



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr



Water poverty in England and Wales

2024/25

Water poverty

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This report is an analysis of water poverty in 2024/25. It is effectively a baseline analysis. Under its December 2024 price determinations, Ofwat allowed water and sewerage companies to increase their charges by an average of 36% above inflation over the next five years from April 2025.

Following appeals by five companies, the Competition and Markets Authority has subsequently allowed a further average increase of 2.2% in the bills for customers of those companies.

There is considerable variation between companies, ranging from a 48% increase in average bills over the period for Southern Water customers to 16% for Northumbrian Water.

The University of York has been analysing water poverty since 2013⁴ including in collaboration with the Consumer Council for Water (CCW)⁵. But this is a new collaboration, which will be followed by annual update reports.

The analysis is based on the Family Resources Survey (FRS) and the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data. The FRS is a large household survey of the UK (including Scotland and Northern Ireland), but this analysis will be based on England and Wales. The HBAI is a subset of variables from the FRS produced by the Department for Work and Pensions and is mainly used to produce poverty estimates. The sample is weighted to ensure that it represents the population from which it is drawn. CCW asked the University of York to make two innovations to the work they have previously undertaken. Since 2020 the FRS has contained questions about the household's water and sewerage provider, so for the first time, the analysis is by water/sewerage provider instead of standard geographic region. This makes the analysis more policy relevant to the water industry. The analysis also includes information about the correlation between water poverty and those households in arrears with water payments.

Where a customer receives water and sewerage services from two different companies and the combined bill exceeds the water poverty thresholds, those cases are allocated solely against the company which issues the bill (or the water company where separate bills are issued).

The analysis uses the conventional definitions of water poverty: the percentage of households spending more than 3% and 5% of their net equivalised income (ie adjusted

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⁴ J Bradshaw and M Huby, Water poverty in England and Wales, Journal of Poverty and Social Justice, 21, 2, 2013, pp137-148

⁵ J Bradshaw and G Main, Water Poverty in England and Wales: an update, 2014 <http://spruyork.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/water-poverty-in-england-and-wales.html>

Ana Castro and Jonathan Bradshaw (2025) Water Poverty and Social Tariffs, <https://cpag.org.uk/news/water-poverty-and-social-tariffs>

⁵ J Bradshaw and A Keung, Water poverty in England and Wales, Water Consumer Council, 2021

<https://www.ccw.org.uk/app/uploads/2023/03/1.Jonathan-Bradshaw.pdf>

J Bradshaw and A Keung, Exploring some options for reducing water poverty: Analysis for the Water Consumer Council Inquiry into water affordability, 2023

<https://cpag.org.uk/news/water-poverty-and-social-tariffs>

to take account of household size) after housing costs (AHC). We also estimate water poverty gaps – how much more than the 3% and 5% thresholds they are spending.

We equalise income because income does not represent equivalent living standards for households of different sizes – a family of four would need a higher level of income to have the same standard of living as a single person. There is a lot to argue about the equivalence scales used to adjust income. But equalised income is used in the government poverty measures and internationally.

However, when we come to measure expenditure, there is a debate to be had about whether it is appropriate to express categories of expenditure as a proportion of equalised or unequalised income. Expenditure on most commodities increases with the needs of the households – larger households spend more on food, fuel, water etc. So, the expenditure already shows this. So why equalise income as well?

One not very convincing argument is that it has been the convention. Another is that expenditure on a commodity that increases with household size may well be constrained by income. Another is that we do not know how to equalise need for household items like water. So equalising income is an effort to adjust for need for expenditure.

Recognising that there are differing views on the issue of equalisation, we have produced the results twice for equalised and un-equalised incomes for comparison purposes. However, in our analysis of the findings, we focus on the findings from the equalised data⁶, which has tended to be the convention in terms of estimating water poverty rates.

While the Family Resources Survey is a large annual sample survey and the data is weighted to represent the whole population, for some smaller water company regions the estimates are likely to have wide sampling errors, and we indicate these in the tables.

In the following tables we produce:

Estimates of water poverty rates and gaps at the 3% and 5% levels by water companies.

We then repeat the analysis by the:

- ethnicity of the household
- by the composition of the household
- whether anyone in the household is disabled
- whether or not their water charges are metered
- whether or not they are in arrears with payments

Then we do an analysis by water company of water poverty and gaps by whether:

⁶ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 'companion' scale to equalise AHC results is used. See table 4 - [Households Below Average Income: Background Information and Methodology report FYE 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

- the households are metered
- whether they are in water bill arrears

There is also an appendix table comparing water and sewerage company estimates of average water and sewerage bills with the FRS estimates, which underlie the analysis.

Limitations of the analysis

The estimates of water poverty levels and gaps are based on data collected through survey fieldwork. It should therefore be noted that the accuracy of the findings rely on information provided by respondents. Respondents are asked to show a copy of their water bill to confirm how much they pay for water, but the sample will most likely include instances where this validation was not possible.

The research sample was not selected to be representative of bill levels within each company region, so the average bill levels on which the data is based inevitably vary from actual average bill levels. This is documented in the appendix table to provide context in terms of the degree of difference for each company

In the analysis where separate companies supply water and sewerage services, respondents have been allocated to the company that issues their bill (or water company where bills are issued separately). Therefore, water poverty rates for companies will include cases where they contribute only partially to the level of the bill and would have only partial responsibilities for potential interventions to address the problem.

As with all quantitative research, the output relies on the extrapolation of data drawn from a sample group. The number of surveys undertaken for each company is detailed in the appendix table. The FRS sample in England and Wales was 12,691 households for the 2024/25 survey. That provides for a very high degree of confidence in statistical accuracy of the headline findings at both combined, and separate, England levels. This is also true of the data for Wales in isolation to a slightly lesser extent.

There is also a reasonably good confidence rating for the results for the larger combined water and sewerage companies. This is not, however, the case for Hafren Dyfrdwy, where the results are based on just 50 interviews.

The sample sizes for some smaller water-only companies (Bournemouth, Bristol, Cambridge, Portsmouth and South Staffs) mean there is also a lower level of confidence in the results for those companies. This is particularly acute in the case of Cambridge, where the sample size is just 32.

The low degree of confidence in the data relating to all the companies above is signalled by their results being presented in red throughout the tables.

Only two Hartlepool Water customers were surveyed during the data collection process. As such the data for that company area has been omitted from the tables.

For further clarity about the reliability of the findings, confidence interval ratings have been included for key data. These show the full range of possible results for those metrics for which statistically there is a 95% confidence rating. It should be noted that in a small number of cases where a 100% result has been recorded, the confidence rating

also shows as 100% to 100%. Whilst mathematically plausible, in reality it reflects the fact that the sample size for that specific data point is too small and there was no observed variation.

The estimates produced by this analysis represent a snapshot of the position during the 2024/25 financial year, based on the newly published survey data. It is recognised that both subsequent bill changes and the impact of enhanced company interventions to support lower-income households, at the time of publication, will not be captured. Some companies may have produced estimates representing their current water poverty levels using their own methodologies.

Taking all the above limitations into account, CCW will use the analysis to inform and support its work in engaging with companies on their progress in addressing water poverty within their regions.

Key findings

The analysis indicates that 6.8% of households in England and Wales faced water poverty in 2024/25 – based on the 5% water poverty measure. That constitutes around 1.8 million households.

That figure increases to 15% (4 million) when considering the households spending more than 3% of their income AHC on water.

The rates of water poverty at the 5% level were broadly similar in England and Wales when considered separately, but slightly higher in Wales at the 3% water poverty level.

The median value by which the bills of those in water poverty exceed the 5% spend threshold, taking England and Wales as a whole, is estimated to be around £337 per annum.

In terms of demographic breakdown, there are significantly higher rates of (5% measure) poverty amongst the following groups:

- people from ethnic minority communities
- single working age adults
- single parents

As might be expected, those who have been in arrears with water charges in the past 12 months are more than twice as likely to also be in 5% water poverty and almost three times as likely to be spending more than 3% of their income on water charges.

Table 1. Households living in water poverty at 5% threshold for England and Wales, and by water & sewage provider in 2024/25. Equivalised Income.

	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	6.8%	6.2%; 7.5%	336.9
England	6.8%	6.2%; 7.5%	338.3
Wales	6.6%	4.9%; 8.4%	300.7
Affinity Water	8.4%	5.5%; 11.8%	522.1
Anglian Water	7.6%	5.1%; 10.7%	459.5
Bournemouth Water	0.8%	0.0%; 2.8%	275.6
Bristol Water	3.4%	0.8%; 7.0%	501.2
Cambridge Water	15.1%	3.0%; 30.1%	904.2
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	6.8%	5.0%; 8.6%	300.7
Essex & Suffolk Water	9.3%	5.3%; 13.9%	353.5
Hafren Dyfrdwy	3.5%	0.0%; 12.1%	155.9
Northumbrian Water	3.7%	2.4%; 5.4%	338.3
Portsmouth Water	4.3%	0.9%; 9.0%	251.8
SES Water	11.7%	3.8%; 21.6%	204.2
Severn Trent Water	5.5%	4.3%; 6.7%	267.4

South East Water	7.3%	4.8%; 10.0%	228.4
South Staffs Water	6.6%	2.3%; 11.6%	301.2
South West Water	5.4%	3.5%; 7.7%	279.3
Southern Water	6.4%	4.5%; 8.4%	247.5
Thames Water	10.5%	8.2%; 13.0%	489.4
United Utilities	6.1%	4.8%; 7.6%	246.9
Wessex Water	3.3%	1.7%; 5.2%	525.2
Yorkshire Water	5.0%	3.8%; 6.3%	209.3

Table 2. Households living in water poverty at 3% threshold for England and Wales, and by water & sewage provider in 2024/25. Equivalised Income.

	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	15.0%	14.2%; 15.9%	220.4
England	15.0%	14.1%; 15.8%	221.3
Wales	16.2%	13.7%; 18.9%	206.2
Affinity Water	14.7%	11.2%; 18.4%	308.7
Anglian Water	16.6%	13.5%; 20.1%	223.2
Bournemouth Water	9.7%	3.2%; 20.3%	93.8
Bristol Water	13.1%	6.7%; 20.6%	209.0
Cambridge Water	17.0%	3.1%; 32.5%	813.7
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	16.1%	13.5%; 18.7%	209.3
Essex & Suffolk Water	22.5%	16.8%; 28.4%	226.1
Hafren Dyfrdwy	25.3%	6.7%; 42.8%	173.0
Northumbrian Water	9.4%	7.1%; 11.8%	172.8
Portsmouth Water	7.3%	2.7%; 13.0%	364.1
SES Water	16.9%	7.7%; 28.0%	356.8
Severn Trent Water	14.7%	12.6%; 16.6%	164.7

South East Water	13.8%	10.3%; 17.1%	248.8
South Staffs Water	13.9%	7.1%; 20.9%	189.1
South West Water	17.0%	12.8%; 21.2%	176.5
Southern Water	12.4%	9.8%; 15.2%	224.9
Thames Water	18.6%	15.9%; 21.5%	283.9
United Utilities	13.6%	11.7%; 15.5%	211.8
Wessex Water	11.3%	7.8%; 14.8%	232.9
Yorkshire Water	14.2%	12.1%; 16.4%	172.4
No information	16.9%	9.1%; 25.5%	293.5

Table 3. Characteristics of households in water poverty at 3% and 5% thresholds at 2024/25 prices. Equivalised Income.

	Water poverty based on a 3% threshold			Water poverty based on a 5% threshold		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
Ethnicity of Head of Household						
White	12.2%	11.5%; 13.0%	200.7	5.2%	4.7%; 5.7%	301.2
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	19.8%	11.3%; 28.5%	319.4	10.4%	4.6%; 17.7%	403.2
Asian/ Asian British	32.4%	27.2%; 37.1%	266.7	15.5%	11.5%; 20.0%	491.9
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	27.0%	22.2%; 32.2%	275.7	15.6%	11.7%; 19.8%	238.8
Other Ethnic Group	37.0%	26.5%; 47.2%	352.5	20.2%	11.9%; 29.9%	788.1
Not declared	-	-	-	-	-	-
Household composition						
One adult over pension age, no children	6.8%	5.7%; 7.8%	160.3	2.2%	1.6%; 2.8%	286.4
One adult under pension age, no children	17.6%	15.5%; 20.0%	275.3	11.7%	10.0%; 13.5%	451.9
Two adults over pension age, no children	7.9%	6.1%; 10.1%	202.1	2.9%	1.3%; 5.0%	1,149.2

Two adults, one over pension age, no children	12.8%	10.0%; 15.6%	191.1	4.8%	2.9%; 6.8%	142.3
Two adults under pension age, no children	10.4%	9.0%; 11.8%	238.8	5.4%	4.5%; 6.5%	405.9
Three or more adults, no children	13.8%	10.9%; 16.7%	221.6	5.6%	3.9%; 7.6%	301.2
One adult with child/ren	29.0%	25.2%; 32.9%	206.1	12.4%	9.6%; 15.3%	220.1
Two adults with child/ren	20.2%	18.3%; 22.3%	200.5	7.6%	6.4%; 8.9%	207.1
Three or more adults with child/ren	29.4%	21.7%; 36.7%	241.3	10.7%	4.7%; 18.0%	974.9
Disability within the family (benefit unit)						
No-one is disabled in the family	15.1%	14.0%; 16.3%	236.9	7.4%	6.5%; 8.3%	371.8
Someone is disabled in the family	14.9%	13.8%; 16.2%	198.9	6.0%	5.2%; 6.8%	275.0
Whether water charges are metered						
Yes	13.2%	12.2%; 14.3%	246.6	6.6%	5.9%; 7.6%	377.9
No	16.2%	14.9%; 17.5%	187.8	6.1%	5.4%; 6.9%	275.6
Whether receive water rebate						
Yes	10.2%	5.3%; 15.8%	66.6	3.6%	0.9%; 7.2%	178.6
No	13.3%	12.2%; 14.3%	248.8	6.7%	5.9%; 7.6%	383.8
Whether have been behind with water rates in last 12 months						

Have not been behind water bill	14.7%	13.9%; 15.6%	222.4	6.7%	6.1%; 7.3%	337.7
Have been behind water bill	41.6%	32.8%; 51.1%	192.0	14.5%	7.8%; 22.2%	146.6

Table 4. Households in water poverty at 5% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they have a water meter. Equivalised Income.

	Water meter - Yes			Water meter - No		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	64.2%	59.9%; 68.4%	377.9	35.8%	31.6%; 40.0%	275.6
England	64.6%	60.3%; 68.8%	383.8	35.4%	30.6%; 40.1%	275.6
Wales	58.6%	42.3%; 72.4%	300.7	41.4%	27.9%; 56.5%	250.7
Affinity Water	78.9%	63.3%; 90.5%	718.1	21.1%	9.4%; 36.7%	371.6
Anglian Water	78.1%	65.7%; 87.7%	372.4	21.9%	12.2%; 33.3%	459.5
Bournemouth Water	-	-	-	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	275.6
Bristol Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	501.2	-	-	-
Cambridge Water	59.3%	0.0%; 100.0%	981.3	40.7%	0.0%; 100.0%	595.7
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	63.1%	48.0%; 75.6%	300.7	36.9%	23.0%; 50.7%	337.7
Essex & Suffolk Water	55.9%	30.5%; 83.4%	522.6	44.1%	19.2%; 69.2%	183.8
Hafren Dyfrdwy	-	-	-	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	155.9
Northumbrian Water	57.2%	32.9%; 79.3%	268.5	42.8%	20.2%; 67.2%	517.4
Portsmouth Water	54.1%	0.0%; 100.0%	251.8	45.9%	0.0%; 100.0%	252.8

SES Water	24.0%	0.0%; 70.7%	204.2	76.0%	18.9%; 100.0%	197.4
Severn Trent Water	49.7%	37.7%; 61.8%	284.1	50.3%	38.9%; 62.9%	267.4
South East Water	71.6%	51.2%; 89.8%	283.9	28.4%	7.9%; 48.2%	25.4
South Staffs Water	15.7%	0.0%; 62.6%	1761.7	84.3%	28.5%; 100.0%	301.2
South West Water	68.6%	50.9%; 84.5%	283.5	31.4%	15.9%; 50.1%	151.6
Southern Water	87.1%	75.1%; 96.7%	247.5	12.9%	2.8%; 24.9%	71.3
Thames Water	70.5%	60.5%; 79.5%	554.5	29.5%	20.0%; 40.3%	339.4
United Utilities	51.0%	38.7%; 62.4%	246.9	49.0%	36.9%; 61.1%	326.2
Wessex Water	77.1%	47.1%; 100.0%	202.4	22.9%	0.0%; 49.0%	830.3
Yorkshire Water	52.1%	37.9%; 65.8%	251.5	47.9%	35.0%; 62.6%	127.5
No information	11.0%	0.0%; 40.1%	298.7	89.0%	58.0%; 100.0%	490.7

Table 5. Households in water poverty at 3% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they have a water meter. Equivalised Income.

	Water meter - Yes			Water meter - No		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	57.5%	54.5%; 60.4%	246.6	42.5%	39.4%; 45.4%	187.8
England	58.4%	55.2%; 61.5%	243.5	41.6%	38.5%; 44.6%	187.8
Wales	42.2%	33.4%; 51.5%	298.5	57.8%	48.2%; 67.4%	185.9
Affinity Water	77.9%	67.6%; 87.4%	346.6	22.1%	13.2%; 32.6%	308.7
Anglian Water	77.9%	70.4%; 84.5%	206.3	22.1%	15.6%; 29.1%	228.6
Bournemouth Water	76.0%	34.6%; 100.0%	124.1	24.0%	0.0%; 63.5%	456.6
Bristol Water	46.3%	19.7%; 78.6%	354.6	53.7%	19.7%; 81.3%	193.8
Cambridge Water	52.8%	0.0%; 100.0%	2052.9	47.2%	0.0%; 100.0%	500.9
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	45.2%	35.6%; 54.3%	287.5	54.8%	46.4%; 64.7%	185.9
Essex & Suffolk Water	50.7%	34.7%; 67.7%	226.1	49.3%	31.6%; 66.1%	231.2
Hafren Dyfrdwy	52.3%	0.0%; 89.0%	173.0	47.7%	9.8%; 100.0%	253.6
Northumbrian Water	50.2%	35.0%; 65.4%	183.7	49.8%	34.9%; 63.7%	141.5
Portsmouth Water	60.7%	24.7%; 100.0%	218.6	39.3%	0.0%; 78.8%	450.8

SES Water	27.5%	0.0%; 65.9%	478.7	72.5%	37.3%; 100.0%	356.8
Severn Trent Water	41.8%	34.9%; 49.9%	190.5	58.2%	50.4%; 65.8%	159.4
South East Water	68.2%	54.6%; 81.9%	344.9	31.8%	17.7%; 46.7%	171.6
South Staffs Water	12.9%	0.0%; 33.4%	48.1	87.1%	66.4%; 100.0%	120.8
South West Water	78.8%	69.1%; 87.4%	126.1	21.2%	13.0%; 31.0%	307.7
Southern Water	86.8%	78.6%; 94.0%	220.2	13.2%	5.5%; 21.9%	233.8
Thames Water	60.1%	51.1%; 68.8%	359.6	39.9%	31.5%; 48.6%	202.9
United Utilities	43.0%	35.8%; 51.0%	242.2	57.0%	49.1%; 65.4%	178.3
Wessex Water	68.1%	50.8%; 84.4%	258.9	31.9%	16.2%; 49.1%	141.2
Yorkshire Water	48.0%	39.1%; 56.1%	177.9	52.0%	44.5%; 60.6%	166.2
No information	31.1%	0.0%; 65.6%	2.0	68.9%	33.6%; 100.0%	454.0

Table 6. Households in water poverty at 5% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they are in arrears. Equivalised Income.

	In arrears - No			In arrears - Yes		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	97.5%	96.0%; 98.6%	337.7	2.5%	1.3%; 4.0%	146.6
England	97.4%	95.9%; 98.7%	339.4	2.6%	1.3%; 4.0%	146.6
Wales	98.1%	94.1%; 100.0%	300.7	1.9%	0.0%; 6.2%	692.1
Affinity Water	95.1%	86.5%; 100.0%	522.1	4.9%	0.0%; 13.3%	892.7
Anglian Water	97.9%	93.9%; 100.0%	501.7	2.1%	0.0%; 5.5%	452.2
Bournemouth Water	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	275.6	-	-	-
Bristol Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	501.2	-	-	-
Cambridge Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	904.2	-	-	-
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	98.2%	94.0%; 100.0%	300.7	1.8%	0.0%; 5.8%	692.1
Essex & Suffolk Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	353.5	-	-	-
Hafren Dyfrdwy	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	155.9	-	-	-
Northumbrian Water	94.2%	80.1%; 100.0%	279.5	5.8%	0.0%; 18.4%	1049.3
Portsmouth Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	251.8	-	-	-

SES Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	204.2	-	-	-
Severn Trent Water	97.6%	91.8%; 100.0%	273.3	2.4%	0.0%; 8.0%	47.4
South East Water	97.8%	92.9%; 100.0%	216.6	2.2%	0.0%; 8.2%	720.3
South Staffs Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	301.2	-	-	-
South West Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	279.3	-	-	-
Southern Water	96.3%	88.1%; 100.0%	255.1	3.7%	0.0%; 12.3%	28.1
Thames Water	99.1%	96.9%; 100.0%	489.4	0.9%	0.0%; 3.0%	40.4
United Utilities	93.6%	86.6%; 98.9%	246.9	6.4%	1.0%; 13.6%	127.6
Wessex Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	525.2	-	-	-
Yorkshire Water	96.3%	91.5%; 100.0%	160.7	3.7%	0.0%; 8.7%	445.2
No information	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	167.8	-	-	-

Table 7. Households in water poverty at 3% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they are in arrears. Equivalised Income.

	In arrears - No			In arrears - Yes		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	96.7%	95.6%; 97.7%	222.4	3.3%	2.4%; 4.3%	192.0
England	96.7%	95.5%; 97.6%	225.8	3.3%	2.3%; 4.4%	192.0
Wales	96.7%	92.6%; 99.6%	208.7	3.3%	0.5%; 7.1%	169.4
Affinity Water	96.1%	90.7%; 100.0%	308.7	3.9%	0.0%; 9.0%	375.2
Anglian Water	98.2%	96.1%; 99.7%	221.9	1.8%	0.3%; 3.8%	520.5
Bournemouth Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	93.8	-	-	-
Bristol Water	74.5%	43.7%; 100.0%	228.6	25.5%	0.0%; 56.2%	193.8
Cambridge Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	813.7	-	-	-
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	96.8%	92.9%; 99.6%	210.6	3.2%	0.4%; 7.2%	169.4
Essex & Suffolk Water	94.1%	85.4%; 100.0%	226.1	5.9%	0.0%; 15.1%	231.2
Hafren Dyfrdwy	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	173.0	-	-	-
Northumbrian Water	91.2%	83.1%; 97.8%	172.8	8.8%	1.9%; 17.1%	104.3
Portsmouth Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	364.1	-	-	-

SES Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	356.8	-	-	-
Severn Trent Water	96.9%	93.3%; 99.6%	166.4	3.1%	0.4%; 6.8%	69.2
South East Water	95.3%	88.8%; 100.0%	269.6	4.7%	0.0%; 10.4%	118.5
South Staffs Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	189.1	-	-	-
South West Water	99.1%	97.0%; 100.0%	178.2	0.9%	0.0%; 3.1%	146.6
Southern Water	96.7%	91.2%; 100.0%	224.9	3.3%	0.0%; 8.2%	399.8
Thames Water	98.0%	95.7%; 99.6%	284.8	2.0%	0.5%; 4.1%	107.7
United Utilities	95.7%	91.9%; 98.9%	209.3	4.3%	1.1%; 8.4%	292.8
Wessex Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	232.9	-	-	-
Yorkshire Water	95.2%	91.9%; 97.9%	172.4	4.8%	2.2%; 7.6%	189.2
No information	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	293.5	-	-	-

Table 1a. Households living in water poverty at 5% threshold for England and Wales, and by water & sewage provider in 2024/25. Unequalised Income.

	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	7.2%	6.6%; 7.8%	291.0
England	7.2%	6.6%; 7.9%	295.9
Wales	7.3%	5.4%; 9.2%	201.0
Affinity Water	8.6%	5.8%; 11.9%	408.9
Anglian Water	7.8%	5.3%; 10.7%	418.3
Bournemouth Water	1.9%	0.0%; 6.2%	63.8
Bristol Water	4.7%	1.5%; 9.0%	333.6
Cambridge Water	8.6%	0.0%; 19.1%	645.1
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	7.1%	5.4%; 8.9%	217.0
Essex & Suffolk Water	8.1%	4.4%; 12.1%	435.5
Hafren Dyfrdwy	4.8%	0.0%; 12.9%	171.5
Northumbrian Water	5.1%	3.4%; 6.8%	166.0
Portsmouth Water	3.7%	0.7%; 8.1%	198.4
SES Water	9.2%	2.2%; 17.3%	310.4
Severn Trent Water	6.5%	5.1%; 8.1%	213.6

South East Water	6.7%	4.4%; 9.2%	283.9
South Staffs Water	5.4%	1.5%; 10.0%	258.7
South West Water	7.2%	5.0%; 9.5%	268.9
Southern Water	5.9%	4.3%; 7.9%	226.2
Thames Water	10.9%	8.8%; 13.6%	483.8
United Utilities	6.2%	4.9%; 7.5%	254.2
Wessex Water	4.6%	2.7%; 6.8%	142.8
Yorkshire Water	5.3%	4.2%; 6.6%	219.7
No information	13.2%	6.7%; 20.3%	287.8

Table 2a. Households living in water poverty at 3% threshold for England and Wales, and by water & sewage provider in 2024/25. Unequalised Income.

	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	14.9%	14.2%; 15.7%	212.6
England	14.8%	14.0%; 15.6%	212.0
Wales	16.5%	14.3%; 19.0%	224.3
Affinity Water	14.3%	11.0%; 17.9%	275.9
Anglian Water	15.4%	12.6%; 18.3%	226.3
Bournemouth Water	14.6%	7.0%; 27.8%	83.5
Bristol Water	11.5%	6.6%; 17.1%	228.6
Cambridge Water	20.3%	5.8%; 36.8%	530.6
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	16.4%	13.9%; 18.8%	224.3
Essex & Suffolk Water	19.4%	14.2%; 25.1%	222.4
Hafren Dyfrdwy	18.5%	7.4%; 31.9%	124.4
Northumbrian Water	11.1%	8.7%; 13.4%	156.4
Portsmouth Water	10.7%	5.5%; 17.2%	145.3
SES Water	17.9%	8.6%; 29.1%	245.0
Severn Trent Water	13.9%	12.0%; 15.8%	198.1

South East Water	14.6%	11.2%; 18.0%	200.5
South Staffs Water	13.5%	7.2%; 20.1%	192.2
South West Water	13.3%	10.3%; 16.4%	257.1
Southern Water	13.1%	10.6%; 15.6%	202.1
Thames Water	18.6%	16.0%; 21.6%	276.5
United Utilities	14.5%	12.7%; 16.5%	184.9
Wessex Water	11.7%	8.6%; 14.8%	185.1
Yorkshire Water	13.6%	11.7%; 15.6%	159.2
No information	24.0%	15.2%; 33.3%	245.4

Table 3a. Characteristics of households in water poverty at 3% and 5% thresholds at 2024/25 prices. Unequalised Income.

	Water poverty based on a 3% threshold			Water poverty based on a 5% threshold		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
Ethnicity of Head of Household						
White	13.2%	12.5%; 14.0%	193.1	6.1%	5.6%; 6.6%	253.2
Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	17.6%	10.8%; 25.0%	302.9	11.4%	5.5%; 17.7%	294.5
Asian/ Asian British	22.5%	17.9%; 27.4%	336.4	11.8%	8.0%; 16.7%	667.1
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	26.4%	21.3%; 32.5%	224.2	13.1%	9.6%; 16.4%	326.5
Other Ethnic Group	27.7%	19.1%; 36.9%	507.3	20.3%	12.1%; 30.6%	746.5
Not declared	21.1%	0.0%; 69.8%	28.9	0.0%	0.0%; 0.0%	0.0
Household composition						
One adult over pension age, no children	19.6%	17.7%; 21.4%	143.4	7.1%	6.0%; 8.1%	145.2
One adult under pension age, no children	29.9%	27.3%; 32.3%	225.9	17.9%	15.8%; 20.1%	266.4
Two adults over pension age, no children	7.8%	6.0%; 10.1%	204.3	2.9%	1.4%; 5.0%	1,154.4

Two adults, one over pension age, no children	12.8%	10.0%; 15.8%	188.7	4.7%	2.8%; 6.6%	142.3
Two adults under pension age, no children	10.4%	9.0%; 11.8%	237.6	5.4%	4.4%; 6.4%	405.9
Three or more adults, no children	5.8%	4.0%; 7.7%	285.2	2.6%	1.4%; 3.9%	349.1
One adult with child/ren	26.8%	23.4%; 30.5%	218.6	11.8%	9.2%; 14.4%	202.3
Two adults with child/ren	9.4%	8.0%; 10.9%	233.8	3.7%	2.7%; 4.6%	430.0
Three or more adults with child/ren	8.0%	2.3%; 16%	1,149.1	6.1%	0.8%; 13.4%	1,380.5
Disability within the family (benefit unit)						
No-one is disabled in the family	14.4%	13.4%; 15.5%	235.6	7.5%	6.6%; 8.3%	332.1
Someone is disabled in the family	15.6%	14.5%; 16.7%	191.0	6.7%	5.9%; 7.5%	244.7
Whether water charges are metered						
Yes	12.6%	11.7%; 13.7%	227.0	6.6%	5.8%; 7.5%	332.4
No	16.3%	15.1%; 17.6%	194.0	6.7%	6.0%; 7.5%	244.7
Whether receive water rebate						
Yes	11.3%	6.3%; 17.5%	83.9	5.5%	2.1%; 9.5%	100.8
No	12.6%	11.7%; 13.6%	229.3	6.7%	5.9%; 7.5%	337.6
Whether have been behind with water rates in last 12 months						

Have not been behind water bill	14.6%	13.8%; 15.4%	214.0	7.0%	6.5%; 7.7%	295.4
Have been behind water bill	39.3%	30.2%; 48.2%	204.8	17.9%	11.6%; 25.1%	145.8

Table 4a. Households in water poverty at 5% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they have a water meter. Unequalised Income.

	Water meter - Yes			Water meter - No		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	61.9%	57.7%; 66.0%	332.4	38.1%	34.1%; 42.1%	244.7
England	62.7%	58.4%; 66.8%	338.3	37.3%	33.0%; 41.7%	248.7
Wales	49.4%	36.4%; 61.9%	253.7	50.6%	38.1%; 63.8%	186.4
Affinity Water	79.7%	65.9%; 91.5%	493.5	20.3%	9.3%; 34.9%	332.1
Anglian Water	74.5%	61.9%; 84.7%	342.3	25.5%	15.1%; 37.2%	304.7
Bournemouth Water	-	-	-	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	278.2
Bristol Water	71.8%	15.8%; 100.0%	498.6	28.2%	0.0%; 72.4%	220.5
Cambridge Water	28.6%	0.0%; 100.0%	307.5	71.4%	0.0%; 100.0%	645.1
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	52.7%	39.5%; 64.4%	265.7	47.3%	34.1%; 59.9%	201.0
Essex & Suffolk Water	57.0%	31.9%; 82.5%	494.0	43.0%	19.9%; 68.3%	263.8
Hafren Dyfrdwy	27.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	7.8	73.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	171.5
Northumbrian Water	60.8%	38.9%; 79.7%	273.7	39.2%	19.7%; 60.8%	166.0
Portsmouth Water	46.6%	0.0%; 100.0%	198.4	53.4%	0.0%; 100.0%	65.6

SES Water	31.9%	0.0%; 100.0%	188.6	68.1%	0.0%; 100.0%	310.4
Severn Trent Water	46.5%	35.7%; 57.6%	259.4	53.5%	43.7%; 64.0%	169.4
South East Water	64.1%	44.2%; 82.6%	572.8	35.9%	17.6%; 55.0%	59.1
South Staffs Water	15.7%	0.0%; 62.6%	1980.1	84.3%	32.7%; 100.0%	77.6
South West Water	79.3%	66.1%; 90.9%	264.1	20.7%	8.7%; 35.2%	268.9
Southern Water	86.0%	72.5%; 96.8%	241.7	14.0%	3.2%; 26.1%	98.5
Thames Water	69.3%	58.8%; 78.4%	518.0	30.7%	21.7%; 40.8%	323.4
United Utilities	50.9%	39.7%; 61.2%	260.7	49.1%	39.6%; 60.2%	234.6
Wessex Water	65.6%	40.5%; 87.3%	139.0	34.4%	12.1%; 57.6%	617.2
Yorkshire Water	46.9%	35.0%; 59.0%	260.5	53.1%	40.4%; 65.4%	151.8
No information	19.0%	0.0%; 53.6%	288.3	81.0%	45.8%; 100.0%	443.9

Table 5a. Households in water poverty at 3% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they have a water meter. Unequalised Income.

	Water meter - Yes			Water meter - No		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	56.2%	53.4%; 58.9%	227.0	43.8%	41.0%; 46.6%	194.0
England	57.1%	54.1%; 60.0%	226.3	42.9%	40.2%; 46.0%	193.4
Wales	43.3%	35.0%; 52.0%	244.3	56.7%	47.7%; 65.4%	210.5
Affinity Water	74.2%	62.0%; 84.2%	283.5	25.8%	16.7%; 36.4%	233.9
Anglian Water	79.1%	71.4%; 84.9%	171.6	20.9%	14.7%; 28.5%	373.3
Bournemouth Water	57.9%	28.8%; 85.5%	83.5	42.1%	15.7%; 72.3%	79.6
Bristol Water	68.3%	42.6%; 89.2%	227.0	31.7%	9.9%; 56.6%	275.5
Cambridge Water	44.3%	0.0%; 85.4%	1419.5	55.7%	13.9%; 100.0%	530.6
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	45.3%	37.0%; 53.2%	251.2	54.7%	46.8%; 63.2%	207.7
Essex & Suffolk Water	54.3%	37.0%; 72.7%	239.8	45.7%	30.3%; 62.5%	224.2
Hafren Dyfrdwy	23.3%	0.0%; 68.0%	28.0	76.7%	33.5%; 100.0%	130.0
Northumbrian Water	45.7%	34.0%; 58.3%	172.9	54.3%	41.1%; 66.9%	85.9
Portsmouth Water	41.3%	12.1%; 73.3%	200.3	58.7%	28.3%; 88.2%	117.6

SES Water	32.1%	6.5%; 66.7%	475.5	67.9%	34.9%; 93.7%	245.0
Severn Trent Water	38.6%	31.6%; 45.2%	211.9	61.4%	54.4%; 68.1%	188.7
South East Water	61.4%	48.9%; 75.8%	214.2	38.6%	24.8%; 52.4%	138.5
South Staffs Water	18.0%	0.0%; 40.4%	105.1	82.0%	59.6%; 100.0%	127.0
South West Water	75.5%	64.7%; 85.2%	220.9	24.5%	15.0%; 35.3%	328.7
Southern Water	79.5%	69.7%; 88.1%	207.7	20.5%	12.2%; 29.2%	171.8
Thames Water	62.2%	54.1%; 70.3%	364.9	37.8%	29.8%; 46.8%	209.2
United Utilities	48.0%	40.8%; 55.4%	184.9	52.0%	45.1%; 58.9%	171.8
Wessex Water	57.4%	41.8%; 71.7%	185.1	42.6%	27.8%; 57.8%	141.2
Yorkshire Water	44.8%	37.7%; 52.5%	129.2	55.2%	47.4%; 62.4%	163.1
No information	12.3%	0.0%; 34.8%	287.8	87.7%	66.7%; 100.0%	310.9

Table 6a. Households in water poverty at 5% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they are in arrears. Unequalised Income.

	In arrears - No			In arrears - Yes		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	97.0%	95.8%; 98.3%	295.4	3.0%	1.8%; 4.3%	145.8
England	97.0%	95.6%; 98.2%	301.7	3.0%	1.8%; 4.3%	145.8
Wales	97.3%	92.5%; 100.0%	201.0	2.7%	0.0%; 7.3%	881.9
Affinity Water	95.2%	88.2%; 100.0%	400.6	4.8%	0.0%; 12.9%	988.9
Anglian Water	97.2%	92.9%; 100.0%	418.3	2.8%	0.0%; 6.7%	436.6
Bournemouth Water	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	63.8	-	-	-
Bristol Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	333.6	-	-	-
Cambridge Water	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	645.1	-	-	-
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	97.3%	92.6%; 100.0%	217.0	2.7%	0.0%; 7.3%	881.9
Essex & Suffolk Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	435.5	-	-	-
Hafren Dyfrdwy	100.0%	0.0%; 100.0%	171.5	-	-	-
Northumbrian Water	93.6%	83.0%; 100.0%	273.7	6.4%	0.0%; 16.2%	8.4
Portsmouth Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	198.4	-	-	-

SES Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	310.4	-	-	-
Severn Trent Water	98.0%	93.4%; 100.0%	222.7	2.0%	0.0%; 6.2%	68.2
South East Water	93.6%	83.1%; 100.0%	283.9	6.4%	0.0%; 16.6%	59.9
South Staffs Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	258.7	-	-	-
South West Water	97.9%	92.2%; 100.0%	268.9	2.1%	0.0%; 7.3%	143.0
Southern Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	226.2	-	-	-
Thames Water	99.0%	97.3%; 100.0%	483.8	1.0%	0.0%; 2.7%	172.8
United Utilities	93.7%	87.1%; 99.0%	260.7	6.3%	1.2%; 13.0%	210.6
Wessex Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	142.8	-	-	-
Yorkshire Water	92.2%	85.7%; 97.4%	210.3	7.8%	2.5%; 14.3%	255.9
No information	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	287.8	-	-	-

Table 7a. Households in water poverty at 3% threshold at 2024/25 prices by water company, and whether they are in arrears. Unequalised Income.

	In arrears - No			In arrears - Yes		
	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median	Percent	95% Confidence Interval	Yearly gap (£s) for water poor, Median
England and Wales	96.9%	96.0%; 97.6%	214.0	3.1%	2.3%; 4.0%	204.8
England	96.9%	96.0%; 97.7%	212.6	3.1%	2.2%; 4.1%	204.8
Wales	96.7%	93.1%; 99.3%	224.3	3.3%	0.5%; 6.7%	230.3
Affinity Water	96.0%	90.8%; 100.0%	263.5	4.0%	0.0%; 9.3%	309.7
Anglian Water	98.1%	95.9%; 99.7%	226.3	1.9%	0.3%; 4.0%	556.4
Bournemouth Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	83.5	-	-	-
Bristol Water	94.0%	80.0%; 100.0%	228.6	6.0%	0.0%; 20.9%	22.1
Cambridge Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	530.6	-	-	-
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water	96.8%	93.3%; 99.5%	224.3	3.2%	0.5%; 6.6%	230.3
Essex & Suffolk Water	93.1%	82.1%; 100.0%	224.2	6.9%	0.0%; 17.2%	59.6
Hafren Dyfrdwy	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	124.4	-	-	-
Northumbrian Water	94.1%	87.3%; 99.0%	164.9	5.9%	1.1%; 12.5%	124.7
Portsmouth Water	88.5%	62.9%; 100.0%	200.3	11.5%	0.0%; 36.9%	117.6

SES Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	245.0	-	-	-
Severn Trent Water	98.1%	95.8%; 99.7%	203.0	1.9%	0.3%; 4.4%	81.7
South East Water	95.5%	88.9%; 100.0%	200.5	4.5%	0.0%; 10.6%	318.4
South Staffs Water	96.2%	87.1%; 100.0%	283.7	3.8%	0.0%; 14.6%	77.0
South West Water	98.9%	96.2%; 100.0%	256.4	1.1%	0.0%; 3.9%	397.8
Southern Water	96.9%	92.3%; 100.0%	201.6	3.1%	0.0%; 8.1%	204.8
Thames Water	98.1%	96.2%; 99.7%	280.7	1.9%	0.3%; 3.9%	174.5
United Utilities	95.7%	92.3%; 98.4%	183.6	4.3%	1.5%; 7.6%	317.9
Wessex Water	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	185.1	-	-	-
Yorkshire Water	93.6%	90.3%; 96.9%	160.3	6.4%	3.1%; 10.0%	149.3
No information	100.0%	100.0%; 100.0%	245.4	-	-	-

Appendix Table: Comparison of water industry estimates of average bill and the those derived from the (FRS) 2024/25

	Water	FRS average water bill	Sewerage	FRS average sewerage bill	Final Combined Average Bill (£) 2024-25	FRS combined bill	Number of households surveyed
Anglian Water	234	367.5	287	238.0	521	522.1	1,213
Dŵr Cymru	186	361.2	313	133.2	500	521.8	1,146
Hafren Dyfrdwy	225	229.2	201	126.1	427	506.4	50
Northumbrian Water	204	388.1	219	298.5	423	429.0	657
Severn Trent Water	231	362.3	222	275.7	453	473.2	1,655
South West Water	216	343.8	310	383.3	526	503.5	463
Southern Water	204	390.7	273	298.4	477	478.8	692
Thames Water	259	371.2	220	279.8	479	533.9	1,384
United Utilities	231	410.4	259	193.2	489	490.3	1,412
Wessex Water	289	404.7	272	257.7	561	520.9	388
Yorkshire Water (incl. York)	217	436.4	250	-	467	492.4	1,405
Affinity Water	240	264.0	-	248.8	-	477.0	648
Central region	235	-	-	-	-	-	-
East region	278	-	-	-	-	-	-

Southeast region	291	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bournemouth Water	194	248.9	-	296.5	-	465.1	74
Bristol Water	235	191.3	-	277.7	-	463.9	121
Essex & Suffolk Water	318	290.9	-	262.3	-	539.4	221
Portsmouth Water	150	163.5	-	-	-	446.5	103
South East Water	303	459.0	-	-	-	500.6	474
South Staffordshire Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cambridge Water	203	-	-	-	-	703.0	32
South Staffs Water	224	-	-	-	-	421.8	122
SES Water	231	280.5	-	191.2	-	601.5	62
No information	-	389.9	-	238.6	-	421.2	97
National average England and Wales	227	331.7	250	276.3	477	487.5	12,691



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