

From source to tap

Our Water Resources Management Plan
summary guide to keep the North West flowing

Put the kettle on, and let's talk about water...

It's something you don't always think about. But every day, you turn on the tap and out flows clear, high quality drinking water.

But your morning brew or shower doesn't happen by accident. It relies on a vast network of reservoirs, underground water sources, treatment works and pipes that bring water to you whenever you need it.

To make sure there's always enough water available for nearly seven million customers, we have to do some careful thinking and plan for the future.

This document summarises our detailed thinking. It takes a look at likely demand patterns over the coming years, and our proposals for meeting the water needs of the North West over the period from 2020 to 2045. And in some areas we've even been looking right up to the 2080's.

If you want to delve deeper, please do read the full, more technical report on our website. We're keen to hear your views on our draft 'Water Resources Management Plan', which is explained in this shorter document.

Find out how you can let us know what you think at the end of this document.

DID YOU KNOW?
We supply water to
3 million households
and **200,000 businesses**

Getting to know your H₂O

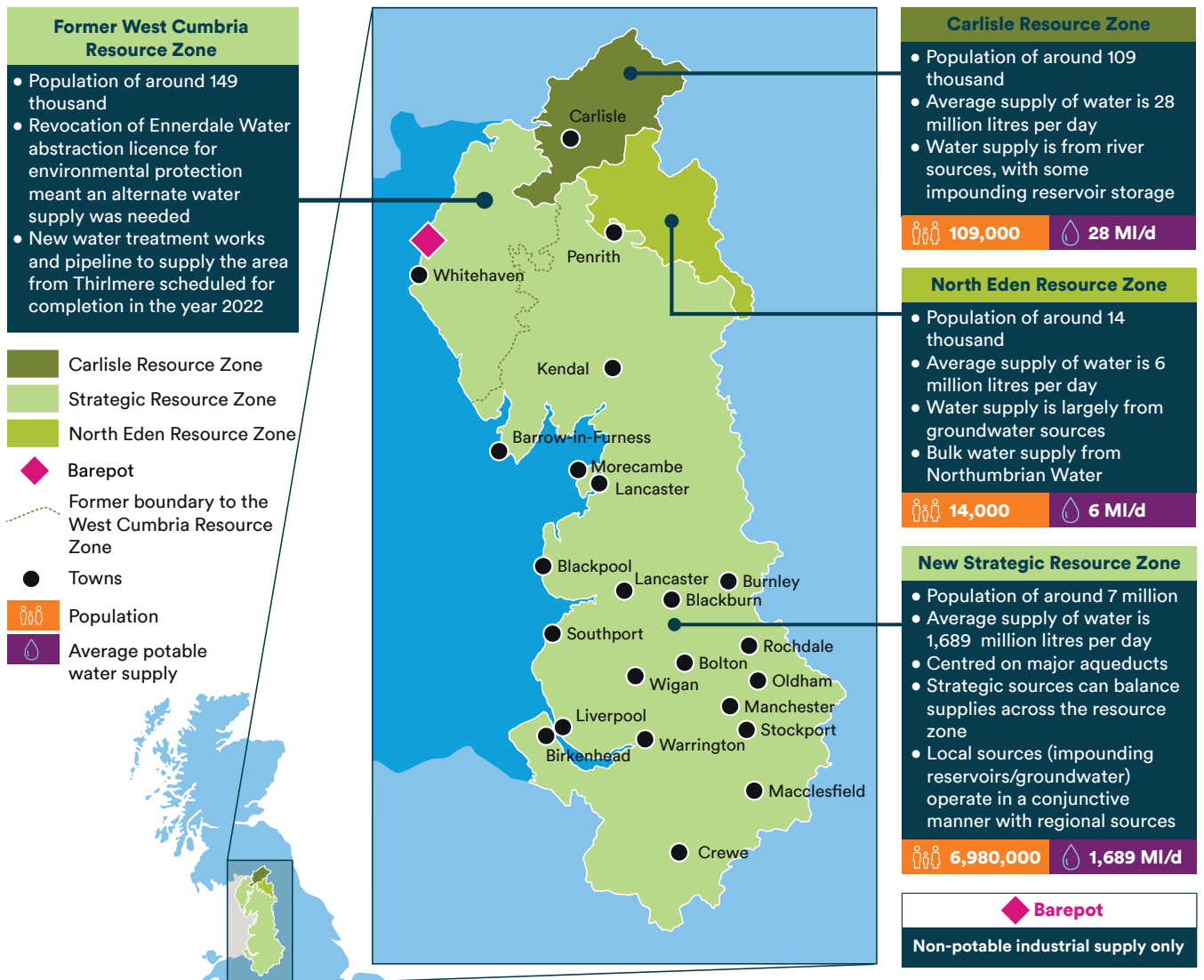
If you live in Manchester or Lancashire, you might be surprised to learn that the cup of tea you're drinking is probably made with water from the Lake District. If you're in Merseyside or Cheshire, chances are your brew began life in North Wales.

Over 50 per cent of the region's water comes from the vast Cumbrian reservoirs of Haweswater and Thirlmere, or from Lake Vyrnwy and the River Dee in Wales. The water travels through an extensive network of pipes known as large diameter trunk mains and water pipes as well as via huge, gravity-fed aqueducts bringing water from Cumbria. The geographical area that relies on these water sources is home to 7.1 million people.

In our 2015 Water Resources Management Plan we identified that West Cumbria faced a significant water shortfall in the coming years. We put plans in place to build a new water treatment works and a pipeline between Thirlmere reservoir and West Cumbria. Once finished by 2022, West Cumbria will be in one of the UK's largest water resource zones.

Merging these resource zones together, it is now known as the 'Strategic Resource Zone.' This means that if you live in this area, your water can come from a wide variety of sources. There are also three smaller 'resource zones' in the north of our region, which get their water from sources closer to home. (Please don't 'zone' out at this point! The information will come in handy later on, we promise!)

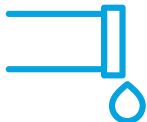
Below is a useful map to show the zones and where the water for each of these zones comes from.



Predicting future demand

Even though the North West's population is growing, the amount of water we forecast to need to take from reservoirs and rivers is actually reducing.

This is good news – as reduced demand means that we shouldn't have to develop a large number of new water sources.



Our forecast for the amount of water we need to take is going down for a number of reasons. A lot of this is due to our efforts to turn the tide on leakage. By replacing old metal water pipes with modern plastic ones, locating and fixing our underground leaks and controlling water pressure in the network, we've significantly reduced the amount of water that drips away into the ground, by more than half since 1992.



Education programmes to promote water efficiency are also playing a part, as is our promotion of the installation of free water meters, which allows customers to manage their water use more carefully. You can read more about whether a water meter could be right for you at:

unitedutilities.com/services/all-about-water-meters/is-a-meter-right-for-me



As a customer, you can play your part – after all, saving water is not only good for the planet, it can be good for your bank balance too; always a help in these tough economic times. You can find out more about how you can save water, and save money, by visiting our website:

unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/save-money-water/water-saving-tips



As a consequence, we expect total demand for water from homes and businesses in the North West to reduce by just under 3% between 2020-2045, even though the region's population is predicted to increase from 7.4 million to 8.3 million.

However, there is always uncertainty in future forecasts, for instance around future economic or population growth. We account for this with a target headroom (which is a calculated allowance for uncertainties) and by using different scenarios to test our plan. These trends are tracked as part of our Water Resources Management Plan annual review process.

DID YOU KNOW?

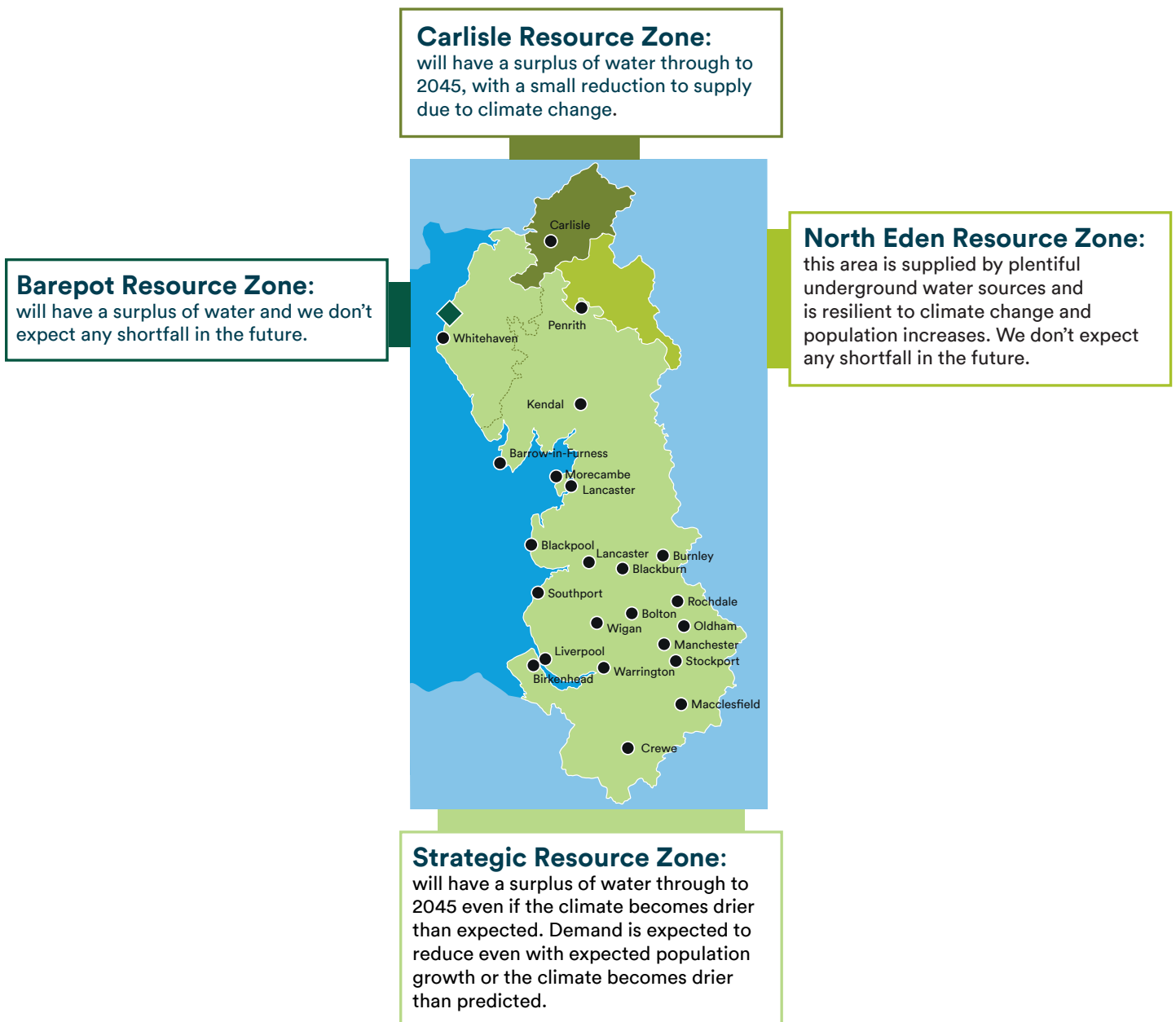


We use sophisticated modelling techniques to work out how much water is available in each resource zone and predict future demand to keep taps flowing

Predicting future demand (continued)

Looking at it from a 'resource zone' perspective, our region will have more than enough water right through to 2045. This means we can continue to ensure we provide a better service for our customers and improve the environment.

Here's quick overview of what's in store for the North West's four 'resource zones' between now and 2045:



DID YOU KNOW?



In 1993, demand for water in our region was 2,500 million litres per day. By 2045, we expect this to have fallen to 1,700 million litres per day

Our plans to keep the North West flowing

The outlook is a positive one for the North West. We expect to have enough water to meet the needs of our growing population until 2045.

That's not to say there may never be another hosepipe ban, but we expect this type of restriction to be few and far between (no more than once in every 20 years, on average).

However, we have taken the opportunity to consider a number of strategic choices to make sure that whilst the outlook is a positive one, we continue to protect and where possible, benefit customers and the environment even more. The choices we're proposing are:

- Continue to promote how customers can save money and help save water through our water efficiency campaign and water meter promotion;
- An enhanced programme of leakage reduction;
- Reduce the number of times we implement drought permits and orders when we need to take more water from the environment during a drought;
- Continue to provide resilience to hazards other than drought e.g. major water pipe burst;
- National water trading - continue to explore opportunities to sell water to other parts of the country, whilst ensuring we protect customers and the environment.

More information on what we're proposing for each strategic choice and how we balance each one out can be found in our draft Water Resources Management Plan at unitedutilities.com/wrpmconsultation



So how do I have my say?

We'd love to hear your views on our Water Resources Management Plan.

If you would like to comment on any aspect of our Water Resources Management Plan, you should look at our full draft plan which can be found on our website at: unitedutilities.com/wrmpconsultation

There you can find details of how you can have your say.



What happens next?

This document is an outline version of our full draft Water Resources Management Plan, which is now available for public consultation on our website unitedutilities.com/wrmpconsultation

Your feedback on our draft plan goes to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and is shared with us.

Once we've received all of the comments from our customers and stakeholders, we'll take the feedback on board. We'll publish a response to all comments and provide an updated Water Resources Management Plan on our website in summer 2018.



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