

Making life better for our customers every day

Customer vulnerability
strategy summary 2025



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Introduction



Our Purpose

To bring environmental and social prosperity to the region we serve through our commitment to love every drop. 

Here at Anglian Water, we're dedicated to making life better for you – our customers – every single day. We know how important it is to you that we are reliable, helpful and there when you need us most.

We understand that sometimes life throws unexpected challenges your way. That's why we've built a clear plan to support you if you ever need extra help – whether that's now or in the future.

We launched our first vulnerability strategy in 2018 and are proud to have consistently overachieved against Ofwat* vulnerability targets. We currently have over 444,000 customers on our Priority Services Register (as of March 2025). And we're not stopping there. We continue to explore how we can work with partners, to reach more customers in need of help. We also listen to what our customers are telling us and have built your feedback and suggestions into our plans for the future.

"Along with our amazing teams, I'm absolutely committed to providing the care and support our customers who need extra help deserve – and I'm proud to see how everyone at Anglian Water holds true to this commitment. Whether it's a personal contact, translator, different coloured bills, or simply a little more time, the vast range of support we offer has helped over 444,000 customers in the last year alone. This strategy reinforces our commitment and our drive to go even further."

Jane Taylor
Head of Customer Services



* Ofwat regulates the water sector in England and Wales.

Our promises to you

To deliver on our customer vulnerability strategy, we're removing potential barriers you may face in accessing support. We're creating a flexible, accessible and easy to use service that promises:

You're in control

We're here for you

We can enable you

You have options

In this summary of our vulnerability strategy, we will highlight the help that is available. We will also share what we've delivered recently and what our short-, medium- and long-term plans are to make sure we continue to be there, when you need us.

Holding ourselves to account against these promises

We've set ourselves clear targets and are regularly assessed by independent experts, so you can trust that we're delivering on what we promise. Our strategy follows – and goes beyond – expectations set out by Ofwat, so you can be sure we're putting your needs first.

What we're doing in relation to our promises

You're in control

We're making it easy to:

- **Manage your Priority Services online** using MyAccount or our app.
- Register, update, or remove support options anytime – instantly.
- Choose someone you trust to help with your account through our nominee scheme.
- Tell us how you'd like to be contacted (letter, call, text, or email).

And **smart metering** is giving customers more visibility and control over water use.

We can enable you

We're removing barriers:

- MyAccount and our app are available in **multiple languages**.
- Access to a personalised affordability hub helps you select the best options to manage your bills.
- It's easy to request bills in large print, audio, or even coloured paper to make things easier to read.
- We provide access to **free translations services and British Sign Language Interpreter**.
- Joined-up support from your energy and gas suppliers, to make sure you're getting all the help you're entitled to.

We're here for you

We provide you with:

- **Specialist Priority Services team** for personalised support.
- **Access to free confidential 24/7 mental health** support through our partners SHOUT.
- A **dedicated bereavement line** and access to a free tell us once service.
- Access to services, even if you're offline.
- Support from our trusted partners like Stepchange, Kidney Care UK and local councils.

You have options

- Contact us in the way that suits you: phone, live chat, WhatsApp, email, or post.
- Tailored **tariffs and payment plans** to fit your circumstances.
- Access to the **Extra Care team** for help with financial or personal challenges.
- **Medical Needs Discount** for those who need to use more water, due to health reasons.
- Added protection and peace of mind against scams and bogus callers.



Priority Services – extra help when you need it

Anyone can experience vulnerability at any time. It may be temporary or may require longer-term support. Our services have been built on this basis: to offer a helping hand when customers need it most.

We know life doesn't always go to plan. Sometimes, a bit of extra help can make a big difference. That's why we offer Priority Services: free support services, designed around you and your needs.

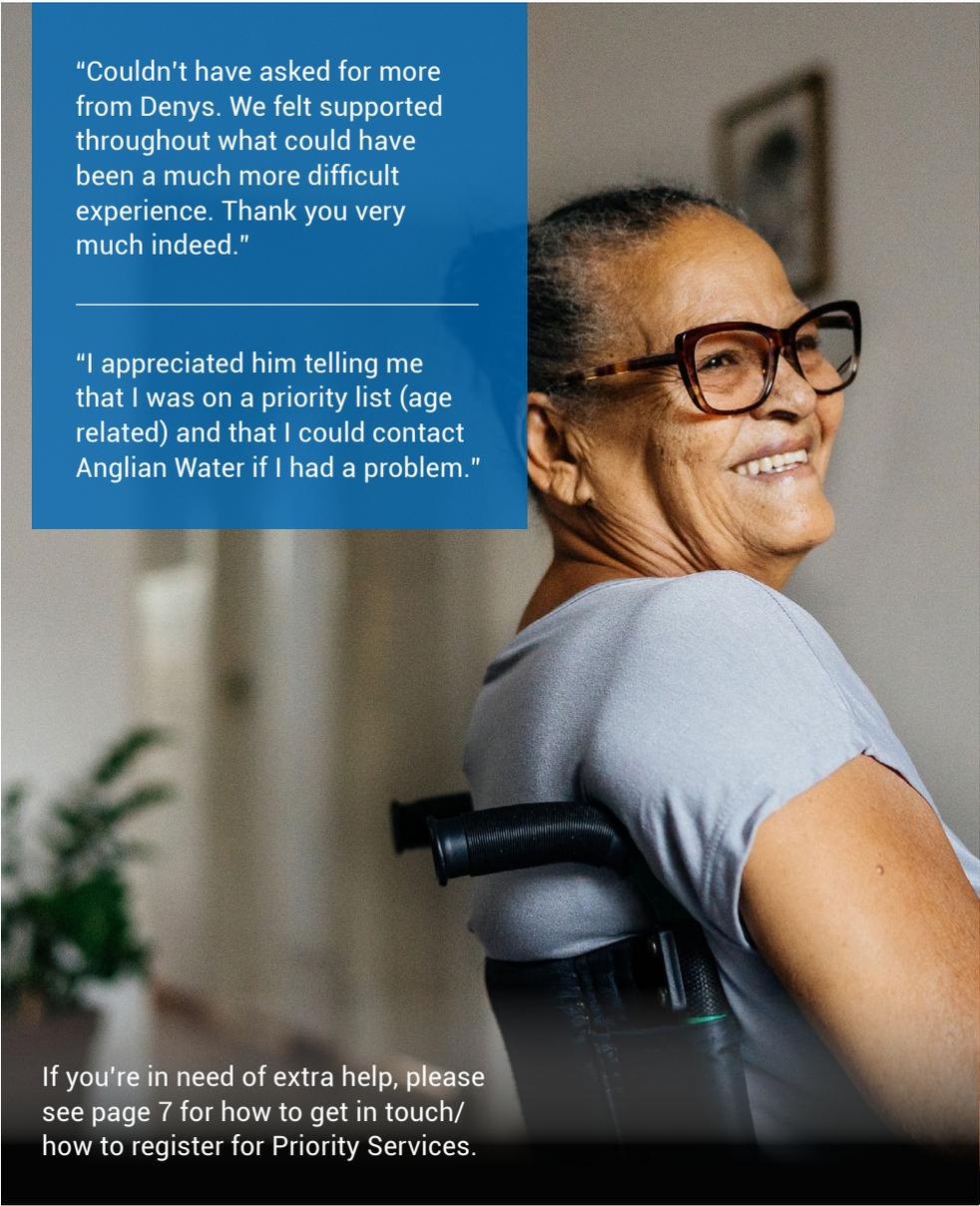
Whether it's day-to-day help, or urgent support in an emergency, we're here to make things easier, safer and more accessible.

Here's what you can expect:

- **Priority contact** and (where needed) bottled water if your water supply is interrupted.
- **Advance notice** of planned work in your area.
- **Tell us how you'd like to be contacted** – by text, call, letter, or in a format that works best for you.
- Access information in a **range of languages and formats**.
- Contact us using the **method that's easiest for you** – phone, WhatsApp, email, or live chat.
- Manage your account **your way** – whether online, over the phone, or face-to-face – we'll support you in the way that works best for you.
- **Instant access to manage your support** – update your details, change preferences, or register for extra help in real time, through our app or MyAccount.
- Speak directly to our dedicated **Priority Services team**.
- Set a **secure password** to protect your account.
- **Change or update** your support quickly, using our app or MyAccount.

15% 444,000 people on our PSR (15% of customers)

 **1,800** customers supported each week



Help with your bills

We understand that health problems, financial worries and life changes can make things more difficult. That's why we offer Extra Care, a range of support designed to help you manage your bills, ease some of that pressure and give you one less thing to worry about.

- A **free Extra Care Assessment**: Our trained team will look at your circumstances and help you find the best support, including discounts, payment plans and even benefits you might not know you're entitled to.
- **Save up to 50% on your water bill** with one of our discounted tariffs.
- Set up an **affordable payment plan** that works for your budget.
- Ask for a **payment break** if things are particularly tough.
- Access our **Debt Forgiveness Scheme** if you've fallen behind.
- **Pay directly from your benefits**, if that's easier.
- Get **leakage allowances** if a leak has caused a high bill.
- **Switch to a meter** – and if our metering programme hasn't come to your area, you can switch back again if it doesn't save you money (this is our two-year switch back guarantee).
- Access help from trusted **charities and support organisations** who can give you expert advice tailored to your needs.



"As a family, we have been through a devastating time recently and we needed some help with our bill. Rebecca went above and beyond and helped us in ways we didn't know about. Thank you so much."

"While dealing with my meter reading enquiry, she asked me about our finances and worked out that we were eligible for help with our water bills. I was totally unaware of this assistance and we're so grateful for her time and patience in dealing successfully with this issue."

 In the last five years we have provided **£315 million** in support.

Last year we signposted over **£67 million** in unclaimed benefits.

If you're facing tough times, please reach out. You don't need to manage it all on your own – we're here to help, listen and support you however we can. See page 7 for how to get in touch for Extra Care support.



How to get in touch – whatever the circumstances

We offer you a variety of ways to get in touch, as we know choice is important. These include by phone, post, email, WhatsApp and through MyAccount and our website. We also have a text relay service and a live British Sign Language interpretation service.

To get help with your bills, find out if you're eligible for Extra Care, or to sign up for our Priority Services Register, contact our team on:

0800 232 1951

Or visit the website/use our app:

Extra Care:

anglianwater.co.uk/extra-care

Priority Services:

register quickly and easily at anglianwater.co.uk/priority, via MyAccount or the app

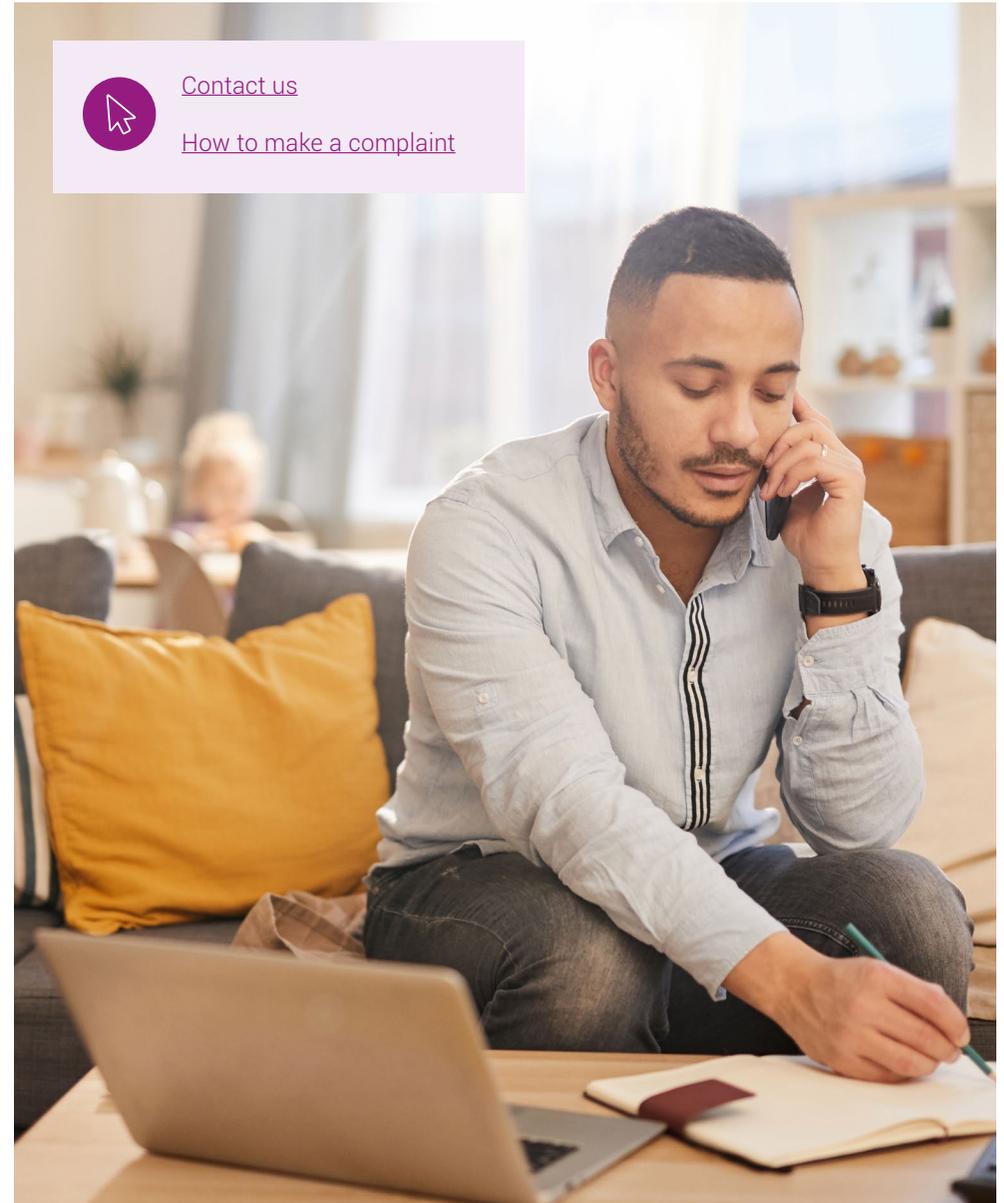
Something not gone to plan? We're here to put things right.

Our commitments to you;

- We will make sure we provide a service that meets your needs, in line with required customer service standards.
- We'll let you know when you have been added to the Priority Services Register and what support you can receive.
- If you fall behind with payments, we will always contact and let you know about ways we can help.

If something doesn't meet expectations, we're here to put it right. We understand how important it is to feel heard and supported, especially when things don't go as expected. That's why we make it simple to get in touch in a way that works for you whether it's online, over the phone or in writing.

We have a dedicated team in place to help. They'll listen, understand your concern and stay with you from start to finish, to make sure everything is resolved. Our focus is always on doing the right thing and making sure you get the support you deserve, every step of the way.

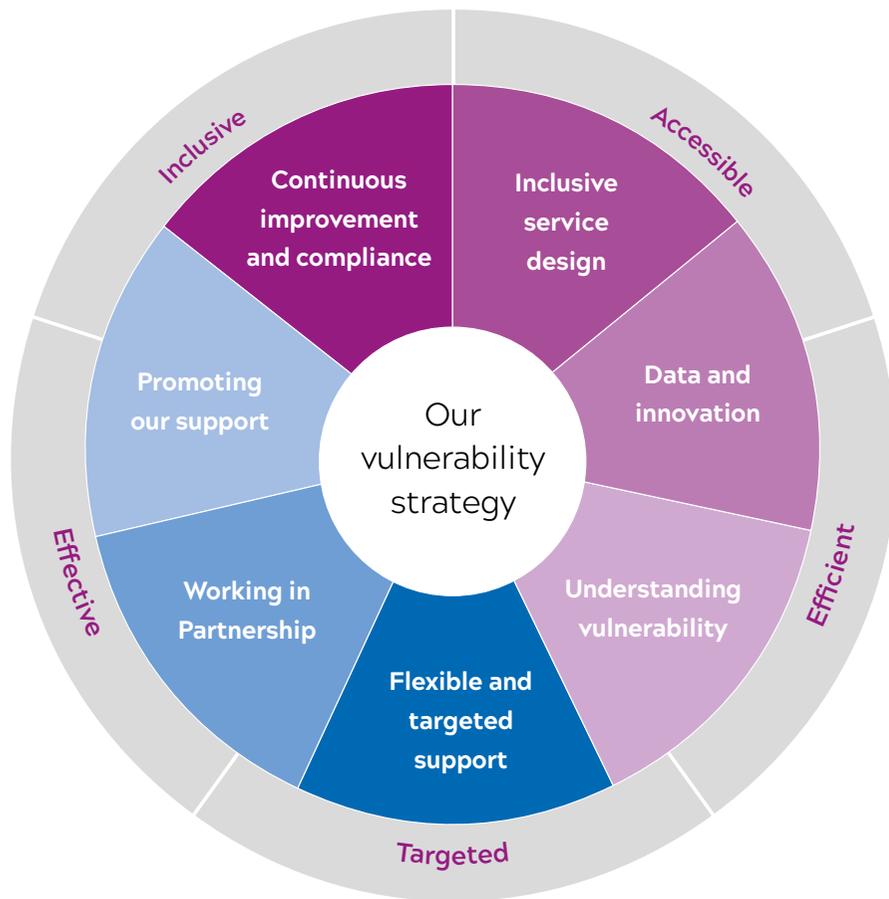


Listening to customers, working with partners



Sharing our plans with customers and partners has helped us learn about the specific challenges and needs of the communities we serve. Through collaboration, we've been able to understand customer needs better and develop a plan that is realistic and flexible. We engage with a wide range of partners and meet with four key customer groups regularly to get their input on all sorts of topics – from bill changes to business priorities.

We've built our vulnerability strategy on the back of this input. It's built around seven key areas that matter to you.



Case study: Help with the loss of a loved one

We actively collect over 150,000 pieces of customer feedback and monitor more than 3.5 million digital interactions, so we can enhance and improve our services.

Through analysing calls, we've been able to identify bereavement as our highest vulnerability disclosure. This led to a review of our bereavement process and the introduction of a dedicated bereavement line and webpage – making it quicker and easier for bereaved customers to access support.

This led to us forming a partnership with Life Ledger and creating a 'tell us once' bereavement service, making us the first company to create a partnership of this nature. In addition:

- Our dedicated vulnerability teams undertook bereavement training with Cruse.
- We partnered with specialist probate partners Philip & Cohen, to help support our customers.
- We built a partnership with Marie Curie, to refer customers to their dedicated support line and help raise critical funds for the charity.

"I had to change accounts as my mum passed away. Matt was sympathetic, friendly, patient, helpful and great to talk to. I wish every company had a Matt! He really did make everything easy for me. Thank you."



Doing more for you through partnerships

We are proud to lead our industry with strong partnerships that help support our customers, especially those who would benefit from extra help. Over the past four years we have engaged with over 835 diverse organisations, including charities, community groups, local authorities and other utility companies. Combined, these partnerships have helped us reach four million people across our region.

Supporting Mental Health: Making Our Services More Accessible for Everyone

At Anlian Water, we believe that every customer should be able to access support in a way that works for them, especially during difficult times. Mental health problems can make everyday tasks harder. That includes dealing with bills, making phone calls, or asking for help.

In September 2024, we took a big step forward. We became the first utility company to take part in the Mental Health Accessible assessment from the charity Money and Mental Health, founded by Martin Lewis.

As part of the assessment, we invited experts to do a full review of how we support people: looking at everything from how easy our website is to use, to how we speak with customers who are feeling overwhelmed.

Our services were also tested by people with real-life experience of living with mental health problems. They gave us honest feedback on what works well and where we could do better.

The response was incredibly encouraging. We were praised for our culture, our team's willingness to go the extra mile and the wide range of ways people can get in touch – without needing to pick up the phone.

We passed the scoring phase of the assessment and are now putting the final recommendations in place to achieve full accreditation.

For us, this work really matters. One in four people experience mental health problems and our region has some of the highest rates of antidepressant use in the UK. This tells us that many of our customers may be facing challenges we can't necessarily see.

Here is some of the feedback we received from our testers:

"The video was very helpful – it shows there's someone on the other end of the phone who genuinely wants to help."

"I can't use the phone when my mental health is bad. Being able to apply for support online made a huge difference."

"I breathed a sigh of relief – there's real help out there and it feels human."

We're proud of this progress, but more importantly, we're committed to continuing it. No one should feel anxious or alone when dealing with their water account. Whatever your circumstances, we're here to help.



Looking back – how we've performed

Over the last five years, we've consistently exceeded our performance targets (set by Ofwat). We're proud of this achievement. In 2022, we were one of the first companies, globally, to achieve an international standard for supporting customers who need extra help, known as ISO 22458 Consumer Vulnerability.

<p>Priority Service reach</p> <p>The number of households supported by our Priority Service Register.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>381,163</td> <td>444,387</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	381,163	444,387	<p>Priority Service reach %</p> <p>The percentage of households in our region supported by our Priority Services Register.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12.8%</td> <td>14.7%</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	12.8%	14.7%	<p>Actual contact</p> <p>The percentage of households we have successfully achieved actual contact with, to confirm they are receiving the right support.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35%</td> <td>58.1%</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	35%	58.1%
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<p>Attempted contact</p> <p>The percentage of households we have attempted to contact to confirm they are receiving the right support.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>90%</td> <td>99.6%</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	90%	99.6%	<p>Awareness</p> <p>The percentage of our customers who are aware of the non-financial support we can provide.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65%</td> <td>66.8%</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	65%	66.8%	<p>Inclusive service provision</p> <p>External assessment of our services, to achieve compliance with British Standards Institution's 'fair, flexible services for all' (BSI 18477).</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Target</td> <td>Performance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BSI 18477</td> <td>ISO 22458</td> </tr> </table>	Target	Performance	BSI 18477	ISO 22458
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Target	Performance													
BSI 18477	ISO 22458													

We have exceeded targets across all areas.

Looking back – what we've done

Additionally, we have ensured we're supporting customers in our region with the challenges they face including:

Challenges	What we've done
<p>We know one of the barriers to disclosure is not knowing what help is available, that's why its important for us to increase awareness of the support available.</p>	<p>Achieved over 60% awareness of available support through awareness campaigns, partnerships and proactive outreach. This includes partnership with Fire and Rescue services on safe and well checks.</p>
<p>Everyone has different communication needs and preferences. We're committed to ensuring services are accessible to all.</p>	<p>Provided different ways to communicate, to suit different needs. Ensured British Sign Language interpretation and text relay services are available. Provide multiple language options through digital platforms.</p>
<p>Making it easy to get in touch.</p>	<p>We've provided at least 10 different ways to get in touch, to ensure everyone is catered for and nobody is left behind.</p>
<p>Recognising support needs on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>All customer-facing roles trained in how to identify and support customers in need of additional help. We've exceeded our targets on identifying new Priority Services customers.</p>
<p>Making it easy to let us know about a change in your circumstances, for example job loss, bereavement, diagnosis.</p>	<p>Introduced 'tell us once' service, so that once you've told us about a change in your situation, all our systems are immediately updated to show this.</p>
<p>Making it easy for customers to update their information.</p>	<p>Customers now able to update information in real-time and have updates shown across systems.</p>
<p>Addressing the social divide in our region.</p>	<p>Participated in schools engagement, ran career fairs and invested in skills programmes including the 2024 launch of a Green Skills Academy, specifically looking at how we can create new opportunities in the growing green skills sector for those in our region.</p>

For full details on what we've delivered and our future commitments, including the data we've used, please see our full [customer vulnerability strategy](#).

Looking ahead – what we're committed to doing

In the next five years, we will maintain the support we've already introduced and we plan to invest further to support customers in our region.

Challenges	What we're doing
Addressing customer concerns regarding incidents, e.g., pollutions, flooding, loss of services.	We will review and enhance our response to incidents, alongside significant investment to protect the environment in our region.
Make sure customers in need are supported in an incident.	We will continually review and update timescales for bottled water delivery to Priority Services customers.
Support those in our region with dementia (recognising the aging population).	Having already introduced Dementia Friends, we will continue to explore our support for customers living with dementia.
Help prevent customers from being scammed.	We will continue to expand and increase our scam prevention to support customers.
Ensure videos are subtitled.	We will make sure video content is more accessible, by adding subtitles.
Making it easier to understand our information.	We have introduced Plain Numbers Practitioners, who specialise in communication and making this accessible. We're continuing our work, with a focus on achieving Plain Numbers certification for our bills.
Understanding the nature and scale of support needs.	We have used social indicators to map and understand the nature and scale of support needs, so we can target engagement and partnership initiatives to reach the right people. From 2025, we aim to collaborate to create a shared view on future needs across the industry and consider how we can address these collectively.
Increasing customer control.	We will provide greater choice and flexibility in the frequency of bills, through the roll out of smart meters.

In addition, we will continue to meet customer groups, partners and stakeholders to review and shape this strategy – learning from real-life experiences.

In the longer-term we plan to:

Lead the way in forming a multi-agency response to incidents that impact the communities we serve.

Advocate and support a Government-led 'share once' support register, to make it easier for customers to engage with key organisations.

Promote the expansion of Priority Services to cover landlines and broadband.

Work with NHS England to increase identification of and support for high-risk groups.



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