

Thames Water Draft Resources Management Plan 2024

Consultation feedback form

Your feedback

Question	Your response
<p>We've chosen to aim for the highest level of environmental improvements. This is supported by our regulators. We'll be tracking the benefits of our work as we carry it out and will adapt our approach as we learn more. Do you have any comments on our approach?</p>	<p>Aiming for the highest level of environmental improvements is a good goal that we support. However, constructing a large reservoir will have a large environmental impact that does not appear to have been considered in the overall process. Smaller, better distributed water storage facilities would have a lesser impact on the environment. Storage linked to existing and proposed gravel extraction works could be a more joined up approach to storing water for future use, should it be required.</p> <p>We also consider Thames Water could increase the number of nature-based solutions, such as improving river catchments. This will help to improve water quality and reduce the costs associated with treating poor quality water. These schemes can also have wider benefits by improving the quality of water in our rivers.</p>
<p>We've set out our plan for reducing demand, with government interventions, to achieve 123 litres of water per person per day on average. This is above the government's national target, but we think it's the right approach. We'll monitor and develop this by building on our learnings and evidence. Do you have any comments on our approach or suggestions for additional measures we could take?</p>	<p>We object to your approach. Thames Water should have a much more ambitious plan for reducing demand. In your question above you describe you target of 123 litres of water per person per day on average as “above the government's national target”, which is misleading, ‘above’ implying that your target is doing better, the reverse of the case here. Your ambition falls significantly short and is significantly failing the government’s national target. Your aim for 123 litres per person per day does not reflect the government ambitions for achieving improvements to water efficiency. Water companies are expected to plan for an average 110 litres of water use per person per day. In January 2023 the Government launched the Environmental</p>

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	<p>Improvement Plan, containing new potential water efficiency standards for new homes with a baseline of 105 l/p/d, with a higher standard of 100l/p/d where there is a local need. The WRMP should be revised to take this into account. As a local planning authority, we are willing to work with Thames Water to support 100 l/p/d in our district through our emerging Local Plan.</p> <p>We consider that the programme set out in the WRMP for fixing leaking pipes and reducing water consumption from dwellings should be significantly expanded. Smart meters should be rolled out swiftly and widely. And, for example, has technology such as micro sensing to reduce in property leakage been considered to reduce demand? Could Thames Water fund water reuse projects such as grey water recycling and source collection and reuse?</p> <p>Using innovative measures to fix leaks and reduce demand measures could have significantly less impact on our existing natural environment and a much lower carbon footprint than constructing a mega reservoir. The WRMP should be revised to prioritise fixing leaks and reducing demand for water over constructing a reservoir. Your lack of ambition on water efficiency and fixing leaks props up your water supply deficit calculations, fuelling your case for large scale strategic solutions like the reservoir proposed in Vale of White Horse district.</p>
<p>Measures to reduce demand for water make up over 50% of our forecast shortfall by 2050. Some of the activity is untested and not within our direct control. Do you think this is the right approach? Should we plan for additional new sources of water</p>	<p>South Oxfordshire District Council supports the intention to reduce demand for water but we consider that this target should be more ambitious. You should seek to reduce demand by 50% well in advance of 2050. We recommend that instead of planning for additional new sources of water in case measures don't deliver the water Thames Water has forecast, further alternative measures</p>

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<p>in case these measures don't deliver the water we've forecast?</p>	<p>should be considered for reducing demand for water and fixing leaks. We note that you are losing 650 mega litres a day, or 24% of water, through leakage, and that Thames Water has among the worst performance on leakage of all water companies.</p> <p>Your intention to increase the roll out of smart metering is welcome but this should be done more quickly than is set out in the WRMP. Thames Water could also encourage and facilitate customers to harvest rainwater and store it for gardening and non-drinking water uses like flushing WCs. We would like to see new housing include provision for storing water, for example in gardens or underground. If implemented now this could greatly reduce consumption and the need for large infrastructure schemes. Thames Water should also invest in new technology such as no-dig 'pipe injection' techniques to plug existing leaks. Thames Water and the other water companies should also focus on working with farmers and landowners to provide more 'at source' storage.</p>
<p>A new reservoir is an integral part of our best value plan for the South East. Do you have any comments on the size of a new reservoir?</p>	<p>South Oxfordshire District Council has concerns about the environmental impact and carbon emissions associated with the proposed SESRO scheme. The decision to advance the SESRO scheme is being made without proper consideration of its carbon footprint. It is clear from the information provided in the SESRO Carbon Report that this reservoir will result in significant carbon emissions. The report refers to Thames Water carrying out work to investigate mitigation for the carbon emissions. For example, low carbon fuels for construction vehicles or low carbon earth moving equipment. However, these technologies are not widely available yet. It is not clear why this scheme that will result in major carbon emissions is being prioritised over smaller,</p>

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	<p>less environmentally destructive projects.</p> <p>Our Council is further concerned that the excessive size of this construction project will cause disruption to our residents over a long time period. We are not convinced that Thames Water has given this disruption and the impact on residents adequate consideration before deciding to proceed with this major infrastructure project.</p>
<p>Do you have any comments on the new water source options included in our draft plan?</p>	<p>We support increased collaboration between the water companies in the South East and other regions but more work is needed to establish how the proposed water transfers (the Severn to Thames Transfer and the Thames to Southern Water transfer) could work in practice. The intended route of the pipelines has not been determined. Our Council is concerned about any potential disruption to our residents from these proposed pipeline projects and as some of the pipelines proposed will run through an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, potential adverse impact on the AONB. It is important that any route planning minimises adverse impacts and that trenchless techniques are used where possible.</p>
<p>Do you think our draft plan represents the best value plan for you, your community and the environment?</p>	<p>No, the draft plan does not represent the best value plan for our community or the environment. The inclusion of the SESRO scheme, located in the adjacent Vale of White Horse district, ignores the cost to local communities and the environment from this scheme.</p> <p>We note that the WRMP indicates that the costs for investing in our future water supply will increase the average household bill significantly in the future, reaching an extra £100 a year by 2050. Our residents, who are Thames Water customers, will not wish to pay for a plan that includes large</p>

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	<p>construction projects that will impact on our local environment and contribute to climate change. More should be done more to encourage and incentivise householders to save water now, and to fix leaks, to avoid the high financial, social and environmental costs that are associated with major infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Thames Water should instead be focusing on encouraging customers to reduce their use of water and fixing leaks. If more work was undertaken by Thames Water to fix leaks and to encourage customers to save water and fix leaks, there may not be the need for the significant investment of constructing a large reservoir.</p>
<p>Do you have any other comments on our draft plan?</p>	<p>The proposals for SESRO are not providing appropriate mitigation for local communities. Proposals should include more significant opportunities for sport, leisure and recreation, green infrastructure, transport improvements and increased flood resilience to assist the wide area over which impacts will fall, including Didcot Garden Town.</p>
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Question	Your response
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