

Policy 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 <https://www.water.org.uk/about-us/work-with-us> to get in touch or to apply.

Senior Policy Manager (x2)



Water UK's Policy Team is led by our Director of Policy. It comprises five 'Heads of' roles - experts who are each in charge of a discreet portfolio: the Head of Water, the Head of Environment, the Head of Rivers and Seas, the Head of Resilience, and the Head of Sustainable Development. Our team is highly collaborative, and the successful candidates will be expected to work flexibly across the policy team.

The Senior Policy Manager roles have the following principal responsibilities:

1. Work with our internal policy experts and water companies to deliver projects responding to a range of strategically critical issues such as lead removal, leakage reduction, addressing obstacles to infrastructure delivery, managing bioresources ('sludge') and improving the nation's bathing waters.
2. Support the delivery of projects that help Water UK prepare the industry for the introduction of new regulatory requirements such as their introduction of thousands of new in-river environment monitors.
3. Develop solutions and engage with regulators and the government to answer a range of challenges, such as pollution caused by wet wipes forming blockages in sewers ('fatbergs')
4. Enhance relationships with and provide a link between Water UK and our members based in devolved administrations and with our European water association EurEau.
5. Support internal policy experts with delivering very high-calibre research, briefings, and position papers.
6. Provide high-quality secretariat support to a range of senior decision-making forums.

In addition, there are two specific duties that will be allocated between the posts:

7. One role will lead work to modernise Water UK's relationships its technical networks, which bring together company experts through 50+ policy area-specific groupings. This role-holder will also lead the coordination and preparation of a cross-team work plan and manage the delivery of the plan once it has been drafted.
8. The other role will be expected to work alongside our Head of Resilience and provide support for work to improve industry's response to emergencies (such as a widespread drought), including via our National Incident Management and Platinum Incident Management control groups.

The successful candidate will have the following attributes.

Essential

- Experience supporting policy delivery in response to ambiguous or complex problems in fast-paced, high-visibility environments. This should include experience in successfully obtaining, working with and communicating data and evidence, problem-solving, and understanding legislative or regulatory processes.
- An ability to manage and prioritise between multiple projects; comfort in delivering quickly and moving swiftly between topics, with the resilience and initiative to proactively overcome challenges.
- Ability to contribute to persuasive and compelling policy papers and presentations, with a fluent verbal style and a logical approach to setting clear and well-crafted arguments. There will be an expectation that you represent the industry at various external-facing events.
- A self-starting attitude, able to identify and pursue the proper work with limited oversight and to get to grips quickly with new, complex topics.
- Ability to see broader strategy, not just detailed mechanics, with an understanding of the 'bigger picture' and 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.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the water sector or comparable utilities and/or familiarity with some issues outlined in this job description, including the water environment, government regulations or legislation.
- High degree of comfort with handling and interpreting data.
- Experience preparing and presenting reports, briefings, or presentations to external audiences.

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.

