

How we handle customer complaints – code of practice



At Bournemouth Water, good customer service is very important to us. However, there may be times when we don't meet the high standards we aim to achieve. If this happens, we'd like you to tell us. This code of practice takes you through the steps you can take.

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

Stage 1

If you're not happy with our service and want to complain, you can do so in a number of ways. You can contact our Customer Service by:

- Calling 01202 590059. We're open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday; and 9am to 2pm on Saturdays (we're closed on bank holidays);
- Emailing customerservice@bournemouthwater.co.uk;
- Writing to Bournemouth Water, George Jessel House, Francis Avenue, Bournemouth, BH11 8NX; or
- Visiting our offices at the address shown above between 8.30am and 5.15pm, Monday to Friday.

Your complaint must be in writing to be registered as a written complaint. We record all complaints and will reply to your written complaint within 10 working days (please note, working days don't include Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays). We try to deal with non-written complaints and queries at the time you raise them.

Keeping you informed

Sometimes we can't deal with your complaint within 10 working days because we need to get more detailed information or investigate the matter fully. We'll tell you if this is the case and give you the name of the person dealing with your complaint.

If you're not happy with our reply to your complaint or the action we've taken, you can move to the next stage.

Stage 2

Write to us again and our Director of Domestic Customer Service will review our original reply and actions taken, and will write to you within 10 working days of hearing from you. If you're not satisfied, you can proceed to stage 3.

Stage 3

You can contact our Managing Director who ordinarily won't have been involved in handling your original complaint. Our Managing Director will review the replies we sent to you and the actions we've taken, and will write to you within 10 working days of hearing from you.

If you're still not satisfied, you can move to stage 4.

Stage 4

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

Consumer Council for Water

www.ccwater.org.uk

There are certain types of dispute which CCWater can't deal with. In these cases, they may ask you to write to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) and will give you the details you need.

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

Stage 5

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

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

You can make an application, free of charge, via the WATRS website at www.watrs.org or you can ask for an application form to be sent to you by emailing info@watrs.org. Guidance notes are available on the website or you can ask for a copy to be sent to you by calling 0207 520 3801. Their address is:

WATRS

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution, International Dispute Resolution Centre
70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 1EU

Compensation and written complaints

If we don't respond to your complaint letter or email within 10 working days, you're entitled to £35 credit on your bill which is a payment under our Guaranteed Standards Scheme. You won't have to claim this payment as we pay it automatically.

If for any reason we don't do this within 10 working days of the payment becoming due, we'll credit your account with an extra £35.

Other service standards are protected by our Guaranteed Standards Scheme. Details can be found in our 'Customer charter' under 'Publications' on our website at www.bournemouthwater.co.uk

General compensation

For certain complaints, we'll consider whether you're entitled to other compensation for any loss, distress or worry you've experienced.

Additional services and alternative formats

We offer a range of additional services free of charge, including a secure password scheme and bills printed in large print or a language other than English. If you'd like a copy of this leaflet in large print, on audio tape or in braille, please contact us.

A Typetalk facility is also available.

Protecting customer information

We're very careful about how we handle customers' personal information. Attempts have been made to obtain information by deception by people who aren't customers or aren't acting on a customer's behalf.

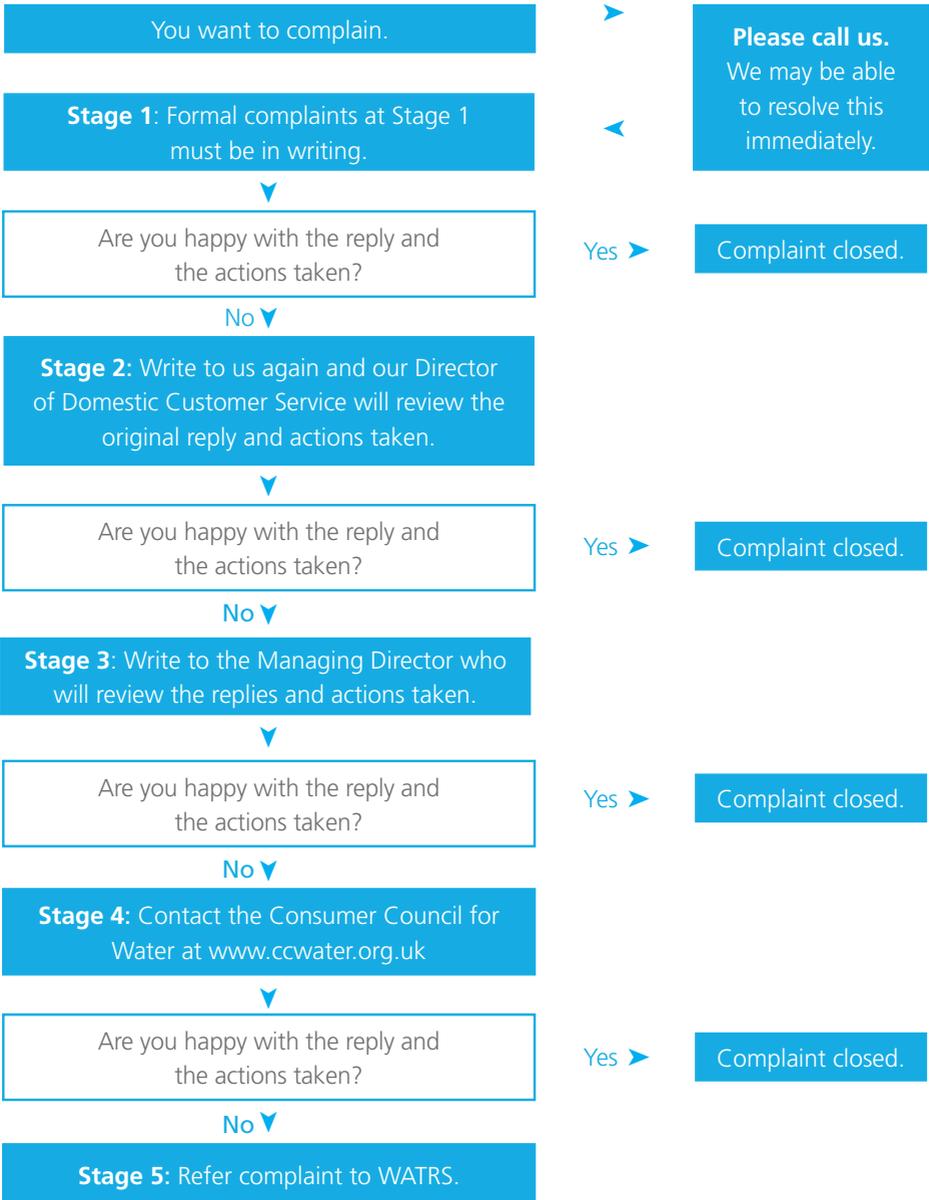
Therefore, if you're complaining on behalf of a customer, we'll seek written consent to confirm whether you can deal with the complaint on their behalf.

Complaints about sewerage

We supply your drinking water, so if your complaint is about drainage or sewerage you'll need to contact your sewerage provider.

Wessex Water 0345 600 3600 **Southern Water** 0845 272 0845

Complaints process



Bournemouth Water

George Jessel House, Francis Avenue,
Bournemouth, BH11 8NX

[Customer Service 01202 590059](tel:01202590059)

Fax 01202 597022

customerservice@bournemouthwater.co.uk

Automated card payment service 0800 389 5110

Freephone Leakline 0800 587 8979

www.bournemouthwater.co.uk

