



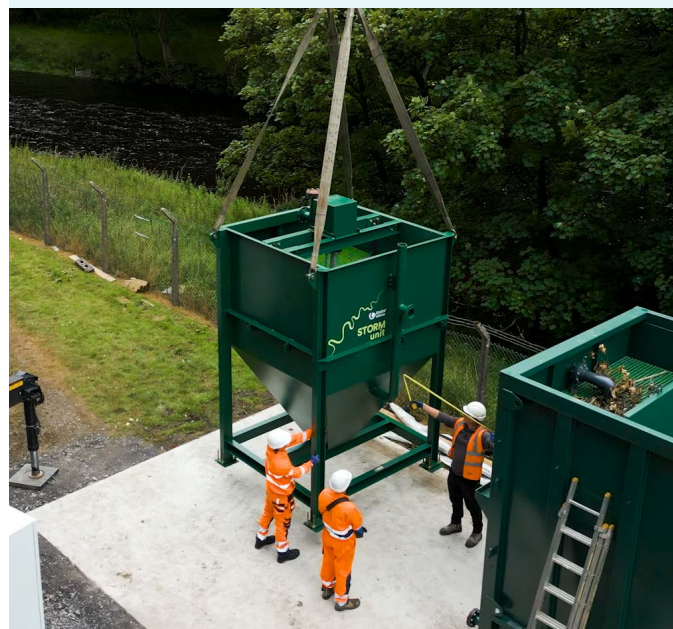
What do customers want?

Customers want us to protect and improve the natural environment by reducing pollution, cutting our carbon footprint and improving the health of our rivers and lakes.

To deliver this outcome, we will continue to reduce the levels of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere (emissions) as a result of our work, helping the UK move towards its national net-zero targets. We will also continue to cut the amount of phosphorus that enters rivers from our wastewater treatment works to improve the quality of the water in our rivers and support healthier ecosystems. In the Lake District, we are taking a wider approach to protecting the environment through our Wonderful Windermere programme, working with partners to reduce the release of nutrients into Lake Windermere from various sources, improve water quality and protect it well into the future. Customers tell us this matters because a cleaner, greener environment supports wildlife, strengthens local communities and protects the landscapes they love for future generations.

Our performance commitments

- Biodiversity
- Operational greenhouse gas emissions (water)
- Operational greenhouse gas emissions (wastewater)
- Total pollution incidents
- Serious pollution incidents
- Discharge permit compliance
- Bathing water quality
- River water quality
- Storm overflows
- Embodied greenhouse gas
- Wonderful Windermere



What have we done?

The UK has committed to achieving net zero by 2050. This means that the total greenhouse gas emissions would be equal to the emissions removed from the atmosphere. To support this goal, we track three measures of greenhouse gases released as a result of our work. This year, we made great progress towards meeting our embodied carbon target for the end of AMP8. To achieve this target we need to use materials more efficiently, include energy-saving measures in our designs for buildings and projects, and choose low carbon alternatives for some of our most carbon intensive wastewater treatment projects.

The very dry weather early in the year meant we had to move more water around our region to protect supplies for customers and the environment. The extra energy needed to run our network in these conditions increased our emissions, meaning we did not meet our target for emissions from water assets. However, we met our target for emissions from our wastewater assets as we reduced our emissions by more than the performance commitment target.

While working on the Wonderful Windermere performance commitment, we're looking at the different sources of nutrients entering Lake Windermere (not including those from our assets). This will help to reduce the amount of phosphorus released from various places across the area, rather than focusing on one site or solution. In the first year of this programme, we met our performance commitment by reducing phosphorus levels by 12.57kg per year. This is an important early step in helping to protect and improve water quality in Lake Windermere. We also reduced phosphorus levels regionally by over 17% from a 2020 baseline and met our river water quality performance commitment target for 2025/26.

In year one, we narrowly missed our target for reducing spills from storm overflows, achieving a performance of 29.6 against our target of 26.35. Across the year, there were 60,843 spills from storm overflows – a 21.8% reduction compared with the previous year. We have focused on reducing spills by checking drainage systems in the area and carrying out a range of practical improvements. These include improving the performance of our water pumps, installing additional storm storage tanks, and tackling infiltration in the network. Together, these actions are helping us make steady progress in reducing the effect of storm overflows on the environment.

Improving biodiversity helps protect wildlife, reduces the risk of species becoming extinct, and makes our natural environment more able to cope with climate change and pressure on water resources. It also supports healthier ecosystems and provides real benefits for people's physical and mental well-being. This year, we carried out over 300 biodiversity baseline surveys to understand the current condition of habitats across our region. Over the next four years, we'll be working to increase biodiversity at sites across the North West. These surveys will allow us to measure the positive changes we make in the years ahead.



Across the North West, there are 25 designated coastal bathing-water sites and nine inland bathing-water sites. For the 2025 bathing season, 25 of these sites were classified as sufficient or better. Of these, 10 achieved a good rating and six were rated excellent, including four bathing-water sites at Windermere. However, nine bathing-water sites were classified as poor, which meant we did not meet our performance commitment target of 51.8%, achieving 45.8% instead.

We are one of many organisations that influence the quality of bathing water. Other factors such as farming, seabirds and pollution from others in the wider area also play a significant role. To better understand the effects of these factors, we are collecting additional samples and carrying out extra monitoring to pinpoint where pollution is coming from. The findings will help us strengthen and refine our action plans for each bathing-water site, making sure we focus on the areas that will make the biggest difference in future years.

We have continued with our overall improvement plan so that our water and wastewater treatment works meet the conditions of their Environment Agency permits, and we have put in place individual, highly focused plans for sites we consider to be at high risk of failing to meet these in the future. This year, 98.20% of treatment works met the conditions of their Environment Agency permits, against a target of 100%. This means that seven treatment works (out of a total 389) did not meet all the conditions of their permits. We carried out a detailed investigation for each of the treatment works to understand what caused them to fail, and we have put action plans in place to reduce the risk of similar failures in the future.

We remain committed to speeding up improvements in our pollution performance. Importantly, we recorded no category-1 pollution incidents, the most serious form of pollution. Despite a reduction in category-2 and category-3 pollution incidents compared with the previous year, we expect an overall penalty for 2025/26 for this measure. Initiatives and measures we have put in place throughout the year have helped to reduce the impact of pollution incidents, such as those caused by storms experienced in January 2025. However, overall, we did not meet the performance commitment target in year one of AMP8 for the number of category-3 incidents in 2025. Similarly, we did not meet the target of zero serious pollution incidents, as two category-2 incidents were reported. We delivered the remaining activities in our 2023 Pollution Incident Reduction Plan (PIRP) but know we have more work to do in this area. In March 2026 we provided an update to our PIRP which explained the measures we are committed to putting in place. You can read more about this plan at unitedutilities.com/corporate/responsibility/environment/reducing-pollution.

Measures achieved

We have achieved or are on track to achieve five of the 11 performance commitments in this outcome.

5/11
measures achieved

