

Public Affairs Team Roles



Introduction from the CEO



Water is used by each of us every day, but until recently was rarely the subject of political debate. Greater scrutiny on the industry has created an unprecedented opportunity to challenge conventional wisdom and secure acceptance for contentious – but necessary – reforms. Joining Water UK provides the chance to develop ideas that are radical but progressive, and design the strategies needed to have them adopted by decision-makers.

Since joining as CEO in 2023, and supported by our Chair, the former Cabinet Minister Ruth Kelly, Water UK has increasingly been at the centre of leading work to ensure that the water industry better meets the needs and interests of society. This has included major new transparency platforms, sweeping and detailed work on long-overdue reforms and building the detailed case for investment.

However, there is much more to do and, in the next few years, I have three main priorities.

First, we need to ensure that industry is well-placed to deliver a quadrupling of capital investment over the next five years. This investment must deliver tangible benefits for customers and the environment or we will lose trust. To accelerate that progress we must also work with government to modernise controls over sewage treatment and wider pollutants across society, much of which can enter the water sources from which we take drinking water for treatment.

Secondly, we must work with Government on its major programme of reform, including the independent Commission being led by Sir Jon Cunliffe. Our aim is to develop major, well-evidenced and compelling policy ideas that better enable the sector to deliver on its long-term ambitions. Those ambitions include much better environmental performance and the huge effort needed to secure water supplies against climate change and to support economic growth and new homes.

It is hard to overstate the potential of this Commission. Since privatisation in 1990, there has been no major change to water regulation. With public and political expectations running very high, Water UK is uniquely well placed to shape the future of water for decades to come.



David Henderson
CEO

The third is to bolster our organisation's national capabilities across policy, regulation and wider engagement. The industry looks to Water UK to analyse some of the most profound public policy challenges facing the country. We need to develop and deliver policies in partnership with some of the largest companies in the country, as well as the most senior decision makers across government, regulators and NGOs.

Recognising the challenges and opportunities facing the industry, and our members' commitment to Water UK, we are expanding the organisation and are currently seeking to recruit a variety of roles across policy, regulation and public affairs.

If the kind of questions we're grappling with sound interesting, and you are excited about making a real difference on a subject that touches the lives of everyone in the country, I would love you to apply for one of our vital new positions. Should you have any further questions about the role, please see [here](#) to get in touch or to apply.

Senior Public Affairs Manager



Title: Senior Public Affairs Manager (title negotiable)

Reports to: Director of Public Affairs

Remuneration: £50,000- c £65,000+ dependent on experience

Location: Westminster with some hybrid working

Role overview:

This critical new position will be part of a highly-capable team leading the industry's work on the future of the whole sector and its efforts to secure unprecedented levels of investment to meet society's demands for change. It is a fast-paced role with exposure to very senior decision makers and the opportunity to have a real and enduring impact for customers and the environment. The work is high-profile, varied and interesting.

Water UK is seeking an exceptional candidate to join its busy Public Affairs team. The Public Affairs team is a vital cross-organisation function. The water industry is under huge political and public scrutiny, meaning Water UK's public affairs team is exposed to senior industry and political stakeholders on a regular basis. Water UK's public affairs team plays a vital role in our work to achieve the reform needed to deliver the improvements that the public rightly expect.

There is no standard day in this team. You could be preparing the Chief Executive to give evidence to a select committee or writing a speech for the Chair to give to a room full of MPs. You could be going to meet Special Advisers, backbench MPs, or peers. Or you might be spending a day tracking and analysing a Parliamentary debate on a piece of legislation affecting the industry, providing insights to the wider organisation or membership about its implications.

The work is varied, and in some weeks you will do all of the above, and need to prioritise and balance it all. This role will suit somebody who is up for that challenge and able to work on multiple projects at once. Crucial to succeeding in this high-performing team is strong attention to detail and an ability to make succinct and persuasive arguments (both verbally and in writing) on behalf of a complex industry.

Working in this team provides an opportunity to engage with politicians and policy makers at the very highest level on some of the biggest challenges facing the country.

Skills and Experience



Role Overview:

As Senior Public Affairs Manager, you will lead Water UK's engagement with political and policy stakeholders, helping to shape major national policy for a vital industry. You will play a crucial role in ensuring the sector's voice is heard and its priorities are understood by decision-makers.

Key Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement strategic public affairs plans to advance industry objectives.
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including MPs, government officials, and industry partners.
- Monitor political, regulatory, and legislative developments, providing timely analysis and advice.
- Plan and deliver engagement campaigns to promote key issues and policies.
- Draft high-quality briefings, reports, and correspondence for senior leaders.
- Represent Water UK at meetings, events, and forums.

Person Specification:

- Proven experience in public affairs, government relations, or a similar role.
- Good political nous and a sophisticated understanding of UK politics.
- Excellent communication, relationship-building, and influencing skills.
- Ability to write persuasively with a fluent verbal style and a logical approach to setting out clear and well-crafted arguments. There will be an expectation that you represent industry at a range of external-facing events.
- Strategic thinker with the ability to manage multiple priorities effectively.
- A self-starting attitude, able to identify the right work and pursue it with limited oversight.
- Ability to see broader strategy, not just detailed mechanics, with an understanding of the 'bigger picture', Water UK's role within it and to reflect this understanding in your advice to senior colleagues internally and in your dealings with external colleagues.
- Knowledge of the water sector or environmental policy is desirable but not essential.

A competitive salary commensurate with experience c.£50-£65k+
Comprehensive benefits and a performance related bonus of up to 25%

About Water UK



Water UK represents all 17 of the water companies across Scotland, Wales, England and Northern Ireland. Our members range from Government-owned and not-for-profit companies to some of the UK's largest enterprises listed in the FTSE100. Water UK's job is to act as a force for good by understanding the biggest challenges facing the sector and solving them. Our activity ranges from developing long-term plans to suggesting legislation to running national behaviour change campaigns. Some recent areas of focus include:

- The increasing pressures to public water supply and the environment from drought. We are responding with work on [leakage](#), [new reservoirs and water transfers](#), and a [national campaign](#) to reduce wasted water.
- Achieving faster progress on sewage spills at lower cost to the customer (for example, by leading the [work on options](#), setting out a [plan of action](#) and campaigning to [reduce sewer blockages](#))
- Improving the broader condition of rivers and seas (for example, by reducing pollutants from sewage works or [supporting the creation of new wetlands and other nature-based treatment](#))
- Achieving [net zero operational emissions](#), reflecting the sector's use of about 2% of UK electricity
- Responding to new threats to drinking water, like microplastics and [persistent toxic chemicals](#)
- Better support for [vulnerable customers](#) and those [struggling with bills](#)

We also work to ensure that Ofwat's decisions [secure sufficient investment](#) for dealing with these challenges, and consider how they could better deal with specific problems like the [aging state of infrastructure](#). We promote education, [information](#) and understanding and work very closely with the most senior leaders across the UK's water companies, NGOs, regulators and Government departments – as well as international bodies and companies abroad.



Working for Water UK



Water UK is small, friendly and high-performing organisation.

Our work is typically fast-paced that offers engagement with and exposure to very senior decision makers and the opportunity to have a real and enduring impact for customers and the environment. The work is high-profile, varied and interesting.

Benefits from working at Water UK

Alongside a competitive salary, we also offer:

1. Discretionary bonus up to 25%,
2. Private medical insurance and dental coverage after successful completion of probationary period,
3. 27 working days' holiday,
4. Pension scheme – employee 5%, employer 6%,
5. Life assurance from date of joining.

We are based in central London, close to St James's Park. All roles are offered on a hybrid basis.

