

FOR YOU. FOR LIFE.



The science behind
your tap water
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Have your say on
our future plans

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WELCOME

Doesn't time fly. It only seems like yesterday our Autumn/Winter edition was delivered to households. The clocks have gone forward, evenings are lighter, flora and fauna have burst back into life and this can only mean one thing: welcome to the Spring/Summer 2023 edition of our customer magazine.

In this issue we take a look inside the laboratory and the work that is undertaken by our lab team – including microbiologists, chemists and samplers to make sure that the water flowing from your taps is of high quality and safe to drink.

We also explain why water bills have gone up. We realise that there are some people who still struggle to pay their bill so please contact us if you are finding your bill hard to afford.

We are committed to finding new and innovative ways to help us provide clean water and effective sewerage services by using the latest gadgets and cutting-edge technology. On page 14 find out how we are using artificial intelligence (AI) to help us detect blockages.

We also address how we are tackling and rising to the challenge of storm overflows. And we suggest some ways you could reduce the amount of surface water that enters the sewer network by doing your bit to capture rainwater before it enters the sewer, but recognising that it is largely our responsibility.

So take time out, make a cup of tea and enjoy the magazine and the spring sunshine.

EDITOR'S LETTER



Marilyn Smith
Group Director of
Communication
& Community

We want to hear from you...

Write to us at Wessex Water Magazine, Public Relations, Wessex Water, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7WW or email us at editor@wessexwater.co.uk

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4-5

in the news.

Pete Orchard rounds up what's been happening near you.

Top up with tap water

We have installed water refill points at towns and cities right across our region, making it easier than ever to stay hydrated on the go.

Southgate Street in Bath became the 24th location to have one of our units, switched on in March to provide free tap water to locals and visitors to the shopping hotspot.

Since 2019, we've been working with councils and businesses in our supply region to install refill points in public spaces. The units are cleaned, maintained and inspected regularly to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and water quality.



Coupled with our mobile refill stations, which we bring along to public events on our patch, we're committed to helping customers eliminate single-use plastics. In turn, this prevents thousands of unrecyclable bottles ending up in landfill. Manufacturing a plastic bottle requires three times more water than it actually holds, not to mention 2,000 times more energy than it takes to deliver fresh tap water through our network of pipes.

There is an interactive map showing the locations of our permanent refill points at [wessexwater.co.uk/refill](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/refill)

YTL Wessex Academy launched

Recognised by the government as an Employer Provider of Apprenticeship training, we're now able to deliver in-house apprenticeship programmes.



The YTL Wessex Academy has been launched to help us provide a sustainable workforce for the future, who will benefit from experienced colleagues' vast knowledge.

A first for the UK water industry and regulated by Ofsted, the academy is delivering our Water Process Technician and Water Process Operator apprenticeships.

Early Careers Manager Becca Thurston said: "We want to provide apprentices with the best possible training and experiences to help ensure they have long and fulfilling careers with us. The best way to do this is for them to learn from our expert colleagues who know these roles inside out."

Proud to be a leading apprenticeship employer in the south west, we offer a range of roles suited to people with different skills and backgrounds. Whether you're academic or more practically inclined, our technical and office-based apprenticeships

are available from a level 2 – equivalent to five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above – through to degree level.

Find out more and view our latest vacancies at [wessexwater.co.uk/careers](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/careers)

Laying a Foundation for debt-free futures

Debt advice services have been boosted thanks to a £160,000 package of funding from the Wessex Water Foundation.

We have long and established partnerships with the debt advice sector, working with Citizens Advice and other organisations since 2005 to develop a range of schemes to help customers afford their bills, repay debts and reduce their water and energy use.

The latest services supported include Community Money Advice centres and foodbanks in areas including Dorset, South Somerset and Wiltshire. Seven new projects will directly increase capacity in the debt advice sector, helping our partners deliver much-needed services in these tough times.

Meanwhile, we retained the Cabinet Office's Customer Service Excellence award and were the top performing water and sewerage company in the UK Customer Service Index in February.

Both assessments recognised our culture of compassion and commitment to helping people, including more than 55,000 customers who were struggling financially through a range of affordability schemes and payment plans.

Working with Avonmouth communities

Alongside communities around Bristol's water recycling centre in Avonmouth, we have formed a new liaison group to discuss current and future activity at the site in Kings Weston Lane.



The Avonmouth Community Liaison Group was established following a public consultation last year around a proposed multi-million pound extension of the centre, plans for which are being submitted for approval this spring.

Representatives from residents' planning groups in Shirehampton, Lawrence Weston and Avonmouth will meet regularly with us to discuss how the site can work positively with the local community, identifying and resolving issues as well as hearing updates on the expansion plans and how water recycling services are being enhanced for Bristol.

The group has met twice already, with Bristol City Council members and other local community and business representatives also invited. The planning groups can be contacted by visiting www.bristolnpn.net

To contact us or find out more about Wessex Water see our contact details on page 15 or visit: [wessexwater.co.uk](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk)

Wessex Water
YTL GROUP



Tackling storm overflows



Preventing diluted, but untreated, wastewater from releasing back into our rivers and seas is a challenge Wessex Water is stepping up to meet. Matt Wheeldon, Director of Infrastructure Development (pictured right), explains what we are doing.



Storm overflows. We know many of our customers don't like them - and we're absolutely clear we don't agree with using them.

According to the Environment Agency's own data, overflows are thought to account for less than one percent of the reasons why our rivers and seas do not achieve good ecological status - because what is being released is so heavily diluted.

Overflows have been part of the sewerage network in this country - and in many other countries around the world - because the majority of sewers carry both rain and sewage and they prevent properties from flooding following intense rainstorms.

One property's rainwater run-off can be the equivalent to the flow rate from 100 separately drained properties.

There is no quick fix.

The reality is that eliminating them entirely will take time, money and a change in emphasis of the way the sewerage system works.

To do so immediately - as is often demanded and as we would love to do - is physically impossible. Replumbing the sewerage system, which has been built this way for the last 150 years, will take time, bring significant disruption to our communities as well as an increase in sewerage bills.

Our firm commitment is to progressively eliminate them - a sizeable challenge in itself, but one Wessex Water is already investing £3 million a month towards and with plans to increase this to more than £9 million a month if funding is agreed.

Solutions include separating rainwater to stop it entering the sewers or constructing large storage tanks to contain the combined rain and sewage for later treatment.

The latter has significant environmental and cost consequences - so one of Wessex Water's main priorities is separating the rain from the sewage before it combines.

Recently, we invested more than half a million pounds to protect the coastline around historic Portland Bill Lighthouse in Dorset to do just that.



One of more than 80 projects up to 2025 addressing storm overflows, our project separated rainwater, running off nearby roofs and roads, from the system that carries sewage from homes, businesses and the public toilets in the lighthouse car park.

The project reduces the likelihood of the combined sewer being overwhelmed during heavy or prolonged rainfall, which could result in excess storm water being released into the sea.

Having invested more than £181 million upgrading more than 600 storm overflows since 2000, a further £150 million will have been spent in the five-year period from 2020 to tackle this issue.

But longer term, we need various changes in legislation and regulation to encourage separation of rain at each property.

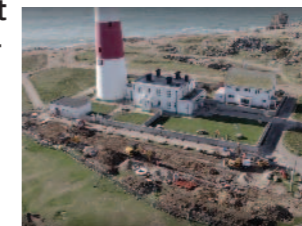
Property owners need to be encouraged to value rain firstly as a resource, capturing it locally for reuse (such as for garden watering) and then disposing the surplus back into the environment (such as through rainwater gardens and/or soakaways) thereby mimicking nature and avoid combining it with sewage. See page 6.

Not only will this reduce customers' bills, but it will also reduce storm overflow operation and require a much lower carbon footprint than alternative solutions.

If we want to tread more lightly on our planet, we need to address storm overflows as a society, not just once rain has been combined with sewage.

Overflow solution reigns at Portland Bill

- The Portland Bill project is part of Wessex Water's Storm Overflow Improvement Plan, which aims to deliver a 25 per cent reduction in the number of hours of discharges from storm overflows by 2025.
- With Portland Bill within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and alongside the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC), we worked with Natural England and the Crown Estate to ensure the project was completed sensitively to the local environment.
- This included reinstating the grassland within the area of our project once it has been completed and working with businesses on Portland Bill to minimise any impact on them while the scheme was in progress.



What else we're doing about storm overflows

More treatment

- We're enhancing capacity at 14 recycling centres - including Bristol's water recycling centre at Avonmouth. This proposal will allow us to treat more sewage and wastewater from a rapidly-expanding city, while also protecting the environment and will shortly be considered by Bristol City Council planning department.
- We're spending more than £15 million over the next two years constructing a new pumping station and transfer pipeline to replace the existing water recycling centre at Ubley in Somerset, reducing the impact of treated wastewater and number of storm overflow discharges into Blagdon Lake and the Congresbury Yeo.

Increasing storage

- We're spending nearly £2 million to build a stormwater storage tank in the centre of Bradford on Avon, reducing discharges into the River Avon by more than three-quarters.

Nature-based solutions

- Wetlands and reedbeds are being explored at several rural sites where the infiltration of groundwater is the primary cause of overflow operation, such as Shrewton Water Recycling Centre in Wiltshire. After primary treatment at water recycling centres, a nature-based solution provides sufficient biological treatment to ensure there is no environmental impact.

Preventing infiltration

- We're continuing our programme of rehabilitating sewers throughout the Wessex Water region, relining and sealing them to ensure they are structurally sound from the threat of infiltration from high groundwater levels.
- Last year we spent nearly £3.5 million relining more than 11km of sewers throughout the Wessex Water region.

Find out more on what we're doing and where at [wessexwater.co.uk/overflows](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/overflows)

Manage rainwater and reduce your bill

Heavy rainfall can lead to increased runoff from roofs and surfaces leading to more water entering the sewer network, which can cause storm overflows to automatically operate.

We recognise it is largely our responsibility to reduce storm overflows, which is why we are spending £3m a month to tackle the issue - see pages 4-5 for more.

But if we can all do our bit to capture rainwater before it enters sewers it will help to reduce how often overflows operate. And you can use the rainwater you collect in your garden which saves water, and money if you're on a meter.

Here are some things you could do to reduce the amount of surface water that enters the sewer network.



Install a water butt

Water butts are used to collect and store rainwater that lands on the roof of your home, garage, shed or greenhouse. This water can then be used on your garden during dry weather.



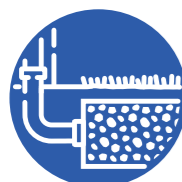
Create a rain garden

A rain garden is a shallow area of ground, or a raised bed, that consists of absorbent soil with plants that can handle temporary flooding. You could direct your property's downpipes towards this section of your garden instead of a drain.



Think about drainage

If you're considering paving over your front garden, upgrading your driveway or constructing a patio, it's important to think about drainage beforehand. Concrete and block paving are not great for drainage. Loose stones and gravel are much better as they allow water to drain through them.



Build a soakaway

A soakaway is essentially a hole in the ground filled with stones or specially designed plastic crates. They help prevent flooding and reduce stress on the sewer network. Soakaways are built underground and are connected to a downpipe, which carries rainfall away from the property.



Save £25 on your bill

As you pay a charge for rainwater draining from your roof to the sewer, you could save around £25 off your bill by disconnecting downpipes, storing rainwater in a water butt and distributing any surplus rainwater across your garden or into a soakaway.

Find out more at [wessexwater.co.uk/surface-water-drainage](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/surface-water-drainage)



Inside the laboratory Meet the team



As an island nation we are never further than 70 miles from the sea - with over 200,000km of waterways and 40,000 lakes, sometimes we can take our water for granted. But have you ever stopped to consider the science behind how we make sure that the water flowing from your taps is great quality and safe?

Emily Larque caught up with our Head of Analytical Services, Sue Clancy (bottom left), at our bustling scientific laboratory in Saltford, near Bath.

How many people work in the labs, and what do they do?

We have around 100 people working in or as part of our labs team - including microbiologists and chemists, and there's also our sampling team out and about across our region.

Alongside everyone else at Wessex Water, we're all working hard to provide wholesome drinking water for our customers. We also perform tests to help ensure treated wastewater that we return to the environment is safe and meets required standards. Protecting public health and the environment is our priority.

What's involved?

We receive around 1,000 sample bottles every day and work 365 days a year, including Christmas Day, to undertake all sorts of tests - making sure things

like pesticides, metals and algae aren't present and that pH levels are correct. We also undertake taste and odour assessments.

Last year we completed 1.2 million tests.

Can you tell us what is in our water?

This depends on where you live, and you might notice a difference if you holiday elsewhere in the UK. Most of the water we supply to your taps originally comes from groundwater, filtered through rocks beneath our feet.

Groundwater tends to be hard water, which is why you might get limescale in your kettle. While some people might prefer soft water for washing their hair and cleaning, customers tell us harder water tastes better. It also contains more minerals like calcium and magnesium to help keep you healthy.

We are often asked about fluoride, do we have it in our water?

We don't add fluoride to our water supply, but traces of fluoride do occur naturally in many water sources. It's a much-debated issue - but any decision to add fluoride to water wouldn't be made by us - it would be made by local authorities and, through them, the Department of Health and Social Care. We haven't been approached by any authority to do this in our region.

Thanks Sue, it's been really interesting to hear all about the science behind our water.

You can find out more about the composition of your drinking water on our website:

[wessexwater.co.uk/water-quality](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/water-quality)

Support for local communities

We support communities across the region through a range of initiatives – find out what we've been up to so far this year and learn about the support available.

Local projects receive £170,000 worth of grants

The Wessex Water Foundation Community Fund recently provided more than £170,000 to over 60 projects that aim to bring people together and strengthen communities.

Here's what some of the groups had to say about our support:

Creative Outbursts received funding to support young people aged between 10 and 18 years old in South Ward, Weston-super-Mare.

Project Manager Elaine Harris said: "The grant will enable us to deliver awareness and information sessions about dental health and personal hygiene, while also supplying young people with a range of toiletries. We will also deliver a specific session on menstruation to support young women."

Thorncombe Village Shop secured a grant to continue hosting its weekly lunch club.

Chair of the village shop committee Anne Johnson-Rooke explained: "The lunch club is important as it provides a low-cost, home-cooked lunch for those who are on a limited budget. It is also an ideal opportunity for people to meet new friends and socialise."

Love Glastonbury received funding to buy supplies for their community pantry and fridge.

Trustee of the group Miranda Millan explained: "Many local people on low incomes would struggle to eat, or eat healthily, without the community fridge and pantry. A working mother, who regularly uses the fridge and pantry, said that they enable her to cook healthy meals despite rising prices."

Crosspoint Westbury can now offer financial advice to people in the local and surrounding area.

Treasurer at the charity Hilary Fairfield said: "We are using the funding to train 'Money Mentors' who will work with clients to help and advise on things such as budgeting, identifying outstanding debt and making sure they claim any benefits they are entitled to."

Funding for environmental projects

Applications are now open for the Wessex Water Foundation Environment Fund, which is offering additional funding this year.

The fund is offering nearly £30,000 worth of grants to projects across the region that aim to have a positive impact on the local environment. Applications close on Monday 22 May 2023.

We are working in partnership with the Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Quartet Community Foundations to help decide which projects will receive support.

To apply, please visit wessexwater.co.uk/funding



A helping hand from our volunteers

Our Water Force volunteers have been working hard to support charities and community groups across the region.

- Volunteers helped the Malmesbury Animal Sanctuary to install a new footpath, wire fence, compost bin and tool area.
- At Underway Meade in South Somerset, a team cleared brambles, nettles and overgrown areas, while also building a new entrance.
- Volunteers joined Dorset Wildlife Trust on Brownsea Island to clear cuttings from a meadow.
- Over six days, volunteers assisted Bath City Farm in clearing paths, bramble bashing, gardening and basic carpentry tasks.



Top up with tap water for free

We have installed 24 water refill points in towns and cities throughout the area we serve to help locals and visitors use less plastic and stay hydrated.

The refill points can be found in the following locations:

- West Somerset Coast Path, Minehead
- Picnic area, Clatworthy Reservoir
- Market Square, Taunton
- High Street, Wellington
- Fore Street, Bridgwater
- Picnic area, Sutton Bingham Reservoir
- Middle Street, Yeovil
- Buckydoo Square, Bridport
- South Street, Dorchester
- Market Place, Blandford
- Town Hall, Shaftesbury
- Hope Square, Weymouth
- Alexandra Gardens, Weymouth
- New Bond Street, Weymouth
- The Esplanade, Weymouth
- High Street, Salisbury
- Warminster Library, Warminster
- County Hall, Trowbridge
- Market Place, Devizes
- Town Hall, Melksham
- James Street, Bath
- Terrace Walk, Bath
- Sydney Gardens, Bath
- Southgate Street, Bath



There is an interactive map showing the locations of our permanent refill points at wessexwater.co.uk/refill

Supplying water at local races and events

We are helping runners and spectators to stay hydrated and use less plastic by supplying water at races and events across the region in 2023.



We have already supported the Yeovil Half Marathon this year and will be supplying the Bath Half Marathon with water again in October.

We are also working with Race for Life to supply water at some of their races, including Poole, Salisbury, Bath and Taunton.

Other events we are supporting include Immortal Stourhead, Taunton Flower Show, The Melplash Show and the Festival of Nature.

Free site tours and school visits



If you're a teacher, we can take your class on a tour of one of our sites to teach them about how we treat water and sewage. You can book tours at the following sites:

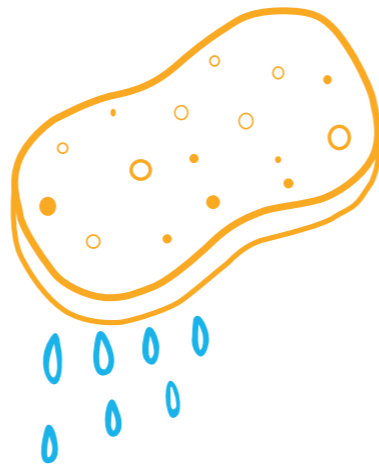
Weston-super-Mare; Saltford, near Bath; Avonmouth, near Bristol; Sutton Bingham, near Yeovil; Ashford, near Bridgwater; and Trowbridge.

Every year, we also visit hundreds of schools, nurseries and youth organisations to deliver hands-on learning activities which explain how we supply water to homes and protect our rivers and the sea through treating wastewater.

To book a school visit or site tour, please visit wessexwater.co.uk/education

SUPER SAVER

Are you a super saver or a sponge?



Most of us know that **saving every drop** is good for the planet, not to mention the bank balance when it comes to our water and utility bills.

Keeping tabs on what you use in the home and garden makes financial sense, especially if you're on a meter or regularly using the shower, washing machine and other appliances that impact your energy costs. But not all water savers are the same.

Think you're a super saver? Answer the quick questions below to find out if you're right!



You're doing the washing-up. Do you?

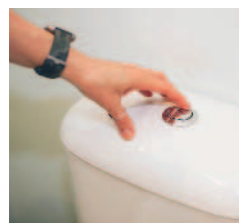
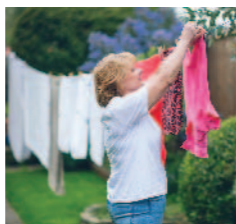
- A** - Fill the sink and wash under a running tap.
- B** - Fill a washing-up bowl.
- C** - Only run as much water as you need.

Washing up
2/3 customers turn the tap off when washing up

Washing machine
3/4 customers wear clothes more than once

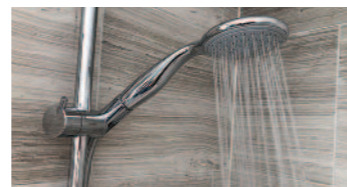
You need to wash some clothes. Do you?

- A** - Wash a few items as and when needed.
- B** - Only do full loads on eco setting.
- C** - Get extra wears out of clothes before washing.



You've just been to the toilet (for a wee). Do you?

- A** - Flush using any button.
- B** - Make sure you use the small flush button if you have one.
- C** - Don't flush this time (wait until next time).

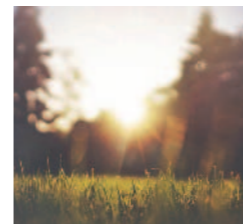


You're need to freshen up after a long day. Do you?

- A** - Run a deep bath.
- B** - Choose the shower.
- C** - Have a cooler, shorter shower.

Shower
half of our customers don't have a shower or bath every day

Toilet
half of our customers don't flush after every use



Your lawn has gone brown. Do you?

- A** - Soak it with a sprinkler.
- B** - Empty the kids' paddling pool on it.
- C** - Wait for the next rainy day (it will soon recover).

Brown lawn
2/3 customers leave it to go brown

Car
8 out of 10 customers rarely wash their car

Your plants are thirsty. Do you?

- A** - Connect a hose to your garden tap.
- B** - Fill a watering can from the tap.
- C** - Use rainwater from a water butt.



Plants
half of our customers reuse water used in the kitchen for plants

Your car is dirty. Do you?



- A** - Wash it with a running hose (it's the quickest way).
- B** - Use a bucket and sponge.
- C** - Only wash the windows.

Answered mostly A?

You're a sponge, a high water user! Don't worry though, taking just a few simple steps can massively reduce your daily water use and potentially save money on your water and energy bills.

Answered mostly B?

Well done, you're doing well - thinking about the water you use and making savings on your bill.

Answered mostly C?

Congratulations, you are a super saver! Thank you for using water responsibly, which benefits everyone and the environment. Spread the word to friends and family!

Anyone can calculate their water usage by visiting our website and using GetWaterFit, our digital engagement tool which offers tips on how to save and even allows you to claim a selection of FREE water-saving devices. Visit [wessexwater.co.uk/saving-water](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/saving-water)

Ways you can save more water

Sprinklers and hosepipes can splurge more than 500 litres in an hour, which is more than an average family of four uses in a day! Use a watering can instead to direct water to plant roots and mulch your soil to retain moisture in pots and borders. Collect rainwater in a water butt.

Mow your grass on a higher setting so it holds more water and let your lawn go brown - it will soon recover after a few showers. Re-use water from paddling pools, cooking or when your kitchen tap is running to hot to water plants.

Inside your home, fix any leaking toilets and taps. A leaking toilet can be hard to spot but up to 400 litres of water a day can be lost dribbling into the pan.

Having a ten-minute shower uses around 120 litres of water, so reduce it to four minutes to save 72 litres each time and cut your energy bill too.

Turn off the tap when brushing teeth and make sure you use the right flush button on your toilet.



Why have water bills gone up?

On 1 April 2023 our water and sewerage bills increased by around 9% on average, which works out around £3 a month for a two-person property on a water meter. We explain why your bills have gone up and how we can help if they've become unaffordable.

There are many different things that are considered when our water and sewerage charges are set for the year by our regulator Ofwat, but the two things that always play a big part of decisions are inflation and investment.

With inflation, many of our main costs such as power, chemicals and building

materials are rising above the current level of inflation. But despite the 9% rise in our bills being higher than previous years, we have been able to keep it below inflation.

In terms of investment, the amount we invest is tightly controlled and scrutinised by Ofwat, however we always invest substantially more money than we receive through bills in upgrading our assets and improving the services we provide.

This year our investment focuses heavily on upgrading our water recycling centres to improve the quality of treated wastewater that is released back into the environment, along with work to reduce how often storm overflows operate around our region - see pages 4-5.

The English water industry is privatised, so some customers will understandably question how Ofwat and water companies can justify bill increases when they make a profit for their owners and shareholders.

However, since privatisation in 1989, significantly higher investment has meant that leakage has halved in our region, beaches in Somerset and Dorset are among the cleanest in Europe and the quality of drinking water is world leading.

In 2022 we invested four times the amount of our profit into improving water and sewerage infrastructure and enhancing and protecting the environment.

How much will my bill go up?

The amount your bill will increase by depends on:

- the services you receive from us (water and sewerage, water only, or sewerage only)
- whether you have a water meter or not
- how much water you've used (if you're on a water meter)
- the time of year you receive your bill (relative to when our charges increased on 1 April 2023).

Two examples of typical increases are:

- A two-person household receiving both water and sewerage services and who is on a water meter will see a bill increase of around £3 per month.
- A typical household receiving both water and sewerage services and who is not on a water meter will see a bill increase by around £6 per month.

You can apply to switch to a water meter with our risk-free money back guarantee by visiting [wessexwater.co.uk/meter](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/meter)

What if I'm struggling to pay my bill?

We understand that for some customers, an increased water bill will be hard to afford, especially during the cost of living crisis.

There are many ways we can help if you're struggling to pay based on your personal situation, including a reduced bill, debt support if you're already behind on payments, flexible payment plans, payment breaks and a discount for pensioners on a low income.

Don't struggle alone, we're here for you.
Visit [wessexwater.co.uk/help-to-pay](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/help-to-pay)

Your say Your future



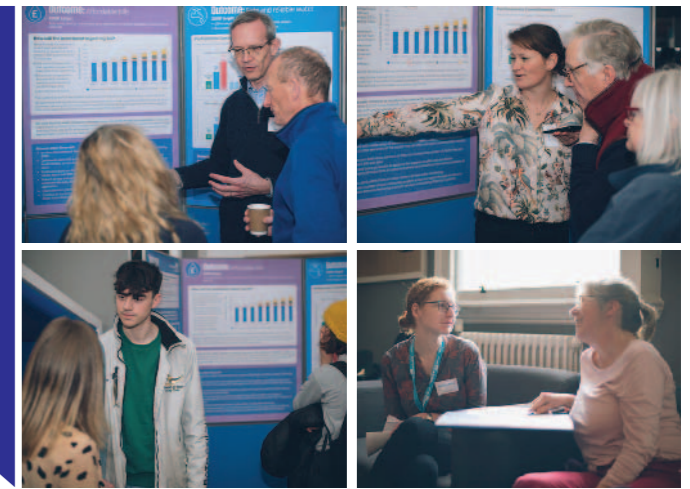
Customers have been having their say on Wessex Water's plans for the future.

Wessex Water is drafting its business plan for 2025-30, based on customer priorities, and, after further scrutiny and consultation, will be submitting it to Ofwat in October.

During February and March people attended events around the region to hear proposals for investment.

The plans are based on eight long-term outcomes that customers and stakeholders have said are most important to them, focusing on key areas such as keeping bills affordable and protecting the environment.

Independent researchers and the Wessex team sought customers' views at drop-in events. A session was held for stakeholders, including councillors and representatives from consumer and environmental organisations.



For people who were unable to attend the in-person events, Ofwat, the water industry regulator is working with Wessex Water to host an online engagement session - see below.

Sue Lindsay, Wessex Water's Director of Customer Policy and Engagement, said: "We've been talking to thousands of customers, businesses and stakeholders over the last two years to help us develop our future plans.

"These sessions are a great opportunity to hear feedback from customers and identify any areas we might need to change."

Find out more about our plans for the future at [wessexwater.co.uk/business-plan](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/business-plan)

Your water, your say

Wessex Water
YTL GROUP



Your water
your say

The **Your water, your say** meeting will allow you to hear about our detailed plan for 2025 to 2030 and ask us questions about it.

Your questions could cover:

- the service we provide
- our impact on the environment
- what will happen to your water bill
- or whatever other topic is important to you.

Join us online on
Friday 28 April (10am-11.30am)
Register at: [wessexwater.co.uk/events](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/events)

You can also find out more about the meeting on CCW and Ofwat websites.

Can't attend or missed the date? Don't worry, you can find out more about our proposed plans and share your views on our website [wessexwater.co.uk/business-plan](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/business-plan)

We'd also love to hear any questions, which you can send in advance to CCW via yourwateryoursay@ccwater.org.uk stating clearly that your question is for Wessex Water and that you are unable to attend and would like CCW to ask your question.

Alternatively, write to us and we'll send you details about our proposals and a survey for feedback: Wessex Water PR24 Team, Wessex Water, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7WV.



Intelligent sewers and smarter repairs

We're committed to finding new and innovative ways to help us provide clean water and effective sewerage services at an affordable price, which is why we continue to work with the latest high-tech gadgets and cutting-edge technology.

One example is how we've been using artificial intelligence (AI) to help us detect sewer blockages.

We're set to become the first company in the world to expand the use of AI technology across our entire 35,000km wastewater network after joining forces with the award-winning company StormHarvester.

Its Intelligent Sewer Suite uses machine learning and hyperlocal rainfall forecasting to detect potential blockages as they begin to form.

We put the technology to the test during a trial in Bath in 2020 and found it successfully detected more than 60 blockage formations, allowing our teams to locate and clear them before they could lead to bigger problems, such as sewage flooding or pollution events.

Asset Technology Manager, Jody Knight, said: "We're really proud to be rolling out this innovative AI solution across our entire

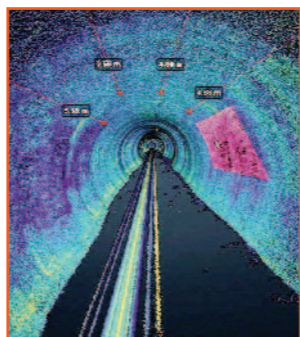
sewerage network. It's a huge step in our ambitions to significantly reduce blockages and improve efficiency in our sewerage operations."

Our sewer rehabilitation team also survey and repair sewers using innovative techniques that are quicker, safer, less disruptive, lower cost and have a smaller carbon footprint.

Rehabilitation Programme Manager, Julian Britton, explains: "We developed a robotic machine called the Re-rounder, inspired by human heart surgery, to deal with deformed sewer pipes.

"It uses automatic plates to push the pipe back to its original circular profile and leaves behind a metal stent - similar to those used to keep arteries open. We then re-line the inside of the pipe over the stent to ensure it's secure and watertight."

To check if sewer tunnels are structurally sound, Wessex Water also developed the world's first laser imaging, detection, and radar (LiDAR) survey, which is a remote-controlled raft that floats along to gather data and creates accurate 3D digital models of the inside of tunnels using AI technology to highlight any problems with millimetre accuracy.



Above: Our teams use high-tech equipment to check sewers, which includes the re-rounder machine (top); the metal stent (middle) to help with deformed sewers; and laser imaging technology (bottom) to detect problems.

Bin your wipes to avoid blockages

There are around 13,000 blockages on our public sewer network every year, most of which are caused by wet wipes being wrongly flushed down toilets.

Even if it says 'flushable' on the packaging, wet wipes really belong in the bin. Like sanitary products, they often contain plastic and don't break down like regular toilet paper - blocking pipes and contributing to storm overflow discharges.

New research by Water UK has found that 22% of people admit to flushing wipes, with men and 18 to 24-year-olds apparently the worst offenders. At Wessex Water, we have long campaigned for clearer 'do not flush' labelling and have lobbied the government, manufacturers and supermarkets to take the lead.

Flushed wipes end up in rivers and seas, putting wildlife at risk, and are one of the leading causes of fatbergs that clog up sewers and lead to flooding in houses, gardens and businesses.

So remember, only flush the three Ps - paper, poo and pee - to help avoid the misery and expense of sewage in your home.

For more information visit [wessexwater.co.uk/stop-the-block](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/stop-the-block)



Contact us

Billing enquiries
0345 600 3 600 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm;
Saturday, 9am to 1pm)

Submit an online enquiry via our website
[wessexwater.co.uk/contact-us](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/contact-us)

Water supply or sewerage enquiries
0345 600 4 600 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm,
emergencies only at other times)

Submit an online enquiry via our website
[wessexwater.co.uk/contact-us](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/contact-us)



Tell us what you think of our service and share your experience with others. Search Wessex Water on [trustpilot.com](https://www.trustpilot.com)





Grow your career this Spring

Looking for a change of scenery, where you can put your current skills and experience to good use?

We have unique and exciting opportunities local to you.

Join our team!



We're on the lookout for passionate, helpful and dedicated people so we can continue to provide essential services to our customers.

Roles include...

- IT Specialists • Customer Service Agents
- Project Engineers • Scientists • Water Samplers
- Electrical and Mechanical Experts • Construction
- Maintenance • Surveyors • Design Engineers
- Estimators • Tanker Drivers • Site Operators

If you enjoy...

- hands-on practical work where you'll be outside
- crunching numbers and analysing data
- helping others and resolving problems
- working with the local environment and nature
- meeting people and visiting picturesque places
- working with great people and leading teams

...you'll discover a career suited for you.
Find out more at wessexwater.co.uk/careers



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