

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).

As your request contained a number of specific questions, this response restates each part of the request (in bold) and then provides our response:

What year was the last sewage facility built in Cheshire and what capacity it has

Across Cheshire there are 49 Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW), which serve a population equivalent of more than 250 people, with a further 82 small sites. Each site takes sewage from a discreet local catchment.

United Utilities has not built a brand new WwTW in Cheshire since privatisation in 1989. The population of Cheshire has increased by 91,900 from the 1991 census to the 2021 census, an increase of 9.2%. This growth has been managed through the expansion of existing WwTW or implementation of more efficient technologies.

Any correspondence regarding plans to build a new sewage facility in Cheshire

The water industry operates in five-year funding cycles and there are currently no plans to build a new WwTW in Cheshire, in the current five-year cycle, which ends in March 2030. We do, however, constantly review development across the county and assess the impact of new development on the capacity of the sewer network and the impact on the flows to the WwTW. .

What is the average time it takes to build a new sewage facility treatment

This would vary dramatically on the size of the WwTW, but from concept through securing funding, purchasing land, obtaining planning permission, obtaining a discharge permit to completion of construction on site could take a minimum of 5-10 yrs.

Details of the expected capacity left in the current sewage treatment works in Cheshire

This is a complex question to respond to, and it may be easier for us to explain in a call how we manage capacity and what it means for longer-term growth and development. Please let us know if this something you would like to arrange.

Ahead of a possible call, here is some context about the nature and operation of wastewater treatment works and what it means for capacity.

Most wastewater treatment works are made up of a series of different treatment stages; screening, preliminary treatment, primary treatment, secondary treatment and, in some cases, tertiary treatment. How capacity is measured for each of these different stages varies – for some stages it is based on what is called dry weather flow (i.e. how much the WwTW treats when it is dry), for others it relates to what is known as full flow to treatment (which is linked to rainfall), whilst the capacity of other stages is based upon measures such as pollutant load (in various forms).

Therefore, the capacity of each WwTW is based upon a series of different measures for the different process stages making a calculation of how much capacity is left very complicated.

Added to any consideration of what capacity is left at each WwTW is an assessment of the impact of forecasted population and business growth, and climate change, on our treatment and network assets across the North West. This assessment is completed every five years as part of our Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs). As we stated above, there are no plans to build a new WwTW in Cheshire in the current business plan.

This allows early warning and identification of treatment works that will require future investment to continue operating within environmental permits set by the Environment Agency. This investment need is then included within our 5-yearly Business Plan submission to Ofwat.

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

[REDACTED]

We'd love to hear your feedback on how we handled your request! If you have a moment, please complete our short survey [here](#) – your input helps us improve our service.