



ccw

The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Household customer complaints about water companies



ccwater.org.uk

1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021



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Introduction

This report provides an independent summary of the complaints that household customers have had to raise with their water company in England and Wales, or with CCW.

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We use it to identify where there might be issues with a company's performance so we can find the cause and work with them to improve things for its customers. It also helps us to identify better performing companies and draw out examples of best practice that we can share with the rest of the industry to improve overall standards of complaint handling.

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We compare and contrast companies' performance primarily using two main measures. The first is the number of written complaints received directly by water companies from their customers. The second is a metric that assesses how well complaints were handled. This measure takes into account complaints that could not be resolved first time by companies – known as escalated Stage 2 complaints – and complaints made about companies to CCW. Each measure allows us to compare the performance of

individual companies and identify trends within the sector to bring about positive changes for customers. Our methodology is explained further in Appendix 1a.

We separate companies when comparing their performance into two distinct groups depending on the services they provide. These are water and sewerage companies – sometimes referred to in this report as WaSCs – and water only companies, sometimes abbreviated to WOCs. WaSCs provide both water and sewerage services to customers, while WOCs only offer water services.



Changes and Challenges

2020-2021

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it some unprecedented challenges for consumers and the water industry throughout the year.

A succession of national and local lockdowns led to many consumers having to change their working arrangements – with a growing number of people working from home or being furloughed. For some this brought with it additional financial pressures. These were reflected in our [Water Matters](#) research, which found that more than one in four households had seen their finances worsen since the pandemic struck.

Water companies faced the challenge of having people spending more time at home and therefore using larger amounts of water. COVID-19 also had a significant impact on the way companies ran their operations as they adjusted to set up remote call-centre working, managed higher than normal levels of absence, and suspended operations that had previously required home visits.

Companies also had to adapt to periods of more extreme weather that affected their operations on the ground. The long, hot dry spell in the spring and summer of 2020 – combined with many people spending more time at home – drove high peaks in demand for water. This intensified the pressure on some parts of the industry's infrastructure and in

some cases led to disruption of consumers' water supplies. Given these interruptions, we might have expected to see a significant increase in complaints about the quality of the water service – particularly those relating to supply pressure. However, this increase did not materialise as companies worked hard to manage the disruption to their network and provide support to affected customers.

There was, however, a significant increase in complaints about wastewater services between September 2020 and January 2021 as companies and customers contended with storms, heavy rainfall and flooding.

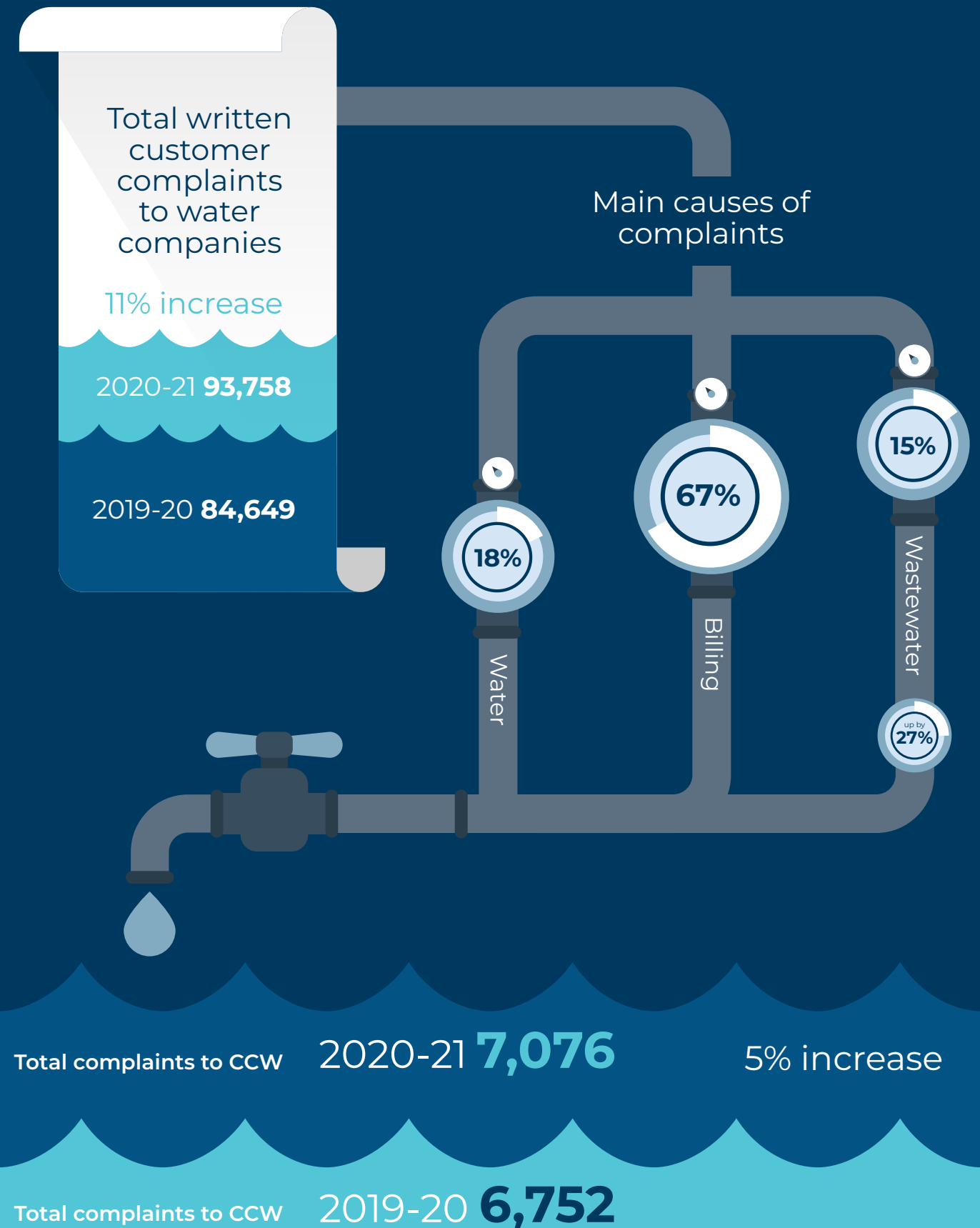
The good and poor performers for both written complaints and complaint handling:



Thames Water
Southern Water
Essex and Suffolk Water



Wessex Water
Hartlepool Water





Complaint performance across the industry

2020-2021

Both written complaints made by customers to companies and those received by CCW increased in 2020-21 compared to the previous year.

Written complaints from customers to the industry rose in 2020-21 by 11 per cent (up from 84,649 to 93,758), making this the third year running where we have seen an increase.

Complaints to CCW increased by 5 per cent in 2020-21 - up from 6,752 to 7,076.

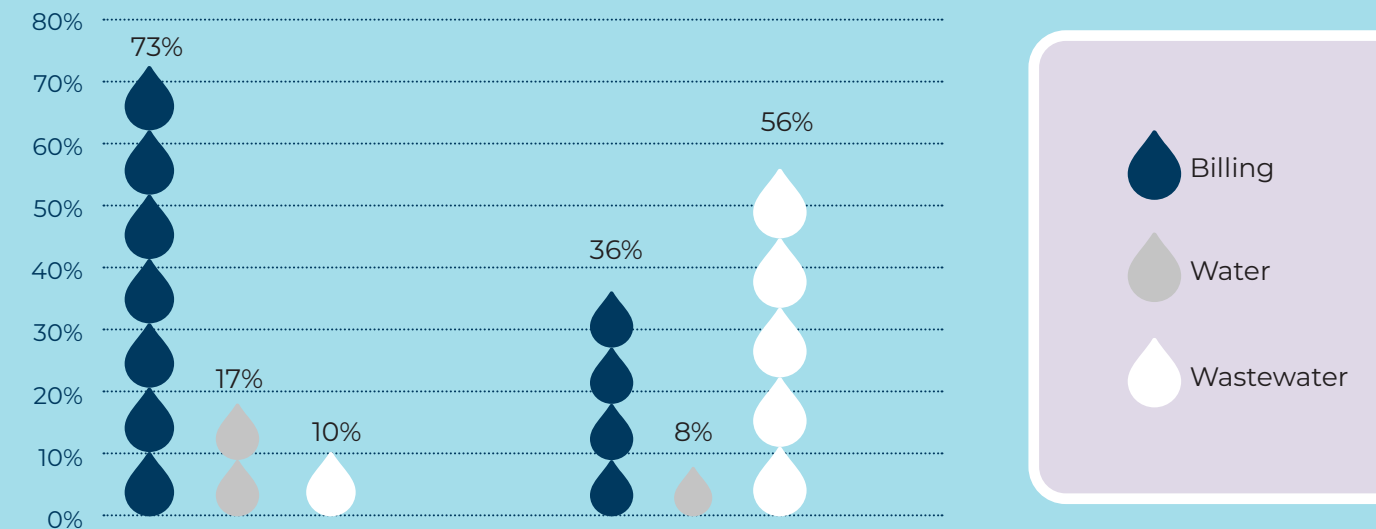
The rising industry totals however do not tell the full story. A further breakdown reveals that almost half (nine) of the water companies saw a decrease in the number of complaints they received from their customers. But the industry's overall performance was skewed by the disproportionately high number of written complaints received by Thames Water. The company accounted for 42 per cent of the industry total of complaints – despite supplying just 19 per cent of the total connections to domestic properties.

It was not alone in reporting an increase with three other water and sewerage companies - Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, Northumbrian Water and Wessex Water, and three water only companies - Essex and Suffolk Water, SES Water and South East Water also reporting rises in excess of 15 per cent. For some of these companies, challenges in maintaining the same level of call centre capacity throughout the pandemic saw customers revert to complaining via written channels.

There were wider concerns with Thames Water's performance, with complaints about the company made to CCW increasing by a third. The rate of complaints to us about Thames Water was almost twice that of the next worst performing company. Yorkshire Water and Anglian Water were the only other companies that generated increased complaints to CCW.

The number of written complaints customers made that companies could not resolve at the first time of asking also rose¹. These escalations increased by more than a quarter with water and sewerage companies largely responsible. Another concern was the steady rise in complaint numbers as the year progressed. Higher complaint numbers, combined with fewer company staff due to Covid-19, led to backlogs that meant the time it took to resolve cases increased while levels of satisfaction fell.

Chart 1: Stage 1 v Stage 2 Complaint proportions for water and sewerage companies - WaSCs



Wastewater complaints made up about 15 per cent of the total that companies received from customers. However, they accounted for more than half of complaints that were not resolved first time and had to be escalated to the second stage. One of the key reasons for this is that these types of complaints – which often involve sewer flooding – tend to be more complex in nature and difficult to resolve quickly. It also goes some way to explaining the difference between water and sewerage companies and water only companies when it comes to resolving complaints first time.

In the most serious cases of poor complaint handling, CCW will carry out a formal investigation². The number of these undertaken in 2020-21 fell from 31 to 23 compared to 2019-20.

The majority of investigations were carried out under the criteria 'Where there are long-standing service failures that the company were aware of but failed to improve'. In most of these cases the company had often been aware of the operational issues for a number of years but no long-term solution was explored or implemented, despite regular contact from customers.

² Investigations are our most serious involvement in complaints and are instigated under the following criteria:

- When the water company procedure has been exhausted and issues remain that the customer has raised and should be addressed by the supplier;
- Where there are long-standing service failures that the water company was aware of but failed to action. This includes a supplier not responding to repeated points the customer is raising unless it falls under an exemption; or
- Where the water company has not correctly escalated a complaint in line with its complaints procedure and CCW would have investigated it if it had done so.

¹ If complaints are not resolved at the initial stage of a company's complaints process (Stage 1), these become escalated complaints within the company (Stage 2).



Main causes of customer dissatisfaction

Issues with billing made up the bulk of customers' complaints and were largely responsible for the rise in both written complaints to companies and those received by CCW. These include customers disputing how much water they used, concerns over estimated bills and the way in which water companies had gone about recovering debt.

A number of factors contributed to the increase in billing complaints. Firstly, household water consumption increased in the year as a growing number of people had to work from home during lockdown periods. The hotter and drier than average spring and summer also fuelled higher consumption. The greater use of water resulted in higher than normal bills for metered customers at a time when a growing number of households were feeling the financial effects of Covid-19³.

The suspension of some water company operations deemed as not essential - such as meter reading - due to Covid-19 restrictions

also created additional issues. Companies suspended debt recovery activity in the first half of the year in recognition of the increased risk of financial vulnerability for consumers. However, the return to normal recovery procedures later in the year brought with it a rise in billing complaints.

Through our own best practice guidance we have advised companies on the steps they can take to help reduce billing complaints. This includes proactively contacting customers before they receive a higher than normal bill to discuss what may be causing the increase. Some companies told CCW they were following this guidance but we want the whole industry to do so.

Almost a third of billing complaints raised with CCW related to customers disputing the volume of water being charged for – up 17 per cent on the previous year. Debt recovery was the next biggest cause of billing complaints, although the rise was relatively small given the wider economic climate.

³. 27% of respondents to our Water Matters survey stated that their household finances had worsened in 2020-21.



Case Study 1

BILLING

Mr B had a water meter fitted in 2018 and did not question his water bill. However, after staying with family during the early part of the COVID-19 lockdown he was shocked to find that his water bill had massively increased.

He contacted his water company and was told that the meter had been fitted incorrectly and he had been paying for the water used by a family of four, not just during lockdown, but since the meter was first fitted. The meter was refitted correctly and Mr B was refunded almost £1,000.

Few service failures from a water company are more disruptive and devastating for customers than sewer flooding, particularly when the aftermath is not handled well. Wastewater complaints to companies were 27 per cent higher than in 2019-20 – continuing a worrying rising trend over recent years. Almost half of wastewater complaints handled by CCW during the year involved internal or external sewer flooding. Severe wet weather during the autumn and early winter made it challenging for some water companies to protect homes from flooding. However, companies have a responsibility to ensure their sewer networks are robust enough to deal with our more volatile climate so customers do not live in fear of being flooded.

CCW is acutely aware of these challenges and in April 2021 launched a campaign focused on ending the misery caused to thousands of customers by sewer flooding. In particular, we intend to work with the industry to improve the standards of support and compensation for customers who find themselves repeatedly flooded. Sharing the good practice that already exists in some parts of the industry will be key to achieving this.



Case Study 2

WASTEWATER

Mrs C suffered from decades of raw sewage flooding her garden every time there was heavy rain, causing her to worry whenever the weather changed. Also, Mrs C was expected to contact her water company every time she experienced flooding.

This was not acceptable, and did little to alleviate her anxiety. CCW worked with the customer to get the water and sewerage company to take remedial action to protect the garden and the surrounding area against future flooding.

In contrast, there was a fall in the number of complaints about the water service people received. This category covers everything from repairs to pipework and low pressure to supply interruptions. Although higher water consumption contributed to an increase in billing complaint rates, the industry as a whole did not see a similar spike for supply issues. In fact, complaints to CCW relating to low pressure fell by 13 per cent, evidencing the work companies did in managing their supply networks during the pandemic. Disputes over who was responsible for repairing pipework was the only significant area to see a rise in complaints to CCW - increasing by 22 per cent.

In addition to billing and operational complaints, Covid-19 may have been a factor in the significant increase in complaints to CCW about administration issues. This category covers issues including customers being unable to make contact with or get a response from their water company. This was a common theme during the pandemic as companies were required to adapt their working arrangements. The inability to contact companies via real-time channels may also have played a part in increasing written complaints to companies, as customers struggled to get in touch via the telephone.



Chart 2: Written complaints to companies - breakdown by category

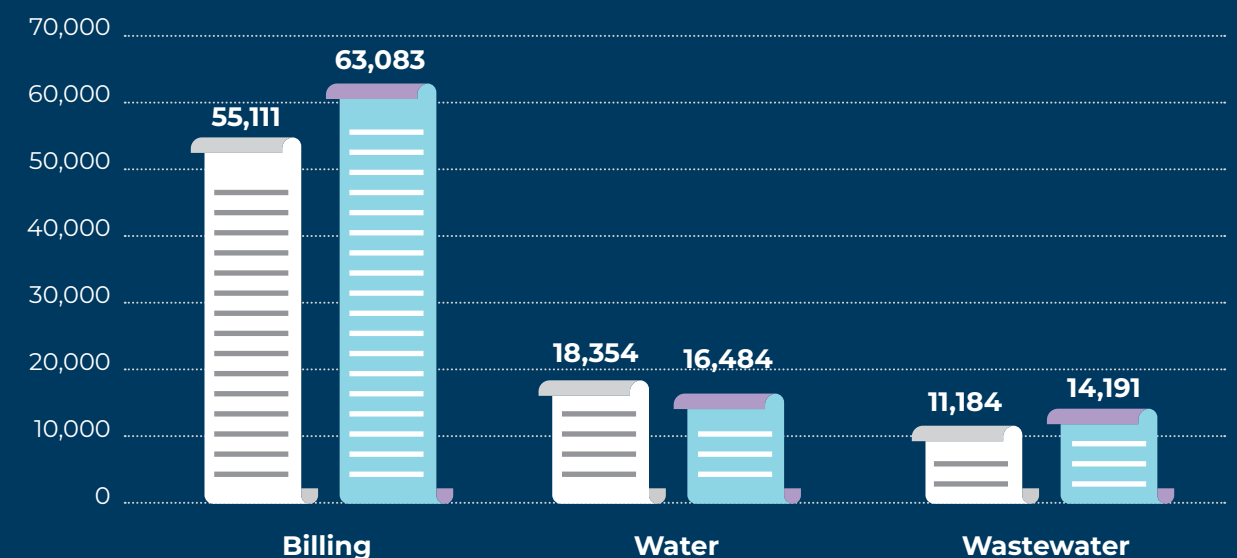
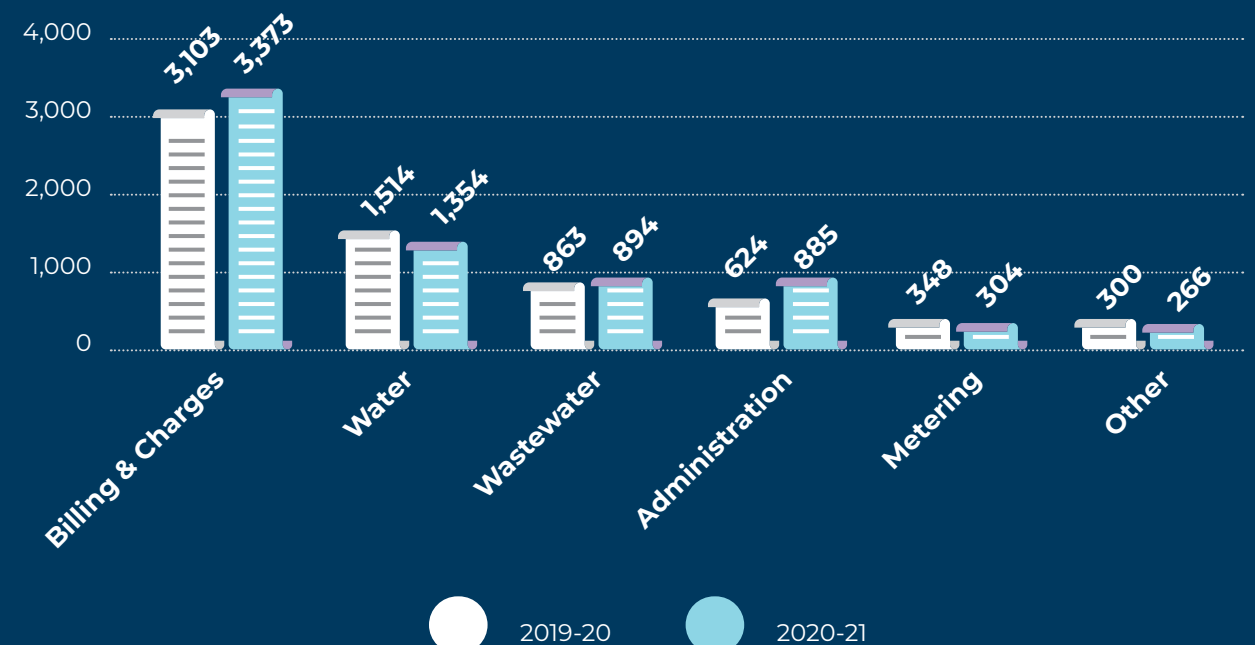


Chart 3: Complaints to CCW breakdown by category



2019-20

2020-21





Company performance in focus

2020-2021

We examine the performance of individual water companies by comparing them with others that provide the same main services.

That means they split into two main groups – water and sewerage companies (WaSCs) and water only companies (WOCs). It is important to make this distinction as WaSCs provide additional services and so are more likely to generate higher complaint numbers.

Our comparison takes into account two distinct measures of performance – the written complaints received by companies from customers and our new complaint handling metric. We developed this second measure

to provide a more holistic picture of how well companies are handling complaints. It uses the information we hold on complaints that are not resolved first time by companies and those that customers bring to CCW for resolution. We have detailed the individual complaint handling calculations for companies in Appendix 1b.

This section provides additional commentary on the performance of selected companies that showed good or poor performance in both measures. It is possible for companies to have high levels of written complaints while being good at handling them.

Water and sewerage companies - WaSCs

Table 1 shows the performance of each WaSC in terms of the written complaints they received in 2020-21 and our complaint handling measure. The median number of complaints per 10,000 connections for WaSCs is 20.5.

Company	Written complaints per 10,000 connections	Change on 2019-20	Complaint handling ⁴
Anglian Water	23.9	-3%	Worse than average
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	16.9	16%	Worse than average
Hafren Dyfrdwy	20.2	-41%	Poor
Northumbrian Water	40.1	28%	Good
Severn Trent Water	22.0	-2%	Worse than average
South West Water ⁵	16.5	-4%	Worse than average
Southern Water	28.8	3%	Poor
Thames Water	67.9	17%	Poor
United Utilities	20.5	13%	Good
Wessex Water	14.2	21%	Good
Yorkshire Water	18.6	6%	Worse than average



Companies with good performance

Wessex Water was the only water and sewerage company to achieve good performance in both written complaints and complaint handling – building on its strong showing in previous years. The company has empowered its staff to resolve customer complaints through its ‘Going the Extra Mile’ initiative. That has helped the company to reduce complaints to the lowest level among all the water and sewerage companies. More complaints are resolved effectively - with positive outcomes for customers - without the need to escalate them either internally or to CCW. Wessex Water has shared its approach with the rest of the industry and we urge other companies to incorporate this good practice into their own operations.

⁴ The calculation detailing the Complaint Handling ranking is shown in Appendix 1b
⁵ South West Water and Bournemouth Water performance is reported as a single company for the first time in 2020-21



Companies with bad performance

Thames Water had the highest level of written complaints among water and sewerage companies - 69 per cent higher than the next worst performer. The company accounted for 42 per cent of the written complaints the industry received, while supplying only 19 per cent of the connections across England and Wales. This disproportionate share of overall complaints has been steadily rising since 2017-18. A similar proportion of the complaints CCW receives can also be attributed to Thames Water.

Its performance was among the worst in every category and it was a statistical outlier⁶ for complaints relating to both billing and water services.

Thames Water has shown a firm commitment to try and turn around its performance, investing in a number of ways to address the issue with the support of CCW. We have worked with the company to help clear a large backlog of complaints by undertaking case reviews and sharing best practice in complaint resolution.

Southern Water received the third highest number of written complaints per 10,000 connections of all water and sewerage companies. Billing issues made up the bulk of its complaints but it also had the highest level of wastewater complaints in the industry. Complaints of this nature rose by 72 per cent compared to 2019-20. The company also had the highest proportion of complaints that were not resolved at the first time of asking and had to be escalated to the second stage. However the company discovered procedural issues later in the year that had caused a problem with identifying and recording these escalated complaints. It has since taken steps to address these issues which it believes will go some way to addressing the high numbers, and has pledged to reduce stage 2 escalation rates by 20 per cent this year.

More positively the company did see complaints about its water service fall by 37 per cent to the lowest level among all the water and sewerage companies. CCW will continue to work with the company to identify and resolve the underlying causes of complaints and improve the way it manages its processes.

⁶ Outliers are identified as values falling greater than 1.5 times the interquartile range (IQR) outside the upper and lower quartiles, i.e. greater than Q3 + 1.5*IQR or less than Q1 – 1.5*IQR.

Water only companies - WOCs

Table 2 shows the performance of each WOC in terms of written complaints received from its customers and complaint handling. It is possible to have high levels of complaints however be good at handling them. The median number of written complaints per 10,000 connections for WOCs is 15.7.

Table 2: Complaint performance 2020-21 – WOCs

Company	Written complaints per 10,000 connections	Change on 2019-20	Complaint handling
Affinity Water	12.4	-20%	Poor
Bristol Water	18.0	5%	Worse than average
Cambridge Water	25.7	-6%	Better than average
Essex & Suffolk Water	43.1	36%	Poor
Hartlepool Water	5.8	-72%	Good
Portsmouth Water	10.8	-1%	Better than average
SES Water	15.7	38%	Worse than average
South East Water	17.8	36%	Poor
South Staffs Water	15.3	-9%	Worse than average



Companies with good performance

Hartlepool Water was the only water only company that achieved good performance in both measures for 2020-21. Written complaints from its customers fell by 72 per cent and it managed to resolve all of those it received at the first opportunity. CCW did not receive any complaints from its customers. Hartlepool Water is a small company that has been able to keep a close eye on complaints and respond quickly to any local disruption. It has also invested to resolve previous problems that emerged from its operations. The company's performance is deserving of praise in what marks the last year of its individual performance being assessed in our report. From April 2021, the company's performance will be incorporated with that of its owner, Anglian Water.



Poor performing companies

Essex and Suffolk Water is the only water only company that was rated poor both for the written complaints it received and its complaint handling. As part of Northumbrian Water Limited, its performance in written complaints was largely due to operational challenges caused by implementing changes to its systems at the same time COVID-19 started to affect the country. This resulted in high levels of billing and water complaints. Compared to other water only companies it reported high levels of complaints that were not resolved first time and had to be escalated. It also had higher than average levels of complaints to CCW, with the proportion of billing disputes above the average for water only companies.



Improving the complaint journey for customers

2020-2021

CCW and the wider water industry recognises that there is a need to improve the complaint journey for customers.

That's why we have been working with the sector to reduce the effort customers have to put into complaints and shorten the time it takes to resolve them – without compromising high levels of service.

Over the coming year we are also consulting with companies on allowing customers access to the Water Redress Scheme (WATRS) sooner in certain circumstances. WATRS is a free for the customer, independent adjudication service that customers can turn to if they remain unhappy after we've tried to resolve their dispute with a water company. We're looking to reduce the number of stages a consumer must go through before accessing this binding resolution.

As a result of all of this work, we expect to see consumer satisfaction with companies' and CCW's complaint handling increase over the next 12 months.

Our work with the industry has already led to some positive changes:

- From next year, companies will report on all complaints, regardless of the channel – giving a much more complete picture of complaints within the water industry;
- Most companies have committed to reduce the complaint response time from the current published standard of 10 working days down to five by 2025. Many of these companies introduced this commitment in 2021
- CCW has piloted an improved first-point-of-contact process. This looked at giving our frontline team the skills to offer advice and guidance to consumers at the first point of contact. The pilot proved successful, allowing us to help consumers within 48 hours. We'll be expanding this work further throughout the year ahead.



Conclusion and next steps

COVID-19 provided significant challenges for many consumers and for water companies. In the months ahead, CCW will continue to monitor complaint performance closely. This will help us to determine just how much the changes we saw in 2020-21 were a unique set of results influenced heavily by the pandemic or part of a sustained trend.

Both written complaints made by customers to companies and the complaints CCW received rose compared to the previous year. However much of this can be traced to the poor performance of a small number of companies. The most significant of these was Thames Water.

Some of the increase in written complaints to the industry may be attributed to the impact COVID-19 had on companies' call centre operations and working arrangements. Customers faced some difficulties getting through to their company on the phone, forcing them to put their concerns in writing.

Disputes over bills continued to cause customers the most frustration with the majority of companies seeing an increase in complaints on this issue. While the nature of some billing complaints might have changed during the pandemic, many of the root causes remained the same.

Customers expect their bills to accurately reflect how much water they use and for companies to show empathy and understanding when trying to recover debt. CCW has provided a template for companies to reduce billing complaints through its best practice guide '[Getting the measure of billing and debt complaints](#)'. Companies should revisit our advice which includes building stronger relationships with customers, taking more frequent meter readings and gaining a better understanding of each individual bill-payer's unique circumstances. Helping customers understand why their water use might have risen significantly before they receive their bill is also a good proactive step.

Our [independent review of water affordability](#) emphasised the importance of companies not only communicating with their customers in a clear and accessible way but also developing a much better understanding of their needs. One of the ways we'll be helping the industry achieve this is through developing a framework to help companies understand their local and regional demographics, who might need help and how best to communicate with them.

We are also concerned to see an increase in the number of complaints about wastewater services. There are few more devastating service failures than sewer flooding which is why it is imperative the industry ensures its infrastructure is robust enough to deal with the pressures posed by our more volatile climate and growing population.

We want to see victims of repeat sewer flooding receive better care, compensation and support on the ground which is why CCW has launched a campaign focused on achieving this. In the coming months the industry has the opportunity to show it shares our ambition by embracing the changes we will be calling on companies to make.

As we cast our eye over individual company performance, Wessex Water and Hartlepool Water have demonstrated that complaint levels can be kept low and problems resolved at the first time of asking. This should be the level of performance that all companies aspire to.

Thames Water and Southern Water have the most work to do to reach that standard. They were the only two water and sewerage companies to receive a poor rating on both of our main performance measures. CCW will continue to work with both companies and we want to see the early signs of improvement sustained and further improvements in the coming year. Thames Water has already shown a clear commitment to reduce complaints by 25 per cent this year.

We will also be working with Essex and Suffolk Water, which was the only water only company to be rated poor on both our measures.

Despite the mixed performance across the industry, we believe our report can provide valuable insights for all companies to learn and improve. More opportunities will also continue to be provided through CCW's monthly Complaints Forums. These give companies the chance to share their experiences, help improve outcomes for people and drive consistency across the water industry. CCW also holds regular complaints surgeries where companies can showcase the good work they are doing and enable others to learn from best practice in complaint handling.

Experience tells us that companies that invest in understanding the root causes of complaints have more chance of preventing them from happening. This should be backed up by well-trained staff that are empowered to make decisions and get a good outcome for the customer – without the need for escalation.

Appendix 1a: Our methodology

Normalising complaints

To allow us to compare companies of different sizes our complaint measures factor in the number of water and wastewater connections served by each company. The measure we use to do this is ‘complaints per 10,000 connections’. For example:

Company A	
Total written complaints	600
<hr/>	
Total connections	4,000,000
<hr/>	
Written complaints per 10,000 connections	= 600/4,000,000 x 10,000 = 1.5

Comparative performance

Where we compare the performance of individual companies we do so within their respective segments as either Water and Sewerage Companies (WaSCs) or Water Only Companies (WOCs).

Our measures

We assess company complaint performance based upon two measures designed to reflect the underlying service provided to customers and the ability of companies to resolve customer complaints first time. For the former we use written complaints (per 10,000 connections) in line with previous reports.

This is assessed based on quartiles where quartile 1 is the best performing quartile. The colour coding is as follows:

Table A1

Quartile	Written complaint rank
1	Good
2	Above average
3	Below Average
4	Poor

The complaints handling metric is a composite of the percentage of escalated Stage 2 written complaints (compared to total written complaints) received by companies and complaints made about companies to CCW per 10,000 connections. Both components are based on the quartile performance within WaSC and WOC bandings where Quartile 1 is the best performing quartile. Each quartile is then scored as follows.

Quartile 1: 1

Quartile 2: 2

Quartile 3: 3

Quartile 4: 4

The respective scores for Stage 2 written complaints and Complaints made about companies to CCW for each company are then added together to determine their respective complaint handling score. Each company is then assigned an overall complaint handling ranking in accordance with the following criteria:

Table A2

Total Score	Complaint handling rank
2	Good
3-4	Above average
4-6	Below Average
7-8	Poor

Appendix 1b - Complaints handling metric calculation

Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs)

Company	Stage 2	Score	Complaints to CCW	Score	Composite Score
Anglian Water	5.5%	3	1.1	2	5
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	4.2%	2	2.3	3	5
Hafren Dyfrdwy	7.0%	3	2.4	4	7
Northumbrian Water	4.1%	1	0.7	1	2
Severn Trent Water	7.5%	4	1.8	2	6
Southern Water	26.7%	4	2.8	4	8
South West Water	4.2%	2	1.9	3	5
Thames Water	9.8%	4	5.1	4	8
United Utilities	3.1%	1	1.1	1	2
Wessex Water	3.2%	1	0.3	1	2
Yorkshire Water	5.9%	3	2.3	3	6
Median	5.5%		1.9		
Best performing quartile	4.2%		1.1		
Worst performing quartile	7.2%		2.4		

Water Only companies (WOCs)

Company	Stage 2	Score	Complaints to CCW	Score	Composite Score
Affinity Water	3.5%	3	1.4	4	7
Bristol Water	4.9%	4	0.4	2	6
Cambridge Water	2.2%	2	0.8	2	4
Essex & Suffolk Water	3.9%	4	1.1	3	7
Hartlepool Water	0.0%	1	0.0	1	2
Portsmouth Water	3.3%	2	0.2	1	3
SES Water	0.5%	1	1.6	4	5
South East Water	7.6%	4	1.1	3	7
South Staffs Water	3.7%	3	1.0	3	6
Median	3.5%		1.0		
Best performing quartile	2.2%		0.4		
Worst performing quartile	3.9%		1.1		



Appendix 2a - Written complaints to Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) from household customers 2016/17 to 2020/21

Company	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	% difference to 2019/20	5 year trend
Anglian Water	8,606	6,382	6,313	7,280	7,039	-3.3	
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	5,430	3,148	2,720	2,143	2,501	16.7	
Hafren Dyfrdwy	135	180	458	340	200	-41.2	
Northumbrian Water	2902	2534	4,168	3,878	4,983	28.5	
Severn Trent Water	11,985	9,921	11,335	9,574	9,409	-1.7	
Southern Water	7,881	6,259	4,544	5,594	5,823	4.1	
South West Water*	2,920	2,447	2,001	1,692	1,649	-2.5	
Thames Water	17,809	17,039	21,108	33,727	39,530	17.2	
United Utilities	7,441	6,755	7,007	5,942	6,759	13.7	
Wessex Water	1,767	1,787	1,889	1,467	1,778	21.2	
Yorkshire Water	5,748	3,897	3,623	4,089	4,348	6.3	
Total	72,624	60,349	65,166	75,726	84,019	11.0	

*South West Water has reported combined complaints numbers with Bournemouth Water in 2020-21, thus, the previous years' data has been combined to ensure like to like comparison.

Appendix 2b - Written complaints to Water Only companies (WOCs) from household customers 2016/17 to 2020/21

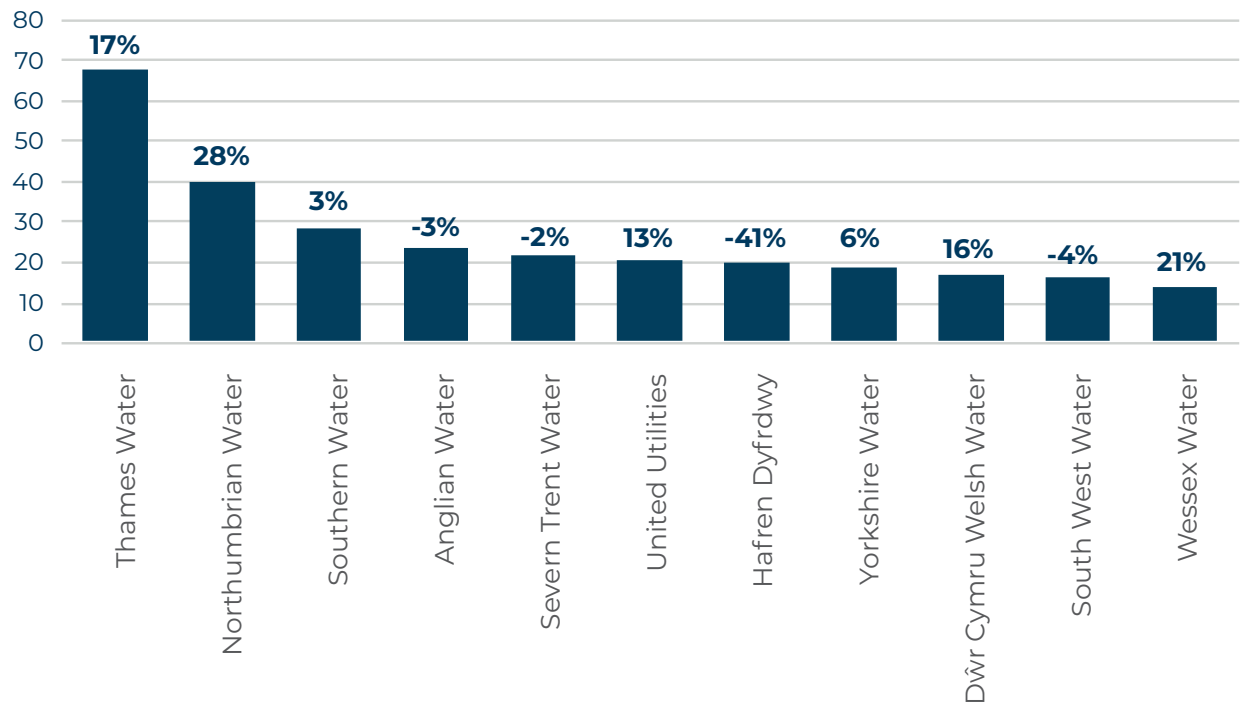
Company	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	% difference to 2019/20	5 year trend
Affinity Water	3,879	2,743	2,149	2,260	1,825	-19.2	
Bristol Water	1,028	1,560	1,328	880	929	5.5	
Cambridge Water	460	286	207	376	357	-5.1	
Essex & Suffolk Water	1,826	1,356	2,781	2,448	3,351	36.9	
Hartlepool Water	136	92	90	89	25	-71.9	
Portsmouth Water	423	310	312	334	331	-0.9	
SES Water	598	567	331	319	444	39.2	
South East Water	1,400	1,476	1,823	1,271	1,614	27.0	
South Staffordshire Water	924	585	502	946	863	-8.8	
Total	10,674	8,975	9,523	8,923	9,739	9.1	

Appendix 3a - Written complaints to Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) from household customers per category and 10,000 connections in 2020/21

Total Household connections	Total Complaints	Per 10,000 Connections	Company	Billing & Charges		Water Supply		Sewerage Service	
					%	Number	%	Number	%
2941718	7,039	23.9	Anglian Water	5,127	72.8	750	10.7	1,162	16.5
1477758	2,501	16.9	Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	1,803	72.1	452	18.1	246	9.8
99026	200	20.2	Hafren Dyfrdwy	138	69.0	54	27.0	8	4.0
1241981	4,983	40.1	Northumbrian Water	3,435	68.9	1,008	20.2	540	10.8
4281005	9,409	22.0	Severn Trent Water	4,693	49.9	2,101	22.3	2,615	27.8
2023725	5,823	28.8	Southern Water	3,757	64.5	283	4.9	1,783	30.6
997474	1,649	16.5	South West Water	991	60.1	331	20.1	327	19.8
5818072	39,530	67.9	Thames Water	28,989	73.3	5,616	14.2	4,925	12.5
3299363	6,759	20.5	United Utilities	4,466	66.1	1,430	21.2	863	12.8
1250148	1,778	14.2	Wessex Water	919	51.7	448	25.2	411	23.1
2332371	4,348	18.6	Yorkshire Water	2,131	49.0	920	21.2	1,297	29.8
25762641	84,019	32.6	Total / Average	56,449	67.2	13,393	15.9	14,177	16.9

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written complaints to WaSCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

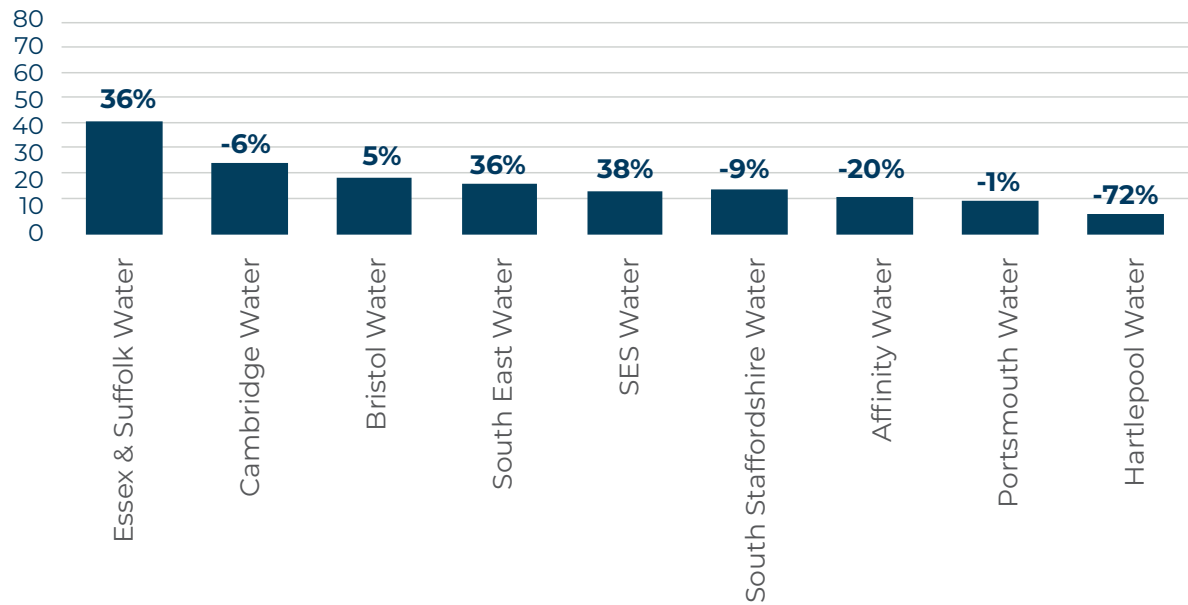


Appendix 3b - Written complaints to Water Only companies (WOCs) from household customers per category and 10,000 connections in 2020/21

Total Household connections	Total Complaints	Per 10,000 Connections	Company	Billing & Charges		Water Supply		Sewerage Service	
					%	Number	%	Number	%
1466811	1,825	12.4	Affinity Water	975	53.4	850	46.6		
514767	929	18.0	Bristol Water	394	42.4	535	57.6		
138951	357	25.7	Cambridge Water	292	81.8	65	18.2		
778358	3,351	43.1	Essex & Suffolk Water	2,648	79.0	689	20.6	14	0.4
43135	25	5.8	Hartlepool Water	22	88.0	3	12.0		
306851	331	10.8	Portsmouth Water	189	57.1	142	42.9		
283795	444	15.6	SES Water	304	68.5	140	31.5		
908,055	1,614	17.8	South East Water	1,099	68.1	515	31.9		
565062	863	15.3	South Staffordshire Water	711	82.4	152	17.6		
5005785	9,739	19.5	Total / Average	6,634	68.1	3,091	31.7	14	0.1

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written complaints to WOCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

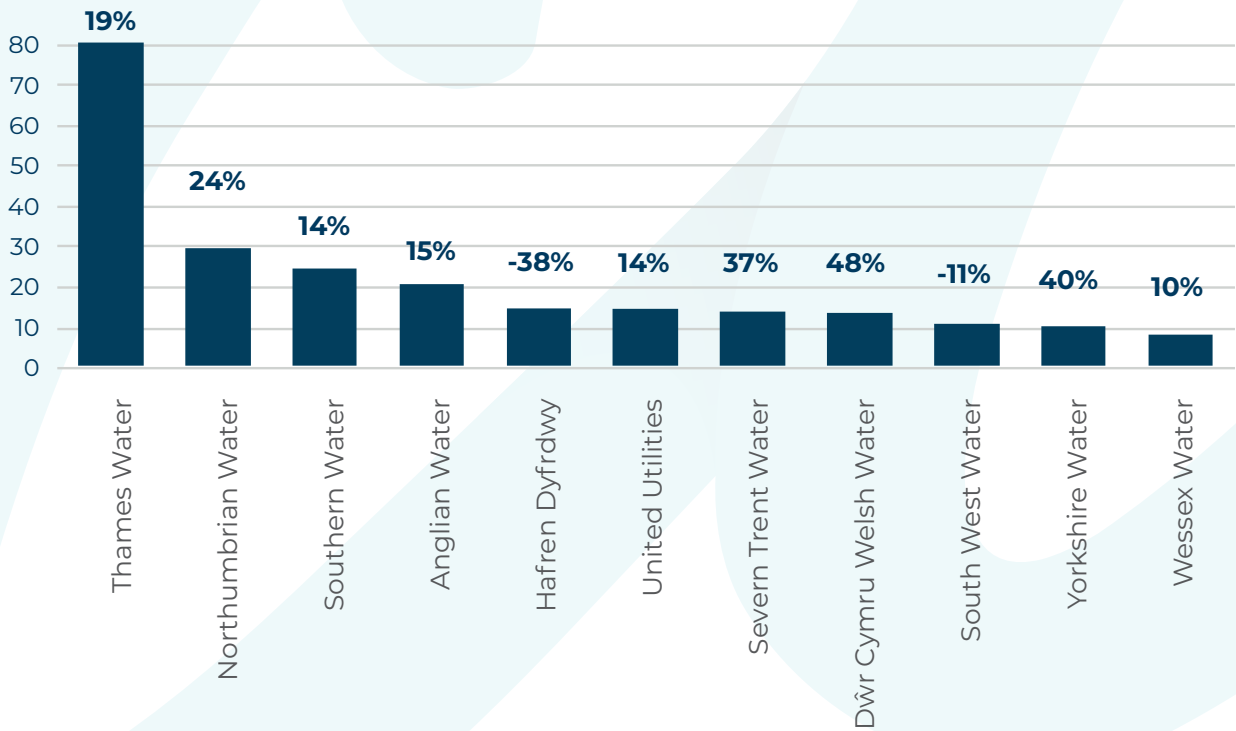


Appendix 4a - Written complaints from household customers received by Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) in 2020/21

Billed Properties	Billing and Charges complaints			Company	Complaints received by companies			
					First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
2,525,439	5,127	20.3	72.8	Anglian Water	4,860	94.8	267	5.2
1,301,294	1,803	13.9	72.1	Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	1,730	96.0	73	4.0
94,235	138	14.6	69.0	Hafren Dyfrdwy	134	97.1	4	2.9
1,190,256	3,435	28.9	68.9	Northumbrian Water	3,344	97.4	91	2.6
3,423,270	4,693	13.7	49.9	Severn Trent Water	4,400	93.8	293	6.2
1,549,634	3,757	24.2	64.5	Southern Water	2,861	76.2	896	23.8
989,065	991	10.0	60.1	South West Water	969	97.8	22	2.2
3,633,241	28,989	79.8	73.3	Thames Water	26,187	90.3	2802	9.7
3,166,903	4,466	14.1	66.1	United Utilities	4,332	97.0	134	3.0
1,229,674	919	7.5	51.7	Wessex Water	909	98.9	10	1.1
2,123,337	2,131	10.0	49.0	Yorkshire Water	2,077	97.5	54	2.5
21,226,348	56,449	26.6	67.2	Total / Average	51,803	91.8	4,646	8.2

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written Billing and Charges complaints to WaSCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

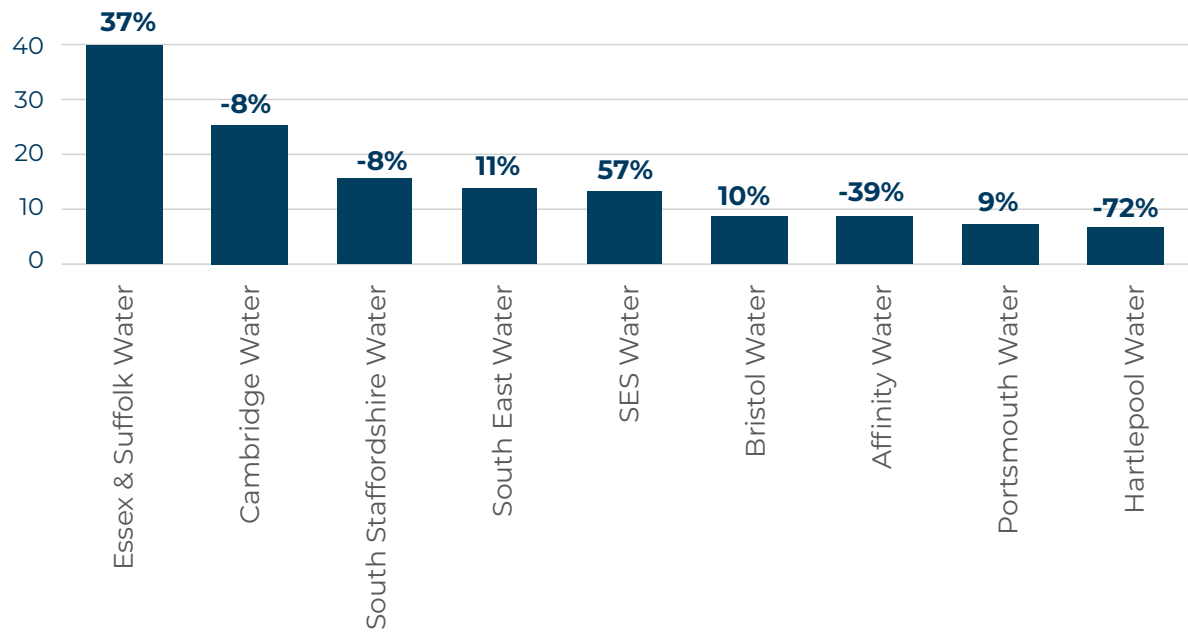


Appendix 4b - Written complaints from household customers received by Water Only companies (WOCs) in 2020/21

					Complaints received by companies			
Billed Properties	Billing and Charges complaints			Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
1,405,628	975	6.9	53.4	Affinity Water	946	97.0	29	3.0
506,095	394	7.8	42.4	Bristol Water	390	99.0	4	1.0
134,855	292	21.7	81.8	Cambridge Water	289	99.0	3	1.0
753,768	2,648	35.1	79.0	Essex & Suffolk Water	2,567	96.9	81	3.1
41,354	22	5.3	88.0	Hartlepool Water	22	100.0	0	0.0
299,816	189	6.3	57.1	Portsmouth Water	181	95.8	8	4.2
273,073	304	11.1	68.5	SES Water	303	99.7	1	0.3
887,071	1,099	12.4	68.1	South East Water	1,017	92.5	82	7.5
539,018	711	13.2	82.4	South Staffordshire Water	686	96.5	25	3.5
4,840,678	6,634	13.7	68.1	Total / Average	6,401	96.5	233	3.5

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written Billing and Charges complaints to WOCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

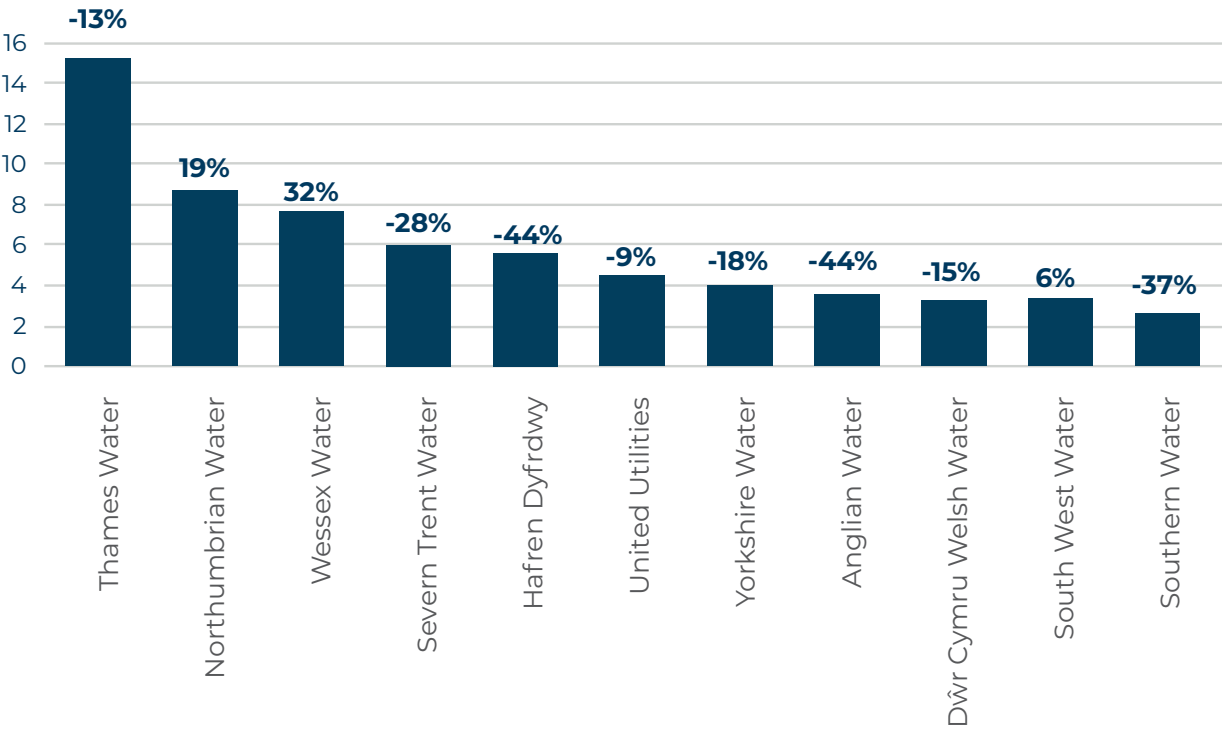


Appendix 5a - Written complaints from household customers received by Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) in 2020/21

				Complaints received by companies				
Connected Properties Water	Water Supply Complaints			Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
2,072,941	750	3.6	10.7	Anglian Water	701	93.5	49	6.5
1,342,875	452	3.4	18.1	Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	425	94.0	27	6.0
97,456	54	5.5	27.0	Hafren Dyfrdwy	46	85.2	8	14.8
1,171,173	1,008	8.6	20.2	Northumbrian Water	950	94.2	58	5.8
3,501,550	2,101	6.0	22.3	Severn Trent Water	1,931	91.9	170	8.1
1,078,877	283	2.6	4.9	Southern Water	236	83.4	47	16.6
992,397	331	3.3	20.1	South West Water	318	96.1	13	3.9
3,741,592	5,616	15.0	14.2	Thames Water	5,135	91.4	481	8.6
3,214,569	1,430	4.4	21.2	United Utilities	1,396	97.6	34	2.4
580,082	448	7.7	25.2	Wessex Water	424	94.6	24	5.4
2,207,849	920	4.2	21.2	Yorkshire Water	852	92.6	68	7.4
20,001,361	13,393	6.7	15.9	Total / Average	12,414	92.7	979	7.3

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written Water Supply complaints to WaSCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

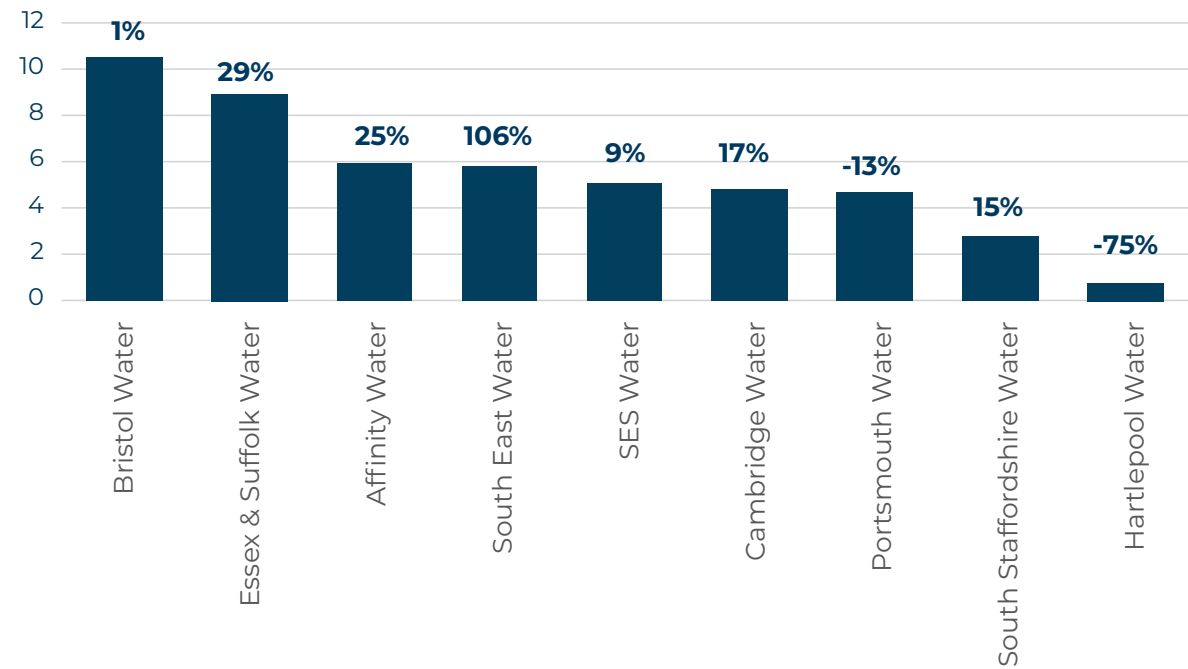


Appendix 5b - Written complaints from household customers received by Water Only companies (WOCs) in 2020/21

					Complaints received by companies			
Connected Properties Water	Water Supply Complaints			Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
1,466,811	850	5.8	46.6	Affinity Water	815	95.9	35	4.1
514,767	535	10.4	57.6	Bristol Water	493	92.1	42	7.9
138,951	65	4.7	18.2	Cambridge Water	60	92.3	5	7.7
778,358	689	8.9	20.6	Essex & Suffolk Water	640	92.9	49	7.1
43,135	3	0.7	12.0	Hartlepool Water	3	100.0	0	0.0
306,851	142	4.6	42.9	Portsmouth Water	139	97.9	3	2.1
283,553	140	4.9	31.5	SES Water	139	99.3	1	0.7
908,055	515	5.7	31.9	South East Water	474	92.0	41	8.0
565,062	152	2.7	17.6	South Staffordshire Water	145	95.4	7	4.6
5,005,543	3,091	6.2	31.7	Total / Average	2,908	94.1	183	5.9

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written Water Supply complaints to WOCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

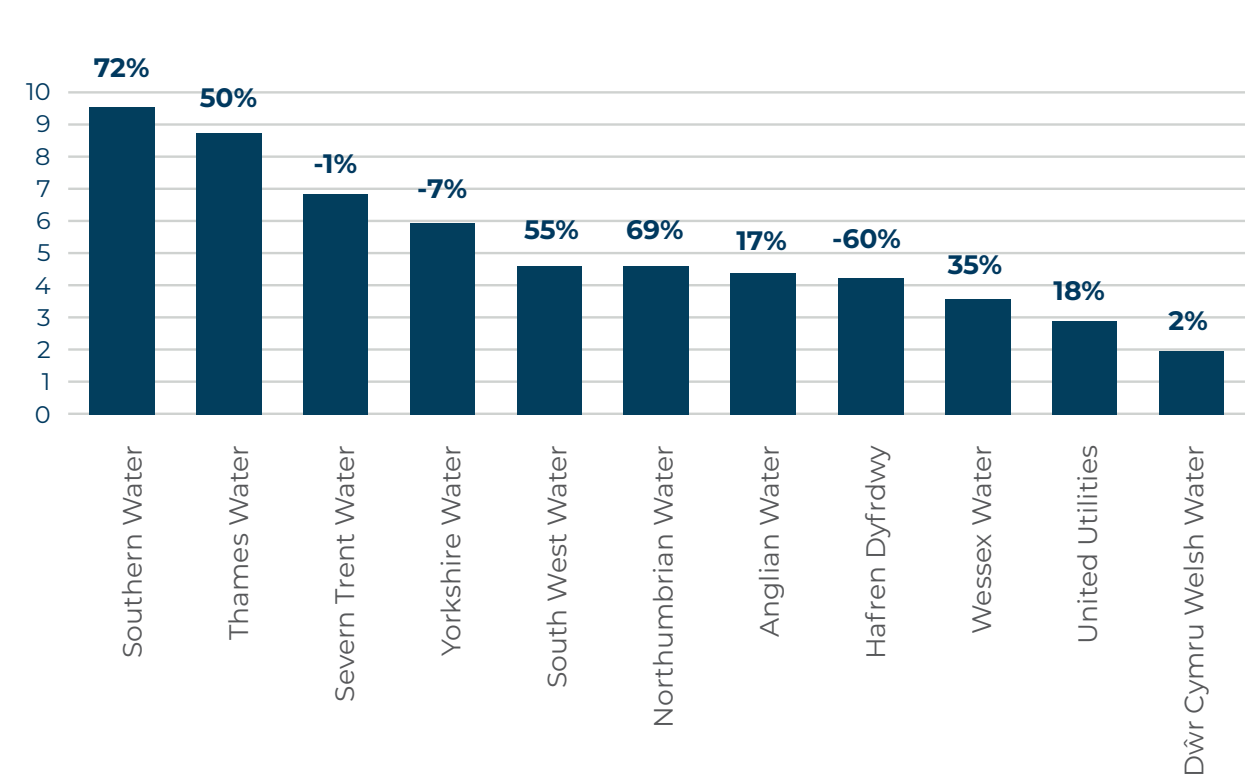


Appendix 6a - Written complaints from household customers received by Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) in 2020/21

				Complaints received by companies				
Connected Properties Wastewater	Sewerage Service Complaints			Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
2,735,414	1,162	4.2	16.5	Anglian Water	1,090	93.8	72	6.2
1,394,274	246	1.8	9.8	Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	240	97.6	6	2.4
19,299	8	4.1	4.0	Hafren Dyfrdwy	6	75.0	2	25.0
1,228,932	540	4.4	10.8	Northumbrian Water	486	90.0	54	10.0
3,954,663	2,615	6.6	27.8	Severn Trent Water	2,376	90.9	239	9.1
1,927,379	1,783	9.3	30.6	Southern Water	1,171	65.7	612	34.3
728,094	327	4.5	19.8	South West Water	292	89.3	35	10.7
5,765,952	4,925	8.5	12.5	Thames Water	4,325	87.8	600	12.2
3,221,875	863	2.7	12.8	United Utilities	824	95.5	39	4.5
1,208,154	411	3.4	23.1	Wessex Water	388	94.4	23	5.6
2,215,814	1,297	5.9	29.8	Yorkshire Water	1,161	89.5	136	10.5
24,399,850	14,177	5.8	16.9	Total / Average	12,359	87.2	1,818	12.8

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Written Sewerage complaints to WaSCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year



Appendix 6b - Written sewerage complaints from household customers received by Water Only companies (WOCs) in 2020/21

					Complaints received by companies			
Connected Properties Water	Water Supply Complaints			Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
	Complaints	per 10,000 connections	% of total complaints		Number	%	Number	%
0	14	N/A	0.4	Essex & Suffolk Water	13	92.9	1	7.1
0	14	N/A	0.1	Total / Average	13	92.9	1	7.1

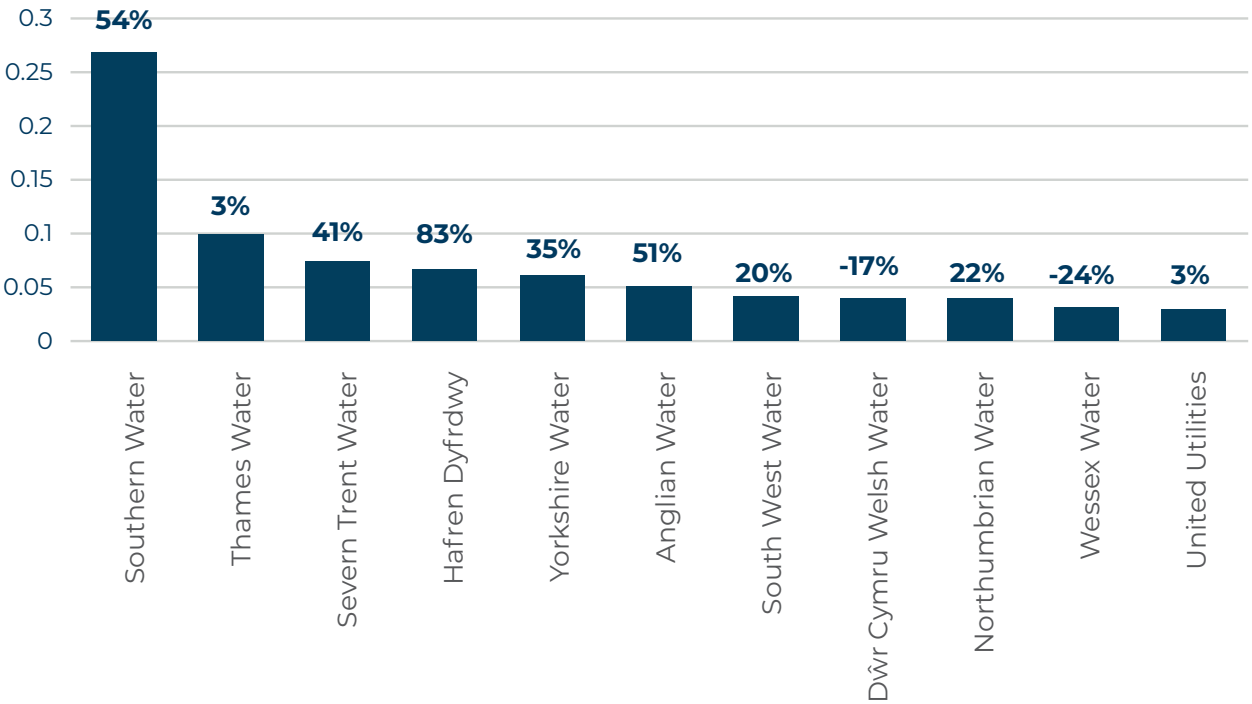
Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

Appendix 7a - Overview of complaints to Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) from household customers escalated (customers write more than once) in 2020/21

			Complaints received by companies			
Total Complaints	Per 10,000 Connections	Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
			Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
7,039	23.9	Anglian Water	6,651	94.5	388	5.5
2,501	16.9	Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	2,395	95.8	106	4.2
200	20.2	Hafren Dyfrdwy	186	93.0	14	7.0
4,983	40.1	Northumbrian Water	4,780	95.9	203	4.1
9,409	22.0	Severn Trent Water	8,707	92.5	702	7.5
5,823	28.8	Southern Water	4,268	73.3	1,555	26.7
1,649	16.5	South West Water	1,579	95.8	70	4.2
39,530	67.9	Thames Water	35,647	90.2	3,883	9.8
6,759	20.5	United Utilities	6,552	96.9	207	3.1
1,778	14.2	Wessex Water	1,721	96.8	57	3.2
4,348	18.6	Yorkshire Water	4,090	94.1	258	5.9
84,019	32.6	Total / Average	76,576	91.1	7,443	8.9

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

WaSCs' written escalated complaints percentage in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year

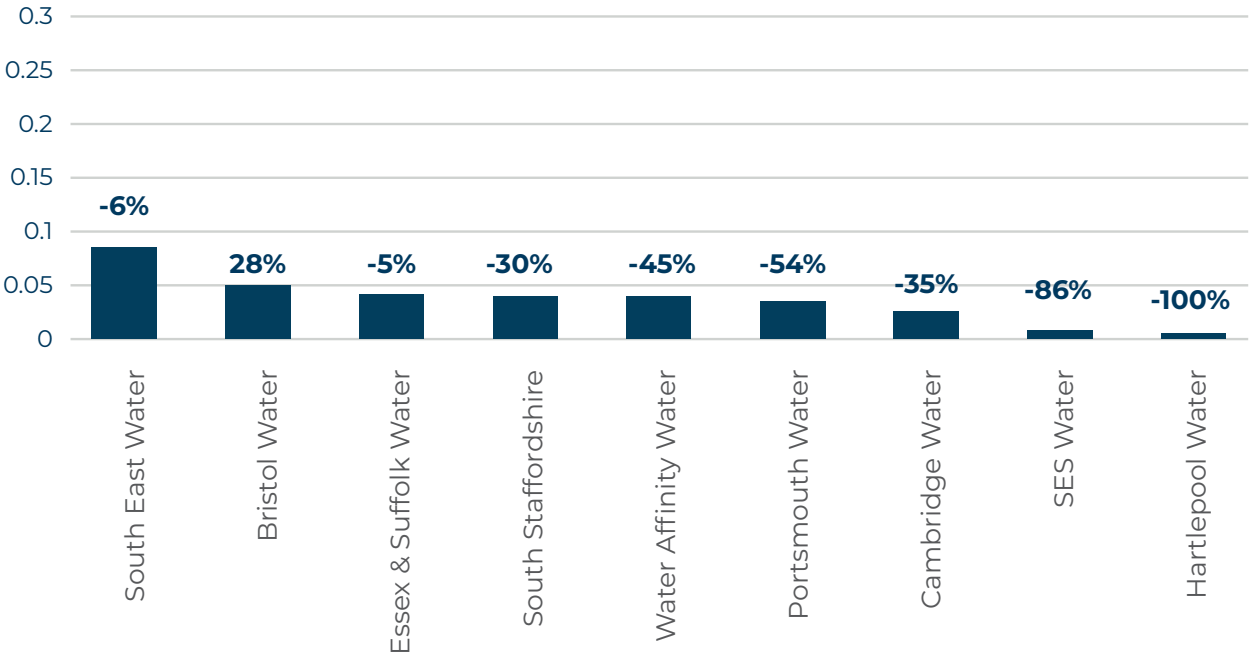


Appendix 7b - Overview of complaints to Water Only companies (WOCs) from household customers escalated (customers write more than once) in 2020/21

			Complaints received by companies			
Total Complaints	Per 10,000 Connections	Company	First stage complaints		Second stage complaints	
			Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
1,825	12.4	Affinity Water	1,761	96.5	64	3.5
929	18.0	Bristol Water	883	95.1	46	4.9
357	25.7	Cambridge Water	349	97.8	8	2.2
3,351	43.1	Essex & Suffolk Water	3,220	96.1	131	3.9
25	5.8	Hartlepool Water	25	100.0	0	0.0
331	10.8	Portsmouth Water	320	96.7	11	3.3
444	15.6	SES Water	442	99.5	2	0.5
1,614	17.8	South East Water	1,491	92.4	123	7.6
863	15.3	South Staffordshire Water	831	96.3	32	3.7
9,739	19.5	Total / Average	9,322	95.7	417	4.3

Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding

WOCs' written escalated complaints percentage in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year



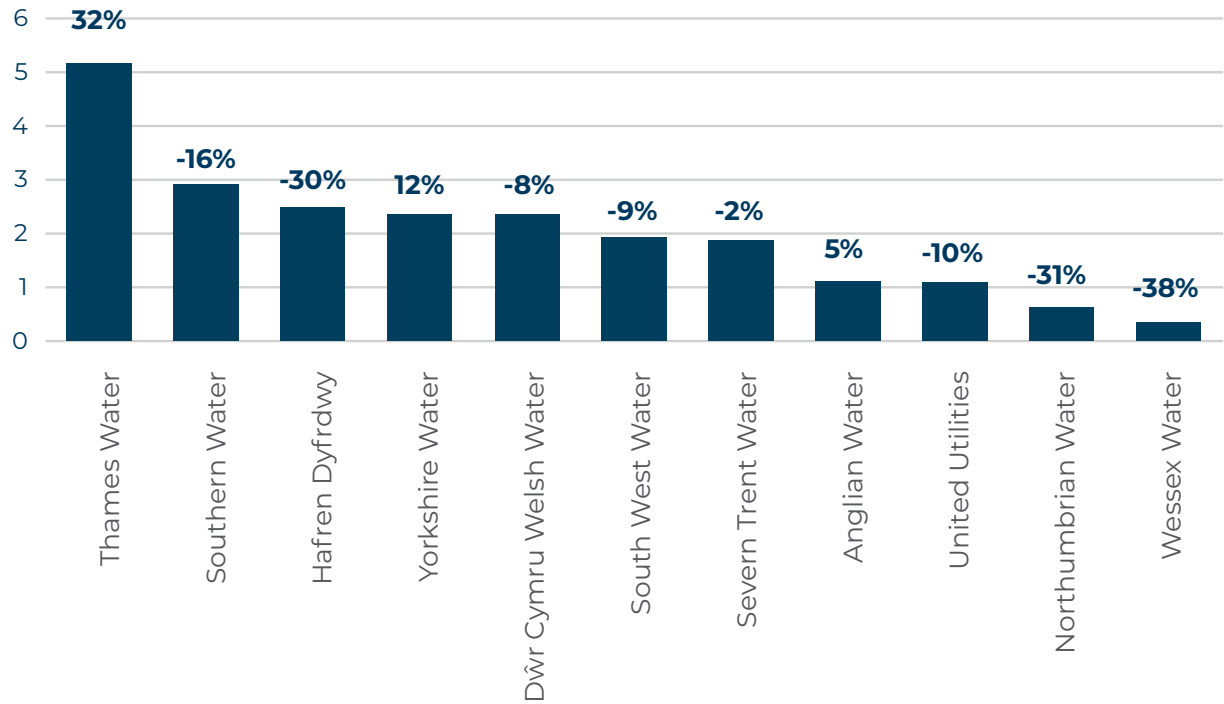
Appendix 8a - Household customer complaints to CCW about Water and Sewerage companies (WaSCs) in 2020/21

Company	Complaints*	per 10,000 connections	CCW investigations
Anglian Water	332	1.1	1
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	342	2.3	0
Hafren Dyfrdwy	24	2.4	0
Northumbrian Water	81	0.7	0
Severn Trent Water	790	1.8	2
Southern Water	572	2.8	7
South West Water	194	1.9	0
Thames Water	2949	5.1	5
United Utilities	366	1.1	0
Wessex Water	42	0.3	0
Yorkshire Water	548	2.3	7
Total	6,240	2.4	22

Others**	300	N/A	0
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**Includes HH complaints against retailers, new appointments and variations, third party intermediaries or where the company was not known.

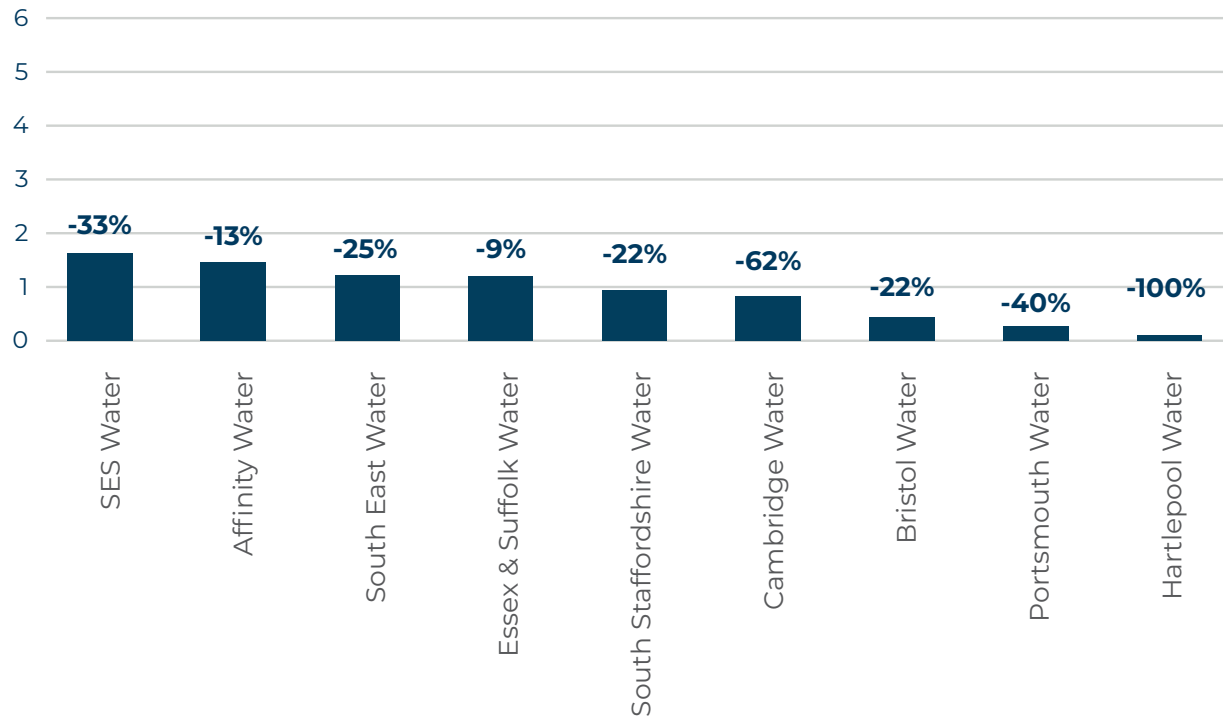
Complaints to CCW about WaSCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year



Appendix 8b - Household customer complaints to CCW about Water Only companies (WOCs) in 2020/21

Company	Complaints*	per 10,000 connections	CCW investigations
Affinity Water	204	1.4	0
Bristol Water	22	0.4	0
Cambridge Water	11	0.8	0
Essex & Suffolk Water	83	1.1	0
Hartlepool Water	0	0.0	0
Portsmouth Water	6	0.2	0
SES Water	44	1.6	0
South East Water	112	1.2	1
South Staffordshire Water	54	1.0	0
Total	536	1.1	1

Complaints to CCW about WOCs per 10,000 connections in 2020/21 and increase/decrease on previous year





The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

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