



United Utilities Water Limited
Haweswater House
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Lingley Green Avenue
Great Sankey
Warrington WA5 3LP

Telephone: 01925 237000

unitedutilities.com

Our ref: EIR/ID681

Date: 23/03/2026

Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for contacting us with your Letter of Claim in accordance with the Pre-Action Protocol for Civil claims pursuant to the Practice Direction - Pre Action Conduct and Protocols in the Civil Procedure Rules 1998 as amended.

Your letter referred to the issues that have been affecting the water supply to your property and contained a Disclosure Request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Your letter then made a number of points (numbered 2 to 8 in your letter) setting out that you were seeking to recover losses and general damages and setting out the basis for your claim. It then suggested a deadline and next steps (point 9) and finally set out (points 10 to 12) the actions that you indicated that you would pursue in the event that our response did not provide the requested information.

This response addresses your request for disclosure under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and addresses points A, B, C and F from your suggested next steps (point 9 within your letter).

The additional points raised in your Letter of Claim have been dealt with separately by our legal claims department.

Your Environmental Information Request:

I require disclosure of the following information relating to the incidents of failure of water supply.

1. *Full details of all repairs, works, or interventions undertaken in relation to my supply*
2. *The cause(s) of each failure*
3. *Why previous repairs failed*
4. *The cost of each repair or intervention*
5. *Your forward plan, including:*
 - *permanent remedial works*
 - *itemised costings*
 - *scheduled dates for completion*

You requested that this information should be supplied in a chronological table format and should include the disclosure of all incidents when the water supply to your property was interrupted or materially affected (i.e. including complete loss of supply, inadequate pressure, and contaminated or unreliable service) over the past 6 years. You also provided a suggested table for use in the completion of this information.

You also asked for the total number of properties affected by each breach/ water supply failure, by postal code.

Our response:

We have provided specific responses to the specific information that you requested. In addition, and to ensure that we provide a clear and comprehensive response, we have initially provided some background information. This additional information is designed to introduce and explain some of the technical terms that are used in the responses and to provide contextual information, about the way that water companies maintain these networks, as well as the specific issues that have been affecting the supply to your property.

A. Background

A1) Water supply networks - All UK Water companies, including United Utilities, manage their water supply networks within physically defined, isolated sections of the network (typically containing 1000 to 3000 properties) called District Metered Zones (DMZ), which are then broken down into more localised, smaller sub-zones called District Metering Areas (DMA).

The DMZs are designed to measure inflow and manage leakage via boundary valves and sensors, with the DMAs being used for a more granular pressure control or enhanced leak detection work. Your property, Meadfarm House, Old Hall Lane, Hargrave, is situated within the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA and borders the Mouldsworth (167-04) DMA, both of which form part of the wider Crewe DMZ.

A2) Maintaining these networks - In total United Utilities manages a network of over 40,000 kilometres of water mains that serves around 3 million households and businesses. This network consists of a mix of sizes and ages of pipes, ranging from Victorian infrastructure through to new, modern pipelines.

The overall scale of the investment programmes to maintain and upgrade water supply networks (and the resulting impact upon customer bills) is governed through the five yearly “price review process” that is managed by Ofwat, the water industry regulator. With the specific work that is undertaken being managed by the water companies, who target and prioritise their programmes of work, based upon the likelihood and consequence of failure of the mains within each DMA and DMZ. As part of the last price review process, that covered the 2025 to 2030 period, the amount of investment that companies were expected to undertake was significantly increased and as a consequence of this United Utilities is planning to upgrade over 925km of water mains between 2025 and 2030.

A3) Specific impacts within your area - The Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA, contains a relatively large number of high-risk water mains. These include asbestos cement mains constructed between the 1930s and 1970s, which are now approaching the end of their asset lives and becoming increasingly prone to bursts. This DMA was therefore, included for early and significant investment within the current 2025 to 2030 rehabilitation programme.

To implement the additional mains rehabilitation work, both UU and our contractors needed to rapidly transition to new organisational arrangements and secure substantial additional resources to implement and manage this increased workload. During the transition to these new arrangements, temporary communications issues between UU departments and contract staff meant that UU did not communicate its work plans with some local councils and affected customers as well as we would have liked.

The work being undertaken within the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA has resulted in some planned interruptions to supply (that were necessary to implement the work) and, on occasion, some unplanned interruptions. To install the new pipeline, sections of the network must be temporarily shut off to allow the work to be carried out safely. When supply is restored, the resultant changes in pressure within the network, particularly where older, more fragile pipes remain, can sometimes result in bursts in the surrounding system.

The aged nature of mains within the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA, will at least partially explain why you and many of your neighbours, will have had relatively large numbers of interruptions to your supply, for some time. With the impact of the recently increased workload, coupled with the ineffective customer communications programme, predominantly explaining why the numbers of interruptions will have increased significantly.

We are confident that the work that we are undertaking will address the highest risk mains, within the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA and will significantly reduce the risk and number of future failures., although, as is the case with all water networks, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of bursts. We are also confident that the customer communications around the ongoing work is also now being managed more effectively. The currently ongoing work to the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA is scheduled to be completed by late April 2026.

It is also worth stating that as part of our mains rehabilitation work, we look at opportunities to reduce the overall risk of supply within individual DMAs or outlying properties, by “rezoning” the DMA so that it is partially supplied from (and incorporated within) an adjacent DMA. As part of this exercise, your property was recently rezoned from DMA 155-07 to DMA 167-04.

B. Specific responses to your disclosure requests

Points 1 to 4 – Details of repairs and interventions - Appendix A [“EIR 681 Intervention timeline”] provides a chronological listing of all the issues and interventions that have affected the supply to your property over the past 6 years.

Point 5 – Forward plan – As set out within background section A3 (above), U UW is currently investing £4.1m into the replacement of 13km of Cast Iron & Cement water mains. Some 12km has been replaced to date, with the scheme due to be completed by late April 2026.

In addition, as also set out within background section A3 (above), we have recently rezoned the supply to your property, which now lies within and is supplied as part of DMA [name/number]. Both of these activities should significantly reduce the likelihood and frequency of future supply interruptions to your property. Although, it is worth noting that no property can be fully secured against future supply interruptions and that the risks affecting relatively isolated and rural properties such as yours, tends to be higher than the equivalent risks affecting more central or urban properties.

Next Step A – Populate your suggested table – Although we have not directly populated the table you suggested, we believe that Appendix A provides all of the information that we hold on the information within the table and that this information is presented in a clearer and more transparent way than if we had sought to shoehorn this information into your suggested table.

Next Step B – Provide a comprehensive explanation – We have sought to provide a comprehensive explanation of the issues that have been affecting the Huxley Lane (155-07) DMA and the work that U UW has undertaken both within the background section to this response and within the timeline set out within Appendix A.

This response, along with all our other EIR responses, will be published on our website at [Environmental Information | United Utilities - Corporate](#). We would therefore be happy for you to share this information with other affected households, or direct them to, where it can be found on our website.

We are also happy to ask a representative from United Utilities to either visit your property, or to meet a group of affected customers to explain and discuss the issues that you have experienced and our ongoing work in more detail. If you think that this might be useful, please could you contact us at the email address provided below.

Next Step C – Numbers of households affected - Appendix A provides the numbers of households affected by each intervention.

Next Step F - Provide an undertaking that works are being commissioned as a matter of urgency – As set out above the work required to reduce the risk of interruptions to your property is already ongoing and to provide additional security of supply, your property was recently rezoned from DMA 155-07 to DMA 167-04.

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