United Utilities Water Limited
Haweswater House
Lingy Mere Business Park
Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000
unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR-1031
Date: XX/XX/2026
Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).

Your request

I am requesting the following information from United Utilities Water Limited under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Drinking water quality data, and the supply zone structure to which that data is reported, are environmental information within the meaning of regulation 2(1). For the avoidance of doubt as to the applicability of the Regulations, water and sewerage undertakers in England and Wales are public authorities for EIR purposes following Fish Legal and Shirley v Information Commissioner and others [2015] UKUT 52 (AAC).

I request:

1. **A list of your water supply zones, giving for each zone: the zone reference code used in your water quality reporting; the zone name; and the population served.**
2. **Drinking water quality results for each supply zone for the most recent complete calendar year, as reported to the drinking water regulator. For each parameter: number of samples, minimum, mean and maximum values, and number of samples failing the standard. Please include total hardness (as mg/l CaCO3).**
3. **A mapping of postcodes to supply zones covering your supply area. If this is held at postcode sector or district rather than full postcode, the version you hold will be sufficient.**
4. **If held, the number of customer contacts about drinking water quality for each supply zone in the same year, by the categories you record (for example taste and odour, discolouration, illness).**

I would prefer to receive this in a machine-readable format such as CSV or XLSX. Items 1 to 3 together are the equivalent of what Thames Water Utilities disclosed in full under reference EIR-26-27-582 on 1 October 2026.

Our response

We currently provide 2022-2024 water quality results that are assured and come with appropriate data licensing on Stream. Stream is a collaboration between UK water companies, supported by industry and civil society partners with a vision to unlock data to address key water sector challenges. This data provides water quality data at a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), which is a national standardised Geographic unit maintained by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). LSOAs can be

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readily mapped to postcode districts using the ONS lookup tables or similar GIS methods.

Accordingly in the context of the above, please see my response to each of your specific questions which I have highlighted in **bold** type for your reference.

Question 1: A list of your water supply zones, giving for each zone: the zone reference code used in your water quality reporting; the zone name; and the population served.

I am unable to provide this information and I would like to explain the rationale for this. As I am sure you will appreciate, we take our obligations to water quality extremely seriously. This is why in coming to this decision we have referred to Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR, which states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety.

When applying this exception, public authorities such as United Utilities must complete a public interest test to decide whether maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The following points have been taken into consideration:

Public interest factors in favour of disclosing the information:

- There is an interest in providing water supply zone information so the public can understand proportionally how many residents are in a named supply zone.
- There is an interest in understanding the specific water quality of these populated supply zones.
- There is a presumption of disclosure under EIR.

Public interest factors in favour of withholding the information:

- There is significant public interest in withholding detailed information about named water supply areas to a postcode level because this level of granular detail could enable bad actors to identify areas to disrupt water quality and target it at a population level, by linking it to our operational network data and other publicly available information. Disclosure would therefore increase the vulnerability of drinking water infrastructure and could adversely affect public health and safety.
- Water quality results at a granular spatial level are already supplied via an official open data source channel which are assured and have appropriate data licensing attached. This reduces the public interest in disclosure because similar information is already available through a controlled and appropriate mechanism.
- The open data already provided under Stream licensing can produce the insight requested using LSOA safely. Using LSOA, a non-United Utilities geographic dataset that cannot be readily linked to critical drinking water assets, enables the requested analysis to be undertaken without creating additional public safety risks with disclosing water supply zone information.

Although I cannot provide water supply zone data at the granularity requested, I can provide a comprehensive list of LSOAs we provide water quality data for via the Stream portal. Please see Appendix 1 (sheet: '*Lower Super Output Areas*') for a list of LSOAs that we supply and are included in

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our Stream data.

Question 2. Drinking water quality results for each supply zone for the most recent complete calendar year, as reported to the drinking water regulator. For each parameter: number of samples, minimum, mean and maximum values, and number of samples failing the standard. Please include total hardness (as mg/l CaCO3).

I have checked our records for drinking water quality results and confirm that the most recent complete calendar year is 2024, and these results are readily available for use at the Stream Open data portal. These results also include the previous year, 2023. Additionally, we also provide water quality results for the year 2022 on Stream. Please see below for links to all these data:

- 2022 Water Quality Data
- 2023-2024 Water Quality Data

I can also confirm that there is an ambition to publish new Stream data which will have the additional parameter of total hardness included. This data will have the same schema as our other water quality datasets on Stream and will include the appropriate data licensing. The ambition is to get this data published by the end of 2026. I am more than happy to keep you appraised separately on the progress of this publication.

Question 3: A mapping of postcodes to supply zones covering your supply area. If this is held at postcode sector or district rather than full postcode, the version you hold will be sufficient.

I am unable to provide this information, and I would like to explain the rationale for this. As I am sure you will appreciate, we take our obligations to water quality extremely seriously. This is why in coming to this decision we have referred to Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR, which states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety.

When applying this exception, public authorities such as United Utilities must complete a public interest test to decide whether maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The following points have been taken into consideration:

Public interest factors in favour of disclosing the information:

- There is an interest in providing water quality data for United Utilities at a postcode level to enable customers to understand their water quality data.
- There is a presumption of disclosure under EIR.

Public interest factors in favour of withholding the information:

- There is public interest in withholding detailed information about the mapping between postcodes and our water supply zones because this level of granular detail could enable bad actors to identify areas to disrupt water quality and target it at a population level, by linking it to our operational network data and other publicly available information. Disclosure would

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therefore increase the vulnerability of drinking water infrastructure and could adversely affect public health and safety.

- Water quality results at a granular spatial level are already supplied via an official open data source channel which are assured and have appropriate data licensing attached. This reduces the public interest in disclosure of a postcode to water supply zone mapping because similar information is already available through a controlled and appropriate mechanism.
- The open data already provided under Stream licensing can produce the insight requested using LSOA safely (by conducting an LSOA to postcode mapping). Using LSOA, a non-United Utilities geographic dataset that cannot be readily linked to critical drinking water assets, enables the requested analysis to be undertaken without creating additional public safety risks with disclosing water supply zone information.

Question 4: If held, the number of customer contacts about drinking water quality for each supply zone in the same year, by the categories you record (for example taste and odour, discolouration, illness).

Please see Appendix 1 for this information which I have broken down by year from 2022 to 2025. Each sheet represents a separate year of contacts about water quality in the categories we record and are assured. Each row represents a supply zone and has a completely anonymised primary key. The sheets are named:

- Customer contacts in 2022
- Customer contacts in 2023
- Customer contacts in 2024
- Customer contacts in 2025

We hope that this response answers your request. However, if you're not satisfied with how we've handled it, you can request an internal review. To do this, please write to us at Environmental Information Office, Haweswater House, Lingley Mere, Warrington, WA5 3LP or email us at EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk, addressing your request to [redacted], and explaining why you're unhappy with our response. We'll be very happy to review your request and ensure we've done everything we can to assist you.

Any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this response, and we will reply within 40 working days from receipt of the request for internal review.

Many thanks
[redacted]

We'd love to hear your feedback on how we handled your request! If you have a moment, please complete our short survey here – your input helps us improve our service.