Human rights policy

UNITED UTILITIES POLICY STATEMENT | NOVEMBER 2026

Our purpose is to provide great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West.

At United Utilities, respect for human rights is fundamental to how we operate. As the provider of essential water and wastewater services to eight million people across the North West of England, we recognise that our decisions, operations and business relationships can affect our customers, communities and colleagues throughout our value chain. Respect for human rights is inseparable from our purpose, values and commitment to delivering services responsibly and sustainably. This human rights policy sets out our commitment to conducting business in a way that respects the dignity, wellbeing and rights of all people affected by our activities.

We support internationally recognised human rights standards, including the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the five commitments set out in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.[1] These principles guide our approach to identifying, preventing, mitigating and addressing adverse human rights impacts. Responsibility for implementing our human rights commitments is shared across the organisation, with oversight provided through our governance and assurance arrangements.

We will:

- Understand and manage potential and actual human rights impacts arising from our operations, supply chain, investment decisions and business relationships.
- Embed respect for human rights across the business, reflecting evolving stakeholder expectations, emerging risks and international best practice.
- Provide a safe, inclusive and respectful workplace where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Value equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion to help protect and uphold human rights.
- Support employee wellbeing and development, and respect the rights of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Expect suppliers, contractors and business partners to uphold standards consistent with our human rights commitments.
- Deliver services fairly and responsibly, with particular regard for customers in vulnerable circumstances.
- Engage openly with stakeholders and communities affected by our activities and seek to understand and address concerns relating to our operations and investments.
- Review our approach regularly and formally review this policy every three years.

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We will deliver this by:

- Observing legal and regulatory requirements to protect human rights.
- Embedding human rights considerations within our governance, risk management and decision-making processes.
- Identifying, assessing and monitoring our most salient[2] human rights risks and impacts.
- Taking action to prevent, mitigate or address identified risks.
- Maintaining and implementing policies that support our human rights commitments, including those relating to modern slavery, risk management, data protection and privacy, employment, health, safety and wellbeing.
- Investing in the wellbeing, development and engagement of our employees, creating an environment where people feel valued, supported and able to thrive.
- Integrating human rights expectations into our procurement and supplier assurance processes and encouraging continuous improvement throughout our value chain.
- Working with suppliers, contractors and partners to promote fair working conditions, safe workplaces and ethical business practices, and to identify and address risks including modern slavery and labour exploitation.
- Providing effective channels for employees, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders to raise concerns without fear of retribution.
- Investigating concerns and taking appropriate corrective action where our operations or relationships have caused or contributed to adverse human rights impacts.
- Reporting transparently on our human rights performance and progress.

Louise Beardmore
Chief Executive

[1] The five commitments include: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of forced or compulsory labour; the abolition of child labour; the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and a safe and healthy working environment.

[2] We have identified several human rights priorities that are particularly relevant to our business and help shape our efforts to protect and promote human rights. These include: health, safety and wellbeing; modern slavery, forced labour and human trafficking; fair pay and decent working conditions; diversity, equity, inclusion and non-discrimination; prevention of bullying, harassment and victimisation; freedom of association and collective bargaining; working hours and worker welfare; community health, safety and resilience; access to essential water and wastewater services; land use, community engagement and environmental impacts; and privacy, data protection and responsible use of information.

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