



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Water Voice - Accountability Session

Action plan response

Water company: South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water
Tuesday 14th April

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
Research & Energy Saving Trust

Version: Update with South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water
Action plan response – 14.04.26

ccw.org.uk

Contents page



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Research findings

[Questions created and asked by community members](#)

Page 3

[Executive summary - insights by question](#)

Page 4

[Actions agreed during the accountability session](#)

Page 5

Our findings in detail

[Q1. Actions overview](#)

Page 7

[Actions in detail "You said" / "We did"](#)

Page 8

[Q2. Actions overview](#)

Page 15

[Actions in detail "You said" / "We did"](#)

Page 16

[Q3. Actions overview](#)

Page 22

[Actions in detail "You said" / "We did"](#)

Page 23

What happens next?

Page 29

Annex

[Background](#)

Page 31

[Objectives](#)

Page 32

[Methodology](#)

Page 33

[Sample](#)

Page 34

["Your Water, Your Say" Infographic 2024](#)

Page 35

[Annual Billing 2026 Leaflet](#)

Page 36

[2026 Company Postcard](#)

Page 37

Questions created and asked by community members



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Community members identified **three priority questions** they wanted to put directly to South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water during the Accountability Session.

The questions were developed through a structured process involving the full Water Voice community (c.50 members). In January and February 2026, members collectively identified and refined priority themes through Spotlight surveys. These priorities were then shaped into draft questions during a dedicated briefing session, before being finalised and formally put to South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water at the Accountability Session.

Each question was led by a community member and explored in depth during the session. South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water provided on-the-record responses, with commitments and actions discussed in real time.

	Topic	Community member question
Q1	Value for money: Bill rises	<i>“Our bills seem to have risen sharply over the last year. Why have bills increased so significantly? How is this money being spent, and how will it benefit us as customers in the short, medium & long term?”</i>
Q2	Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience	<i>“Customers are experiencing repeated burst mains, flooding, pressure issues and even loss of supply, in areas that are already water stressed and seeing housing growth. What are you going to do to support future proofing to ensure that ongoing housing development does not continue to impact current water customers?”</i>
Q3	Communication and information: Reactive, opaque and hard to access	<i>“Why do we as customers feel uninformed about bill increases, investment plans, compensation rights and available support such as Priority Services Register? What specific changes will you make to ensure communication is proactive, transparent and accessible rather than reactive or buried online in technical documents?”</i>

Executive summary - insights by question



The Accountability Session for South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water highlighted customers' need for clearer explanations of rising bills, confidence that infrastructure investment will maintain a reliable supply and more proactive, accessible communication about services and support.

Q1.

Value for money: Bill rises

During the session, South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water explained that bill increases are linked to a significant programme of infrastructure investment intended to improve resilience, reduce leakage and upgrade treatment facilities.

Community members welcomed the investment programme but emphasised that customers need **clearer explanations of why investment is needed now, how it will benefit them and what outcomes they should expect to see over time.**

The discussion therefore focused on improving transparency around how customers money is used and ensuring communications explain both the **scale of investment and the benefits it delivers.**

Customers recognise the need for investment but felt explanations of rising bills have not been communicated clearly or effectively to the community in the past or during the session.

Q2.

Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water explained that population growth and housing development are increasing the pressure on infrastructure and water resources. The company outlined **plans for investment** to improve network resilience and long-term supply.

Community members **wanted reassurance** that infrastructure investment will keep pace with housing growth and **maintain reliable service** for existing customers

Customers want confidence that infrastructure investment will keep pace with housing growth and protect existing service levels.

Q3.

Communication and information:
Reactive, opaque and hard to access

The water company acknowledged that customers can sometimes find information difficult to access or understand. The company explained that it is working to improve the way it communicates with customers, including simplifying information, making key messages clearer and increasing transparency around bills, investment and available support services.

Community members welcomed the acknowledgement but felt the response did not fully address their concerns. Many felt that important information is still too often **hard to find, overly technical, or only communicated after issues arise.** Customers emphasised the need for communication that is **proactive, clear and accessible**, particularly when it comes to explaining bill increases, outlining investment plans and raising awareness of support schemes such as the Priority Services Register.

Customers want clearer, more proactive communication so they can easily understand their bills, rights and available support - the information may exist, but it isn't reaching people in a way that works.

Actions agreed during the Accountability Session



Q1.

Value for money: Bill rises

- Provide clearer explanations of why bills are increasing now
- Clearly show how customer money is being spent
- Demonstrate the benefits customers will see from investment
- Improve confidence in infrastructure investment and the metering programme.

Q2.

Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

- Provide clearer explanations of how infrastructure investment will support growing demand and housing development
- Demonstrate how they will maintain a normal supply of water to existing customers when adding new housing developments onto the infrastructure
- Reassure customers that infrastructure capacity will keep pace with housing growth
- Show how long-term water supply planning will protect existing customers in water-stressed areas.

Q3.

Communication and information:
Reactive, opaque and hard to access

- Improve transparency and clarity in communications about bill increases, investment plans and company decisions
- Provide more proactive updates to customers when it comes to investment and available support.
- Increase awareness of customer rights, compensation schemes and support services such as the Priority Services Register
- Ensure key customer information is communicated in simple, accessible formats that are easy to find and understand.



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Water Voice - Accountability Session

Action plan response

Our findings in detail

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
Research & Energy Saving Trust

ccw.org.uk



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment

Question asked by South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water Community member:

*“Our bills seem to have risen sharply over the last year. Why have bills **increased so significantly**? How is this money **being spent**, and how will it **benefit us** as customers in the short, medium & long term?”*

During the session, South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water explained that bill increases are linked to a significant programme of infrastructure investment intended to improve resilience, reduce leakage and upgrade treatment facilities.

Community members welcomed the investment programme but emphasised that customers need **clearer explanations of why investment is needed now, how it will benefit them, and what outcomes they should expect to see over time.**

The discussion therefore focused on improving transparency around how customer money is used and ensuring communications explain both the **scale of investment and the benefits it delivers.**

Actions

- Provide **clearer explanations** of why bills are increasing now
- Clearly show **how customer money is being spent**
- **Demonstrate the benefits** customers will see from investment
- **Improve confidence** in infrastructure investment and the metering programme

“If they said my bill was £100, 25% of this is going to be spent on infrastructure... 4% is going to the shareholders... that simple.”

“It just felt like a very politically correct sort of answer... no real commitment that the bills are going to come down.”

“I’m a family {of 6} on low income... my bill increasing {by 25%}, it’s not affordable - it’s either food or paying the bills sometimes.”



Customers recognise the need for investment but felt the explanations of rising bills have not been communicated clearly or effectively to the community in the past or during the session.

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (South Staffs and Cambridge response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' South Staffs and Cambridge response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / final comments
Provide clearer explanations of why bills are increasing now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company explained that bill increases are linked to an ambitious proposal for the largest ever investment programme – approx £1bn over 5 years. Investment is required to meet future demand, environmental obligations and regulatory requirements. Future plans: A "Your Water, Your Future" newsletter will accompany bills to help explain investment and future spending plans to customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide simple explanations of why bills are increasing now. Clearly explain the regulatory process and investment decisions. Help customers understand how today's investment benefits future supply and resilience. 	Some communication improvements can be implemented in the short term. Further detail expected within the company action plan.
Clearly show how customer money is being spent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company explained that customer bills fund investment in infrastructure, leakage reduction, supply resilience and environmental protection. Some financial information is already available through company publications and reporting. No future commitments were stated on the night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear and simple breakdowns showing where customer money goes. Use visuals or summaries to explain how the customers bill supports investment and improvements. Improve the visibility of how spending benefits customers and the environment. 	Further detail expected through the company action plan following the session.
Demonstrate the benefits customers will see from investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company outlined plans for significant investment in infrastructure, leakage reduction and new water supply schemes. Examples included reducing leakage and strengthening network resilience. No future commitments were stated on the night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly show the outcomes customers will see from the investment. Provide measurable indicators where possible (e.g. leakage reduction, improved resilience). Communicate short, medium and long-term benefits. 	Within the next 3 months
Improve confidence in infrastructure investment and the metering programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company confirmed that the metering rollout forms part of a wider strategy to manage water demand and protect the long-term supply. Infrastructure investment is also planned to maintain network resilience as demand grows. No future commitments were stated on the night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear explanations of how metering supports water security and fairness. Improve transparency and trust in long-term investment decisions. 	Commitment to reducing leakage by 20% over 5 years. Commitments and plans within the next 3 months

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 2)

Timescale

Action:

- Provide simple explanations of why bills are increasing now.

Customer clean water bills increased by around 25% from 2024/25 to 2025/26. Here are some of the key changes we have made to investments to help to improve our service and resilience:

- From 2020 to 2025 we spent £35 million on pipe renewal and leakage reduction. From 2025 to 2030, we have budgeted to spend £79 million. This will help us to renew more pipes, and reduce the amount of leakage across our network.
- From 2020 to 2025 we spent £6 million on environmental commitments. From 2025 to 2030, we have budgeted to spend £15 million. This will fund interventions to meet our environmental commitments to our regulators - such as Ofwat and the Environment Agency. These include restoring the chalk streams found in our Cambridge region and protection and biodiversity improvement.
- From 2020 to 2025 we spent £17 million on our metering programme and improvements across our assets to ensure we have enough water supply to meet the demand of our consumers. From 2025 to 2030 we have budgeted to spend £69 million to increase our installation of water meters at domestic properties, develop new water supply sources, and help household and business customers to reduce their consumption. This will lead to fairer charging and help to identify leaks quicker.
- From 2020 to 2025 we spent £17 million on Water supply resilience and cyber and physical security of our sites. From 2025 to 2030, we have budgeted to spend £21 million, which will fund new pipelines to improve supply resilience in the parts of our network where there is greatest risk of pipes bursting, and improvements to our assets to protect against cyber and physical security threats at our sites.
- From 2020 to 2025 we spent £109 million on the ongoing maintenance of our assets. From 2025 to 2030, we have budgeted to spend £157 million, which will fund the ongoing replacement of equipment and assets at water sources (e.g. aquifers, reservoirs), treatment works, pumping stations and other facilities - continuing to maintain reliable equipment is vital to ensure a consistent supply of high-quality drinking water every day to customers.

Overall, the total spend on these major themes from 2020 to 2025 was £184 million. From 2025 to 2030, this will be £341 million, which is an increase of £157 million in our investment across these areas.

Launch a 'Your Water, Your Future' web page. A key focus of this content will be a 'where your money flows' visual/infographic, including a breakdown of our key investment areas and an infographic showing the make-up of customer bills, and where each pound goes. **See the annex named 'Infographic used by SSC in Your Water Your Say' for an example of an infographic used in our PR24 business plan engagement, showing an example of where every £1 goes. As this is an example from a previous year, please note this not a reflection of current bills.**

All within 3 months apart from 'Launch a "Meter Health Check" programme' - delivered in 6 months

Add a prominent QR code and short URL on customer bills, and add an infographic explaining the breakdown of bills - delivered within 9 months (due to billing cycles)

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 2 of 2)

Timescale

Actions:

- Clearly explain the regulatory process and investment decisions.
- Help customers understand how today's investment benefits future supply and resilience.
- The content will include a "why have my water charges changed" section, showing the uplift in expenditure between 2020-2025 and 2025-2030. We will summarise each investment area to outline: the priority/challenge we are seeking to address; how much we are spending; the benefits for customers and/or environment; overall progress against the targets we have committed to Ofwat as part of our business plan deliverables (e.g. leakage reduction, reducing supply interruptions/bursts, network upgrades to provide improved supply resilience, support for vulnerable customers, etc.)
- Add a prominent QR code and short URL on customer bills linking directly to tailored online content explaining bill changes
- Launch a "Meter Health Check" programme for customers concerned about the accuracy of their charges or any customer who has had more than two consecutive estimated reads. This will reduce the risk of customers receiving unexpectedly high bills they have not budgeted for.
- Launch a "Your Water, Your Future" newsletter to accompany bills to help explain investment and future spending plans to customers. This helps us to cover multiple channels. (already completed action - [see the annex Annual Billing 2026 Leaflet](#). This was launched in February 2026 in line with our annual billing cycle.
- When we start our engagement with customers in 2027 to develop our plan for the period 2030-2035 we will engage on how best to explain the regulatory process and how this informs investment decisions. In the short-term we can add to our website a video from the regulator Ofwat that explains this regulatory process - this was used during the development of the latest 5 year plan for 2025-2030: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yGm4u2_G0k&sm_nck=1

Understanding how our customers want to be communicated to:

- Since 2017, we have engaged on-going with our customers to understand the ways they would like to be communicated with and what should be in those communications. For example, we conduct surveys as part of the majority of our communication campaigns to gain feedback on the content and how it is presented. Although we recognise there is more we can do, the engagement has driven a step-change in the effectiveness and range of our communications over time. We will continue to engage our customers to better understand their preferences for communications, using insights from our feedback surveys, customer focus groups and workshops, direct feedback from our colleagues, alongside insights from wider industry studies, including those published by CCW.

All within 3 months apart from 'Launch a "Meter Health Check" programme' - delivered in 6 months

Add a prominent QR code and short URL on customer bills, and add an infographic explaining the breakdown of bills - delivered within 9 months (due to billing cycles)



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Actions:

- Provide clear and simple breakdowns showing where customer money goes.
- Use visuals or summaries to explain how the customers bill supports investment and improvements.
- Improve the visibility of how spending benefits customers and the environment.
- Develop and publicise case studies of a range of the investment schemes (spread by investment type and geography) we are undertaking. Outline the purpose, cost, timescales, key milestones, customers impacted and service benefits/outcomes.
- Include simple explainer videos and quarterly updates on progress (and/or at key milestones). Share via an online web tool, social media, links within bills and wider customer letters and via comms with local news outlets (to ensure we reach customers in a variety of ways, given not everyone can get online)
- Example investment case studies:
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/news/major-mains-replacement-scheme-starts-in-aldridge/>
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/news/major-mains-replacement-scheme-starts-in-draycott-in-the-clay/>
 - <https://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/news/community-consultation-begins-for-interconnector-pipeline-from-grafham-to-cambridge/>
 - <https://www.watermagazine.co.uk/2026/03/23/south-staffs-water-invests-4m-in-major-mains-upgrades-across-staffordshire/>
- Raise awareness of our annual report (which gives a breakdown of spend across the business and how we are performing against our targets, every year), sharing customer-friendly summaries via customer letters, information within bills and short videos/social media content. Our latest annual report for the year 2024/25 is found at:
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/ktmd3clr/annual-report-and-financial-statements-ye-31-march-2025-final.pdf>

Within the next 3 months

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Actions:

- Clearly show the outcomes customers will see from the investment.
- Provide measurable indicators where possible (e.g. leakage reduction, improved resilience).
Communicate short, medium and long-term benefits.

Publish information on the total five year capital investment work programme, with a spread of regional investment examples on our website - detailing live, complete (within the 5 year period) and upcoming schemes. Show customers the benefits of investments that are local to them up to 2030.

Introduce a quarterly "Service Snapshot: Your Money in Action" summary that openly shares our performance against key service metrics (including for example: leaks repaired and time to respond, supply interruptions, water quality measures, meters installed, support for vulnerable customers on the Priority Services Register, children reached through our community education programmes etc).

Within the next 6 months

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 2)

Timescale

Action

- Provide clear explanations of how metering supports water security and fairness.
- Launch an information insert on the universal metering programme (which aims to ensure every home has a water meter) that could be shared with customer bills. This will provide helpful updates to customers about our roll-out schedule, how to book an appointment, why metering is important (especially to identifying and reducing leaks) and provide advice on saving water. It also outlines why meters are the fairest way to charge customers for their water supply.
- Proactively contact customers by letter, post card, or email ([see annex called 'South Staffs Water post cards'](#)) who are part of our Universal Metering programme. More details can be found here: <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/meters-in-your-area/>
- Our communications will explain when we will fit their meter and sign post customers to our website for more information on; how smart meters work, how we use smart data to monitor our network, what smart meter data could mean for the custom and the affect this will have on their bills.
- Proactively contact customers by letter, post card, or email (see examples in the annex) who are part of our Universal and Smart Metering programmes.

Action:

Improve transparency and trust in long-term investment decisions.

Commitment to reducing leakage by 14% over 5 years by:

- Installing hundreds more sensors to our pipe network. The sensors can pro-actively spot hidden leaks, which means our teams can fix them faster
- Exploring trials into “no dig technologies”. This means we can repair more pipes quicker as we don't have to dig up roads/pavements. This approach to repairing pipes also helps to reduce traffic works disruption to communities.
- Making use of the latest satellite technology to find leaks hidden deep underground quicker.
- Look at new approaches to balancing the pressures in our pipe network, as if the pressure is too high it can cause pipes to burst. This involves finding the best possible balance across each part of the pipe network between the water pressure customers receive at their taps being satisfactory and being able to control leakage levels.
- The role out of our largest ever metering programme will help us to locate leaks quicker on customers' premises and so fix them faster.
- Publish information on the total five year capital investment work programme, with a spread of regional investment examples on our website - detailing live, complete (within the 5 year period) and upcoming schemes. Show customers the benefits of investments that are local to them up to 2030.

Within 9 months (due to billing cycles)

Metering communications to customers going through the metering programme are on-going - from 4 weeks before the meter fit, 2 weeks ahead, on the day and a welcome letter following the fit and other contacts. The programme runs to 2035 in the South Staffs region and 2030 in the Cambridge region.

* The response continues onto the next slide

Q1. Value for money: Bill rises

Clarity, transparency and reassurance on rising bills and investment



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 2 of 2)

Timescale

- Introduce a quarterly "Service Snapshot: Your Money in Action" summary that openly shares our performance against key service metrics (including for example: leaks repaired and time to respond, supply interruptions, water quality measures, meters installed, support for vulnerable customers on the Priority Services Register, children reached through our community education programmes etc).
- Develop and publicise case studies of a range of the investment schemes (spread by investment type and geography) we are undertaking. Outline the purpose, cost, timescales, key milestones, customers impacted and service benefits/outcomes.
- Include simple explainer videos and quarterly updates on progress (and/or at key milestones). Share via an online web tool, social media, links within bills and wider customer letters and via comms with local news outlets (to ensure we reach customers in a variety of ways, given not everyone can get online).
- Example investment case studies:
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/news/major-mains-replacement-scheme-starts-in-aldridge/>
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/news/major-mains-replacement-scheme-starts-in-draycott-in-the-clay/>
 - <https://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/news/community-consultation-begins-for-interconnector-pipeline-from-grafham-to-cambridge/>
 - <https://www.watermagazine.co.uk/2026/03/23/south-staffs-water-invests-4m-in-major-mains-upgrades-across-staffordshire/>
- Raise awareness of our annual report (which gives a breakdown of spend across the business and how we are performing against our targets, every year), sharing customer-friendly summaries via customer letters, information within bills and short videos/social media content. Our latest annual report for the year 2024/25 is found at:
 - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/ktmd3clr/annual-report-and-financial-statements-ye-31-march-2025-final.pdf>

Within 9 months (due to billing cycles)

Metering communications to customers going through the metering programme are ongoing - from 4 weeks before the meter fit, 2 weeks ahead, on the day and a welcome letter following the fit and other contacts. The programme runs to 2035 in the South Staffs region and 2030 in the Cambridge region.



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand

Question asked by South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water Community member:

*“Customers are experiencing **repeated** burst mains, flooding, pressure issues and even loss of supply, in areas that are already water stressed and seeing housing growth. What are you going to do to support **future proofing** to ensure that ongoing housing development does not continue to impact current water customers?”*

South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water explained that population growth and housing development are increasing pressure on the infrastructure and water resources. The company outlined plans for investment to improve network resilience and long-term supply.

Community members wanted reassurance that infrastructure investment will keep pace with housing growth and maintain reliable service for existing customers.

Actions

- Provide clearer explanations of how infrastructure investment will support growing demand and housing development
- Demonstrate how network upgrades will reduce burst mains, pressure issues and supply interruptions.
- Reassure customers that infrastructure capacity will keep pace with housing growth.
- Show how long-term water supply planning will protect existing customers in water-stressed areas

“They haven’t clarified any benefits at all to us as customers of that work, what is the long term, what will that lead to?” How much water are they saving by these leakage repairs etc? We need more detail around that.”

“What’s the point of having a meter if the pipes are leaking everywhere else and it’s not a true reading?” / “I want to see less leakage, less silly roadworks that cost a lot of money and a lot of time for people, and I want to see where the money’s going.”



Customers want confidence that infrastructure investment will keep pace with housing growth and protect existing service levels.



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (South Staffs and Cambridge response on the night)	"We will do in the future" (South Staffs and Cambridge response on the night)	What is the 'ideal' South Staffs and Cambridge response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale
Provide clearer explanations of how infrastructure investment will support growing demand and housing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water explained that population growth and housing development are increasing the pressure on infrastructure and water resources. The company outlined plans for investment to strengthen network resilience and support long-term supply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacing mains that are time-expired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear explanations of how infrastructure planning accounts for housing growth. Show how investment decisions are made to support both new developments and existing customers. Explain how customers will benefit from these long-term investments. 	<p>Timescale: Infrastructure upgrades outlines to take place in the next 5 years, and actions will be answered within the next 3 months</p>
Demonstrate how network upgrades will reduce burst mains, pressure issues and supply interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company explained that infrastructure investment includes programmes to upgrade parts of the network and reduce leakage in order to improve reliability and reduce failures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacing 250km of mains in the next 5 years Investment to ensure the maintenance of pressure and flow standards - £12m over the next 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate how infrastructure upgrades will reduce burst mains and pressure issues. Provide measurable indicators of improvement where possible (e.g. fewer bursts or supply interruptions). Detail how much water will be saved 	
Reassure customers that infrastructure capacity will keep pace with housing growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company acknowledged concerns that housing growth can place additional demand on existing infrastructure. Investment planning aims to ensure sufficient capacity to support future demand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with housing developers to ensure the installation of household appliances that use less water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide reassurance that infrastructure capacity will be increased where needed. Demonstrate that new housing development will not negatively impact existing customers. 	
Show how long-term water supply planning will protect existing customers in water-stressed areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company outlined plans for long-term investment to strengthen supply resilience and ensure reliable water services as demand grows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New reservoir to meet growing demand, including meeting demand on hot summer days and during the winter, when freeze thaws cause more pipes to burst 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how long-term water supply planning protects customers in water-stressed areas. Provide greater transparency on how resilience planning addresses future population growth and demand. Response so far has felt like 'towing the party line' – improving confidence and reducing scepticism in company intentions requires greater transparency 	

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 2)

Timescale

Actions:

- Provide clear explanations of how infrastructure planning accounts for housing growth.
- Show how investment decisions are made to support both new developments and existing customers.
- Explain how customers will benefit from these long-term investments.

Publish a customer-friendly summary of our Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) explaining our plans to manage increased water demand, especially in the Cambridge region, and promote it through at least three channels including email and social media.

Our WRMP shares our plans on addressing an increase in demand. We will make the information more digestible and visible - <https://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/our-water-resources-management-plan>

As part of this, include case studies of schemes that specifically increase the supply of water, 'future-proof' the network for generations to come or reduce demand (e.g. water recycling) to ensure we can meet the needs of a population growth and new housing developments.

Develop and publicise case studies of a range of the investment schemes (spread by investment type and geography) we are undertaking. Outline the purpose, cost, timescales, key milestones, customers impacted and service benefits/outcomes.

Include simple explainer videos and quarterly updates on progress (and/or at key milestones). Share via an online web tool, social media, links within bills and wider customer letters and via comms with local news outlets (to ensure we reach customers in a variety of ways, given not everyone can get online).

Raise awareness of our annual report (which gives a breakdown of spend across the business and how we are performing against our targets, every year), sharing customer-friendly summaries via customer letters, information within bills and short videos/social media content. Our latest annual report for the year 2024/25 is found at:

<https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/ktmd3clr/annual-report-and-financial-statements-ye-31-march-2025-final.pdf>

Within the next 3 months, we will share our 5 year plan on infrastructure upgrades.

* The response continues onto the next slide

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 2 of 2)

Timescale

For examples of investment case studies, see links in previous actions outlined above.

Publish information on the total five year capital investment work programme, with a spread of regional investment examples on our website - detailing live, complete (within the 5 year period) and upcoming schemes. Show customers the benefits of investments that are local to them up to 2030.

Introduce a quarterly "Service Snapshot: Your Money in Action" summary that openly shares our performance against key service metrics (including for example: leaks repaired and time to respond, supply interruptions, water quality measures, meters installed, support for vulnerable customers on the Priority Services Register, children reached through our community education programmes etc).

Within the next 3 months, we will share our 5 year plan on infrastructure upgrades.

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 2)

Timescale

Actions:

- Demonstrate how infrastructure upgrades will reduce burst mains and pressure issues.
- Provide measurable indicators of improvement where possible (e.g. fewer bursts or supply interruptions).
- Detail how much water will be saved

As part of this, include clear explanations to customers of how we are upgrading the pipes across our network to reduce leakage and bursts (including how our metering programme can also help identify leaks quicker on premises) and our performance responding to supply interruptions.

Continue our Mains Renewals engagement programme, established in October 2025, surveying all customers on completion of mains renewals schemes they are affected by. Their feedback is collated and reviewed in bi-weekly meetings to generate at least two actions that will improve the programme.

Partner with developers to design and deliver an engagement plan for residents living near new developments. The plan will provide clear updates on upcoming network upgrades and give reassurance about the continuity of water supply. Developers will be required to share this information with 100% of affected households at least four weeks before construction begins.

Develop and publicise case studies of a range of the investment schemes (spread by investment type and geography) we are undertaking. Outline the purpose, cost, timescales, key milestones, customers impacted and service benefits/outcomes. Include simple explainer videos and quarterly updates on progress (and/or at key milestones). Share via an online web tool, social media, links within bills and wider customer letters and via comms with local news outlets (to ensure we reach customers in a variety of ways, given not everyone can get online).

* The response continues onto the next slide

Actions will be answered within the next 3 months, the main renewal programme is on-going

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 2 of 2)

Timescale

Raise awareness of our annual report (which gives a breakdown of spend across the business and how we are performing against our targets, every year), sharing customer-friendly summaries via customer letters, information within bills and short videos/social media content. Our latest annual report for the year 2024/25 is found at:

<https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/ktmd3clr/annual-report-and-financial-statements-ye-31-march-2025-final.pdf>

For examples of investment case studies, see links in previous actions outlined above.

Publish information on the total five year capital investment work programme, with a spread of regional investment examples on our website - detailing live, complete (within the 5 year period) and upcoming schemes. Show customers the benefits of investments that are local to them up to 2030.

Introduce a quarterly "Service Snapshot: Your Money in Action" summary that openly shares our performance against key service metrics (including for example: leaks repaired and time to respond, supply interruptions, water quality measures, meters installed, support for vulnerable customers on the Priority Services Register, children reached through our community education programmes etc).

Understanding how to communicate this with customers:

- Since 2017, we have engaged on-going with our customers to understand the ways they would like to be communicated with and what should be in those communications. For example, we have surveys as part of the majority of our communication campaigns to gain feedback on the content and how it is presented. Although we recognise there is more we can do, the engagement has driven a step-change in the effectiveness and range of our communications over time. We will continue to engage our customers to better understand their preferences for communications, using insights from our feedback surveys, customer focus groups and workshops, direct feedback from our colleagues, alongside insights from wider industry studies, including those published by CCW.

Actions will be answered within the next 3 months, the main renewal programme is on-going

Q2. Investment, infrastructure and long-term resilience

Confidence, resilience and long-term infrastructure planning to support growing demand



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Actions:

- Provide reassurance that infrastructure capacity will be increased where needed.
- Demonstrate that new housing development will not negatively impact existing customers.
- Explain how long-term water supply planning protects customers in water-stressed areas.
- Provide greater transparency on how resilience planning addresses future population growth and demand. Response so far has felt like 'towing the party line' – improving confidence and reducing scepticism in company intentions requires greater transparency

Work with Local Authorities and other utility providers to launch a 'Future Growth in Your Area' infographic series, showing the number of new customers we expect to supply and the investments we are making in response to planned housing growth, verified through quarterly engagement with external stakeholders.

Publish a customer-friendly summary of our Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) explaining our plans to manage increased water demand, especially in the Cambridge region, and promote it through at least three channels including email and social media.

As part of this, include case studies of schemes that specifically increase the supply of water, 'future-proof' the network for generations to come or reduce demand (e.g. water recycling) to ensure we can meet the needs of a population growth and new housing developments.

Our WRMP shares our plans on addressing an increase in demand. We will make the information more digestible and visible - <https://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/our-water-resources-management-plan>

As part of this, include clear explanations to customers of how we are updating the pipes across our network to reduce leakage and bursts (including how our metering programme can also help identify leaks quicker on premises) and our performance responding to supply interruptions).

Continue our Mains Renewals engagement programme, established in October 2025, surveying all customers on completion of mains renewals schemes they are affected by. Their feedback is collated and reviewed in bi-weekly meetings to generate at least two actions that will improve the programme.

Within the next 3 months, we will share our 5 year plan on infrastructure upgrades.

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Question asked by South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water Community member:

*“Why do we as customers feel **uninformed** about bill increases, investment plans, compensation rights and available support such as Priority Services Register?”*

*What specific changes will you make to ensure communication is **proactive, transparent and accessible** rather than reactive or buried online in technical documents?”*

The water company acknowledged that customers can sometimes find information difficult to access or understand. The company explained that it is working to improve the way it communicates with customers, including simplifying information, making key messages clearer and increasing transparency around bills, investment and available support services.

Community members welcomed the acknowledgement but felt the response did not yet fully address their concerns. Many felt that important information is still too often **hard to find, overly technical, or only communicated after issues arise**. Customers emphasised the need for communication that is **proactive, clear and accessible**, particularly when it comes to explaining bill increases, outlining investment plans and raising awareness of support schemes such as the Priority Services Register.

Actions

- Improve transparency and clarity in communications about bills, investment plans and company decisions
- Provide **more proactive updates** to customers when it comes to investment and available support.
- Increase awareness of customer rights, compensation schemes and support services such as the Priority Services Register
- Ensure key customer information is **communicated in simple, accessible formats that are easy to find and understand**

“This is all written down and if we want to go to the website it’s written there, but we need to be communicated with so much better so that we **understand** what’s going on.”

“I **totally ignored that email...** because it said ‘Get help with your water bill’. I didn’t need help, so I didn’t open it.”



Customers want clearer, more proactive communication so they can easily understand their bills, rights and available support - the information may exist, but it isn’t reaching people in a way that works.

Q3. Communication and information: Reactive, opaque and hard to access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (South Staffs and Cambridge response on the night)	"We will do in the future" (South Staffs and Cambridge response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' South Staffs and Cambridge response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / final comments
<p>Improve transparency and clarity in communications about bills, investment plans and company decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged customers should clearly understand where their money goes Confirmed newsletters such as <i>Your Water, Your Future</i> aim to explain investment plans Accepted communication could be clearer and more locally specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make communications more granular and area-specific Use customer contact points and billing cycles to share clearer information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish simple explanations of where customers money is spent Clearly link bill increases to investment, outcomes and benefits for customers 	<p>Timescale: All within 3 months</p> <p>South Staffs Water and Cambridge Water closed by confirming that they do a lot of these things already and/or have tried in the past.</p>
<p>Provide more proactive updates to customers rather than relying on information buried in technical documents or websites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted the need for more proactive communication with customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive outreach is already being considered Use customer interactions and communications to provide information earlier Explore proactive outreach when bills or circumstances change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact customers proactively when key changes occur Move from reactive explanations to proactive updates and alerts 	
<p>Increase awareness of customer rights, compensation schemes and support services such as the Priority Services Register</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed compensation payments are increasingly automated rather than requiring customers to apply Explained the need for Priority Services Register is checked during customer interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve awareness of support services including social tariffs and affordability support programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly promote customer rights, compensation and support schemes Ensure vulnerable customers are identified and supported earlier 	
<p>Ensure key customer information is communicated in simple, accessible formats that are easy to find and understand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognised current communications can be complex or buried in longer materials Accepted the need to make information easier to find 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify communications and provide clearer signposting to key information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear, concise summaries on bills and communications Use simple formats that highlight key information customers need quickly 	

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 2)

Timescale

Actions:

- Publish simple explanations of where customers money is spent
- Clearly link bill increases to investment, outcomes and benefits for customers
- Launch a 'Your Water, Your Future' web page. A key focus of this content will be a 'where you money flows' visual/infographic, including a breakdown of our key investment areas and an infographic showing the make-up of customer bills, and where each pound goes
- The content will include a "why have my water charges changed" section, showing the uplift in expenditure between 2020-2025 and 2025-2030. We will summarise each investment area to outline: the priority/challenge we are seeking to address; how much we are spending; the benefits for customers and/or environment; overall progress against the targets we have committed to Ofwat as part of our business plan deliverables (e.g. leakage reduction, reducing supply interruptions/bursts, network upgrades to provide improved supply resilience, support for vulnerable customers,.
- Develop and publicise case studies of a range of the investment schemes (spread by investment type and geography) we are undertaking. Outline the purpose, cost, timescales, key milestones, customers impacted and service benefits/outcomes.
- Include simple explainer videos and quarterly updates on progress (and/or at key milestones). Share via an online web tool, social media, links within bills and wider customer letters and via comms with local news outlets (to ensure we reach customers in a variety of ways, given not everyone can get online)
- Raise awareness of our annual report (which gives a breakdown of spend across the business and how we are performing against our targets, every year), sharing customer-friendly summaries via customer letters, information within bills and short videos/social media content. Our latest annual report for the year 2024/25 is found at:

<https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/ktmd3clr/annual-report-and-financial-statements-ye-31-march-2025-final.pdf>

Actions within 3-6 months, as above

* The response continues onto the next slide

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 2 of 2)

Timescale

Publish information on the total five year capital investment work programme, with a spread of regional investment examples on our website - detailing live, complete (within the 5 year period) and upcoming schemes. Show customers the benefits of investments that are local to them up to 2030.

Introduce a quarterly "Service Snapshot: Your Money in Action" summary that openly shares our performance against key service metrics (including for example: leaks repaired and time to respond, supply interruptions, water quality measures, meters installed, support for vulnerable customers on the Priority Services Register, children reached through our community education programmes etc)

Actions within 3-6 months, as above

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Actions:

- Contact customers proactively when key changes occur
- Move from reactive explanations to proactive updates and alerts

Refine and lower the bill increase thresholds that trigger proactive outreach and introduce expert-led outbound contact to support customers in understanding increases and resolving underlying billing issues

Launch a "Plain English Tariff Guide". A simple, visual guide explaining:

- How bills are calculated
- The difference in the costs between metered vs unmetered charges
- What drives bill changes year to year

Launch a "Customer Communication/Update Promise" that sets clear timelines for when customers will hear from us at each stage of key service journeys - for example, when they move home or have a meter fitted. The promise will include a simple commitment such as: 'We will update you at least every X days until your issue is resolved.'

Action within 6 months, with the
Launch a "Customer
Communication/Update
Promise" within 3 months

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Action: Clearly promote customer rights and support schemes

- Redesign and relaunch the GSS (Guaranteed Standards Scheme) and complaint-escalation sections of our website to ensure they are easy to find, written in plain English, and accessible within two clicks from the homepage.
- GSS - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/household/extra-help/our-customer-promise/>
- Complaints - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/contact-us/making-a-complaint/>

Action: Ensure vulnerable customers are identified and supported earlier

- Continue to ensure that our Priority Services Register (PSR) is highly visible through our community presence, our website, and it is signposted on almost all letters we send to customers. In line with Ofwat's regulatory requirement, we proactively reach out to customers on our PSR to validate their information every two years.
- Priority Services Register - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/household/extra-help/priority-services-register>
- Outside of GSS, we will continue to offer compensation considered on a case by case basis depending on customer circumstances.
- Introduce an affordability support programme for any customers indicating they are struggling to afford their water costs (over and above our existing social tariff and shareholder-funded charitable trust hardship funds). Ensure that alongside direct financial assistance from South Staffs Water, we facilitate access to a wider support programme including energy and water efficiency advice, income maximisation and benefit entitlement support, access to energy efficiency funding schemes.

All within 6 months, the PSR awareness action is on-going

Q3. Communication and information: reactive, opaque and hard to access

Clarity, transparency and proactive communication customers can easily access



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Please find the response from South Staffs and Cambridge Water's Action Plan below (Page 1 of 1)

Timescale

Action: Provide clear, concise summaries on bills and communications

Continue our ongoing programme to simplify our customer billing communications, embedding plain language principles and customer-tested messaging to make it easier for customers to understand their bills and how charges are worked out.

Action: Use simple formats that highlight key information customers need quickly

Develop a new customer hub/portal including self-help guidance, FAQs and videos to help customers understand their charges, how meter reading works, updates about our water metering programme and our wider investment plans to improve the service.

Provide accessible versions of all standard customer letters and leaflets on request, and ensure our website meets mandatory accessibility scores (WCAG 2.2 AA), confirmed through quarterly testing.

Examples of existing content that will be expanded and added to:

How to understand your bill - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/news/how-to-understand-your-water-bill/>

this includes bill examples and FAQs.

Our Universal metering programme - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/meters-in-your-area/>

meters - <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/household/my-water-meter/reading-my-water-meter/>

All within 6 months

What happens after the Accountability Session?

After the Accountability Session, there is a clear and structured follow-up process.



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Publication and transparency

Within 5 working days

A full (anonymised) transcript of the session was [published](#) on **Tuesday 10th March**

Within 10 working days

A plain-English summary is published, setting out:

- The questions asked.
- The key points raised by Community members.
- The actions agreed for inclusion in the action plan.

Anything recorded as *not yet agreed*.

Tuesday 17th March



Action plan

Within 28 days

The water company must share its **action plan**, setting out how it will deliver the agreed actions.

The action plan will be **shared with the Water Voice community on Tuesday 14th April**



Customer feedback

Participants will be asked, via a short survey, whether they feel the action plan:

- ✓ Reflects what was agreed in the session
- ✓ Goes far enough to address customer concerns

This feedback forms part of CCW's ongoing monitoring and follow-up with the company and helps inform future accountability work.



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Water Voice - Accountability Session

Action Plan response

Annex

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
Research & Energy Saving Trust

ccw.org.uk

Background



What is an Accountability Session?

An Accountability Session is a formal, facilitated meeting where **water consumers directly question senior executives from their water company** about performance, service failures and issues of concern – and **agree the actions they want the company to take**.

They sit at the heart of CCW's statutory role to strengthen consumer voice and ensure companies respond transparently and meaningfully.

Why do they exist?

Accountability Sessions exist because customers deserve a real say in how their water company performs. They give people a direct line to the people in charge – not through a survey, not through a complaint form, but face-to-face.

For years, customers have felt that water companies weren't listening closely enough. *Water (Special Measures) Act 2025** requiring a relevant undertaker to have arrangements in place for involving consumers in decisions of the undertaker that are likely to have a material impact on consumer matters.

These sessions make that happen. They create a space where customers can:

- Ask honest questions
- Raise the issues that really affect them
- Agree the actions they expect the company to take next.

It's all about making the process fair, open, and focused on what matters most to the people who actually use and pay for the service.

*<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/5/enacted>

Objectives

What the session aims to achieve



1. Give customers a real voice

These sessions make sure customers aren't just "heard" – their views actually guide the conversation and shape what happens next.

2. Make companies answer directly to the people they serve

Senior water company leaders must respond openly, honestly, and in real time. No hiding behind reports or press statements.

3. Agree clear actions that lead to real improvements

By the end of each session, everyone should be clear on:

- ✓ what the company will do
- ✓ how they'll do it
- ✓ how customers will know things have improved.

4. Build trust through transparency

Everything is published – the questions, the answers, the agreed actions – so customers can see what's happening and whether companies are following through.

5. Make sure all types of customers are represented

People from different backgrounds, ages, abilities and regions take part, ensuring the outcomes reflect real experiences across the community.

Outputs

By the close of the process, this Accountability Session will have:

- Provided CCW with **robust, publishable evidence** of consumer concerns and company responses.
- Established a clear and transparent set of customer-agreed actions that the water company must reflect in its published action plan. The action plan itself is published by the company following the session, in line with the accountability process.
- Given consumers confidence that their participation leads to **real scrutiny and follow-through**, reinforcing the credibility of the accountability process.
- Informed future regulatory engagement by highlighting **systemic or recurring issues** requiring wider attention.

Together, this ensures the session delivers both **immediate accountability** and **longer-term value** for consumers and the sector.

Methodology

How does it work?

01



Prioritising what matters most

1. We listen to what customers tell us each month

Through Barometer & Spotlight surveys and the online community

2. We play back what they said

In the January Spotlight survey, we show customers the issues they raised & ask them to prioritise the most important ones.

3. Confirm their priorities

In the February Spotlight survey, customers confirm if they agree with which points matter most.

02



Getting ready (Briefing session)

Selected 12 customers join a 2-hour online (via Zoom) briefing before the main meeting.

Everyone gets clear, easy-to-read information beforehand so they feel confident and prepared.

The facilitator talks them through:

- How the session will work
- The issues they've prioritised
- How to shape their questions & come up with a set of questions for each priority.

We will brief the CCW Chair separately at this point & remind them on their role, share guide & prioritised topics / Priorities will be sent the Water Companies at this point

03



The Accountability Session (Main meeting)

12 customers take part in an online session (via Zoom) with a senior water company representative for 2 hours.

TMcK facilitator & Chair guiding the conversation:

- Customers ask their prepared questions
- Challenge the company's answers
- Explore what needs to change.

Live polls let everyone share honest views – even those who prefer not to speak out loud.

Welsh panels will be given the option of English, Welsh or simultaneous translation .

04



Agreeing what should happen next

During the main accountability session, after each issue is discussed, the facilitator checks whether customers feel the company's proposed actions are good enough.

Together, they work towards a clear **consensus** on what actions the company must take.

05



Publishing the outcomes & following up

A summary is produced showing: the questions asked, how the company responded, and the actions agreed.

- CCW publishes a **transcript within 5 working days**
- CCW publishes a **summary within 10 working days**
- The company must publish its **action plan by day 28**

Panellists are asked short follow-up questions about whether the plan reflects what was agreed.

CCW then tracks progress and updates panellists before the next session.

[Priorities will be shared with the ISG]

Sample

Who takes part in an Accountability Session



We've brought together a **small, representative group of around 12 people** for each accountability session.

This number keeps the conversation manageable and ensures everyone has the chance to speak.

Each person is selected by the panel manager from their panel of 50 participants.

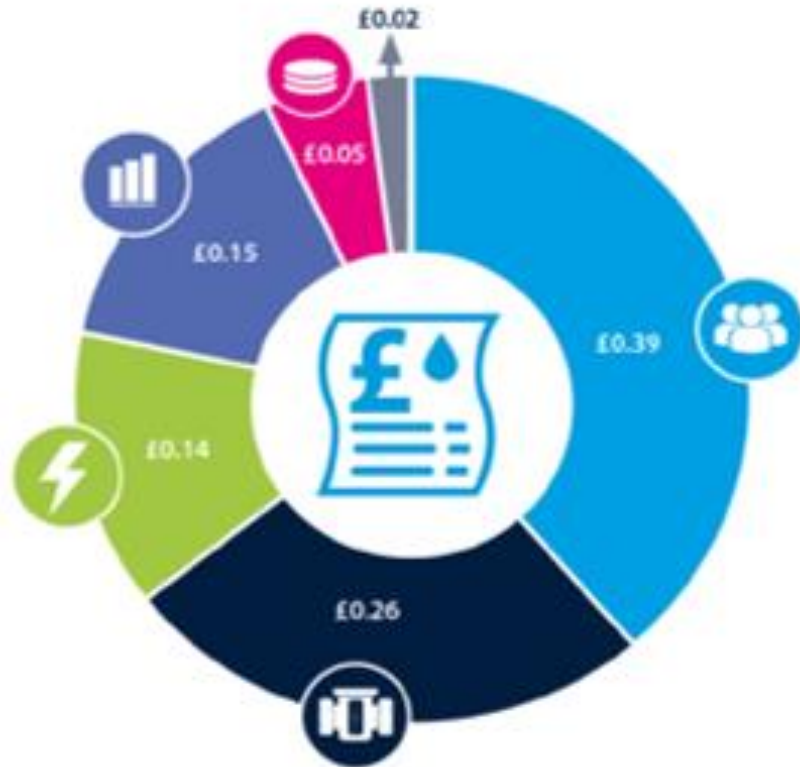
Our panel managers are responsible for selecting a representative range of participants and ensure that anyone who has expressed a keen interest in taking part in an accountability session is included at this stage.

We make sure each session of 12 includes the following types of panellists:

- **Age** - younger adults, middle-aged adults and older customers (2 per age bracket)
- **Gender** - a balanced mix (at least 5 males & 5 females)
- **Income levels** - including low-income households (3 financially vulnerable, 3 x 20-40k, 3 x £40k-60k & 2 x £60k+)
- **Location** - Rural and Urban water users (different house-types represented)
- **Ethnic backgrounds** - reflecting the local population, 2-3 from an ethnic minority background
- **People with accessibility, neurodivergent or additional support needs** (at least 1)
- **Different customer types** - e.g metered/unmetered, renters/homeowners
- **Different attitudes** – including 3 x positive, 3 x neutral & 3 x negative customers
- **Bathing water users** – 3 regular users (for WaSC panels)
- **Welsh speakers** – at least 2 Welsh speakers within our two Welsh panels & options for accountability session language

This ensures all voices are represented, not just the loudest or most confident.

Infographic used by SSC in 'Your Water Your Say' 2024 session with customers:



Potential bill impact by 2030 Breakdown of where every £1 goes

- Opex (people costs, materials and contractors)
- Investing in our assets
- Energy costs
- Financing costs, rates and other taxes
- Return to shareholders
- Performance incentives

We are a clean water only company

South Staffs and Cambridge Water Annual Billing 2026 Leaflet

Cambridge Water

Your Water, Your Future.



See where your money flows, and why it matters.

We're investing more than ever to provide reliable, high-quality water. Your bill helps keep the network running: **around 40% covers daily operations** like treatment and pumping, while the rest upgrades equipment and delivers on the priorities that matter most to you.

For an average cost of 58p per day...

...we're investing over **£224m** over the next five years to upgrade your water services. Customers have told us their priorities, and here's how we're delivering:

- Supporting customers: £16m** to provide help when and where it's most needed.
- Reducing leakage: £17m** to replace ageing pipes most at risk of leaking or bursting.
- Reliable supply, 24/7: £125m** to keep water flowing to homes and businesses.
- High-quality water: £41m** to improve and maintain water treatment plants and pumping stations.
- Protecting the environment: £25m** to significantly reduce water waste.

Working together to use water wisely

Water is precious. By combining your efforts at home with ours across the network - we can make sure there is enough for everyone. Small changes, like shorter showers or fixing a dripping tap, add up to a big difference.

The water you use each day comes from local rivers, reservoirs and underground sources such as aquifers. These are part of a delicate natural system, and protecting them is a responsibility we all share.

Water use in our region is rising quickly, and the Government has declared our area seriously water stressed. We're investing heavily to cut leakage, and your actions at home help too. Simple steps, like adjusting cooking and gardening habits, fixing dripping taps or leaking toilet valves, can save thousands of litres each year.



Scan here to learn more about water savings

Together, your small changes, and our network improvements add up to a big impact. For more water-saving tips, just scan the QR code.

How do we finance this critical investment?

We need to spend millions to keep clean water flowing. That means fixing old pipes, building reservoirs and protecting the environment. Customer bills help, but they don't cover everything. So, we work with investors to raise extra money.

2p in every pound goes to our investors, why do they matter? Investors give us long-term funding. That helps us plan ahead and invest more now.

Water bills in our region are some of the lowest in the UK. We are working hard to keep it that way.

Thank you!

Your bill is helping us protect water today and build a better future for everyone.

Cut me out and stick me on your fridge

Your water action plan

Make sure you're getting the most from your water service:

- Off supply?** Phone us on 0800 316 7676 or visit cambridge-water.co.uk/my-water-supply/.
- Set up a Direct Debit** An easy, hassle-free way to pay your bill. Set up a Direct Debit at myaccount.cambridge-water.co.uk.
- Update your contact details** Check we have your latest email address and phone number so we can reach out to you quickly if there's an issue with your supply.
- Switch to a water meter** Only pay for the water you use. Visit cambridge-water.co.uk/meter to switch to a meter today.
- Let us know if you need extra care** If you, or someone in your home needs extra support due to age, health or disability, let us know and join our Priority Services Register at cambridge-water.co.uk/psr.
- Want to keep in touch?** Follow us on Facebook, X and Instagram for our latest updates and news.
Facebook: [CambsWater](https://www.facebook.com/CambsWater)
X: [@CambsWater](https://twitter.com/CambsWater)
Instagram: [@Cambs_Water](https://www.instagram.com/Cambs_Water)

Cambridge Water, 90 Fulbourn Rd, Cambridge, CB1 9JN | cambridge-water.co.uk | 01223 706 050

Did you know?

- Last year, we improved 916 hectares of land through our environmental and biodiversity projects.
- We reduced leaks by 11% on the network.
- 5,190 people benefited from our social tariff, lowering their bills during the cost of living crisis.
- If an unexpected burst or supply interruption occurred, we typically got water flowing again in under 90 minutes.

CAMB0161

South Staffs and Cambridge Water 2026 Postcard



South Staffs Water

Faye is getting her new water meter installed next week

Water you waiting for?

Your meter is on its way.

Water meters mean fairer bills for everyone and put you in control.
Find out more about meters at south-staffs-water.co.uk/meters



South Staffs Water

Hello,

We're about to begin installing free water meters across your area. Together, this will help us manage water supplies sustainably in the face of climate change and increased demand from housing and population growth.

Water meters offer several benefits:

- You're in control – Pay only for what you use. Use less, pay less.
- Fair, accurate billing – Just like gas or electricity.
- Smarter water use – Reduce waste, save money.
- Protect nature – Using less water supports rivers, reservoirs, and the environment.
- Improved leak detection – Meters help spot leaks faster.

We'll contact you again soon, as your installation date approaches.

To learn more, visit: south-staffs-water.co.uk/meters
Contact us: 0345 60 70 456

Warm regards,
South Staffs Water

South Staffs Water,
Green Lane,
Walsall
WS2 7PD



<Firstname><Lastname>
<123 Any Street>
<Address 2>
<City>
<Postcode>



ccw

The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Thank you!



ccw.org.uk