

Rt. Hon. Alistair Carmichael
Chair – Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Committee

Email: EFRACOM@parliament.uk

Date: 18 December 2025

Dear Mr Carmichael

Thank you for your letter dated 26 November regarding debt recovery practices and support for vulnerable customers. We welcome the opportunity to confirm our approach and share the steps we take to support customers.

I can confirm that Wessex Water does not seek Suspended Committal Orders (SCOs), and we do not use bailiffs or enforcement agents to recover water or sewerage bill debts. We have also not had any complaints to the Consumer Council for Water in connection with our enforcement actions or failure to follow Ofwat's Paying Fair guidelines on recovering debt. As such, we have not completed a spreadsheet.

Our Debt Recovery Code of Practice is available for customers on our website and enclosed and sets out all the enforcement options that are available to us. While this includes measures such as bankruptcy, High Court Writ of Control and warrant of execution, these are not tools we use as standard practice. Before commencing any enforcement action, we assess the information we hold about a customer on a case-by-case basis to identify any vulnerability. Customers on one of our social tariffs would not routinely be taken through the County Court Claim process.

We recognise that increased water bills are challenging for some of our customers, and our approach is firmly focused on supporting those who cannot afford to pay. We have pledged to eradicate water poverty across our region by 2030 and actively support the development of a single social tariff, participating in Defra's working group.

To help customers manage their bills and prevent debt escalation, we promote our affordability schemes widely and make it as easy as possible to apply. Our support includes:

Flexible payment options - we provide affordable payment plans and payment breaks tailored to individual circumstances.

Wessex Water
Claverton Down
Bath BA2 7WW

Tel 01225 526 000
Web wessexwater.co.uk

Wessex Water Services Limited registered office
Registered in England No 2366648

Social tariffs and help schemes - we offer discounted tariffs or capped bills for low-income households, with auto-enrolment where possible. Over 75,000 customers currently benefit from discounts of up to 90% off their bills.

Debt repayment - we help customers to repay their debt by matching the payments they make.

External partnerships - we collaborate and partner with multiple charities and debt advice agencies to provide holistic support for vulnerable customers with many directly referring customers onto our schemes.

Dedicated support - our customer service teams are trained to identify and assist customers in vulnerable situations, offering tailored support based on their needs.

We are absolutely committed to supporting customers and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Ruth Jefferson
Chief Executive

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