

Future Trend: Population Changes

Trend definition and relevance to DWMP

Population change across our region is one of the principal risks and uncertainties affecting the DWMP28. Our region is already one of the most densely populated in the UK and is projected to experience further growth.

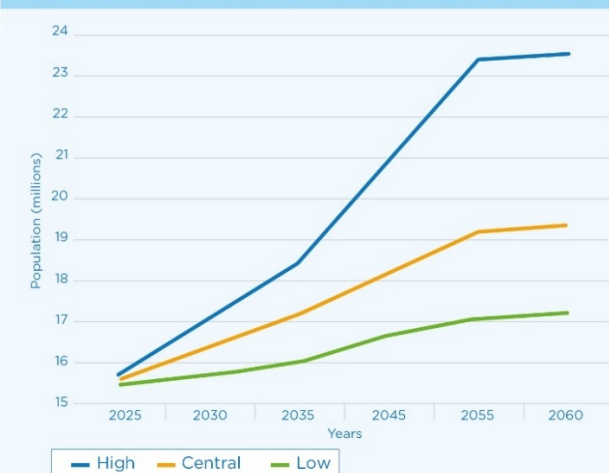
As the population increases, so too does demand for our wastewater services as more wastewater is generated. Providing infrastructure in the right place at the right time is critical to support regional and national economic growth and prosperity, while maintaining and improving environmental water quality without adding to climate related flood and pollution risks.

Responding to the trend within the DWMP is likely to require increased investment in system wide capacity and asset health resilience, alongside working in partnership with other stakeholders to enable adaptive approaches that can effectively manage uncertainty.

Stage of DWMP used	
Risk assessment	✓
Plan development	✓
Impact/Importance	
Short term (2035)	Medium
Medium term (2045)	Medium
Long term (2055)	High
Example PIs affected by this trend	
	Storm overflow performance (England)
	Treatment works compliance (numeric)
	Good ecological and chemical status

Trend description, uncertainty and potential impact on our region

Population forecasts for Thames Water region 2025 - 2060



Source: Demographic analysis for Thames Water, Edge Analytics October, 2025

- Demographic data provided by Edge Analytics¹ for Thames Water's strategic planning considers Local Authorities Local Plans, together with other trends in the economy and government policy. The three scenarios shown in the figure represent a range of potential population futures for our region – a high estimate, central (most likely) and low estimate. The same dataset is also used to underpin our Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), ensuring consistency across strategic planning.
- In the central estimate, the region's population is forecast to increase from 15.6 million to 19.2 million by 2055 (a 23% increase), with growth expected to flatten thereafter to 2060. In the high estimate, population growth could reach 23.4 million by 2055 (a 50% increase).
- Population forecasting is highly uncertain and dependent on government policy relating to housing and migration, as well as the general health of the UK and regional economy. This uncertainty is reflected in the wide range of growth projections, particularly beyond 2035.

¹Source: www.edgeanalytics.co.uk

