



Cambridge Water

Cambridge Water

Our Code of Practice for  
Household Customers 2023/24

**Our customer promise**



January 2023

## Our Code of Practice for Household Customers

### Introduction

#### The Code

This Code of Practice is for household customers and gives information on the services we provide, the terms and conditions on which they are offered and how our customers can find the help and advice they need. It does not establish a contractual relationship between Cambridge Water and any of its customers.

#### Cambridge Water

In 2011, Cambridge Water Plc was purchased by South Staffordshire Plc. On 1 April 2013 the company was merged with South Staffordshire Water Plc, but continues to trade under the name of Cambridge Water.

Under the Water Industry Act 1991 South Staffordshire Water is, along with its supply area in the West Midlands, appointed by the Secretary of State as the Water Undertaker for an area that stretches 1,173 square kilometres. This includes Cambridge and extends to Ramsey in the north, Gamlingay in the west, Balsham in the east and Melbourn in the south (see map). It covers a population of 319,000 and has 133,000 customers. We do not supply sewerage services; our customers receive these from Anglian Water. However, we bill for these on behalf of Anglian Water.

The company supplies excellent quality underground water that is pumped from boreholes. A total of 97% comes from chalk and 3% comes from greensand aquifers.



We provide an essential public service to our customers, enabling them to go about their daily lives while also protecting the environment that they rely on and enjoy.

How we perform as a business is important to our customers and other stakeholders, including our regulators and our owners. Because we want to demonstrate that we are accountable for our performance, we have developed a number of outcomes for the business. These are the promises we have made to our customers on the services they want us to deliver.

To ensure we maintain our customers' trust in us, it is vital that we deliver these promises. So we have developed 30 performance commitments, which are the areas our customers have said they want to hold us to account. We have worked with customers to set targets for each of these commitments so they can measure our performance and see how we are doing.



Further details of the measures that sit underneath these outcomes can be found on our website [www.cambridge-water.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-water.co.uk).

Throughout this Code there are references to useful information that can be found on our website.

***If you do not have access to the internet, please call us for any information you require and we will be happy to help.***

## Our Customer Promise

We are committed to continually improving our standards of customer service. We operate a Customer Promise, which covers the terms of the statutory Guaranteed Standards Scheme and sets out our additional customer service promises for more information you can visit our website, [www.cambridge-water.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-water.co.uk). In line with our Customer Promise there are a number of specific circumstances where we will credit your account or make payment if we fail to meet our Guaranteed Standards. A summary of our Promise is detailed below.

### Keeping appointments

When we make an appointment to visit you, we will always contact you to see when's best for you and if we ever need to rearrange or cancel we will give you at least 24 hours' notice. If we fail to meet these guidelines for an appointment we will give you £20.

### Responding to written correspondence

We will reply to your written enquiry about your bill within 10 working days. If you ask for a change to your payment arrangements, (for example, to pay by instalments) and we cannot accept the change we will write and tell you the reason why within five working days of your request. We will reply within 10 working days to any letter of complaint. If we fail to meet any of these standards, we will give you £30.

If we fail to make an automatic payment to you for any of the above standards within 20 working days following a payment becoming due and you submit a written claim within three months we will pay you a further £20.

### Keeping the water flowing

Occasionally we need to turn off the water supply to carry out essential planned work. We will always let you know in advance and tell you when the supply will be restored. If the supply is off for more than four hours, and we have failed to give at least 48 hours' notice, you may be eligible for a payment under the terms of our Guaranteed Standards Scheme.

After an emergency or unplanned interruption such as a burst water main, we will restore supplies within 12 hours for most bursts or within 48 hours if it is a burst on a strategic main. If necessary, we will provide an alternative supply. If we fail to meet these standards, we will give £20.

We shall pay you a further £10 for every additional 24 hours you are without supply. Sometimes it is difficult to know who has been affected by supply interruptions. If you have been affected and we have not made an automatic payment to you within 20 working days of the interruption then please write to us. We will then make an additional payment to you of £20.

### Maintaining pressure

We aim to provide you with water at sufficient pressure to enable you to meet your normal domestic needs. If you are affected by low pressure of less than seven metres static head on two occasions each lasting one hour or more in a period of 28 consecutive days you may claim a payment once in any year. This payment will only be made once in any year in accordance with current Guaranteed Standards of Service exclusions.

## Exceptional circumstances

The making of any payment shall not constitute an omission of liability for any other purpose. Similarly, acceptance of a payment by you will not affect any other liability we may owe to you. Our guarantees do not apply if we are prevented from meeting our standards by third party actions or exceptional circumstances or severe weather conditions or industrial action.

## Additional promises

We will:

- Reduce your water charges if your supply is continuously interrupted on three or more occasions during any 12 month period. A written claim must be received within three months of the third interruption
- Pay you £10 if we do not despatch a refund cheque to you within 10 working days and you submit a written claim within three months
- Pay you automatically £10 if we issue a notice of boil water in an unplanned emergency (excluding mains rehabilitation works)
- Pay you £10 if we do not despatch two metered bills within 12 calendar months and you submit a written claim within three months
- Provide compensation if you suffer loss of supply as a result of our mismanagement during a drought

Where a dispute arises between a customer and the company regarding a payment, the matter can be referred by either party to Ofwat for determination.

Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)

Centre City Tower

7 Hill Street

Birmingham

B5 4UA

Telephone: 0121 644 7500

E-mail - [enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.ofwat.gov.uk](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk)

## Installation of meters

If you request a meter and the installation is to be carried out free of charge, we will survey the property and install the meter within 90 days subject to acceptance of survey within a reasonable timescale.

If you are paying for your meter to be installed, we will survey, invoice and install the meter within 30 days, subject to receiving payment of the invoice.

If we fail to survey or install the meter within these times, you may claim a payment of £10. This guaranteed does not cover situations where the customer causes the delay, for example where no access is provided to the property.

## Meter reading

We will read your meter on the day you are moving house, subject to receiving five days' notice. If we fail to do this, we will automatically pay you £20.

## Meter changes

We will notify you when a meter is to be changed. When a meter is situated externally, we may change the meter when you are out, and we will leave a card to let you know. If we fail to do this, you can make a claim to us in writing for a payment of £10.

## Pressure standard

You can expect a minimum static water pressure of 10 metres at the stop tap at the boundary to your property. For a typical two-storey house this means that:

- Water will rise and fill a storage tank in the loft.
- The minimum flow at the boundary stop tap will be nine litres a minute. This would be sufficient to fill a one gallon (4.5 litre) bucket in 30 seconds.

If, in any 28 day period, the pressure in a communication pipe falls below seven metres, on two occasions, each lasting more than one hour, we will automatically pay you £25.

Sometimes it is impractical for us to identify who has been affected by low pressure. If we have not made an automatic payment you can make a claim for £25 (either verbally or in writing) within three months of the date of the later of the two occasions. Customers can claim one payment every 12 months.

We cannot guarantee to maintain the minimum pressure during droughts or where the fall in pressure is caused by necessary repair and maintenance work.

## Discoloured water

We ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, no water is supplied that causes loss or damage due to discolouration. If damage is caused as a result of the water supplied we will pay for the actual loss or damage.

## Court claims or judgements

If we issue a county court claim or judgement in error we will pay you £30 for a false claim and £70 for a false judgement.

## Exceptions

We will not make payments if we have failed to reach these standards as a result of severe weather conditions, industrial action by Cambridge Water's employees, or an act/default of a person not representing the company, for example, malicious damage or vandalism.

## Payments due

Generally, where a payment or credit is required under these standards, it will automatically be paid within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within that time, a further £10 becomes due.

If you are eligible for a further payment, you need to claim in writing within three months of the payment becoming payable. We will not make payments if a customer cancels an appointment or a request for information.

However, if the payment or credit is due under our Restoration of Supplies Guarantee or our Notice of Interruption Guarantee and is not made within 20 working days following the date the water is cut off, we will automatically pay you a further £20 (or £50 to business customers).

### Customers in arrears

If you are entitled to a payment but you owe money to Cambridge Water, and the debt has been outstanding for more than six weeks, the payment will be made by crediting your account.

Payments do not affect other legal liabilities or statutory rights.

A payment/credit by Cambridge Water does not constitute admission by us of any other liability other than an obligation to comply with the standards. If you accept a payment or credit it does not affect other liabilities or statutory rights.

### Referrals to Ofwat

Where a dispute arises between a customer and the company regarding a payment, the matter can be referred by either party to Ofwat for determination. For more details please call 01223 70 60 50.

### Natural England

We work closely with Natural England on biodiversity initiatives and on the management of the many Sites of Special Scientific Interest that we own.

We also seek their advice on wildlife issues connected with our capital investment programme, for example when working to avoid adverse impacts on protected species and their habitats.

Tel: 0845 600 3078

Email: [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) Website: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

### Health Protection Agency

We work in partnership with the Health Protection Agency (HPA), which provides us with support and advice to safeguard public health.

We work closely with HPA when an incident is reported to protect and inform the public, especially vulnerable groups.

Anglia Health Protection Team,  
Thetford Community Healthy Living Centre Croxton Road,  
Thetford IP24 1JD

Tel: 01844 2253546

Email: [anglia.hpu@phe.gov.uk](mailto:anglia.hpu@phe.gov.uk)

The Anglia Health Protection Team is part of Public Health England - [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england)

## Key telephone numbers and addresses

### Cambridge Water

Cambridge Water, 90 Fulbourn Road, Cambridge, CB1 9JN

**Website:** [www.cambridge-water.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-water.co.uk)

**E-mail:** [info@cambridge-water.co.uk](mailto:info@cambridge-water.co.uk)

### By phone:

Customer Service: 01223 70 60 50

Leak Line: 0800 316 76 76

Emergency Line: 01223 70 60 50

Difficulty in paying: 0800 587 77 01

### Anglian Water

Anglian Water can be contacted for all issues relating to wastewater.

**Postal address:** Anglian Water Customer Services, PO Box 10642, Harlow CM20 9HA

**Website:** [www.anglianwater.co.uk](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk)

**By phone:** 03457 145 145 (sewerage service queries and emergencies)  
This line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### CCW the voice for water consumers

Customers are represented in the water industry by an independent body called the CCW.

23 Stephenson Street

Birmingham

B2 4BH

Telephone: 0300 034 2222

Email: [enquiries@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ccwater.org.uk)

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