



# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



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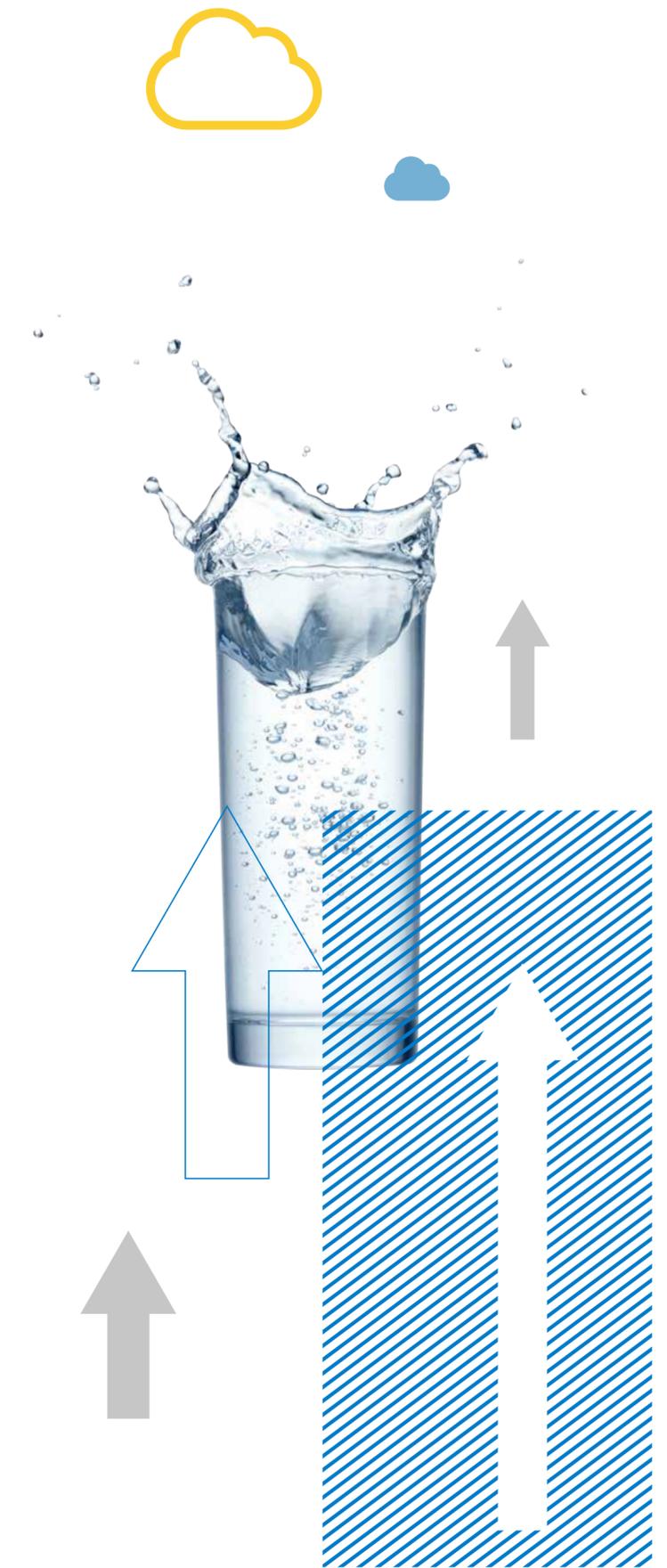
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# FOREWORD

The Drinking Water Inspectorate continues to develop in response to evolving policies and legislation, utilising innovative principles and practices of regulation, for the industry it regulates. This strategy sets our vision with emphasis on the objectives to be a responsible, accountable, open and transparent drinking water quality regulator, focusing the water industry for the benefit of the public of England and Wales.

Our objective is to improve the quality and sufficiency of drinking water supplies in England and Wales; working within our regulatory remit to ensure the protection of public health and the maintenance of public confidence and trust in drinking water, which must remain central.

This strategy balances how we deliver effective and proportionate regulation of the quality of drinking water supplies; requiring water suppliers to strategically plan to manage drinking water supplies as their primary duty and responsibility to their consumers.

We set out here an ambitious, evidence-based strategy, which addresses long-term future challenges, including climate change and increasing demand, without compromising on water quality or sufficiency. The strategy directs the continuing need to deliver safe, sufficient drinking water supplies; taking decisive and timely independent regulatory action in the interests of consumers; scrutinising water suppliers' operations from source to tap, utilising company data to identify risks and carrying out investigations.

We endeavour to drive our purpose beyond compliance, utilising innovative approaches, which are independent and risk based.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcus Rink', written in a cursive style.

**Marcus Rink**  
Chief Inspector of Drinking Water





# INTRODUCTION

Safe, clean drinking water is vital to public health and the wellbeing of our society. This is ever more important in the face of significant challenges to drinking water supplies from the impacts of climate change, and on the quality and availability of water resources. It is essential that good quality drinking water, and the necessary investment by companies to achieve it, is maintained into the future.

The presence of an independent regulator is fundamental to how we reassure the public about the safety of our drinking water when we turn on the tap. Our regulatory framework has resulted in some of the best drinking water quality in Europe, and governments around the world have adopted the basic principles of this successful approach.



# THE DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

AN OVERVIEW





# DWI - AN OVERVIEW

The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) is the independent regulator of drinking water quality for public supplies in England and Wales, and operates as a business unit within Defra's Floods and Water Directorate. The Directorate has formal responsibility for sponsoring the Inspectorate in Defra.

The Inspectorate differs from other business units within Defra, in that certain duties are vested directly in its Chief Inspector by statute. Other powers are delegated to the Chief Inspector by the Secretary of State and Welsh ministers; the Chief Inspector reports on these matters directly to ministers and is accountable to the Director for Human Resources and Financial Management Matters. All staff in the Inspectorate are civil servants.

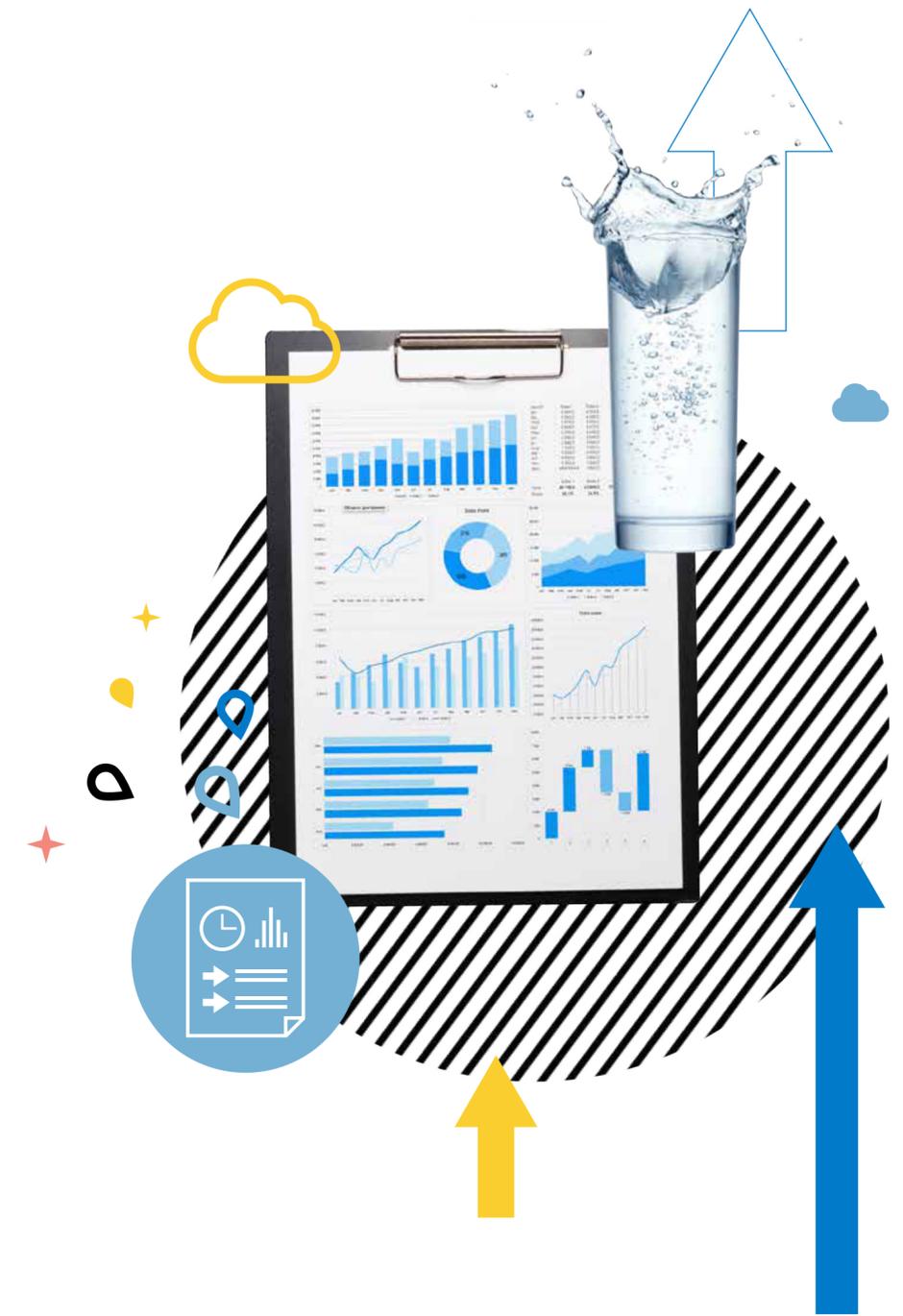
The Drinking Water Inspectorate recovers its costs from the industry which it regulates but remains accountable to Parliament for that expenditure. As Principal Accounting Officer, the Permanent Secretary is the principal adviser to the Secretary of State on resource allocation and proper financial management. These responsibilities are delegated through the Director General

(Environment and Rural Group), to the Director (Floods and Water), and on to the Chief Inspector, insofar as they relate to the Inspectorate's expenditure.

The Inspectorate produces its own independent reports for ministers in both England and Wales; reporting on the operational performance of the water companies that it regulates in both countries, and on the performance of local authorities in their duties with respect to private water supplies.

The Inspectorate's day-to-day operations are generally independent of the Directorate. For example, it manages its own evidence programme; its inspectors deal directly with consumers and the media, seeking information about drinking water safety and regulation; and it has its own website.

The Inspectorate's operational performance is monitored routinely by formal and informal liaison with Welsh Government and Defra officials, and is reported publicly in our business performance report.





# DWI - OUR MAIN STATUTORY DUTIES

The DWI was established by Parliament in 1990 to provide independent assurance that the privatised water industry in England and Wales delivered safe, clean drinking water to consumers.

The regulatory framework for water supplies in England and Wales, including the powers and duties under which it operates and the duties of water suppliers, is established in legislation.

The Chief Inspector of Drinking Water is appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Welsh ministers, and acts on their behalf. Certain powers are vested directly in the Chief Inspector which ensure independence in the Inspectorate's work. In addition to the Inspectorate's regulatory role, the Chief Inspector and his inspectors are the appointed technical advisers to the Secretary of State and Welsh ministers on all drinking water matters.

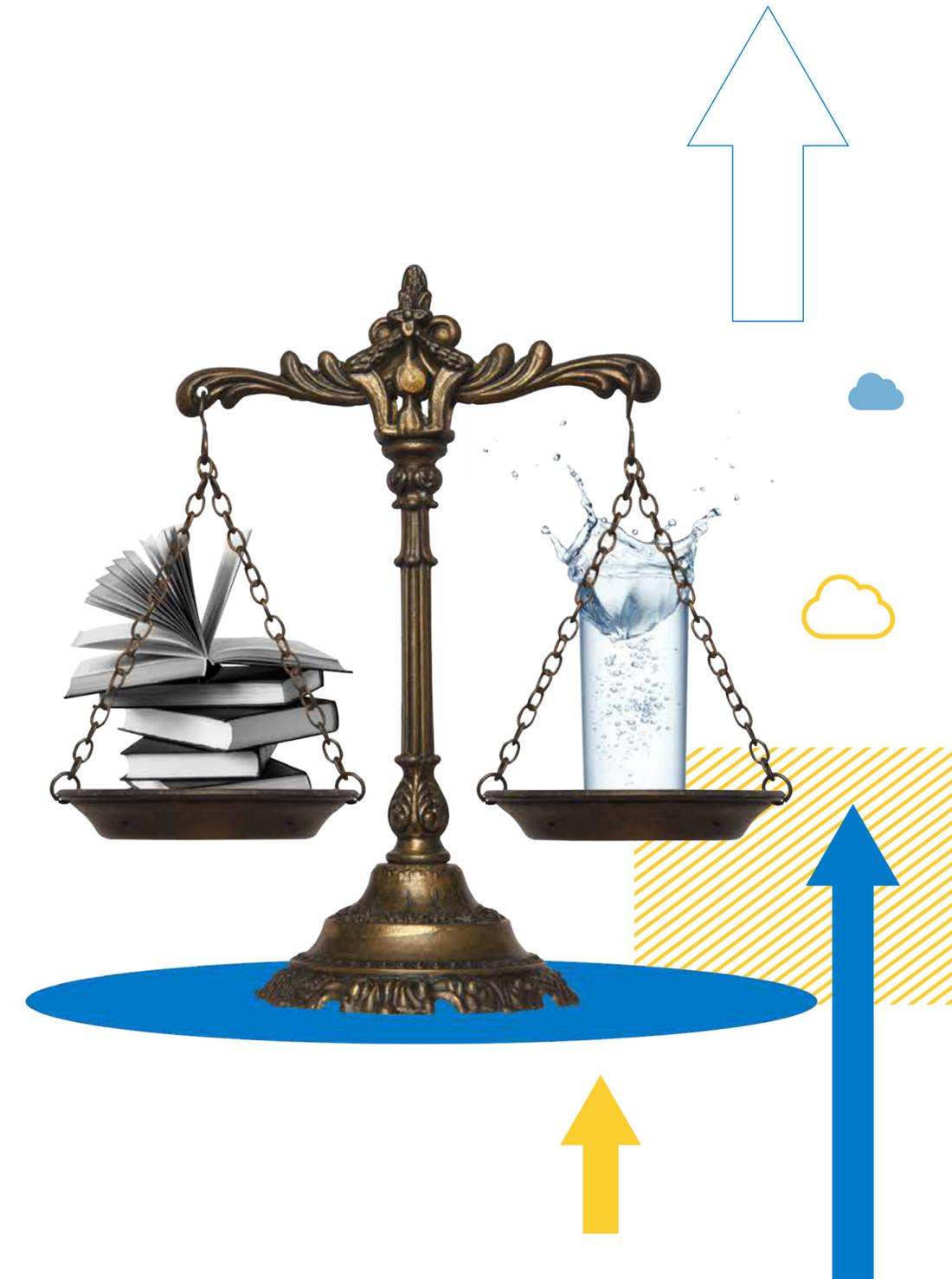
The primary legislation setting out the Inspectorate's functions and duties is contained in the Water Industry Act 1991 (WIA) (as amended by the Water Act 2003, the Water Act 2014 and the Water Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments etc.) Order 2017). Water supply matters are also devolved to the Welsh Government by means of the Government of Wales Act 1998

The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 (England) as amended by the Water Supply (Water Quality) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Miscellaneous Amendments etc.) Regulations 2019 – S.I. No. 526; the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Wales) 2018; the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016 (as amended); and the Private Water Supplies (Wales) Regulations 2017, made under the WIA – referred to collectively as the Regulations – set out the regulatory requirements for the quality of public and private drinking water supplies.

In addition, the Network and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations 2018 set out requirements to protect the provision of essential services, including water supplies. Equivalent legislation and regulators exist in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The provisions in Section 68 of the WIA (concerning enforcement) have been formally delegated to the Chief Inspector by ministers.

The provisions in Section 70 of the WIA (concerning proceedings against undertakers and others who supply water unfit for human consumption) are vested directly in the Chief Inspector. Responsibility for supporting ministers in some other requirements of the WIA is shared between the Inspectorate and policy officials in the Welsh Government and Defra.



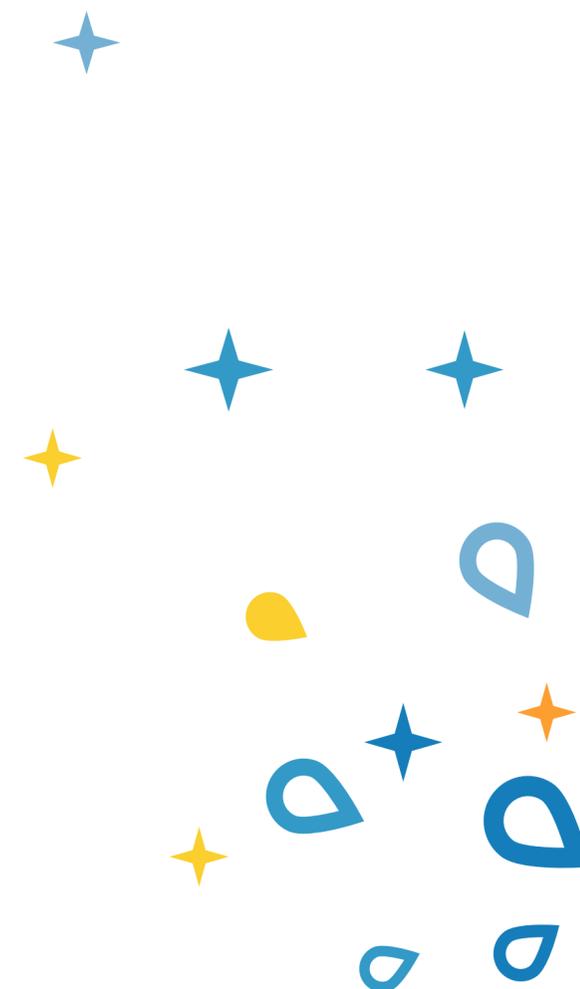


# DWI - OUR MAIN NON-STATUTORY FUNCTIONS

The Inspectorate's work is wide-ranging, covering all aspects of the quality and sufficiency of public water supplies. The collective technical expertise of its staff covers all aspects of the science, engineering and management of drinking water supply. Closely aligned with its statutory duties, the Inspectorate has responsibility for many other functions, including:

- provision of advice and guidance to water suppliers on all aspects of drinking water supply
- dealing with queries relating to drinking water quality from consumers, organisations and businesses
- provision of advice to ministers and officials on drinking water supply issues, and on Parliamentary Questions and other queries arising
- working collaboratively with the other regulators in the water industry
- provision of advice to ministers on private water supplies (that is, those not supplied by a water company) and related issues
- provision of advice and support to local authorities on all aspects of drinking water quality, including private water supplies
- management of Defra's Water Quality and Health research programme
- provision of information to the Secretary of State in order to publish a report on the quality of drinking water to inform consumers

It is the responsibility of policy officials to advise their ministers on policy matters arising in connection with drinking water supply.





# HOW THE **INSPECTORATE** IS MANAGED

The Inspectorate has a single office located in central London, but its staff work flexibly across England and Wales.

Its inspectors are experienced professionals, with strong technical, scientific or engineering backgrounds. The Inspectorate's technical and support staff includes experts in data management, information and knowledge management, and business administration. The work requires a high level of expertise in all aspects of drinking water supply; the interpretation of law, fair and proportionate enforcement of legal requirements, and the provision of sound advice and guidance to all levels of industry stakeholders and government.

The Inspectorate's senior management team has overall responsibility for the management and strategic direction of the Inspectorate. Delivery of day-to-day activities is the responsibility of the Inspectorate's management team of principal inspectors.

For human resources, recruitment and pay purposes, the Inspectorate staff are bound by Defra's policies and follow Civil Service guidelines.

The Inspectorate operates a better regulation initiative. This allows salaried staff from water companies to join the Inspectorate for training and development purposes for a period of six months. The secondees function as temporary assessors and are authorised to carry out any of the Inspectorate's day-to-day functions; they are not paid by Defra and do not fill inspector posts.





# HOW THE **INSPECTORATE** IS FINANCED

The majority of the Inspectorate's operating costs are funded by water companies through cost recovery for regulatory services. Costs are also recovered from commercial organisations for approval of their products for use in drinking water treatment and distribution.

The Inspectorate receives a small amount of funds from Defra, which relates to work in support of policy advice; the functions the Inspectorate carries out internationally; and for its work on private water supplies. This funding is classed as programme expenditure and falls within Defra's Floods and Water Directorate's total programme allocation. The requirements of the Inspectorate are taken into account in the same way as other programme requirements for which the Directorate is responsible in its annual business planning and resource allocation exercises. However, the strategy of DWI is one of full-cost recovery and will work towards recovering this element of the budget without recourse to Defra.

New Fees' Orders for the financial year 2016 to 2017 came into force on 1 April 2016 (for England) and 8 September 2016 (for Wales). In 2017 to 2018, the DWI reviewed the time spent on assessment of water supply management arrangements and made some adjustments to the values used in cost recovery. The Inspectorate will keep its fees under review to ensure it continues to recover the full cost of its regulatory activities. In particular, changes in staff salary and the sampling regime will have to be taken into account, as a result of the 2018 regulations to implement the revision to Annex II of the Drinking Water Directive. However, any additional or new regulatory activity would likely be included within the existing functions of the order. The objective in 2020 will be to charge for all activities permitted within the order, so that the full budget can be recovered to finance this strategy.



# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES





# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## VISION:

To protect public health and maintain public confidence by securing sufficient, safe and clean drinking water, now and for future generations.





# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## **Strategic objective 1: To improve and protect the quality and sufficiency of drinking water supplies in England and Wales.**

We will continue to deliver, as we have been doing for 30 years, our core regulatory functions to ensure drinking water is safe, secure and clean. In order to reduce reliance on end-point testing we will continue to promote a risk-management approach, which has proven to deliver a real reduction in risk for consumers. Water safety planning is advocated by the World Health Organisation and has been in place in England and Wales for over a decade.

In order to deliver effective and informed regulation, our work is based upon robust science and evidence. We believe that changing times and shifting challenges, affecting social attitudes, climate and the environment, should be key priorities in our approach. This approach supports sustainable and resilient drinking water supplies, through long-term planning, by those we regulate now and in the future.

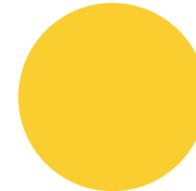




# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## **Strategic objective 2: To protect public health and maintain public confidence in drinking water.**

As the drinking water quality regulator, we conduct independent assessments of drinking water quality; we provide accurate and relevant drinking water quality information; and we publish the actions taken to protect consumers. We are a transparent and open organisation publishing our information and performance to government, suppliers, other stakeholders and consumers. Through this approach, consumers can source information about the quality of their water, so they can make informed choices about their use of water.

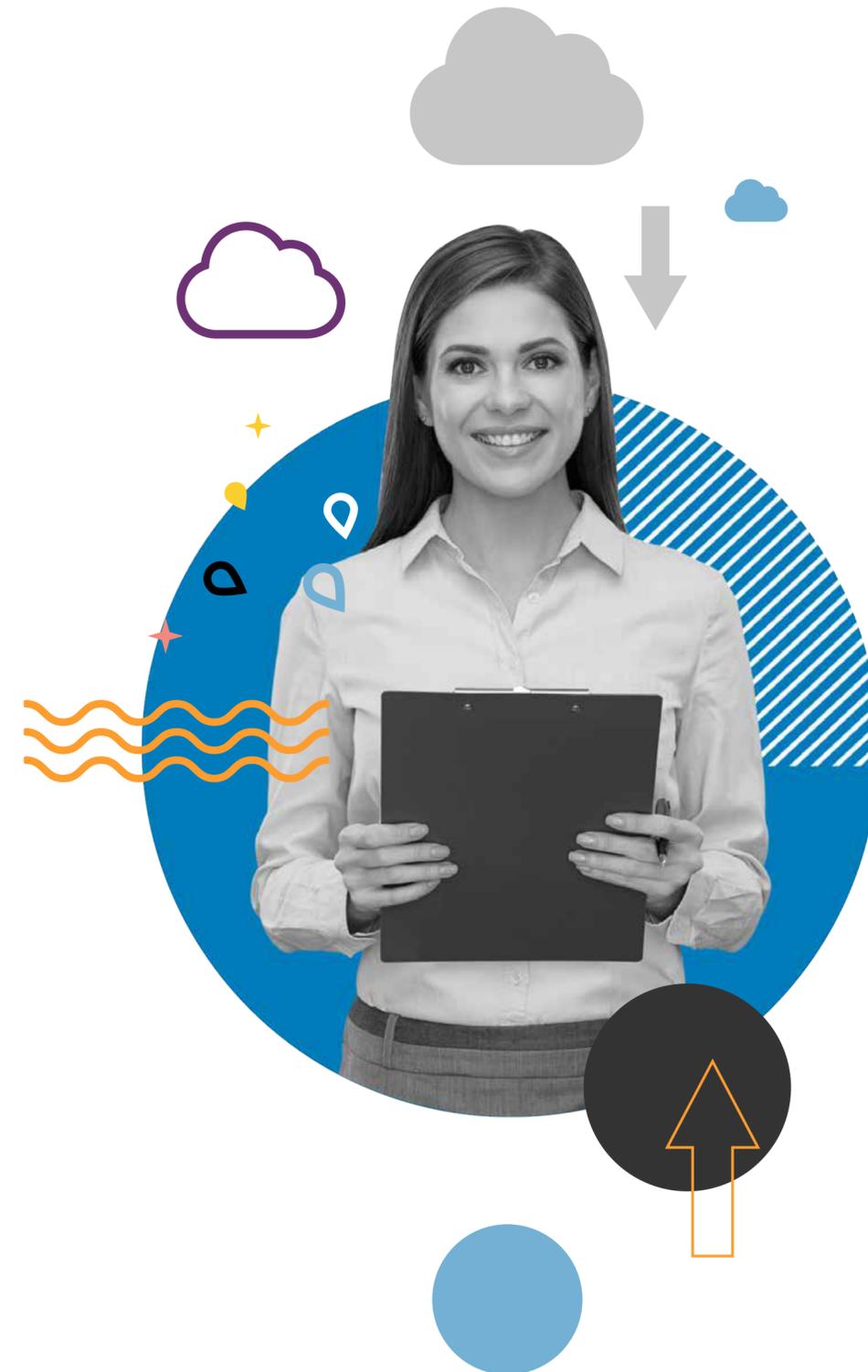




# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## **Strategic objective 3: To ensure effective and proportionate regulation of the quality of drinking water supplies.**

As an independent regulator, and working within current legislation, our activities and decisions follow the principles of better regulation, embracing a risk-based approach. Our staff have the necessary skills and knowledge of the water industry and are core to delivering these principles. We will develop and employ good practices that are fit for purpose, providing timely and technical advice to all who need it.





# VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

**Strategic objective 4: To promote strategic planning for water quality and sufficiency now, and for future generations.**

The delivery of safe and sufficient drinking water supplies relies on effective long-term planning. We will provide effective scrutiny of suppliers' plans to ensure that all operations, from source to tap, are safe and secure in delivering our drinking water for current and future generations.



# OUR STRATEGY IN DETAIL

dwi





# 1. LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

**Objective:** To ensure water suppliers comply with drinking water quality legislation.

We will deliver proportionate and appropriate regulation, commensurate with current legislation, to ensure that drinking water supplies remain wholesome and sufficient now and for future generations. In doing so, we will protect public health and seek to maintain public confidence.

**Our approach:** We will advise policy makers to ensure that legislation is fit for purpose, deliverable, and relevant for the water industry and for private water suppliers.

We will deliver regulation of public water supplies through appropriately trained and competent staff, using our enforcement powers, as appropriate, to protect consumers. We will oversee the activities of water suppliers; carrying out our audit investigations and assessment functions in an efficient and transparent manner, in the interests of consumers.





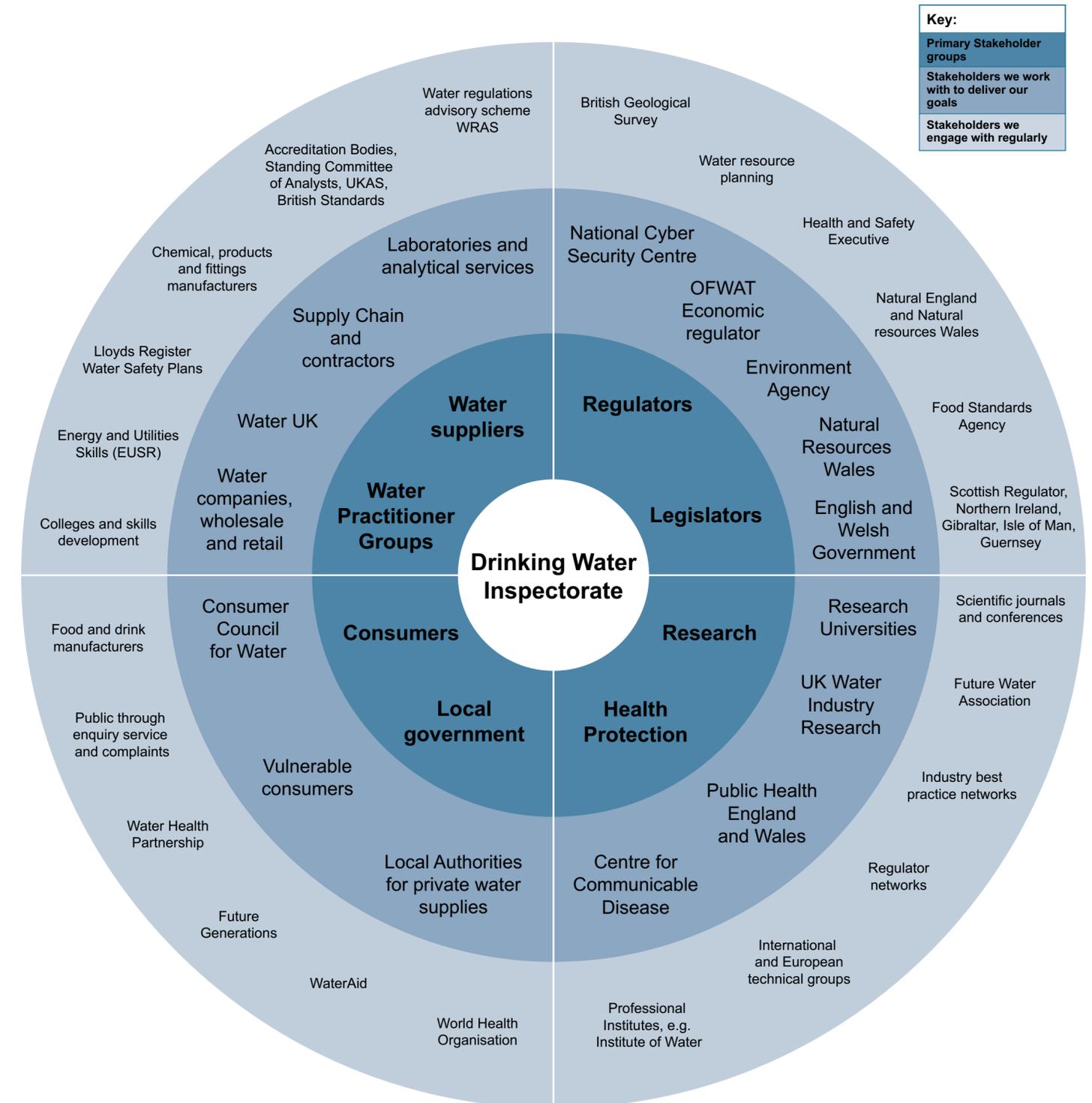
# 2. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

**Objective:** To engage with all stakeholders, including water suppliers, supply chains, government, regulators, and consumers, in the pursuit of maintaining and improving wholesome and sufficient drinking water.

**Our approach:** On policy, we will engage at all levels on strategic objectives for future decision-making. We will work collaboratively with other regulators, and engage with their strategies to ensure that drinking water quality is always considered within the scope of any strategic decision.

We will engage with water suppliers at all levels, including board and working levels, to ensure the resilient delivery of wholesome and sufficient water. We will promote the significant role of the supply chains for water companies when considering their operation to maintain the supply of wholesome water.

We will put consumers at the centre of our decision-making.





## 3. ASSURANCE

**Objective:** To operate to the standards expected by the Regulators' Code of Compliance to ensure we deliver open, transparent, proportionate, and risk-based regulation. We will be fair and independent.

**Our approach:** Publication: we will publish our enforcement policy, and associated appeal mechanisms, a report on our actions, and our annual Business Performance report, in a straightforward manner. Our strategies and reports will be shared on our website.

Behaviour: we will respond to non-compliance in a fair and equitable manner but take enforcement action if required. We will ensure even-handed application of regulatory processes on companies and be transparent in all the performance measures we apply.

We will always provide a timely explanation of our decisions to those we regulate, to enable them to make better decisions and allow them to work towards full compliance.

We will recognise efforts made by companies towards achieving compliance in a fair and equitable manner.

We will avoid unnecessary regulatory burden to those we regulate and will hold ourselves to account through our own policies and procedures.

We will seek feedback from those we regulate in order to foster productive working relationships.





## 4. ORGANISATION

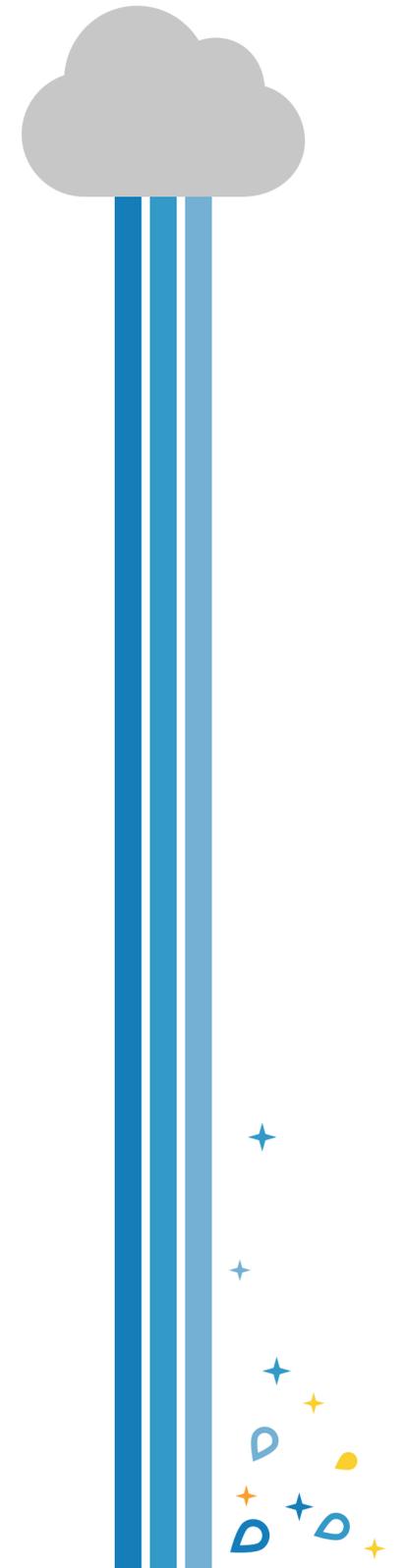
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**Objective:** To ensure that the structure of the organisation is designed to deliver our strategic objectives, and that our staff are competent, consistent, efficient, and effective.

**Our approach:** We will maintain our highly-skilled workforce, consisting of a professional, multi-disciplinary group of experts.

Our function is to provide high-quality assurance of the effectiveness and integrity of companies who deliver wholesome water, based on sound evidence.

The central tenet of our role when we were formed through an Act of Parliament was to protect consumers, and this remains the same today. On this platform, we will seek to develop and expand our identity and resources, in an organisational structure that reflects our core principles and supports their delivery.





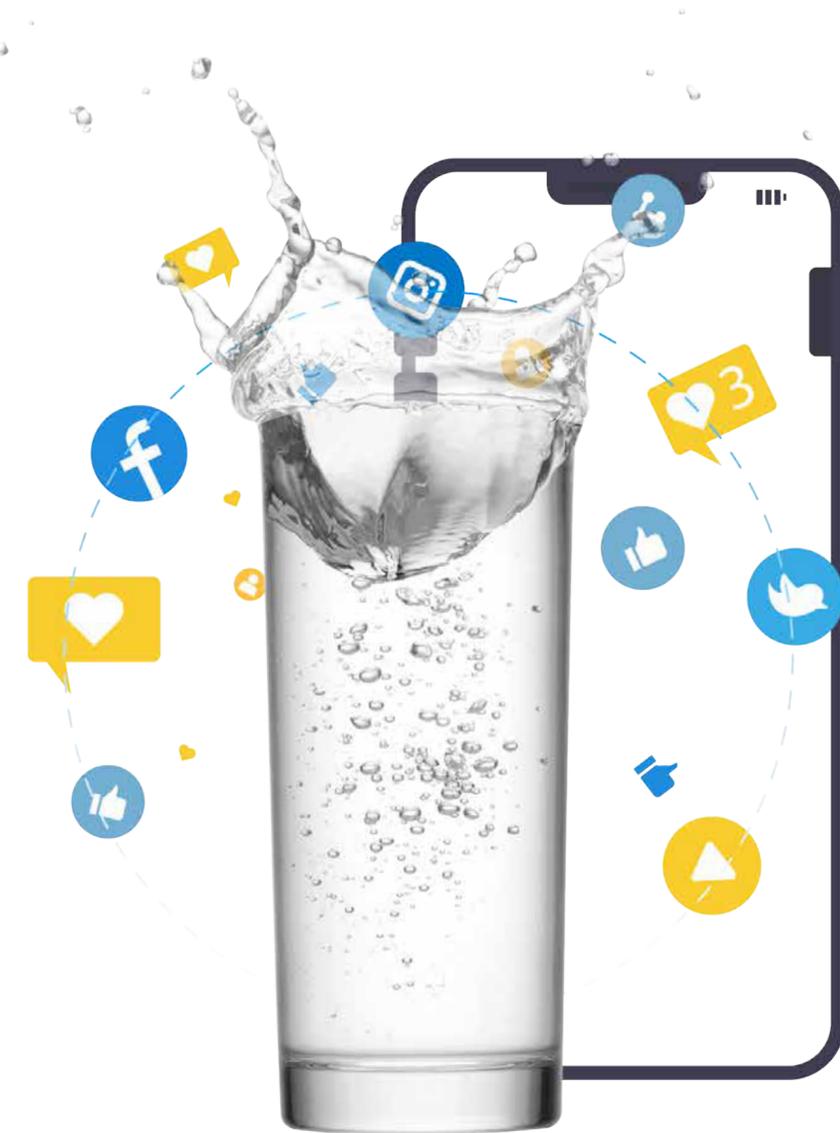
# 5. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Objective:** To use digital technology to collect and report information in an accessible and reliable way for all stakeholders.

**Our approach:** Ensuring that our website is fit for purpose, accurate and relevant.

To develop IT which allows easy interface for the collection of information from stakeholders (who are under an obligation to provide it), in a way that is robust and reliable.

To develop interfaces which allow dissemination of relevant material where possible to stakeholders, including water companies, local authorities and consumers.





## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

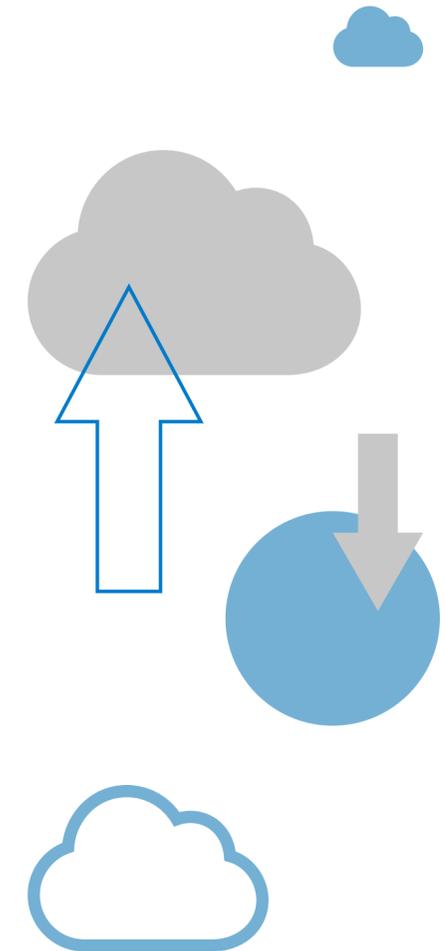
**Objective:** To use effective communication tools to obtain all relevant information in order to make sound decisions in the public interest; and to disseminate relevant information to stakeholders, including ministers, consumers, water companies and regulators.

**Our approach:** To engage with relevant groups, where drinking water quality is concerned, on an international, national and local level.

We will employ tested methodology to derive intelligence on drinking water quality from whatever source, including research, political, international, media, and interested groups.

We will provide timely and technical advice and guidance to water suppliers, governments, local authorities, health officials and other regulators, at both national and international levels; we will explore the potential contribution of social media to this objective.

To ensure that consumers have sufficient information to have confidence in the quality of their drinking water.





# 7. PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES

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**Objective:** To ensure an appropriate regulatory regime that keeps pace with developments that may affect drinking water. To ensure a high level of compliance with that regime by water suppliers, so that consumers have confidence in their drinking water supplies.

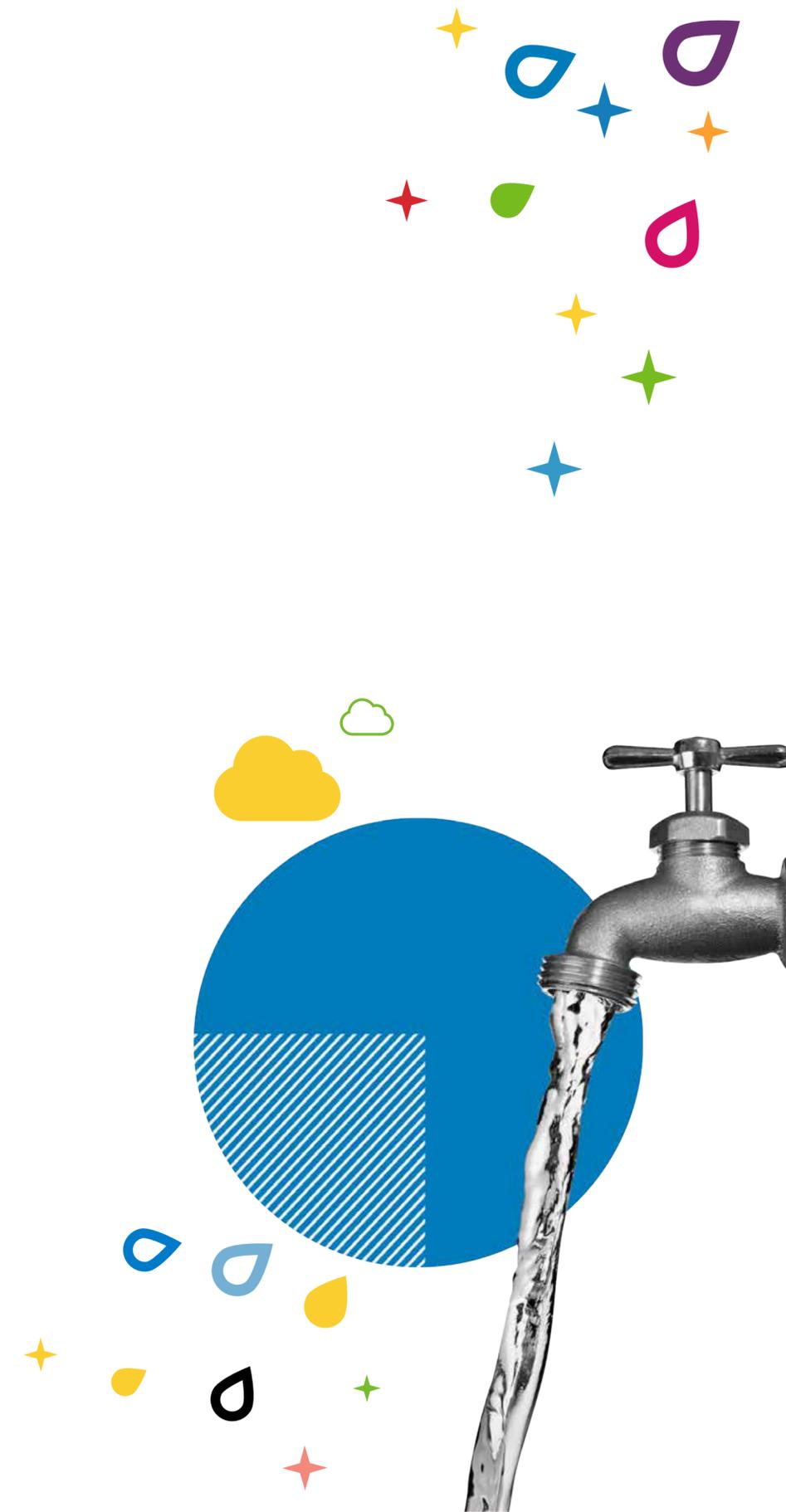
**Our approach:** To ensure legislation is current and relevant; to provide tools to collate and report information; and to act on behalf of the Secretary of State to ensure that we deliver their responsibilities.

We will continue with the enactment of the WIA to protect public health on behalf of consumers.

To provide technical advice and information to Defra and the Welsh Government to meet requirements of the legislation.

To ensure the tools and resources are available to collate and maintain the national record on compliance with the public water supply regulations, and to report the current status to ministers.

To develop and maintain evidence-based measures that bring about positive change and improvement within the industry.



## 8. PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

**Objective:** To promote effective regulation of private water supplies by local authorities, so that consumers enjoy the same level of protection as for public supplies.

**Our approach:** To ensure legislation is current and relevant.

To help provide tools to collate and report information.

To ensure that we deliver our responsibilities under the WIA, including hearing representations on notices served.

To provide technical advice and information to inform local authorities, helping them to meet the requirements of the legislation.

To ensure the tools and resources are available to collate and maintain the national record on the location and water quality of private water supplies; and to report the current status to ministers.





# 9. LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS AND CHALLENGES

**Objective:** To engage with government and stakeholders on policy and strategy to tackle future challenges facing drinking water supplies and water resources.

**Our approach:** To take into account the effect of climate change (which could result in both drought and flooding, and which may affect drinking water quality and sufficiency) and promote actions for adaptation and mitigation.

We will recognise changes in demographics, future generational needs and expectations, and will support proposals for any new infrastructure needed to maintain a sufficient supply of wholesome water.

We recognise that the provision of water has a social purpose, and the value of water should be reflected in wider society.





# 10. NETWORK AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

## Introduction

The Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS) Directive provides legal measures to protect essential services and infrastructure, by improving the security of network and information systems. The Directive applies to those sectors which are vital for the economy and society, and provide services such as the supply of electricity, water, healthcare and transport.

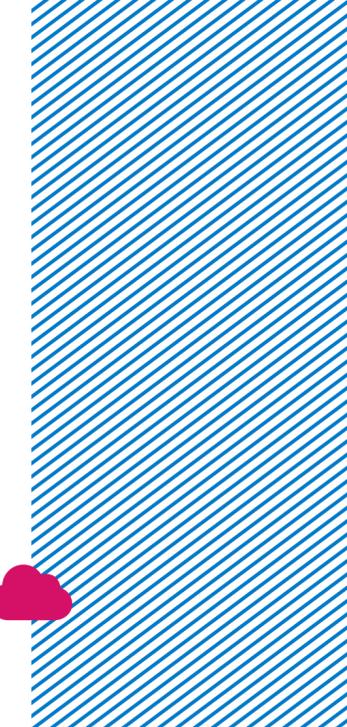
The NIS Directive was adopted by the European Parliament on 6 July 2016, and EU Member States had until 9 May 2018 to transpose the Directive into domestic legislation. The UK implemented the requirements of the NIS Directive through the NIS Regulations 2018, which came into force on 10 May 2018.

Drinking water supply and distribution was designated an essential service within Schedule 1 of the regulations, with the threshold for operators of essential services within the sector, identified in Schedule 2, as the supplier of potable water to 200,000 or more people.

The DWI is the delegated authority responsible for checking that water companies have taken the appropriate action to maintain network security in the supply of drinking water quality, and to safeguard public health.

The NIS regulations provide legal measures to protect essential services and infrastructure by improving the security of network and information systems. Operational responsibilities of the competent authority function, under the regulations for the water sector, have been conferred on the DWI.

The DWI will: prepare and publish guidance documents to assist operators of essential services; receive and assess incident notifications; and undertake incident assessments, conduct inspections (audits) and enforcement (including issuing notices and penalties), where necessary.



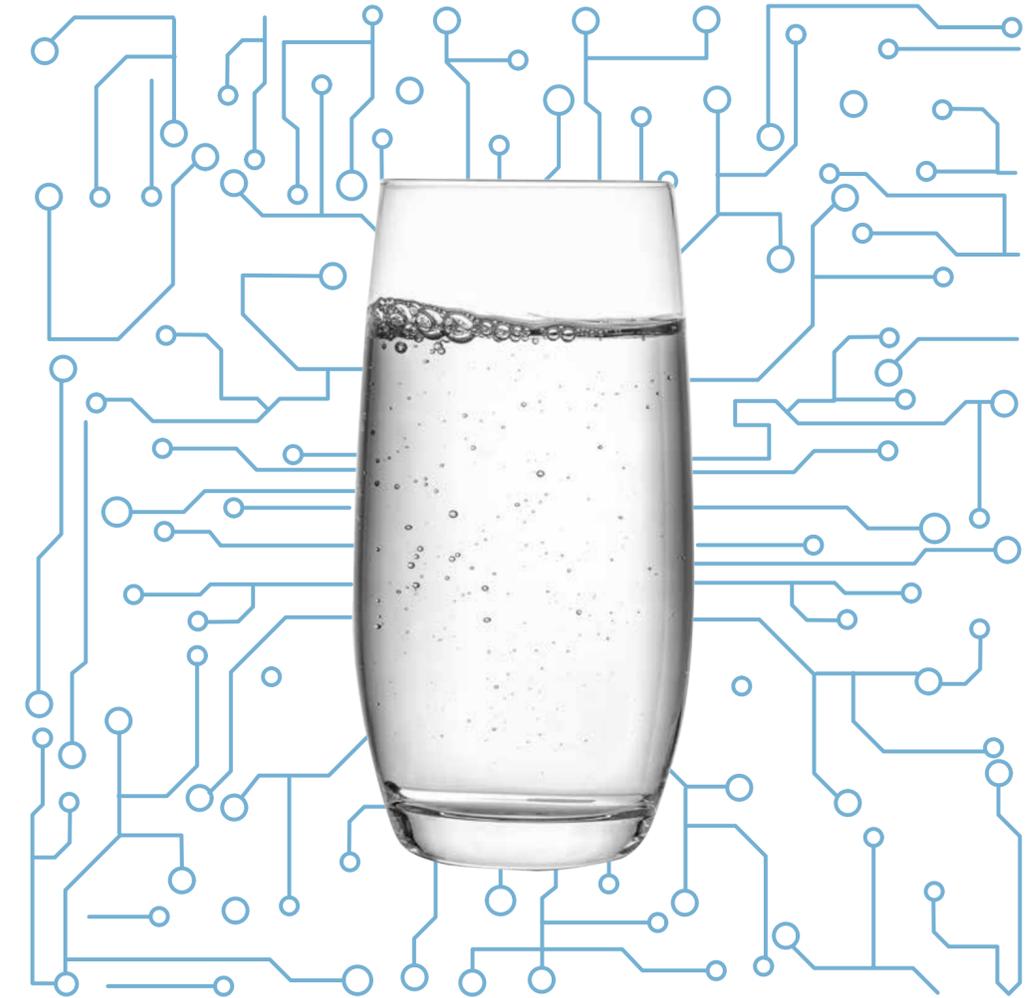


# 10. NETWORK AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

**Objective:** To ensure the industry is resilient to cyberattacks, by identifying risks and promoting their mitigation; ensuring threats are contained and that lessons are learned.

**Our approach:** We will have sufficient staff who are appropriately trained.

We will plan to drive company investment, while working with other regulators within the regulatory framework. This will be achieved by charging fees which are equitable, proportionate, and justifiable to the objective.





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Drinking Water Inspectorate  
Area 5B  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
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Tel: 0300 068 6400

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