

Water **SMART** Street Pilot

Smarter Water Management

We believe water makes the North West greener, healthier and stronger.

There's evidence that climate change is having an impact, but 'urban creep' plays its part in the form of surfaces that don't help with drainage – things like patios, extensions and driveways. Several record-breaking weather events have caused flooding, power cuts and travel disruption in the local area.

Flood risks are higher in the North West. It's the wettest region in the country. That situation is likely to get worse, so, together, we must prepare for more regular weather events.

Is change inevitable?

Yes. Weather patterns are always changing. We cannot ignore the threat of climate change. It's likely that storms will be stronger and happen more often, summers will get hotter, and winters wetter. All of these events have the potential to cause damage and disruption.



What are we doing about it?

Our business is already working hard to build a more resilient network. We're reducing our own impact on the environment – only using electricity from renewable sources – and as one of the biggest energy users in the North West, that alone is greatly reducing carbon emissions.

In our innovation labs, we're testing all kinds of ideas to help reduce the amount of surface water that enters our network. From gravity fed systems to innovative new roofs on Manchester's tallest buildings, we'll scale up our most successful pilots to benefit the whole of the North West.

As you would expect, we're putting water at the heart of nature's recovery:



Improving water systems such as the River Wyre



Planning to help mitigate environmental challenges



Protecting and enhancing a wide range of wildlife



Testing new ideas through Water SMART Street

Water SMART Street

Water SMART Street is our way of testing ideas on a small scale as we try to alleviate surface water and sewer flooding. Existing systems can often be overwhelmed in heavy rainfall, and we want to reduce the amount of rainwater entering the combined sewer system.

Traditionally, this involves installing tanks to handle the increased volume of water – slowly letting it flow into the system as capacity becomes available. It's usually successful, but it's time consuming, disruptive and reliant on a large amount of space to accommodate the tanks.

SMART water butts

One of the pilots we're running at the moment involves using smaller tanks – SMART water butts. Each one measures 58cm wide and is 99cm tall. It's a standard 227L green recycled plastic barrel, fitted with an autonomous solar powered, smart rainwater management system.

Each SMART water butt is connected to a downpipe from the roof and fitted with a small, solar-powered and weather-protected computer-controlled box at its side.



How does it work?

The SMART water butt transmits information that tells us how much rainwater has been collected. We can then release that in a controlled way – when the sewers aren't being overwhelmed by rain. Previous trials show these systems are up to 19 times more effective.

With whole communities working together, we could stop around 22,700 litres of excess water at a time from entering the sewer network.

If it's successful, we'll run more trials with a view to installing these SMART water butts right across the North West – helping make the North West greener, healthier and stronger too.



Join our FREE Smart water butt Pilot

Join our FREE Smart water butt Pilot. We're installing 75 SMART water butts now in Wrea Green, with a view to rolling them out across the region on completion of a successful pilot.

Depending on the size of your roof, we may recommend installing two water butts. Or, if possible, one at the front and one at the rear of your property – but you'll have the final say, based on what's right for you.



Simply scan here to sign up

Or go online to sign up now: www.uuhub.co.uk/wreagreen/

FAQs

We've prepared answers to some questions that we think you might have.

How does it work?

The SMART water butt collects rainwater, transmits information to confirm how much is available, and is then emptied on demand into the sewage network at an optimum time.

What are the benefits?

SMART water butts help prevent the sewage network from being overwhelmed. 100 butts would collect 22,700 Litres of water freeing up that capacity from the sewage network.

Where can I see the results?

We'll keep you up to date with progress of the pilot on our website: www.uuhub.co.uk/WaterSmartStreetPilot

How long with the pilot run for?

12 months.

How big is it?

The SMART water butt measures 58cm wide and is 99cm tall, and is a 227l green recycled plastic barrel.

Can I choose a different colour, shape and size?

No, all SMART water butts are issued in a standard format.

How many can I have?

If your property meets our criteria then we may install more than one SMART water butt.

Will you be spying on me?

No. The SMART water butts only transmit information about the water they've collected, they can't connect to any other devices.

What information will you collect?

We'll be collecting information about the amount of water that's been captured in each water butt.

What access can I have to the data?

We won't be sharing the data directly with homeowners.

Will it flood my garden?

The SMART water butts work the same way as traditional water butts. But if there's excessive rain forecast then we can direct them to empty their contents sooner.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Homeowners taking part in the pilot will have access to a dedicated helpline.

What if I decided I don't want it anymore?

Once the SMART water butt has been installed, we'll need to leave it there for the whole trial. It can be removed afterwards if you decide you no longer want it.

What happens if I sell my house?

If you're moving after the trial ends, you're welcome to take the water butt with you or leave it for the new owner. We won't install SMART water butts on properties that are currently for sale.

What happens if someone steals it?

You won't have any liability for the theft.

Who owns it?

United Utilities will retain ownership of the SMART water butt until the end of the pilot, when it will become the property of the person who signed up to the trial.

FAQs

We've prepared answers to some questions that we think you might have.

How quickly will you take it away?

The SMART water butt won't be collected at the end of the pilot.

How can I move it?

The SMART water butt must stay in the same place during the pilot, but can be easily moved when empty after the pilot is completed.

How much access do you need?

We'll need clear access to your downpipe, and to transport the SMART water butt from our delivery team's vehicle to the installation point.

How much do they cost?

The SMART water butt will be installed free of charge to everyone who takes part in the pilot.

What do I do with my existing water butt?

We recommend moving your existing water butt to an alternative location.

How long does it take to install?

It should take no more than about 20 minutes for us to install each SMART water butt.

Who can I contact?

If you'd like to ask us questions, please contact myview@uuplc.co.uk



Water for the North West