



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited
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Telephone: 01925 237000

unitedutilities.com

Dear Owner/Occupier,

We're getting in touch with you as someone whose premises uses a septic tank to manage wastewater and to raise awareness of our first time sewerage scheme. This means that you could apply to connect your premises to the public sewer and the sewerage will then be managed by United Utilities.

Pilot scheme for first time sewerage now launched in your area

United Utilities is committed to playing our part in doing more to continue to protect the water quality of Windermere. Over the next five years, we're investing £200 million across the catchment to significantly reduce spills from six storm overflows and to further improve the treatment standards at nine of the sites around the lake.

There are also 89 businesses and approximately 1,800 private household septic tanks which discharge into the lake and can ultimately influence its water quality. Combined, the wastewater from those septic tanks and package treatment plants is almost equivalent to the volume of a treatment works like Ambleside.

We are therefore working to increase awareness of our first time sewerage process, which could remove the need for some of those private septic tanks and mean more properties are directly connected into a public sewer pipe.

We are conducting a pilot scheme to identify the need and appetite for public sewerage in three areas around the Windermere catchment:

- Skelwith Bridge
- Ambleside
- Tower Wood area of Windermere

You could be eligible

We are writing to you as your premises is inside one of these pilot areas and you can register your interest in applying for first time sewerage if the following criteria is met:

- The application is for a premises already in existence and which uses a private wastewater system (such as a septic tank, for example) and on which there are buildings used for living accommodation
- The drains or sewers used for domestic sewerage purposes (such as toilet flushing) do not currently, either directly or through an intermediate drain or sewer, connect with a public sewer
- The effect of the private wastewater system being used is causing, or likely to cause, an adverse effect to the local environment, such as a local watercourse
- The environment or amenity problem cannot be more appropriately resolved by improved maintenance or operation of the existing septic systems

If you think these criteria may apply to your drainage system, please head to our website where you can complete the expression of interest form. **The deadline for submitting your expression of interest is 16th May 2025.**

Come along and see us

Our FAQs are included in this letter for all of the essential information that you will need, however, if you would like to discuss this with us or want to find out more about first time sewerage, we will also be holding a drop-in session:

22nd April at the Windermere Information Centre (8 Crescent Road, LA23 1EA), 9-30am to 3-30pm.

We would love to see you there, so please pop down.

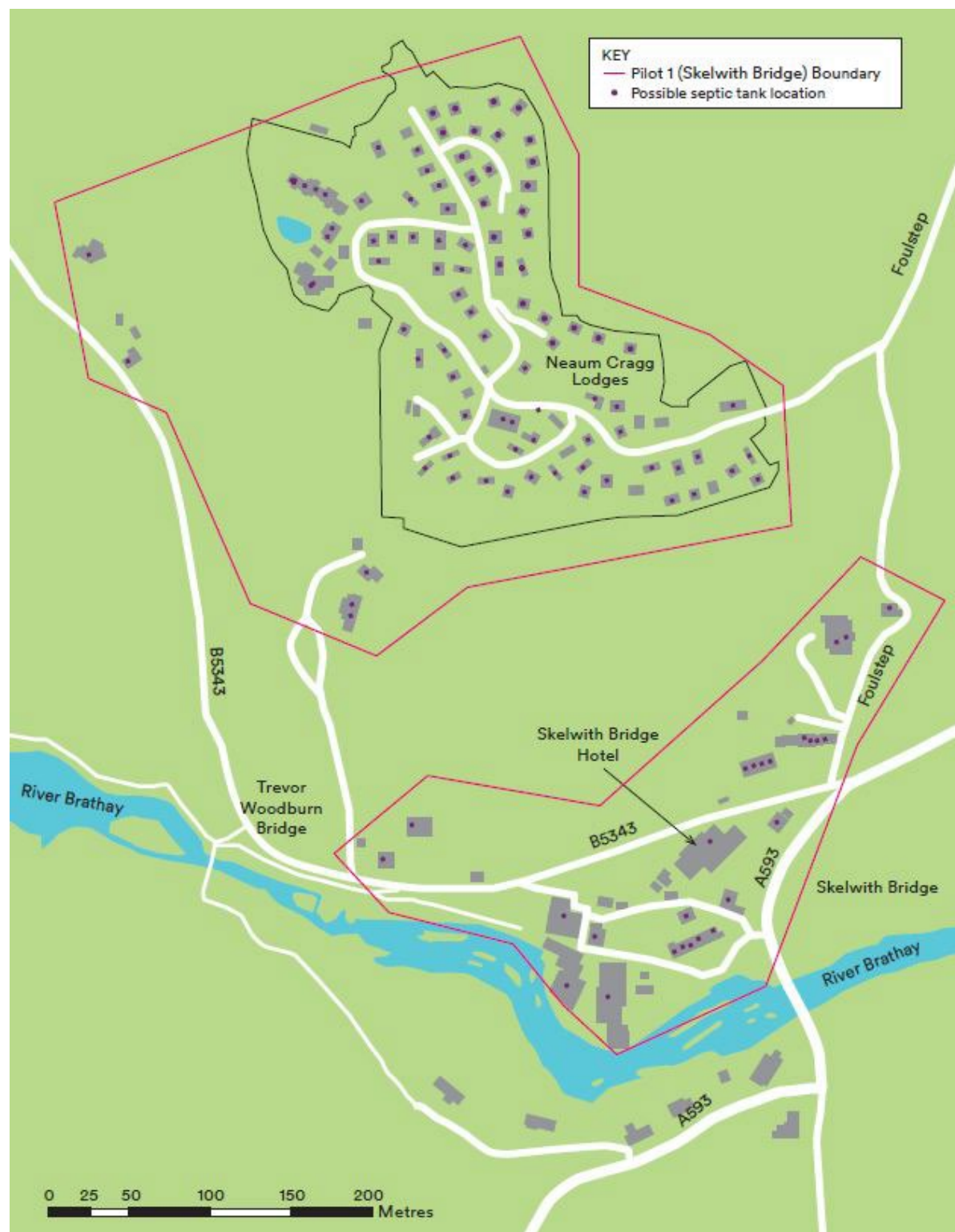
You can also contact us via email at fts@uuplc.co.uk and we will get back to you.

Yours sincerely

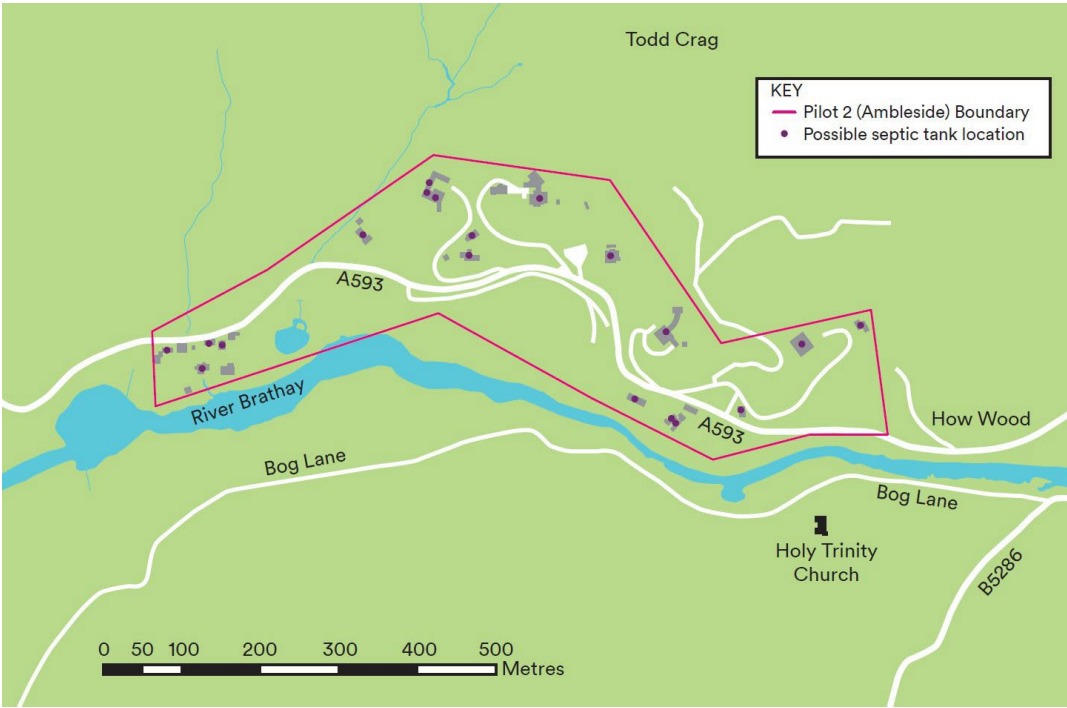
United Utilities Wastewater Team

Pilot scheme areas

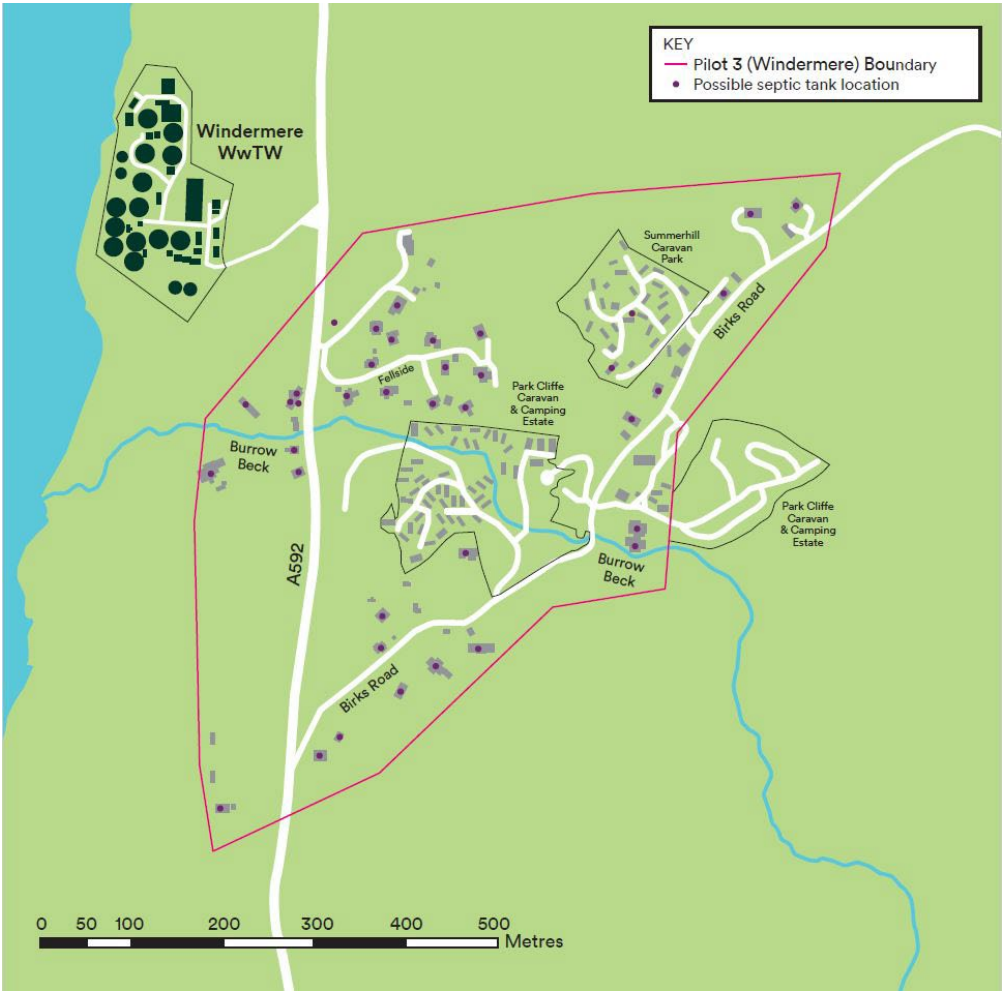
Skelwith Bridge



Ambleside



Tower Wood - Windermere



FAQs

Why are you undertaking this pilot scheme?

Windermere is an iconic waterbody and United Utilities is working in partnership with other organisations to help protect its water quality well into the future. We're investing £200m over the next five years which will improve treatment standards at nine of our wastewater treatment works across the Windermere catchment and significantly reduce spills from the six storm overflows. There are around 89 businesses and approximately 1,800 private septic tanks which discharge into the lake and can also ultimately influence its water quality and the amount of nutrients in the water. We are therefore working to increase awareness of the first time sewerage process, understand community appetite for public sewer provision and whether there are any barriers within the existing process which might restrict applications or take-up.

The areas chosen for the pilot are those where there are known to be a high number of private septic tanks.

What buildings qualify?

Domestic dwellings designed or occupied as living accommodation, but not sheds, garages, stables or other outbuildings.

For industrial/commercial buildings (shops, factories, public houses, hotels etc.) only domestic wastewater from activities such as from flushing toilets and washing etc is eligible. Other commercial activities may need a separate trade consent.

What is an environment or amenity problem?

This is something which will impact the water quality of the local watercourse, for example if the private septic tank drains into somewhere or causes problems such as smells, nuisance or public health issues.

What will you do once you've received my expression of interest?

We will collate all expressions of interest from within the pilot scheme areas and undertake an initial screening exercise to understand whether they meet the eligibility criteria.

If these conditions are met, we will contact residents again to discuss a community-scale application and progress to a detailed engineering technical assessment to determine the options, costs and benefits in line with government guidelines. As part of this assessment, we will visit the wider area to look at their current drainage arrangements and gain information of the type of systems and maintenance regimes. We will also liaise with the Environment Agency and Local Authority.

When assessing, we will need to consider whether the problem with the sewerage system could be rectified more cost-effectively by repair or proper maintenance of the existing systems. We will only be responsible for providing a public sewer if our assessment confirms the existing drainage is giving or is likely to give rise to adverse effects to the environment or amenity and identifies that a public sewer is the most cost effective and practical way to provide satisfactory drainage.

The timeline for this pilot scheme is:

- 1st April: Expression of interest window opens
- 22nd April: Drop in event at Windermere Information Centre
- 16th May: Expression of interest window closes
- 19th May: Assessment of expression of interest and technical assessment begins (subject to interest)

- 16th July: Technical assessment complete
- 31st July: Subject to interest and technical assessment, community event and outline of potential schemes

How will I hear back from you?

Once we have conducted the assessment and know all the options, we will write to everyone who has expressed interest. We are holding a drop in event on 22nd April at the Windermere Information Centre, that you can attend and ask any questions you may have.

If a public sewer is provided, what costs will United Utilities pay for and what costs will I need to pay?

United Utilities will cover the cost of construction of the public sewer.

Under normal circumstances, the customer would be liable for the cost of connection from their premises to the new sewer. This is a one-off connection charge, currently £442. Customers would also be liable for annual sewerage charges as part of their water bill, from the day that the connection is made.

Under the terms of the pilot, we will waive the usual one-off connection charge, provided the customer connects to the public sewer within six months of its construction – so this is a saving of £442 off the usual charges.

In addition, we will charge you nothing for sewerage for the first 12 months following connection.

Customers would still need to pay for:

- The cost of laying a pipe (house drain) from your premises to the new sewer
- Obtaining building regulations approval from the local authority for the above work
- The cost and arrangements for emptying and making safe the old private drainage system, which may include rearrangement of internal and external drainage systems

If a public sewer is provided, am I obliged to connect?

It is in the interests of each householder to connect to the public sewer if it is provided as the potential environmental or amenity benefits will be better achieved if all properties do connect.