



Governance and Human Resources
Town Hall, Upper Street, London, N1 2UD

AGENDA FOR THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee are summoned to the meeting which will be held in on, **8 March 2017 at 6.00 pm.**

N.B. THERE WILL BE A PRE-MEETING FOR MEMBERS AT 5.30P.M. ON THE EVENING OF THE MEETING

Stephen Gerrard
Interim Director of Law and Governance

Enquiries to : Peter Moore
Tel : 020 7527 3252
E-mail : peter.moore@islington.gov.uk
Despatched : 27 February 2017

Membership

Councillors:

Councillor Richard Greening (Chair)	Councillor Una O'Halloran
Councillor Clare Jeapes (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Michael O'Sullivan
Councillor Jilani Chowdhury	Councillor Caroline Russell
Councillor James Court	Councillor Troy Gallagher
Councillor Theresa Debono	Councillor Nick Wayne
Councillor Gary Doolan	Councillor Gary Heather
Councillor Osh Gantly	Councillor Rowena Champion
Councillor Martin Klute	

Substitutes:

Councillor Satnam Gill OBE	Councillor Marian Spall
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE	Councillor Angela Picknell
Councillor Dave Poyser	

QUORUM: 4 COUNCILLOR

A.	FORMAL MATTERS	Page
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declaration of Substitute Members	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	To approve minutes of previous meeting	1 - 14
5.	Matters Arising from the minutes	
6.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS	
7.	Chair's Report	
B.	ITEMS FOR CALL IN - IF ANY	Page
C.	SCRUTINY AND MONITORING REPORTS	Page
8.	Flooding Scrutiny - Witness evidence	15 - 108
D.	DISCUSSION ITEMS - IF ANY	Page
E.	REPORT OF REVIEW CHAIRS	Page
F.	URGENT NON EXEMPT MATTERS	
	Any non-exempt items which the chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reason for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.	
G.	EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS	
	To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business in the remaining items on the agenda any of them are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the access to information procedure rules in the constitution and if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.	
H.	CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FOR CALL IN - IF ANY	Page
I.	EXEMPT ITEMS	
	The Public may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that exempt information would be disclosed.	

The next meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee will be on 14 March 2017 **Please note all committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on the council's website:**
www.democracy.islington.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

London Borough of Islington

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 26 January 2017

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at on 26 January 2017 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Greening (Chair), Jeapes (Vice-Chair), Russell, Wayne,
Heather and Champion
Also **Councillors:** Hull
Present:

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

300 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Councillors Doolan, O'Halloran, Chowdury, O'Sullivan , Klute, Debono and Councillor Calouri – Executive Member Children, Young People and Families

301 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None

302 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

None

303 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

A copy of the draft minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2017 were laid round for consideration of Members.

The Chair stated that they would confirm these at the next meeting once Members had had time to consider them.

304 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Item 5)

None

305 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 6)

The Chair outlined the procedure for Public questions and filming and recording of meetings

306 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 7)

The Chair referred to the Flooding Scrutiny review and that the public meeting with residents and businesses would take place on 1 February at the Business Design Centre and all Members were welcome to attend. The Chair stated that he had been invited to Chair this meeting.

The Chair also outlined the proposals for visits and meetings connected with the scrutiny

307 BUDGET 2017/18 (Item 8)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member for Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present for discussion of this matter and outlined the report. Steve Key, Service Director, Finance and Resources Directorate was also present.

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- The Committee noted the continuing severe reductions in Government funding and this has led the Council having to save over £170m of savings over the past 7 years
- It was also noted that there will be a further 17% reduction in core funding over the next 3 years which will mean further savings having to be made of £47m, including £24.1 in 2017/18
- Whilst the Government had cut the New Homes Bonus scheme funding the Council were now contributing £3m from mainstream funding to compensate for this
- The Committee welcomed the proposal to write off Council Tax arrears for Care Leavers under 2 years of age
- The Committee were informed that whilst they had increased the Social Care precept by 3%, as allowed for by the Government, this would not meet the demands of the service and that the Government should be willing to fund the social care precept properly and not pass the burden onto Local Authorities
- The Committee noted that there had been a reduction of 54 posts in the savings proposals, however 50% of these were from voluntary redundancies and there had been no compulsory redundancies
- In response to a question as to whether the Council should consider a higher Council Tax increase it was felt that there had to be a balance between what residents were comfortable with and services provided and it was felt that the rise proposed was correct
- The view was expressed that the hiring of the Assembly Hall fee could be increased for some users who are able to pay a higher cost
- The Committee were concerned at the proposed Government increases in Business Rates and the effect on businesses in the borough and Councillor Hull undertook to report back in more detail on this once proposals were clarified
- In response to a question it was stated that CIL money would be used for Highways Maintenance in 2017/18, however this would free up funding in the Council's revenue budget for other services
- Whilst the Committee welcomed the building of Council new homes and the provision of affordable housing, they expressed concern at the potential loss of future housing through Right to Buy and the lack of clarity about when capital receipts would be available

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Executive for consideration

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull and Steve Key for attending

308 **APPENDICES A TO F BUDGET REPORT EXECUTIVE 19.1.17 V3 (Item 9)**

This item was dealt with under minute 307 above

309 **UPDATE ON YOUTH CRIME INVESTMENT/UPDATE ON YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (Item 10)**

The Director of Children's Services, Carmel Littleton was present for discussion of this item and was accompanied by Nikki Ralph and Liz Westlund who presented the report to the Committee.

During consideration of the report the following main points were raised –

- The investment of the additional £500k was felt to have resulted in significant improvements, despite the measures not being put in place until September/early Autumn
- The vast number of referrals made had been appropriate
- There had been training for practitioners and staff which was contributing to improved performance and confidence of staff
- There are one to one and group sessions taking place
- Work is taking place to implement and evaluate specialist interventions for 20 young people at medium or high risk of sexual exploitation and/or /perpetrator of HSB
- Reference was made to the fact that the relevant PI's would show an improvement in the next quarter, following the additional investment work
- It was noted that in the past 9 months there has been substantial progress in improving the YOS performance
- The latest performance data from the Youth Justice Board has shown that three of the five PI's are improving and the service now has an amber rating which is the first time Islington has not been in the red in nearly three years
- First time entrants have been reduced and improvements had been made in binary reoffending rates, and for the first time this quarter, the use of custody has gone down
- The frequency reoffending rate and reoffences by reoffender remain up, but this is usually a corollary of a reduced cohort size
- Discussion took place on Criminal Behaviour Orders and it was noted that work is taking place on this to ensure that whilst the Public are still protected that the restrictions placed were appropriate
- In response to a question concerning work going on around FGM and child sexual exploitation it was stated that the Integrated Gangs Team was a multi-agency team that was investigating this and taking appropriate measures
- It was stated that a variety of methods, including outreach, were needed to try to get young people to engage with the services available and this included work on estates to build up relationships with young people
- There was a commitment to continued funding for the Youth Counsellor role beyond the end of this financial year
- The Committee noted that a more detailed profile of the young people most at risk was being developed and the service was providing mentoring and role models to assist young black males, in particular, who formed a disproportionate percentage of the cohort

RESOLVED:

That the report and progress to date be welcomed and noted

The Chair thanked Carmel Littleton, Nikki Ralph and Liz Westlund for attending

310 PERFORMANCE REPORT (Item 11)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present for discussion of this item.

During consideration of the report the following main points were raised –

- Reference was made to the sickness PI and that this was off target, however it was noted that a contributory factor to this may be the severe reductions that had been necessary due to Government funding reductions, and that this had impacted on pressure of work and stress levels on staff
- Discussion took place as to the number of people placed in Council apprenticeships and that this is off target. Councillor Hull stated that this was being addressed and Directorates not achieving their targets in the past would be expected to do so in future. Councillor Hull added that with the advent of the apprenticeship levy, it is important for the Council to fill apprenticeships otherwise they would suffer a reduction in income from the Government
- In response to a question Councillor Hull stated that he would provide details of apprenticeships and where they were located to Members
- It was stated that the Council were encouraging more on line transactions and were making available increased opportunities for residents to be able to do this. Details would be included in the Council Tax letter sent to residents
- In response to a question it was stated that pilot schemes had been put in place to help elderly and learning disabled to utilise online systems
- Discussion took place as to the agency staff figures and that whilst there is a commitment to reduce this further there will always be a need for some agency staff, particularly in adult social care. However improvements had been made, particularly in the area of Digital Services and work to reduce agency staff is ongoing
- The application of market supplements had been used to reduce agency some in some Directorates

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and Councillor Hull be requested to provide the information on apprenticeships, referred to above

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull for attending

311 WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 (Item 12)

RESOLVED:

That the work programme 2016/17 be noted

The meeting ended at 9.20p.m.

CHAIR

This page is intentionally left blank

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 18 January 2017

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at on 18 January 2017 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Greening (Chair), Jeapes (Vice-Chair), Chowdhury,
Debono, Gantly, Klute, O'Halloran, O'Sullivan, Russell,
Wayne and Heather
Also **Councillors:** L.B.Hackney – Sharon Patrick
Present:

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

292 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)**

Councillors Doolan. and Gantly for lateness

293 **DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)**

None

294 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)**

None

295 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 December 2016 be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them

296 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Item 5)**

None

297 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 6)**

The Chair outlined the procedure for Public questions and filming and recording of meetings

298 **CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 7)**

The Chair stated that the following meetings had provisionally been arranged in connection with the Flooding scrutiny and a copy of these had been circulated for Members;

The Chair welcomed Members and officers from L.B.Hackney and representatives of Thames Water and TfL who were also present that evening. In addition he welcomed Jennette Arnold the GLA Member representing the area.

Members and officers introduced themselves to the residents and businesses present.

The Chair informed the meeting that Thames Water had organised a meeting for residents and businesses at the Business Design Centre on 1st.February at 6.30p.m.at which Councillors would be present.

The Chair added that the meeting that evening would therefore concentrate on the asset management strategy of Thames and their emergency response procedure and look into the circumstances of the floods in Stoke Newington and Upper Street and other issues such as compensation could be dealt with in detail at the 1 February meeting

299

FLOODING INCIDENTS IN UPPER STREET AND STOKE NEWINGTON - SCRUTINY REVIEW - WITNESS EVIDENCE THAMES WATER AND TFL (Item 8)

Chris Davis, Simon Hughes and Rob Hales of Thames Water were present for discussion of this item. A statement from TfL was circulated and Mufu Durowoju and Andrew Sherry were in attendance from TfL.

During consideration of the matter the following main points were made –

- TfL stated that the incident on Upper Street occurred on 5 December and had resulted in a 36" trunk main burst which resulted in the full closure of Upper Street and numerous business and residents were flooded
- TfL asked Thames to work round the clock to complete the repair works and although the northbound carriageway was reopened in a short space of time the southbound carriageway remained closed until 16 December
- This closure resulted in serious disruption, on the first morning in particular with southbound traffic slow moving beyond Highbury Corner at considerable inconvenience to bus users. One lane southbound reopened on 16 December and the site completely cleared on 17 December
- During the course of the works TfL acted to prevent other works taking place on TfL roads that would have conflicted with the closure and kept the Council's streetworks team informed of the works and used roadside Variable message signs (VMS), to inform road users about the closure
- In Stoke Newington Thames attended a leak on 6 December and was unsuccessful in identifying the source of the leak and on 9 December Thames communicated that the leak may be on the trunk main. The main burst on 11 December and resulted in the full closure of the A10 Stoke Newington High Street at the junction with Northwood Road . Numerous properties and residents were flooded
- TfL asked Thames to complete the works as quickly as possible and although the northbound carriageway was reopened within a short space of time, the southbound carriageway remained closed until 23 December. This resulted in serious traffic disruption and all southbound traffic slow moving beyond Tottenham Hale gyratory. All buses had to be diverted and this resulted in inconvenience to bus passengers
- Thames reopened the road and completely cleared the site on 23 December. TfL during the works kept L.B.Hackney streetworks informed of he works and used mobile VMS at strategic locations to inform road users about the closure. In both the

above cases TfL had to make emergency/urgent traffic regulations order following discussions with the boroughs involved

- TfL engage with Thames on a regular basis at senior management level with respect to their performance, response to incidents and future maintenance of these assets, however due to the recent state of bursts the Chief Executive of TfL and Thames are conducting high level discussions
- It was stated that a current investigation between Thames and TfL on maintenance and replacement of Thames assets was being conducted and it was agreed that this report be submitted back to the Committee in 3 months time
- Discussion took place as to the impact on passengers of the road closures and it was stated that this had resulted in inconvenience and longer journeys for passengers but TfL had done all it could to mitigate this
- Reference was also made to the fact that shopkeepers had lost a great amount of business at the busiest period of the year due to the burst at Upper Street
- Concern was expressed at the burst in Upper Street and the effect on businesses and residents and given Thames profits more should be done to ensure pipes are in an acceptable condition
- Members stated that they had the impression that there had been more major leaks in the last few years than previously and that it should be looked into **whether this was in fact the case**. Thames stated that they would investigate this and report back in 3 months time when they came back to the Committee
- Thames stated that they did have discussions on a regular basis with TfL and Local Authorities to look at the best way to manage road closures and pipe works
- A Member enquired whether heavy traffic loads had an effect on the ageing Victorian pipes and the vibration was causing bursts. Thames stated that this was not the case in their view as the roads were concrete and even if there is a leak and the road is reinstated a curing element is added to enable the concrete to set quickly to avoid as much disruption to roads as possible. The Victorian pipes were in some cases over 150 years old and could have been subject to contamination or laid with various degrees of quality control in the past, but mainly the leaks were due to corrosion in the pipe
- Thames stated that they had investigated all the last 8 major bursts that had occurred recently and there was no common reason for the bursts
- In response to whether there had been an increase in burst pipes, TfL stated that they only had information on TfL roads and that there is a need to take a pan London view of this and engage with London Boroughs to ascertain this information
- In response to a question in respect of Thames Emergency response teams it was stated that Thames did have 24/7 emergency operations teams to deal with any emergency situation. Thames stated that the length of time to get to the Upper Street flood had been due to crews getting to the site, the need for safety inspections in respect of voids and water contamination etc. and then the need to turn off the valves which was a lengthy and complex process. The response teams crews were highly skilled and trained. Members were concerned however that it was a number of hours before the leak was stopped
- The view was expressed that businesses, residents and TfL had lost revenue as a result of the closures and it was stated that Thames were in discussion with residents and businesses on compensation
- Reference was made to the fact that many commuters were confused about the arrangements for diverted routes and TfL stated that they would look at their website with a view to improving the information available, however when there are diversions they have travel ambassadors at bus stops to advise passengers of diversions in place
- The GLA Member stated that the situation with burst pipes was not satisfactory all across London at the present time and that the GLA would be interviewing Thames

Director of External Affairs the following day and Councillor Greening would be giving evidence

- Thames stated that they had commissioned an independent review into the recent leaks headed by an industry expert and this will look into the reasons for the leaks in the last 12 months and if there any patterns to the bursts and lessons that can be learnt going forward and this would assist in building a case with the economic regulator to look at investing in the assets in future. Thames stated that they would submit this report to the Committee when it is available
- Thames stated that the economic regulator set the amount of money that Thames could raise on guidance from the Department of the Environment and this is closely controlled. There needed to be a prioritisation for the investment plans which included things like safety, quality and availability of water supply and Thames had not been able to pay a dividend to shareholders in the last 18 months. A Member stated that Thames increased their profit by 29 % in the previous year and that in their view Thames profits should be put back into asset management
- Thames added that it is difficult to deal with pipes on trunk road as these pipes were large and not visible and often of Victorian origin
- Thames stated that they had had loss adjustors on site quickly and had provided for evacuation and provision of temporary accommodation, where necessary, with the assistance of the Local Authority, and there had been a facility provided for access to Thames staff at the Business Design Centre and this had now relocated to 222 Upper Street to assist residents and businesses. In addition a meeting with residents and businesses to discuss outstanding concerns had been arranged for 1 February at the Business Design Centre
- In response to a question it was stated that in Stoke Newington 20/22 residents/businesses had been affected and in Upper Street 120 and there had been 18 residents who had had to go into temporary accommodation and there were still 10 residents in alternative accommodation and there had been 104 insurance claims from residents
- The Upper Street burst had now been repaired but was still not in operation and would be subject to further testing, however the repair had been carried out with the highest quality pipe available. Thames apologised sincerely for the bursts and the inconvenience to residents and businesses that had been caused
- A Member expressed the view that Thames were aware that these pipes were Victorian and subject to corrosion and bursting and Thames was run as on a commercial basis and not as a public service
- Thames stated that they did have modelling to predict the degradation of the network and that this is being independently reviewed. Pipe replacement is prioritised and Thames operated within a 5 year plan of investment and the independent review being carried out will inform this. However it should be noted that one section of a pipe may be in excellent condition whereas the next bit of pipe is leaking and this needs to be looked at when replacing pipes in entirety as it could be a waste of money and resources and Thames had a duty to act efficiently
- A Member referred to ongoing problems of dampness in flooded properties and whether any advice had been given on this. Thames stated that they had supplied dehumidifiers and other equipment and the Member stated that he would supply the information he had on this and make it available for the 1 February meeting with residents and businesses
- Councillor Patrick expressed concern that the Stoke Newington leak had been reported some days earlier and despite Thames being on site they had not been on site all the time and that they had not identified it was likely to develop into a major burst. The major burst would not have happened if they had fixed the leak initially
- Thames responded that whilst the leak had been reported earlier that week the risk assessment of a major burst had been unsatisfactory and apologised for this

- Member expressed concern that when leaks were reported there appeared little feedback and communication from Thames about what action was being taken and that there needed to be an improvement in response times given the volumes of water that have been lost as a result of these floods
- In response to a question it was stated by TfL that where there was an emergency it was not necessary for Thames to apply for a permit for works before the works could begin
- Concern was expressed that it appeared that the Victorian pipes on the valves required more than one person and a great deal of time to close down and whether new technology could improve this. Thames stated that they were exploring new technology solutions and how it could assist in this and indeed a new system called SYRINIX which will be able to check pressure changes in the pipe had been installed in Upper Street.
- Thames were now embarking on a 4 element strategy to improve performance - looking at a detailed review of recent bursts and patterns of these bursts within the last 12 months, what they could do better in terms of response and repairs, identify any common factors for bursts. In addition the burst pipe at Upper Street had now been repaired using a 2"-3" plastic pipe inserted into the old pipe and that this type of pipe is extremely strong and manufactured to stringent conditions. Furthermore Thames were looking at options for managing risk and to identify techniques that are available to monitor and identify leaks at an earlier stage
- Thames stated that to replace all the Victorian pipework in London would create 'gridlock' and there is an need to find a solution that minimises disruption and there is a need to get the balance right
- Thames outlined the process for turning off the valves on Victorian pipes and that this operation was very skilled and needed to be carried out carefully
- Thames added that the intention is to investigate every 100 metres of pipe where there have been recent bursts to form an analysis of risk and to understand the quality and type of pipe involved and if needed make the necessary investment. It was not possible to investigate every bit of pipework however the intention is to rank the ones that are most vulnerable and assess other pipework in a structured way
- Concern was expressed that the two flooded areas in Stoke Newington and Upper Street had been subject to similar leaks over the past few years and that this should be looked at. Thames stated that the two sections of pipe in Stoke Newington and Upper Street had now been repaired however these parts of the pipe were still not operational but were being tested, however there were some other pipework across London where the testing equipment that is used would not be able to be used
- Reference was made to the fact that Thames should make more use of social media like other utility companies and Thames stated that they were in negotiations with a communications company at the current time and that there will be improvements in future and more use made of social media to inform customers and the general public
- Discussion took place as to the mains replacement programme and Thames stated that work did take place with TfL and boroughs to minimise disruption and the process of wholesale replacement of pipes had been discontinued as this was felt to be wasteful as Thames were replacing serviceable sections of pipe in the process and they needed to justify their 5 year plan to the economic regulator
- Thames stated that the target is to replace 700km of pipe in the next 3/4 years of the current 5 year plan. Members expressed concern at this level of progress it would take Thames over 200 years to replace all the Victorian piping in London and given that some of these pipes were already 150 years old this was clearly unacceptable. Thames responded that this was clearly not acceptable, however they had to present a case to the economic regulator for extra investment and the independent review currently being carried out would assist in this. The costs of only renewing

the Stoke Newington and Upper Street piping alone would cost in excess of £10m and that new techniques needed to be identified to repair and replace pipes without bringing London to 'gridlock'

- A Member referred to the critical response procedures put in place by Thames for dealing with situations near to tube stations, electricity sub-stations etc. and Thames stated that the response to the Upper Street flood was no different to that which would have been used in these circumstances
- In response to a question Thames stated that there could be no guarantee of further floods in Upper Street and Stoke Newington but could guarantee that the measures that had now been put in place were the best that could be achieved to minimise any chance of flooding in these areas again. All the new piping used was to the highest quality plastic available with electro fusion joints and could withstand extremely high pressure
- A Member referred to the fact that in the last 5 years Islington residents had paid over £180m in water bills and this is without the contribution from businesses and in view of events and lack of investment this was not acceptable. Thames stated that they were trying to improve hence the independent review recently set up. Thames stated that they would arrange an inspection for Members of the new type of piping installed
- Discussion took place as to the large amount of construction work taking place in the south of the borough and across London, including Crossrail and the amount of heavy traffic and Thames stated that discussions did take place with relevant parties and permits had to be issued for works
- The Chair stated that when Thames came back on 8 March to the Committee they could discuss progress on the incident reports produced by them and any update of the independent review progress referred to earlier. In addition information should be provided on whether there had been an increase in major bursts in the last 12 months

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a report, as referred to above be submitted to the Committee detailing the results of the investigation between Thames Water and TfL on maintenance and replacement of assets in 3 months time
- (b) That Thames Water investigate whether there has been an increase in major bursts in the last 2 years and report back thereon to the Committee
- (c) That Thames Water report back to the Committee, once the independent review, as referred to above, has been completed into reasons and patterns of bursts and investing in assets once this is available
- (d) That a site visit be arranged by Thames Water for Members of the Committee to see the new SYNIRIX system in place in Upper Street as referred to above and the new piping that has been installed

The Chair thanked Thames Water and TfL for attending, together with Members and officers from L.B.Hackney, members of the public and Jennette Arnold GLA Member

The meeting ended at 9.55p.m.

CHAIR

This page is intentionally left blank

By closing this message or continuing to browse, you consent to our cookies on this device in accordance with our [cookie policy](#) unless you have disabled them.

[Close](#)

Supply Support Sewage

- [Our plan](#)
- [Fixing pipes](#)
- [Reliable supplies](#)
- [Smart meters](#)
- [Better service](#)
- [Helping you pay](#)
- [Flooding](#)
- [Maintenance](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Tideway Tunnel](#)
- [Future bills](#)
- [More information](#)



[Navigation](#)

Our five-year plan



This website summarises the main contents of our plan for the period 2015-20. It reflects the ^{final} determination published by our financial regulator, Ofwat, in December 2014.

The plan sets out the investment we intend to make to maintain and improve essential water and wastewater services, and achieve the targets agreed with Ofwat.

Our proposals are based on the [challenges](#) we face, our [long-term promises](#) and, most importantly, [what you've told us](#).

The plan outlined below represents our current best estimate of how we intend to meet our targets. The details may change if we find more efficient and/or effective ways to do this.

Look out for:

-  The 'You Said' icon, featuring quotes from our customers that helped to inform our plan.
-  The 'Commitments' icon, letting you know our long-term commitments.

Scroll to find out more



Fixing pipes

We will improve 881km of water mains and reduce leaks

Water is an increasingly precious resource - so it's important that we find and fix leaks, as well as repairing or renewing ageing mains.

[Find out more](#)

Saving 59 million litres of water each day



We will provide safe and reliable water.



Fixing leaks quickly and efficiently is vitally important.



Reliable supplies

We will improve treatment works and equipment so that homes and businesses in our region continue to have the water they need

We will upgrade five of our London treatment works, which together supply 6 million people, and address population growth by providing new mains and pumps in 11 separate projects across our area.

It's our job to plan not just for the next five years but also for the long-term future. We will lead discussions to agree on the best option for the new source of water we believe will be needed by the late 2020s.



Water is a basic commodity we all need, so it has to be top quality, safe and clean.

[Find out more](#)



Smart meters 900,000 households will be fitted with new meters

New 'smart' meters help to locate leaks and encourage customers to save water

We will be able to read the meters electronically, with less need to visit them. We have already begun fitting these new meters and will accelerate our work across London, moving to other areas after 2020.

[Find out more](#)



I am on a water meter and it does make you think more carefully about how you use water.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 0 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0



Better service

We're dedicated to providing better customer service

We will improve the service we provide through a variety of changes. Customers have told us they want us to get things right first time, resolve problems quickly and provide communication channels that suit them - so our plan focuses on improving these.



We will show customers we are easy to do business with and care, and that they can trust us.

[Find out more](#)



Great customer service never goes unnoticed. Friendly and helpful behaviour go a long way.

Helping you pay

We know that some customers struggle to pay their bill, and we will look at ways to keep costs down while maintaining the assistance we currently provide. This now includes a newly launched social tariff, which will halve the bills for those least able to pay, and benefit checks to help ensure people get the payments they are entitled to.



We will provide the services customers need in the most economic and efficient way.

We anticipate halving the bills of 37,000 households through our social tariff.

[Find out more](#)



Affordable bills are very important.



We will provide customers with a choice of easy-to-use contact options.



Flooding

No one should suffer the threat of sewage flooding their home. We will improve the sewer system, reducing the risk for 2,127 properties.

Our plans include major flood relief work in west London, 14 investigations aimed at preventing rain infiltrating our sewers, and doing more to prevent blockages.

We'll also promote sustainable drainage, which encourages rain to soak away naturally or slows its progress into our sewers.

[Find out more](#)



Flooding can be devastating for families, so it's very important to ensure that our wastewater pipes work efficiently.

Maintenance

We'll be working hard to ensure sewage works and pumping stations cope with the demands of a growing population.



Among our proposals, we will carry out a major overhaul to update Deephams sewage works in north London and start work to refit two incinerators which burn sewage sludge to

generate renewable energy. We will keep pace with population growth at 18 sewage works and increase sewer capacity to cater for housing developments.



Maintenance is an essential part of providing a good quality service.

[Find out more](#)
Environment

We will generate 33% of our own power needs from renewable sources.

The environment is a vital part of our business: we source much of our water from rivers, to which we eventually return it following sewage treatment. We aim to increase the amount of power we generate from this treatment process, reduce what we take from watercourses and make a range of changes to help protect wildlife and plants. And by 2020 we'll educate 20,000 pupils per year about the environment and what we do.

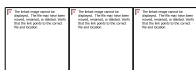
[Find out more](#)



We will limit our impact on the environment and achieve a socially responsible, sustainable business.



I think generating renewable energy from sewage is a good idea to protect the environment.



Tideway Tunnel



We will provide a safe and reliable wastewater service.



The Thames Tideway Tunnel is necessary to cope with the increasing demand for sewage disposal in the future.

London has outgrown its sewer system

The Thames Tideway Tunnel is an essential upgrade, which is needed because the capital has outgrown its sewer system. The original network, built by the Victorians, is still in good

condition but often fills to capacity when it rains, causing sewage to overflow into the nation's most iconic river.

The solution and its benefits

The tunnel will run for 15 miles under the tidal Thames. It will capture most of the pollution that would otherwise enter the river and transfer it to Beckton sewage treatment works, in east London. This will improve water quality in the Thames, significantly benefiting the environment and river users. The tunnel will help enable London's sewer system to cope with the demands of the 21st and 22nd centuries.

Future-proofing for 100 years

This solution will tackle the problem of sewer overflows for at least the next 100 years, and enable the UK to meet European environmental standards. It's a huge project that forms part of the Government's National Infrastructure Project and has to be delivered.

[Find out more](#) [Watch the video](#)



Future bills

Our charges between now and April 2020 have been approved by our independent financial regulator, Ofwat. Throughout this period, the average household bill for water and wastewater services will remain below the industry average.

The agreed charges vary from year to year to reflect the costs of work we are planning to carry out in that period, and to spread the impact on bills of new assets, such as pipes and treatment technology.

Average bills across the five years will rise by about ?12 (3.4 per cent) by 2020, excluding inflation.

Our performance targets

We have agreed with Ofwat a range of five-year targets. Our performance against some of these targets could affect average household bills in 2020-25.

For illustrative purposes, we have shown four of the measures below. In each case, you can choose between six performance levels to see the potential impact on an average bill, spread across the five years.

[Find out more](#)

Water supply interruptions

Target is average of 7 minutes 48 seconds per property.

- [Up](#)
- [Down](#)

Leakage

Target is 8.9% reduction from starting point of 665 million litres per day.

- [Up](#)
- [Down](#)

Internal sewer flooding

Target is 10.3% reduction from starting point of 1,029 cases.

- [Up](#)
- [Down](#)

Pollution

Target is 0% reduction from starting point of 340 incidents.

- [Up](#)
- [Down](#)

-
-
-
-



More information

Want to know more?

- [Thames Water](#)
- [The Thames Tideway Tunnel](#)
- [Watch the You Poo Too video](#)
- [Our strategies and plans](#)
- [Help paying your bill](#)
- [Water meters](#)
- [Help and advice](#)
- [Water-saving freebies](#)
- [Customer views](#)
- [Challenges we face](#)
- [Long-term commitments](#)

[Back to top](#)



[Tweet us:](#)



2001 - 2017 Thames Water Utilities Limited. All rights reserved.
Thames Water Utilities Limited, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading RG1 8DB.
Company number: 2366661 Registered in England and Wales



Fixing pipes

Leaks are wasteful and undermine our message about how important it is to conserve water. It's vital we repair them quickly, as well as finding and fixing those below the surface.

By 2020 we aim to reduce the level of leakage by 59 million litres per day - enough to supply over 350,000 people. The new 'smart' water meters we install will play an important part, by helping show where water is escaping from our pipes, and those belonging to customers.

We also want to minimise the risk of burst pipes, which waste water, cut off supplies and cause huge disruption. We will fit monitors to our biggest water mains to reduce the risk of bursts happening.

Our plans include repairing or renewing 881km of water mains, plus a further 45km of our biggest mains in places where bursts would have most impact.

- [Reporting a leak or burst pipe](#)
- [Tackling leakage](#)



Reliable supplies

We must plan ahead to make sure homes and businesses have the supplies they need, despite the challenges of climate change and a growing population.

For example, we will upgrade five London water treatment works, which together supply 6 million people. This will ensure they can continue to reliably produce top-quality tap water. New mains and pump improvements are needed to keep pace with our area's growing population.

We have agreed with Essex & Suffolk Water to reduce the amount of water we transfer to their area until 2030, providing an extra 17 million litres per day.

We will encourage people to use water wisely - for example, by continuing to provide free water-saving devices. We also plan to save an additional 15.45 million litres per day by 2020,

by giving advice and devices to newly-metered customers. And we will trial new price bands, which aim to encourage heavy water users to use less.

Despite these measures, we believe that by the late 2020s a major new water source will be needed - not just for our region, but the wider South-East. We will lead discussions with stakeholders, regulators and other companies to agree the best of a range of options.

- [Water resources](#)
- [Water-saving freebies](#)



Smart meters

We want to ensure there's always enough water to go round. But population growth and climate change will make that more difficult in the future.

Part of the answer is fitting more water meters. Our aim is that every building in our region will have one by 2030. This will encourage households to use less and will help them control their bills.

The meters we install will be 'smart' models that we can read electronically, helping households to monitor how much they use. They will also record how much water is flowing through the pipes, which will help us locate leaks from our pipes and those belonging to customers.

We have already begun to fit more meters. We will accelerate our work, installing more than 900,000, which will increase the proportion of metered homes in our region from 31 per cent to 56 per cent by 2020.

We'll initially focus on the London area, moving to other parts of our region after 2020.

- [Water meters](#)



Better service

We need to make improvements so that we consistently provide a high level of customer service.

We have already begun opening our revenue and billing contact centre for an extra five hours on Saturdays, and have reduced to two days the time allowed to answer emails.

In addition, we will:

- Improve customer satisfaction from 4.3 to 4.65 out of 5 by 2020

- Resolve 95 per cent of written complaints without the need for them to be escalated - a five per cent improvement
- Offer to ring back callers waiting in a queue, at a specified time
- Increase the proportion of bills based on actual meter readings, rather than estimates, from 85 to 96 per cent

We anticipate replacing our ageing billing system in 2017/18, helping us provide self-service online account management. In the meantime, we will investigate providing this using our existing technology.

We also plan to introduce a web chat service in the same year, so that staff can help customers who are making an online enquiry.

We'll continue to provide a choice of contact options. And our plans include a renewed emphasis on training and development, so that staff improve the way they handle enquiries.

- [Customer commitment](#)

Helping you pay

It's important that we keep bills affordable. So our plan mainly focuses on doing the minimum to maintain current standards, without storing up problems for the future.

We'll promote innovation, to find ways to provide the same service at a lower cost. And we will replace the systems we use to target people who choose not to pay, to help ease the burden on other customers' bills.

Even so, we know some households may struggle to pay their bill. We've already introduced a social tariff, which we forecast will halve the bills of those customers least able to pay. We forecast this will be helping 37,000 households by 2020.

We have also brought in benefit checks, to help ensure customers get payments they are entitled to. By 2020, we expect 25,000 people will have taken this up.

We will carry on promoting these, to increase the take-up and help more households, and are also donating a one-off tax refund of 10m into our Customer Assistance Fund between now and 2018.

In addition, we will promote ways of saving water to newly-metered customers, to help them budget for their household bills.

- [Help paying your bill](#)
- [Customer Assistance Fund](#)



Flooding

Sewage flooding the inside of your home is a horrible experience. We will protect 2,127 properties over the next five years. Our largest project will benefit homes in the west London boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea.

We will ensure that new developments don't increase the risk of flooding for existing houses, by promoting the use of sustainable drainage. This encourages rainfall to soak away naturally - for example, through permeable paving - instead of reducing capacity in our sewers. Working with local councils and developers, we aim to cover the equivalent of 28 football pitches with this type of drainage.

In some areas, heavy rain can soak through the soil into our sewers. We'll investigate how to prevent this at 14 locations across our region. This will benefit 328 households who sometimes can't flush their toilets for weeks on end when the ground is waterlogged.

And we'll guard against flooding at 24 of our sewage works by installing protective measures. Blocked sewers can cause flooding too. So we'll increase our warnings to households not to put materials like fat and cooking oil down the drain. We will target the worst-affected areas, promoting the message 'bin it, don't block it'.

- [Drains and sewers](#)

Maintenance

We must make certain we can continue to transport sewage from our 5,000-square-mile region and treat it to the required standard.

Our plans include major improvements to Deephams sewage works in north London, parts of which date from the 1950s. This will ensure we meet new treatment standards to be introduced in March 2017. We'll also reduce the risk of odours for 6,600 homes near our sewage works.

We run two incinerators in east London, which burn sewage sludge to generate renewable energy. They have been in use since 1998 and now require a major refit, which we will continue beyond 2020.

Eighteen of our sewage works need improvements to keep pace with an increasing population locally. We will set aside funding for smaller works, in areas where growth is less certain. In addition, we expect to increase sewer capacity to serve new developments in parts of our region.

In October 2016 we will take responsibility for 4,500 privately-owned pumping stations, on top of the 2,600 we already run. We will ensure those we know about are of a safe and serviceable standard while we assess their condition further.

- [Drains and sewers](#)
- [Deephams Sewage Works](#)



Environment

We aim to protect the environment and reduce our impact on it. For example, we will reduce the amount of phosphorus, ammonia and other pollutants in the treated effluent we discharge to rivers, which will benefit plants and wildlife.

We will reduce how much water we take from rivers with insufficient flow by 22 million litres per day, and will set aside dedicated areas for wildlife at some of our larger reservoirs.

We will also increase the amount of renewable energy we generate - for example, from the sewage treatment process - sourcing 33 per cent of our power needs in this way. A new 'thermal hydrolysis' plant at Basingstoke sewage works will help achieve this and allow us to cease lime treatment, which is smelly and creates no power. We will also install more efficient generating equipment at 12 other works.

In addition, we will work with farmers to reduce fertilizer run-off into local rivers, which can damage the environment and increase water treatment costs.

Looking to the future, we will promote the environment through visits to our sites. We will open three new education centres, in addition to the five we are currently running, and will take on more staff to run them. By 2020, we aim to be educating 20,000 schoolchildren per year about the environment and what we do.

- [Protecting our environment](#)



Tideway Tunnel

The backbone of London's sewer system was built in the mid-19th century. Although still in good working order, it was built to serve just two million people - far below the city's current population of eight million.

Coupled with an increase in building developments and paved surfaces, this means the problem of overflows to the River Thames is getting worse and worse.

When first constructed, the sewers were designed to overflow once or twice a year, but discharges now occur on average once a week, after as little as two millimetres of rain. As a result, tens of millions of tonnes of untreated sewage enter the river every year. It can stay in the river for up to three months before the ebb and flow of the tide finally takes it out to sea.

The Thames Tideway Tunnel will capture most of these overflows, channelling them to our sewage works in Beckton. There the sewage will be treated in the normal way, with renewable energy generated from the solid matter and clean water returned to the Thames.

Under the preferred delivery mechanism for the tunnel, much of the work will be carried out by a separate company, independent of Thames Water and set up specifically for the purpose, with its own licence from Ofwat.

The tunnel is part of our wider London Tideway improvements, which also include the ongoing construction of the Lee Tunnel and upgrades to the capital's five main sewage works.

- <http://www.thamestidewaytunnel.co.uk/>

Our performance targets

We have agreed with Ofwat 53 different targets for 2015-20, and will publish our performance against each of these on an annual basis.

We have also agreed financial incentives for 27 of these performance targets. This means that where we do not meet all of these targets, we will need to reduce average household bills by up to ?170, spread over the period 2020-25. Where we significantly exceed these targets, we will be able to increase average household bills by up to ?37, spread over the same five years. This is independent of other changes to average household bills, which include alterations in investment costs and inflation.

For illustrative purposes, we have shown four of the financial measures. Each allows you to select one of six performance levels to see the potential impact on average household bills over the period 2020-25.

The ?starting point? for three of these, from which increases or decreases are measured, represents the 2014/15 performance level assumed in Ofwat?s ?final determination? in December 2014.

- ?Water supply interruptions? measures the average hours lost per property served ? the 2014/15 performance level assumed here was 7 minutes 48 seconds. (Please note that, for any single incident, property hours are capped at 20,000.)
- ?Leakage? shows total water lost per day.
- ?Internal sewer flooding? refers to the number of properties flooded internally, excluding those due to overloaded sewers.
- ?Pollution? refers to incidents when effluent enters a river or stream, with the potential to damage the environment.

In each case, the potential increases and decreases refer to average annual household bills. The values shown are spread across the period 2020-25, and are not annual figures.

For each of these four measures, the target we have agreed with Ofwat would put us in the top quarter of performance, compared with other water companies? current performance levels.

Other measures within the range of financial incentives include compliance with strict drinking water quality standards and the Service Incentive Mechanism, an industry-wide mechanism to encourage water companies to improve their customer service.

Please note that the figures are shown in 2014/15 prices. Payments do not affect our Customer Guarantee Scheme. More details on this, and the full range of ?outcome delivery incentives?, are available on our main website.

Challenges our plan responds to

There are some big issues we face in continuing to provide high-quality water and sewerage services over the coming years - and in limiting the effect on customers' bills:

- **Affordability:** Our work is ultimately paid for by all of our customers and has to remain affordable. This is a particular challenge when the state of the economy means household budgets are already under pressure. The Thames Tideway Tunnel, which is badly needed - as well as being a legal requirement - will have a significant impact on the wastewater charges paid by our customers.
- **Population growth:** The population in our water supply area is likely to rise from 9 million to 10.4 million by 2040, while the population in our wastewater area is forecast to rise from 15 million to 16 million over the same period. Both will put more pressure on our pipes, treatment works and other equipment, as well as on the natural environment.
- **Climate change:** The latest predictions suggest that summers will become hotter and drier, increasing the demand for water. Winters are forecast to become generally wetter, with more intense storms that will put additional pressure on our sewer network.
- **New laws and regulations:** Legal changes could impose additional demands on how we operate. For example, the Water Act of 2014 is opening the water industry to greater competition, while the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive could require stricter treatment standards at sewage works. Changes are also likely in the rules governing how water is taken from the environment.
- **Ageing equipment:** Some of our equipment, although working well, is nearing the end of its life, putting it at higher risk of failure and increasing maintenance requirements. We need to make the right decisions about when and where we replace equipment.
- **Rising energy costs:** Energy prices are predicted to rise steeply in the coming years. This will have a significant effect on the costs of pumping water and wastewater around our 5,000-square-mile region.
- **Customer expectations:** The level of service customers expect of us is rising - a trend which is likely to continue. Technology now plays a major part in people's everyday lives. We need to keep pace with changes and offer services that match expectations.

Listening to customers

Before submitting to Ofwat the first version of our five-year plan, in December 2013, we had already sought the opinions of thousands of our customers.

As part of this, we interviewed over 5,000 people, listened to the views of more than 30,000 and received in excess of 18,000 responses to online surveys. This feedback, and the thoughts of our [Customer Challenge Group](#), helped us put together our initial proposals.

We later, we have asked a representative sample of customers for their views on three issues:

Bills: Customers said bill increases should be smoothed from year to year, avoiding sudden rises. Our plan for 2015-2020 follows this approach as far as possible.

Our overall plan: Eight in ten customers found our plan (excluding the Thames Tideway







Tunnel) reasonable. Acceptability fell to nearly six in ten when the additional Tunnel charges were included.

Incentives: Customers agreed with Ofwat's requirement for financial penalties if we don't meet certain targets, or a small increase in bills if we do. They said the most important areas to incentivise in this way were reducing supply interruptions, leakage and sewer flooding - our plan addresses these. They also said bills should be lowered if we fail certain targets - again, our plan would see bills reduced from 2020 if this happens.

- [Have your say](#)

Our long-term commitments

Based on what customers have told us they want, we identified six basic long-term services and benefits that we aim to provide in our five-year plan and beyond:

-  We will provide safe and reliable water that meets all necessary standards and is available when customers need it.
-  We will provide a safe and reliable wastewater service that meets all necessary standards and is available when customers need it.
-  We will show customers that they can trust us, that we are easy to do business with and that we care.
-  We will provide the services customers need in the most economic and efficient way, so that bills are no more than necessary.
-  We will limit our impact on the environment and achieve a socially responsible, sustainable business.
-  We will provide customers with a choice of easy-to-use contact options.

<iframe src="//www.googletagmanager.com/ns.html?id=GTM-N35ST6" height="0" width="0" style="display:none;visibility:hidden"></iframe>

This page is intentionally left blank



Delving into Water 2016:

Performance of the water companies in
England and Wales 2011-12 to 2015-16



November 2016

The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) represents the interests of household and non-household water and sewerage consumers in England and Wales.

We do this in many different ways. One way is by using our research to understand what really matters to consumers and then monitor how water and/or sewerage companies are performing in these areas to identify potential issues that may affect consumers.

This report is based on information that companies¹ voluntarily shared with us throughout 2015-16. We use the data to see where there are potential problems. It also acts as an early warning sign and helps us to identify good practice which can be shared across the industry.

This report is based on audited data that companies submitted to us in July and confirmed to us as correct in October. Any data changes subsequent to then are not included.

Comparability of data

Because companies vary in size, the data in this report is shown as either per 10,000 connections² as of 31st March each year, or as a percentage. This ensures that company performance can be directly compared. Averages are taken as the arithmetic average unless otherwise stated.

Where applicable, we have also made reference to how companies are performing in terms of the commitments they have made to their customers. However, it should be noted that these vary between companies and are not always the same as the metrics in this report.

Our other reports

Water Matters is an annual survey of households which tracks customers' satisfaction with the services they receive

¹ Due to its small size, Cholderton Water¹ does not feature in this report and neither do any of the New Appointments and Variations (NAVs). A NAV is where a limited company asks to become the provider of water supplies and/or sewerage services for an area that would otherwise be serviced by an existing appointed. NAV appointees have the same duties and responsibilities as all other appointed companies.

² For 2010-11 to 2013-14, per 10,000 connections is calculated from 2013-14 year end connections data as we had not collected the previous years' connections data.

and their value for money. The latest report is available on our [website](#)³.

We also produce [an annual report on complaints](#) to the water companies. This is also available on our website, although the key findings are summarised in this report, alongside any follow-up actions.

Making information more accessible

We take key data from our household tracking survey, the complaints report and this report and publish it on our website under the banner '[How is my water company doing?](#)'. This presents a more rounded view of customers' experience and perception of the water industry in England and Wales.

We are also working with the industry on the Water UK-led project to provide data for a web portal called [Discover Water](#). This portal features a wide range of facts and figures on the performance of water companies.

Phase one of the Discover Water project went live in July 2016 and included industry level data up until 2014-15. Phase two will be launched in November 2016 and will include company level data up until 2015-16. A lot of the data included in this report will be accessible on the portal.

Future reporting

In May 2016 we consulted with the industry about the information we currently collect from companies and our plans to collect information relating to progress against their performance commitments.

Companies were supportive of our proposals to:

- ◆ Continue to collect comparable information quarterly;
- ◆ Publish the Delving into Water report annually;
- ◆ Collect information relating to progress against performance commitments from publically available sources; and
- ◆ Work with Ofwat, the industry regulator, on ways to show a comparative analysis on progress against performance commitments.

³ You can find information relating to the statistical reliability of Water Matters and the other research quoted in this report at Appendix A.

Contents

1.0	Executive Summary	4
Table 1	Summary of company performance 2011-12 to 2015-16 (industry level)	
2.0	Category one: Areas where performance is not consistent throughout the years or across companies	
2.1	Dealing with complaints	9
Table 2	Number of written complaints per 10,000 connections	
Chart 1	Service Incentive Mechanism scores for 2015-16	
2.2	Interruptions to water supply	15
Chart 2	Year on year percentage reduction of supply interruptions	
Chart 3a/b	Number of hours lost due to water supply interruptions of three hours or longer per property served	
2.3	Leaks	20
Table 3	Company leakage levels (mega litres per day)	
Table 4	Total daily leakage per property served	
3.0	Category two: Areas of steady progress in the right direction with some outliers	
3.1	Sewer flooding	24
Chart 4	The number of properties flooded internally per 10,000 sewerage connections	
Chart 5	The number of areas flooded externally per 10,000 sewerage connections	
3.2	Customer assistance and payment schemes	29
Chart 6a/b	The number of customers registered on WaterSure or the equivalent	
Table 5	The number of customers registered for customer-funded Social Tariffs	
Chart 7a/b	The number of customers registered on Water Direct	
Chart 8a/b	The number of customers registered on special assistance registers	
Chart 9	The impact of customers' awareness on the number of customers that are registered for special assistance	
3.3	Metering	38
Table 6	Percentage of household metering	
Table 7	Percentage of non-household metering	
3.4	Daily water consumption	41
Table 8	Average water use per person, per day	
Table 9	Water use per person, per day (metered and unmetered properties)	
3.5	Drinking water quality	44
Chart 10a/b	Overall drinking water quality	
4.0	Conclusions	46

Appendix A - Statistical reliability of CCWater research

Appendix B - Links to companies' annual performance reports

1. Executive Summary

Key findings

- ◆ Customers have told us that they have high levels of satisfaction with many aspects of their water and sewerage services.
- ◆ Most companies are performing well in the areas of sewer flooding, customer assistance and payment schemes, metering, daily water consumption and drinking water quality. We will continue to monitor and work with any outliers that we have identified in these areas.
- ◆ However, there are three areas of operational performance where we have concerns that the industry is not delivering what it should for customers:
 - ◆ We are disappointed that there has been only a marginal overall reduction in written complaints, with ten companies reporting an increase. Some of these increases were very substantial.
 - ◆ Overall, the amount of time that customers are without a supply of water because of a burst or due to maintenance work has decreased. However, as only just over half of the companies have made improvements, we are concerned that variable performance is masking a wider issue.
 - ◆ There has been a 1.4% decrease in leakage, but some companies have made much greater improvements than others. We will continue to challenge the rest of the industry to follow suit.

This report has been produced using information that water and/or sewerage companies (companies) have voluntarily provided to the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater)⁴. We collect this information to understand and monitor how companies are performing in a number of areas that have a significant impact on consumers. We press the poor performers to improve and encourage the industry leaders to share good practice and to continue to make improvements.

Where appropriate, we have shown the information in a comparable format by using percentages or showing numbers per 10,000 connections.

Table 1: Summary of company performance 2011-12 to 2015-16 (industry level)

Measure	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Contacts and complaints					
Written complaints	163,027	150,942	123,218	106,693	106,196
Service Incentive Mechanism (SIM score) - average ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	83.75
Customer assistance and payment schemes (total number of customers)					
WaterSure/Welsh Water Assist ⁶	78,835	93,251	109,404	120,477	130,681
Social Tariffs	N/A	N/A	12,890	43,579	131,989
Water Direct ⁷	212,894	227,297	243,811	248,111	246,429
Special assistance registers	186,171	224,393	249,918	263,691	280,324

⁴ It is a statutory requirement that companies share information in relation to their written complaints.

⁵ Please note that due to a change in methodology, historical SIM data is not comparable. However, past information can be found in the appendices of this report.

⁶ This is the Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water scheme which uses the same eligibility criteria as WaterSure but extends to both measured and unmeasured households.

⁷ Historical data is not available for all companies.

Operational activities					
Measure	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of properties flooded internally	4,572	8,720	5,010	4,513	4,344
Number of areas flooded externally	39,492	52,394	43,379	41,156	31,712 ⁸
Leakage (total megalitres ⁹ per day)	3,089	3,091	3,108	3,131	3,087
Supply interruptions (Average number of minutes lost due to water supply interruptions of 3 hours or longer per property served)	18:38	16:17	14:04	19:27	11:29
Household metering (properties as a % of total properties)	44%	47%	49%	51%	53%
Non-household metering (properties as a % of total properties)	89%	89%	90%	90%	90%
Per capita consumption (Average litres per person per day)	146	140	142	139	140
Drinking water quality (% compliance)	99.96%	99.96%	99.97%	99.95%	99.96%

The progress that the industry is making varies between different areas and can be summarised into two broad categories:

Category one: Areas where performance is not consistent throughout the years or across companies

Complaints and contacts: Whilst the overall five-year trend for written customer complaints to water companies is downwards, in 2015-16 the reduction slowed markedly to just under 0.5% compared to 13.4% reduction in 2014-15. Ten companies reported an increase in written complaints, most notably:

- ◆ For the fourth consecutive year Southern was the worst performing company. At over 77 complaints per 10,000 connections this is more than twice the industry average, and the gap between Southern and the rest of the industry is widening. The company has a lot of work to do to close that gap. We expect the company to do so.
- ◆ Affinity was the worst performing water only company for complaints per 10,000 connections. The company's increase in complaints over the past three years has bucked the industry trend. The company's problems last year were compounded by additional customer contact generated by its compulsory metering programme plus staffing issues which led to delayed responses to customers, causing further complaints.
- ◆ Problems caused by the introduction of a new billing system and more rigorous debt collection led to a doubling of complaints to Dŵr Cymru.
- ◆ Bournemouth also had problems with introducing a new billing system resulting in customer complaints to the company increasing by over 90%.

⁸ 2015-16 data is not available for Severn Trent.

⁹ A mega litre is equivalent to a million litres. For comparison, an Olympic-sized swimming pool has a capacity of 2.5 megalitres.

We have stressed continually to companies that when they implement new billing systems they must ensure that they take all necessary steps to avoid customer detriment. It is not fair on customers that this issue continues to arise.

As reported in our annual complaints report¹⁰, we asked the poorer performers for an interim report that set out the actions they had taken or were taking to reduce complaints. An overview of the progress made by these four companies is included in section 2.1 of this report.

Supply interruptions: It is very important to customers that they have a reliable source of water as interruptions cause inconvenience, especially if they occur at times of peak demand and without warning. If the interruption does occur without warning, customers cannot plan ahead and more inconvenience is caused. Over the past five years the duration of supply interruptions has decreased by 41% and now stands at an average of 11 minutes and 29 seconds per property, per year. This year 12 companies made a reduction, and this is masking disappointing results from other companies.

Northumbrian is the 2015-16 industry leader with its customers experiencing the shortest amount of time off supply. They are closely followed by Hartlepool with last year's leader, Bournemouth, in third place. Large reductions have also been seen for Bristol, Sutton & East Surrey, and Portsmouth.

The poorest performers are South East (which saw an increase of 256% to 33 minutes due to a specific event), South West and Dŵr Cymru. Large increases have also been seen for Southern and Essex & Suffolk. Additionally, five companies failed their performance commitments in this area. We will continue to push companies to minimise supply interruptions.

Leakage: Leakage is a key concern for customers and can have a big impact on customers' motivation to save water, as well as their perception of water companies. We raised concerns about rising leakage levels in both our previous reports (and in several conference speeches). Whilst there has been 1.4% decrease this year, it remains above the baseline of 2010-11. However, all companies have met the leakage performance commitments set out at the 2014 Price Review. We continue to question whether these targets are challenging enough.

The largest reductions were made by Bournemouth (-6%) and Anglian (-5%). We challenge the rest of the industry to make a step change in tackling leakage, so that they can meet customers' expectations.

The greatest increases were seen for Hartlepool (+8.9%), which also had the second largest increase in 2014-15, and Southern (+2.4%) - although this did not prevent it from being the best performer in terms of leakage per property, per day.

Category two: Steady progress, with some outliers

Sewer flooding: Few service failures have the potential to cause more distress for customers than sewer flooding. Although the winter of 2015 was particularly wet and resulted in widespread flooding across Northern England, many companies rose above this challenge and the weather had a minimal adverse affect on sewer flooding.

¹⁰ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/publications/waterindustrycomplaintsreport/water-industry-complaints-2015-to-2016/>

The number of properties flooded internally reached their peak in 2012-13, and had been steadily falling. Southern (17.7%) and United Utilities (36.7%) reported the largest increases in 2015-16. We acknowledge that in most cases the wet winter was a contributory factor. Despite Thames and Yorkshire reporting a reduction in numbers, they both remain worse than the industry average.

Similarly, areas flooded externally also peaked in 2012-13, but have fallen year on year with a further 6.2% decrease reported in 2015-16. The only increases came from Dŵr Cymru (0.2%) - which remains worse than the industry average - United Utilities (5.4%) and Wessex (2.9%). Southern, Anglian and South West performed worse than the industry average, despite all reporting reductions in 2015-16.

Customer assistance and payment schemes: The percentage of customers who have told us that their bills are unaffordable remains at 12%, and so customer vulnerability remains a key focus of our work. The customer assistance and payment schemes included in this report are:

WaterSure¹¹ and Welsh Water Assist: The number of customers receiving help through WaterSure and Welsh Water Assist¹² schemes now stands at over 130,000, an 8.5% increase since last year and a 66% increase over the past five years. Whilst this progress is promising we are still concerned that only 8% of customers know about the scheme¹³. Companies are taking steps to raise awareness of all of their financial assistance schemes, including acting on recommendations arising from our research¹⁴ and a CCWater-led seminar in 2014. But work in this area must continue.

Social Tariffs: In 2015-16, 15 companies had a social tariff in place and almost 132,000 low-income customers were receiving help through these schemes. We are continuing to work with companies to identify opportunities for improvements in their social tariffs and how they are promoted. As part of this work we are holding a workshop in November 2016 to explore company experiences in implementing the tariffs with a focus on sharing good practice and identifying solutions to problems which have been encountered. We have also encouraged companies to work with neighbouring companies which operate different schemes to deliver greater consistency in the application process for customers who receive their water and sewerage services from different companies.

Water Direct¹⁵: In 2015-16 there were over 246,000 customers registered for Water Direct. This is a slight decrease since 2014-15 (-0.68%) and may be due to the increase in customers who are receiving help through social tariffs, data cleansing, or customers no longer receiving welfare benefits. However, over the past five years, there has been a steady rise in the number of customers who are paying bills through Water Direct.

Special assistance registers¹⁶: The number of customers receiving additional services and help through companies' special assistance registers has increased by 51% over the past five years, and now stands at over 280,000.

¹¹ WaterSure is a Government scheme which caps the water bill at the average household bill for the company.

¹² Welsh Water Assist, a WaterSure type for unmeasured Dŵr Cymru customers, ceased to be available from April 2016. However, WaterSure Wales is available to metered customers.

¹³ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

¹⁴ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2014/09/05/living-with-water-poverty-research-report-2014/>
<http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Delivering-Affordability-Assistance-to-water-customers.pdf>

¹⁵ Water Direct enables some customers to have payments taken directly from their benefits.

¹⁶ Special assistance registers allow customers to register for additional help in accessing services.

While companies offer a broad range of additional services and help, awareness of the support that exists is still low. We will be working with the companies and with advice agencies to address this.

Metering: Many customers accept that metering is the fairest way to charge for the water they use, although many do not support compulsory metering due to the impact it could have on some customer bills.

Metering levels have been rising at around two per cent per annum for many years. Initially this was because all new build properties were required to be metered, and because customers have the right to opt for a meter. Latterly, metering levels have been boosted by four compulsory metering programmes in the south east of England which has been classed as water stressed by the Secretary of State for the Environment. Currently 53% of households are metered and this is expected to reach 61% by 2020. Non-household metering levels have, however, slightly fallen. This may be due to data cleansing ahead of the non-household retail market opening on 3rd April 2017.

Per capita consumption: Although there is a generally downward trend in the amount of water that customers are using each day, minor fluctuations in demand can be seen throughout the years. This was true of 2015-16 where the average amount of water used by an individual per day rose slightly. Many companies remain a long way off the UK Government's aspirational target of 130 litres per person, per day. In fact, only four companies have succeeded in meeting or beating this target: Hartlepool, South Staffs, Severn Trent and United Utilities.

Drinking water quality: Quality drinking water is a priority for water customers. Across the years compliance levels have remained fairly static and currently stand at 99.96%. The industry leader is Bournemouth, which was the only company to achieve 100% compliance. Affinity comes a close second with 99.99%. The companies that have the lowest levels of compliance are Hartlepool (99.81% compared to 100% in the previous four years) and South Staffs (99.87% compared to 99.98% in 2014).

2. Areas where performance is not consistent throughout the years or across companies

2.1 Dealing with customer complaints and contacts



Key findings

- Written complaints reduced slightly by 0.5% in 2015-16.
- This does not compare well to the 13.4% reduction in 2014-15.
- Ten companies reported an increase in complaints.
- Four companies were asked for interim reports.

Number of written complaints to water companies

CCWater was established at a time when complaints to water companies were rising rapidly. In 2007-08 written complaints peaked at 273,000. Since then we have worked with companies on a 'right first time' approach to managing the complaints that they receive. Through our [annual written complaints report](#) we name and shame the poorer performers and praise those companies that are performing better.



Every year we also visit some companies and assess the processes they have in place for dealing with complaints, and the quality of their responses to customers. In doing this we aim to help the poorer performers to improve by adopting good practice from industry leaders. This (together with the introduction of the Service Incentive Mechanism - see section below) has helped to drive complaints down by over 60% from their 2007-08 peak.

Over the past five years there has been a 35% reduction in written complaints from 163,027 to 106,196. However, for the first time since 2002-03 we have seen the number of written complaints to companies decrease by less than 1% compared to the year before. Whilst this reduction continues the downwards trend in written complaints, we are concerned that this has dramatically slowed.

In part, this is because ten companies reported an increase in written complaints in 2015-16, most notably:

- Southern was for the fourth consecutive year the worst performing company. At over 77 complaints per 10,000 connections this is more than twice the industry average, and the gap between Southern and the rest of the industry is widening. The company has a lot of work to do to close that gap. We expect the company to do so.
- Affinity was the worst performing water only company for written complaints per 10,000 connections. The company's increases in complaints over the past three years have bucked the industry trend. The company's problems last year were compounded by the additional customer contact generated by its compulsory metering programme. Staffing issues also led to delayed responses to customers, causing further complaints.
- Bournemouth had problems with introducing a new billing system and customer complaints to the company increased by over 90%. We have stressed repeatedly to

companies that when they implement new billing systems they must ensure that they take all necessary steps to avoid customer detriment. It is not fair on customers that this issue continues to arise.

- ◆ Problems caused by the introduction of a new billing system and more rigorous debt collection led to a doubling of complaints to Dŵr Cymru.

We asked the poorer performers for an interim report that set out the actions they had taken or were taking to reduce complaints. In October 2016, they responded as follows:

Southern

The steady reduction in written complaints from December 2015 continued into the new reporting year. Between April and September 2016, written complaints were down by 46% compared to the same period in 2015.

Continuing its Customer First Programme, Southern has implemented initiatives such as:

- ◆ Establishing a dedicated customer service team who are using meter reading data to proactively target those customers most likely to see bill increases, which is a significant area of dissatisfaction for its customers;
- ◆ Outsourcing in-bound calls relating to billing, which has meant that call response times have improved;
- ◆ Improving digital channels of communication for customers;
- ◆ Introducing new tariffs to help people struggling to pay their bills;
- ◆ Undertaking water efficiency visits to help customers understand where they can further save water and reduce their bills;
- ◆ Working in partnership with other organisations with respect to debt prevention;
- ◆ Making improvements to the way in which money is collected;
- ◆ Speeding up issuing refunds to customers; and
- ◆ Contacting customers after the event to ensure that reported operational issues are resolved, and for feedback on their satisfaction.

We are heartened by Southern's actions and improving performance but, as the company itself recognises, there is still some way to go before its customers receive the service they deserve. While annual written complaint numbers could end up at a company five year low, they are still well above the current industry average.

Affinity

Affinity reported a 22% decrease in written complaints up until September 2016, despite IT issues and increased operational water supply incidents causing a slight upturn in complaints in September. 'Other' types of complaints saw the greatest decrease (-65%) due to work to identify the root causes of these types of contacts. A number of new processes have been implemented through the company's Customer Service Plan, including:

- ◆ Focusing on initiatives to improve various operational processes;
- ◆ Improving IT systems;
- ◆ Identifying where current process can be improved;
- ◆ Making it easier for customers to contact the company;
- ◆ Improving staff training; and
- ◆ Improving the way in which customers are kept informed about issues.

Affinity forecast that written complaint numbers will reduce by 12% for 2016-17 when compared to 2015-16. However, this means that they will still be around 50% higher than 2014-15 levels.

Bournemouth

Bournemouth reported an overall reduction in written complaints of 16% (20% for household customer complaints only). When comparing September 2016 to September 2015, there has been a 50% reduction in the number of complaints received through:

- ◆ Introducing an improved case management process;
- ◆ Analysing the root causes of complaints immediately;
- ◆ Improved recruitment, training and development of staff;
- ◆ Further improvements to the customer service systems; and
- ◆ Wider use of customer analytics.

Bournemouth considers that they may deliver a year end reduction of about 30%, although this would leave written complaints numbers above levels reported in each of the years, 2012-13 to 2014-15.

Dŵr Cymru

Between April and September, there has been a month-on-month reduction in written complaints to Dŵr Cymru (written complaints in September were 37% lower than in April), although the number of complaints received was 39% higher than the same period last year. This is primarily due to increases in complaints about the company's more active debt collection activity in early 2016. Written complaints are now returning to prior levels, but the company is not expecting end of year numbers to fall to 2014-15 levels.

Action taken by the company includes the creation of a team to target problems early and resolve them before they have the opportunity to develop into a complaint. It is already showing positive results. The company are currently reviewing their customer correspondence to ensure that contacts have been correctly classified. Once this review has been completed, a more detailed update will be provided by the company to CCWater.

Next steps

While all four companies have taken action to improve their operational practices, internal processes, or how they engage with customers, it is unlikely that complaints numbers will fall sufficiently to return them to 2014-15 levels. As such, we have asked all four companies to provide us with a further interim report, covering the period October to December 2016, and will report on progress made early in the new year.

Table 2: Number of written complaints to water companies per 10,000 connections

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Weighted Average	53.2	49.0	39.8	34.2	33.7	
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian	60.8	57.3	44.5	44.5	42.4	
Dwr Cymru	30.4	26.0	26.4	21.4	45.8	
Northumbrian	39.6	38.1	35.1	27.0	29.4	
Severn Trent	48.2	41.9	43.8	33.8	24.2	
South West	56.8	53.1	55.6	49.7	49.0	
Southern	64.5	113.3	81.1	70.4	77.1	
Thames	60.7	56.5	38.2	35.5	27.1	
United Utilities	81.5	49.4	40.8	34.2	38.5	
Wessex	22.5	20.4	17.1	16.2	13.0	
Yorkshire	36.1	45.0	37.8	30.2	33.5	
Water only companies						
Affinity	16.6	15.0	17.4	20.1	36.3	
Bournemouth	23.0	18.5	18.0	16.7	31.7	
Bristol	23.2	22.3	20.3	18.6	14.1	
Cambridge	24.5	20.6	12.4	10.3	10.1	
Dee Valley	50.4	35.8	29.6	20.9	18.1	
Essex & Suffolk	41.3	34.6	28.7	27.4	31.9	
Hartlepool	30.1	26.1	18.5	27.1	27.5	
Portsmouth	8.1	10.4	7.6	10.8	8.7	
South East	147.1	98.0	69.4	35.5	21.9	
South Staffs	43.4	28.7	22.9	21.0	14.1	
Sutton & East Surrey	19.7	17.8	16.4	15.9	20.2	

Key

	Companies that are 25% or more above the average
	Companies that are within + / - 25% of the average
	Companies that are 25% or more below the average

Wessex was again the best performing water and sewerage company. Its consistent improvement has put it way ahead of other water and sewerage companies. Portsmouth regained its position as the best performing water only company, overtaking Cambridge which still remains a consistently good performer. South Staffs was the third best performing water only company, recording fewer written complaints for the fifth consecutive year. Bristol and Dee Valley also reported fewer than 20 complaints per 10,000 connections.

South East's improvement in its customer service has paid dividends with fewer written complaints and an improved position in the industry rankings. This improvement comes at a time when the company is metering all its household customers - a policy which has caused problems for other companies in the region.

South East also had the biggest reduction in written complaints with 38.2% fewer than in 2014-15. Other companies that saw significant reductions in complaint numbers were South Staffs (down 32.5%), Severn Trent (down 27.8%), Bristol (down 23.5%), Thames (down 22.9%) and Portsmouth (down 18.9%).

The Service Incentive Mechanism

We have previously worked with Ofwat and the industry to change the regulatory reward and penalty system so that incentives drive customer-focussed behaviours and outcomes that satisfy customers. In 2010 Ofwat introduced the Service Incentive Mechanism (SIM) which assessed all aspects of companies' contact handling processes and included a customer satisfaction survey. Companies' performance on both aspects was given equal weighting and was scored out of 100. This method was used until 2014-15.

2014-15 was a trial year for SIM as the methodology changed in the following ways:

- ◆ More weight was given to the customer satisfaction survey;
- ◆ Non-household customers were no longer included;
- ◆ The survey no longer focused just on resolved contacts as unresolved contacts were included; and
- ◆ Companies were given no warning about when the survey would take place.

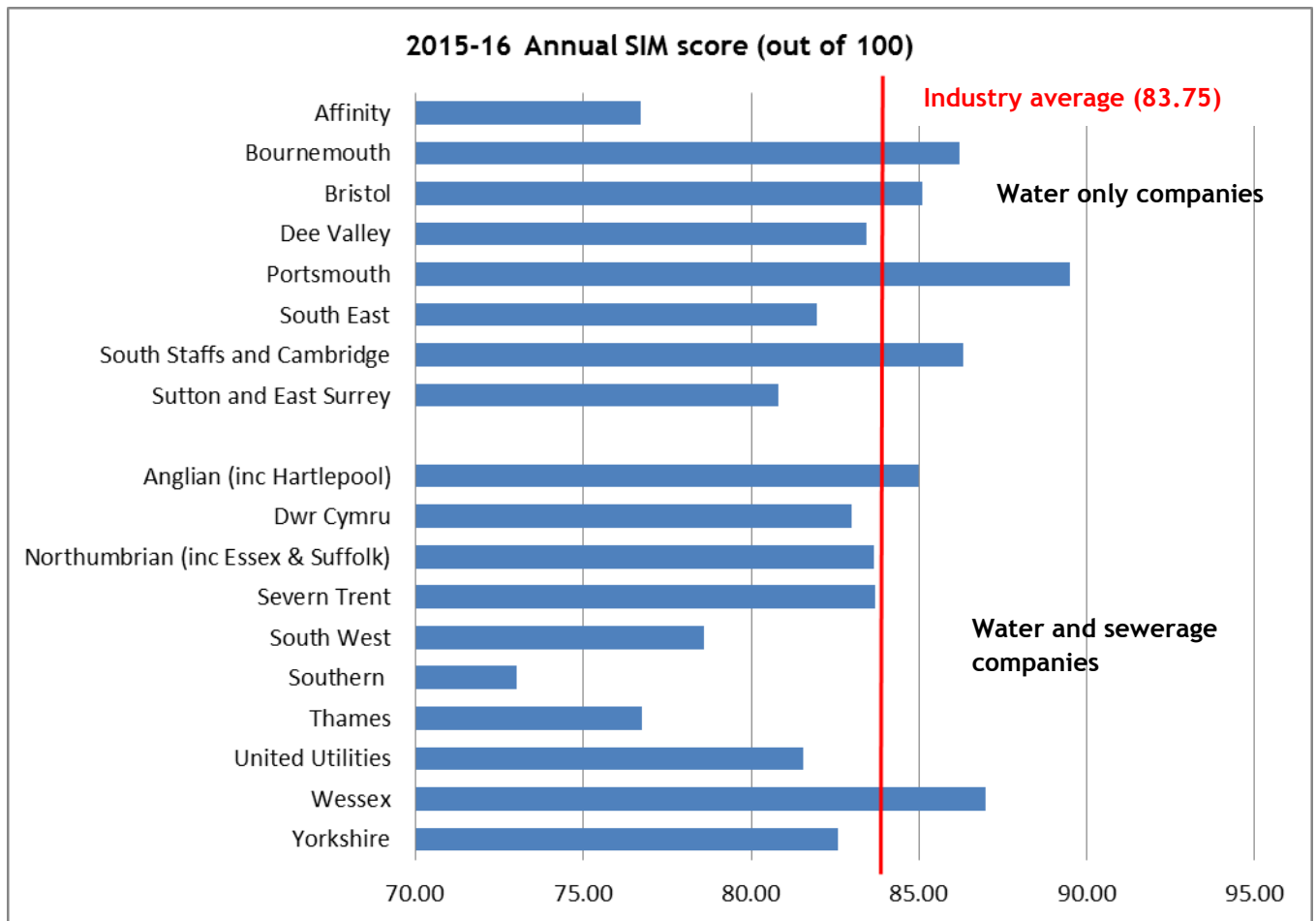
During 2014-15 many companies tried to replicate the methodology used by Ofwat for calculating the overall SIM score. However, variances in how this was done by each company meant that the scores were neither comparable with previous years, nor with other companies.

The new process was embedded by 2015-16 and the table below shows company performance during that year.

Portsmouth is the industry leader (89.5) followed by Wessex (87.0), South Staffs & Cambridge (86.3) and Bournemouth (86.2).

In an echo of its performance on written complaints, Southern is the poorest performing company (73.0), with Affinity (76.7) and Thames (76.7) joining it at the back of the pack. Both Thames and Southern failed their performance commitments relating to SIM in 2015-16 and recognise that improvements must be made in their customer service.

Chart 1: SIM scores for 2015-16



2.2 Interruptions to the water supply



Key findings

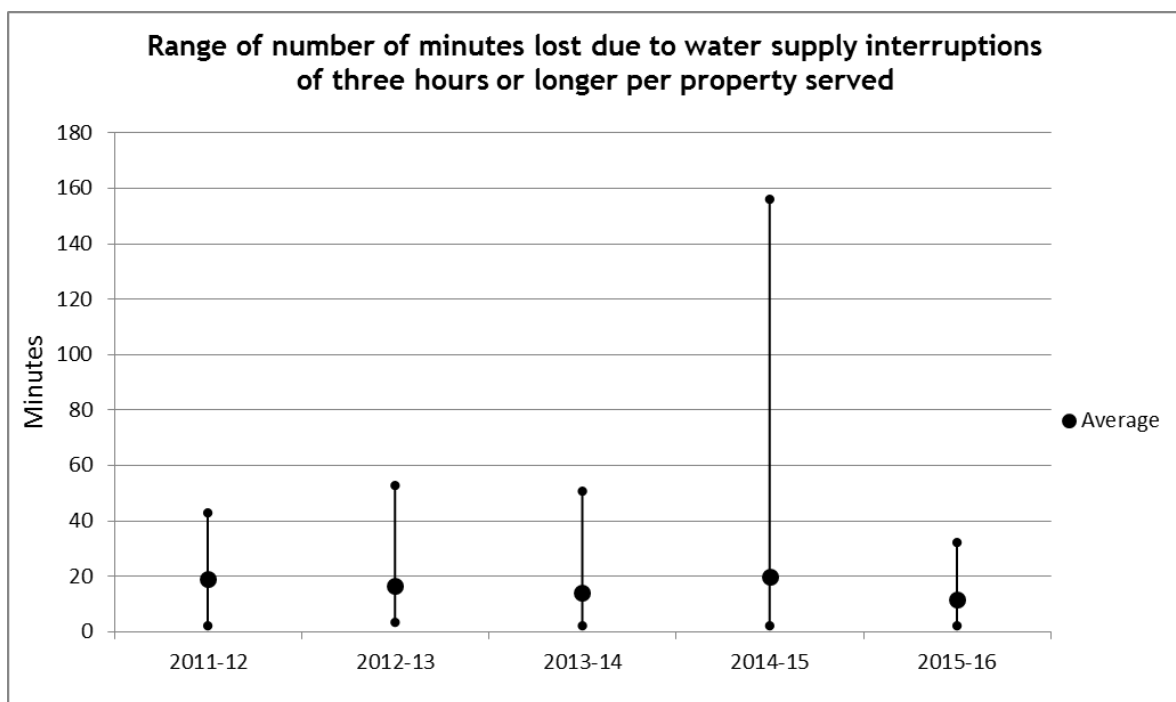
- 💧 The amount of time that customers are without a supply of water has reduced by 41% in the past year.
- 💧 However, only half of the industry has made reductions and we are concerned that this headline result is masking an issue with the remaining companies.
- 💧 5 companies are significantly worse than the industry average.

Customers value a reliable supply of water, and their satisfaction with the reliability of their supply is high, at 97%¹⁷. Interruptions to water supplies cause inconvenience, especially if they occur at times of peak demand. If the interruption is without warning, customers cannot plan for this and more inconvenience is caused.



Over the past five years the duration of supply interruptions has decreased by 38%, although there are year to year fluctuations. In 2015-16 the amount of time that customers were without a supply of water reduced from 19 minutes and 26 seconds to 11 minutes and 29 seconds (41%).

Chart 2: Range of number of minutes lost due to water supply interruptions of three hours or longer per property served



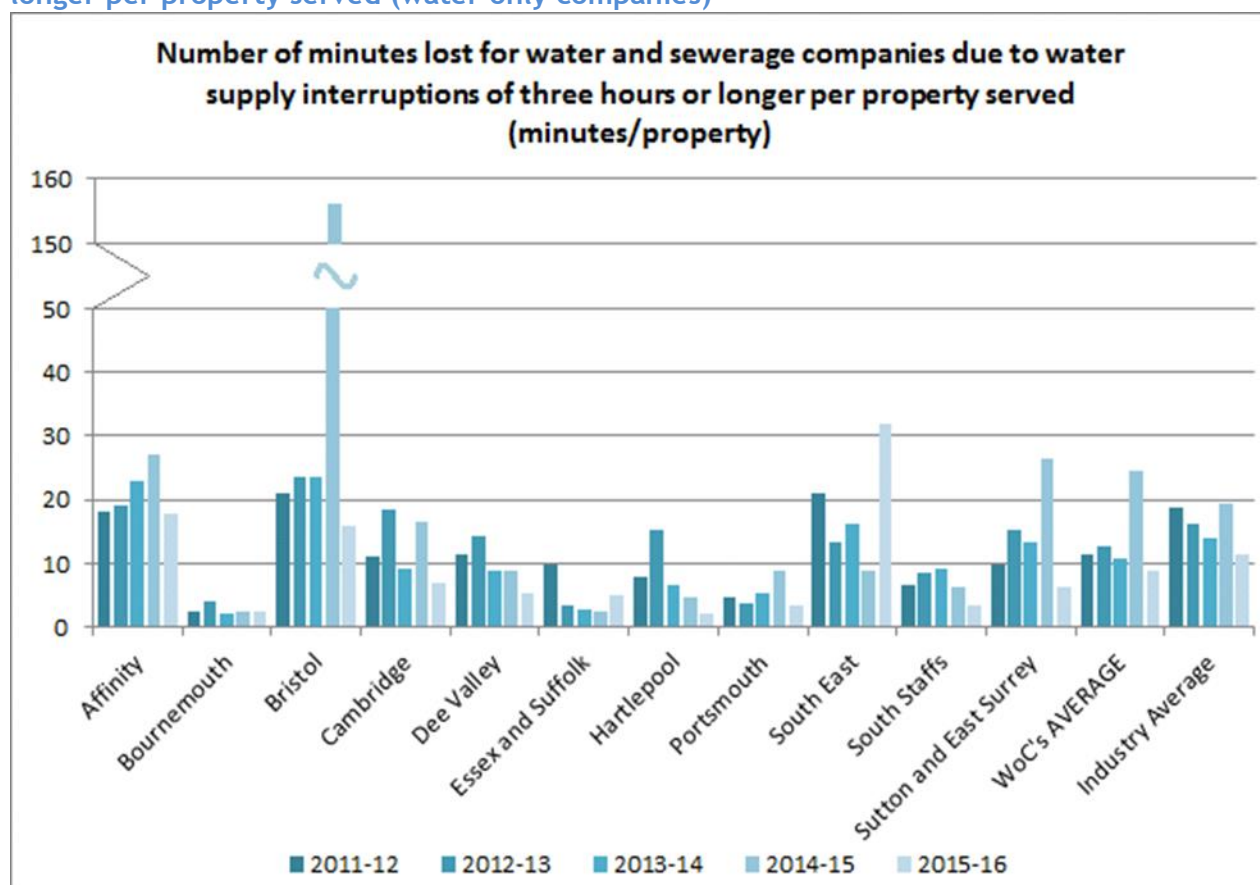
¹⁷ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

Whilst the overall reduction looks positive for the industry, further investigation reveals that only half of all companies made a reduction in 2015-16. The majority of these were water only companies.

Charts 3a and 3b show the number of minutes lost due to water supply interruptions of three hours or longer per property served for each of the last five years.

Northumbrian is the 2015-16 industry leader, at 2 minutes and 11 seconds (a 54.7% reduction). The company has made this a priority, with dedicated teams monitoring interruptions to minimise the number of customers affected by leaks and bursts. Hartlepool has the second lowest time that customers are without supply (2 minutes and 18 seconds - a 52.6% reduction) and last year's leader Bournemouth (2 minutes and 32 seconds - a 5.6% increase) is in third place.

Chart 3a: Number of minutes lost due to water supply interruptions of three hours or longer per property served (water only companies)

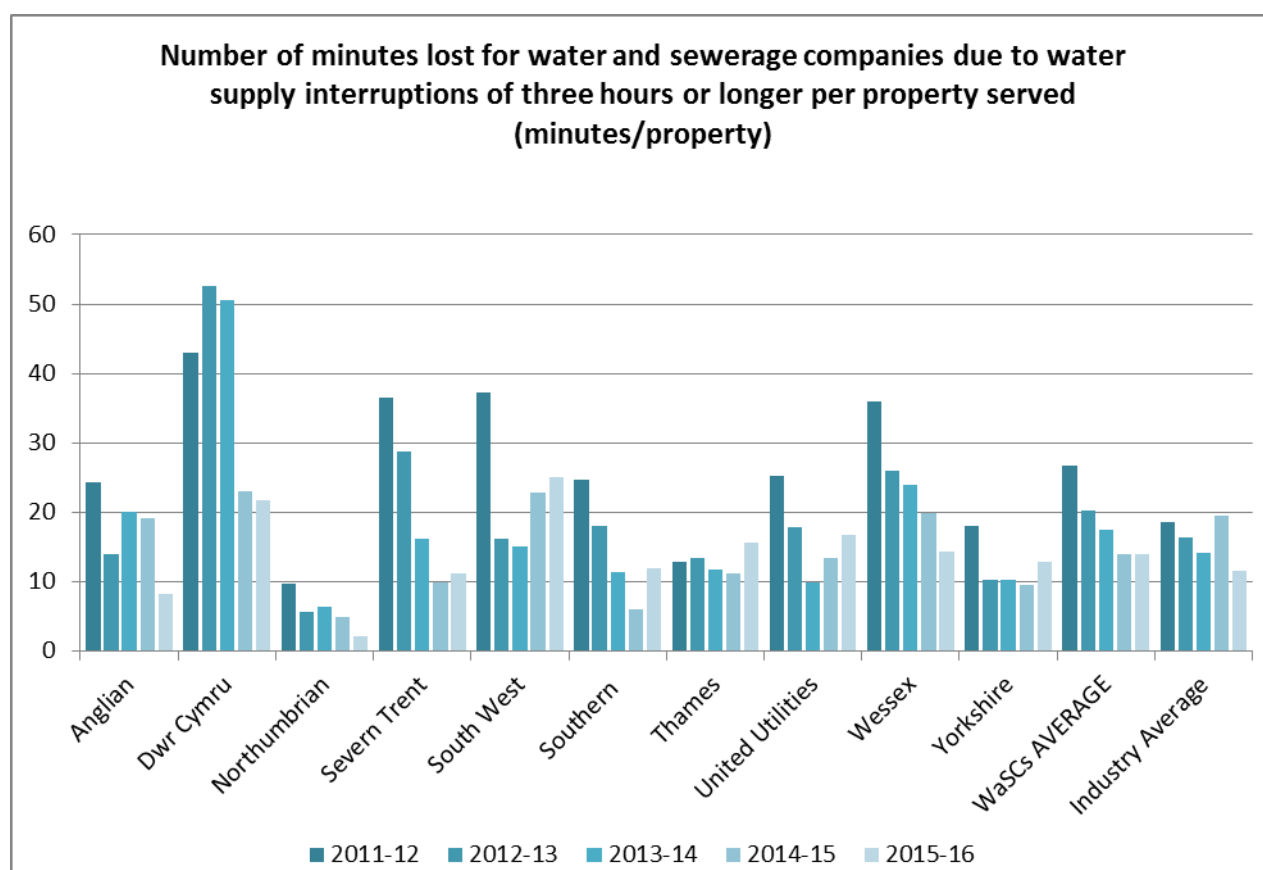


South East was the poorest performer, with the amount of time that its customers were without supply escalating from 9 minutes in 2014-15 to 32 minutes and 3 seconds - a 256% increase. This meant it failed its performance commitment in this area. The company has reported that this increase was due primarily to a major main burst in Hailsham, East Sussex in May 2015 that took some time to rectify due to the characteristics of the main. South East sent an apology letter to all affected customers and credited their accounts for the inconvenience caused. Our local team considers its recovery plans to be appropriate, and will monitor how it implements lessons learnt into future recovery and network maintenance plans.

The amount of time that South West’s customers were without a supply has been rising since the low of 2013-14. In 2015-16 it was the second poorest performer with an average of 25 minutes and 8 seconds (a 10.2% increase) and failed its performance commitment. The increase was due primarily to two burst trunk mains, one in St Blazey, Cornwall and the other in Plymouth, Devon. South West has reviewed its strategies for avoiding and tackling such bursts and is targeting improvements through better network monitoring, the use of new technologies, further investment in pressure management and improved incident and asset management processes.

The third poorest performer was Dŵr Cymru at 21 minutes and 44 seconds. Although this represents the fourth successive annual reduction for the company, its customers are experiencing a much poorer service than most other companies. We note that the company is taking action to try and reverse this performance through, for example, undertaking zonal studies and analysing the worst performing water quality zones. There were four significant burst main incidents that affected the company’s performance in 2015-16: Cilfyndd; Llanpumsaint (West Wales); Crosskeys (Newport); and Llechryd (West Wales). We will challenge the company to demonstrate how it can address this performance more effectively to meet its challenging targets over the next four years.

Chart 3b: Number of minutes lost due to water supply interruptions of three hours or longer per property served (water and sewerage companies)



In addition, the following companies were also significantly worse than the industry average of 11 minutes and 29 seconds, and each failed its performance commitment to customers as agreed with Ofwat in 2014:

- ◆ Despite reducing the amount of time that customers were without supply from 27 minutes to 17 minutes and 55 seconds (a reduction of 33.6%), Affinity remains worse than the industry average and has failed to meet its performance commitment target due to a number of burst mains throughout the year. However, 2015-16 was the first year that it reported a decrease within the five-year reporting period. We will continue to monitor the company's performance quarterly.
- ◆ United Utilities continues its upward trend from 2013-14, with a 24.5% increase. The average time that customers were without a supply was 16 minutes and 42 seconds. The company stated that two major incidents led to it not meeting its performance commitment in this area:
 - ◆ A major water supply incident at Sweetloves water treatment works in Bolton in July 2015; and
 - ◆ Severe weather in Cumbria which caused a major loss of water supply in December 2015.

Other companies performing worse than the industry average of 11 minutes and 29 seconds were:

- ◆ Bristol's performance shows a significant improvement (-89.8%) from its 2014-15 level that was dominated by a single, major interruption. At 15 minutes and 52 seconds it remains worse than the industry average and has failed its performance commitment for the year. There were a number of factors that contributed to the higher than average total, including five incidents which took over 12 hours to fully repair, and some significant renovation work. We are pleased with the steps that the company has put in place to address these issues, including its ongoing investment programme and efforts to improve resilience.
- ◆ Thames, which for the first time since 2012-13, reported an increase in the amount of time its customers were without supply (+39.9%), taking its average to 15 minutes and 32 seconds. This was largely due to an interruption that occurred in July 2015 in Enfield and a significant incident in April. Thames plans to target mains replacement at the locations with the highest number of burst pipe incidents. The company will also install temporary mains to supply customers while repairs are being undertaken, better plan works, and improve information held on its systems on the location of valves on critical water mains. We will be monitoring progress throughout 2016-17.
- ◆ Wessex has consistently performed worse than the industry average, despite a 28% decrease in 2015-16, taking it to 14 minutes and 16 seconds. While this was better than its performance commitment for 2015-16 the company still faces a challenge to bring the average down to the more demanding target levels set for future years.
- ◆ Yorkshire saw its first increase (+34.2%), and its average now stands at 12 minutes and 53 seconds. This was due to a single incident in the Pocklington area, the most impactful incident in the company's area for 10 years. Yorkshire has a number of initiatives to ensure that its performance improves in future years.
- ◆ Southern has reported a 100% increase (from 6 minutes to 12 minutes), making it worse than the industry average for the first time in the five-year period. The company failed to meet its performance commitment due to two major bursts (one near Sittingbourne, Kent in January 2016, which led to a loss of supply to the Isle of Sheppey, and one in Hastings, East Sussex in August 2015). Whilst this is disappointing we acknowledge the events that have contributed to its year-end position. We expect to see a reduction in 2016-17 and will monitor this with the company throughout the year, challenging any upward trends.

Whilst considerably better than the industry average, Essex & Suffolk saw its first increase in the reporting period, from 2 minutes and 35 seconds to 5 minutes and 1 second (a 94.2% increase). This was due to a burst main in Heybridge in August 2015. We will be looking closely to see if the company can learn from its experience of this incident.

Companies which saw large reductions include Sutton & East Surrey (76% reduction to 6 minutes and 18 seconds), Portsmouth (60% reduction to 3 and a half minutes), Cambridge (58% reduction to 6 minutes and 53 seconds), Hartlepool (53% reduction to 2 minutes and 18 seconds), South Staffs (43% reduction to 3 minutes and 36 seconds) and Dee Valley (42% reduction to 5 minutes and 13 seconds).

In summary, we have concerns that the reductions made by a small number of companies may be masking a wider issue for other companies within the industry. We acknowledge that interruptions are sometimes necessary for maintenance work, but we will:

- ◆ continue to push companies to keep this to a minimum;
- ◆ monitor the poorer performing companies and challenge any upward trends; and
- ◆ press companies to communicate effectively with customers to avoid unnecessary disruption.

2.3 Leaks



Key findings

- Leakage has decreased by 1.4% across the industry, reversing the increasing trend from 2011-12.
- Some companies have made much greater improvements than others, and so we challenge the rest of the industry to follow suit.
- There is a huge range in leakage per property, per day, with the leader losing less than half that of the company at the bottom of the pack.



Ofwat requires companies to “fix leaks as long as the cost of doing so is less than the cost of not fixing the leak. The cost of fixing a leak includes environmental damage and the cost of developing new water resources to compensate for the water lost through leaks. This approach is called the sustainable economic level of leakage (SELL)”¹⁸.

Many customers have told us that leakage is a key concern for them, and that companies’ performance in this area can have a big impact on how they approach their own water-saving activities, as well as their perceptions of the water companies¹⁹. However, many customers accept that leakage will happen due to the sheer size and age of the water network. But they expect companies to do more to tackle leakage and fix leaks, and become annoyed and frustrated when water is allowed to run to waste for days on end. The SELL does not take customer perceptions into account.

In our last *Delving into Water* report we commented that even though companies were meeting their targets they needed to do more to reduce leakage. Leakage levels had been rising since 2011-12, but we note that this pattern has not continued into 2015-16. However, there is still work to be done by the six companies that have still not been able to reduce their leakage levels, and by those companies which have only made marginal improvements. Despite this, we once again see that the industry as a whole has met its performance commitments relating to leakage.

Overall leakage levels

Leakage levels have been creeping up since 2011-12. However, 2015-16 saw a slight reversal in that trend, with leakage levels across the industry reducing by 1.4%. The largest reductions were made by Bournemouth (-6%) - which has introduced a programme of planned mains inspection, and is finding and fixing leaks quicker in response to customers’ concerns about leakage - and Anglian (-5%). We challenge the rest of the industry to make a step change in tackling leakage so that similar reductions can be seen for all companies.

¹⁸ <http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/supply-and-standards/leakage/>

¹⁹ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Research-into-customer-perceptions-of-leakage.pdf>

Only seven companies have been able to maintain leakage at or below their reported 2011-12 figures. These were Anglian, Severn Trent, United Utilities, Wessex, Bournemouth, Portsmouth and South East.

The largest increase was reported by Hartlepool (+8.9%), which also had the second largest increase in 2014-15. It had several complex bursts during the year. Hartlepool is working closely with its parent company Anglian, which is the industry leader, to provide additional resource on the network within Hartlepool, as part of the ongoing integration project.

The second largest increase was reported by Southern (+2.4%), despite being the industry leader on a 'per property' basis, as discussed in more detail below.

Table 3: Company actual leakage levels (mega litres per day)²⁰

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian	194.8	185.1	189.2	187.9	178.2	
Dwr Cymru	161.7	178.4	183.8	179.1	179.9	
Northumbrian	130.0	136.0	134.0	136.8	136.0	
Severn Trent	464.0	441.0	441.0	444.0	434.0	
South West	81.0	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.3	
Southern	82.0	81.0	85.0	82.0	84.0	
Thames	637.0	646.0	644.0	654.0	642.5	
United Utilities	453.0	457.0	452.0	453.6	452.0	
Wessex	69.0	69.0	69.0	69.0	68.3	
Yorkshire	274.0	265.0	282.0	288.0	285.1	
Water only companies						
Affinity	169.8	189.5	180.7	183.5	180.9	
Bournemouth	21.7	20.9	20.9	20.9	19.6	
Bristol	43.0	42.0	44.0	45.0	44.2	
Cambridge	12.4	12.4	12.7	13.5	13.2	
Dee Valley	8.5	9.3	10.2	9.8	9.9	
Essex and Suffolk	59.1	53.9	58.4	60.8	60.4	
Hartlepool	4.2	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.4	
Portsmouth	37.0	34.0	30.0	28.9	28.1	
South East	95.2	93.2	92.6	92.5	88.1	
South Staffs	68.2	65.3	66.9	69.2	69.9	
Sutton and East Surrey	23.6	23.7	23.9	24.2	24.2	
Total	3,089.16	3,090.52	3,108.08	3,130.62	3,087.25	
Industry Average	147.10	147.17	148.00	149.08	147.01	

Leakage per property, per day

Overall leakage levels are not comparable across companies given the variations in the size of the companies' network. For example, we would expect that the larger companies have higher leakage levels per day than the smaller ones because they maintain more pipes. In previous reports we have used leakage as a percentage of water put into the system to be able to compare companies' leakage levels. However, after discussions with the industry and an external consultant, we have concluded that there are too many variables in this way of presenting the figures. Instead, for this and future years, we will report leakage on a per property, per day basis.

²⁰ For South West the leakage figure is reported on a calendar year rather than financial year.

On average 121 litres of water are lost per property, per day from leakage. This is almost as much as one full bath tub (80 litres²¹) and a washing machine load (50 litres²²) in every house, every day.



As can be seen in table 4 below, there is a huge range in the levels of leakage per property served. Essex & Suffolk is the best performer at 74.5 litres, followed by Southern (76.5 litres) and Dee Valley (78.2 litres). Both Southern and Dee Valley reported increases during 2015-16 (+2.4% and +1.5% respectively). Conversely, Thames reported 170.9 litres, although it made reductions in 2015-16 (-1.8%).

Table 4: Leakage per property, per day (Litres per day)²³

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian	93.8	89.1	91.1	89.8	84.5	
Dwr Cymru	115.2	127.1	130.9	127.2	126.9	
Northumbrian	109.8	114.9	113.2	114.9	113.8	
Severn Trent	133.2	126.6	126.6	126.9	123.0	
South West	101.3	105.1	105.1	104.3	103.6	
Southern	75.6	74.7	78.4	75.2	76.5	
Thames	172.3	174.7	174.2	175.6	170.9	
United Utilities	140.0	141.2	139.7	139.6	138.0	
Wessex	115.5	115.5	115.5	114.6	112.5	
Yorkshire	121.6	117.6	125.2	127.2	125.2	
Water only companies						
Affinity	116.4	129.9	123.9	125.2	122.6	
Bournemouth	106.4	102.4	102.5	101.9	95.4	
Bristol	82.7	80.7	84.6	86.0	83.8	
Cambridge	91.8	91.6	94.2	98.9	95.9	
Dee Valley	68.3	74.4	81.4	77.7	78.2	
Essex & Suffolk	74.9	68.4	74.0	76.6	74.5	
Hartlepool	95.0	89.1	87.0	91.7	99.0	
Portsmouth	119.5	109.8	96.9	92.2	89.03	
South East	105.0	102.8	102.1	94.4	90.0	
South Staffs	117.7	112.7	115.5	118.2	119.1	
Sutton & East Surrey	83.2	83.5	84.3	84.8	84.2	
Industry Average (Weighted)	120.78	120.83	121.52	122.07	120.74	

In addition to Thames there are a further five companies that are performing worse than the industry average of 121 litres per property, per day. The companies with the highest amounts of water leaked per property served are:

²¹ <http://www.waterwise.org.uk/news.php/11/showers-vs.-baths-facts-figures-and-misconceptions>

²² <http://www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/indoors.html>

²³ Per property data is calculated using all water only connections and all water and sewerage connections.

- ◆ United Utilities (138 litres), although it made reductions to overall leakage levels in 2015-16 (-0.35%) (its' high figures are due to the fact that it would not be economically viable to significantly better the leakage targets set by Ofwat which take into account the nature of the supply infrastructure, geography, population distribution and water resource pressures).
- ◆ Whilst Dŵr Cymru is delivering its SELL, it is one of the companies that saw an increase in overall leakage levels (to 126.9 litres, a 0.44% increase) and is performing worse than the industry average. During the winter period heavy rainfall and high winds hampered leakage detection efforts and affected customer reported leaks. However this stabilised in February with a strong leakage performance during March. CCWater will continue to challenge the company to demonstrate how it can improve its performance.
- ◆ Yorkshire saw a 1% decrease to overall leakage levels (125.2 litres). It explained that its economic level of leakage is influenced by the age and length of the water network, the operating pressures required to ensure water gets to all customers at the required delivery pressure, and the cost of operating in the area.

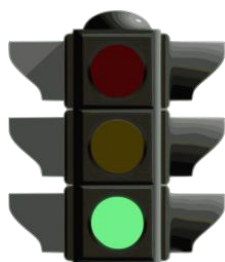
Companies have acknowledged that leakage is a key concern for customers and all have made commitments in relation to their leakage levels over the next five years. But we would question whether the rate that companies are reducing leakage is quick enough to meet customers' expectations. If customers do not see progress on this issue, they are more likely to ignore company campaigns on water efficiency. And should another drought arise then they may not react as positively to water saving messages as they did in 2012.

Companies should aim to beat - not just meet - their leakage targets. Some companies are committed to doing so. The whole industry should be.

We will continue to monitor this area to push companies - particularly those that are worse than the industry average, and those that are seeing an upward trend - to improve their performance in this area and meet their customers' expectations.

3. Steady progress in the right direction, with some outliers

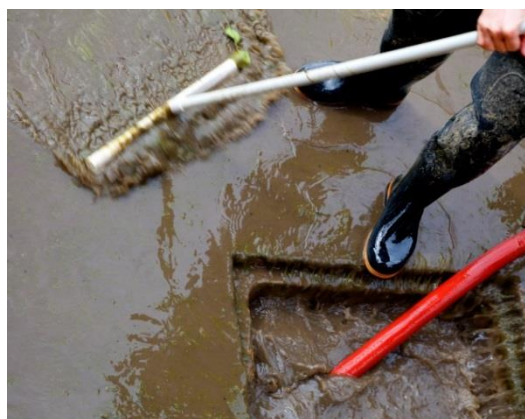
3.1 Sewer flooding



Key findings

- The winter of 2015 was particularly wet but, surprisingly, this had minimal effect on both internal (decreased by 3.7%) and external sewer flooding (decreased by 6.1%)
- Many companies have made improvements and risen above the challenge of the weather.

Few service failures have the potential to cause more distress for customers than sewer flooding. It can have a devastating impact on affected homes and businesses. Internal sewer flooding can be particularly traumatic for people who suffer damage to their property and personal belongings. Even after the clean-up is completed, households can remain fearful of history repeating itself every time storm clouds gather - unless action is taken to tackle the underlying cause. Our research shows that 84% of customers are satisfied with the efforts that their company is taking to minimise sewer flooding²⁴.



Three-quarters of sewer blockages are caused by people putting items they shouldn't down the loo or the sink, and half of sewer flooding is caused by these blockages.

Only toilet “paper, pee and poo” should be flushed down the loo.

Items such as tampons, sanitary pads, wet wipes, cotton buds, condoms, nappies, cooking oils, fat and grease should be disposed of in a bin.

Please note that Severn Trent this year have not been able to supply comparable data in relation to external flooding for 2015-16 in time to be published in this report. This is because the company altered its reporting systems to match its performance commitment on sewer flooding. Therefore, when calculating the industry overall position, increases and decreases, historical Severn Trent information has been excluded from the calculations to ensure that the data is comparable across the years.

We acknowledge that weather conditions have an impact on levels of sewer flooding. The winter of 2015-16 brought severe flooding in December with record rainfall²⁵

and nine named storms. Since 1910, the only winter that has been wetter was in 2013-14. These conditions have presented an additional challenge for companies. But, having raised sewer flooding as an area of concern in our last report, we are pleased to see that companies responded well to the poor weather with minimal effect on internal sewer flooding and a reduction in the number of areas affected by external sewer flooding.

²⁴ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

²⁵ <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/summaries/2016/winter>

Number of properties that have flooded internally

The number of properties flooded internally reached their peak in 2012-13, and we are pleased to note that since then they have been reducing. However, sewer flooding is heavily influenced by the weather and the number of properties affected can vary dramatically across the years. Despite last year's record rainfall and severe weather events, the number of properties experiencing internal sewer flooding decreased by 3.7%. It now stands at 4,344, a 5% decrease in the past five years.

Three companies reported increased internal flooding when compared to the previous wettest year of 2013-14: Anglian (+8.2%), United Utilities (+5.7%) and Yorkshire (+9.8%).

Severn Trent saw the largest reduction (-33%). It has dedicated teams focussing on improving flooding performance, has invested on proactively inspecting flooding 'hot spot' areas and cleaning and repairing sewers identified as most likely to flood. Additionally it has carried out work at over 3,000 properties that have experienced repeat sewer flooding in the past and have updated their processes to better identify these properties in the future.

Despite the wet weather significant reductions in the numbers of properties flooded were made by Northumbrian (-23.3%) and Anglian (-9.1%) when compared to last year. Northumbrian made a concerted effort to address the issue having suffered at the hands of severe weather in the past, so it shows what can be achieved. Wessex Water reported a 19.2% reduction and Dŵr Cymru reported a 17.8% reduction to the overall number of properties flooded.

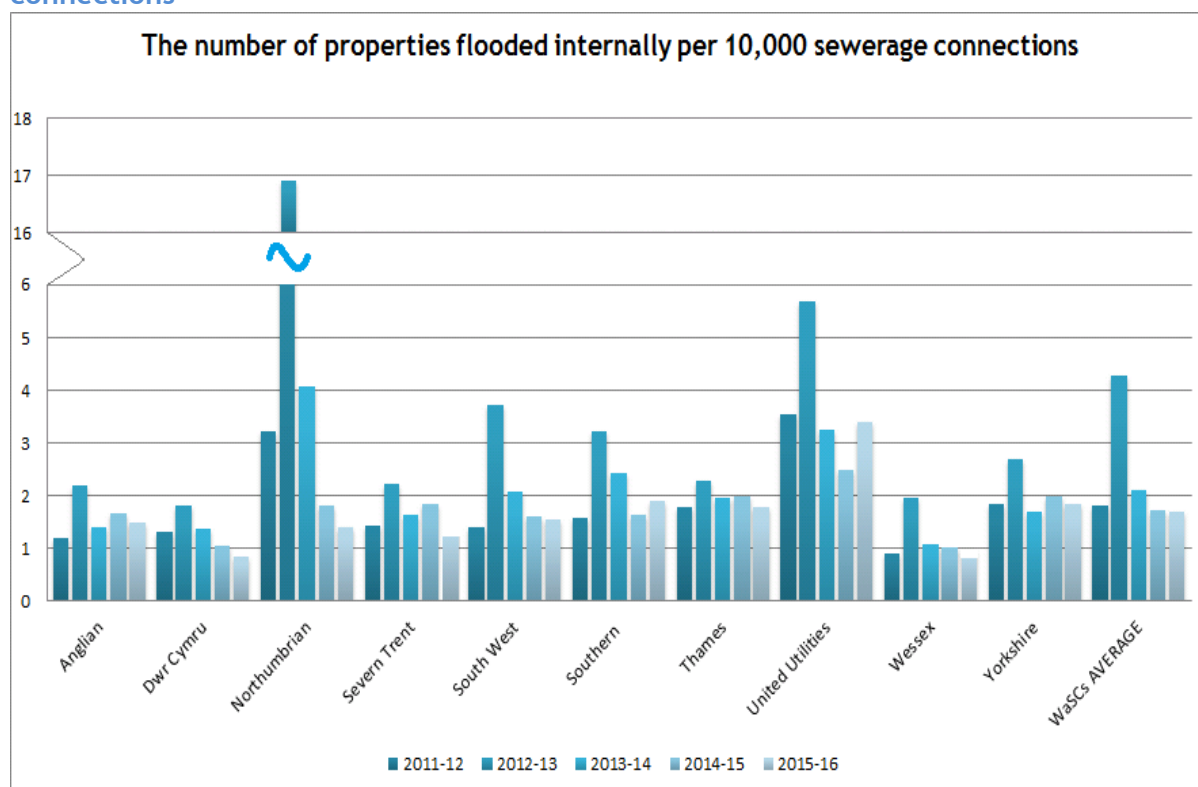
Some companies attributed increases in sewer flooding to the wet weather and the largest were seen by:

- ◆ United Utilities, which experienced an overall 36.7% increase and missed its target for its sewer flooding performance commitment. It is also above the industry average. This was largely due to storms Desmond, Eva and Frank which hit the North of England in quick succession during December 2015 and January 2016. Discussions with the company have focused on lessons learnt and remedial action.
- ◆ Southern reported a 17.7% increase in the numbers of properties flooded due to the exceptionally wet August 2015. They are above the industry average and missed their performance commitment on sewer flooding.

The industry average for properties flooded internally is 1.63 incidents per property served. In addition to Southern and United Utilities there were two other companies above this average, although we note that they have both made reductions this year:

- ◆ Thames made a 8.9% reduction, to 1.78 per 10,000 connections; and
- ◆ Yorkshire made a 7% reduction, to 1.83 per 10,000 connections.

Chart 4: The number of properties flooded internally per 10,000 sewerage connections²⁶



Number of areas that have flooded externally

External flooding may not be as traumatic or as damaging as internal flooding, but the presence of sewage in gardens, roads and public spaces is unpleasant and can have implications for public health. The frequency of external flooding is typically eight times greater than for internal flooding, largely because the sewerage system is designed to overflow from manhole covers and other areas before it impacts properties.

Similar to the pattern seen for internal flooding, external incidents also peaked in 2012-13, but conversely have continued a downward trend since then. The poor weather seen over the winter of 2015 did not have an adverse impact on the number of external areas flooded by sewage. Indeed, there was a 6.2% decrease in 2015-16 compared to the previous year. When compared to the wetter winter of 2013 only one company has reported marginally increased figures - Yorkshire (4.7%).

Since 2014-15 the largest reductions have been made by three companies which continue to perform worse than the industry average of 16.56 areas flooded per 10,000 connections:

- Southern has made a 20.1% reduction, but is the poorest performer in terms areas flooded per 10,000 connections (24.64);
- Anglian made a 10.2% reduction (19.53 areas flooded per 10,000 connections)

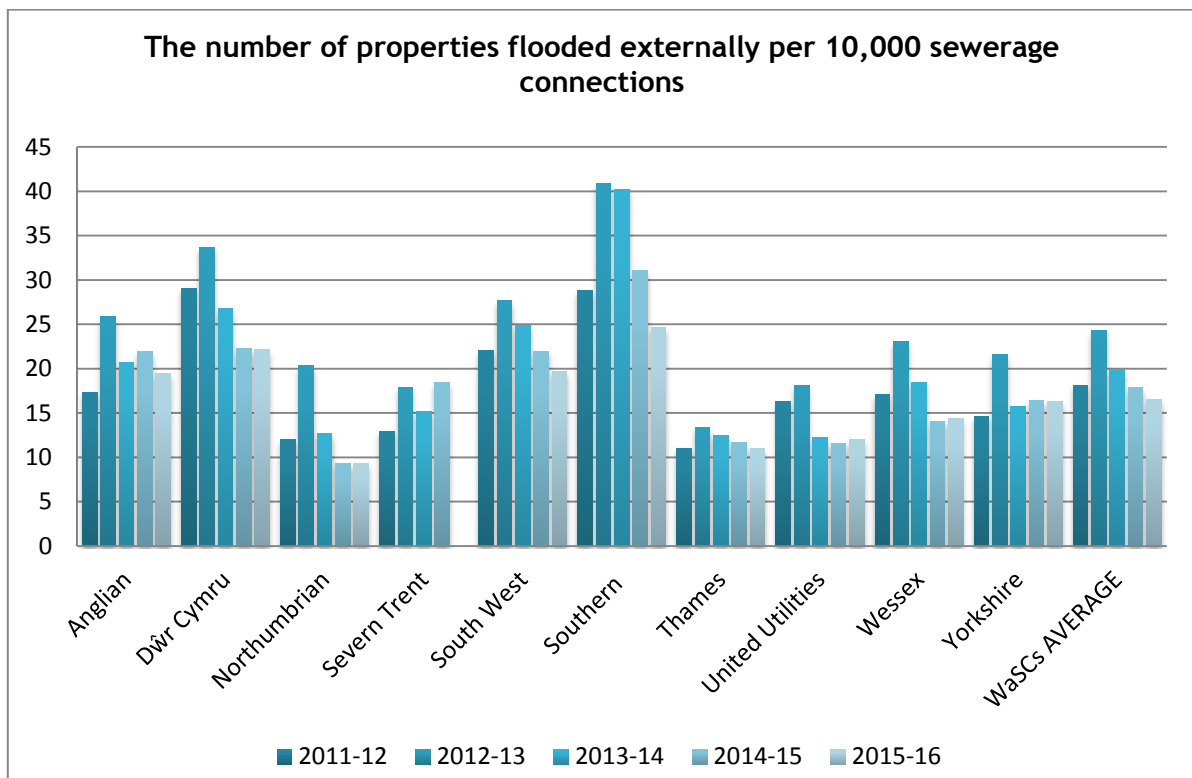
²⁶ Based on the total number of water and sewerage, and sewerage only connections. Information relates to public sewers and does not include those which have transferred to companies from private ownership as these were not included in the targets set for companies at the 2009 price review period.

South West made a 9.6% reduction (19.73 areas flooded per 10,000 connections). Despite this the company did not meet its performance commitment in relation to sewer flooding and remain above the industry average. We note that South West’s performance commitment now also relates to private sewers transferred to the company’s ownership. To combat this it is undertaking further sewer rehabilitation/relining and the replacement of trunk sewers. South West aims to improve how quickly it responds to flooding incidents and to raise customer awareness about what can be flushed down toilets and sinks.

Dŵr Cymru is also worse than the industry average (22.17) and reported a 0.2% increase in total areas flooded. We are aware that the company is taking steps to identify hotspot areas and high-risk customers to address increasing dissatisfaction and contact from customers relating to these incidents. Whilst Southern made a reduction it remains worse than the industry average.

United Utilities (5.4%) and Wessex (2.9%) also reported increases.

Chart 5: The number of areas flooded externally per 10,000 sewerage connections²⁷



N.B. 2015-16 comparable data is not yet available for Severn Trent as the company altered its reporting systems to match its performance commitment. However, it will be able to report comparable information in future years, but this information was not available in time for publication of this report. Severn Trent reports that it delivered on the commitments made to its customers. Its flooding performance commitments are more ambitious than previously as the company now records a property that floods twice as two incidents whereas before that property would only have been counted once.

²⁷ Based on the total number of water and sewerage, and sewerage only connections. Information relates to public sewers and does not include those which have transferred to companies from private ownership as these were not included in the targets set for companies in the 2009 price review period.

21st Century Drainage Programme

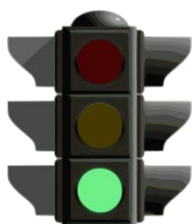
In late 2014 Defra, Ofwat, the Environment Agency and Water UK (the trade association for the sewerage companies) discussed how to improve the sustainability and resilience of the UK's wastewater infrastructure to deliver better customer service and minimise greenhouse gas emissions. The result was the creation of the Water UK-led 21st Century Drainage Programme Board. The Board is tasked with improving drainage systems over the next 25-50 years so that they will be able to handle projected increased flows through them and limit incidents of sewer flooding. CCWater has observer status on the Programme Board.

In early October 2016, the Programme Board published a 36-page document that set out the future challenges and how these would be tackled. Seven linked work streams have been identified:

- ◆ **Communications and engagement** - informing key stakeholders, including customers, about the programme's ambition to improve customer service by protecting communities from flooding and pollution.
- ◆ **Defining and managing drainage capacity** - identifying current and future use of the drainage system. This will lead to discussions about what strategic enhancements are needed, and when, to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the drainage system for the next 25-50 years.
- ◆ **Addressing overflows that operate frequently** - developing a process to prioritise investment in those combined sewer overflows that spill frequently. The outcome will be greater protection from flooding for customers and the environment.
- ◆ **Sewer misuse** - promoting a 'do not flush' message to customers who might be tempted to use the loo to dispose of sanitary products and wet wipes branded as 'flushable'.
- ◆ **Groundwater inundation of drainage system** - managing rising groundwater that can enter drains and sewers and lead to flooding and pollution.
- ◆ **Enablers to progress** - identify and address the social, regulatory, legal and financial issues that might prevent progress being made in other work streams.
- ◆ **Drainage infrastructure deterioration** - understanding the rate at which the drainage system deteriorates, its effect on customer service, and how future investment should be targeted.

Over the next few years each sewerage company will build up a picture of what it needs to do to deliver the ambitions set out in the Programme Board's document. There are already a number of specific projects underway which will assist companies to scope and cost their plans for 2020-25. Additionally, there are other projects to gather evidence and assist the four Governments in the UK to consider options for change to deliver more resilient and cost effective services to customers.

3.2 Customer assistance and payment schemes



Key findings

- Overall almost 800,000 customers are receiving help through WaterSure, social tariffs, Water Direct and Special Assistance Registers.
- Companies continue to offer more assistance in different ways.
- But the industry needs to continue working towards targeted communication with customers who would benefit most from the schemes.

Customer affordability remains a key focus for us, with 12% of customers having told us that they find their water bills unaffordable²⁸. Water companies have a range of different support schemes and strategies to help customers who are struggling to pay their bills and much more help is becoming available with the introduction of company social tariffs. However, customers' awareness of the help available to them remains relatively low.

We continue to work with companies to ensure that the right schemes are available and that customers know who to turn to and what help is available if they are struggling to pay their bill.

In January 2016 we teamed up with poverty relief charity Turn2us to launch two new tools on our website to help customers in financial difficulty identify ways to boost their household income. Customers can use our [Grants Search tool](#) to see if they qualify for assistance from more than 3,000 charitable funds, including those established by water companies. Our [Benefits Calculator](#) helps customers quickly identify whether they are entitled to a wide range of means-tested benefits, including Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Working Tax Credit. From its launch in January to the end of September 2016 4,100 customers had identified entitlement to annual benefits of more than £2.3 million.

The next sections of this report consider the following assistance and payment schemes:

- WaterSure and Welsh Water Assist;
- Social tariffs;
- Water Direct; and
- Special Assistance Registers.

Between 2015 and 2020 companies expect to help 400,000 households (around a million more people) through schemes designed to help them pay their bill.

²⁸ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>



Our research suggests that companies could build on the good work they are already doing to deliver affordability assistance by:

- Developing cross-sector partnerships.
- Using every interaction with customers to gather information and target support.
- Incorporating water affordability within more holistic debt advice approaches.
- Using 'moments of change' in customers' lives to embed affordability messages.
- Improving relationships with regular, positive customer contact.
- Developing tailored communication strategies.
- Exploring more ways of communicating with customer face to face.

<http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/07/13/delivering-affordability-assistance-to-water-customers-cross-sector-lessons/#more-8039>

WaterSure and Welsh Water Assist

WaterSure is a Government scheme which caps the water bill at the average household bill for the company, although both Bristol and Wessex offer a further reduction and cap the water bill at the average metered charge. Customers are eligible for this assistance if they are:

- on a water meter (although the Welsh Water Assist scheme historically extended help to unmetered properties serviced by Dŵr Cymru);
- in receipt of certain welfare benefits; and
- in receipt of child benefit for three or more children under 19, or have someone living at the property with a medical condition requiring high water use.

More information about WaterSure and eligibility for it can be found on our website [here](#)²⁹.

Although the scheme is mandatory only in England, both Dŵr Cymru and Dee Valley, which operate predominantly in Wales, have introduced similar schemes on a voluntary basis. 2014-15 was the last year during which Dŵr Cymru's Welsh Water Assist scheme extended WaterSure type assistance to unmetered customers, with charges capped at a lower level than the average bill. WaterSure Wales remained a Dŵr Cymru scheme for metered customers only. In 2015-16 there were 10,146 metered customers receiving help through WaterSure Wales and Welsh Water Assist, and 23,721 unmetered. Welsh Water Assist is currently being phased out and ceased to be offered to new claimants from 1st April 2015, following the introduction of Dŵr Cymru's new social tariff 'HelpU'.

Charts 6a and 6b overleaf show how many customers per 10,000 metered connections are registered for WaterSure (or the equivalent scheme in Wales). These figures are for information only. They cannot be compared across companies because the level of charges and the extent of household poverty will vary between companies and will have an impact on uptake of the schemes.

The numbers of customers receiving help through WaterSure and Welsh Water Assist has increased at a rapid rate over the past five years. In 2011-12 there were just under 79,000 customers registered for WaterSure and this has increased by 66% to over 130,000 over the five-year period.

For some companies the uptake has decreased as customers have instead moved onto social tariffs. However, large increases were seen by Anglian (+48.3%), Southern (+33.6%), South East (+22.6%) and Northumbrian (+20.5%).

Dee Valley reported a 20.3% increase and attribute this to improvements to in-house training for their staff and better communication with customers who can cascade information to relatives. The company used personal contact and home visits to increase awareness, as well as building partnerships with other organisations. This is a positive increase and we encourage Dee Valley to apply the same approach to their new social tariff, Here2Help, which has had only very limited uptake in the first six months.

²⁹ http://ccwater.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/406

Chart 6a: The number of customers per 10,000 household metered connections that are registered on WaterSure or the equivalent (water only companies)³⁰

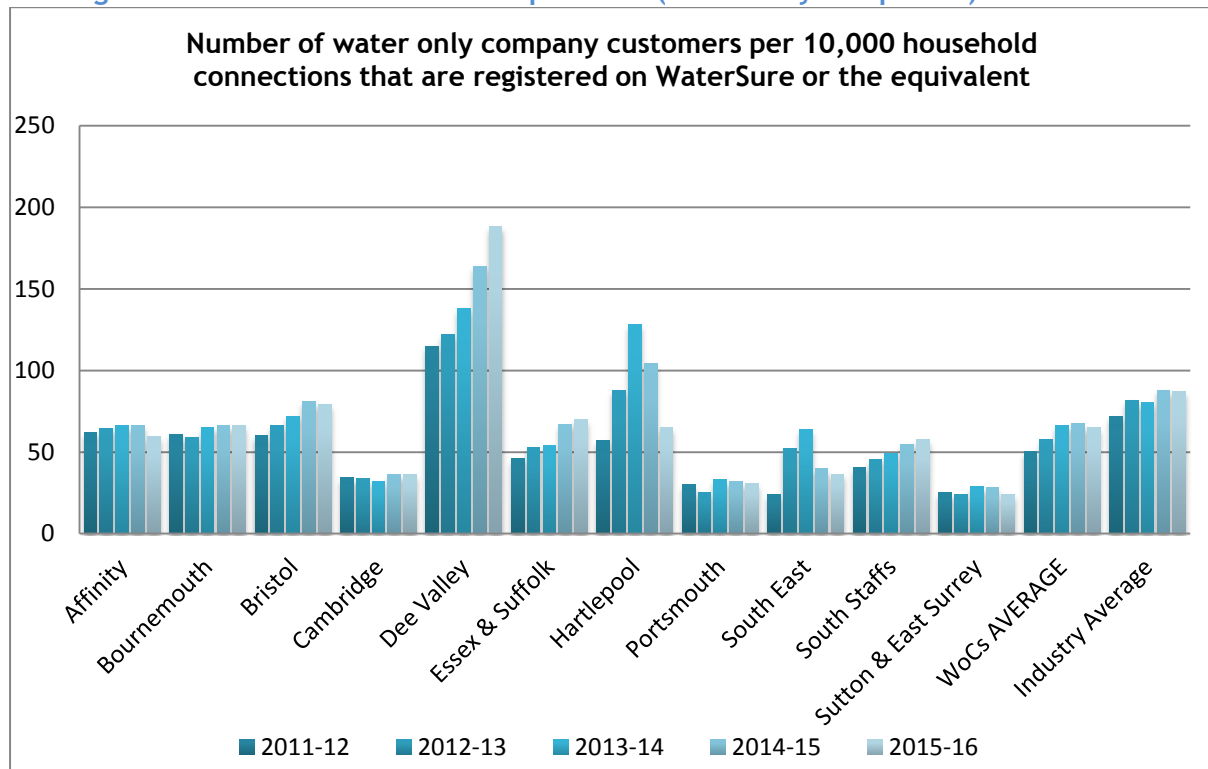
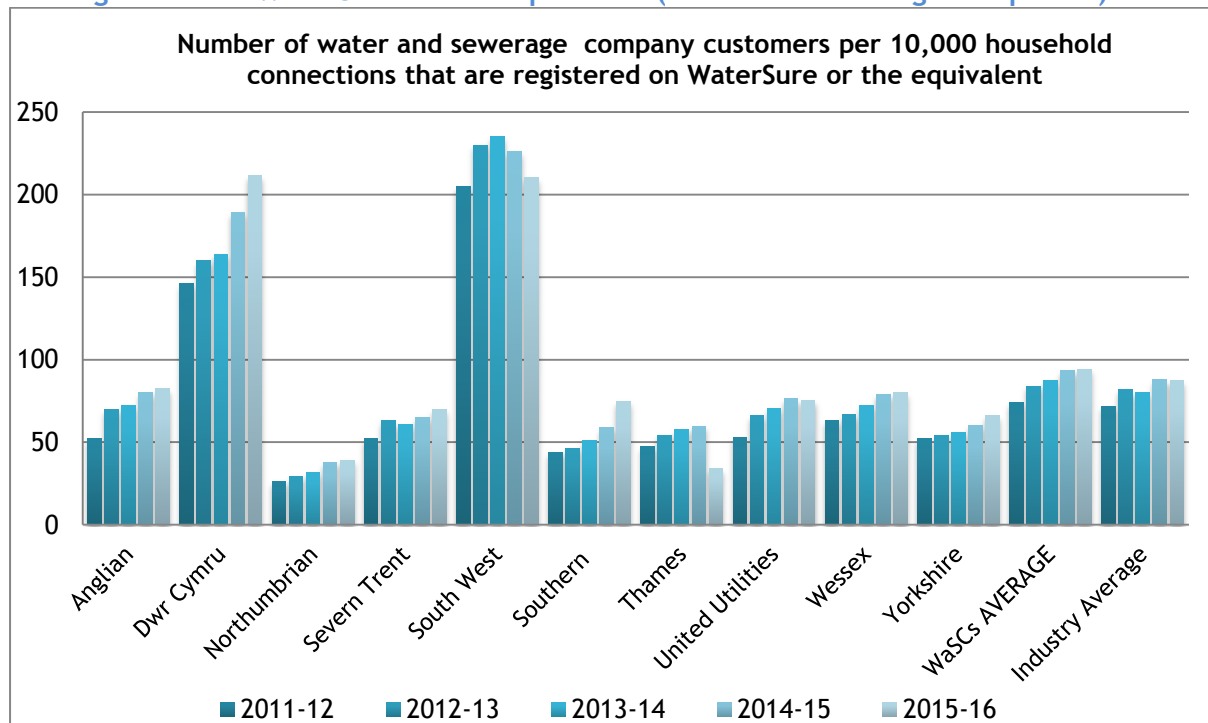


Chart 6b: The number of customers per 10,000 household metered connections that are registered on WaterSure or the equivalent (water and sewerage companies)³¹



³⁰ Based on metered household water only connections. The 2014-15 figures for Bristol Water and Wessex Water refer to the WaterSure Plus scheme which has the same eligibility criteria as WaterSure, but offers greater financial assistance.

³¹ Based on metered household connections (water, sewerage and sewerage only). Includes the Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water Assist for metered households but not for unmetered.

Whilst good progress has already been made we know that only 8% of customers know about WaterSure³². Companies need to increase their efforts to raise awareness of this and other assistance schemes.

Social tariffs

The Government introduced legislation under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 which enabled companies to operate local social tariff schemes funded by customers through their bills. These social tariffs provide lower bills for some customers who might otherwise struggle to pay. Government guidance requires companies to consult CCWater on the development of such tariffs and to test their acceptability with customers. Details of the social tariff schemes which are now available can be found on the CCWater website.³³

At the end of 2015-16 there were 131,989³⁴ customers receiving help through social tariffs.

Table 5: The number of customers per 10,000 household connections that are registered for customer funded social tariffs³⁵

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Water and Sewerage Companies			
Anglian	N/A	N/A	5.27
Dwr Cymru	N/A	N/A	22.60
Northumbrian	N/A	N/A	7.06
Severn Trent	N/A	N/A	24.22
South West	15.10	36.53	51.37
Southern	N/A	N/A	42.18
Thames	N/A	4.92	34.70
United Utilities	N/A	N/A	41.55
Wessex	65.02	77.17	81.51
Yorkshire	N/A	N/A	31.72
Water only companies			
Affinity	N/A	150.49	277.22
Bournemouth	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bristol	87.32	111.77	125.66
Cambridge	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dee Valley	N/A	N/A	N/A
Essex and Suffolk	N/A	N/A	3.76
Hartlepool	N/A	N/A	N/A
Portsmouth	N/A	N/A	N/A
South East	N/A	N/A	49.95
South Staffs	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sutton and East Surrey	N/A	106.02	210.38

³² <http://www.cwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

³³ <http://www.cwater.org.uk/savewaterandmoney/lower-bills-for-customers-struggling-to-pay/>

³⁴ This includes 5,446 customers that are currently registered for United Utilities pilot tariff.

³⁵ Based on household connections (water, sewerage and sewerage only) for water and sewerage companies and water only connections for water only companies.

19 out of the 21 water companies across England and Wales now have social tariffs, with the remaining two expected to launch schemes in 2017.

Company social tariff schemes have been developed in consultation with their customers. As such they vary considerably in terms of their eligibility criteria and the scope of help which is provided. This can be confusing for customers, especially when they are receiving services from two different companies. We will continue to work with companies to determine where schemes can be simplified and made more consistent.

CCWater is leading the way on helping companies raise awareness of the help available through social tariffs and other assistance schemes. In October 2014 we held an industry seminar to identify ways in which companies could improve the assistance they provide to customers who are struggling to pay and the ways in which the availability of this help is communicated. The seminar produced a number of recommended actions and we are now working with companies to implement them. We will hold a workshop in November 2016 to explore company experiences in implementing the tariffs with a focus on sharing good practice and identifying solutions to any problems which have been encountered.

We have also added a guide to company social tariffs on our website to help customers identify what help is available from their company and whether they might qualify for support.

Water Direct

The Water Direct scheme enables some customers (usually those in arrears with water charges) to have payments taken directly from their benefits. Some customers find this helpful in managing their household budgets. You can find out more about the scheme on our website [here](#)³⁶.

Charts 7a and 7b below show the number of customers who are paying their water bill through Water Direct for each company. However, this cannot be used to draw direct comparisons between companies because there are several local factors which can affect take-up of the scheme. These include the number of customers who receive benefits locally and the level of customer debt.

Until 2015-16 we had seen that the number of customers paying their charges through Water Direct had been increasing at a steady rate for each of the previous five years. However, 2015-16 has shown the first decrease (-0.7%).

Some companies have informed us that the decrease in the number of customers paying through Water Direct is due to an increase in the number of households receiving help through social tariffs. It may also be being driven by data cleansing or customers moving out of receiving benefits.

Last year we noted a slight downward trend in the number of customers per 10,000 connections registered for Water Direct with Southern, Thames, United Utilities, Yorkshire, Affinity, Cambridge and Portsmouth. In most cases this trend has continued into 2015-16, with the exception of United Utilities and Yorkshire which have both seen a slight increase per 10,000 connections this year. Northumbrian, South East and Bournemouth were the only other companies that had an increase per 10,000 connections.

³⁶ http://ccwater.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/247

Chart 7a: The number of customers per 10,000 household connections that are registered on Water Direct (water only companies)³⁷

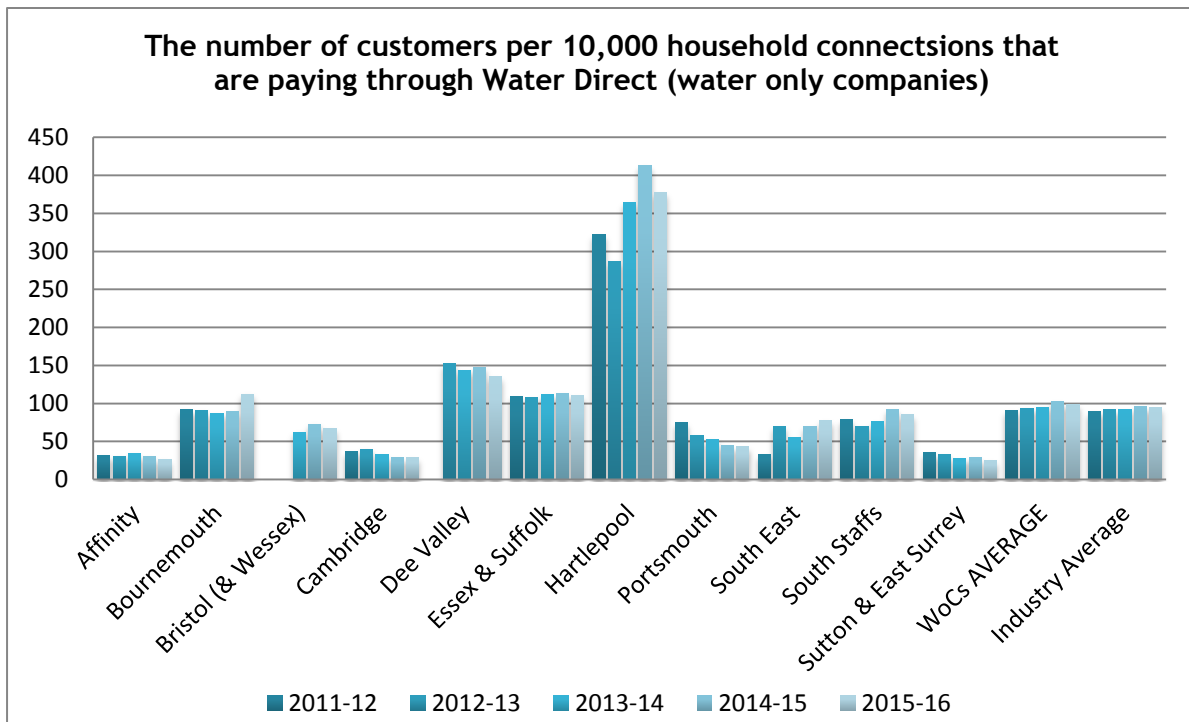
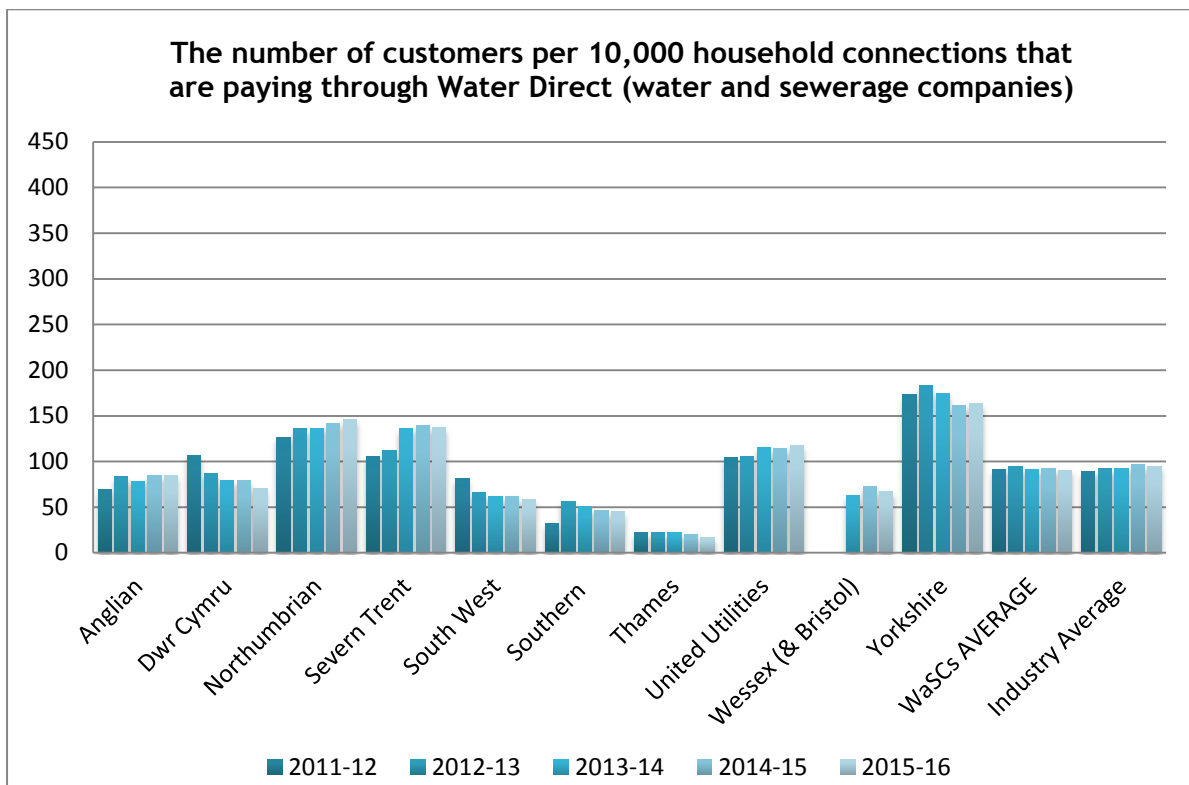


Chart 7b: The number of customers per 10,000 household connections who are registered on Water Direct (water and sewerage companies)³⁸



³⁷ Historic figures are not available for all companies. Based on all household water only connections.

³⁸ Historic figures are not available for all companies. Based on all household connections (water, water and sewerage and sewerage only).

Special Assistance Registers

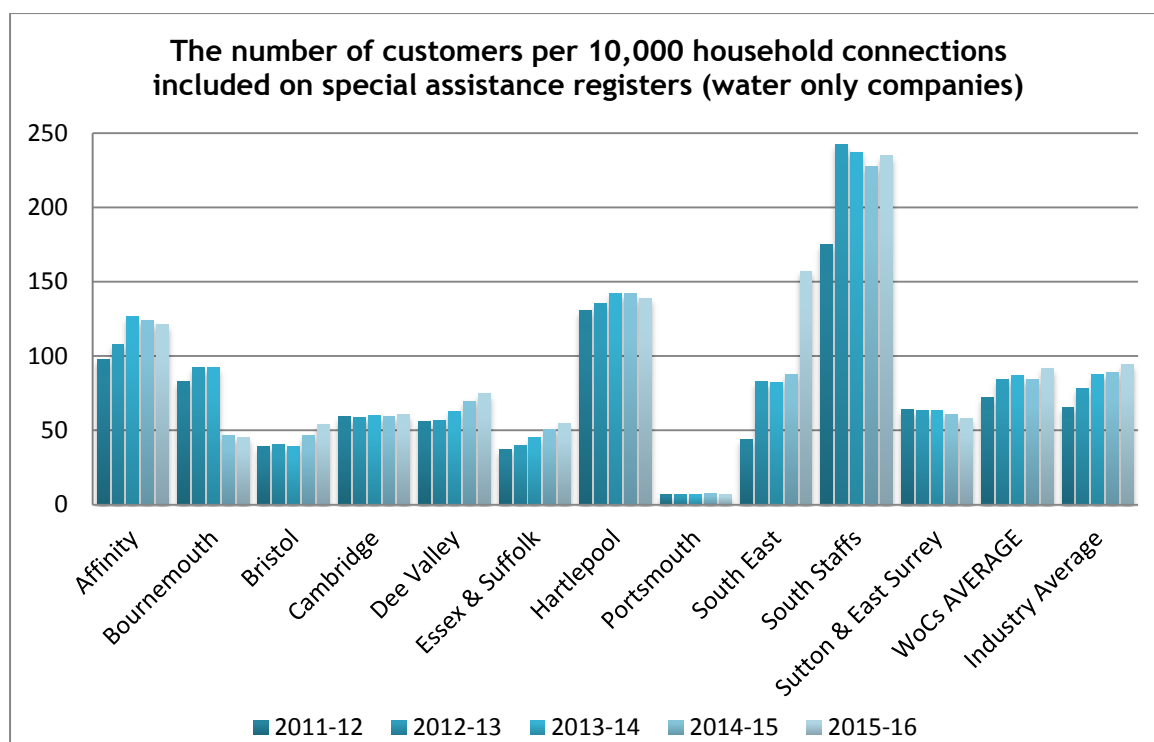
Every water company has a ‘special assistance register’ which allows customers to register for additional help in accessing services such as meter reading, help during water supply interruptions, large print, Braille or talking bills. The schemes are open to anyone who needs extra help regardless of age, health or disability. You can find further information about the types of assistance available [here](#).

Charts 8a and 8b below show that the number of customers who have signed up for extra help has been increasing at a steady rate over the past five years, from 186,171 in 2011-12 to 280,324 in 2014-15. This is a 51% increase across the five-year period and companies are to be commended for promoting their schemes.

This year South East has recorded a 78.7% increase in the number of customers registered for special assistance, which they attribute to the introduction of a customer care team to support their work around vulnerability. Bristol increased the number of customers on its scheme by 16.6%.

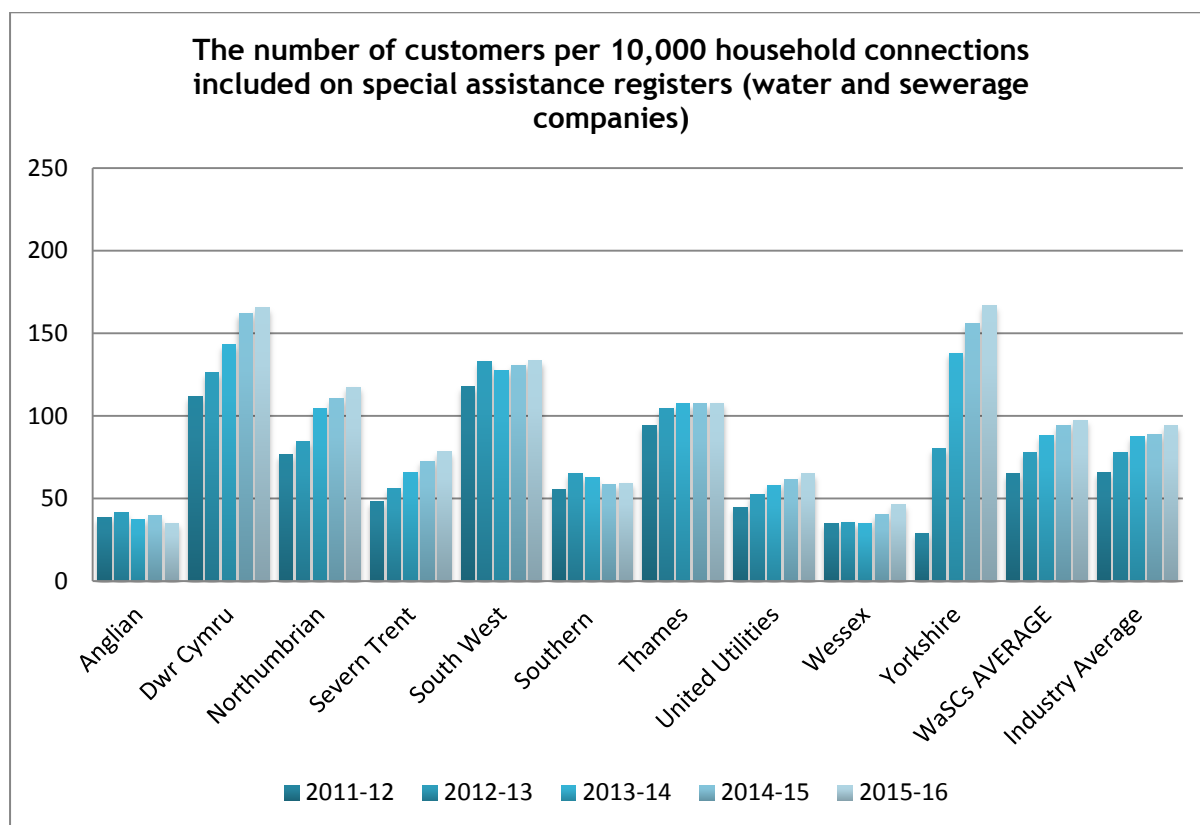
However, we have seen decreases for Anglian (-11%), Portsmouth (-9.3%) Sutton & East Surrey (-4.7% - who also reported a decrease in the previous year), Bournemouth (-3.2% - who also saw a decrease in 2014-15 due to a review of their reporting process), Hartlepool (-1.7%) and Affinity (-1.5%). These decreases are likely to be due to people moving away from the area or dying.

Chart 8a: The number of customers per 10,000 household connections who are registered on special assistance registers (water only companies)³⁹



³⁹ Based on all household water only connections.

Chart 8b: The number of customers per 10,000 household connections who are registered on special assistance registers (water and sewerage companies)⁴⁰



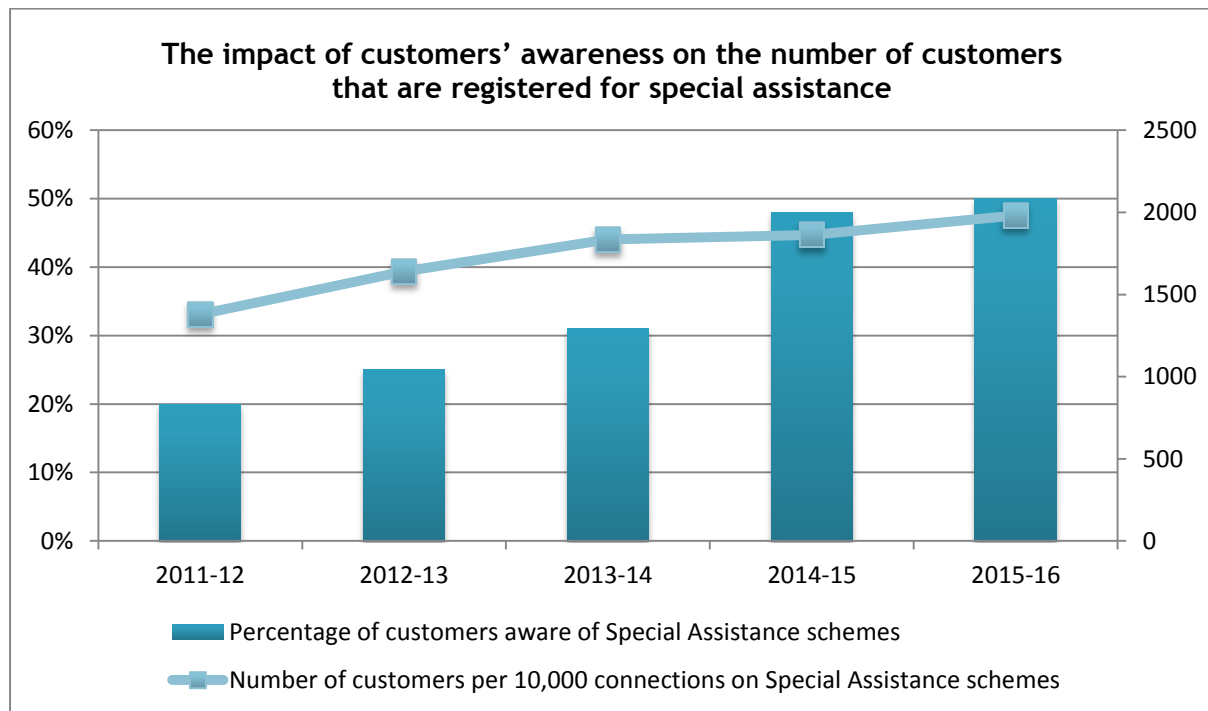
Wessex saw an increase of 19.5% in 2015-16 with the company seizing opportunities to identify customers' circumstances through telephone contact and partnering with organisations, such as energy companies, to be able to offer more holistic advice.

Chart 9, below, shows the impact of customers' awareness on the number of people that are registered for special assistance. It shows an increase in awareness alongside a rise in take up. Awareness of the scheme has increased from 48% to 50% in the past 12 months⁴¹. The slight dip in take up for 2014-15 was due to how Bournemouth had previously reported its figures, counting individual registrations, not customers (for example, if someone is blind and deaf they would have been recorded as two entries).

⁴⁰ Based on all household connections (water, water and sewerage and sewerage only).

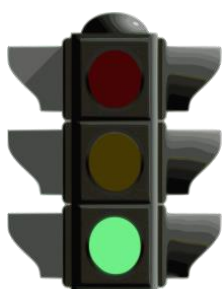
⁴¹ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

Chart 9: The impact of customers' awareness on the number of customers that are registered for special assistance



3.3 Metering

Key findings



- There has been an upward trend in household metering over the past five years, from 44% to 53% during that time.
- In 2015-16 household metering increased by 1.7 percentage points.
- But many customers do not know about the options available to them with regard to metering. Therefore, the industry must improve its communication in this area.
- There has been a slight decrease in non-household metering. This is likely to be due to data cleansing ahead of retail market opening in April 2017.

Household properties

The majority of customers support metering as the fairest way to charge for the water they use, but many do not support compulsory metering because they are unsure about how this will affect their bill⁴². The case for compulsory metering can be understood in areas of significant water stress, where it can bring environmental benefits and reduce the need to build new reservoirs. The case is not as compelling in areas where water resources are not under stress.

Where feasible all new properties are fitted with a water meter. Some water companies also selectively meter properties when they change ownership/occupier or have a high discretionary use of water (e.g. garden watering or swimming pools).



Metering can be one way for customers to manage their water bill. Any customer who is currently paying their bill based on the rateable value of their property (and is not subject to a compulsory metering programme) can request to switch to a water meter. However, our research shows that only two-thirds of unmetered customers are aware of this⁴³.

Installation of the meter is free and customers have the option to revert to their previous method of charging within 12 months (or longer for some companies). But only 64% of unmetered customers are aware of this⁴⁴. Awareness of these rights could be a barrier to companies meeting their targets and so further communication about the meter option is needed.

Household customers can find out if they could save money by switching to a water meter by visiting our Water Meter Calculator at:



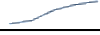




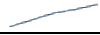







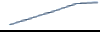
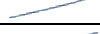





www.ccwater.org.uk/watermetercalculator/

⁴² <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/The-Customer-Impact-of-Universal-Metering-Programmes.pdf>

⁴³ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

Table 6: Percentage of household metering

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Industry Average	43.8	46.7	49.1	51.3	53.0	
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian*	70.3	73.1	74.7	76.8	77.7	
Dŵr Cymru	34.0	35.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	
Northumbrian	25.9	27.8	29.7	31.4	33.1	
Severn Trent	35.9	37.5	39.0	40.9	41.0	
South West	73.4	75.4	76.9	78.1	79.1	
Southern	52.2	64.5	75.2	82.5	85.6	
Thames	31.1	32.5	33.8	34.9	36.1	
United Utilities	33.0	35.0	37.0	38.4	40.0	
Wessex	51.0	54.0	56.0	58.0	58.0	
Yorkshire	40.7	43.0	45.2	47.1	49.0	
Water only companies						
Affinity	45.1	47.3	48.6	49.6	50.5	
Bournemouth	60.1	62.3	64.3	66.4	68.1	
Bristol	37.3	39.7	42.2	44.6	46.6	
Cambridge	65.1	66.4	68.0	69.3	70.2	
Dee Valley	52.0	54.0	56.0	57.0	59.0	
Essex & Suffolk	52.0	53.9	55.5	57.3	58.7	
Hartlepool	27.4	29.8	32.2	34.3	35.2	
Portsmouth	19.0	21.0	23.0	25.3	28.0	
South East	47.0	57.0	60.0	67.0	74.0	
South Staffs	28.3	29.9	32.5	34.2	35.1	
Sutton & East Surrey	38.5	41.6	44.3	45.9	48.7	
* Anglian includes Hartlepool						

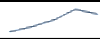
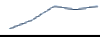

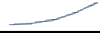
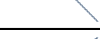
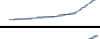



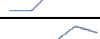

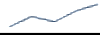

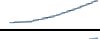
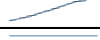


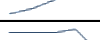
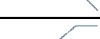



There has been a 1.7 percentage point increase in metering during the year and an upward trend over the past five years (from 44% to 53%). Between 2015 and 2020 the industry is expected to increase metering levels from 51% to 61%⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/pricereview/pr14/det_pr20141212final.pdf

Non-household properties

For non-households the percentage of properties metered is much higher (90% on average). Whilst most non-household properties are metered it may not be appropriate for lock-up garages, field troughs or other small uses of water to be metered.

Table 7: Percentage of non-household metering

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Industry Average	89.1	89.4	89.7	90.2	89.9	
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian*	96.8	97.2	98.0	97.8	98.0	
Dŵr Cymru	91.0	91.0	91.0	91.0	92.0	
Northumbrian	87.8	87.9	88.1	88.4	89.0	
Severn Trent	93.2	93.4	93.4	92.9	81.5	
South West	91.8	92.2	92.5	93.1	96.4	
Southern	89.2	89.3	89.6	89.9	90.5	
Thames	83.1	83.5	83.6	83.4	83.7	
United Utilities	90.0	90.0	91.0	91.3	91.0	
Wessex	90.0	90.0	91.0	91.0	91.0	
Yorkshire	85.8	86.1	86.3	87.3	86.8	
Water only companies						
Affinity	87.7	88.2	88.0	88.4	88.7	
Bournemouth	94.2	94.3	93.7	93.9	91.0	
Bristol	87.3	88.3	89.8	92.4	95.5	
Cambridge	91.4	91.6	91.9	92.2	92.4	
Dee Valley	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	
Essex & Suffolk	95.2	95.3	94.7	95.1	95.4	
Hartlepool	70.3	71.3	72.6	73.0	74.0	
Portsmouth	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.2	89.2	
South East	91.0	91.0	92.0	95.0	95.0	
South Staffs	86.2	86.7	87.0	87.4	87.6	
Sutton & East Surrey	86.2	86.4	86.7	86.9	86.7	
* Anglian includes Hartlepool						

Over the past five years non-household metering has increased by 0.8 percentage points, although 2015-16 was the first year that we have seen a decrease (0.3 percentage points). This is thought to be due to companies beginning to cleanse their data ahead of non-household retail competition being introduced in April 2017.

3.4 Daily water consumption

Key findings

- ◆ Over the past five years, there has been a downward trend in the amount of water that households are using each day, although fluctuations can be seen throughout the years.
- ◆ However, in 2015-16, there was a slight increase in the amount of water that customers use each day.
- ◆ Only four companies have met the UK Government's aspirational target of 130 litres per person, per day.
- ◆ Unsurprisingly, unmetered households use more water (around 30 litres per person per day more) than metered households.

The changing climate, population growth and changes in household size are having an impact on water availability. But only one in five people (21%) has seen or heard something in the past year about pressures or impacts on water resources in the UK⁴⁶. Although the UK is thought to have a wet climate our available water resources are under pressure and tighter controls on the amount of water that is taken from the environment are being put in place.

Water companies and customers both have a role to play in becoming more efficient in water use. For companies this is largely through tackling leakage and promoting efficient water use among their customers. For customers it is about how they use water. However, two in five adults in England and Wales have not made a conscious decision to reduce the amount of water that they use⁴⁷.

There are several simple steps that each and every one of us could take to reduce the amount of water we use. Individually, it might seem like a small saving but collectively it would be large and might defer the need to build new resources which would add cost to customers' bills. For more information on using water wisely, visit our website [here](#).

2015-16 saw a slight increase in the amount of water that each person uses each day (0.75%). Many companies remain a long way off the UK Government's aspirational target of 130 litres per person, per day. In fact, only four companies have succeeded in meeting or beating this target: Hartlepool (128 litres), South Staffs (129 litres), Severn Trent (130 litres), and United Utilities (130 litres).

Two-thirds of people in England and Wales have decided to use less water over the past three years. They are most likely to do this in simple and convenient ways:

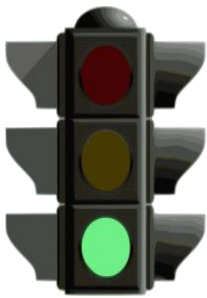
- ◆ Turning off the tap when brushing teeth.
- ◆ Waiting for a full dishwasher or washing machine load.
- ◆ Only boiling the water they need.
- ◆ Taking showers instead of baths.
- ◆ Having shorter showers.
- ◆ Flushing the toilet less often.

But many people see water saving as common sense and this could be a barrier to them adopting new ways of saving water.

<http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/08/10/attitudes-to-tap-water-and-using-water-wisely/>

⁴⁶ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/08/10/attitudes-to-tap-water-and-using-water-wisely/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/08/10/attitudes-to-tap-water-and-using-water-wisely/>



However, five companies are close to meeting this level: Southern (132 litres), Yorkshire (133 litres), Cambridge (133 litres), Bournemouth (134 litres), and Dee Valley (135 litres).

In 2015-16 the largest decreases in the amount of water people use each day were for Bournemouth (-3.5%), Dŵr Cymru (-2.1%) and Southern (-2.1%). Conversely, the greatest increases were seen for South East (+8.8%) - which has explained that new guidance from Ofwat on the classification of household and non-household properties has resulted in changes to its figures this year - Hartlepool (+6.3%), Dee Valley (+3.4%) and Severn Trent (+3.1%).

Eight companies were above the industry average of 139.6 litres per person, per day: South East (161 litres) - which has seen figures rising over the five-year period, with the exception of 2014-15 when there was a decrease; Sutton & East Surrey (158 litres) - despite reporting a 2% decrease, Essex & Suffolk (151 litres), Affinity (152 litres), Thames (149 litres), Northumbrian (145 litres), Portsmouth (143 litres) and Bristol (141 litres).

Table 8: Average water use (litres per person, per day)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Trend
Industry Average	145.8	140.1	141.5	138.6	139.6	
Water and Sewerage Companies						
Anglian*	144.8	136.2	135.1	133.4	135.4	
Dŵr Cymru	152.1	144.4	144.6	141.5	138.5	
Northumbrian	146.2	140.5	141.2	141.9	144.7	
Severn Trent	125.0	120.9	129.3	126.4	130.4	
South West	134.5	136.7	136.9	134.6	136.6	
Southern	156.7	143.4	140.8	134.8	132.0	
Thames	160.6	154.7	156.2	150.9	149.3	
United Utilities	132.0	128.0	129.1	130.0	130.0	
Wessex	139.8	136.3	138.4	138.8	138.1	
Yorkshire	136.0	133.4	136.2	133.0	133.1	
Water only companies						
Affinity	157.6	148.5	154.7	148.3	152.2	
Bournemouth	146.4	142.4	144.1	138.4	133.6	
Bristol	142.0	141.0	144.0	143.0	141.1	
Cambridge	140.7	133.1	130.1	130.5	132.9	
Dee Valley	138.3	135.5	132.9	130.4	134.9	
Essex & Suffolk	153.0	147.4	151.9	151.0	150.7	
Hartlepool	123.7	123.1	124.7	119.9	127.5	
Portsmouth	160.0	149.0	148.0	145.5	143.3	
South East	167.2	159.4	155.6	148.2	161.2	
South Staffs	135.6	127.6	131.0	129.0	128.9	
Sutton & East Surrey	168.6	161.5	166.5	161.1	157.9	
* Anglian includes Hartlepool						

Each of the first four companies named in the paragraph above are in areas where water resources are under strain and where population is forecast to grow. If these companies are to reduce water use among their customers then they will need to step up their promotion of water efficiency.

Metered versus unmetered properties

The table below demonstrates how the average amount of water people use each day relates to whether or not there is a water meter at the property.

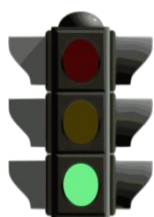
Table 9: Water use per person - litres per day (metered and unmetered)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Metered	128.67	124.40	124.92	122.50	124.64
Unmetered	156.82	151.59	154.53	152.82	154.53
Difference	28.15	27.19	29.61	30.32	29.89

Additionally, 2015-16 has seen a slight increase in water consumption for both metered (1.75%) and unmetered (1.12%) customers, returning to levels last seen in 2013-14.

3.5 Drinking water quality

Key findings



- ◆ Compliance with the Drinking Water Directive in 2015 was 99.96%, a slight increase from 99.95% in the previous year.
- ◆ There are high levels of customer satisfaction with drinking water quality.

Quality drinking water is a priority for water customers and our research shows that 93% of customers are satisfied with the safety of their drinking water⁴⁸.

Drinking water quality is regulated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). Its annual report⁴⁹ outlines what it does to check that water companies and local authorities have taken action to maintain or improve the quality of drinking water to safeguard public health. Compliance



with the European Union's Drinking Water Directive standards in 2015 was at 99.96%, a slight increase from 99.95% in the previous year.

There are high levels of customer satisfaction and compliance with safety standards.

However, some customers still prefer to drink bottled water at home (14%). About half of these customers perceive tap water to be of a poor quality or to have a bad taste or smell.

This can often be overcome by simply placing a jug of water in the fridge to chill. Any residual chlorine in tap water (which is there to protect consumers' health) will disappear. This often improves the smell and taste of the water.

Tap water costs less than 1p per litre compared to over £1 per litre for some branded bottled water.

Companies have been challenged by the DWI to increase compliance to 100% by 2020.

Bournemouth was the only company to achieve 100% compliance in 2015, with Affinity coming a close second with 99.99%.

Dee Valley was an outlier in 2014 with 99.88% compliance, but it worked hard to reach the industry average of 99.96% in 2015.

The poorest performing companies are Hartlepool (99.81% compared to 100% in the previous four years) and South Staffs (99.87% compared to 99.98% in 2014). As Hartlepool has a small customer base, a small number of events can have a significant impact on overall compliance. We welcome the ongoing dialogue that the company has had with us on this matter and note its plans to prevent similar issues in the future. These include prioritised high-velocity flushing of areas with high rates of

⁴⁸ Water Matters 2016 - <http://www.ccwater.org.uk/blog/2016/06/28/water-matters-household-customers-views-on-their-water-and-sewerage-services-2015/>

⁴⁹ <http://dwi.defra.gov.uk/about/annual-report/2015/index.html> - Please note that this reports on a calendar year basis.

discolouration contacts and manganese removal upgrades.

In order to improve its water quality standards South Staffs installed ultra-violet (UV) treatment at its Seedy Mill treatment works near Lichfield in 2016. It is also investigating corrective actions, including chlorine dioxide dosing and UV, at Hampton Loade near Bridgnorth.

Chart 10a: Overall drinking water quality 2011-2015 (water only companies)

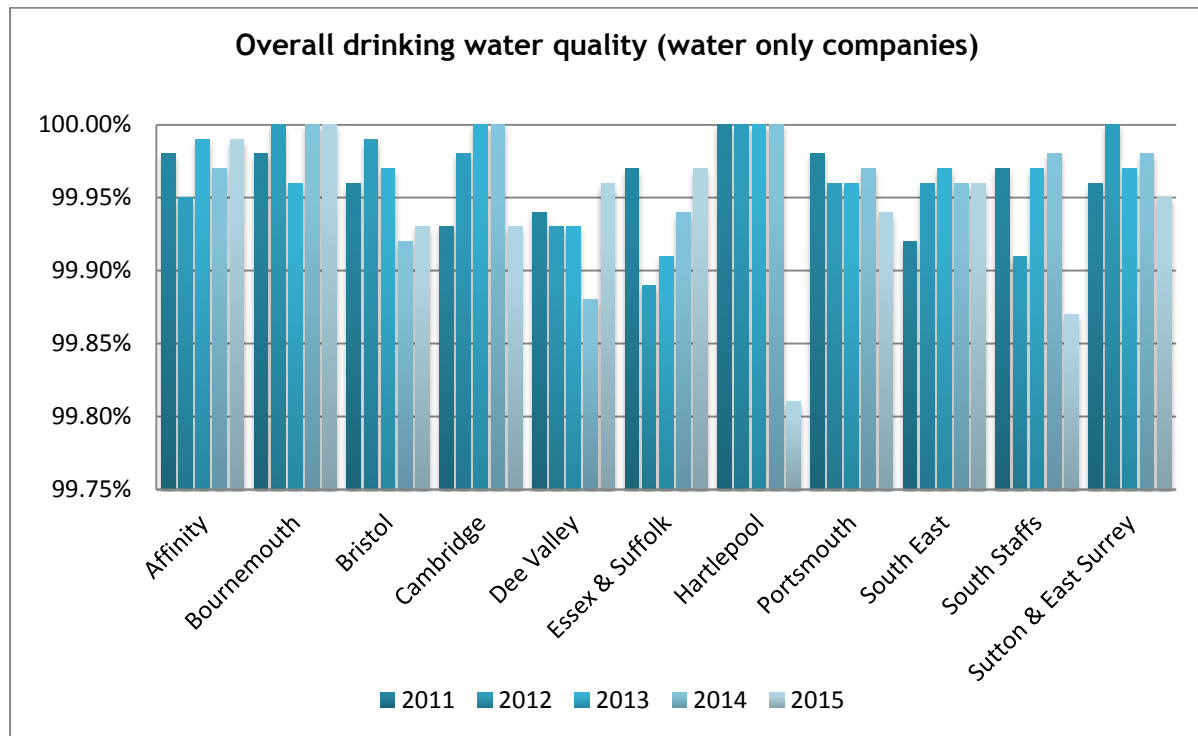
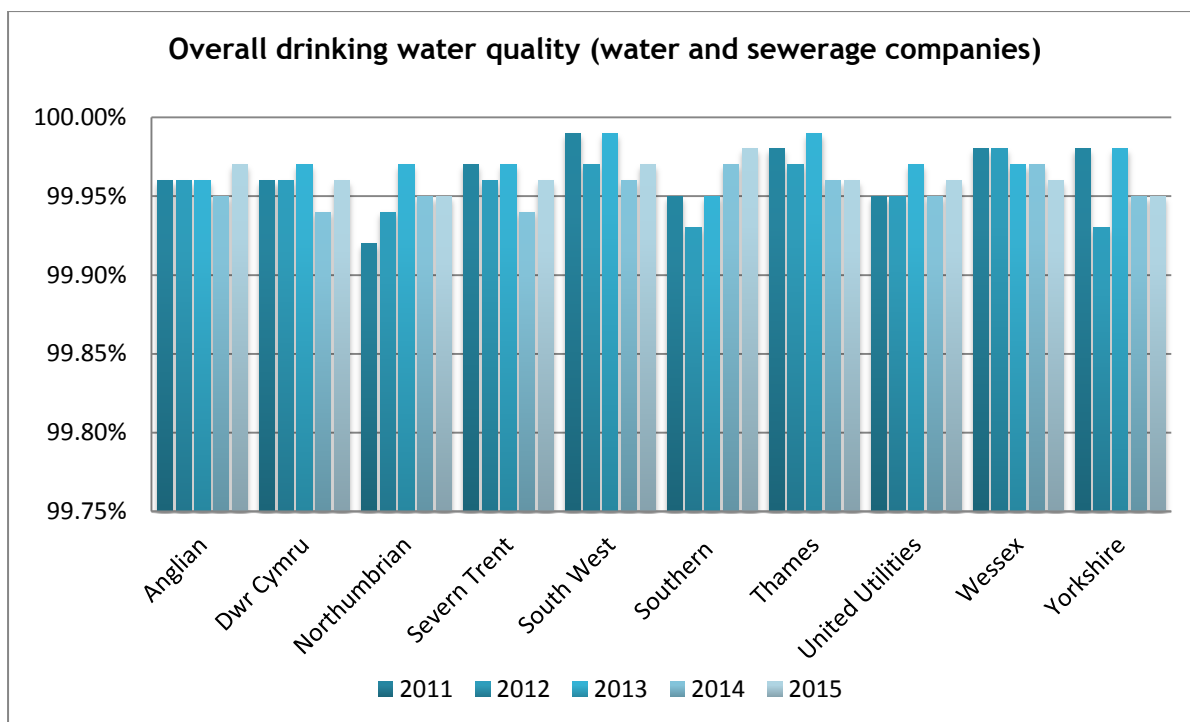


Chart 10b: Overall drinking water quality 2011-2015 (water and sewerage companies)



4. Conclusions

Complaints: Although total complaints to the industry fell for the eighth successive year, the reduction was small and was largely offset by an increase in complaint numbers by ten companies. Of particular concern was the performance of four companies - Southern, Affinity, Bournemouth and Dŵr Cymru - which either reported large increases in the year or which continue to be poor performers. As a result, we wrote to each company requiring them to provide an interim report on actions taken to drive down complaint numbers and their latest and forecast performance for the year.

While all four companies have taken action to improve their operational practices, internal processes, or how they engage with customers, it is unlikely that complaints numbers will fall sufficiently to return them to 2014-15 levels. As such, we have asked all four companies to provide us with a further interim report, covering the period October to December 2016, and will report on progress made early in the new year.

Supply interruptions: Although the amount of time customers were without a supply of water reduced by 41% last year, only 12 companies were responsible for this reduction, and this is masking significant increases by some companies. Five companies - South East, South West, Dŵr Cymru, Affinity and United Utilities - highlighted specific events which contributed to their worse than average performance. All have shared their improvement plans, and we will closely monitor these companies' supply interruptions performance through our quarterly update meetings.

Leaks: Leakage remains a key customer concern. Although companies reported a 1.4% reduction in leakage levels this year, reversing the upward trend of recent years, we believe that companies need to be more active in leakage management. Water is likely to become a diminishing resource, particularly in the south and east of England, because of population growth and climate change. While customers will need to use water ever more wisely, companies will need to better conserve the water that is currently available. Active leakage control is a key part of that conservation strategy.

Sewer flooding: Although the winter of 2015 was particularly wet, this surprisingly had minimal effect on internal or external sewer flooding at an industry level. Nevertheless, there were some companies which reported increased sewer flooding. Southern, for example, reported an increase in internal incidents and performs worse than the industry average. It also is the poorest performer in terms of incidents per property served for external sewer flooding. We will, therefore, closely monitor the company's performance this year, and that of South West which, despite making reductions in external flooding incidents, performed worse than the industry average and did not meet its performance targets.

Customer assistance and payment schemes: The number of customers receiving help in paying their bills continues to rise, but our research shows that customer awareness of the help that companies can provide is low. We will continue to work with companies to share best practice in promoting and implementing financial assistance schemes via a CCWater-hosted workshop in late November 2016 and by individual discussions with companies.

Metering: Metering continues to increase across England and Wales, in line with the targets set in the companies' 2014 final determinations i.e. by 2020 61% of household properties will be metered. CCWater is committed to doing all it can to ensure that for compulsory metering programmes, customers receive good quality information and that financial protections are in place to help them transition from unmetered to measured charges. We have undertaken research in conjunction with Southern to understand if and how the customer journey could be improved for those that will go through a future compulsory metering programme. We will work with the industry once the findings from this work have been published.

Daily water consumption: The amount of water used by customers each day has fallen for the last five years, although only four companies have so far met the UK Government's aspirational target of 130 litres per person per day. CCWater regularly promotes water saving messages, and the companies provide a range of water efficient devices to help customers conserve water. Our research shows that two-thirds of customers are making a conscious effort to reduce water usage. Many customers see water saving as common sense, but would also welcome advice on other ways to save water. With population growth and climate change likely to put resources under increasing strain, there will be a need to encourage customers to use water ever more wisely. This is a challenge for all of us.

Drinking water quality: The quality of drinking water across the UK is high, and many customers recognise this. Nevertheless, there are occasions where the quality of water flowing through customers' taps is less than ideal. Whilst compliance with drinking water standards is regulated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate, we will continue to ask companies how they plan to improve the colour, taste or smell of the water they provide as it is such an important issue for customers and a regular source of complaint.

Appendix A: Statistical reliability of CCWater research

1. Water Matters

	Sample size	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Total	5,964	0.76	1.16	1.27
England	5,417	0.80	1.22	1.33
Wales	547	2.51	3.84	4.19
Company sample sizes	150	4.80	7.33	8.00
	200	4.16	6.35	6.93
	250	3.72	5.68	6.20
	350	3.14	4.80	5.24
	400	2.94	4.49	4.90
	500	2.63	4.02	4.38
Metered households	2,888	1.09	1.67	1.82
Unmetered households	3,076	1.06	1.62	1.77
150: Bristol, Cambridge, Dee Valley, Essex & Suffolk, Hartlepool, Portsmouth, South East, South Staffs and Sutton & East Surrey.				
200: Northumbrian, Southern, Thames, Affinity (East) and Affinity (Southeast).				
250: Affinity (Central).				
350: Bournemouth.				
400: Anglian, Dŵr Cymru, South West, United Utilities and Yorkshire.				
500: Severn Trent and Wessex.				

We give companies the opportunity to boost their sample in Water Matters. Any company listed above with a sample size of 250 or more chose to boost their sample.

2. The 2016 Attitudes to Tap Water & Using Water Wisely Survey

A sample size of 4,169 carries a maximum confidence interval of $\pm 1.5\%$ at the 95% confidence level, but readers should note that sub-samples are subject to larger confidence intervals. Where a difference is referred to as 'significant' it will have been corroborated via statistical testing.

	Sample size	10% or 90% \pm	30% or 70% \pm	50% \pm
Total	4,169	0.91	1.39	1.51
England	3,161	1.04	1.6	1.74
Wales	1,008	1.85	2.83	3.09

3. Research into customer perceptions of leakage

	Sample size	10% or 90% \pm	30% or 70% \pm	50% \pm
Total	1,891	1	2	2
England	1,700	2	2	2
Wales	191	4	7	7
Reducing leaks a priority before seeing material	1,288	2	3	3
Reducing leaks not a priority before seeing material	603	3	4	4

4. All other quoted research

Qualitative research is a technique used for an exploratory and in-depth understanding of attitudes and behaviours. It produces rich and detailed data from a relatively small number of individuals, selected to broadly represent a cross-section of the population in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics.

Due to the limited sample sizes used in qualitative research, the findings are not representative of the overall population in a statistically meaningful way. Any recommendations or hypotheses from qualitative research are born out of rigorous and robust analysis and interpretation of the qualitative evidence, making reference to the weight and strength of opinion observed across the sample where relevant, but without quantifying these. These recommendations should, ideally, be tested by quantitative research to determine the prevalence of these attitudes and behaviours across the population in a statistically meaningful way.

Appendix B: Links to companies' annual performance reports

Water and sewerage companies

Anglian	http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/_assets/media/ara2016_navigable.pdf and further information at http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/_assets/media/addendum_to_table3a_of_ara2016.pdf
Dŵr Cymru	http://www.dwrcymru.com/en/Reading_Room_Library/Company-Reports.aspx
Northumbrian	https://www.nwl.co.uk/_assets/documents/Northumbrian_Water_Annual_Report_FINAL.pdf
Severn Trent	https://ar2016.severntrent.com/assets/pdf/Severn_Trent_Annual_Report_2016.pdf
South West	http://www.southwestwater.co.uk/media/pdf/n/e/South_West_Water_Annual_Performance_Report_and_Regulatory_Reporting_2016.pdf
Southern	http://annualreport.southernwater.co.uk/media/default/PDFs/annual-report-15-16.pdf
Thames	http://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/19435.htm
United Utilities	http://corporate.unitedutilities.com/documents/united-utilities-annual-report-2016.pdf
Wessex	https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/annualresults2016/
Yorkshire	https://www.yorkshirewater.com/sites/default/files/APR%20YW%20March%202016%20Final%2014.07.2016.pdf

Water only companies

Affinity	https://stakeholder.affinitywater.co.uk/docs/Performance-Report-2015.pdf
Bournemouth	http://www.bournemouthwater.co.uk/Uploads/Docs/RegulatoryAccounts/HWD_Brochure_WEB.PDF
Bristol	http://www.bristolwater.co.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/BW-Annual-Performance-Report-2016-FINAL-signed.pdf
Cambridge	Included in the South Staffs report
Dee Valley	https://www.deevalleywater.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Annual-Performance-Report-2015-2016.pdf
Essex and Suffolk	https://www.eswater.co.uk/_assets/documents/Northumbrian_Water_Annual_Report_FINAL.pdf
Hartlepool	Included in the Anglian report
Portsmouth	https://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/REPORT-ACCOUNTS-2016.pdf
South East	http://www.southeastwater.co.uk/about-us/reporting-on-our-success
South Staffs	https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/1874/annual-performance-report-2015-16.pdf
Sutton and East Surrey	http://www.waterplc.com/userfiles/file/Annual%20Report%202016.pdf



The Consumer Council for Water

1st Floor, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4AJ

Visit our website: www.ccwater.org.uk

Follow us @WaterWatchdog

Contact: Hannah Bradley, Senior Policy Manager
(hannah.bradley@ccwater.org.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

Number of properties flooded internally (total)

Company	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Water and Sewerage Companies			
Anglian	325	593	380
Dwr Cymru	186	256	194
Northumbrian	403	2,112	508
Severn Trent	573	888	645
South West	101	266	148
Southern	303	624	469
Thames	1,009	1,299	1,106
United Utilities	1,149	1,841	1,051
Wessex	108	235	131
Yorkshire	415	606	378

Number of properties flooded internally (p

2014-15	2015-16
452	411
152	125
228	175
735	492
117	113
316	372
1,129	1,029
813	1,111
125	101
446	415

Company	2011-12
Water and Sewerage Companies	
Anglian	1.20
Dwr Cymru	1.31
Northumbrian	3.23
Severn Trent	1.44
South West	1.41
Southern	1.57
Thames	1.78
United Utilities	3.55
Wessex	0.90
Yorkshire	1.85

per 10,000 connections)

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
2.20	1.41	1.66	1.50
1.80	1.37	1.06	0.87
16.92	4.07	1.82	1.39
2.24	1.62	1.84	1.22
3.71	2.06	1.62	1.55
3.23	2.43	1.63	1.91
2.29	1.95	1.98	1.78
5.68	3.24	2.50	3.39
1.95	1.09	1.03	0.82
2.70	1.69	1.98	1.83

This page is intentionally left blank

NOTE OF MEETING OF FLOODING SCRUTINY WITH L.B.LEWISHAM AND
L.B.LAMBETH – FRIDAY 03 FEBRUARY 2017

Present: Councillors: Richard Greening, Una O'Halloran – L.B.Islington
Alan Hall, Alan Smith, Kevin Bonnavia, Amanda De Ryk
LB.Lewisham
Andy Wilson- L.B. Lambeth

Officers from all the boroughs were present.

During discussion Members from the respective boroughs outlined details of the recent floods in their respective boroughs

The following main points were made –

- Thames took some time in all boroughs in turning the valves off to stop the trunk mains leak – consequently the emergency response being completed took longer than it should
- There appeared to have been previous leaks in many of the areas that had been subject to recent major bursts
- There appeared to be insufficient funding to provide the necessary improvements to infrastructure
- Concern was expressed that Thames often used the excuse of requiring permitting permission from Local Authorities to carry out works, however this is not necessary in an emergency situation
- In terms of getting to an emergency it was felt that Thames should have a 'blue light' system in the same way as the emergency services as a major burst could constitute a threat to life
- Thames were reluctant to share information in relation to their piping network and this needed to be addressed
- There needed to be improved communication channels by both Thames and Local Authorities when bursts took place
- Information on the recent 8 major bursts that Thames have referred to needs to be collected so that a Pan London approach can be taken
- Members felt that there the Council and Fire Brigade should be made aware by Thames of where the turn off valves were located

Members agreed the following –

- That whilst individual Councils would progress their own separate scrutiny investigations there should be a Pan London report produced through London Councils to highlight the common factors experienced by all Councils affected by major bursts and this be taken up through the LSN. Case studies could be used to support the report
- Details of the 8 recent major bursts should be requested from Thames in order to identify which boroughs should liaise on this report
- OFWAT should give evidence
- Evidence should be taken from other public utilities about flooding on their services
- Information on siting of valves on major trunk roads should be made available to Councils and the Fire Brigade

- Thames idea of smart metering to reduce leakage would take a number of years to implement and would not deal with the issue of leakage on trunks roads, only with customer leakages
- It was noted that in Lewisham Thames applied for over 1900 permits in the last year but ended up cancelling over 1000 of them which caused a lot of unnecessary work for the authority

NOTE OF A MEETING WITH FIRE BRIGADE/POLICE – FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2017 - 3.00P.M.

Present: Patrick Golbourne – Fire Brigade Commander Islington
Debbie Pierson, Walt Mutch – Islington Police
Councillors – Richard Greening, Clare Jeapes, Rowena Champion,
O'Halloran
Kevin O'Leary and Dan Lawson – L.B.Islington Environment and Regeneration

During discussion the following main points were made –

- The first call to LFB had been made at 05:01:29 to the LFB control room and at 05:03:05 a crew was despatched to the verified address
- The first crew arrived on scene at 05:06:54 and Thames Water were contacted at 05:07:49 with an estimated time of arrival within 2 hours, which is their standard response time. At 05:20:23 a request was made to the Police and TfL for road closures and at 05:34:33 a request was made to the Council for 120 sandbags
- At 05:40:04 the Watch Manager reported that a burst water main of unknown size had burst and there was flooding to a depth of 0.5 metres affecting an area of 100 metres and operational support unit was requested to control the flow of water
- Information was received that the pipe is a 36" mains pipe and LFB provides pumps and a Fire Rescue unit with one boat. Properties in Charlton Terrace flooded to depth of 8 feet
- 05:51:53 message received from Thames Water to say technician on way and sending 150 sandbags and LALO requested for rehousing of tenants
- At 06:03:20 an offensive tactical mode has been adopted and all FRU's must carry boats due to flooding and LUL informed of close proximity to tunnels
- At 06:30:35 flooding has spread to an area of 460 metres by 150 metres flooding multiple residential and commercial properties and basements in Charlton Terrace flooded to a depth of 2 metres People evacuated to Steam Passage Public House
- At 06:48:17 LFB request attendance of electrical authority as substation at Shalford Court is flooded to depth of 300 ml. Thames and Local Authority to increase supply of sandbags from 150 to 500. At 07:21:05 received notification that first sandbags en route from Slough with an eta of 1hr 30 mins and second lorry being loaded and departing 40 mins with total delivery of 700 sandbags
- At 08:26:28 reported that multiple properties now flooded. A multi-agency tactical meeting had been held at 07:45 and no casualties had been identified, evacuation to Steam Passage and that Thames operative be on site to establish water valve location at 08:45 and next tactical co-ordination group meeting scheduled for 09:00. Now been declared a major incident
- At 09:45:44 attendance of structural engineer requested
- At 09:54:48 flooding now approximately 600 metres by 300 metres in Devonia Road, Duncan Terrace, Colebrooke Row and Charlton Place, affecting 80 residential and commercial properties flooded to various depths up to a maximum of 3 metres. Pumping operations and systematic search of premises in progress. Approximately 50 residents evacuated to rest centre
- At 11:23:47 systematic search of all premises completed and pumping operations continuing in Devonia Road and Colebrooke Row and lightweight pumps, submersible pumps, dry suits and PFD's in used

- At 12:32:51 progress made in pumping out properties and water levels subsiding and next tactical co-ordination group meeting scheduled for 1:30 and phase moved into tactical mode
- At 12:13:13 LFB Commander report that 36" water main had burst and outlined situation that had occurred. Water supply now isolated and electricity supply isolated to approximately 601 properties by UK power networks and 20 properties pumped out by Fire Brigade. One elderly female resident rescued and carried to safety. Approx 100 residents evacuate under care of Local Authority. Major incident had been declared by Police
- At 16:37:35 co- ordination group meeting concluded and no further Fire Brigade presence required. Duty of care left with Thames Water
- It was noted that at present LFB did not have responsibility for the statutory Flood response and that they were lobbying the Government on this matter
- In response to a question it was stated that there is a need for sandbags to be more readily available and that the Local Authority were making arrangements in this regard
- Discussion took place as to the first report of the leak, which was at 03:57 by a bus driver and at this stage it was a very small leak. Just after 04:00 a.m. this was reported to TfL to contact Thames Water but it is unclear if this happened. It was noted that it was felt that TfL could have acted more speedily in the situation and
- Reference was made to the local knowledge of Fire Brigade crews and that this is valuable when dealing with a situation like the flood at Upper Street as they were aware where the fire hydrants were
- Discussion took place as to whether Thames were able to share their plans of the locations with LFB and the Local Authority and it was stated that there were security implications with this but this is being looked at
- The view was expressed that whilst 17 calls had been received from the Fire Brigade in respect of the flood given the magnitude of the flooding there needs to be a communications message to the Public that they should report any leak immediately
- Members were informed that it would be useful if the public utility companies were involved in the tactical emergency planning meetings that took place with the Local Authority, Fire Brigade and the Police
- It was noted that the Fire Brigade had an excellent relationship with the Emergency Planning team at the Local Authority
- It was noted that discussion of provision of sandbags could be discussed at the London wide Directors of Environment meeting to see if a system of sandbag distribution on a shared basis is possible or whether other new technology systems are available

NOTE OF PUBLIC MEETING WITH THAMES WATER AND RESIDENTS – FLOODING SCRUTINY REVIEW- BUSINESS DESIGN CENTRE – MONDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2017 – 6.30P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Richard Greening, Una O’Halloran, Alice Perry and Caroline Russell
Thames Water : Bob Collingham, Chris Davis, Matthew Hackshaw, Cecilia Larkin, Simon Hughes, James Kingston
Residents of flooded area and Christine Lovett and Jackie Ambrosini – Business Improvement District

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

The Chair outlined the proposed format of the meeting and it was noted that Thames Water loss adjusters and insurers were available following the meeting if residents wished to raise individual concerns with them.

It was noted that a separate meeting with businesses had been arranged for 13 February at the Business Design Centre.

Thames Water made a presentation to the Committee details of the flooding incident and Thames response It was noted that Thames had arrived on site at 7.45a.m. and that the valves that needed to be shut off had finally been shut off at 9.15a.m. 4 men were needed to shut off each of the 4 valves as these were complex to shut down. It was noted that Thames took 4 hours 20 mins from when the leak was first reported to closing down the mains.

It was noted that the burst pipe was laid in approximately 1850-1875 and that an 800 metre section of the pipe that had burst is being relined. However pipe replacement did come with the implications of disruption for residents and businesses and road closures and planning will need to take place with TfL, the Council and residents and businesses.

An independent review into all the recent major bursts is taking place led by Paul Cutill OBE who is an industry expert.

Thames apologised to residents and businesses for the flood and that they would need to submit a case to OFWAT for increased funding for pipe replacement and it was hoped that the independent review would support this.

It was noted that the burst pipe in Upper Street is currently not back in operation until pipe relining is completed. Thames reported that to reline $\frac{3}{4}$ km of piping will take 4 months at an estimated cost of £5m, High tech sensors had been installed.

Thames stated that they did not want to see residents or businesses to be massively out of pocket due to the flooding and already had made a goodwill payment of £1000 and a meeting was taking place with the Chief Executive to look at other measures and he would report back on the outcome. In addition residents and businesses will not have to pay water bills until the situation is resolved.

In response to a question it was stated that to replace the piping concerned in the last 8 major bursts would cost in the region of £55m and this was far in excess of any compensation/insurance payments made as a result and a case has to be made to the economic regulator to increase investment in the 5 year plan for pipe replacement.

It was stated that Thames had made a £300m profit in the last financial year and had reinvested 80% of its profits and had not paid a dividend to shareholders. Pipe replacement was based on risk and whilst leak detections measures are deployed these do not detect all risks, such as in Upper Street, where one wall of the pipe had got thinner and had led to the eventual burst. In some locations the detection method used is difficult to use and can take time. Other new technology techniques were being looked at.

In response to a question it was stated that the water had been re-routed to the Essex Road mains, however residents expressed concern that this section of pipe had had a history of previous bursts. Thames undertook to survey both the Essex Road and Upper Street main pipes to assess risks of bursts within the next 2 weeks and residents would be updated with the results.

Thames stated that extensive damage has been caused to seven neighbouring streets as a result of the flood. Around 54 residential and 44 commercial properties had been affected. Eighteen residents had been accommodated on the first night and 10 tenants are still in temporary accommodation. Staff on site had included

technicians and out of hours co-ordinator, senior local management team, loss adjustors, customer liaison, a clean up team and repair team on 24/7 rota.

A resident stated that it had taken a long time to turn the valves off to stop the leak and enquired whether this timescale could be improved. Thames stated that operatives had to turn the valves off manually and that if they were not turned off properly this could cause a hydraulic shock wave and cause further bursts along the pipe and each valve closing took approximately an hour. The system would be looked at but there is no 'magic wand' to reduce the time taken. Any automatic solution would be a long process and would need approval from the economic regulator and involve severe disruption to install.

Discussion took place as to the emotional stress that has been caused to residents and businesses and that discussions had taken place at Thames with a view to providing such services if future events occurred.

It was stated that the leak had first been reported to Thames at 5.07a.m. although CCTV had picked up the first leak at 4.00a.m. Thames stated that as part of the review of the incident they would be looking at how co-operation with other agencies could be improved.

Residents expressed the view that it was good fortune that no residents were killed in the flood and that where there are basement properties there should be a special response in place to deal with these situations. Thames responded that they were looking at this however local knowledge of properties would be needed for this. The view was expressed that the information could be found on flood maps and Thames stated that they would be doing this as part of their modelling process. In addition residents were informed that the Council's consultation on the flood plan was taking place and residents were welcome to contribute to this.

Reference was made to the fact that there had been 3 previous floods in the Upper Street area in recent years and the future risks needed to be assessed.

In response to a question it was stated that the Emergency Services would always respond faster to events like this than Thames and they liaised with them to get appropriate information to enable them to respond. Thames do have sandbags stocks, however they arrived too late to be effective in this instance.

Thames stated that they had visited properties in Devonia Road on the day of the flood.

Thames stated that in regard to whether they had a compensation policy that Thames had a range of policies and one that covered flooding situations, however this did not always provide sufficient recompense and he would be discussing the flood in Upper Street with Thames Chief Executive given the individual circumstances.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

**NOTES OF A MEETING TO DISCUSS UPPER STREET FLOOD WITH
EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM – 07 FEBRUARY 2017 – 3.00P.M.**

**Present : Councillor Richard Greening
Daniel Lawson – Emergency Planning – Environment
and Regeneration Department**

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

During discussion the following main points were made –

- **It was noted that the Police first reported the leak as a result of checking the CCTV. TfL had initially reported the leak to the Police and at around 4.58a.m. the Fire Brigade were contacted. It was not known whether TfL had contacted Thames at this stage or if they had contacted them**
- **It was stated that 2 Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALO's) were on call and were alerted to attend on site and additional staff were on standby and there are also 30/40 volunteers who are available to assist if needed**
- **LALO's have to live within an hour of Islington and it took them 40 minutes to get on site. The Borough Emergency Control centre (BEC) opened at 7.00a.m. at 222 Upper Street**
- **There was initially a rest centre for residents set up at the Steam Passage and this was moved to the Business Design Centre later in the morning at 8.30a.m.**
- **LALO's were able to obtain medication for residents who needed this and could not get back to their properties because of flooding**
- **There had been problems with some media representatives who were present pretending to be residents and this is an area that would be looked at in future to ensure measures were in place to deal with such situations**

- **The BEC received regular updates on what was happening on site and sent pumps to the site and staff to assist the Police with traffic management**
- **Once the situation was in actual recovery stage the BEC organised street environmental services to go on site and clean and make safe footpaths and roads and these were safe to open within 36 hours of the flooding. A member of staff from Building Control was also sent down in order to check that building were structurally sound**
- **In terms of going forward and lessons learnt it was felt that the Council were looking into the stocking of sandbags, and that a request would be made for Thames to provide information on where main trunk mains were situated**
- **It was stated that once the internal incident report had been completed by the Emergency Planning team this should be circulated to Members**

Source	Time	Exact?	Event
LBI	04:00	approx	CCTV
LBI	04:30	approx	CCTV
LFB Incident Summary	04:50	approx	999 Call
Devonia Rd residents	04:50	approx	Flooding description
LFB Incident Summary	05:01	exact	First(?) 999 Call
LFB Incident Log	05:03	exact	A301 Dispatched
LFB Incident Log	05:06	exact	A301 Status 3
LFB Incident Log	05:07	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	05:08	exact	Information
LFB Incident Log	05:20	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	05:30	exact	Information
LFB Incident Summary	05:30	approx	F241 Dispatched
LFB Incident Log	05:34	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	05:40	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	05:41	exact	Information
LFB Incident Log	05:48	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	05:49	exact	Information

LFB Incident Log	05:50	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	05:51	exact	Information
LFB Incident Log	05:54	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	06:00	exact	Information
Devonia Rd residents	06:00	approx	Flooding description
LFB Incident Log	06:03	exact	Officer change
LFB Incident Log	06:03	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	06:16	exact	Information
Devonia Rd residents	06:30	approx	Flooding description
LFB Incident Log	06:30	exact	Informative message
Devonia Rd residents	06:33	approx	Flooding description
LFB Incident Log	06:34	exact	Officer change
LFB Incident Log	06:35	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	06:48	exact	Make up assistance required
GLA meeting	06:52	exact	
LFB Incident Log	07:05	exact	Information

LFB Incident Log	07:16	exact	Officer change
LFB Incident Log	07:17	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	07:21	exact	Information
LFB Incident Log	07:23	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	07:45	exact	Information
LFB Incident Log	08:26	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	08:49	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	09:00	exact	Officer change
LFB Incident Summary	09:30	approx	Water isolated
LFB Incident Log	09:45	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	09:50	exact	Make up assistance required
LFB Incident Log	09:54	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	10:52	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	11:23	exact	Informative message

LFB Incident Log	12:32	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	13:57	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	14:13	exact	Stop message
LFB Incident Log	15:37	exact	Officer Change
LFB Incident Log	16:37	exact	Informative message
LFB Incident Log	20:50	exact	Incident closed

Particulars
CCTV Pointed at leak in Upper St following report from TfL
By this point leak has covered southbound carriageway of Upper St causing traffic to divert to the other side
At approximately 04:50 on Monday 5 December 2016 a 36 inch water main burst in the vicinity of 341 Upper street and High road in Islington
The topography and road layout in the area of the burst water main caused the escaping water to flow downhill, channelled down Charlton Place and across Colebrooke Row and then down a private road, where it built up very rapidly in an area confined by closed garages and garden walls.
London Fire Brigade (LFB) via its control room at Merton called the London Operations Centre (LOC) received the first 999 call to a burst water main outside 42-44 Upper street.
LFB dispatched the nearest appliance which was A301 from Islington Fire Station Islington PL with T/WM Thorpe as C In attendance (A301 arrived on scene)
Request urgent attendance of Water authority
Water authority eta within 2 hours
Request Police for traffic and road closures CAD 897
Inform TFL Ref 98
Around this time the LOC began to receive multiple/ additional calls to flooding in the area. Thirteen other calls were received and the LOC mobilised F241 Shoreditch fire station to a flooding at 37 Colebrook Row, Islington N1 8AF
Request local authority with 120 bags of sand
From Watch Manager Thorpe o/s 356 Upper street Islington. One burst water main of unknown size flooding to a depth of 0.5 meters effecting an area of 100 metres of upper street, flooding approximately 15 commercial, 10 residential properties. Request urgent attendance of water authority to isolate supply. Request operational support unit to control flow of water. Upper street closed from Camden passage to Essex road Tactical mode is Oscar (Offensive) Islington council will call back with eta if and when for sand
From Watch Manager Thorpe Make pumps 4, Fire Rescues Units 1 with Boat Thames water state this is a 36 inch pipe

From Watch Manager Thorpe Properties in Charlton place now flooded to a depth of 8 feet.

Thames water sending technician ASAP and truck with 150 bags of sand

From Watch Manager Thorpe request LALO for rehousing of residents

Local authority calling back for ETA for Louise Brown LALO

By 6am a huge pool of water, estimated at between 7-8 feet in height, burst through the garages and garden wall at the rear of No 1 Devonian Road. Like a tsunami, it poured into the garden of No 1 and rapidly built up against the rear of the house.

Watch manager Coltress is now Incident Commander tactical mode Oscar, (offensive)

Make FRUs 3 all must carry boats tactical mode Oscar, (offensive)

LUL informed due to proximity of tunnels LUL ref 11

At about 6.30am, the police and fire services warned residents to evacuate with immediate effect. This was just minutes before the conservatory at No 1 exploded.

From Watch manager Coltress at 341 Upper street Islington. An area of 460 meters by 150 meters from City road to Islington green affected. Multiple residential and commercial properties involved. Basements in Charlton place flooded to a depth of 2 meters. 50 People evacuated by Brigade and Police to the Steam Passage tavern as a refuge. This will be a protracted incident. Water rescue level 2 implemented. Tactical mode is Oscar (Offensive)

At approximately 6.30am the water had sufficient force to cause the conservatory at 1 Devonian Road (whose windows are strengthened by reinforced security glass) to explode. The power with which the water entered the house ripped the radiators of the wall and flung them to the far end of the room. The water level rose from about one inch to over seven feet high; within seconds it had almost reached the ceiling.

Station Manager Eager is now incident commander

From Station Manager Eager make pumps 6

From Station Manager Eager request attendance of electrical authority as substation 44736 at Shalford court is flooded to a depth of 300ml
Thames Water arrive on site according to evidence at GLA meeting. Full staff complement to turn off stop cocks may not be present yet
Thames water / local authority will increase sandbags from 150 to 500 and give an ETA soon

Group Manager Sutcliffe is now Incident Commander

From Group Manager Sutcliffe Make operational support units one

First lorry with sandbags en-route from slough eta 1 hour 30 minutes.
Second lorry is being loaded will depart in 40 minutes. Delivery will be 700 sand bags.

From Group Manager Sutcliffe Request attendance of bulk media advisor and hazardous materials and environmental protection officer.

Tactical coordination group meeting in progress.

From Group Manager Sutcliffe 36 inch main burst in roadway at 352 upper street. Multiple properties flooded in surrounding area, multi agency tactical coordination group meeting held at 07:45hrs, no casualties identified, steam passage tavern remains in use as reception centre, water authority representative to establish water valve isolation at 08:45hrs, Next tactical coordination group meeting scheduled for 09:00hrs. This has now been declared a major incident by Police.

From Group Manager Sutcliffe Request the attendance of TFL and British Transport Police ref 97 Tactical mode is Oscar (Offensive)
Borough Commander Goulbome is now Incident Commander

The water was isolated to the burst main at approximately 09:30hrs.

From Group Manager Goulbome request attendance of dangerous structure engineer

From Group Manager Goulbome request attendance of Press officer

From Group Manager Goulbome one 36 inch burst water main, affecting an area of approximately 600 meters by 300 meters in Devonia road, Duncan Terrace, Colebrook row and Charlton Place. Affecting approximately 80 residential and commercial properties. flooded to various depths up to a maximum of 3 meters. Pumping operations and systematic search of all premises in progress. Approximately 50 residents evacuated to rest centre in care of local authority, dry suits, PFDs in use

From Group Manager Goulbome Tactical coordination group meeting concluded, next meeting scheduled for 11:30

From Group Manager Goulbome Systematic search of premises in Devonia road, Charlton place, Colebrooke road and Duncan Terrace now complete, Pumping operations continue in Devonia road and Colebrooke road, Lightweight Pumps. Submersible pumps, dry suits, PFDs in use

From Group Manager Goulbourn Steady progress being made pumping out properties in Devonia road and Duncan terrace. Water levels subsiding, 11:30 Tactical coordination group meeting concluded, next meeting scheduled for 13:30hrs. Light weight portable pump, Submersible pumps, PFDs in use

From Group Manager Goulbourn Tactical coordination group meeting concluded, next meeting scheduled for 16:00

From Group Manager Goulbourn outside 352 Upper street. One 36 inch water burst on roadway flooding an area of 600 metres by 300 metres. Approximately 80 Domestic and commercial properties and one electrical substation flooded up to a maximum depth of 3 metres. Water supply to burst main isolated by Thames water. Electricity supply isolated to approximately 601 properties by UK Power networks, Light Weight Portable pumps, Submersible pumps, Large spill kit, dry suits, PFDs, Approximately 20 properties pumped out by Brigade, One elderly female rescued and carried to safety by Brigade from number 16 Colebrook road, One elderly female rescued and carried to safety by Brigade from number 7 Devonia road, Approximately 100 residents evacuated to business design centre under care of Islington local authority, level 2 water rescue, salvage operations, Major incident declared by Metropolitan Police service, Same as all calls, Tactical mode Oscar (Offensive)

Station Manager Impey is now Incident Commander Tactical mode Oscar (Offensive)

From Station Manager Impey Tactical coordination group meeting concluded. No further Brigade attendance required. Duty of care left with Thames Water.

NOTE OF A MEETING WITH THAMES WATER AND RESIDENTS – UPPER STREET FLOOD – MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2017 – 6.30P.M. – BUSINESS DESIGN CENTRE

**PRESENT: Thames Water – Nigel Dyer- Chief Executive Thames Infrastructure, Matthew Hackshaw, Chris Davis, James Kingston, Cecilia Larkin
Cunningham Lindsey – Andrew Mishen, Joseph Noel, Jeff Hoskin**

**Councillors – Richard Greening, Rowena Champion, Clare Jeapes and Caroline Russell
London Angel Business Improvement District – Jackie Ambrosini
Businesses affected by the Upper Street flood**

Councillor Richard Greening in the Chair

Matthew Hackshaw opened the meeting describing the structure of the event. Nigel Dyer then made a presentation to the meeting concerning the circumstances around the flooding incident.

Nigel Dyer made a sincere apology on behalf of Thames Water to those affected by the flood. He said that ‘Thames Water were doing everything they possibly can to prevent this situation happening again.’

Nigel Dyer explained that the main which burst had originally been installed in 1854. It was currently out of use while this 800 metre section of pipe is being relined by Thames Water. Sensors had already been put on it.

The following main points were then made -

- 1.Nigel Dyer stated that survey work would be started on 15 February in Upper Street, between the Pentonville Road and Islington Green junctions, Islington Green between the Upper Street and St.Peter’s Street junctions, and St.John’s Street between the junctions of Owen Street and Pentonville Road. This work will take place between the hours of 10pm. and 6.00a.m.**
- 2.Nigel Dyer made a commitment to businesses that it was their intention that no business will be worse off as a result of the flood or to see anyone suffer materially or otherwise and that any losses to businesses that are not met by the loss adjustors would be supplemented met by a payment from Thames Water**
- 3.Concern was expressed that businesses had lost trade over the busy Xmas period and that some of their stock was difficult to value as they were the experts in that field.**

Cunningham Lindsey, the loss adjustors, stated that they would consult on valuations and make an offer. Nigel Dyer stated that Thames would make up the balance with one cheque being payable to businesses and he committed to ensuring to ensure that they were no worse off as a result of the flood. In response to a question it was stated that traders in Camden Passage worked to a profit margin of around 33% and it was reiterated that traders would be recompensed and not be worse off as a result of the flood.

4. Concern was expressed at the attitude shown by some staff at Willis Towers Watson, (WTW) (who were acting for Cunningham Lindsey), to businesses that had contacted them on some of the claims and that this was not acceptable. Businesses expressed the view that WTW should have had a representative present that evening to respond to the criticisms made. Cunningham Lindsey responded that WTW had been invited to attend, but they had stated that they were not able to do so. Cunningham Lindsey stated that they would raise these concerns with WTW, and that whilst this problem has not arisen in the past, if businesses wished to raise these issues with Cunningham Lindsey after the meeting they would take these up and deal with them

5. Concern was also expressed that on the day of the flood conflicting information had been given to businesses about removing items from their premises, which had led to disputes about the cost of items and disposal of items. It was stated that Thames should provide written advice or information, (for example on a laminated sheet) for businesses and residents for any future incidents on how to deal with claims following floods and who to contact in this regard and Thames and Cunningham Lindsey undertook to do this. It was noted that Thames admitted that this was the biggest incident that they had dealt with. They committed to learning from their mistakes to better handle future incidents

6. Reference was made to the fact that some businesses had been informed that they should go through their own insurers, whilst others had been told to contact Thames insurers. Cunningham Lindsey stated that the advice that would have been given to businesses was dependent on the type of policy that they had, and individual questions on any claims and building costs for works could be raised individually following the meeting with them

7. Discussion took place as to the level of compensation businesses would get for loss of trading over the busy Xmas period, how the loss adjustors/Thames would decide on an appropriate sum to be paid, taking into account the fact that many businesses were still not open for trading and the many hours that businesses had to put in

completing forms and arranging work for their premises etc., Businesses enquired how the loss adjustors would calculate the appropriate hourly rate payable that businesses should be entitled to in relation to dealing with such issues regarding the flood. Cunningham Lindsey stated that these discussions would be held with individual businesses and appropriate payments made dependent on circumstances

8.Reference was made to differing levels of compensation paid to businesses and the fact that when this was queried with WTW they had been rude and dismissive. Cunningham Lindsey stated that they would raise this with WTW, however in view of the concerns raised, businesses would now be able to deal with Cunningham Lindsey directly

9.Businesses expressed concern that despite completing information on the day of the flood, detailing contact details etc. for the insurers and Thames, no direct contact had been made by Thames with businesses since the incident. It was added that businesses had been left to deal with WTW, who had been unhelpful in many instances, and often failed to respond in a satisfactory timescale. Cunningham Lindsey reiterated that they would now deal with businesses in the future to resolve individual claims, however this was the first time that problems had arisen with their use of WTW, when they had acted on behalf of Cunningham Lindsey. Cunningham Lindsey stated that they would inform WTW that they needed to respond in a satisfactory timescale to businesses and also make payments, where agreed, within 7 working days

10.Concern was expressed that on the morning of the flood that Thames, when arriving on scene, were not really in control of the situation and that their response had been reactive, rather than proactive, and Thames needed to learn lessons from this for future flooding situations

11.Reference was made to the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee taking place at the Town Hall at 6.00p.m. on 8 March and that Thames would be reporting back in relation to the circumstances around the flood and an update on the independent review of major bursts that is taking place

12.A business representative queried where the emergency operatives who attended the site had come from and why they had taken so long to arrive on site. In addition, she enquired when they had first been first contacted about the flood, the area that they had had to come from, given the delays in getting to the flood, and whether Thames had known where the valves were located that needed to be turned off. Thames responded that they did know the location of the valves, however it was a lengthy manual operation involving 4 people to turn off each valve. Thames

stated that they did not have available the information as to where the emergency operatives had attended from and residents expressed concern that this information was still not available some weeks after the incident

13.Thames stated that they had been informed at 5.10 a.m. on 5 December that there was a flood in Upper Street and the first Thames operative had been on site at 6.15a.m. However a number of checks had to take place before the valves could be turned off. This had taken some hours as it took 4 men to turn off each valve and each valve had to be turned manually 73 times

14.Discussion took place in relation to the reopening event for businesses in the Angel area that was to be funded by Thames Water and the additional measures that Thames could put in place to encourage trade back into the area following the loss of trade, (especially the loss of trade over the crucial Xmas period) and the damage to reputation, due to the flood. Suggestions included – Festive lights, Entrance lights to Camden Passage, Press releases in local press, Evening Standard and the Metro, contributions towards London in Bloom exhibit, advertising on websites/flyers, information in hotels in the area on Camden Passage traders, and also advertising in the Antiques Trade Gazette. It was agreed that the final list of additional measures should be the subject of discussion between Jackie Ambrosini of the Angel London BID, Pauline Coakley Webb of Pierrepont Passage and Matthew Hackshaw of Thames and a consensus view agreed

15.Businesses also expressed the view that the meeting that had been held that evening should have been held earlier and that this may have helped businesses to raise issues of concern previously

16.The Chair stated that a meeting between businesses and the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PPS) would be held later in March and that details would be notified through Jackie Ambrosini at the Angel BID. A meeting would be held with the PPS Committee and Thames Water on 8 March at 6p.m.