

Complaints and Compliments

Complaints and compliments

We aim to provide you with the best possible service by treating you courteously, fairly, efficiently, and making contact with us as easy as possible. However, sometimes problems do occur, and when they do, we want to know so that we can put them right.

In this leaflet we explain what to do if you have any comments or suggestions to make or a compliment or complaint about our service.

A list of other Codes of Practice can be found on the back of this leaflet. You can download them from our website, southwestwater.co.uk/cop, or call us on 0344 346 1010 for a free copy.

Who should I contact if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint, we have a simple procedure for you to follow to ensure your complaint is dealt with promptly – please see the diagram on the next page.

If your complaint is about your bill or account, please call our Accounts Helpline on 0344 346 1010. If your complaint is about your water supply or wastewater service, please call our Services Helpline; or write to us or contact us via our website www.southwestwater.co.uk/contact-us/complaint/. We aim to deal with non-written complaints and queries when you raise them.

If you're not able to complain in writing, we'll make arrangements either to call you or to visit you to take the details. If you need our help to register a complaint, please call our Accounts Helpline on 0344 346 1010.

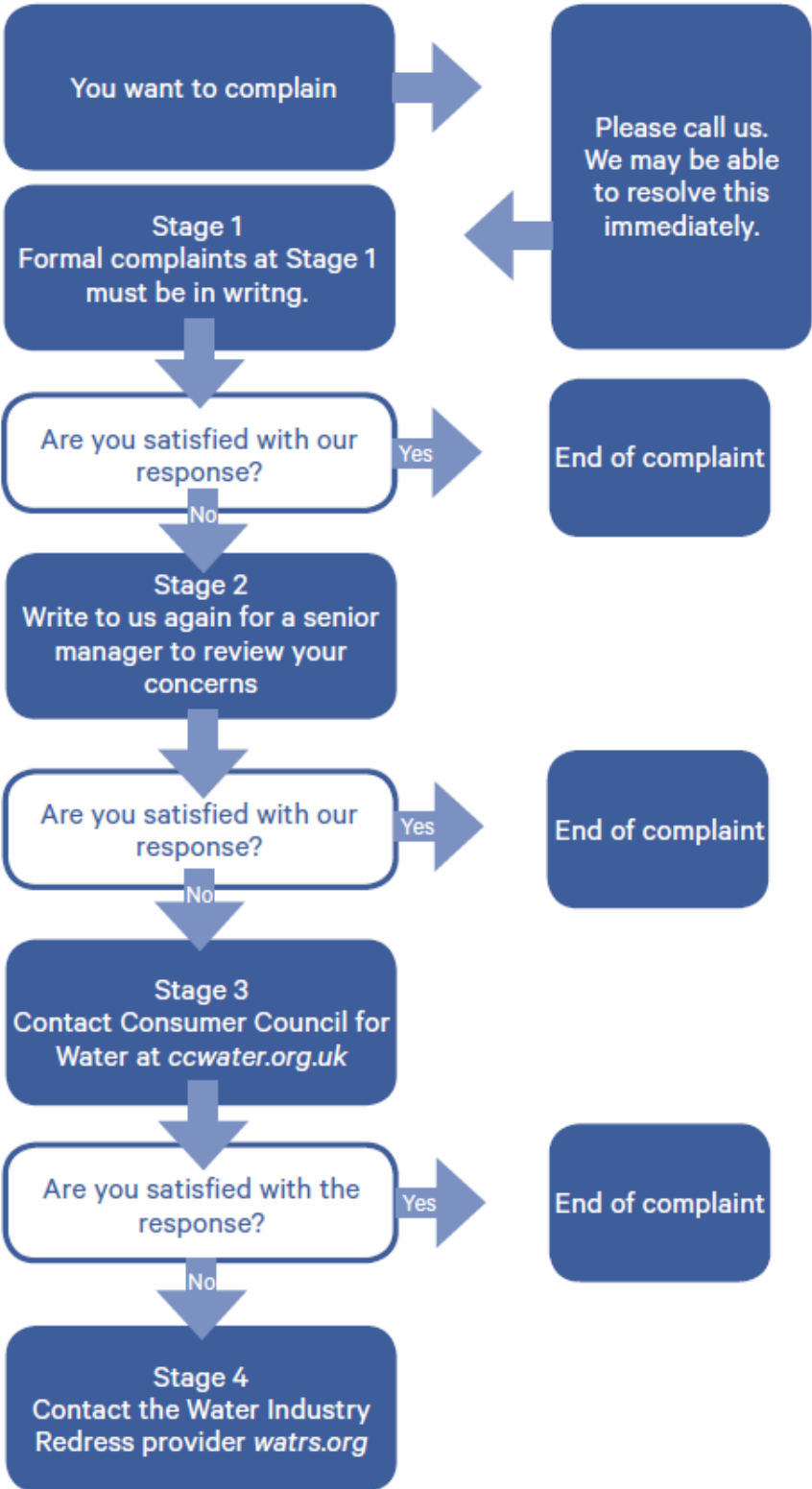
How do you register and monitor complaints?

We register all written complaints when we receive them.

We normally record telephone complaints and complaints made in person on our customer contact system as they are received. However, in an emergency situation it may be necessary to log the complaint at a later stage.

We don't record anonymous complaints for reporting purposes, but we consider them carefully and take any necessary action.

To help us improve our services, our senior managers closely monitor the complaints we receive and how we handle them, and report on our performance annually. We regularly audit the way we manage complaints and the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) also carries out an independent assessment of our complaint handling.



What is the South West Water complaints process?

If you have a complaint about your bill or our water and wastewater services, our specially trained customer service staff will deal with it in the first instance. Staff who deal with complaints have regular training in complaint-handling and our procedures and policies.

If you're not happy with our initial response, and if you're not providing additional or new information we need to consider in resolving your complaint, you can write to us and we'll ensure a senior manager reviews your concerns and our response.

How will you investigate and respond to my complaint?

If you contact us by telephone or in person, we'll try to resolve your complaint immediately.

We'll ensure that our responses are clear, concise, free from jargon and include an explanation of all the concerns you raise. In the case of complex complaints requiring discussion and negotiation with other parties, we'll keep you informed of developments at agreed intervals.

If you complain in writing, by letter, email or fax, we'll reply within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. If we don't, we'll make an automatic payment to you under [Our Customer Promise](#). If you ask us to acknowledge that we've received your complaint, we'll do this on the day we receive it.

If your complaint is about your bill or account, we won't take any recovery action while we investigate your complaint.

Sometimes it can take a little longer to resolve a complaint, so if we haven't been able to sort things out within eight weeks or we can't agree a way forward with you, we will let you know that you have a right to pass your contact to [CCW](#).

How will you put things right?

- We'll make contact with you where necessary to discuss your concerns
- We'll investigate your complaint and where we can, we'll put right the cause of the complaint as quickly as possible
- We'll say sorry if we've made a mistake
- We'll tell you what action we've taken to overcome the problem or what action will be taken and timescales
- Where it's not possible to resolve the problem immediately, we'll take action to reduce the effect of the problem and keep you informed of the action to resolve the problem in the longer term

- If we're unable to meet your requirements or expectations, we'll explain why
- If we're not responsible for the cause of the complaint, we'll point you in the right direction and provide a name and telephone number for further enquiries where appropriate.

Will I be compensated?

If we fail to provide you with a service which we guarantee in [Our Customer Promise](#), we'll make a payment.

If a complaint involves a matter not covered by [Our Customer Promise](#), we'll consider a goodwill payment taking into account the cause of the problem and loss suffered. In some cases, especially if loss or damage is claimed, we may ask you to provide us with full details, together with receipts for any expense incurred.

Independent review of complaints

In the unlikely event that we're not able to resolve your complaint to your full satisfaction and you remain unhappy with the decision made by the senior manager, you can refer your concerns to the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) which will investigate independently. CCW is an independent statutory body which protects customers' interests and investigates complaints. You can contact them at:

Telephone: 0300 034 2222
Relay UK (NGT) is also available
Address: 1st floor
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham B24 AJ
Email: via form on website ccwater.org.uk

Water Industry Redress Scheme (WATRS)

If your complaint remains unresolved after it's been through all the stages of our complaints procedure and has been reviewed by CCW, you may be eligible to take your concerns to WATRS, the Water Industry Redress Scheme, which can provide an independent, binding decision. You can find details on how and when to apply at watsr.org or contact:

Telephone: 020 7520 3801
Email: info@watsr.org

Address: WATRS
International Dispute Resolution Centre
70 Fleet Street
London
EC4Y 1EU

What complaints can be referred to Ofwat?

Ofwat protects the interests of customers of all water and wastewater companies in accordance with legislative provisions and Government licences. Disputes that can be referred to Ofwat include any claim that we're not complying with our licence conditions or statutory obligations.

They are:

- Disputes about water connections and lateral drains
- Disputes about interest on monies deposited for requisitioned mains, sewers, lateral drains and water connections
- Self-lay water main disputes
- Guaranteed standards scheme disputes
- Requirement for separate supplies
- Reasonableness of refusal for a free meter option
- Closure or restriction of use of a public sewer
- Alterations to the drainage system in the area
- Requirement that drains or sewers be constructed as part of a general system
- Disputes regarding costs and security where we decide to undertake the making of a connection to the public sewer
- Adoption of sewers
- Disputes where we've refused an application to adopt a sewer at some future point
- Conditions for connecting a drain to a public sewer
- Work by us on private land.

For disagreements regarding: compensation for street works and sewerage works (Schedule 12 Water Industry Act, 1991); and conditions of installing, costs and positioning of a meter (Water Industry Act sections 47, 49, 148 and The Water (Meters) Regulations), Ofwat can appoint an independent arbitrator where the parties cannot agree on one. You can contact them at:

Telephone: 0121 644 7500
Address: Case Management Office, OFWAT
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham B5 4UA

Email: casemanagementoffice@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk
Fax: 0121 644 7559

How do you protect my personal details?

All the information we hold about you is treated in strict confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Access to information by employees will be on a 'need to know' basis only.

We'll share the information we hold on you with third parties and service providers in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. The Privacy Policy on the South West Water website (southwestwater.co.uk/privacy) explains what information we hold and process, who we share your information with and our lawful basis for doing so.

Compliments

Although complaints are really helpful and make us aware of how we can improve, it's also very helpful to hear when you've experienced an excellent service from us.

If you'd like to tell us when we've exceeded your expectations, please call our Accounts Helpline or write or email us telling us what it was that you liked, for example, the people you spoke to or met, the speed and quality of our service or how you were treated as a customer.

Contact us

Accounts Helpline: 0344 346 1010
8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat
Closed on Sundays and bank holidays

Services Helpline: 0344 346 2020
8am-6pm Mon-Fri
Emergencies only outside these times

There's lots of information and we can be contacted on our website
www.southwestwater.co.uk

Debt Helpline: 0800 083 0283
Water conservation: 0800 378937
Minicom: 0800 169 9965
You can contact us via Relay UK (NGT)

Address
South West Water,
PO Box 4762,
Worthing, BN11 9NT

We have Codes of Practice on:

- [*Complaints and Compliments*](#)
- [*Our Customer Promise*](#)
- [*Leakage for Domestic Customers*](#)
- [*Our Water Supply Service*](#)
- [*Our Wastewater Service*](#)
- [*Payment and Debt Recovery*](#)
- [*Priority Services*](#)

These codes of practice can be found on our website www.southwestwater.co.uk