

# Portsmouth Water Drought Plan

## Method Statement: Development of Drought Options

This method statement sets out the process for identifying, refining and appraising drought management options for inclusion in Portsmouth Water's draft 2027 Drought Plan. It includes the approach for updating and developing existing options carried forward from the previous Drought Plan.

The existing drought options from the previous Drought Plan were compiled and reviewed by HR Wallingford. The drought options are:

### **Demand-side options:**

- Appealing to customers to use water more sparingly
- Reducing leakage
- Water pressure management
- Restrictions: temporary bans on water use
- Further restrictions: bans on the non-essential use of water

### **Supply-side options:**

- Source S Drought Permit

### **Extreme (more before 4) options:**

- Option A – Recommissioning of Source U
- Option B – Recommissioning unused private boreholes
- Option C – Increasing pump capacity and lowering pump levels at Sources Q and R

As part of this process, for Option C of the extreme 'more before 4' options, pump depths and Deepest Advisable Pumped Water Levels (DAPWLs) for each of Portsmouth Water's groundwater sources were reviewed and a list of those which could potentially be lowered or changed was produced.

In July 2025, an initial workshop was held by HR Wallingford at Portsmouth Water's Head Office with staff from water resources, operations, water quality and emergency planning. The workshop involved going through the existing drought options and understanding how each option works and its feasibility for the next Drought Plan. This included a discussion around which groundwater sources as part of Option C from the 'more before 4' options could be lowered as well as a discussion around new options.

Following the initial workshop, a kick-off meeting was held with Portsmouth Water, HR Wallingford and AtkinsRealis to discuss the drought options and the environmental assessment requirements. AtkinsRealis are producing the Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for each of the drought options for Portsmouth Water.

The options discussed at both the initial workshop and meeting with AtkinsRealis were screened based on technical feasibility, environmental risk, operational deliverability and lead-time and resource requirements. To support the screening process for the 'more before 4' options, the source diagrams from the WRMP19 deployable output assessments were analysed and any constraints identified.

Once the drought options had been screened, a second meeting with Portsmouth Water was held in October 2025. In this meeting HR Wallingford presented what had been done to date (including the review of drought triggers) and for drought options to be finalised by Portsmouth Water staff. There was also a discussion around lead-times and the complexity of some of the extreme drought options. It was agreed that sea tankering and desalination would be removed and become part of the Emergency Plan. A new option, augmentation at Source N and Source U, was removed as there would be no change to how the augmentation on the River Ems currently works.

The finalised list of drought options are:

- Level 1
  - Enhanced leakage reduction
  - Pressure management
- Level 2
  - Temporary Use Bans (TUBs)
- Level 3a
  - Non-Essential Use Bans (NEUBs)
- Level 3b (More before 4)
  - Changing pump at Source T
  - Changing pump at Source Q
  - Changing pump at Source D
  - Changing pump at Source F
  - Changing pump at Source H
  - Changing pump at Source R