management development framework has continued to grow in 2024/25, with 529 course completions across seven programmes. Notably, 48% of Emerge participants were promoted this year - a powerful indicator of success. This investment is playing a key role in advancing our high-performance culture and living our values.

We're proud to have been recognised for these achievements, winning Best Employee Development Programme (Large Business) at the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards, and the Excellence in Management and Leadership Development award at the Belfast Telegraph Business Awards.



NI Water won Best Employee Development Programme (Large Business) at the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards.

People Providing a great place to work

We were delighted to win Best Employee Experience Programme at the prestigious CIPD NI Awards 2025. This award recognises our commitment to fostering a supportive and empowering workplace - where innovative initiatives enhance employee well-being, promote active participation, and enable our people to shape the future of NI Water.



NI Water won Best Employee Experience Programme at the prestigious CIPD NI Awards 2025.

In 2024/25, we implemented a range of resourcing and talent strategies to recruit a balanced mix of entry-level talent, mature career changers, internal promotions, and career developers. These approaches are helping us future-proof our workforce and maintain a steady pipeline of talent - ensuring the right people are in the right roles when needed.

We introduced new processes and training to identify business-critical roles and establish strong talent pipelines across all levels of the organisation. Our cost-effective and innovative resourcing strategies - particularly through entry-level and re-skilling programmes - are enabling us to meet evolving business needs and build essential skills in preparation for anticipated retirements during PC21 and into PC28.

This year also saw the launch of our enhanced hybrid work experience programme, developed in partnership with leading social mobility charity Speakers for Schools. The initiative has increased work experience participation fivefold while delivering significant improvements in quality and efficiency. It also advances our diversity and inclusion goals by opening opportunities to a wider, more representative group of young people.

Our Entry Level Academy continues to thrive, expanding into new business areas in line with NI Water's strategic direction. In 2024/25 alone, the Academy provided meaningful employment opportunities for over 100 individuals and has contributed to cultural transformation within the organisation, supporting our ambition for a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

Notably, this year marked a milestone in succession planning, with Water Utilities Apprentices, Leakage Employment Accelerator Programme (LEAP) Technicians, and ACE Technicians transitioning into permanent, funded roles upon completing their training - a tangible outcome of our long-term talent investment.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZxMG3RFFpg>

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we will continue to build strategic partnerships with regional colleges and launch new programmes in high-demand areas such as climate change and financial technology, as we evolve our resourcing strategies to address emerging skills gaps and meet the future needs of our organisation.

niwater | entry level academy



NI Water's Entry Level Academy.

Safe, happy, and healthy workplace

At NI Water, our commitment to zero harm is unwavering. The safety of our employees, contractors, and customers is our highest priority. We are investing in a robust health and safety culture, driven by a dedicated team that fosters competence, empowers individuals, and encourages excellence at every level of the organisation.

Our approach is grounded in proactive planning, collaborative problem-solving, and the pursuit of continuous improvement. We adopt industry-best practices and set the highest standards of compliance and safety. Participation in health and safety is not just encouraged - it is embedded in our culture, ensuring every voice is heard and every action contributes to a safe, healthy, and thriving workplace.

In April 2025, we launched our 2025–2028 Health and Safety Strategy and Work Programme. This new strategy builds on the progress of key risk assessment initiatives - including Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER), Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR), and Occupational Road Risk - and identifies further opportunities for improvement. Over the next three years, our strategy will focus on five key themes:

• Passionate People

Cultivate a strong, values-led health and safety culture, measured by employee engagement, participation, and survey outcomes.

• Planning and Problem Solving

Establish a robust and systematic safety planning framework that integrates high-quality risk assessments and drives continuous improvement. Success will be reflected in reduced incidents and improved assessment outcomes.

• Participation in Prevention

Actively involve employees in safety training and preventative activities to enhance awareness and workplace safety. Impact will be measured through participation rates and feedback.

• Plant, Equipment, and Premises

Strengthen the management of plant, equipment, and premises through rigorous risk assessment and compliance processes to mitigate legal and operational risks.

• Proper Order

Promote a well-organised and safe working environment through regular inspections and audits, reducing incidents associated with disorganisation.

Through this strategy, we aim to not only meet compliance requirements but also create a culture of ownership and care - where safety is everyone's responsibility and zero harm is a shared goal.



Prioritising health

At NI Water, we take a proactive, data-led approach to employee wellbeing, embedding a strong culture of workplace health over the past six years. Our multi-award-winning wellbeing strategy is designed to create a supportive, inclusive environment that enhances employee engagement and drives positive health outcomes.

We recognise the specific needs of our diverse workforce, including an ageing, geographically dispersed, and predominantly male demographic. As such, we tailor our wellbeing programmes based on employee feedback and emerging trends identified through our attendance management framework, with a strong focus on prevention and early intervention.

The strategy is built around four core pillars: physical health, mental health, financial wellbeing, and social wellbeing. Through a combination of education, support, and targeted initiatives, we empower employees to take an active role in managing their health. The programme includes guest speakers, our twice-yearly Live Well Roadshows, and themed events timed to coincide with national campaigns such as Men's Health Week, Mental Health

Awareness Week, Carers Week, and Smoking Cessation initiatives.

These efforts have led to meaningful outcomes. There have been early detections of serious conditions such as prostate cancer, heart failure, and skin cancer, potentially saving lives. We have also seen increased openness and storytelling around personal experiences with physical and mental health, helping to reduce stigma and foster a culture of support. These efforts will also help support recovery in our employee absence target, against which we underperformed in 2024/25.

Our wellbeing strategy continues to be a vital component of how we support our people and sustain a healthy, resilient, and engaged workforce.



Involving people in the decisions that affect them

We have continued our partnership with Gallup, our expert culture and engagement partner, to deliver a holistic listening strategy across NI Water.

Building on the insights from our company-wide NI Water Unplugged survey - which highlighted above-average engagement levels, a supportive and inclusive culture, a strong focus on safety, and a sense of agility and empowerment - we launched the second phase of our listening strategy in 2024/25. This phase focused on turning feedback into action.

As part of this, we shared local survey results with people managers and provided them with training and support to develop tailored action plans. These plans are designed to ensure teams feel heard and that we are continuously improving the employee experience across the organisation.

In 2025/26, we will continue to support the implementation and refinement of these plans, ahead of launching our second NI Water Unplugged survey in late 2025.



Celebrating and promoting diversity

As a large employer delivering a vital public service, we understand the significant business and personal value of fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. Diversity is key to attracting and retaining top talent, and we are committed to creating an environment where every individual feels respected, included, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Over the past three years, we have made substantial progress in laying the foundations for a more inclusive culture. This work is already delivering positive outcomes, particularly across our priority focus areas of age, gender, and social mobility.

We were proud to retain the rigorous Silver Diversity Charter Mark in 2024/25, following a comprehensive assessment of our continued progress since our initial accreditation in 2022/23. Looking ahead, our focus in 2025/26 will be on advancing further toward achieving the Gold Diversity Charter Mark, as we continue to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion into every part of our organisation.



 Find out more about diversity and inclusion at page 184.

Creating a legacy for our communities

Helping hands

Our Cares Challenge volunteering programme has been running for over a decade and stands as a testament to our ongoing and exceptional commitment to the communities we serve. As one of the largest corporate volunteering initiatives in Northern Ireland, it has engaged hundreds of our employees and contributed approximately 13,000 hours of volunteering since its inception.

The programme is designed to support our customers in their own communities by assisting with the projects that matter most to them. Delivered in partnership with Business in the Community, it connects us with local organisations and charities in need of practical support with hands-on tasks.

Through this initiative, our employees have supported a wide range of charities and community groups, including Southern Area Hospice, Foyle Search and Rescue, The National Trust, Simon Community, Foyle Hospice, Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary, and many others - making a meaningful and lasting difference where it's needed most.



NI Water volunteers help at Foyle Hospice, County Derry/Londonderry.

Making a difference in Rwanda

NI Water proudly supports WaterAid's vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has access to sustainable and safe water, sanitation, and hygiene. We are honoured to lead the local WaterAid NI Committee, which raises approximately £100,000 each year to support this vital mission.

Recent fundraising efforts have focused on the Flowing Futures project in the Bugesera district of Rwanda. In partnership with local communities, WaterAid is working to improve access to clean water, decent toilets, and hygiene education. While Rwanda has made significant progress in expanding access to these essential services, over one in three people still lack clean water close to home, and more than one in four do not have access to a decent toilet.

The Flowing Futures project builds on WaterAid's long-term work in Bugesera, supporting the Rwandan government's ambition to achieve universal access to water, sanitation, and hygiene in the district - an effort that also aims to inspire broader national change.

In November 2024, the local committee hosted its most successful fundraising event to date, the 'Back to the 80s' Charity Ball at Titanic Belfast, raising a record-breaking £118,000. With the committee's funding target for the Flowing Futures project now fully met, planning is underway to identify and support a new project in 2025.



Flowing Futures project in Rwanda. Photo credit WaterAid/James Kiyimba.

Creating a water saving culture

NI Water is dedicated to fostering a culture of water conservation across our communities. Through our Education Programme, we deliver key environmental messages on water efficiency to schools, youth groups, and community organisations, with a strong focus on the simple, everyday actions we can all take to protect this vital resource.

These messages are reinforced through our free water audit and water efficiency initiative, supported by the interactive online platform 'Get Water Fit'. This programme provides customers with practical tools such as save-a-flush devices, four-minute shower timers, leaky loo detection strips, and toothy timers to help reduce water waste in the home.

In 2024/25, we engaged directly with communities through 247 school visits and 66 community outreach sessions, helping to embed water-saving behaviours across Northern Ireland.



Key Stage 2 pupils who were finalists in NI Water's 'Water People' poster competition joined NI Water's CEO, Scientists and Outreach and Learning Officer.