



South Staffs Water

(incorporating Cambridge Water)

Green Lane, Walsall WS2 7PD  
www.south-staffs-water.co.uk

13 May 2021

Ms Monica Hone

By email

Dear Ms Hone

I notice from recent posts on social media that you are concerned about Cambridge Water's abstractions. So, I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you about some of the work we are doing now to protect the environment and highlight some of our long-term ambitions for water resources in our operating area.

Every five years, Cambridge Water produces a [business plan](#) and a long-term [water resources management plan](#). These set out in detail our plans for the services we will deliver to customers and the investments we will make over a five-year period (in this case, from 2020 to 2025); and how we will manage our water resources over a longer 25-year timeframe.

We are currently investing heavily in our assets. This includes constructing a new 8 million litre storage reservoir at our Bourn site to cope with the demand for water because of population growth in the area, reducing leakage by at least 15% and encouraging all our customers to reduce the volume of water they use each day by 6%. And we have set ourselves ambitious targets to incentivise developers to build more water efficient homes, reduce our carbon emissions in line with the water sector's net zero carbon ambitions and protect a total of 690 hectares of environmentally sensitive sites.

In addition, we have voluntarily reduced our abstraction licences (and therefore the volume of water available for abstraction). This should remain constant, albeit with seasonal fluctuation, with leakage reduction and demand management helping to offset growth. There is some scope in our greensand sources that will help offset further demand increases, which will maintain constant abstraction in the chalk aquifers. We are also working in partnership with other stakeholders, including Cambridge City Council on an [analysis](#) of the health of the chalk streams in the area; and with Cambridgeshire County Council and the Granta Land Managers Group on a project to implement land use changes in the River Granta catchment that will improve river flows and increase resilience to flooding.

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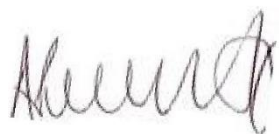
Cambridge Water is also a key member of [Water Resources East](#) (WRE), along with Anglian Water and Affinity Water. WRE is one of five water resources planning regions in England and Wales; it is currently preparing a long-term regional water resources plan for Eastern England. Options such as new reservoirs, water transfers, greater abstraction reform and projects to protect chalk streams are being considered as part of the plan, which will be published in 2023.

We are aware that some of these are long-term initiatives. In the medium term, you may be aware that the Environment Agency has recently updated its method for determining areas of water stress in England. If Cambridge Water is determined to be in an area of serious water stress, we would be able to introduce compulsory metering as one of the tools to manage our long-term water supplies, if this is supported by our customers. We are waiting for the Secretary of State's final decision on this issue.

Which brings me to my final point. During the past 12 months, demand for water from our customers has increased by around 5% – largely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and sustained periods of dry weather during the year. So there is a role for all of us to play here in using water wisely to ensure long-term water supplies. We are also piloting an [interactive tool](#) to help customers manage their water use by making small changes to their daily activities. To date, 745 Cambridge Water customers have signed up to this tool.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Willicott', written in a cursive style.

**Andy Willicott**  
**Managing Director**