



# Northern Ireland Water

## Recreation and Access Policy

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This document is to be read in conjunction with the NI Water Recreation and Access Guidance Document

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### 1. Introduction

NI Water is the second largest land owner in Northern Ireland having responsibility for approximately 8,600 hectares across the province. This policy provides a framework defining what access is permitted to NI Water owned lands and waters, and how access arrangements will be communicated, controlled and governed.

Given the dispersed nature of land and assets required by NI Water to provide high quality drinking water and effective wastewater services across Northern Ireland, members of the general public will seek to access lands and waters owned by NI Water to enjoy recreational activities. This policy has been created to communicate, and set out how new and existing forms of access to NI Water owned lands and bodies of water will be controlled and governed, setting out a framework for the consideration of specific applications.

### 2. Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are as follows;

- To provide a clear policy on public recreation and access for NI Water owned land and waters
- Ensure that all existing and future agreements involving recreational activities on NI Water owned land fall within the NI Water Recreation and Access Policy
- To provide members of the public, organisations and groups with clear guidance on the rules that govern recreation and access to NI Water owned land and waters
- Establish a policy that better protects NI Water from adverse levels of risk associated with permitting members of the public, organisations and groups to access NI Water owned lands and waters
- Ensure appropriate Health and Safety for members of the public, organisations and groups who access NI Water lands and waters.
- Ensure a committed, fair and transparent system of application for members of the public, organisations and groups wishing to use NI Water lands and waters.

### 3. Scope

This Policy is devised by NI Water, and applies to all employees, contractors, agents and members of the public, organisations and groups who are accessing NI Water owned lands or waters for the purpose of recreational use. Actions that result in either negligent and / or deliberate contravention of this policy may result in either disciplinary action and / or legal proceedings.

### 4. The Policy

NI Water will;

- Endeavour to meet the demand for use of NI Water owned land, without exposing NI Water to unacceptable levels of risk or cost (maintenance or operational costs).
- Ensure that all NI Water employees and contractors are aware of public right to access certain sites, and to carry out recreational activities at these sites.
- Manage our landholdings and natural resources in a sustainable manner to protect and enhance water quality and permit public access where appropriate.
- Recognise the importance of encouraging biodiversity, managing our landholdings responsibly and protecting designated areas. We will take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of our functions, to further the conservation and enhance the biodiversity within our landholdings
- Apply this policy to all NI Water owned land and bodies of water.
- Permit members of the public, organisations and groups access to its land and bodies of water and will endeavour to facilitate recreational activities, where safe to do so and where financial resources permit, taking into account the need for safeguarding the quality of drinking water supplied to its customers.

### 5. Further information and Guidance

For further information and guidance on how to access NIW lands for Recreation and access activities please refer to the NI Water Recreation and Access Guidance Document.