



**South West  
Water Business**

# How we handle customer complaints - Code of Conduct



At South West Water Business, good customer service is very important to us. However, there may be times when we do not meet the high standards we aim to achieve. If this happens, we would like you to tell us. This Code of Practice takes you through the steps you can take.

We take an independent view of complaints but will use an arbitrator if we feel a complaint or a complainant can benefit from one.

As part of our investigation into any written complaint, we may request a site visit or further information to help us draw our conclusions. We will endeavour to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction by offering the following solutions as appropriate:

- An apology,
- An explanation,
- Remedial action, and
- Compensation where remedial action is not possible or is insufficient to deal with the complaint.

Our complaints process follows a four-stage process as detailed below:

## **STAGE 1**

If you are not happy with our service and want to complain you can do so in a number of ways. You can contact our Retail Service Centre by:

- Calling 0344 406 8053 – Our opening hours are Monday – Friday - 8am to 6pm. Closed Bank Holidays and weekends.
- Emailing [customerservices@swwbusiness.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@swwbusiness.co.uk);
- Writing to South West Water Business, PO Box 9136, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH11 0GF.

Your complaint must be in writing to be registered as a written complaint. We record all written complaints and will reply to your written complaint within 10 working days. We endeavour to deal with your non-written complaints and queries at the time you raise them.

## **Keeping you informed**

Sometimes we cannot deal with your complaint within 10 working days because

we need to get more detailed information or investigate the matter fully with your wholesaler. We will tell you if this is the case and give you the name of the person dealing with the complaint.

If you are not happy with our response to your complaint or the action we have taken, you can move to the next stage.

## **STAGE 2**

Write to us again and our Director or Head of Operations will review our original response and any action taken. They will respond to you within 10 working days of receiving your correspondence. If you are not satisfied, you can proceed to Stage 3.

## **STAGE 3**

You can take your complaint to the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater), a statutory organisation that represents water customers' interests. One of their main roles is to investigate complaints made by customers against water companies and water retailers.

[www.ccwater.org.uk](http://www.ccwater.org.uk) **Consumer Council for Water**

There are certain types of dispute that CCWater cannot deal with. In these cases, you may be asked to write to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat). CCWater will provide you with all the details you will need to do this.

Ofwat, an organisation accountable to Parliament, is responsible for overseeing the conduct and performance of water companies in England and Wales. Ofwat is independent of the water industry and ensures that water companies provide customer with good quality and an efficient service at a fair price.

## STAGE 4

If CCWater are unable to resolve your complaint you have the right to refer your complaint to the Water Redress Scheme (WATRS).

WATRS is an independent adjudication scheme for unresolved or deadlocked complaints made by customers if they have been through the water company's complaint process and CCWater.

You can make an application, free of charge, via the WATRS website [www.watrs.org](http://www.watrs.org) or you can ask for an application form to be sent to you by emailing [info@watrs.org](mailto:info@watrs.org). Guidance notes are also available on the website or you can call 0207 520 3801 for a copy.

Their address is: WATRS, 70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1EU.

### Compensation and Written Complaints

If we do not respond to your written complaint within 10 working days, you are entitled to a £20 credit on your bill which is a payment under our Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS). This credit will be automatically added to your bill.

### General Compensation

For certain complaints, we will consider whether you are entitled to other compensation for any loss, distress or worry you may have experienced.

### Protecting Customer Information

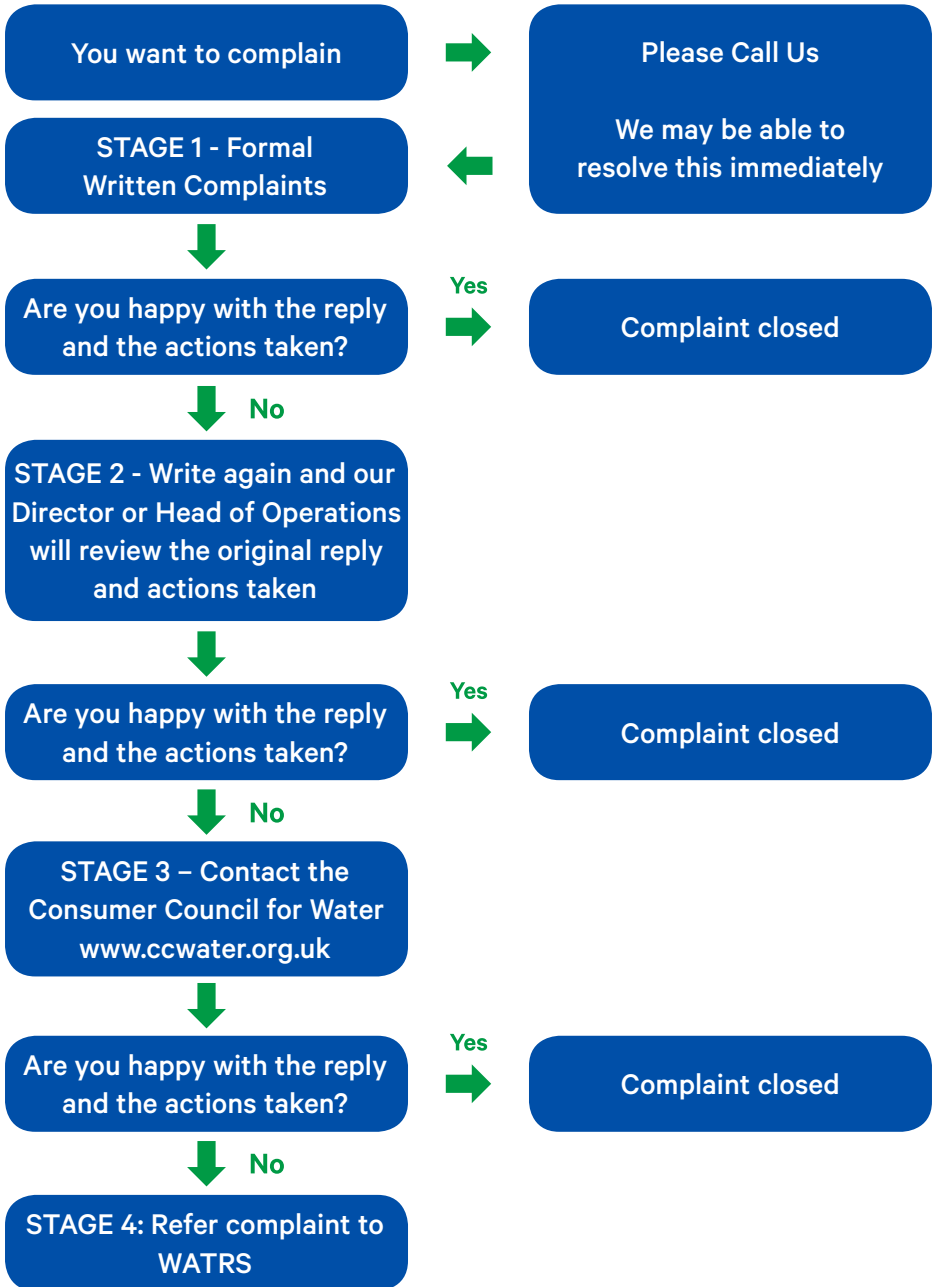
We are very careful about how we handle customers' personal information.

Attempts have been made to obtain information by deception, if you are complaining on behalf of a customer, we will seek written consent that you are dealing with their complaint on behalf of them.

### Complaints about Wholesale Water and Sewerage

We are your Retailer. If your complaint is about your water, drainage or sewerage services you can still make your complaint via us and we will refer your complaint to the relevant wholesaler to respond.

# CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCESS



## Contact us today



[swwbusiness.co.uk](http://swwbusiness.co.uk)



[customerservices@swwbusiness.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@swwbusiness.co.uk)



0344 406 8053