

# Our complaints procedure



## When we get it wrong

You deserve the highest standard of service from us, but sometimes we make mistakes. If we do, please let us know and we will investigate and review your concerns. This leaflet tells you how we will handle your complaint and who to contact.

## What can you expect?

We will apologise and you will receive a full, fair and courteous response from someone who can effectively deal with your problem.

Your complaint will be investigated thoroughly.

If we can remedy the problem straight away we will explain what action has been taken.

If we cannot immediately resolve your problem we will keep you informed of actions being taken to reduce or eliminate the issue in the future.

In cases where we cannot meet your expectations we will explain why and advise you of the best course of action.

## What is the complaints process?

Complaints received by telephone will be registered on our contact system and we will try to resolve them immediately.

We will respond to written complaints within ten working days of the date received, but we will always aim to respond more quickly. We will record details of who has contacted us, and the reason for the complaint.

This information is used to help us improve our services, the handling of our complaints, and to report our performance annually.

## How do you register a complaint?

Firstly, please call us and we will try to sort out your problem straight away. If you have already written, use the telephone number on the letter you received from us, otherwise call us on the appropriate number.

### Complaints about bills

Please call **0845 272 0845**

### Complaints about water or sewerage

Please call **0845 278 0845**

## If you have contacted us by telephone

We will try and resolve your complaint immediately. If we cannot and you are unhappy, please ask to refer your complaint to a Manager, and we will make arrangements to call you back.

## If you remain dissatisfied your case can be reviewed by the Customer Relations Team

Please ask for your case to be referred to the Customer Relations Team which can either telephone or write to you to resolve the problem.

## If your complaint still remains unresolved

Please ask for your case to be referred to the Director of Customer Services and Revenue, who will make sure your case is reviewed by a member of the Directors Review Team.

## Independent review

While we aim to resolve your complaint first time, in the event that we are unable to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, ultimately you can contact the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater). Contact details can be found overleaf.

In exceptional circumstances we may undertake a final review of your complaint.

## How will we treat your complaint if you contact a third party?

If a third party representative acts on your behalf, this will have no effect on the way we carry out the review. We will not charge you for any reviews we carry out but we will not pay the costs of any solicitors/agents you have instructed.

If you ask your local MP or other elected representative to act on your behalf, we will give a full and complete response which may include personal and/or financial information.

## Guaranteed Standards

Our aim at Southern Water is to provide a high level of service at all times.

However, with more than 1.5 million customer contacts a year, 3,000 operational sites and a vast network of water mains and sewers, it is inevitable that there will be occasional problems.

When things do go wrong we operate a Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS). If we do not respond to your written complaint within 10 working days of receipt of your correspondence, you are entitled to a payment under the scheme.

## Code of Practice

If we have failed to comply with our duties under the Water Industry Act 1991 and you have been caused loss or damage, your dispute may be referred to Ofwat or to legal arbitration. You can find details of this in our Code of Practice for Domestic Customers on our website.

Alternatively a copy can be obtained by writing to us, the postal address can be found overleaf.

## Further help



### The Consumer Council for Water

If you are not satisfied with our handling of your complaint, you can contact the **Consumer Council for Water (CCWater)**. Please make sure that you have followed the process overleaf first. If not, CCWater will pass the complaint back to us. The contact details for CCWater are:



Website: [www.ccwater.org.uk](http://www.ccwater.org.uk)



Call: **08457 581 658**



Write to:  
**CCWater London and South East,  
First Floor, Victoria Square House,  
Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4AJ**

## How to contact us



Technical and  
24-hour Emergency helpline:  
**0845 278 0845**

Billing helpline:  
**0845 272 0845**

Report a leak:  
**0800 820 999**

Debt advice freephone:  
**0800 027 0363**

### Automated Services

Notify us of a change of address, pay your bill or request a Direct Debit or Payment Card by calling us on **0845 270 1508**



Minicom users:  
**0845 275 0845**



Fax:  
**020 3047 9146**



Website:  
**[www.southernwater.co.uk](http://www.southernwater.co.uk)**



Write to:  
**Southern Water,  
PO BOX 41,  
Worthing,  
West Sussex BN13 3NZ**

**We can contact you by telephone, email or letter, and also in large print and Braille. If you would prefer a particular method please let us know.**