

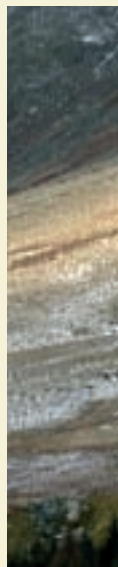
A full-page background image of a rugged mountain range. The peaks are covered in snow, and the lower slopes are a mix of brownish-green vegetation and rocky terrain. A dense forest of evergreen trees is visible in the lower third of the image, with a body of water at the very bottom.

*Conservation, Access and Recreation  
Report 2002 - 2003*

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Front cover  
Kidsty Pike



# CARAC Chairman's statement 2002

Following the development of the United Utilities Sustainable Development Policy and the strategies to achieve it, the main thrust of the Conservation, Access and Recreation Committee has been to work closely with United Utilities Service Delivery, to help develop and prioritise an appropriate programme in areas within the remit of the Committee. Post 'Foot and Mouth' it has been an absolute priority that the future of the Company's upland estates be agreed.

David Crawshaw produced an excellent paper on the opportunities to move closer to a more sustainable model for upland farming. This thought provoking paper led the Committee to serious discussions on the preferred ways of development for the future. This led to a second paper summarising the Company's views in the light of those discussions.

United Utilities objectives were now defined as positioning its catchments as 'models of best practice in sustainable upland farming', which will deliver protection of water quality, protection and enhancement of biodiversity in balance with reasonable expectations for access and recreation, a viable living for tenant farmers on catchments and support for local communities.

The Committee has had many opportunities to visit tenants on catchments over the past few years. Recently, the Committee has been able to see and assess the results of The Bowland Initiative, visit farms on the Haweswater catchment and become involved in the 'Moors for the Future' initiative in the Peak District National Park, on the Longdendale Estate. In all these very diverse areas, with very different tenants, it was clear that many tenants were prepared to encompass a wide range of conditions, in Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and recreation areas, but naturally, they did not wish to just look after the land to comply with environmental legislation, or Company requirements, but wished to farm for profit over the long term and had agreed practical ways to achieve this with the Company.

The Committee is very impressed by the practical steps being taken by the Catchment Management Teams, to implement the model being developed by United Utilities Environment and Community Section and will be showing a keen interest in ongoing schemes and new developments during 2003/2004.

Continuing the theme of sustainable development, there has been some concentration on the subject of windfarms for the production of electricity. The Committee received an initial paper on this from Julian Carter, with a more detailed and site specific update from Ian Smith. Whilst being pleased to hear that there were no proposals to place windfarms on any United Utilities land in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Committee

expressed concern that much of Company catchment land is in high, fairly isolated, areas of the Pennine uplands where visual intrusion might be just as great. The siting of windfarms and turbines in areas adjacent to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, may also not be suitable.

It was accepted that some of these objections could be overcome to some extent, but there was just as much worry about how the generated power would be moved from these remote upland (and coastal) sites, to areas of usage. The Committee can best be described as being ambivalent, feeling that there should be ways of producing 'green' energy, without the downside of polluting the high scenic value of the landscape of the North West of England. We would like to see a scheme and see how far it overcomes our objections.

The Committee has tried to encourage the Company to look at all aspects of sustainable development through renewable energy and this has become a much more interesting subject since we have had discussions at regular intervals with the Head of Environment and Community, Julie Spinks. However, Julie's monthly reports have shown that the Company continues to show increased use of energy.

More worrying, as Ian Brodie, Deputy Chairman of CARAC, has pointed out, some new schemes, for water supply in particular, are showing greater energy usage to meet stricter legislation. The Committee will look at new schemes more carefully and intend to make more detailed observations in future. Julie has initiated discussions with her colleagues in order to gain further insight into how these energy uses can be reduced.

The United Utilities 'Green Portfolio' is at the very heart of the Company's philosophy and of course, the way it carries out its service delivery. In the year 2000, the Company produced seven revised Green Portfolio papers and these have now been further revised in light of new and changing legislation. As a result of this revision, the Company's Sustainable Development Policy, two commitments on public access (Public Access to the Bowland Estate and Commitment to Public Access to Open Land) have been amalgamated and three new commitments agreed and published:

A conservation commitment for the Company's tenants, agents, contractors and consultants

A commitment to the Company's natural and built heritage

A commitment to sport and recreation

Of these, the Committee agreed that a strategy and programme should be developed as a priority for the natural and built heritage

and a programme is now underway for reporting to CARAC during 2003/2004. Co-ordinating the information will be a huge task, but must be a priority.

Two further items must be raised and attention drawn to them. Firstly, the Ranger Review was finally agreed after one of the longest review periods I ever remember and quite rightly so, as it has affected the livelihoods of a number of people. The overall effect was virtually no reduction in resources in monetary terms, but did result in redeployment of rangers staff by areas to meet changing priorities, whilst information services in the field would be provided differently and for more hours per week.

Whilst there was general support for the overall policy and implementation plan, there were reservations expressed by members of Committee. The Peak National Park expressed concern at the area allocations and others more general disquiet about the proposals to discontinue the additional 'voluntary' system of rangers, to be replaced by paid part-time rangers on a seasonal basis. The levels of effectiveness of volunteers being more a reflection of the Company's organisation than the quality of the volunteers.

I feel we have not heard the last of the Ranger Review as far as this Committee is concerned.

Finally, a subject close to the heart of the Committee, the 'Bill Foster Conservation Award'. The scheme had fallen into temporary abeyance and CARAC members were extremely unhappy about this situation.

Committee asked for a new scheme to be underway by 2003. The Committee was therefore pleased, that at a full meeting of CARAC, a scheme was put forward which was warmly welcomed.

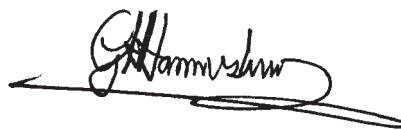
It should be clear from my Statement, that the year 2002/2003 has been a much better year for Environment and Community than the previous year. The Sustainable Development Strategy has now made it very clear where the Company is heading, what it has set as objectives and what are its priorities. It is much easier for the Committee to respond to the Company, and for the Company to respond to the Committee.

My overall assessment of performance is that the Company has clearer objectives and strategies to meet these objectives. We have seen the early stages of the plans and some of the outlines for the future, but we are looking five to twenty five years ahead to meet some of these objectives. Generally, the Committee likes what it is seeing and supports strongly what has been achieved so far, particularly the work on upland catchments.

In concluding this Statement I thank my Deputy Chairman, Ian Brodie, who has continued to share the workload with me.

My thanks also go to the members of CARAC, many of whom give so much of their time, advice and helpful views outside of the formal meetings of Committee.

My special thanks go to Peter Guy, our Secretary, who does this job as well as his full-time job and has to have answers to the questions we ask, preferably on the same day we ask the question. I would also thank Julie Spinks, Head of Environment and Community, whose department is continually under scrutiny by CARAC, because it is Julie who is the manager within United Utilities who has this advisory committee offering advice and comments on all major policies concerning the environment and community. Alongside Julie, there is David Crawshaw, the Company's Environment Manager, who has raised the debate on sustainability and environment to new levels of excellence. David's papers and presentations are eagerly looked forward to by members. Kate Snow has supplemented David with her practical work on the catchments and on our site visits and sets a very high standard of proof from members if she is to be convinced that their views should greatly influence strategy. Finally, I must thank the Catchment Managers and their Teams who have spent many hours with the Committee during site visits, a sincere thank you.



Howard Hammersley  
Chairman of CARAC

# Conservation, Access and Recreation Advisory Committee annual summary 2002

## 1 Moving towards sustainable upland farming

David Crawshaw's paper was to update members on developments since the Foot and Mouth outbreak, outline the challenges and opportunities and to seek members views on how to best progress towards the goal of sustainable upland farming on UU catchments.

UU wants to take this opportunity to move towards a more sustainable model of upland farming on our catchments. Hopefully, in so doing, we will help to solve some of the problems that currently confront landowners and hill farmers, whilst also meeting the needs of our core business.

### The conflicting demands on UU Catchments

#### Protection of water quality

Need to deliver safe and wholesome supplies of water to customers.  
Management of catchments is an over-riding priority.  
Constraints on activities of tenant farmers.  
Risk of contamination by Cryptosporidium.

#### Access and Recreation

UU catchments and reservoirs used for managed access and recreation.

#### Conservation

Expectation that UU will preserve traditional landscapes which are result of historic farming methods.

Modernisation of farming methods mean some old assets are no longer economic for farmers to maintain e.g. hedges, walls and barns.

Historic features replaced by more controversial ones such as fences.

Agricultural subsidies based on food production, so stocking levels increased, resulting in damage to habitats, erosion, lack of management, increased grazing pressure leading to lack of regeneration of woodland and heather moorland.

United Utilities would wish to see a system of farming on our upland catchments where conservation is a fundamental part of the farm rationale.

#### What can be done?

UU welcomes the Curry Commission's recommendation, that as a first step, the Government should shift 10% of subsidies towards environmental activities.

We hope that this recommendation will, in time, lead towards a system of subsidising activities which will maintain the landscape and associated wildlife habitats. Whilst not eliminating sheep from upland catchments, this implies substantially reduced stocking levels. Experiments have shown, for instance in Bowland, that enormous gains to wildlife can be achieved.

The new grant systems should encourage farm diversification where this is compatible with local needs, and provide opportunities to replace the income lost from reduced stock numbers.

Some of the opportunities that may be opened up include:

- Identification of limited areas that might be allowed to revert to 'wilderness' with minimal management
- Identification of other areas where a more managed woodland system might be more appropriate
- Promotion of managed sustainable tourism which does not damage the environment, whilst working with local communities and planning authorities to define what this might involve.

We feel that by adopting these suggestions, within the right framework of financial support, we could move towards a system which not only meets the needs and aspirations of farmers and local communities to make a reasonable living, but also the aspirations of the rest of society to protect our upland areas.

#### How to promote this approach on UU catchments

Because most of UU tenant farmers operate under old agricultural tenancy agreements, it is not possible for us to control all of their activities in the way we might wish to. Change in these areas must, therefore, come through co-operative working, persuasion and development of viable alternatives which are attractive to farmers.

This will be an enormous task. We rarely hear the voice of farmers, so a key task is to engage with our tenants, both individually and collectively. We envisage organising a series of local conferences, aimed primarily at our tenants, where the issues, often quite specific to a local area, can be given a thorough airing. In addition, we hope to invite external speakers who will inject new thinking to the debate.

The objective will be to define a financially viable model of sustainable upland farming on United Utilities catchments.

We understand that the Curry Commission will be holding a series of regional stakeholder workshops around the country. We would welcome the opportunity to attend one of these to discuss ideas in more detail.

United Utilities is also actively participating in the newly formed NW Rural Affairs Forum which, hopefully, will act as a catalyst for change, a source of ideas from around the region and a useful vehicle for feedback, via the Government Office NW.

Ian Brodie thanked David for an extremely interesting paper, but felt that timescales will be indeterminable at this time and that 'agri-grant schemes' currently in operation could delay action. Ian suggested that there may be opportunities for external funding to help achieve some form of demonstration projects. Now is the time

to pursue some wonderful opportunities, but there will, inevitably, be some difficulties along the way.

Ian also suggested that, it is down to the landowner to establish priorities for his/her land and that traditional farming activities may be in conflict with these objectives.

Peter Atkin suggested, that sustainability will inevitably be linked with profitability.

Peter felt that tenancy agreements need to be resurrected, as farm business plans, covering a 5 year period, are not viable to a young farmer who will be looking to possibly a lifetime of farming. The average age of farmers in our uplands is 60, so short term business tenancies will not attract young farmers into the business.

Landowners should reward tenant farmers for achievement, to acknowledge the role of farming. A farm should be able to survive on its merits.

Sean Prendergast indicated that this is a super opportunity for United Utilities to invest in partnerships with young farmers, to manage land for water gathering and for income generation. Hill farming is in serious decline and as a result rents will follow, with subsidies shifting from production to conservation.

The farm business and the landowner should be the partnership arrangement, with the farm operating as a stand alone with support from the landowner.

John Robinson expressed concern that if tenants leave, who will take over? UU must encourage farmers to remain.

Roger Allen asked whether hill farming can be profitable and whether agricultural colleges are bringing forward any ways of making it sustainable?

Eric Harper asked Peter Atkin, why hill farmers are not making a profit now, when only 10 years ago they were.

Peter suggested that several factors have influenced this. Impact of land-agents in the countryside, cost of farming has increased, the livestock industry has been screwed down by supermarkets and buyers, public eating habits changing, subsidies reduced, strength of the pound and an overall reduction in the size of the National flock.

Howard Hammersley felt that, even though UU is a water company, the tenant farmers can be a part of its activities, whilst still farming. The tenant farmers need to be part of the whole suite of activities which helps deliver profit to the landlord, in this case, water.

Nick Taylor pointed out to the meeting, that as a regulated company, the regulator sets our contracts. The Regulator must, therefore, need to understand the whole nature of this debate for inclusion in future deliberations.

#### **CARAC recommended that:**

**United Utilities needs a strategy and a policy to take this forward. The issues must be discussed with all tenant farmers, who must be part of the suite of activities on the land and wholly related to the cost of water coming off that land.**

## **2 UU Environment Policy (Progress Report)**

Jo Luckhurst presented this paper to update members on progress with this Policy.

In 1996, United Utilities produced and published its Environmental Policy. This policy is now out of date and in need of update to reflect current organisational arrangements and wider sustainable development principles.

Following advice from the Company's Sustainable Development Panel, the policy has been expanded into a Sustainable Development Policy, to cover environmental as well as social and economic aspects. The Policy will support and complement other Company policies, such as the Corporate Social Responsibility Policy and the Statement of Business Principles.

Essentially, the policy reflects an integrated approach to the environment, following sustainable development principles.

The Sustainable Development Panel has reviewed the proposed policy and has recommended it for approval. The policy is currently going for refinement by the Plain English Campaign and sign off by UU Group Executive Committee.

Robina McNeil expressed a concern that there was no reference within the paper to archaeological issues and historical landscapes.

Howard Hammersley also felt that UU needs to address these historical issues and include a policy on its approach to archaeology.

Roger Allen asked whether the Regulator will take note of a UU Sustainability Strategy?

Julie Spinks indicated that sustainable development is not a current responsibility of OFWAT. However, if the Water Act is introduced later this year, then it would become a formal responsibility.

Nick Taylor indicated that there is some internal debate as to whether we need to put pressure on to the Regulator.

Eric Harper felt that, if the Water Bill is brought forward before the next Periodic Review, then UU must put forward a Sustainable Policy with all monetary benefits identifiable. It is a responsibility of UU to make a positive impact on the Regulator, based upon the areas within the remit of CARAC including, conservation, access and recreation, education, farming and other rural issues.

Phillida Entwistle felt that the new Regulator may be more

sympathetic to principles of what CARAC represents, but we must take it forward now, 2 years in advance of next deliberations.

### 3 Ranger review

The Chairman informed the Committee that there was still further consultation to be done to complete the Ranger Review and that, hopefully, by the next formal meeting of the Committee in October, the finished report will be available.

### 4 Commonwealth Games 2002 (UU Involvement)

Nick Taylor, Head of Communications for Service Delivery, updated the Committee on the Company's involvement with the forthcoming Commonwealth Games, in Manchester.

#### Background

Planning for the Games started some time ago and United Utilities agreed to sponsor as a major business in the NW Region. The sponsorship is cash based, but it also involves a huge amount of in-kind support. The Company is also a 'default' venue operator.

#### Why is UU involved?

The Company is a major stakeholder in the region and this is one of the world's top events, the reputation of the UK is at stake. United Utilities takes its social responsibilities seriously and there may also be commercial opportunities.

#### What is UU's positioning?

No longer see the Games as a commercial opportunity, in fact the Games are a potential 'banana skin' in that any flawed utility provision may rebound on the Company.

United Utilities is the regional provider of water, wastewater and electricity services and as a result, are a major presence in the North West and Manchester.

#### What is our input?

The Company will invest £1 million in cash and £0.5 million in operational in-kind support. We will also provide mobile phone handsets and contingency support, and access to our landholdings and property in the West Pennine Moors.

#### What will UU get out of it?

The Company is an 'official partner' to the Games, but we may seek a position as an 'official sponsor'.

The opportunity to promote the Games to an 'excluded' audience that may not necessarily experience sport.

A legacy that can be exploited across the region and the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to deliver a world class event.

A real investment in the North West community in a unique and historic sporting event.

#### What are the practical implications?

We will receive 10,000 tickets for distribution to the community. This includes 5,000 to be given away to the community through a competition run by the Manchester Evening News and the BBC, and 5,000 to distribute to people living in SRB areas through recognised agencies.

2002 tickets will be given to UU employees and there will be hospitality for selected groups and organisations to showcase our abilities.

#### Operational implications

There will be 24/7 cover at all venues, key locations such as airports and hotels and full contingency. We will provide a high level of security of supply, including 10 second switching of electricity and special service provision.

All investment and maintenance programmes will be rescheduled to accommodate the Games.

There will also be dedicated teams and investment 'beyond the call of duty', such as fitting extra equipment at the Company's expense.

#### Use of Company land - the scope

Company land to the east of Lower Rivington Reservoir will be the home for the mountain bike events, whilst roads in the same area will be the location for the cycle road races.

Rivington Water Treatment Works will be used as a compound by the BBC Outside Broadcast Team.

#### Use of Company land - the implications

We need to be able to protect the water catchment and environment, whilst recognising the ambitions of Lancashire County Council, Bolton Metro and Chorley Borough Council regarding the boost to tourism in the area.

There will opportunities to promote the benefits and appropriate behaviours through signage and interpretation.

There will be the need to return the land to its original state and to ensure that our conservation, access and recreation principles are not compromised, but enhanced.

Peter Phizacklea was delighted that United Utilities is involved in the way it is. However, he was less impressed with the way that ticket sales to the public were being handled and that this could reflect on the Company in the form of bad PR.

Brian Parry expressed some concerns regarding the use of Rivington as a venue and that no monies had been allocated to re-instatement of the area following the cycling events.

Nick indicated that the general expectation of the Games organisers, is that the Company will be responsible for re-instatement. Ian Brodie asked about rights of access to cyclists and

pedestrians to the Rights of Way when events were taking place, and is the reduction in water pressure in the region in any way linked with the Games?

Robina McNeil asked whether measures have been taken to protect the landscape and has an environmental impact assessment been carried out.

Brian Green suggested that representatives from United Utilities should attend a major mountain bike event to assess its impact.

Sean Prendergast suggested that it was wrong to get too bogged down with Rights of Way issues as there are mechanisms in place to deal with these. The more important matter is the inevitable clean-up which will be required after these events and the Company should be working to manage any foreseeable problems.

## 5 AMP 4 & XD4 Capital Programmes

Julie Spinks introduced this paper by first referring to previous AMP and XD programmes and the history of each.

The previous 5 year AMP programmes began in 1990, with the initial 5 year programme having a value of £1.8bn, the second £2.5bn and the current programme, ending in March 2005, having a value of £3.0bn.

AMP3, for the period 2000 – 2005, will mean a reduction in bills in real terms for NW customers and is the largest environmental improvement programme of any Company in England and Wales (£1.7bn out of £3.0bn). This is a challenging investment programme of Asset Maintenance and quality improvements.

The timetable for AMP4 begins in October 2002, when OFWAT consults on methodology. In July 2003, the Company will publish the draft business plan, followed by the final business plan in 2004.

July 2004 will see OFWAT publishing draft determinations, with final determinations in November 2004.

The new price limits will be operational in April 2005.

The electricity programme process, for XD4, will start in 2003 and the new price limits will apply in April 2005.

Howard Hammersley indicated that the water companies are so different and that the north west is not like other areas. The United Utilities area is significantly different to other water company areas and that we are not replacing recent infrastructure and in many instances we are still replacing very old buildings and assets, whilst managing huge areas of water catchments.

Eric Harper suggested that if sustainability is raised as an issue, then CARAC should be part of any presentation by the Company to the Regulator. In fact the timing could be appropriate now for it to be raised with OFWAT.

The Chairman suggested that this issue be raised at the next formal meeting of CARAC.

## 6 Regional Fisheries Plans (Impact on UU Reservoirs)

Miran Iprahamian, of the Environment Agency, presented this paper outlining the development of Fisheries Action Plans resulting from a recent independent review of Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Legislation.

The main aims of the Action Plans are to optimise the ecological, social, recreational and economic benefits of fisheries through the targeting and prioritisation of resources, and to maintain, improve and develop sustainable fisheries, through open consultation and partnership with local fisheries and other interests.

The Plans are designed to present a clear means of communication between the Agency and local fisheries interests. In doing so, they provide a forum in which management objectives for a catchment can be agreed and who will be responsible for achieving them.

### Implications for United Utilities

One of the aims of the Fisheries Action Plans is to try to ensure a match between demand for various types of fishing and availability within the area. As part of the process, the Agency will be carrying out market research to identify what kind of fishing people want, as well as what is available.

If certain types of fishing are not available, or access is an issue, then the aim is to discuss with fishery and riparian owners whether it is feasible to match up supply and demand.

Fred French expressed concern that a figure of £1m had been suggested to implement the Plans. The Agency and UU should be doing much of what is proposed as 'business as usual', thus saving much of this proposed expenditure.

Eric Harper felt that the consultation groups were not wide enough and that there is already good evidence that some fisheries are improving before these Plans are produced. United Utilities has a major role to play in these Plans by pressuring the Regulator for further water quality improvements.

Ian Brodie suggested that UU needs to be aware of the impact of wastewater treatment works on Fisheries Action Plans, through the regulated framework.

David Crawshaw indicated that many of these issues will be picked up as part of AMP4.

**The Chairman recommended that David Crawshaw be asked to keep a watching brief on progress of this item.**

## 7 Impact of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 on United Utilities

The CRoW Act 2000 has started a process which, when fully implemented, will give people a right to walk over large areas of open countryside and common land.

United Utilities owns considerable operational assets and land that may be designated as open access, so the Act has implications for the business as a whole.

The CroW Act will extend the public's ability to enjoy the countryside whilst also providing safeguards to landowners and occupiers. It will create a new statutory right of access and modernise the rights of way system, as well as giving greater protection to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, provide better management arrangements for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and strengthening wildlife enforcement legislation.

The Act is split into 5 sections:

Part 1: Access

Part 2: Rights of way and road traffic

Part 3: Nature conservation and wildlife enforcement

Part 4: Areas of outstanding natural beauty

Part 5: Miscellaneous and supplementary

### Potential Issues facing United Utilities

There are several areas where the CRoW Act may impact on the business including, water quality, Health and Safety, increased security risks, land management and business results. The majority of these risks may be ascribed to an asset being mapped as open country and the public subsequently freely accessing these.

### UU Measures to mitigate potential impact

The immediate concern was to ensure that any operational land or UU owned agricultural land was not designated as open access. As the maps for the Lower North West region were published in November 2001 and there was just 3 months for the consultation process to be completed. A comprehensive plan to review the maps was implemented.

The next stage in the process is to wait until the provisional maps for the Lower North West are published, when it will be clear whether UU's comments have been adopted. Where there may be outstanding issues UU will use the appeal process (yet to be finalised) to formally object, if necessary. When the Upper North West maps are published in September 2002 the process will repeat itself to cover the rest of UU's operating area.

Fred French asked if United Utilities is represented on any of the local access forums.

Sean Prendergast clarified that organisations are not represented directly, but that members of organisations can sit on access forums without representing the employer. Sean also informed the meeting that Yorkshire is now designating some woodlands within the principles of the CRoW Act.

The Committee was reminded that UU has been doing much of what is included within the CRoW Act for a good many years

Ian Brodie suggested that United Utilities needs to be more aware of the implications of the Act for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## 8 Bill Foster award

The Company is looking at the feasibility of linking the Award with some awards scheme already in existence, such as the North West Tourism Awards

Brian Parry suggested that the Company might feel it more appropriate to link the award to some individual in the region, for outstanding services to conservation, access, or recreation.

Howard Hammersley felt that a tree planting scheme might also be an appropriate way of remembering Bill.

## 9 Catchment development

This paper, presented by David Crawshaw, was to update members on developments and to seek advice on how best to progress towards the goal of sustainable upland farming on United Utilities catchments.

### Background

United Utilities has an aspiration to develop a model of sustainable farming and this has been distilled into a simple statement.

United Utilities objective is to position our catchments as models of best practice in sustainable upland farming which will deliver:

- Protection of water quality
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity in balance with reasonable expectations for access and recreation
- A viable living for tenant farmers on our catchments and support for the local community

### Protection of water quality

A great deal of work has been done to reduce risk and protect water quality, through projects such as fencing to separate stock from watercourses. Conditions have improved, but clearly the risk remains, as was illustrated in mid August, with high cryptosporidium counts at Wythburn and Mill Gill, following high rainfall.

However, it has been clearly shown that illness in the community has been substantially reduced in the last two years, but it isn't

entirely clear as to the main reason for this improvement. There is little doubt that our actions will have been a contributory factor.

### **Striking the balance**

We know from our work at High Hullock Howe Farm what can be achieved if farming methods are oriented towards wildlife. The question is, how can we achieve this whilst also meeting our third objective? (which is about the economics of farming). United Utilities is currently working with RSPB on the details of a wider project, which is intended to address this question on our farms at Haweswater. We also know there are opportunities for diversification. This has been shown at Dalefoot Farm with the Lakeland Gold bracken composting business, and we are keen to develop other opportunities for sustainable diversification which are compatible with our objectives.

The 'Curry Report' recommends a shift towards rewarding farmers for Environmental improvement and a move away from supporting food production. We see our role as trying to help translate these aspirations into real action on the ground that will actually deliver on all our three objectives. We believe that there is a special case to be made for upland areas and have argued this point strongly by presenting our case to both DEFRA and DWI. Both have shown significant interest in what we are doing.

We are asking our tenant farmers to support these objectives and to work with us to deliver practical solutions which can be used as a model for upland areas elsewhere in the country. We have started the process of consultation with our tenants at a very successful tenant's supper at Thirlmere.

The Company will be making a serious bid in AMP4 for funding from the Regulator.

### **Comments**

Adrian Brown suggested that some serious lobbying is required at this stage to highlight agri-environment schemes. In Europe, the headage support lobby is increasing and we need to keep a close watch on what develops.

Roy Taylor indicated that with the scrapping of the ESA's, the Government is aiming for 95% of farmers to be in a 'broad and shallow' scheme to be in place by 2005, and with some payments for good practice. United Utilities has an important role to play in encouraging its tenant farmers to support such schemes.

Howard Hammersley asked if United Utilities is proposing to have a scheme in place to encourage its tenants with financial incentives.

Ian Brodie stressed the importance of United Utilities and the tenants working together to achieve catchment management objectives and that there should be measurable shared objectives.

The Chairman indicated that the Committee will look forward to regular updates on this matter.

## **10 Renewable energy**

Ian Smith provided the Committee with a verbal update on the current situation on the approaches to renewable energy.

United Utilities is looking to increase its portfolio on Green Energy, by concentrating efforts into wind energy.

The approach will be to look at the country on a regional basis, with the NW grouped with Scotland. We will be looking carefully at land already owned by the Group, but also with third party involvement.

Possible developments will have a broad range of scale, from single turbines, to more significant developments.

United Utilities is committed to operating in a more open way on proposals for developments and has produced information cards outlining this commitment.

It is proposed to establish trust funds locally, to be administered locally by trustees for the duration of the project.

It is the intention to contribute towards achieving the Government's regional targets for provision of energy. Current projects being investigated are:

- White Hill (Clowbridge)
- Scout Moor (Edenfield/Rochdale)
- Denshaw Moor (Oldham)
- Warmwithens(Oswaldtwistle)

These have been identified from an initial trawl of Company land holdings will be investigating the asset base for other opportunities

### **Comments**

Roger Allen asked, what are the main objections being raised by the public and are there any comments in favour?

Ian's response was, most objections are about visual impact. The British Horse Society highlighted rider safety issues. Ramblers Association raised visual impact and noise. MOD suggested interference to radar, air traffic control and aircraft safety Meteorological Office concerned about impact on weather radar systems.

Cliviger Parish Council supported the principle based on living with the Coal Clough Wind Farm for the last 7 - 8 years.

Ian Brodie felt that wind farm development could impact on house prices.

Brian Parry asked about maximum height of turbines. Ian's response was 95 metres.

Tony Hothersall asked if United Utilities is investigating biomass opportunities.

Ian indicated, not in the NW.

Ian Brodie highlighted United Utilities usage of energy, as reported in this year's Annual Report, in that it was showing an increase. He suggested that there should be an encouragement for the Company to use less energy, but some new projects will inevitably use more energy.

Howard Hammersley also expressed concern about this increased use of energy and recommended that the Company should look very seriously at all new schemes in an attempt to use less energy.

### 11 Environment and community update

In presenting this paper, Julie Spinks was providing an update on the performance and activities linked to Environment & Community for the period April to September, 2002.

Information included in the paper was drawn from the monthly reports submitted to the Board of United Utilities Water. It is hoped that future updates will be linked to the new Sustainable Development Policy and its implementation.

The written report was quite lengthy, but overall, members were very supportive of the paper, the information it included and looked forward to future updates.

Additional verbal information, provided by David Crawshaw, was an update on the Schelly project, at Haweswater. Members will recall the previous paper on the moving of schelly fry from Haweswater, to Small Water and Blea Water. The good news is, that schelly have been caught and appear to be breeding in Small Water.

### 12 Environment and community capital programme

This paper was to update members on the current state of the Capital Programme for 2001/02 and the proposed spend for 2002/03. The new system to prioritise capital spend is in continuous development and is being used to develop a rolling programme of projects for the coming five years.

Any income generated from the Capital Programme continues to be allowed as an increase on allowable capital spend.

#### Overview for 2001/02

The 2001/02 programme was split into four categories, Woodland, Access & Recreation, Estates and Community Projects, with the Community items being transferred to the Service Delivery Communications Team.

Following delays caused by the outbreak of Foot & Mouth, we have continued to progress the 2001/02 Capital Programme alongside the 2002/03 Programme. The majority of 2001/02 projects in progress will be completed before December 2002.

Unfortunately, the slippage in the 2001/02 work programme meant that the funding requirement of £0.6 M was lost at the end of that financial year and had to be sourced from the 2002/03 allocation.

#### Overview for 2002/03

Funding available for 2002/03 has been reduced from £1.4M to £0.9M, as a result of the loss of £0.6M last year.

The categories for 2002/03 have been amended to take account of biodiversity and conservation. Some projects may be divided between categories, but this has happened in the past but not recorded in any detail. In reality, there are often conservation/biodiversity aspects of investment in our farmsteads and woodland projects

The new asset data base is now contributing to the prioritisation of projects.

#### Comments

Adrian Brown asked about the future programme and whether Dove Stone Sailing Club was included. He suggested that Oldham may be prepared to provide £30k towards the project and that Peak Park may also have some funding available.....is United Utilities prepared to do the same?

Howard Hammersley felt that the 2003/04 Capital Programme should be covered by the Sustainable Development Strategy, which is still in draft format.

### 13 Green Portfolio

Sharon Steer's paper was to provide Members with the opportunity to comment on proposed revisions to the current Green Portfolio commitments.

Comments were invited on six existing Portfolio papers and three new papers.

#### Background

The Water Resources Act 1991, Sections 3 general environmental and recreational duties, 4 environmental duties with respect to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and 5 codes of practice with respect to environmental and recreational duties, and the Environment Act 1995, Sections 7,8 and 9, form the main legislative requirements which United Utilities as a landowner, must comply.

The Company published seven revised Green Portfolio papers in 2000, these were based on previously published papers from the days of North West Water Ltd.

- Our Commitment to Freedom of Public Access to Open Land
- Our Commitment on Public Access to our Forest of Bowland Estate
- Access Provision in the Countryside for Disabled People

- Expedition Camping and Backpacking
- Our Liaison and Consultation Process
- Our Woodland Strategy
- Our Commitment to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

These Green Portfolio papers have been reviewed in light of new national legislation and to reflect the changed internal structuring of the Company, its new policies and strategies.

### United Utilities Sustainable Development Policy

Green Portfolio Commitments  
 Catchment Asset Standard Documents  
 Catchment Management Plans

#### Summary of Review

“Our Commitment to Freedom of Public Access to Open Land” and “Our Commitment on Public Access to our Forest of Bowland Estate”, have been amalgamated to provide a single generic public access commitment. All catchments will adopt this approach when dealing with access and Rights of Way issues. This document has also been updated to reflect the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

A reference to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is now included in the commitment to the “Access Provision in the Countryside for Disabled People”. “Our Commitment to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” has been amended to reflect the Chatsworth Statement, which is administered by the Council for National Parks and is endorsed by all members of the Corporate Forum for National Parks, of which United Utilities is a member. “Expedition Camping and Backpacking” has new commitments to enforce no camping near reservoirs, feeder streams, or on islands. “Our Woodland Strategy” now recognises the importance of woodland in the sequestration of carbon and in some cases, value for education. It also highlights our commitment to sustainable development and our aim to achieve forestry accreditation. “Our Liaison and Consultation Process” has updated terms of reference.

#### New commitments

Three new papers have been produced in draft format to ensure all aspects of conservation, access and recreation, are represented in equal measure within our Green Portfolio.

These are:

- Conservation commitment by our Tenants, Agents, Contractors and Consultants
- Our commitment to Natural and Built Heritage

- Our commitment to Sport and Recreation on our land
- To provide continuity and to avoid duplication of general information, an introductory sheet will be produced for distribution with each Green Portfolio commitment.**

This introductory sheet will:

- Outline the principle aims of the Green Portfolio
- Reference relevant national legislation, codes of practice and Company policies Provide contact details of the four main Catchment Teams, highlighting specialists in each team
- Provide the reader with an accurate interpretation of the Green Portfolio commitments without reading

#### Comments

Adrian Brown recommended the Green Portfolio be distributed to member groups and be included on the United Utilities website.

Tony Hothersall felt that the liaison and consultations paper was missing references to the community partnerships established by the Company.

Brian Parry suggested that a conference be organised every two years, so that information can be passed to the community.

### 14 Update on River Eden abstraction scheme

This paper was to update members on developments and to seek views on the success, or otherwise, of the consultation process.

The River Eden Abstraction – one of the key outputs from AMP3, to provide a secure and reliable water supply for the Carlisle area.

Since 1999 there has been extensive consultation with the Environment Agency, English Nature and other environmental groups (e.g. Friends of the Lake District, Eden Rivers Trust and River Eden District Fisheries Association) on our proposals to increase the abstraction licence for our River Eden intake, at Cumwhinton, from 27MI/day to 32MI/day.

In view of the River Eden being designated a Special Area for Conservation, under the Habitats Directive, a major planning and environmental study has also been carried out over the past three years in support of the application. These studies form the legal requirement to carry out an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive.

The studies have now been completed and a series of reports have been sent to the Environment Agency and English Nature, to accompany the formal licence application, which we expect to submit at the end of September 2002.

Despite the extensive consultations with environmental groups (especially the fisheries and angling organisations), it is likely that

some objections will still be made to the Environment Agency about our proposals. Objections could also be made directly to the Company. However, we (and our environmental consultants) believe we have fully demonstrated in our reports, that there will be no adverse impacts on the environment from our proposals.

It is hoped that the technical rigor of our arguments and modelling work contained in these reports will result in the licence being granted and the application will not be referred to the Secretary of State to hold a Public Enquiry.

#### Comments

Kath Atkinson was very complimentary to United Utilities on the way the whole consultation process has been handled.

#### 15 AMP4 and XD4

Julie Spinks provided a verbal update on what is, a constantly changing situation.

The Environment Agency has been outlining the key drivers for environmental issues:

- Water Framework Directive
- Nature Conservation
- Bathing Waters
- Sewer Overflows

The Agency do not appear to be talking about conservation, access and recreation, or odours etc..

OFWAT has produced a document setting the guidelines and they appear to be making positive noises about issues such as catchment management. As from 15th October 2002, the Price Review is ongoing and in November 2004, new prices will be announced.

Main consultees during the Review period will be, Water UK (representing the Water Companies), DEFRA and Drinking Water Inspectorate, investors and environmental champions (English Nature etc.).

Capital investment will still be the major driver, but it is expected that licences will be extended from 10 to 25 years.

This is now a major opportunity for United Utilities to influence the Regulator and a draft Business Plan will be produced by August 2003. In support of this, market research has been completed in the NW to see what customers require.

Within United Utilities there is a commitment to support catchment management and the Company is about to organise a NW Stakeholders Conference, to establish feedback.

#### Comments

Eric Harper, speaking now as an outsider, suggested that it is now very clear that the 5 year pricing periods are far too tight and do

need to be longer. The 2010 River Quality Objectives need to be changed and tightened and this will have enormous impact in the NW.

Eric also suggested that the economic viability of our farms will also take considerably longer than 5 years and there is a need to gather information well in advance of regulatory review periods. He called for a more rational approach to environmental improvement and for the Company to make provision to gather information now, so that we are able to have a real and credible influence on the Regulator.

#### 16 Heritage strategy

In presenting this paper, David Crawshaw was seeking members views on the suggested aims within the draft Green Portfolio paper.

The paper represents draft commitments on Natural and Built Heritage and outlines the steps that United Utilities intends to take to progress heritage issues. It is worth noting that there are particular responsibilities on the electricity side of the business as well as the water side. These are encompassed in Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act, which requires companies to draw up a suitable statement after consultation.

There are significant resource difficulties and we do not expect to sort out all the outstanding issues overnight. Our intention is to make steady and visible progress and to provide CARAC with regular reports on our actions.

As with many of the other components of the Green Portfolio, our heritage commitments affirm the need to recognise our obligations and to work with others to fulfil them successfully in order to maximise public enjoyment.

We see our commitments falling into 3 categories:

- Assessment and Recording
- Conservation/Restoration
- Education

#### The Way Forward

We envisage the first step will be establishment of a small steering group, hopefully including outside representation, and to prepare a programme of work which may well take a number of years to complete. An important component of the programme will be to ensure that the Catchment Management Plans, currently being produced, give due weight to heritage issues.

The other high priority action will be to establish a suitable recording and assessment database.

#### Comments

Ian Brodie was concerned about a lack of policy on our built heritage. He also suggested that our natural heritage requires a separate policy.

Adrian Brown suggested that the two National Parks could advise.

### 17 RSPB in Bowland 2002

Peter Wilson, RSPB Bowland Officer, had prepared a written report for CARAC.

During the last twelve months the RSPB/United Utilities partnership has progressed rapidly, including the development of an identity – “The Birds of Bowland” project.

Lucy Barron has been appointed as Community Education Officer, funded by Heritage Lottery money and with office accommodation provided by United Utilities. This has opened up a huge and important area of work in Bowland, which had previously been untouched.

Gary Woodburn has recently been appointed to the team as Bowland Wader Officer. His work will be focused on working with farmers, to encourage more sympathetic land management for breeding wading birds.

Several events have been held, which have highlighted two things – that most people knew very little about the Forest of Bowland and its birds, but more importantly, they were keen to know more.

Fieldwork has picked up again this year following serious disruption last year as a result of the Foot & Mouth outbreak.

In spring, some 200 nest boxes, provided by United Utilities, were installed at locations throughout the Estate, to allow monitoring of Pied Flycatcher and Redstart populations.

Breeding Hen Harriers haven’t been as successful this year as they have in recent years. Six young birds fledged from 2 (of 4) nests, but the Estate still remains important in the National context.

Merlins fledged 19 young from 5 nests.

Peregrines fledged 6 young from 3 (of 7) nests.

The main core of the Estate was surveyed for other key upland songbirds and waders.

#### Comments

Roy Taylor provided an outline of what might be achieved as part of the partnership in the future.

- Emphasis will change in the approach to activities in Bowland
- Feasibility study on making harriers accessible to the public
- Bowland Festival - 14th/15th June 2003 - two days of events
- Training for farmers who want to get more involved in enterprise schemes
- Development of partnership at a higher level to embrace all RSPB/United Utilities activities

### 18 Moors for the future

Dan Tomes presented the paper outlining the Company’s involvement in a major new moorland restoration initiative.

United Utilities will have a key role in this project, which is being led by the Peak District National Park, who have secured £3.5M from the Heritage Lottery Fund, to help restore degraded areas of moorland in the Peak Park.

Some of the targeted areas are on Company owned land, used primarily for gathering of raw water, mainly in Longdendale, but including smaller areas in the Goyt Valley and at Dove Stone. By funding 35% of the restoration costs on these degraded areas, United Utilities will benefit from receipt of funding from the “Moors for the Future” project.

The programme will run for 5 years and internal funding in year 1 has already been approved. Years 2 – 5 will be reviewed in the annual E & C Capital Programme.

In addition to the huge benefits to raw water quality by reducing erosion and suspended solids, the project will deliver improvements to the environmental and conservation value of the catchments.

The project will also have significant positive impact on the biodiversity of the moorlands. Alongside the re-vegetation work, a suite of measures will be implemented to help restore the water table to its natural level. Large areas will be excluded from grazing pressure for up to 10 years.

Another key element of “Moors for the Future”, is to educate and encourage people to use and enjoy the moorlands in a sustainable manner.

A whole new team will be established to deliver the project, including the educational elements.

The project will also provide much needed research into moorland management and its impact on water quality (United Utilities, Severn Trent and Yorkshire Water, are all involved in the project).

#### Comments

Roy Taylor congratulated all the partners involved in the project, it will have significant impact on the National Park.

Tim Mitcham asked about monitoring and how it will be undertaken. (Response – members of the team will be dedicated to monitoring of the project. This will be carried out by a Research Officer and assistant).

It will also pull together other academic information from other sources, to help build up all available information (which will then be available to others).

Chris Dodd asked if there will be any restrictions placed on public access. (Response – NO, infrastructure will be put in place at

strategic locations e.g. stiles on footpaths at fence crossings etc.)

Ian Brodie suggested that fencelines could provide barriers to those who wanted to follow their own chosen routes over the moors.

The general feeling from members was, that this was an interesting paper and that suitable site visits should be arranged to observe progress.

### 19 Site visit reports

Two written site visit reports were presented to members following the visits to High Hullock Howe Farm and to Boulsworth Hill.

#### Comments

Howard Hammersley indicated that the site visits are an important part of the Committee's advisory role to the Company. The visits provide members with opportunities to better understand the way that United Utilities operates, thus allowing for more considered debate on issues, leading to more constructive advice for the Company.

Tim Mitcham congratulated the Company and RSPB in taking the initiative at High Hullock Howe, on what is a super project.

Brian Parry was very enthusiastic in his support for the High Hullock Howe project.

Eric Harper felt that the Company and RSPB should publicise the High Hullock Howe project more widely, we might be surprised at the response and support we get. Eric's wife, who had accompanied him on the site visit, had found the day incredibly interesting and stimulating.



## Membership and attendance 2002

### Member

Association of County Archaeologists  
 British Association for Shooting and Conservation  
 Central Council for Physical Recreation  
 Community Forests  
 Council for the Protection of Rural England  
 County Wildlife Trusts  
 Cumbria County Council  
 Environment Agency  
 Forestry Commission  
 Greater Manchester Metropolitan District Councils  
 Groundwork Trusts  
 Independent Member  
 Independent Member  
 Independent Member  
 Lake District National Park Authority  
 Lancashire County Council  
 Merseyside Metropolitan District Councils  
 NW Federation for Sport, Recreation and Conservation  
 NW Federation for Sport, Recreation and Conservation  
 NW Federation for Sport, Recreation and Conservation  
 Peak District National Park Authority  
 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
 Sport England (NW Region)  
 United Utilities

### Representative

R McNeil (1)  
 Ian Danby (0)  
 F French (2)  
 A Hothersall (3)  
 I Brodie (4)  
 T Mitcham (3)  
 J Collier (4)  
 M James (2)  
 K Jones (0)  
 J Hilton (0)  
 H Rowan (0)  
 K Atkinson (4)  
 E Harper (4)  
 P Atkin (1)  
 P Phizacklea (4)  
 Cllr G Slynn (0)  
 VACANT  
 W R Allen (4)  
 H Hammersley (Chairman) (4)  
 B Parry (4)  
 A Brown (1)  
 R Taylor (3)  
 C Dodd (1)  
 P Entwistle (2)

### Other Attendees

Peak District National Park Authority S Prendergast (2)  
 Environment Agency M Aprahamian (1)

(Figure in brackets show total attendance from 4 possible meetings, which included 2 site meetings)

# Environment and Community highlights

## Our sustainable development strategy

Following the launch of our Sustainable Development Policy in May 2002, each business area within the company has produced a sustainable development plan outlining key objectives, actions and targets. We have examined how we can contribute to meeting the government's and local community's aspirations as set out in regional and national sustainable development strategies, such as the Government's "Better Quality of Life" strategy, and the North West's "Action for Sustainability." The production of the plans has been co-ordinated by the Environment and Community section to ensure consistent, common themes are integrated into each plan and to promote company wide targets. The plans will be reviewed annually and progress against overall implementation of the policy will be reported in the company's annual Corporate Responsibility Report as well as on the website.

## Green portfolio commitments review

2002 saw the comprehensive review of the company's Green Portfolio Commitments.

The Commitments were first published in 2000 to provide a framework of policies relating to all aspects of conservation, access and recreation on company owned land and to ensure compliance with national legislation.

The review took into account new legislative requirements and new internal policy, the CROW Act and the United Utilities Sustainable Development Policy and strategy. The Commitments are endorsed in the strategy and will be reviewed on a regular basis. Consultation with CARAC and other key stakeholders, including the Council for National Parks, ensured that each policy commitment accurately reflected internal company requirements whilst meeting the needs of our key stakeholders.

The review resulted in the addition of 3 new Commitments to the Portfolio, as well as a summary sheet which references generic portfolio legislation, internal policy and contact details. The nine Green Portfolio Commitments are:

- Our Commitment to Freedom of Public Access to Open Land
- Access Provision in the Countryside for Disabled People
- Expedition Camping and Backpacking on United Utilities Land
- Conservation Commitment by our Tenants, Agents, Contractors and Consultants
- Our Commitment to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Our Liaison and Consultation Process
- Our Commitments on Natural and Built Heritage
- Our Commitment to Sports and Recreation
- Our Woodland Strategy

## Heritage

The profile of both natural and built heritage was raised during 2002. The addition of a Green Portfolio Commitment specific to heritage demonstrates senior endorsement and company policy. A Heritage Group has been established, which includes members of CARAC, to advise our Environment Team on how to progress our heritage policy. A heritage strategy is currently under development, which will include a detailed action plan and procedures for identifying, ranking, and recording heritage, and ensuring appropriate standards of maintenance. This will be in place for the end of 2003.

## Capital programme 2002/2003

Work on the capital programme has continued apace throughout the year with £406k spent on woodland initiatives, £187k spent on access and recreation, £987k spent on our farms and £106k spent on biodiversity and conservation. Hareden Bridge, Information centres, Burnley Millennium Forest and Moors for the Future are all examples cited in this report of capital schemes undertaken in 2002/2003.

## Hareden Bridge

The bridge provides a public right of way onto Hareden Fell, as well as access to a farm and cottages. The bridge was damaged by severe floods in 2001 and needed major structural strengthening, which involved the relaying of some foundations. The road leading up to the bridge also required renovation work. The costs of this project totalled £50k.

## Moors for the future project

We have a key role in a major new initiative being led by the Peak District National Park. The PDNP has secured £3.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to help restore degraded areas of moorland in the Peak Park.

The project will have a significant positive impact on the biodiversity of the moorlands. Restoration techniques will be used to restore severely degraded areas of moorland which are at present ecological deserts. Another key element of the Moors for the Future programme is to help to educate and encourage people to use and enjoy the moorlands in a sustainable manner.

Some of these areas are on company owned land and are used primarily as raw water catchments, mainly on Longdendale but

including some smaller areas in the Goyt Valley and Dove Stone. By funding around 35% of the restoration costs on these degraded areas, we will benefit from receiving the rest of the funding from the Moors for the Future programme.

### **Burnley Millennium Forest**

Work was completed in 2002 on the Burnley Millennium Forest, with access points designed to ensure access for all. Problems with 4 wheel drive vehicles and motor bikes have resulted in more access points with padlocks and greater observation of the main access routes by our employees. Since the project began over 250,000 trees have been planted at Dunnockshaw, which is the part of the forest on company owned land contained within the forest.

### **Disability access improvement**

As part of our Green Portfolio Commitment for the access provision in the countryside for disabled people, thirty new kissing gates were installed in the Anglezarke, Rivington and Belmont areas. This work formed part of our on-going programme for moving towards compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and progressively removes difficult step-over and ladder stiles throughout the area.

### **Castle Rock access improvements**

Castle Rock is one of the premier rock climbing venues in Britain, and was the subject of one of our access improvement projects last year. The exit route from the crag had become severely eroded over time. However, with part funding from the British Mountaineering Council, we carried out a £20k project of pitching and revetment work to stabilise the path. The inspection, carried out in conjunction with the National Park Mountain Liaison group was very encouraging - only minor work is needed to repair rock revetments and some clearance of scrub from footpaths.

### **Commonwealth Games**

It has been generally acknowledged on every front that the Games were an immense success and the Rivington Estate was both an excellent site for the cycling events and an excellent backdrop shown off to great advantage by the BBC. Despite the vast numbers of people (highest ever attendance at a mountain-bike event) there was very little damage resulting from c50,000 people lining the route. The subsequent litter clearance by M2002 and the minor reinstatement works have left the area almost unmarked.

We have put out a free leaflet showing all definitive and concessionary cycling routes on bridleways. The leaflet contains a

request for riders not to seek or try to use the M2002 route because it is partly on farmland and in the process of restoration.

### **Ranger and information services**

The year has seen agreed changes to the numbers and distribution of Countryside Rangers across Central and Southern catchments, implemented with a view to improving catchment monitoring and visitor/recreation management. The Company's West Pennine Moors Countryside Volunteers were disbanded at the end of 2002, having run for over 20 years. They have been replaced with a small number of part-time positions to give more emphatic control in areas of high public usage, especially at week-ends at places like Rivington and Jumbles. The changes were supported by our West Pennine Moors partners – Bolton, Blackburn, Chorley and Lancashire.

Other changes, also supported by our partners, have involved the West Pennine Moors Information Centres where we intend to convert three of the four centres to dual operation with the addition of commercial cafe leases. This step has been taken to upgrade information provision and expose more visitors to our messages, while providing refreshment facilities much in demand by those visitors. Three part-time staff have been displaced by the changes and took either voluntary severance or redeployment. Two people remain in post to run the information centre at Rivington, our most heavily-visited site.

### **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:**

#### **Open access update**

We are fully committed, and always have been, to open access to the public on our land. This approach is defined in our Green Portfolio Commitments on access for all. However we have lodged 66 appeals against what we believe is mistaken registration of in-by-land and other land that is not 'mountain, moor or heath' within our catchments in South, Central and Bowland Areas. These restrictions apply to a small proportion of our land where access could have negative impact on either water quality or farming, or operational activity. Meanwhile, in a parallel process, comments have been forwarded to the Countryside Agency on their published draft consultation map for Open Access land in the Lake District. The appeal process for the Lake District will probably begin in 2004.

The outcome of the appeal process will decide if areas of catchment land which are currently proposed to be open access land will appear as such in the final Open Access Maps. If they do

appear on these maps then the public will be able to access the land for recreational walking at any time. The original principles of open access were to identify areas of open country which could be used by the public for walking. What has actually appeared on the draft and proposal maps are some considerable areas of land which are in-by farmland on water catchment, woodlands and in some instances operational sites. It is important that these errors are identified and appealed against before they are adopted on the final plans.

### **Sustainable upland farming**

The Curry Report on the Future of Farming and Food recommends a shift towards rewarding farmers for environmental improvement and a move away from supporting food production. As a result of this report we have reviewed our approach to the management of our upland catchments to try to move in a more sustainable direction. Our aim is to protect water quality and improve biodiversity, but also to secure a viable income for our tenant farmers. This is no easy task, but a number of initiatives are now in place which will help to progress this objective.

We have an aspiration to develop our catchments as models of best practice in sustainable upland farming and encourage opportunities in diversification. A good example of this is at Dale Foot Farm on our Haweswater estate, where Lakeland Gold bracken composting has become the principal business of the tenant farmer.

We are having detailed discussions with the RSPB as to how we could extend the very successful work that has been done at High Hullockhowe on our Haweswater catchment. Hopefully, a similar approach can be developed at Bowland, and further south, as part of a regional partnership with RSPB. We are preparing a project along these lines as part of our AMP4 submission to OFWAT.

We will need to secure the active involvement of our tenant farmers, and the Northern Area Team made a very promising start to this process by organising a tenants supper at Thirlmere. We are also actively participating in the newly formed NW Rural Affairs Forum set up by Government Office NW.

### **Renewable energy**

In March 2002, we launched a major partnership, called Renewables Northwest with the Northwest Development Agency to promote the development and use of renewable energy. Over 400 delegates attended a major conference in Manchester, at which key speakers including Energy Minister Brian Wilson.

We have continued our programme of actively pursuing and developing renewable energy sources. We have applied to develop wind farms at a number of sites throughout the country including Scout Moor in Rochdale and White Hill in Clowbridge. We recognise that there is a need to strike a balance between promoting green energy and protecting our landscape and local environment.

### **Environmental awards**

The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and encourages good standards for parks and green spaces. It is independently run with backing from DEFRA, the Countryside Agency and English Nature. For 2002/2003 the Green Flag Award was presented to Strinesdale, near Oldham. The site previously contained two reservoirs, however the River Medlock was returned to the valley floor in the 1990's. The new valley sides are made to appear natural and trees have been planted. It is understood that this is the first time this award has been granted to a private company. The judges at the time of their visit were tremendously impressed by the commitment to the local community.

We were also awarded a Green Apple Gold award for the work we carried out at Bowland related to the Bowland Environmental Strategy (BEST) Programme. This has now reached completion and the Project Co-ordinators report has been submitted to DEFRA. Interpretation Boards explaining the elements of the scheme have been distributed throughout the estate for information to members of the public and other visitors to the area. The scheme has been hailed as a great success for our Bowland Estate and the rural economy. Our estate infrastructure has benefited considerably from the new farm building programme, which allows stock to be handled and over-wintered indoors. Large areas of eroded moorland have been fenced and re-seeded, walling repaired, stock numbers reduced, all of which have benefited water quality on the estate.

# Environment and Community capital investment programme 2002-2003

This capital investment programme is the special allocation from United Utilities' capital budget to the Environment and Community Section. This does not represent the Company's total spend on these activities as considerable expenditure on conservation and landscaping is included in the major capital programme.

## North

Project Title	Gross total £
Benn forest road	9000
Tailbert Farm, culverting stream	6000
Thirlspot Farm, ESA barn restoration (over 3 years)	37000
Haweswater Valley, replace woodland walls/fences	13000
Haweswater, replace northern woodland fences	10000
BTCV, footpath/drystone wall rebuilds	10000
Thirlmere, fencing	21000
Fisher Tarn, woodland road	5000
Thirlmere, upgrading roads	22000
Tailbert Farm, ESA barn restoration (over 3 years)	65000

## Bowland

Project Title	Gross total £
Objective 5b	29000
Sheep vaccinations 5b	22000
Sheep buildings 5b	30000
Heather burning 5b	14000
Project management fees 5b	5000
Gathering costs 5b	4000
Vegetation survey 5b	3000
Moorland road	13000
Redundant barns, safety work	6000
Brennand Farm, anti-pollution work	3000
Brennand Farm, sheep pens	2000
Brennand Farm, pen roofs	2000
Higher Clough Farmhouse	48000
Outbarns, safety and fencing	2000
Whitendale Farm, midden	5000
Dean Clough, woodland fence	5000
Hareden Farm, bridge	57000
Langden Valley, upland access roads	10000
Hareden Valley, upland access roads	10000
Croasdale Farm, renovate old sheepfold	6000
Croasdale Farm, new bridge	7000
Catlow Farm, water supply	30000
Bowland Estate, replacement of walls/fences	7000
Hareden Farm, replace septic tank	13000
Sykes Farmhouse, improvement project	11000
Shuttleworth Pasture Farm, roof over midden	10000
Catlow, Saddle End, Hareden, rendering	7000

## Central

Project Title	Gross total £
Burnley Millenium Woodland	256000
Clowbridge, toilets	11000
Manor House Farm, sheep shed	6000
Remedial electrical work	12000
Lower Roddlesworth Farm	13000
Higher Knoll Farm, sheep shed	24000
Higher Knoll Farm, track upgrade	10000
Barons Fold Farm, midden	78000
Rivington, fencing	8000
Rivington, office refurbishment	21000
Estate management access routes	10000
West Pennines, walls, fences, access	39000
East Pennines, walls, fences, access	19000
Erosion control, all estates	78000
Bufs Farm, foul/dirty water remedial work	8000
Cowm Reservoir, watersport development	4000
Bufs Farm, structural work	14000
Rivington, crypto fencing Phase 2	15000
Cunliffe Farm, install midden drainage	12000
Home Farm, surface water remedial works	7000
Lever Park, heritage project officer	15000
West Pennine Moors, information centres	65000
Worsthorne Moor, SSSI protection work	7000

## Southern

Project Title	Gross total £
Blackshaw Farm	40000
New footpath creation BF	3000
Woodhead Bridges, northern horse route	10000
Lamaload, outbarn	18000
Crowden Moor, eastern fencing	30000
Macclesfield Forest, fence and wall renewal	5000
Macclesfield Forest, replace access road	12000
Didsbury, renew forest road	12000
Goyt, Piethorne, Castleshaw, fence renewal	15000
Watergrove, rebuild gabions	5000
Strinesdale, pond construction	3000
Wood Farm, Castleshaw	8000
Arnfield, gamekeepers cottage	5000
Woodcote Farm, Altrincham	6000
Goyt, access improvements	4000
Stalybridge Country Park, information boards	3000
Wood Farm, rewire farmhouse and buildings	11000
Hollingworth Hall Farm, re-roof	9000
Kitcliffe, bund between water and sheep pens	8000
Wood Farm, bund in stock collecting area	9000
Longdendale Trail, storm damage rebuilds	7000
Trentabank, water supply refurbishment	5000
Moors for the Future	5000
Moors for the Future	4000
Moors for the Future	79000
<b>Total gross spend</b>	<b>1,696,000</b>

# Appendix

Our Sustainable Development Policy was launched in May 2002 and outlines the company's approach towards achieving sustainability throughout the whole of the business. The Policy contains a specific commitment towards managing conservation, access, recreation and heritage issues, which is highlighted in the full policy statement below.

## United Utilities Sustainable Development Policy

### Introduction

We are a company supplying water, wastewater and electricity distribution services, as well as providing asset and customer-management services for other companies. We also provide renewable energy and business telecommunications. Our operations are mainly based in the United Kingdom, but we also have activities in countries all around the world. This policy applies across all of the company.

### Our principles

We recognise and support the need for sustainable development. By this we mean long-lasting development that protects and enhances the environment, conserves natural resources, maintains strong economic growth and supports the communities we serve. We aim to include principles of sustainable development into our business practices and consider the long-term effects of our decisions.

We will work closely with the communities we serve and all our internal and external stakeholders to develop socially and environmentally responsible policies and practices. This policy supports our general principles of social responsibility and our company values. We will aim to encourage government policy and regulation that allows us to make progress towards sustainability.

Adopting this policy of sustainable development will help to maintain our financial stability. We will contribute to local and national economies and provide services worldwide to improve the quality of life. We will work to continually improve our performance by aiming towards best practice in providing effective services. Through these services, we aim to make life better - balancing the needs of communities, the environment and the economy without reducing their quality.

We will do the following:

- Operate in a way that safeguards public health, aims to use energy and resources sustainably, reduces waste and avoids nuisance.

- Prevent pollution and meet all relevant legal obligations.
- Assess and manage the environmental risks and effects (including emergencies) associated with our operations by developing and maintaining procedures and plans and putting them into practice effectively throughout the company.
- Tell stakeholders about the issues associated with our products and services, find out and take account of stakeholders' opinions, and report on our performance in relation to sustainable development.
- Support a programme of environmental and safety education for local communities.
- Develop and promote the environmental and economic health of the regions we operate in by working in partnership with relevant organisations and local communities.
- Make sure we design and deliver our services in a way that helps reduce the exclusion of particular groups of people.
- **Fulfil our obligations for responsibly managing our land, balancing access, recreation and conserving natural and built heritage.**
- Include the principles of this policy in our purchasing policy and in our choice of business partners and suppliers of goods and services.
- Make sure that the development of new services and technologies supports the principles of sustainable development.

The end of 2002 saw the production of sustainable development plans for each area of the business. These plans were designed to ensure the main Policy principles are achieved. The Service Delivery Plan identified the programme of work specific to conservation, access, recreation and heritage issues on our land. The Green Portfolio Commitments review was a specific action of the Plan and was carried out in 2002. The review considered new legislative requirements along with ensuring new policy requirements were incorporated into respective Commitments. The original Green Portfolio was produced in 2000 and included 7 commitments. The review merged Our Commitment on Public Access to our Forest of Bowland Estate with Our Commitment to Freedom of Public Access to Open Land. It also introduced three new commitments which are highlighted below.

- Our Commitment to Freedom of Public Access to Open Land
- Access Provision in the Countryside for Disabled People
- Expedition Camping and Backpacking on United Utilities Land
- Conservation Commitment by our Tenants, Agents, Contractors and Consultants

- Our Commitment to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Our Woodland Strategy
- Our Liaison and Consultation Process\*
- Our Commitments on Natural and Built Heritage\*
- Our Commitment to Sports and Recreation\*

\*Indicates new Commitment

### Facts and figures

#### Land

Size of company landholding - 59,000 ha

Our land covers the following:

3 national parks accounting for - 26,337 ha

9 Special Protection Areas (SPA) accounting for - 15,894 ha

19 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) accounting for - 12,007 ha

#### Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Number of SSSIs on company owned land - 54

Hectares of company land covered by SSSIs - 17,376 ha

These include:

Armbboth Fell 817.07ha

Bowland Fell 5778.9ha

South Pennine Moor 604.643ha

The Dark Peak 5766.4ha

#### Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Our land falls within 4 AsONB covering 11,427ha



### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)**

There are 33 SAMs located on company owned land.

Bowl barrow east of Brown Hills Beck  
Pike Stones chambered long cairn  
Round cairn on Noon Hill  
Round cairn on Winter Hill  
Round Loaf bowl barrow on Anglezarke Moor  
Buck Park deerpond  
Castle Crag slight univallate hillfort  
Enclosure containing four clearance cairns and a stone bank west of Four Stones Hill  
Hallsteads Iron Age camp  
Medieval dyke system and shieling west of Shap Abbey  
Ring cairn east of Threepow Raise  
Romano-British farmstead 800m north-east of High House  
Romano-British farmstead at Haweswater  
Round barrows at Smithy Beck  
Round cairn 490m ENE of Rough Hill Tarn  
Round cairn 680m ENE of Dalefoot  
Round cairn north of Four Stones Hill  
Round cairn on High Raise  
Round cairn on White Raise  
Round cairn west of enclosure on Four Stones Hill  
Round cairn west of White Raise  
Selside Pike round cairn  
Settlement SW of Naddle Bridge  
Shoulthwaite Gill hillfort, Thirlmere  
Stone bridge, Cawdale Beck  
Towtop Kirk early Christian enclosure  
Two standing stones north-west of Four Stones Hill  
Bowl barrow on Toot Hill  
Castleshaw Roman forts, 250m west of Castle Shaw Farm  
Deerpond on Toot Hill  
Part of Goyt's Moss colliery, centered 220m south west of Derbyshire Bridge  
Section of an early medieval boundary ditch known as the Nico Ditch on Denton golf course 320m south west of Lodge Farm

### **Recreational sites**

#### **Nature reserves**

We have 20 nature reserves on company owned land, 3 of which are managed in-house.

- Swallows Wood, Longdendale
- Hope Carr, Leigh
- Davyhulme Millennium Nature Reserve, Trafford

#### **Catchment plans**

The ILUMPS are in the process of being superseded by company catchment plans. Catchment plans are being produced on a rolling programme with the most critical catchment land receiving the first plans. 154 catchment plans will be completed by March 2005. During 2002/2003 33 plans were successfully completed.

#### **Access areas**

The following formally agreed access areas have been in existence for many years:

Saddle Fell – Bowland  
Worsthorne Moor – Burnley  
Anglezarke/Rivington – West Pennine Moors  
Belmont – West Pennine Moors  
Spring Mill/Cowm – Rochdale/Rossendale  
Withnell Moor – West Pennine Moors  
Ashway Gap and Chew – Dove Stone  
Arnfield Moor – Longdendale  
Crowden Moor – Longdendale  
Salters Brook – Longdendale  
Peak Naze Moor – Longdendale  
Pikenaze Moor – Longdendale





Dawson House, Great Sankey  
Warrington WA5 3LW  
[www.unitedutilities.com](http://www.unitedutilities.com)