

# Leaflet 9: Complaints

We want to offer you the best service possible, but sometimes things go wrong. If something has gone wrong, or our service has fallen below the level you would expect we will work with you to resolve the issue.

We define a complaint as any contact with us by a customer or potential customer in which an allegation is made that any action, or inaction, or any service provided by us has fallen below their expectation. Complaints can be made on behalf of our customers by third parties.

## How to make a complaint

To contact us about a complaint:

Call us: 03300 242020

Email us: [complaints@albionwater.co.uk](mailto:complaints@albionwater.co.uk)

Write to us: Clearwater House, Castlemills, Biddisham, BS26 2RE

There are three levels for investigating and responding to complaints within the Complaints Procedure:

1. Call us and one of our team will go through your issue with you. If we have done something wrong, we'll apologise and try to resolve your issue immediately. Some issues might require further investigation, particularly if they involve other parties. If this is the case, we will tell you and we will aim to respond to you within 5 working days. If we find that the complaint relates to a service that we don't provide we will give you the details of the company that you need to contact (for example if your complaint relates to water supply but we supply sewerage services to you property).

You can complain by email or by letter, we will acknowledge your complaint on the day it is received and we will respond within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.

If we fail to respond within 10 working days you might be entitled to compensation under our Guaranteed Standards of Service (GSS). Full details can be found on our website [albionwater.co.uk/document-library](http://albionwater.co.uk/document-library).

2. If you are not happy with the response we have given, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by a senior manager.
3. If you are still unhappy following the review by a senior manager, you can ask CCW to help you. CCW – The voice for water consumer is an independent body representing the interests of water and sewerage customers, they have a legal duty to deal with customer complaints. This is a free service, and they will look at the complaint and take the matter up with us on your behalf.

Phone: 0300 034 2222

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

Address: CCW, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham, B2 4BH

A summary of our complaints procedure will be sent with our first reply to a complaint.

## Handling of complaints

We will deal with all complaints courteously, fairly, efficiently and as simply as possible.

We will put things right as quickly as possible, if we are not responsible for the cause of the complaint we will give you a full explanation of why we cannot help and we will help you find out who to contact for further assistance.

Some issues may take time to resolve, we will do everything we can to help you while the issue is being dealt with and we will keep you informed of the progress.

Complaints will be overseen by a member of our customer service team. Staff who deal with complaints have undergone specific training in complaints handling and our procedures and policies for dealing with customers who wish to register a complaint. Regular training in complaints handling is provided for employees.

When we respond to your complaint we will:

- Thank you for contacting us.
- Issue an apology where we are at fault.
- Provide an explanation of all matters raised by you, including:
  - an explanation of the cause of the problem, where appropriate;
  - a description of the action which has been taken to overcome the problem; or
  - a description of the action which we will be taking together with timescales for that action; or
  - a description of the action which has been taken to reduce the problem together with an explanation of further action planned to resolve the problem ultimately and a commitment to keep you informed of progress; or
  - a full explanation of why we are not able to satisfy your requirements or expectations.
  - Advice on who to contact where responsibility for the problem does not lie with us.
  - A named contact and telephone number for further enquiries where this is appropriate.

## Resolving complaints

If your complaint relates to an issue that is covered by our Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS) we will pay you the compensation detailed (see LEAFLET 8 – GSS for further information).

If your complaint relates to an issue that is not covered by GSS we will consider compensation, taking into account the cause of the problem and any loss/damage suffered.

## Monitoring complaints

All complaints will be recorded on the day they are received regardless of how they are made. Complaints are monitored internally to ensure that we respond within our target of 5 working days.

## **Complaints from customers who need extra assistance**

If you need any assistance in making a complaint, we will work with you to make sure that you can make your complaint as simply as possible. Depending on the assistance required, it may mean that it takes longer to handle these complaints.

## **What to do if you are not happy with our initial response to your complaint**

If you are not happy with the way in which we have handled a complaint, or action it has taken to resolve a problem, you can ask for the case to be reviewed by a senior manager.

If the relevant senior manager has been involved in a case previously the review will be carried out by another manager or the Director of Albion Water to ensure an independent review. Both senior functional managers and the Director are empowered to take any action necessary to resolve the matter under review with the customer and are expected to do so.

A substantive response will be sent within 10 working days. A £30 payment will be made automatically for failures to meet this target.

## **If you remain unhappy following review of your complaint**

If you are still unhappy with the response after our review, you can ask CCW – The voice for water consumers to review your case.

CCW is an independent body. A complaint may be referred to them at any time but usually it will not begin its own investigations into a complaint until we have had the opportunity to resolve it.

The contact details for CCW are:

CCW, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham, B2 4BH

Telephone: **0300 034 2222**

e-mail: You can email via the CCW website at [www.ccwater.org.uk](http://www.ccwater.org.uk)

Office hours: Mon to Fri 8:30 to 17:00

If you remain dissatisfied following CCW's efforts to resolve your complaint, you have the right to refer your complaint to the Water Redress Scheme known as WATRS. WATRS is a voluntary alternative dispute resolution scheme to help address the very small number of customer complaints that remain unresolved. WATRS, is designed to provide an independent, impartial and easy to use alternative to going to Court or a Tribunal.

You can make an application, free of charge, via WATRS website [www.watrs.org](http://www.watrs.org) or you can ask for an application form to be sent to you [applications@watrs.org](mailto:applications@watrs.org). Guidance notes are available on the website or you can ask for a copy to be sent to you by telephoning 0800 008 6909. Their address is:

WATRS, 100 St Paul's Churchyard, London, EC4M 8BU

We have signed up to the scheme's commitments which are set out below. A full copy of the Scheme Rules can be found here [www.watrs.org/commitments](http://www.watrs.org/commitments).

Commitment to:

1. Provide WATRS free of charge to customers;
2. Support the principles set out in the ADR Specification;
3. Respect the independence of WATRS
4. Be bound by decision of the WATRS' adjudicator if accepted by customer and to implement decision as required by Scheme Rules;
5. Co-operate with and have due regard to the recommendations of the ADR Panel
6. Provide accurate and reliable information to and co-operate with the WATRS' adjudicators;

What type of complaint can be referred to WATRS?

Only disputes relating to the following apply:

Bills, payment, collections and debt recovery

Metering

Water supply services

Wastewater/sewerage services

Development and new supplies

## Legal redress

In some cases you have a legal right to refer a problem either to arbitration, or to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) for determination, or to the Courts. Where we cannot reach agreement with you in such cases we will ensure that we notify you of your right to refer the matter to another body.

Matters which may be referred elsewhere include

- Financial conditions for water supply or sewerage requisition.
- Entitlement to a free meter
- Conditions for disconnecting and reconnecting non-domestic supplies
- Extensions to the period within which a sewer must be provided after requisition or the places at which private drains and sewers connect with the requisitioned sewer.
- Adoptions of water mains, sewers and sewage disposal works.
- Conditions for the connection of a drain to a public sewer.
- Requirement that a proposed drain or sewer be constructed so as to form part of the general drainage system.
- Alterations to the drainage system of premises.
- Closure and prohibition of use of a public sewer.
- Our exercise of entry powers on private land.

## Contact details

Our contact details are set out below.

### **ALBION WATER LIMITED**

Emergency Helpline **0800 917 5819**

Customer Service Helpline **03300 242020**

Our Customer Service Helpline is open Monday to Friday from 8:30am until 5:30pm.

If you want to write to us about any customer service or billing issue, please use:

**Albion Water Limited, Customer [Services](#),**

**Clearwater House**

**Castlemills**

**Biddisham**

**BS26 2RE**

Our website - [www.albionwater.co.uk](http://www.albionwater.co.uk) - contains customer information and email addresses if you wish to contact us electronically.

### **THE WATER SERVICES REGULATION AUTHORITY (OFWAT)**

Ofwat

Centre City Tower

7 Hill Street

Birmingham

B5 4UA

Telephone: 0121 644 7500

e-mail: [mailbox@ofwat.gov.uk](mailto:mailbox@ofwat.gov.uk)

### **CCW – The voice for water consumers**

CCW

23 Stephenson Street

Birmingham

B2 4BH

Telephone: **0300 034 2222**

e-mail: You can email via the CCW website at [www.ccwater.org.uk](http://www.ccwater.org.uk)

Office hours: Mon to Fri 8:30 to 17:00

### **WATER REDRESS SCHEME (WATRS)**

WATRS

100 St Paul's Churchyard

London  
EC4M 8BU  
Tel: 0800 008 6909  
E-mail: [applications@watrs.org](mailto:applications@watrs.org)

**CITIZENS ADVICE (CA)**

To find your local CAB please contact the central CAB using the contact details listed below.

Myddelton House,  
115-123 Pentonville Road,  
London, N1 9LZ

Telephone number: 0800 144 8848  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)