

Water First

UK Water Partnership Business Plan 2024/25



*Improving the **coordination and collaboration** across the water sector*



*Supporting research excellence and promoting **collaborative innovation***



*Connecting the **public and private sectors** to work better together*



*Tapping into the **\$500 billion global water market***

The UK Water Partnership

- ❖ Was established in 2015 to provide a **strategic vision for the development and growth** of the UK water industry.
- ❖ Brings together diverse water industry and related organisations in a **single coherent alliance**, promoting mutual understanding, cooperation and coordination.
- ❖ Supports the development of sustainable solutions and ensures that the UK's experts, innovators and entrepreneurs are at the forefront of the global response.

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Section 1

Who We Are



THE UK WATER PARTNERSHIP

Our Vision And Purpose

1. To ensure that the UK's experts, innovators, academics and utilities are at the forefront of the response to global water challenges by building sustainable and resilient global expertise networks, sharing knowledge and resources.
2. To advance UK capability by effectively supporting delivery and implementation of research and innovation.
3. To improve understanding, cooperation and coordination across the diverse range of stakeholders in the water community by facilitating collaboration across the public and private sectors.
4. To catalyse the growth of the water economy both in the UK and internationally by showcasing UK capability and connecting organisations and opportunities.

Our Approach



1. Improving the coordination and collaboration within the water sector

By pooling knowledge and resources we address global water challenges and promote the connectivity across the sector.

We bring together a diverse range of organisations from across the sector.

This aids the industry to work collaboratively towards a common goal with a collective voice that spans UK Wide and has, up to now, been absent.



2. Supporting research excellence and promoting collaborative innovation

We develop and give a platform to thought leadership.

We promote and support innovation and research within the sector.

This accelerates the advancement of capability, knowledge, and innovation in the sector.



3. Connecting the public and private sectors to work better together

We enable a close and permanent dialogue between public and private sectors.

We facilitate industry wide discussions and collaboration to share knowledge and expertise.

This provides a unique link across the sector to improve efficiency and efficacy of work.



4. Tapping into the \$500 billion global water market

We showcase UK capability to international market through events and platforms.

We support UK organisations working to tackle global water challenges and open opportunities for work and funding.

This drives commercial growth in the sector by highlighting gaps in the industry and giving visibility to initiatives happening across the UK.



Our Value

Value to the Sector

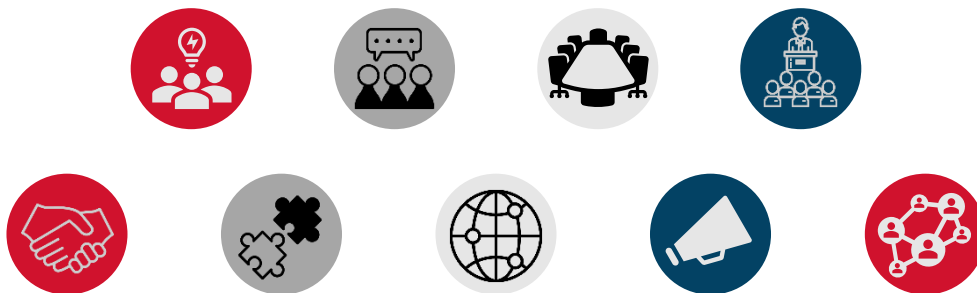
Our company's value proposition can help the water sector in several ways:

- ❖ **Facilitating the advancement of UK research and innovation:** By increasing the capacity and capabilities in water related activity, we can contribute to tackling the challenges that the water sector is facing. This can help the UK to be seen at the forefront of sector to grow and access new markets.
- ❖ **Working together with the public sector:** We believe that working together with the public sector is key to achieving our goals. We provide an organised communication channel between the private and public sector, which helps us to connect key actors across the water community. This collaboration results in an effective response of action within the sector.
- ❖ **Focusing resources by providing a common voice of the strategic priorities within the sector:** By providing a common voice of the strategic priorities within the sector, we focus resources, accelerate capability advancements, and help grow the sector.
- ❖ **Access to national and international opportunities:** Our platform provides access to national and international opportunities, which can help the sector grow and access new markets.
- ❖ **Producing thought leadership pieces and white papers:** We produce these to provide water professionals with a tool to raise awareness for critical gaps within the sector. This can help to raise awareness for critical gaps within the sector and contribute to tackling those challenges.

Value to Members

The UK Water Partnership membership consists of a broad and diverse range of organisations including academia, private sector companies, research institutes, and public bodies. This provides the UKWP members with a unique position to influence and better coordinate the work being done across the sector.

The UKWP's way of working, and its unique role within the water sector, means that being a member of the UK Water Partnership provides several invaluable benefits. The key benefits are exposure, influence and improved collaboration across the sector as well as a unique line of communication between the public, private, and academic sectors.



Value to Members



Workstreams

Workstreams are the foundation for the work that UKWP does. Involvement in a workstream provides the opportunity to shape the advancement of work within a specific sector and often results in co-authorship of a white paper.



Collective voice

Being a member of the UKWP and working together with other organisations from across the industry outwardly shows you as a forward-thinking player in the sector.



Yearly meetings

The UKWP hosts three yearly meetings where members can network with others, share their knowledge and expertise, and discuss the latest developments in the water sector.



Events

The UKWP organises, and is involved with, events throughout the year such as the UK Water Industry Summit, World Water Tech and a UK Water Resilience Showcase. Members are given the opportunity to attend these events and often have the opportunity to present their work and thought leadership to a varied audience.



Work and funding opportunities

The UKWP meetings and network provide a platform to connect with other organisations across the UK who are working in a similar area. This can open new opportunities for work and funding.



Direct links to influential public bodies

Through UKWP channels, members can directly communicate with the specific people who influence water related activities within government and other public bodies such as Defra and DBT.



UK and International visibility

Being a member of the UKWP, attending meetings and events and participating in workstreams will enhance the visibility of your work to the UK and International markets.



Publicise your events

Members can publicise their events through UKWP channels to reach a wider audience.



Improve your network

Meet people from other areas of the sector who are working on similar subjects at our monthly meetings, events, or just through contacts within the UKWP network.



Section 2

How We Operate



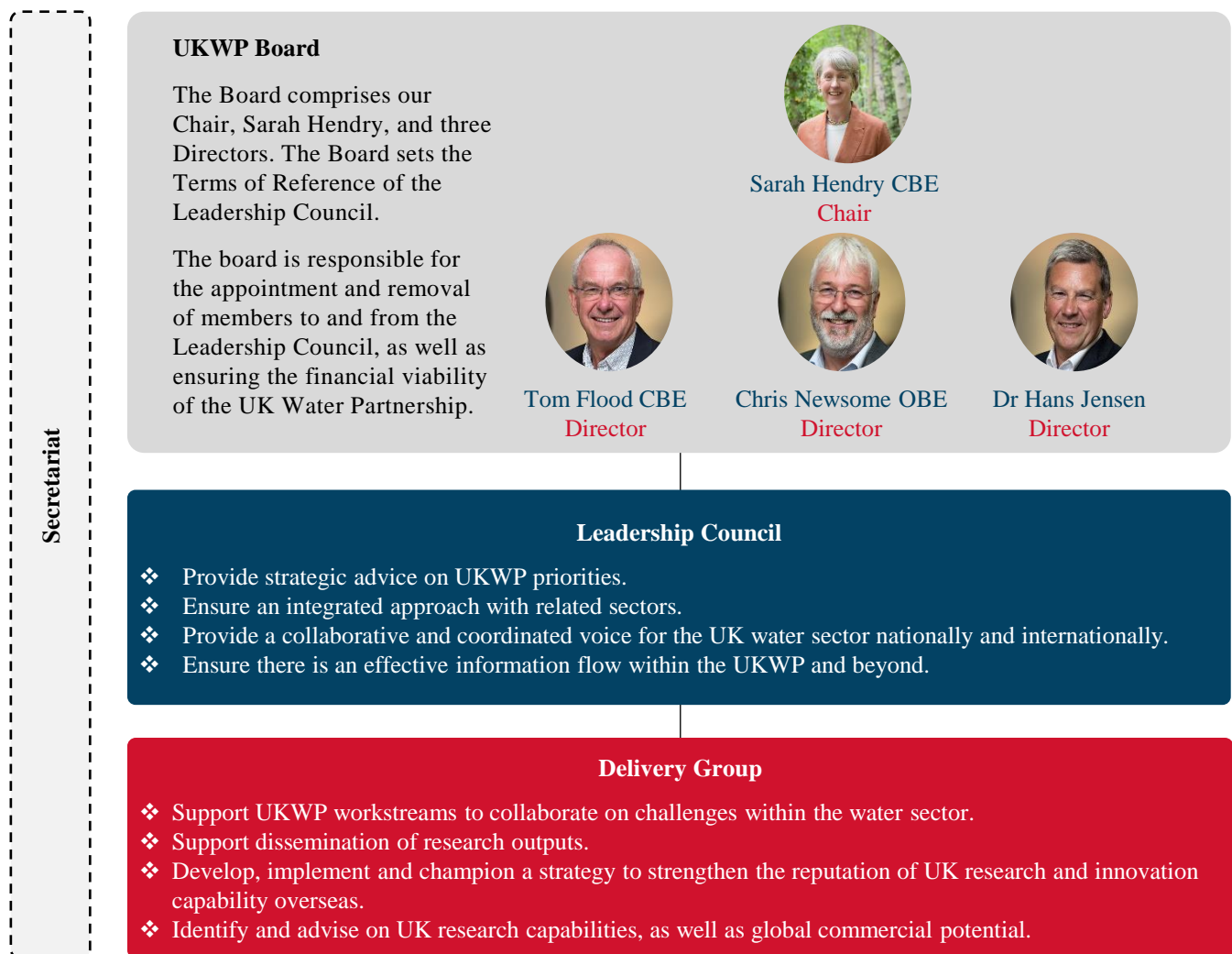
THE UK WATER PARTNERSHIP

Our Structure and How We Operate

The organogram below shows how the partnership is structured and describes the respective roles and responsibilities of the Chair and Board of Directors, Leadership Council, and supporting Delivery Group.

The Leadership Council and Delivery Group meets not less than three times a year.

A secretariat, provided by Arup, has provided support to the UKWP since its inception in 2015, and operates the bank account for the partnership under arrangements covered by a written protocol from the Board.



Our Ethos

We value diversity in our organisation, seeking a variety of backgrounds and sector expertise to enrich discussions and initiatives. Our goal is to promote positive water consumption behaviour and raise awareness of the value of water nationally and internationally. Committed to excellence, we uphold high standards in our work for the UKWP and its members, ensuring outstanding service and value.

Our Board



Sarah Hendry CBE

Chair

Sarah Hendry has been the Director General of the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) since 2018. After studying Modern Languages at Oxford University, she was a civil servant for nearly 30 years, working mostly within Defra but also in the Cabinet Office and Department of Health. She was a Director for 12 years, covering a wide range of policy areas including rural development, Common Agricultural Policy reform, animal health and welfare, farming, forestry, climate change, global and public health. From 2015 – 18, Sarah was the Defra director for Floods and Water policy and a member of the UKWP Leadership Council.



Chris Newsome OBE

Director

Chris comes from a Civil Engineering background and has over 40 years of experience in managing large asset bases and infrastructure. He is recognised for his leadership in collaboration and innovation across the supply chain leading to significant reductions in both carbon footprint and costs. Chris has 14 years main board executive experience and is now growing a diverse non-executive portfolio.



Dr Hans Jensen

Director

Hans Jensen is a graduate of Imperial College and the University of Oxford and began his career as a geophysicist working on earthquake research and geothermal energy. He spent the majority of his career with RWE working on power stations, international project development and serving as Head of Environmental Management and R&D & Innovation. He was CEO of UKWIR for seven years, leading water industry research, before taking up his role of UKWP Director. Hans is a Visiting Professor at UWE in Bristol and works as a power plant and energy consultant.



Tom Flood CBE

Director

Tom's childhood in Southern Ireland gave him a lifelong appreciation of the health benefits from access to green spaces and being part of a local community. His career started with 3M in sales and marketing. He was CEO of the Conservation Volunteers and in 2004 was awarded a CBE for services to conservation. He helped establish the UKWP with Defra and is currently Walbrook Warden for the Water Conservators Livery Company. He divides his time between London and Dorset where he is Chair of the Dorset Community Foundation, founder of the Paul Cornes Fund and junior President Poole Rotary.



Our Members and Partners

The UKWP is a public-private not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with its operations funded by financial contributions from its members. Private sector contributions are used to carry out core operational activities such as administration, marketing and promotion, as well as planning and hosting events that help promote the UK water economy both at home and overseas. The Partnership is indebted to its members, not just for their continued financial support, but also for their substantial gifts of time and for their willingness to co-design our emerging products and services.



Endorsement

“The UKWP partnership provides a critical connection across the water sector to seek out, stimulate and champion best practice, whilst advocating the role water plays in our lives, economy and the just transition to net zero society”

**Prof Andrew Tyler,
Scotland Hydro Nation Chair**

“The extensive network provided by members of the UK Water Partnership supports our aim to work with global practitioners across the water sector. This ensures our science addresses the most pressing issues and that the full benefits of our research are realised.”

**Prof Alan Jenkins,
UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology**

“Aiimi recognizes the critical importance of collective action and cross-industry collaboration in addressing complex societal and environmental challenges. Aiimi is privileged to bring its expertise in digital, data and AI to the UK Water Partnership, and is committed to future collaboration so we ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of the global effort to secure a sustainable water future.

In a world where the need for sustainable solutions is more pressing than ever, the UK Water Partnership's dedication to fostering innovation, knowledge exchange, and cross-sectoral cooperation is truly commendable. Aiimi proudly stands with the Partnership in its mission to safeguard water resources for current and future generations, and we look forward to contributing our expertise and capabilities towards this shared goal.”

**Steve Salvin,
Chief Executive, Aiimi**

“The UK Water Partnership brings together senior leaders and subject matter experts in the water sector and beyond. As a member, UKWIR benefits from the opportunity to work collaboratively with other organisations, helping to create innovative solutions to meet the complex challenges facing the water sector today and in the future.”

**Steve Kaye,
Chief Executive, UKWIR**

“UKWP have been key to developing our project around ‘The public value of water’ providing the forum to develop and connect with key partners, supporting our working group and helping to promote the activity and create new connections to develop the work further. Consequently, we are now developing the project into best practice guidance for the industry as a whole and building the necessary collaboration to secure innovation funding which will enable deeper research, impact and longevity to the project.”

**Jeremy Galpin
Lead Consultant, Costain**



Section 3

Business Plan 2024/25



THE UK WATER PARTNERSHIP

The UK Water Industry Summit

The UK Water Industry Summit, which took place in October 2023, was a pivotal moment in looking forward to the strategic focus of the UKWP. The summit invited speakers from a range of perspectives to raise the challenges that they feel are most critical to the water sector.

The UKWP co-hosted the event with partners British Water, UK Water Industry Research (UKWIR), Future Water, the Water Industry Forum and Spring. The visible collaboration of six of the UK water industry's leading membership organisations signified a new era of collaboration to tackle the complex challenges raised – and to take advantage of the opportunities that these challenges present.

Outcomes

The UK Water Industry Summit defined five areas that collaborative working among the six partners, and the members of each of the organisation, could help address more effectively.

- Future Talent and Skills
- Data and Digital
- Customer Engagement and Trust
- River Health and Catchment Management
- Collaboration and Water Innovation Strategy

Commitments

The six partners made the following commitments by signing a Statement of Intent at the UK Water Industry Summit:

- Sharing of work programmes to explore areas of mutual interest.
- Coordination on 'One Voice' statements in areas of common interest.
- Participation in an annual joint 'water collaboration summit' to share knowledge and experience and to agree and deliver programmes of work.
- Exploring more opportunities to promote UK water expertise internationally.
- Connecting resources and sharing knowledge to review, update and build upon the UK 2050 Water Innovation Strategy to ensure it remains current and valid.

The UKWP Business Plan integrates these commitments and collaborative initiatives into its objectives for 2024/25. This strategic approach aims to realise the vision of a collaborative ecosystem, as envisioned by the UK Water Industry Summit, serving as a catalyst for progress in the water sector.





Collaborating for the UK Water Sector

Statement of Intent

The water sector of the UK is facing a range of challenges from the impacts of climate change, environmental concerns to regulatory and infrastructure issues. These challenges require better coordination across the whole of the water value chain to address issues such as the response to climate change, ageing infrastructure, water quality, pollution, customer expectation and population growth as well as the need to attract and retain talent.

Although, the sector is well served by a number of industry associations which serve the whole of the water value chain, the organisations below consider that they can be more effective through increased collaboration in order to best delineate the solutions to issues that face the sector and to agree and deliver what is required.

Areas of collaboration include:

- Thought Leadership;
- Research;
- Development;
- Innovation;
- Application.

Collaboration will take the form of the following:

1. Sharing of work programmes in order to explore areas of mutual interest.
2. Coordination on 'One Voice' statements in areas of common interest.
3. Participation in an annual joint 'water collaboration summit' to share knowledge and experience and to agree and deliver programs of work.
4. Explore opportunities to promote UK water expertise internationally.
5. Connecting resources and sharing knowledge to review, update and build upon the UK 2050 Water Innovation Strategy to ensure it remains current and valid.

This collaboration will help the UK water sector deliver a reliable supply of safe, clean water while protecting the environment and adapting to changing conditions.

Signed,













Sarah Hendry, The UK Water Partnership

Mark Fletcher, British Water

Steve Kaye, UK Water Industry Research

Anita Payne, Water Industry Forum

Paul Horton, Future Water Association

Carly Perry, Spring



Business objectives for 2024/25

Our business objectives are the high-level priorities for ensuring the UKWP continues to be a thriving, influential membership body that serves members' interests effectively.

❖ Maximise our impact on the water sector

In 2024/25 the UKWP aims to fortify governmental engagement and facilitate networking and discussion platforms to enhance communication among key stakeholders in the industry. These initiatives are designed to direct investments strategically, ultimately achieving a substantial and measurable impact on the water sector.

❖ Be at the forefront of thought-leadership for water in the UK

The UKWP aims to maintain its position as one of the leading supporters of research and innovation within the water sector through our workstreams by developing thought leadership papers and supporting research initiatives including highlighting funding opportunities to members accelerating the advancement of capability, knowledge, and innovation in the sector.

❖ Honour the commitment made at the UK Water Industry Summit

The UKWP aims to foster a collaborative ecosystem within the UK water sector by honouring the commitments made at the UK Water Industry Summit. Through strategic alliances and joint initiatives, the objective is to drive innovation, enhance thought leadership, and develop collaborative solutions to the key challenge areas highlighted during the Summit.

❖ Grow and diversify the membership

To expand and diversify the membership of the UK Water Partnership (UKWP) in 2024/25 the primary focus will be on the retention, recruitment, and representation of members.

❖ Provide members with exceptional value through their membership.

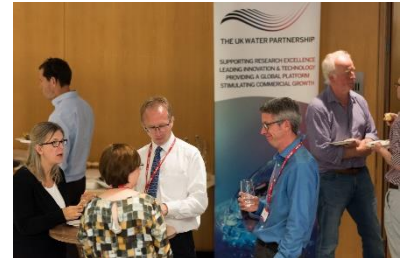
Building on 2023/24 successes, including the Water Summit, the UKWP is intensifying its commitment to delivering tangible benefits in 2024/25. This includes providing its members with a greater influence, increased exposure, expanded networking opportunities, and collaboration.

Business enablers for 2024/25

How will we achieve our Business Objectives over the next year?

Our business enablers are the crucial activities which will allow us to deliver on our business objectives.

- **Engagement Opportunities:** Implementing targeted engagement initiatives to involve members actively, by promoting involvement in workstreams, organising regular events, providing platforms to engage with government, which will foster networking and knowledge sharing among members.
- **Skill and Knowledge Development:** Allowing members to showcase their expertise, enhancing their profile within the sector by providing a platform for them to present or host workshop, increasing their visibility and networking opportunities.
- **Global Collaboration:** Establishing and maintaining connections with international organisations and professionals to bring in diverse perspectives and global best practices by participating in global conferences and events to expand the partnership's visibility on an international scale.
- **Technological Innovation:** Working with our members and partners to identify and communicate the gaps within the water sector to drive research into these topics. This will foster and promote innovation in water technologies and solutions as well as attract tech-oriented companies and startups who will contribute to the partnership's diversity.
- **Advocacy and Thought Leadership:** Maintaining the position of the partnership as a thought leader in the water sector by actively participating in policy discussions and advocating for positive change. This will also provide an opportunity for joint working between members, through development of white papers, co-development of workstreams and events, improving the collaboration within the partnership.
- **Youth Involvement:** Promoting events and opportunities that involve younger water professionals to also provide them with an opportunity to have a voice and share ideas for the future of water. Attending events to improve the visibility of the partnership amongst young professionals.



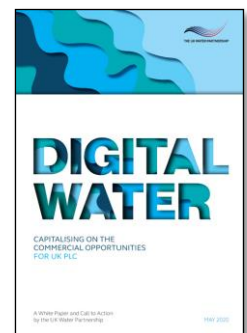
- △ Regular member meetings and networking sessions



- △ Attending international water events such as World Water Tech



- △ Supporting innovation and research such as the Fourth Era Programme



- △ Collaborative development of white papers through workstreams such as the Digital Water White Paper

Our Workstreams and Planned Work for 2024/25

Collaborative Initiatives

This section outlines the initial actions and proposed strategic outlook for the collaborative workstreams that were developed at the UK Water Industry Summit. Through strategic alliances and joint initiatives, the objective is to drive innovation, enhance thought leadership, and develop solutions to the key challenge.

Future Talent and Skills

- During the joint planning session, this challenge area was assigned as a pilot to test how a collaborative initiative could work going forward.
- It was agreed that this would be moved forward together as it is a topic area being focused on by all organisations in the industry.
- The initial action is for Anita Payne from WIF and Hannah Spencer from FWA to write a briefing document for a workshop session to create a strategic plan for the joint initiative.

Data and AI

- This challenge area arose in response to the presentation given by Steve Salvin from Aiimi at the UK Water Industry Summit.
- The UKWP has led on this initiative and is developing a White Paper on the subject.
- The final version of the white paper is to be published in April 2024.
- The objective is to develop the White Paper recommendations through a consultation process with the support of our partners.

River and Catchment Health

- This challenge area is to be taken forward by developing a collaborative public to private sector relationship with DEFRA.

Citizen Engagement and Trust

- This initiative links to the current work being done under the UKWP's Public Value of Water workstream.
- The work will be progressed by working collaboratively to develop and prove a methodology capable of defining and measuring the public value of water and to identify its linkages with the emerging multi capital framework.
- The UKWP will work to coordinate this initiative with the current work being done in this area across the six partners.



Our Existing Workstreams

Since 2015, the UKWP has been working alongside clients, collaborators, and government to drive strategic sector initiatives. The workstreams of the UKWP aim to drive innovation, enhance thought leadership, and develop solutions in specific challenge areas that are chosen by our members. Over the last year, the UKWP have been continuing work on their legacy workstreams and developing work programmes for the new initiatives that were launched in 2023.

Water Resilience

Background:

- Supported by Arup, HR Wallingford and wider contributors in the steering group, the UKWP published a Water Resilience White Paper in February 2022, examining the contribution of water resilience to shaping the industry and the water economy.
- In 2023, the UKWP hosted the Water Resilience Showcase in partnership with Department for Business and Trade. The event was a series of 14 drop-in sessions held by leading practitioners from the UK. This was shared with all UK embassies and aimed to promote UK capability in water resilience further. This has also produced video assets which are uploaded to the UKWP website for anyone to access.

Aims for 24/25:

- The UKWP aims to update the paper with new exemplar case studies.
- The UKWP will continue its collaborative relationship with DBT and look to host another UK Water Resilience Showcase following the success of the 2023 event.

Water Resilient Places

Background:

- The workstream has been set up in response to the concept of ‘Resilient Place’ becoming increasingly prominent in government and agency policy agendas across the UK and more widely.
- The Future Water Resilient Places workstream will be led by a steering group comprising of Deryck Irving from Hydro Nation Chair, Charlie Stratford from UKCEH, the Department for Business and Trade, Tom Flood and Hans Jensen as directors of the UKWP, and potentially with support from the Welsh Government.
- The workstream aims to address the concept of Resilient Place from a water sector perspective, with a focus on developing water-resilient solutions for new places.

Aims for 24/25:

- The workstream aims to produce a consultation document on the challenge area by the end of January 2023, which will set the objectives for the workstream for 2024/25.
- The working group aims to use feedback from planners, urbanists, and engineering colleagues in Scotland to create an example project which will then be taken UK wide.
- The aim is to have engagement finished Summer 2024 and a draft White Paper by Q3 in 2024.



Our workstreams

Circular Economy

Background:

- In 2018, the UKWP held an industry workshop to explore the barriers, enablers, and challenges around circular economy initiatives, which helped to identify the development of a better understanding of the Circular Water Economy and the production of a roadmap for the UK's Circular Water Economy as next steps.
- During 2023, the CE working group defined the requirements for a water sector circular economy marketplace.
- Work is ongoing a draft White Paper that articulates the rationale for, and opportunities related to, circular economy in the water sector including a call to action aimed at raising awareness of and garnering wider support for the development of the marketplace.
- Following a redraft and improved case studies, the UKWP aims to conclude and publish the Circular Economy White Paper by the end of the FY 23.

Aims for 24/25:

- Following the publication of the White Paper, the UKWP aims to form a coalition of the willing with their partners and across the industry in order to implement the key recommendations of the White Paper.

Greenhouse Gases

Background:

- This workstream was initiated from discussions at the UKWP Annual Event in 2022.
- The workstream aims to close the knowledge gap that currently exists in attempts to quantify emissions, which often underestimate the magnitude of emissions and do not fully account for the impact of more potent GHGs.
- The Greenhouse Gases workstream is a collaborative effort led by the Hydro Nation Chair (HNC) Programme and Arup, with the support of Chris Newsome, a director the UKWP.
- This is a cross-sector challenge, and hence, there is a need to establish a working framework of interested and involved partners.

Aims for 24/25:

- The next steps for this workstream are to bring together all the work currently being done into a thought leadership piece through the UKWP. This will bring together work and data from across the research space in the UK and developing recommendations from Europe.
- The UKWP will work collaboratively with UKWIR to define the knowns and the unknowns of GHG emissions across the water cycle.
- This will aim to give research focus to the prioritise areas of unknowns, whilst developing innovative approaches for the better understood issues.



Our workstreams

The Digital Water and Net Zero will have a reduced focus for the UKWP in 2024/25 while the partnership focuses on progressing the collaborative workstreams that have come out of the UK Water Industry Summit.

Digital Water

Background:

- In May 2020, the UKWP digital water workstream published a White Paper and Call to Action to capitalise on commercial opportunities for UK plc.
- The UKWP has been supporting the Fourth Era project since its launch, utilising digital twin technology to better manage water at the landscape scale.
- The UKWP has been instrumental in the UK-India Digital Working Group convening in December 2022 to explore further collaboration opportunities in digital water, highlighting the importance of working together to address global water challenges.

Future Aims:

- Focus UKWP resources on Data and AI through the joint initiative arising from the Water Industry Summit.
- Continue to support Fourth Era project and other initiatives that utilise digital technology to better manage water resources.
- Collaborate with UK water industry and global partners to advance UK digital water expertise and leadership.

Net Zero

Work directly regarding the Net Zero workstream has wound down over the FY 2023/24. The important thought leadership and collaborative outputs from this workstream have fed into many of the workstreams that the UKWP is focussing on now. Thank you to all who have worked on this workstream while it has been active.

For more information about the UK Water Partnership

www.theukwaterpartnership.org

Or contact us:

Tom Flood, Director – tomnflood@gmail.com

Hans Jensen, Director – hans.jensen@theukwaterpartnership.org

Chris Newsome, Director – newsomec@ic24.net

Secretariat – info@theukwaterpartnership.org



THE UK WATER PARTNERSHIP