

Statement of Common Ground

Between: Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and South East Water (SEW)

Relating to: Water supply infrastructure requirements to support the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan

1. Purpose of this Statement

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground records the shared understanding between Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and South East Water (SEW) regarding the water supply infrastructure required to support the level and distribution of growth proposed in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It provides evidence of ongoing engagement and collaboration and supports the Infrastructure Delivery Plan by confirming areas of agreement and identifying any matters where further work is required.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 SDC is responsible for preparing the Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, identifying infrastructure needs arising from growth, and securing delivery through planning policy and developer contributions.
- 2.2 South East Water is one of four statutory water supply undertakers operating within Sevenoaks District. It supplies clean water to roughly the eastern half of the District, including Sevenoaks town, Otford, Kemsing, Dunton Green, Hartley, New Ash Green, West Kingsdown, Chiddingstone Causeway, Leigh and Penshurst. South East Water is responsible for planning, maintaining and upgrading water supply infrastructure, assessing capacity, and ensuring a secure and sustainable supply in line with statutory obligations.

3. Evidence Considered

- 3.1 Both parties have considered the following evidence in forming this Statement:
- The scale and distribution of growth set out in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan;
 - The Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - South East Water's Water Resources Management Plan 2024 (WRMP24);
 - South East Water's business plan 2025-2030 (AMP8);
 - National policy and regulatory requirements, including Ofwat and Environment Agency guidance;
 - Site-specific assessments and ongoing discussions between SDC and South East Water; and
 - Information on existing and planned water supply infrastructure across the District.

4. Areas of Agreement

4.1 SDC and South East Water agree that:

1. The level and distribution of growth proposed in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan has been reviewed and understood.
2. South East Water's current WRMP24 does not fully reflect the scale of growth proposed in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. WRMP24 is based on 2022 population forecasts, and similar discrepancies are being experienced across the wider region due to recent changes in national housing requirements.
3. South East Water has commenced preparation of WRMP29, which will incorporate the full level of growth proposed in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and identify the measures and investment required to meet future demand, including any upgrades to existing infrastructure.
4. The majority of new housing in the District is expected between 2030 and 2042, and both parties are committed to working collaboratively to ensure WRMP29 appropriately plans for this impact.
5. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated regularly and will incorporate all relevant upgrade projects as they are identified through WRMP29 or other technical assessments.
6. South East Water's business plan includes a committed scheme within WRZ1 (Tunbridge Wells) and WRZ6 (Maidstone), which addresses resilience and water quality improvements at Hartley and Hartley Water Treatments Works, including booster pump upgrades, new water quality monitors and new water mains, at a cost of £2.7m, to be completed by 31 January 2030. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan correctly identifies this project.
7. As development proposals come forward, South East Water will work with SDC and developers through South East Water's developer enquiry process to undertake detailed network modelling and ensure any necessary reinforcement is delivered ahead of occupation.
8. SDC and South East Water will continue to work collaboratively on planning applications to secure appropriate network reinforcements and ensure timely delivery of required water supply infrastructure.
9. Delivery of water supply infrastructure will be secured through planning conditions and developer contributions, in line with Local Plan Policy UD1 and South East Water's published requirements for development engagement.

10. Both parties recognise the importance of early engagement, particularly where infrastructure constraints may require long lead-in times for delivery.

5. Areas of Ongoing Work / Matters Not Yet Agreed

5.1 The following matters require further work or clarification:

1. Incorporation of Local Plan growth into South East Water's population forecasts for WRMP29, expected later in 2026.
2. Identification of specific upgrade schemes required to support Local Plan growth, to be confirmed through WRMP29 and subsequent modelling.
3. Detailed feasibility, costings and sequencing for any required network reinforcements.
4. Ongoing refinement of modelling as site-specific development proposals progress to planning application stage.

5.2 Both parties are committed to resolving these matters through continued engagement.

6. Delivery and Phasing

6.1 SDC and South East Water acknowledge that the delivery of water supply infrastructure will depend on:

- The timing and phasing of development;
- Detailed design and feasibility;
- Alignment with South East Water's investment programmes;
- Availability of land and access for construction; and
- Funding availability and developer contributions.

6.2 Indicative delivery timescales are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and will be refined as further information becomes available in due course.

7. Signatures

Signed on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council	
Name:	
Role:	

Date:	
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Signed on behalf of South East Water	
Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

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