



Priority Services

code of practice



Contents

Register for free services

Communicating with you.....	4
Supply interruptions	5
Meter reading	6
Password scheme for when we visit.....	7
Registering with Priority Services	8
Wessex Water Promise	11

Other ways we can help

Problems paying your bill.....	12
Switch to a meter	13
Unoccupied properties	14
Our website	14
Fishing and recreation	15

Other organisations16

Contact us18

extra care for people with additional needs

We are committed to providing the highest standards of service to all our customers.

And we understand that some may need extra consideration, so if you have particular requirements due to your age, ill health, a disability, or additional needs we can help.

Priority Services is a free service which enables us to identify and respond quickly to the needs of customers who require extra care.

This leaflet details the assistance available if you register for Priority Services as well as other ways we might be able to help.

Priority Services is available to anyone living within the Wessex Water region, whether they are a bill payer or not.

Details of how to register are on page 8 of this leaflet.

register for free services

We offer a range of free services which you can register for under Priority Services.

Communicating with you - your bill and other information

If you have difficulty communicating or you find it hard to understand your bill and other information you can nominate a carer, family member or friend to talk to us or receive correspondence on your behalf.

Your bill and a selection of leaflets are available, on request, in braille, large print, on CD or can be read and explained to you over the telephone. Or we can arrange for them to be translated into a language

other than English. We also offer a home visiting service.

If you need to communicate with us using British Sign Language or a language other than English, we can arrange an interpreter free of charge or to communicate with you using our dedicated "language line".

We publish leaflets on our website. To find these visit www.wessexwater.co.uk Additionally, a CD with general information about Wessex Water is available.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech difficulties, you may want to use our Text Relay service.

To make a call from a textphone, dial 18001 and then the number you require from the 'contact us' section.

To make a call from a telephone, dial 18002 and then the number you require from the 'contact us' section.

A Text Relay operator will join the call and act as our interpreter.

Alternatively, you can email us.

See pages 18 – 19 for our contact details.

Supply interruptions

Occasionally we may need to turn off your water supply to carry out essential work.

Usually we let you know in advance, either by letter or by using our loudspeaker vans.

We appreciate this may not work for you so if you are blind, partially sighted or have difficulties reading or understanding English, we can contact you by telephone.

If you have hearing difficulties, we can arrange a home visit. Alternatively, we can contact a neighbour to let you know when your supply is likely to be affected.

If your water supply is interrupted then we can provide you with bottled water. If the water is likely to be off for a longer period of time and we need to use water bowsers, these will be located as conveniently as possible to you.

register for free services

We can offer assistance if you are unable to collect water from these bowsers.

If you use dialysis equipment or have a particular need for water, we will try to plan our operations around your needs. In the event of an unplanned interruption, we will contact you to advise how long it will last and what help is available.

Meter reading

If you have a water meter and have difficulty reading it, we can help. We offer up to four additional meter readings per year to elderly customers and those with additional needs.

The reading will be taken within five working days of your request. If we fail to do this, you can claim automatic compensation under our customer guarantee scheme, the Wessex Water Promise.

If you are unable to access your meter, we may be able to move it at no cost to you – please contact us on 0345 600 4 600 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) for more information.

Password scheme for when we visit

You can have a personal password that we will use every time we visit you to help guard against bogus callers.

Additionally all Wessex Water employees carry an identity card, which includes their name and photograph. They should show you this identity card whenever they visit.

If you have any concerns about a caller, you should not let them in your home.

Call us on 0345 600 4 600 (24 hours) to check they are genuine or contact the police immediately.

Any genuine callers will be happy to wait while you check their identity.

Bogus callers and distraction burglars can be persuasive and use tricks to get into your home, but you don't have to let them in.

If you are not sure don't open the door.

For more information, please visit:
www.wessexwater.co.uk/boguscallers

Don't worry if you take a while to answer your door - we'll wait for you.

registering with Priority Services

If you, a carer, family member or friend would like to register, please contact customer services on 0345 600 3 600 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm). We welcome calls via the Text Relay service.

Alternatively you can register online at www.wessexwater.co.uk/customerplus or email your details to customer.plus@wessexwater.co.uk

If you prefer, you can complete the form attached to this page and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided.

If you are a Bristol Water and Wessex Water customer, you only need to register once as our joint

venture billing company BWBSL operates the Priority Services service for both companies.

If a different water company supplies you, then you need to register with both that company and Wessex Water.

All information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Your information will be restricted to our employees or agents who need to know in order to deliver the extra services you require.

We aim to keep the register updated, but rely on you, a carer, family member or friend to inform us about any changes in your circumstances.

Please detach and return the completed form in the envelope provided

Priority Services registration

Title Name

Address

Postcode

Phone number Text phone number

email address

Customer reference (as shown on your water bill)

Our password system helps customers to guard against bogus callers. If you would like us to use a confidential password when we visit your home, please write it here:

Do you need this password to be shown to you in a written form? Yes No

Are you or anyone living in your home disabled? Yes No

If yes, provide registration number

deaf or having difficulty hearing? Yes No

blind or partially sighted? Yes No

vocally impaired? Yes No

have learning difficulties? Yes No

have mobility difficulties? Yes No

a wheelchair user? Yes No

have kidney dialysis treatment at home? Yes No

If yes, please indicate here if it is renal or CAPD dialysis

Do you or anyone in your home have any other medical condition which needs a constant water supply? Yes No

If yes, please indicate here the medical condition that requires a constant water supply

Wessex Water Promise

Under the **Wessex Water Promise** – our customer guarantee scheme – we have set out the standards we aim to meet regarding **Priority Services** and the compensation we will pay should we fail to meet them.

If you register for **Priority Services**, we will do this immediately when you apply by telephone or within 10 working days of receiving your written or online application. If we fail to do this, you can claim automatic compensation.

If you have registered your requirements with **Priority Services**, you can claim automatic compensation if we fail to meet any of the following requests:

- to provide a bill in a particular format, eg, braille, large print
- to communicate with you in an agreed way
- to send an item of literature in the format agreed with you.

Please state how you would like to receive your water bill:

- in large print in braille read to me over the phone
- read by Text Relay by home visit CD
- in another language If so, which language

If you prefer us to send your water bill to a carer, family member or friend, please provide their details:

Title Name

Address

Postcode

Their phone number

Has the person named above agreed to receive your bill?

- Yes No

Are you happy for us to contact the person named above about your account?

- Yes No

If you are blind or partially sighted and we plan to turn off your water supply, and you think you will have difficulty reading the card we send, would you like us to: (please tick one box)

- phone you? visit you? not applicable

If you have difficulties with your hearing and you think you may not hear the message we give out with the loudhailer in an emergency, would you like us to: (please tick one box)

- phone you? visit you? put a card through your letterbox? not applicable

If you have a water meter do you need help to read it?

- Yes No

To register with **Priority Services**, simply complete this form and return using the envelope provided.

other ways we can help

Problems paying your bill

Money can be a worry for all of us and sometimes we struggle to pay our bills.

If you are in financial difficulty, talk to us today. We might be able to help you through our tap assistance programme:

- Spread the cost of your bills with a flexible payment plan.
- Pay us direct from your benefits with Water Direct.
- Lower your water bills with Assist or Watersure Plus.
- Repay debt and get back on track with Restart.
- Reduce your water use (and bill if you're metered) with free water saving devices and home water and energy checks.

Call 0345 600 3 600 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or email customer.services@wessexwater.co.uk (please quote your customer number and telephone number).

Organisations such as Citizens Advice, National Debtline and StepChange offer free, independent and confidential debt advice.

For more information visit www.wessexwater.co.uk/tap



Switch to a meter

If you live on your own, have a small family, live in a house with a high rateable value, or you are a low water user, a water meter could help you lower your bill.

We can normally fit a meter for free and if we're unable to do so we may be able to offer an alternative charge. We'll let you try it out and if you decide within two years it isn't for you we'll let you go back to paying on an unmetered basis.

This option lapses after you have been billed for two years on the metered charge and you can only make this change once.

Apply online at www.wessexwater.co.uk/meteroption or request a leaflet and application form by calling 0345 600 6 600 (24 hour answering machine).

other ways we can help

Unoccupied properties

If you need to stay in hospital, live in residential care or stay with relatives for a long period of time, we can redirect your bills to a carer, family member or friend.

If your property is unoccupied but furnished during this time, we will withdraw the water and/or sewerage charges.

Depending on the circumstances, the charges will be withdrawn for six or 12 months, or a lesser period of time agreed with you.

This does not apply to metered customers whose

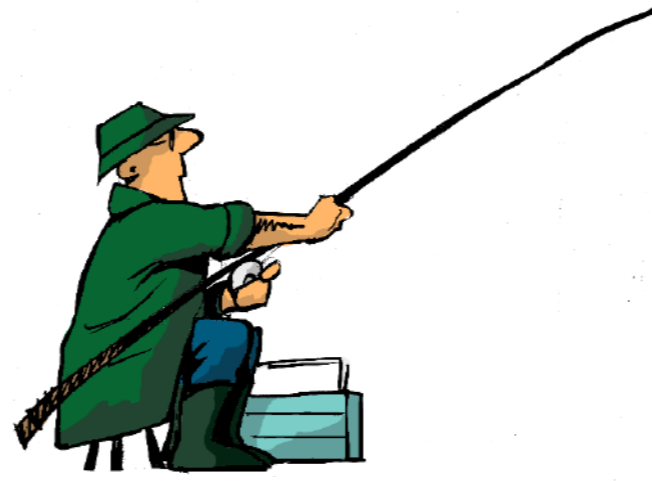
bills are based on the amount of water they use.

Our website

When using our website you can change the font sizes to meet your specific needs.

A simple layout, easy navigation and search facilities means you can find your way around the site, using any website browser, text browsers or screen reader software. We also have a mobile friendly version of our website.

www.wessexwater.co.uk/customerplus provides information for customers with additional needs, in particular those with visual impairment.



Fishing and recreation

Set in beautiful surroundings, our reservoirs offer a variety of recreational activities and most have facilities for people with disabilities.

For more information visit:
www.wessexwater.co.uk/recreation

other organisations

A number of other organisations can also offer further help and information if you have additional needs.

Age UK

Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9NA

Call: 0800 169 8080

(Lines are open between 8.00am and 7.00pm)

Visit: www.ageuk.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss

19-23 Featherstone Street, London, EC1Y 8SL

Call: 0808 808 0123 (freephone)

Textphone: 0808 808 9000 (freephone)

Email: informationline@hearingloss.org.uk

SMS: 07800 000360

Visit: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation

4th Floor, Jessica House, Red Lion Square, 191 Wandsworth

High Street, London, SW18 4LS

Call: 0300 999 0004

(Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm)

Textphone: 020 7432 8009

Email: info@dlf.org.uk

Visit: www.dlf.org.uk

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

(Monday to Friday, 8.45am to 5.30pm)

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk (national)

Visit: www.rnib.org.uk

Action for Blind People

10 Still House Lane, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4EB

Call: 01179 537750

Email: Bristol@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Unit G Stanley Court, Glenmore Business Park,

Telford Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7GH

Call: 01722 345440

Email: Salisbury@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Visit: www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

If you require additional help from us, you may also want to register for help with your other utilities.

Energy companies offer password schemes and other services similar to ours. To find out more you should contact your energy supplier directly and ask about their Priority Services Register.

contact us

questions about your bill or Priority Services?

Call: **0345 600 3 600**
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

Email: **customer.services@wessexwater.co.uk**
(Please quote your customer number and telephone number)

Write to: Wessex Water
1 Clevedon Walk, Nailsea,
Bristol BS48 1WA

questions about your water supply* and/or sewerage service

Call: **0345 600 4 600**
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, emergencies
only at other times)

Email: **operational.enquiries@wessexwater.co.uk**
(non urgent enquiries only)

* If your water is supplied by Bristol Water or Bournemouth Water, please contact them if you have a question about your water supply on 0345 702 3797 or 01202 590 059 respectively.

We welcome calls via the Text Relay service.

Calls to **0345** numbers usually cost the same as standard UK landline numbers. Please check with your telephone service provider.

To protect our customers and staff calls may be recorded.

Wessex Water is not responsible for the content of external websites

To contact the independent water watchdog representing customers' interests

Write to: The Consumer Council for Water
1st Floor
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4AJ

Call: 0300 034 2222
Email: enquiries@ccwater.org.uk
Visit: www.ccwater.org.uk

