

What happens when you make a complaint

Code of Practice



South West
Water



What happens when you make a complaint

We're always sorry when we let any customer down. Although we work hard to provide the best possible service, sometimes we do slip up. When this happens, we want you to tell us so that we can learn from it and put it right.

In this leaflet we explain how to make a complaint and what happens behind the scenes to get it sorted.

What happens when you make a complaint

Here's our simple five step process. We call this process a Stage 1 complaint. And usually, most complaints are sorted at this stage.

1. You make a complaint

We don't want you to stay silent and upset when, more likely than not, the problem can be fixed straight away. Therefore, when something isn't right, the best thing to do is to contact us as soon as possible.

Call us

0344 346 1010
to talk about your bill
or account

0800 234 6317
to talk to our Debt
Team

Online

Use our online chat
forums:

WhatsApp
Facebook
Twitter
Webchat

Send a letter

South West Water
PO Box 4762
Worthing
BN11 9NT

Important

Your information will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, 2018 (GDPR). Access to information by employees, third parties and service providers will be on a 'need to know' basis only. For further information, our Privacy Policy explains what information we hold and process, who we share your information with and our lawful basis for doing so. This policy is available on our website.

2. We'll register your complaint

As soon as we get your complaint, we log it onto the system. The fastest way to sort out your issue is to let us know by phone or online (that way you don't have to wait for the post!).

When we receive a written complaint (by letter), we let you know we have it. It is then sent to our team who work hard to come up with a solution within 5 working days. More complicated issues can take up to 10 working days.

3. We'll investigate

We look into all complaints before offering a solution.

Sometimes, the issue might not be straight forward and involve other people and organisations. If this is the case, we'll need more time to look into it and find the best way to fix it.

If your complaint is about your bill or account, we won't take any recovery action while we look into the issue.

4. We'll respond

We'll do everything we can to sort your complaint straight away. Once we've found the best solution for your complaint, we'll tell you what we've done, or what we're going to do and when, to fix the problem.

Where it's not possible to fix it straight away, we'll do what we can to reduce the effect of the problem, and keep you posted on how we're fixing it in the long term. We'll agree with you how often we update you and we'll stick to that agreement.

If we can't meet your needs, we'll explain why. If we're not responsible for the cause of your complaint, we'll signpost you to the best person to talk to, and where appropriate, we'll provide their contact details.

Important: If you don't understand something we've said, please ask us to explain or repeat the information. We'd rather you do that than leave feeling confused.

5. We'll put things right

Our Customer Promise lets you know all the services we guarantee and the amount we'll pay you if we fail to do this.

If you have been affected by a matter not covered in Our Customer Promise, we'll consider a goodwill payment, taking into account the cause of the problem and the loss suffered.

When loss or damage is claimed, we may ask you to send us full details and receipts or invoices for any expense incurred.



This process is what we call a Stage 1 complaint. Usually, the complaint is sorted at this stage, and we learn from it and improve our services.

However, if you're not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can escalate it through the next stages.

Need more help?

We aim to get things right first time, but if things go wrong we'll fix them quickly for you.

Stage 1

As above - Just call a member of our team on 0344 346 1010 or go online at southwestwater.co.uk and we will get you a resolution within 10 working days.

Stage 2

If you're not happy with the resolution or need further help then please let us know and why.

Stage 3

If:

- You are not happy with the final resolution, or
- Your issue is over eight weeks old, or
- You just want some free, trusted, independent advice

You can call the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) the independent voice for water consumers in England and Wales by calling 0300 034 2222 or use their online form at ccw.org.uk/contact-us.

Ofwat

Disputes that can be referred to Ofwat include any claim that we're not complying with our Government license conditions or statutory obligations. Such complaints can be escalated to Ofwat at any time.

Ofwat can appoint an independent arbitrator for disagreements regarding:

- Sewerage and water connections
- Our Customer Promise schemes
- Compensation for street works and sewerage works
- Conditions of installation costs and positioning of a meter.

You can find out the other types of disputes you can refer to them on their website: [ofwat.gov.uk](https://www.ofwat.gov.uk)

You can contact Ofwat by:

Phone: 0121 644 7500

Letter: Case Management Office, OFWAT
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham
B5 4UA

Email: casemanagementoffice@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk

On the flip side

Compliments

Not all feedback we receive is negative. We also love to hear from you if you feel like we've done something right and want to see us do more of the same.

If we did something that particularly exceeded your expectations, and you would like to tell us, then please call 0344 346 1010. Our team love to hear from customers when they have given great service.



Other ways to get in touch

Call us

0344 346 1010
to talk about your
billing or account.

0344 346 2020
about your water
supply or wastewater
services.

Minicom
0800 169 9965
for textphone

SignLive
Register at:
signlive.co.uk/login

Relay

Contact us via Relay UK through the
app or by dialling 18001 before the
helpline number.

Online

WhatsApp
Facebook
Twitter
Webchat

Send a letter

South West Water
PO Box 4762
Worthing
BN11 9NT

Website

For more information,
please visit:

[www.southwestwater.
co.uk/your-account](https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/your-account)

Our other Codes of Practice:

- Looking after your water supply
- Our Customer Promise
- Our support when you need it - Priority Services
- Support with your bills and dealing with debt
- Taking care of your wastewater
- What to do if you spot a leak (Household Customers)
- Your bills explained