

Transition of a Group Water/Wastewater Scheme to Uisce Éireann

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

March 2024

Rev. 3

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Which Group Schemes can apply to be taken-in-charge (TiC) by Uisce Éireann (UÉ)?

Currently all public group schemes (Water-PubGWS & Wastewater-GSS) that are connected to the UÉ network can make an application to Leitrim County Council Rural Water Department (LCC RW) to be TiC by UÉ. Orphaned/Moribund schemes will need to be reactivated for the purposes of completing the TiC process.

Privately sourced Group Water Schemes (PriGWS) wishing to get TiC by UÉ would first have to confirm agreement to connect the entire scheme (all members) to UÉ's Public Water Supply (PWS) & sign consent if they wish to be TiC by UÉ. TiC consent forms are available on LCC's Website.

Why would a group scheme want to be TiC by UÉ?

Group schemes may wish to hand over their scheme to UÉ for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons being:

- The committee no longer wishes to maintain and operate the scheme.
- All committee members have resigned and the scheme is orphaned/moribund.
- It is no longer financially viable to continue running the scheme.
- The current committee/caretaker are no longer fit to run the scheme and the scheme has no succession plan in place and/or water quality issues exist on the scheme.

Does a group scheme have to pay to apply to UÉ to have their scheme TiC?

No, The TiC by UÉ process is 100% fully funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLG&H) through LCC RW subject to a detailed advanced funding submission to the DHLG&H and subsequent confirmation of designated approved funding allocation under the Multi- Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) 2024 – 2026. Please note that no expenditure can occur by group schemes until a completed TiC Consent Form has been submitted to LCC RW.

What does a group scheme have to do, in order to have their scheme taken-in-charge by Uisce Éireann?

Each group scheme must complete and submit the following to LCC RW:

1. A completed & signed TiC Application Form available on LCC's Website (LCC can assist)
2. Get a minimum two thirds signed TiC consent (>67%) from their members.
3. Provide a Connection Schedule list (fully completed in Excel format only as req'd by UÉ) of all connections on the scheme (available on LCC's Website).
4. Get signed Wayleave (W/L) Agreements (if applicable) from landowners. W/L Forms are available on LCC's Website
5. Provide a Wayleave Schedule (if applicable). Forms are available on LCC's Website
6. Land Transfers/Folio Registration for any Assets (reservoirs/pumping stations/chlorine boosters, etc.) into the name of the group scheme in the first instance.
7. Submit As-Constructed drawing/s of the scheme & assets.
8. Carry out CCTV surveys (GSS only) to identify any repairs required to sewer defects.
9. Carry out any agreed & required capital work upgrades to bring the scheme up to UÉ's Basic Standard for TiC. Unaccounted for Water (UFW) must be <0.4m³/km/hr.
10. Resolve any outstanding utility billing (water, power, phone, etc.)

Uisce Éireann also requires As-Constructed Drawings of schemes. Schemes are advised to appoint a Consultant Engineer to complete same if no accurate drawings currently exist. These documents should be submitted to LCC RW at the earliest opportunity who will review and compile these documents together and make an application submission (incl. 1 – 4 below, where required) on behalf of the group scheme to UÉ for TiC.

Leitrim County Council Rural Water Department will prepare the following:

1. Technical Report on the Group Scheme following any scheme upgrades.
2. Calculate the current Unaccounted-for-Water (UFW)/leakage rate (GWS only)
3. Obtain up-to-date & historical Bulk Meter readings (GWS only).
4. Obtain water test results for (regulatory GWS only) following any upgrade works.

What is a wayleave?

A wayleave is an access Right of Way granted by a landowner consenting to allow UÉ (or agents acting on their behalf) to enter lands post TiC for the purpose of; access to any assets, leak detection, leak repair, replacing defect pipes/valves/fittings. UÉ will make good any damage or disruption to lands caused by any works following TiC of scheme. Wayleaves are generally denoted at 10m width along the full length of relevant mains (Water & Wastewater) network sections and full width for access roads/lanes to any assets. Typical Wayleave is shown below.

If the network main routes through private land at any point on the scheme, regardless of the number of connections, then a wayleave must be signed by the landowner/landowners.

If the scheme has a situation where a service connection pipe routes through land/property and serves only one house or land connection, then this does not require a wayleave by UÉ's Standards as it is classed as a single service connection.

Where a previous property/land owner has signed a recent Wayleave Agreement (i.e. in the new W/L Form template on LCC website) this will suffice. It is a matter for the Vendor to inform any new property/land owner that a Wayleave Agreement exists on said lands at conveyancing.

Do wayleaves have to be registered?

No, currently wayleaves are not required to be registered with the Property Registration Authority of Ireland (PRAI) – Tailte Éireann.

What is an As-Constructed Drawing?

An As-Constructed drawing is a drawing showing the complete layout of the scheme and any assets (typical As-Constructed Dwg sample can be seen below) and contains the following:.

- a. Scheme Name, North point, Ordnance Grid reference for the center of the scheme.
- b. Line and layouts of mains (including diameter and material of pipes), hydrants, sluice valves, scour valves, air valves, pressure reducing valves, pumphouses, booster stations, chlorine dosing stations, reservoirs, bulk meters, manhole covers & chambers.
- c. Locations of; stop cock, meter box, connection with map reference number (sequenced from start of scheme to end) linked to; Connections Schedule List & Consent Form/s.
- d. Where available locations of service pipes.
- e. Confidence rating to be included on mains information (1= High 5= No Confidence).
- f. Location of scheme's connection to UÉ's network.
- g. Wayleaves (where applicable) should be indicated on layout map/s and indexed sequenced to the Wayleave Schedule.

Who pays for the Consultant Engineer to complete the drawing of the scheme?

The appointment of a C. Eng is 100% funded by LCC RW to the scheme. The scheme will not have to contribute toward these costs.

Why can't Leitrim County Council complete As-Constructed drawings for schemes?

The completion of an As-Constructed drawing for schemes can take several weeks, up to a couple of months depending on the size of the scheme. Currently LCC RW does not have the resources to complete this work.

Our group scheme needs some upgrade works before it is TiC by UÉ, who pays for these?

If it is demonstrated that the scheme requires capital upgrade works (non O&M) to bring the scheme up to UÉ's Basic Standard for TiC then all necessary upgrade capital works carried out by the scheme (or agents acting on their behalf) will be 100% funded by LCC RW to the scheme.

Our group scheme has assets – A pumphouse, a reservoir, a pump station, etc.. What does the scheme have to do?

If your scheme has any sort of asset, then the scheme must ensure that these assets are registered in the name of the group scheme in the first instance. Asset sites must be fully fenced off with defect free fencing & lockable gates. LCC RW may at a later date request that any asset Folio be transferred to LCC RW prior to the scheme being TiC by UÉ which LCC RW will pay for.

Assets that are already owned by Uisce Éireann do not have to be transferred into the Scheme's ownership, as Uisce Éireann already owns and maintains these assets.

The scheme may be required to engage with a solicitor to get any assets transferred into the ownership of the group scheme from private landownership. All costs associated with asset security and legal costs for land transfer/PRAI registration will be 100% funded by LCC RW.

There is nobody to assist with the application for our group scheme. What can I do?

Contact Leitrim County Council Rural Water Department on (071) 96 20005 or email ruralwater@leitrimcoco.ie at the earliest opportunity where we will be more than happy to assist you in any way we can with this process.

The members of the scheme won't consent to be TiC by UÉ. What can we do?

Each group scheme needs signed consent from at least two thirds of their members. If a scheme is short only a few signatures, then please contact LCC RW at the earliest opportunity on (071) 96 20005 or email ruralwater@leitrimcoco.ie to explain the situation.

Uisce Éireann may make allowance if the number of signatures is just below the two third majority.

Before any work can commence to bring a scheme to the required standard for taking-in-charge, a completed consent form must be submitted to LCC RW.

If the group water scheme has received very few consent signatures, then it may be the case where the scheme cannot be TiC by UÉ. The scheme is advised to contact members individually who refused to sign consent and advise them that the scheme may not be TiC by UÉ which could be detrimental for the scheme's future sustainability.

Landowners have refused to sign the wayleaves. What can we do?

Contact Leitrim County Council Rural Water Department on (071) 96 20005 or email ruralwater@leitrimcoco.ie at the earliest opportunity to explain the situation and LCC RW may be able to advise on possible alternative options if any.

Once a TiC Pack is submitted to Uisce Éireann is the scheme automatically TiC?

No, UÉ will review and consider each application individually to make a determination on whether the scheme is suitable for TiC or not. It is at UÉ's discretion to choose whichever schemes are TiC. Please note that the average waiting time to be TiC by UÉ upon submission is currently 32 months. No schemes were TiC by UÉ in 2023. The scheme's committee **must** continue to operate & maintain the scheme and any assets (i.e. flush and scour Network/Reservoirs, leak detection & repair, etc.) and pay all utility bills (water, power, phone, etc.) until such time as the scheme is TiC by UÉ. Group Water Schemes are also eligible to apply for their annual subsidy (subject to Subsidy T&C's) while awaiting to be TiC by UÉ.

Once a scheme is Taken in Charge by Uisce Éireann, what happens next?

The group scheme then disbands and no longer exists, and each member becomes a customer of UÉ.

Will houses be charged by Uisce Éireann for water usage post TiC of scheme?

Currently there are no water charges for any domestic customers in Ireland. UÉ charges for non-domestic water usage (land and commercial connections). LCC RW has no control into UÉ water charging policy as it's a matter between UÉ and The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU).

Our group water scheme has unpaid water bills owing to Uisce Éireann. Will this prevent the scheme being TiC?

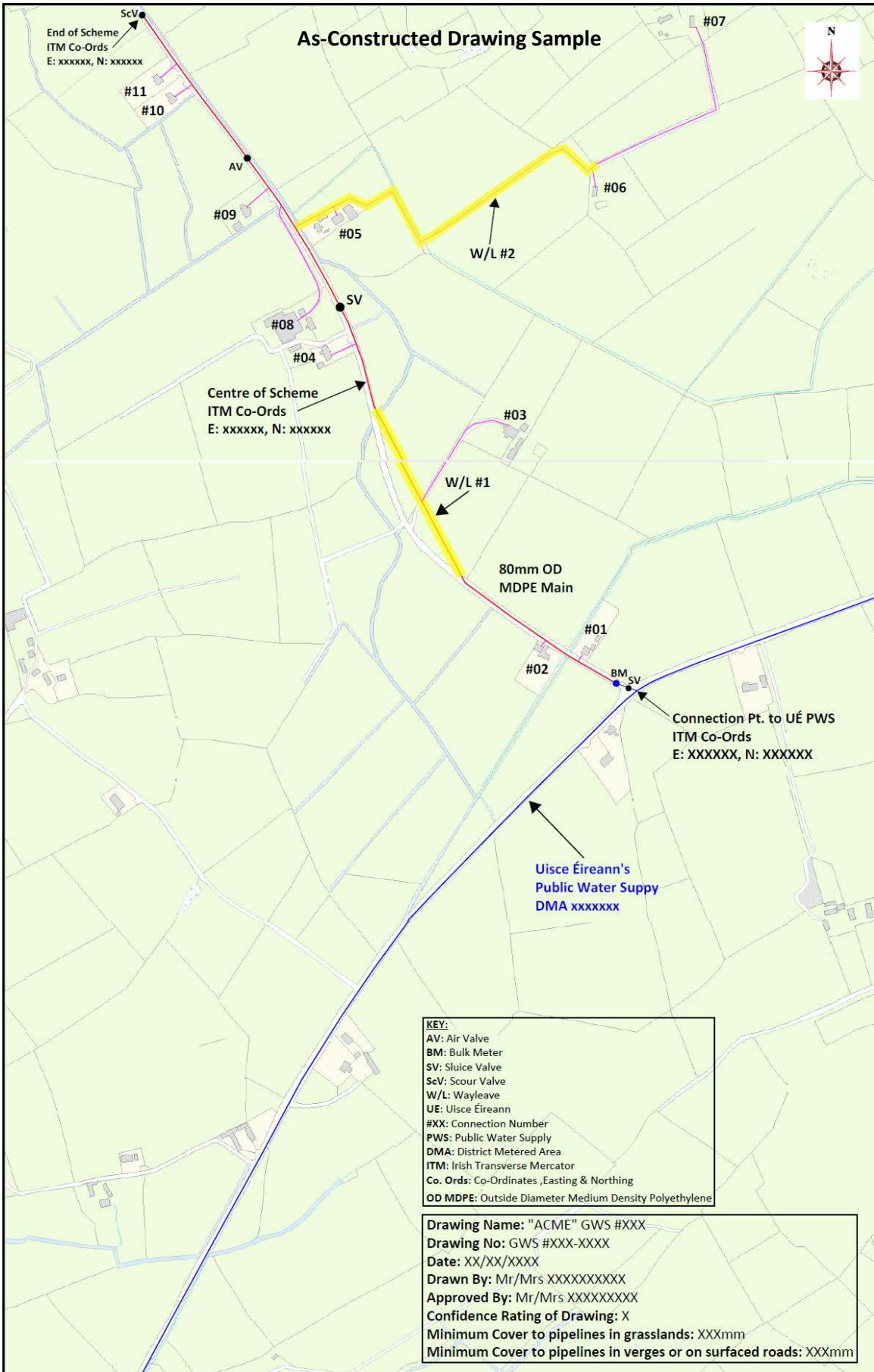
Currently UÉ does not TiC schemes until all debt issues are resolved. The Finance Department of UÉ will make a determination on the outcome of any outstanding water usage bills of each scheme on a case-by-case basis. Schemes can contact the (CRU) if they feel they are not getting any resolution from UÉ Billing.

Leitrim County Council Rural Water Department.

February 2024

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Take-in-Charge Checklist

TiC Application Form & Wayleave Schedule (if any)	
Connection Schedule List	
Consent Form (>67%) of members' signatures	
Signed Wayleave Agreements (if required)	
Asset Land Folio transfers (if required)	
As-Built Drawing completed (Scheme & any Assets)	
CCTV & Conditional Report (GSS's only)	
Bulk Meter Readings of the previous 12-18mts (GWS 's only)	
Unaccounted for Water Report (UFW <0.4m ³ /km/hr)	
Technical Report	
Water Quality Compliance (Regulated GWS's)	