

Our pledges

Introducing our five pledges

Our Business Plan for 2020 to 2025 has one simple objective – to deliver more of what matters to our customers. It was built around our customers’ priorities through an extensive engagement programme and led us to making five pledges to improve our service.

We’ve considered how the world around us is changing and made sure our plan is fit for the future. From climate change and population growth to smart technology – our pledges set out how we aim to transform our service and how we deliver it to our customers.

By delivering on our pledges, we’ll not only provide a great service, but we’ll contribute more to society. However, successful delivery of our plan is not entirely in our hands. Water is a precious resource and we live in an area where it’s coming under increasing pressure because of the changing climate and higher demand. We all need to use water wisely and we’re committed to helping our customers do this by providing information, support and incentives.





Our pledges in action



We'll provide you with high-quality water all day, every day

Our pledge in action

Nothing is more important to us than keeping our customers supplied with safe, clean water.

Highlights


- For 2022/23, we reported a water quality risk index score of 0.01, which places us as one of the top-ranking companies for water quality in the Drinking Water Inspectorate's 2023 report.
- We've maintained our excellent performance for minimising the number of customers contacting us about the taste, smell or appearance of their water and continue to be significantly better than industry average.



2023: Target met/not met

Target met:  Target not met: 

KPIs

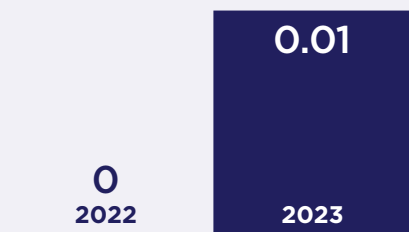
Water quality – DWI Compliance Risk Index (CRI) score 


Why do we measure this?

All water companies in the UK are measured against the DWI's CRI to ensure our water is of the highest quality.

Performance

We've determined our CRI score to be 0.01, which the DWI has confirmed as one of the top-ranking company scores in its July 2023 report.



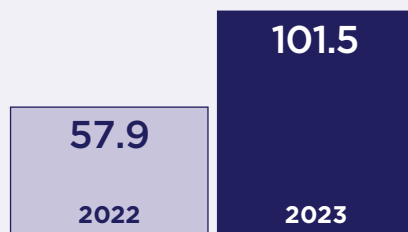
Mains repairs number/1,000 kilometres 


Why do we measure this?

We want our network to be as resilient as possible, which is why we have a programme of mains replacement schemes across our supply area.

Performance

The level of bursts seen over the year increased significantly – initially in the summer during the drought, and later in December as a result of the freeze/thaw – and we will receive a significant financial penalty from Ofwat.



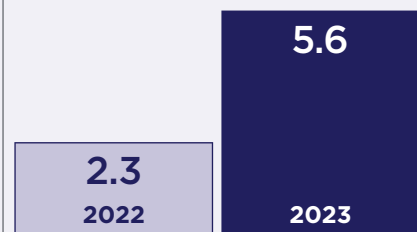
Water softening number of periods exceeding hardness target (mg/l) 

Why do we measure this?

We are unique in the industry in having a legal obligation to soften the groundwater we treat.

Performance

A number of operational outages, alongside chemicals supply chain disruption and periods of very high demand, resulted in a number of periods where softening did not meet its required target. We will again receive a financial penalty from Ofwat for the year.



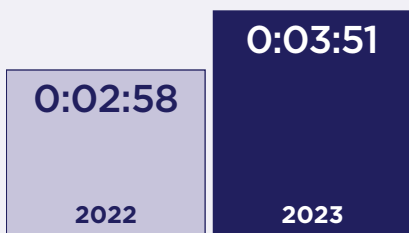
Supply interruptions hours:minutes:seconds/property/year 

Why do we measure this?

Although some planned interruptions to supply are unavoidable, we are always working to improve the long-term resilience of our supply network.

Performance

Our performance this year continues to be excellent, again beating our target, despite the challenges posed by the drought and December freeze/thaw, and we will again receive a financial reward from Ofwat.



Taste, odour and discolouration contacts number per 1,000 customers 

Why do we measure this?

We have a challenging target to minimise the number of customers who need to contact us about the taste, smell or appearance of their water.

Performance

We recorded 0.64 contacts per 1,000 customers this year, which is above our target limit of 0.50, so we will receive a financial penalty from Ofwat, but our performance continues to be significantly better than the industry average.



Our pledges in action



We'll provide your service at a fair price and offer help when you need it

Our pledge in action

This year we have been able to support our customers to pay their bill and provided financial support options when they have needed it the most.

Highlights

- Our average household bill for 2022/23 equated to around 60 pence a day.
- We know our customers are being impacted by the rise in cost of living and have continued to provide financial support to them through our 'Here For You' payment support schemes.
- We also regularly visit vulnerable customers to make sure the members of the community who need it most benefit from our support. This includes contact over telephone and attending food banks.
- 19,476 customers are benefitting from our Water Support Scheme, which provides a 50% bill reduction to eligible people. This means we are surpassing the target we set ourselves for year four of this five-year Business Plan period.
- 7% of our customers are on our Priority Services Register, which provides extra support to those who have health, access or communication needs.
- More than 80% of our customers think the extra services we offer are helpful.
- We reduced the volume of connected properties with no billing account to just 2.4% on average across the year, meaning more customers are paying for the water they are using.



2023: Target met/not met

Target met:  Target not met: 

KPIs

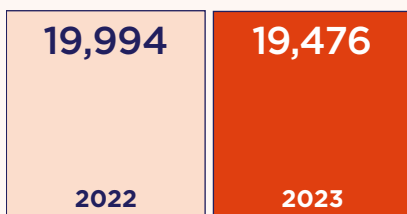
Supporting customers in financial hardship number

Why do we measure this?

We continue to welcome more customers, who are struggling financially, onto our Water Support Scheme, which provides a 50% bill reduction to eligible people.

Performance

We again exceeded our target for the number of customers benefitting from our Water Support Scheme, although the overall number dropped as customers who are no longer eligible were removed from the tariff.



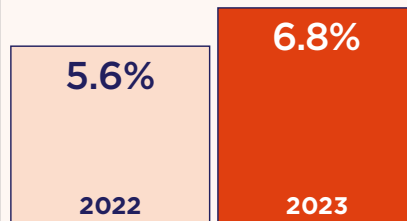
Customers on our Priority Services Register %

Why do we measure this?

Our Priority Services Register provides extra support to customers who have health, access or communication needs, and helps us tailor the help we can offer.

Performance

7% of customers are on the Register, well ahead of our target of 5.3% and putting us on track already to deliver our target for the new financial year.



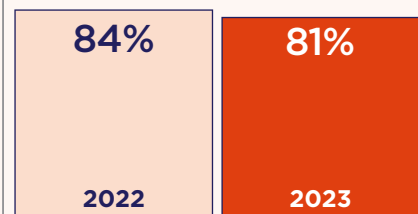
Vulnerable support scheme helpfulness %

Why do we measure this?

It is important we are tailoring our support in the right way to help those who need it.

Performance

We exceeded our target with 81% of people who receive the services agreeing that they are helpful.



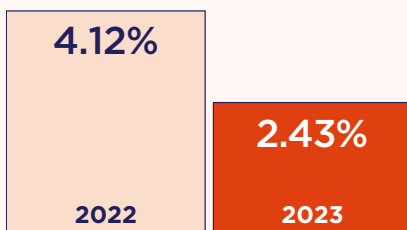
Void properties %

Why do we measure this?

We have a target to reduce the number of 'void' properties in our supply area, which means they are connected to our network but not charged for any water.

Performance

We achieved this target and will receive a financial incentive from Ofwat for this commitment for the first time.



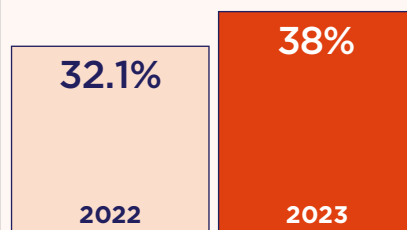
Vulnerable support scheme awareness %

Why do we measure this?

Promotion of our support schemes is important so people are aware of the financial help available to them.

Performance

We did not achieve this target but continue to work hard on promoting scheme awareness and delivered a 5.9 percentage point increase on last year.



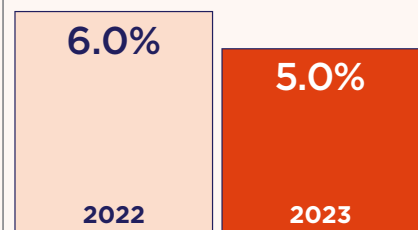
Proportion of customers who believe their bill is not good value % dissatisfied

Why do we measure this?

It is important our customers feel they are getting good value for the service they receive from us.

Performance

Just 5% of customers questioned told us they believe their bill is not good value, which is better than our target of 7%.



Our pledges in action



We'll provide you with a service that is fit now and for the future

Our pledge in action

We target our investment in our infrastructure every year where it is needed most and are using innovative technology to provide a better service to our customers.



28

Highlights

- We have stayed at or below the maximum allowed level of leakage every year since the target was first set more than 20 years ago and have once again met our leakage reduction target, which is industry leading.
- We have won a Utility Week Award for Innovation, recognising our investment in our 'smart' network technology to detect and fix leaks quicker.
- We also won the Asset Management Initiative of the Year Award and was shortlisted for Water Company of the Year at the Water Industry Awards in June.
- We have laid 13 kilometres of new main pipe in the past year and progressed a number of key mains replacement schemes across our supply area. As a result, we are on track to meet our target for the number of mains repairs in the remaining year of the AMP.
- Key mains replacement schemes have been completed this year across Edenbridge, Brockham and Redhill. We've also completed a new main from Langley Park to How Green. This means we're nearing completion of a 15-year resilience programme we've been progressing since 2010. By 2025, every property across our region will be supplied by more than one treatment works if, due to operational challenges, this is needed.

2023: Target met/not met

Target met:  Target not met: 

KPIs

Leakage reduction

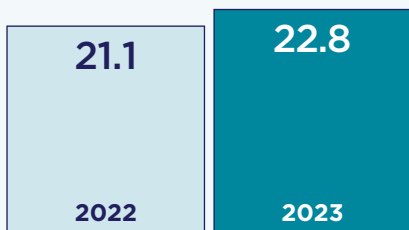
ML/day

Why do we measure this?

Managing leakage is one of our customers' top priorities and a key focus for us to keep to a minimum.

Performance

While higher than last year, due to the extremes of weather experienced, our overall leakage reduction performance continues to meet our required three-year target, and we remain on track to deliver the 15% reduction required by 2025.*



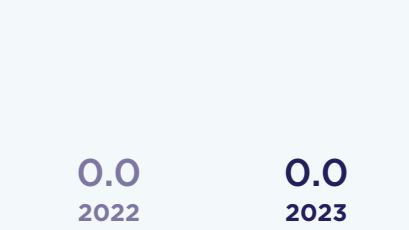
Risk of severe restrictions in a drought % customers

Why do we measure this?

We operate in a water stressed region, therefore we need to monitor our water resources closely.

Performance

Despite most of England being declared in drought last year, we did not impose any restrictions on the use of water during the year.



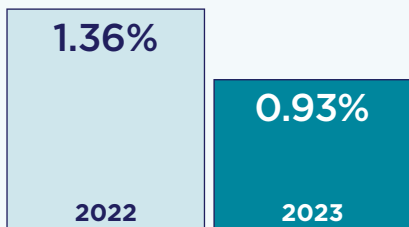
Unplanned outages at treatment works %

Why do we measure this?

There are times when unexpected incidents reduce the performance of our WTW or require us to take them out of service for maintenance.

Performance

Our ongoing focus on operating, maintaining and investing in our WTW continues to secure the delivery of our unplanned outage target.



Risk of supply failures

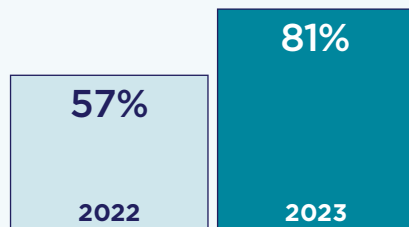
% of properties connected to more than one treatment works

Why do we measure this?

By 2025, we plan for every property to be supplied by more than one treatment works if needed.

Performance

As a result of the culmination of five resilience projects delivering over the last year, more than 180,000 further customers now benefit from being connected to two treatment works.



* We are continuing to conduct work - overseen by Ofwat - to ensure our water balance reporting is fully compliant with all regulatory guidelines. Whilst we are confident in the accuracy of our leakage reporting, we have agreed with Ofwat that we will not seek to apply for any outperformance payments associated with our leakage performance until this work is concluded.

Our pledges in action



We'll provide excellent service, whenever and however you need it



Our pledge in action

We want the most satisfied customers in the country and to get there we are fundamentally changing a lot of what we do and significantly investing in our people and the systems they use.

30

Highlights

- We achieved our highest ever C-MeX ranking of 10th for the period January to March 2023. For the full year, we finished 13th, which is two places up from last year.
- We have launched MyAccount, an online platform accessed via our website, so customers can more easily pay their bills, manage Direct Debits, see how much water they're using and more. Since launch, there has been more than 56,000 registrations to the platform.
- We have recently improved our dedicated service for bereaved customers, provided our field teams with braille passes and offered Dementia Friends training to our whole workforce.
- We've increased the number of employees in our Customer Care team and now answer over 95% of calls within 30 seconds.
- We've re-designed our complaints journey and introduced new Root Cause Analysis reporting that is enabling us to target and remove the drivers of customer dissatisfaction.
- We've developed a new Customer Academy to give our employees all the development and support they need to deliver excellent service to our customers.



2023: Target met/not met

Target met:  Target not met: 

KPIs

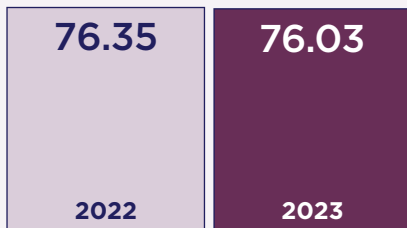
C-MeX (industry measure of customer satisfaction) score

Why do we measure this?

C-MeX is the industry metric for measuring customer satisfaction and experience across all companies.

Performance

Although we've improved our position, unfortunately we did not meet our target of customers ranking us in the upper quartile of industry performance and will again receive a financial penalty from Ofwat for this commitment.



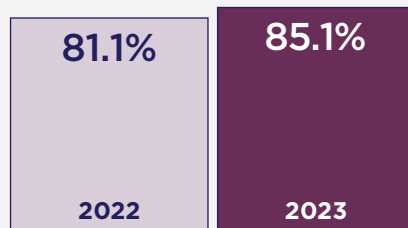
First contact resolution %

Why do we measure this?

It is important that our customers receive an excellent, tailored resolution every time they contact us.

Performance

We increased our performance by 4 percentage points from last year and achieved our target of 85% of contacts being resolved first time.



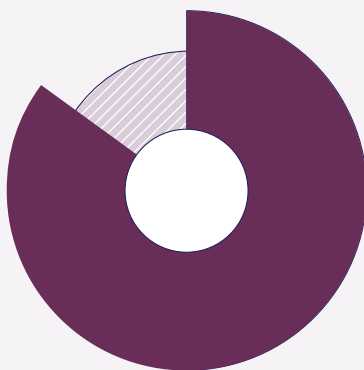
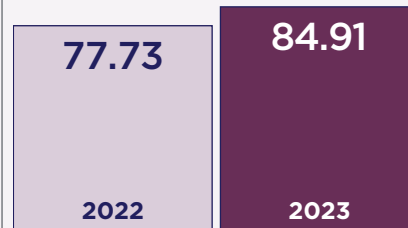
D-MeX (industry measure of developer satisfaction) score

Why do we measure this?

D-MeX is the industry metric for measuring developer satisfaction and experience across all companies.

Performance

For D-MeX our overall position of 12th is improved on last year. We are responding more quickly to developer applications, keeping them updated on progress and better tailor our services to meet their needs.



85.1%
Number of customer contacts resolved first time



Our pledges in action



We'll support a thriving environment we can all rely on

Our pledge in action

We are committed to reducing the impact of our operations by achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and continuing to implement more sustainable ways of pumping, treating and distributing millions of litres of water every single day.



32

Highlights

- We retained the Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark Award for the third year at our Elmer Treatment Works and the second year at Fetcham Springs in Leatherhead. We are the only water company to currently hold the accreditation and expect one more site to follow by 2025.

- More than two thirds of our customers are already metered and we are looking to provide meters for 90% of our customers by March 2025.

- We launched our draft Water Resources Management Plan for consultation, which looks ahead 50 years and helps us understand how much water will be available and how much we will need to supply.

- Our vehicle fleet now comprises 30% electric vehicles, with each electric car helping to save 2-3 tonnes of CO₂e per year, as well as reducing the impact on local air quality.

- We have partnered with Run Series to support both Run Gatwick and Run Reigate as the events' official water provider, avoiding more than 48,000 single-use plastic water bottles from being given out at each event.


- We've continued our work with Bore Place, a charity local to our Bough Beech site, and a number of other partners to assess opportunity to develop biodiversity net gain on a landscape scale.

2023: Target met/not met

Target met:  Target not met: 

KPIs

Consumption

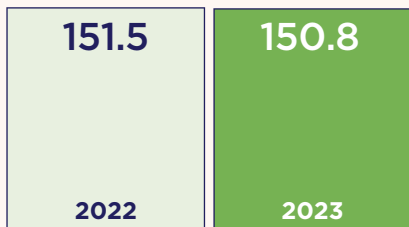
litres consumed per person per day 

Why do we measure this?

We operate in a region classified as being in serious water stress, which is why we have a target to reduce the amount of water per person we need to take from the environment.

Performance

Whilst slightly lower than last year, our PCC remains too high and we again fall short of our target. Recent performance in a year of extremes does provide some encouraging signs, demonstrating the benefits of our ongoing metering, water efficiency and customer engagement programmes.



Greenhouse gas emissions

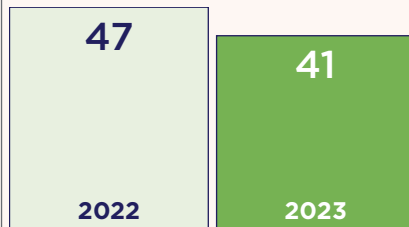
kgCO₂e/megalitre 

Why do we measure this?

We are committed to achieving net zero operational carbon emissions by 2030.

Performance

The progression of our net zero carbon plan has seen further reductions in greenhouse gases this year through ongoing energy efficiency and switching of fleet to pure electric vehicles and heating to non-fossil fuel alternatives.



Abstraction Incentive Mechanism

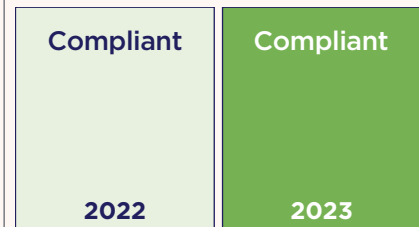
average megalitres reduction 

Why do we measure this?


The Abstraction Incentive Mechanism (AIM) means we will reduce abstraction of water from environmentally sensitive sites when flows or levels are low, but this has not been necessary this year.

Performance

We remain compliant with our AIM target, focused on reducing abstraction in chalk catchments during sensitive times of year.



River-based improvement – delivery of Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP)

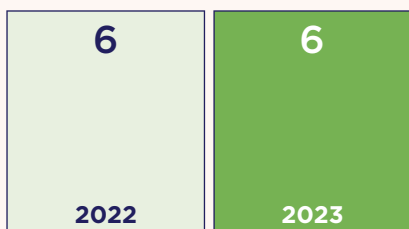
number of schemes 

Why do we measure this?


We are committed to improving the ecology and the quality of water in rivers through delivery of WINEP.

Performance

We continue to deliver our programme of work to the plan agreed with the Environment Agency (EA). From June 2023, the Ofwat and EA plan realign, and we will be fully compliant with this performance commitment in next year's report.



Pollution incidents

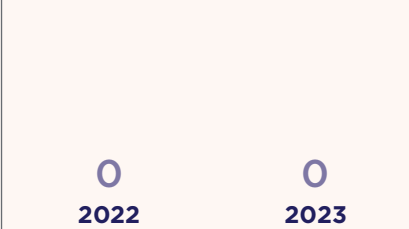
number of category 1 and 2 incidents 

Why do we measure this?


We are committed to measuring our performance against varying levels of pollution.

Performance

We continue to deliver our commitment on minimising pollutions, having not caused a category 1 or 2 pollution incident for over 15 years. We also remain in full compliance with all our environmental abstraction licences and discharge consents.



Land-based improvement – biodiversity

number of sites awarded benchmark 

Why do we measure this?

We are committed to protecting and improving the biodiversity at all of our sites.

Performance

Reaccreditation of both our benchmark sites was confirmed this year, and progress is on track to receive our third award – for Bough Beech WTW – by March 2024.

