

Thinking about drought

1976, 1995 and 2006

1976: Maintaining Industry and Agriculture

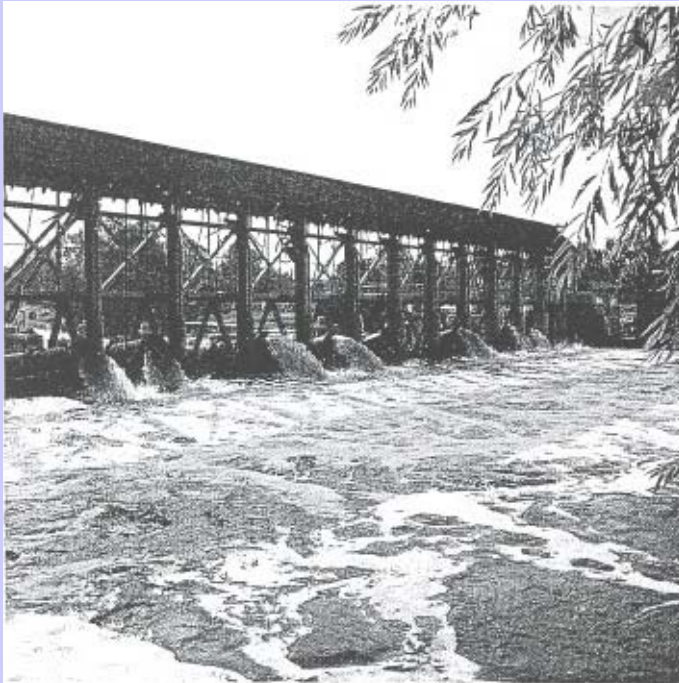
**Save a bucket a day for Dennis,
keep industry on the move
it's work and safety first
and last is your thirst,
so you'll have to use your bird bath to
flush your loo...**

(Radio 4 broadcast)

1976: Curbing demand



Supply strategies in '76: “Flogging the rivers and reservoirs”



Water below Molesey Weir is pumped upstream again towards the supply intake



Pumping water out of Ennerdale Water

1976: a national emergency

- **A long hot summer...**
- **Maintain industry, agriculture and health**
- **Curbing demand while maximising supply**
- **Consumers enrolled as responsible citizens**
- **Lack of co-ordination regional water bodies and inefficiency (leakage)**

1995-96: a crisis of mismanagement

First test of privatisation, newly defined relationships privatised companies and customers, focus on maintaining levels of service and claiming entitlements to water

The Yorkshire Water fiasco:

- **Company surprised by both supply conditions and growth in demand**
- **Over reliance on gravity-led upland sources & misreading of system on a number of levels: leakage, catchment behaviour, demand forecasts**

1995-96 drought: demand and supply responses

- Efforts to enlist customers as demand managers often failed, reluctant to change practices and claiming 'entitlements' to water
- Support for development of longer term supply led solutions to make the network more robust, now phenomenal capacity for moving water about
- Redefinition of operational parameters (e.g. headroom and intensification of leakage control)

2006 Drought: preparedness and precaution

“Across the south east of England, rainfall has been much lower than for the same period in 1974-76, and in some places it is the lowest since the drought of 1920-22”.

“continued dry weather through the spring and into the summer would give us one of the most serious droughts of the last hundred years”

(Environment Agency 2006a)

The 2006 drought: emerging characteristics

- Regionally (and sub-regionally) specific
- Environmental protection and precautionary approach
- Focus on domestic customers, questioning 'necessary' consumption
- Debates about the future, housing development, demand growth, climate change

Drought	Primary concerns	Emphasis of mitigation	Key players	Consumer	Issues
1976 State provision	Ensuring industrial, agricultural & domestic supply	Maximising supply & demand management	Govt and regional statutory agencies	National citizens, sympathy	Inefficiency of national-regional co-ordination Long term implications
1995 Early privatisation	Maintaining domestic supply & levels of customer service	Demand side management followed by new supply	Private water companies	Local customer, disruptive	Yorkshire profits Water efficiency Drought planning
2006 Matured market-environmentalism	Protecting environment & securing supply	Promotional, legislative DSM & ensuring efficiency of supply	Private water companies and regulators	Customer & Regional citizen, co-operative	Water company leakage Implications for securing supply in growth area