

HERE TO HELP

Extra help when you need it.



RHAGOROL O'R TAP
WONDERFUL ON TAP

HAFREN
DYFRDWY
severn dee

WELCOME

Welcome from James, our Managing Director

Croeso gan James, ein Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr

I'm delighted to introduce 'Here to Help', a document which sets out in one place all of the support we have available to our customers.

We're proud to be a local company, and as the provider of an essential service to over 100,000 households and businesses across our communities in Mid and North-East Wales, our goal is to ensure that we're accessible, inclusive and meet the needs of all of our customers.

Every one of us is different and no one knows how their circumstances might change. So, we offer a range of flexible options to tailor our service to you, whether that's communicating with you in another language, alternative bill formats, support with paying bills or supporting you through an incident. Our Priority Services Register is there for anyone who needs it.

Sometimes getting in touch can feel daunting, so our Care and Assistance team - who have been trained to support customers with more specialist requirements - are there to help. You can talk to them on the phone, online or come and see them at our office in Wrexham. And we also work with some brilliant partner organisations in the community that help us to get the message out about the options available.

We've made great strides since we were created in 2018, and we want to keep improving.

So, if you see our Community Connector team out and about where you live, I'd encourage you to pop over for a chat about what we have to offer, and tell us if there's more you'd like to see us do.



James Jesic, Managing Director



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HAFREN DYFRDWY AND OUR CUSTOMERS

We want to make sure any customer in our region gets the support they need, when they need it. This could be in the form of financial support, helping with personal circumstances, or if they experience problems with their water and wastewater services.

Our customers are central to everything we do, and our teams work tirelessly to provide them with a great experience. We understand different customers need different things from us and that these needs can change over time.

We believe that the support and services we offer mean we can deliver a more personalised, convenient and flexible service for all, at a price that remains affordable.

Regardless of their situation, we want our customers to know about the extra help we have available and how to access it when they need it. This document shows the various ways we can help to make life easier for those who need extra help.

But we will go further, by collaborating with partners in communities local to our customers.

We believe that by using local community-based experts we can help people to recognise their needs, understand what help is available and get the support they need, when they need it.

ABOUT US

Hafren Dyfrdwy was launched in 2018, and is a local company based in Mid and North-East Wales.

We supply customers with water and sewerage services stretching across the heart of Wales, covering the county of Monmouthshire, before reaching Mid-Wales and stretching all the way up to Wrexham in North-East Wales.

Our enduring focus is on delivering for our customers in Wales, both now and for generations to come.



One of the **11** regulated water and wastewater companies in **Wales and England**.

Serving over **100,000** households and businesses.

Our average combined household bill for 2025/26 is the **lowest in Wales** and the third lowest across Wales and England.

We clean **60 million litres** of drinking water every day. We do this at **five** water treatment works.

Our customers used an average of **131 litres a day** per person in 2023/24, making them some of the more efficient users in Wales and England.

Our patch includes Lake Vyrnwy, where we are a **leader** in land management and biodiversity.

We maintain over **3,000km** of water mains and sewers.

Removing over **19 million litres** of sewage and wastewater every day.

We employ over **230** skilled and dedicated employees.



OUR PRIORITIES AND PROMISE

We work hard to understand what our customers' priorities are, to help us shape our future plans. Whether that's through face to face interactions out in our community, direct feedback via any of our customer contact channels, or the invaluable research we carry out with our customers. All of which tell us what our customers want:

Reliable supplies – with supply interruptions and low pressure events kept to a minimum.

Help when needed – in emergencies, after incidents or when struggling financially.

Be convenient and easy to talk to – deliver a high-quality customer experience and be available when needed.

By recognising the needs and priorities of our customers this means we can:

Provide services that meet our customers' needs – our Priority Services Register allows us to tailor our support to customers' situations and needs.

Support our customers now and in the future – through financial assistance schemes and smart metering to make bills more affordable.

Be easy to talk to – our dedicated Customer Solutions team in Wrexham has a wide range of tools and skills, which allows us to provide the extra help that may be needed at times.

Make it easy to access support – we proactively try to identify customers that may need some extra support by working with external partners and charities across our region so we can raise awareness of our services and schemes.

Give more broad support for our communities – we invest in the communities we serve to create opportunities for employment and provide life skills training to boost incomes.

Offer affordable and fair bills – our customers benefit from the lowest bill in Wales (and one of the lowest in England) and we continually strive to tackle water poverty through offering generous levels of support to those most in need (up to 70% off the average bill).



OUR PERFORMANCE

Performance to date - 2020-2025

By working hard to understand our customers and following through on our promises, we have significantly grown the number of people we support through our Affordability Schemes and Priority Services.

Affordability

At the end of year one of the last AMP, we were supporting just 4,321 of our struggling-to-pay customers, which was **35%**. We have now more than doubled this number to 10,595, representing **84%** of our struggling-to-pay customers. This is comfortably over our target of **73%** for the final year of the AMP.

We've supported:
10,595 customers
Representing:
84% of our struggling-to-pay customers

Priority Services

Year on year we have surpassed our targets for the number of customers on our Priority Services Register ("PSR"). PSR reach started the AMP at **2%** and ending at **9.63%**, exceeding our **7%** target.

Priority Services Register
9.63% of customers
An Increase from 2% which exceeds our 7% end of year target.

OUR DEDICATED TEAMS

Customers can call the team for free on **0800 0853 053** or come in and speak to the team face to face.

We are always on hand to help with any additional support, whether that's with bills or any of our Priority Services.

In any emergency where a customer has an issue with their water or waste services, they can call our operational teams, for free on **0800 085 8033**, 24/7 365 days of the year.

Our customers can also speak to our dedicated Care and Assistance team based in our Wrexham office. They've been trained to deal with more specialist customer needs and give additional support where needed.



OUR SUPPORT

Whether it is help with understanding our bills, making sure we know how to support customers during a water supply interruption, or finding the right solution to help customers pay what they can afford, we're here to help.

Like us, we know our customers are all different and have needs that change from time to time. This is why it is important that we are flexible for our customers and our Priority Services Register helps us understand individual needs.

Welcome to Priority Services

Once registered for Priority Services we will ensure that customers know exactly what extra help they can expect and the services they will receive through their preferred contact channel, sending a welcome letter so they are clear they are benefiting from Priority Services.

We will continue to review the content of our welcome letters to ensure they are in line with the new standards.

We will also let them know our contact details should they need us. We will contact customers at least every two years to check in and make sure their situation hasn't changed, so we can keep up to date with their needs.

We know that people may need extra help at any point in their life. Sometimes this can be temporary, for example if a customer is recovering from an operation, an expectant mum with a new addition to the family on the way, or have a longer-term need, such as a health condition or other disability.

When we are made aware of a customer's circumstances, we will capture their individual needs as long as we receive consent. For example, if a customer is visually impaired and can only read off yellow paper, we will capture this need in its entirety, ensuring any extra support is tailored and completely individual.

Here are just a few examples of where we can provide extra help. We want customers to let us know if any of these apply to them, or someone else in their household:

Has a mental health problem that impacts the ability to deal with day-to-day tasks or leaving the house:

By knowing this information, we can have better conversations with customers through awareness of their circumstances.

We promise to:

- Recognise when to signpost customers to our extra help schemes and other trusted organisations and charities.
- Case manage customers over the short term during difficult periods, providing a dedicated point of contact.
- Provide all our customer facing staff with mental health training and awareness, including having dedicated mental health first aiders for our employees.
- Support mental health awareness campaigns each year.
- Offer a range of tailored support to their needs.
- Offer the nominee scheme to allow someone else to speak to us on their behalf for as long as it is needed.

Has issues with sight or are partially blind:

In the UK, more than two million people are living with sight loss, and over 340,000 are registered blind or partially sighted. Awareness of how we can support customers with sight issues is key to ensuring all customers receive the extra help they need.

We promise to:

- Provide bills and other communications in many different formats, including paperless billing, larger print, braille, audio, and we offer an over the phone bill read service. More information on our communications can be found on page 15.

Has a hearing impairment, deafness, or speech difficulties:

It is estimated hearing loss affects 11 million people in the UK which is approximately one in three adults. We know that customers who have hearing or speech difficulties are less likely to pick up the phone to communicate with us. We want to ensure our services are accessible for all customers and offer a wide range of ways a customer can communicate with us.

We promise to:

- Ensure that communicating with us is as easy as possible, and we offer many different channels such as:
 - Webchat
 - Social Media

- Ensure when supply interruptions take place that we communicate through their preferred communication type.
- Provide customers with sight issues the ability to use our nominee scheme to allow someone else to speak to us on their behalf.
- Ensure our website is accessible, and offer the 'Recite Me' tool which lets customers customise our website to their needs.
- Give customers the option to set up a doorstep password with us if we ever need to visit their property, to ensure they know our field staff are genuine.

- Face to Face support
- Email or letter writing.
- Provide customers with hearing or speech difficulties the ability to use our nominee scheme to allow someone else to speak to us on their behalf.
- Tailor our communication during all emergency incidents to suit the needs of the customer.
- Ensure our field teams use the 'Knock and Wait' scheme, allowing more time for customers to answer the door.
- Include subtitles on our customer help and educational videos across our website and social media channels.

Requires connection to a water supply for medical treatment or chronic illness, such as Dialysis:

450,000 people in Wales have Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). We recognise that being diagnosed with CKD could mean a huge life change, not only financially but also with the level of extra help they need as they go through treatment. To manage their increased water and energy use can have a significant impact.

We promise to:

- Ensure high dependency customers always have a water supply in the event of an emergency.
- Contact customers as soon as possible if we need to turn off their supply for any reason.
- Promote our WaterSure Scheme to reduce the cost of excess water usage.
- Celebrate World Kidney Day every year (14 March) to continue to raise awareness of the help available.
- Ensure our partnership specialists are visible in communities, including visiting hospitals to meet those directly impacted with kidney disease to promote what additional help is available from Hafren Dyfrdwy.

Needs extra support for a limited amount of time due to a life event, such as divorce or bereavement:

Life events, whether big or small, can affect us all in different ways. We understand it is important to recognise when someone might need extra help, even if it's for a short period of time.

We promise to:

- Provide tailored support for customers experiencing any kind of life event.
- Signpost customers to other organisations and charities to help and support in these circumstances.
- Ensure we have mental health first aiders available to our own employees as we recognise conversations with customers about grief and bereavement can be upsetting.
- Provide all our customer facing staff with dedicated grief and bereavement training.
- Offer different communication channels including the use of Life Ledger.



Has mobility or restricted movement or is recovering from an operation:

Mobility impairments can range from upper or lower body restrictions, to needing to use a cane, walker or wheelchair. We want to ensure all customers have the support they need.

We promise to:

- Ensure bottled water deliveries are arranged in the event of a supply incident.
- Give customers the option to set up a doorstep password with us if we ever need to visit their property, to ensure they know our field staff are genuine.
- Ensure our field teams use the 'Knock and Wait' scheme, allowing more time for customers to answer the door.
- Provide tailored communications in the event of an emergency, ensuring we get to the most vulnerable customers first.
- Offer to relocate water meters to a more accessible location if it's required.
- Ensure that our offices and visitors' sites are wheelchair accessible.
- Offer financial support through our affordability schemes, if you are recovering from an operation which has put you out of work for a while.

Is of Pensionable age:

Over ten million people in the UK are currently aged 65 and over, and whilst we recognise not everyone needs additional help, we know it can make life a little more challenging.

We promise to:

- Provide access to our dedicated Care and Assistance team to provide any extra help needed.
- Provide all our customer facing staff with dedicated training on how to recognise customers over the age of 65 that may need extra support.
- Let customers know about our nominee scheme to allow someone else to speak to us on their behalf.
- Ensure customers are aware of the best affordability schemes for them, particularly through retirement.
- Give customers the option to set up a doorstep password with us if we ever need to visit their property, to ensure they know our field staff are genuine.



Has a Neurodevelopmental condition:

Around 1 in 6 people in the UK have a neurodiverse condition which may affect a person's ability to communicate and interact with other people.

We promise to:

- Provide access to our dedicated Care and Assistance team to provide any extra help needed.
- Offer one dedicated point of contact if a customer would benefit
- Ensure bottled water deliveries are arranged in the event of a supply incident.
- Provide many different communication

channels such as SMS, two-way messaging or digital communication via email.

- Offer a nominee scheme where a nominated speaker can be added to an account as a representative.
- Provide communications in clear, jargon free and plain Welsh and English.
- Ensure that neurodiverse customers and colleagues are celebrated, feel valued and supported.
- Signpost customers nominees and carers to other organisations and charities that offer extra help.
- Provide a sensory guide at our visitor sites for customers with cognitive disabilities.

Has any kind of dementia:

It is estimated over 900,000 people in the UK are living with some form of dementia, with this predicted to rise.

We promise to:

- Offer a nominee scheme where a nominated speaker can be added to an account as a representative.
- Ensure all of our customer facing teams are trained to recognise signs and have an awareness of different types of dementia.
- Ensure our field teams use the 'Knock and Wait' scheme, allowing more time for customers to answer the door.
- Signpost customers, nominees and carers on how to set up a lasting power of attorney.
- Provide access to our dedicated Care and Assistance team to give any extra help needed. We recognise that customers living with dementia can benefit from having one dedicated point of contact.
- Ensure bottled water deliveries are arranged in the event of a supply incident.

Is unable to read, write or communicate:

We're proud to have very diverse region and we know that not everyone is comfortable talking about bills and essential information, particularly if Welsh or English is not their first language.

We promise to:

- Help customers to speak to us in their own language through our translation services.
- Provide alternative bill and communication formats such as larger print, braille, or audio.
- Continue to offer a nominee scheme where a nominated speaker can be added to an account as a representative.
- Provide many different communication channels such as SMS, two-way messaging or digital communication via email.
- Ensure our website is accessible, and offer the 'Recite Me' tool which lets customers customise our website to their needs.

This list is not exhaustive, and we do encourage customers to let us know about any extra help they may need.

NOMINEE SCHEME

Some customers might need someone to help them at times, which is where our nominee scheme helps make things easier.

If a customer has dementia, suffers from anxiety, or there's anything else that makes managing their account with us difficult, they can appoint a nominee.

We simply ask for them to give us details of a friend, relative or carer who they allow to

speak to us on their behalf. We can even send information directly to the nominee if this is preferred so they can help make sure bills are up to date.

If there's a water emergency such as a supply interruption, we will contact the nominee as well as the customer, in case they need any extra support.



TAILORED COMMUNICATION

We offer different types of alternative formats to make bills as clear as possible. Joining our Priority Services Register will provide customers with a bill that suits their needs.

The types of formats we can provide are:

- **Large print:** Our standard bills are written using the font Arial in size 16 point. However, if a customer needs larger print, we can arrange this for them.
- **Braille:** If a customer needs their bill in braille, we can arrange Class 1 and 2 braille versions.
- **Audio:** If a customer would rather receive an audio bill, we can send the bill on CD or cassette. We can also read a bill out to customers over the phone.



INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICE

We use the **Recite Me accessibility software** on our websites to provide customers with the tools needed to navigate and access our information. The communication toolbar allows visitors to customise the content into an easy-to-read format in a way that works best for the individual. The translation tool contains over 100 languages as well as tools to assist with visual impairments and learning difficulties such as dyslexia. See our contact us table with all our different channels that we have available.



WELSH LANGUAGE

As a Welsh company, we know how important the Welsh language is to our customers and communities. We have a Welsh Language scheme which can be found on our website, and we are working hard to improve the language services we offer our Welsh speaking customers.

Over the next year we're looking to increase the number of employees we have across our customer facing teams who speak fluent Welsh. We'll be delivering bilingual events to our partner organisations across the industry and out in the community.

In partnership with



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SUPPORT DURING AN INCIDENT

What if my water supply is interrupted?

We work 24/7, 365 days of the year to make sure our wonderful water gets to where it's needed. However, all sorts of things can get in our water's way, like burst mains or issues with our network, so things don't always run smoothly. But, whatever happens, we promise to fix it quickly and keep customers informed.

What we'll do

Keep customers updated

We will put updates about the incident on our website so locals can find out what is happening. We will also send text messages to affected customers where we have their up-to-date contact details.

Provide bottled water

In the unlikely event of a lot of people being without water, we'll set up local bottled water stations.

Spotting our team

Our engineers, support team, and colleagues delivering bottled water will be wearing branded, protective clothing.

If customers are worried, they can always check their identity card and if still unsure they can call us to check on **0800 085 8033** so we can confirm their identity. We recommend customers do not use any phone number they give them.

Provide compensation

We understand how frustrating it is if there's an interruption to water or wastewater services, and we'll take responsibility if things go wrong.

Our Guaranteed Standard Scheme outlines the length of time we'll take to respond to contacts and incidents, and how much we'll pay if we fail to meet our promise.

You can access the full scheme here:

hdcymru.co.uk/customer-promise

As a company, we commit to complying with the GSS standards and any future changes.



Incident Management - Priority Services

Alongside the additional support we provide our Priority Service customers (pages 9-15), we will prioritise customer groups based on their specific needs during an incident.

Priority Support Table

| Priority 1 | Priority 2 | Priority 3 | Priority 3 |
|--|---|---|---|
| Dialysis, feeding pump, and automated feed | Unable to answer the door | Partially sighted | Pensionable age |
| Poor sense of smell/taste | Cognitive impairment (including Dementia) | Medically dependent (showering/bathing) | Unable to communicate in English or Welsh |
| Water dependent | Nebuliser and apnoea monitor | Careline/telecare | Medicine refrigeration |
| Blind | Heart/lung ventilator | Hearing impairment | Families with children under 5 |
| Oxygen concentrator | Additional presence preferred | | Speech impairment |
| Stair lift/hoist/electric bed | | | Temporary (life change) |
| Physical impairment | | | Temporary (young adult) |
| Developmental condition | | | |
| Mental health | | | |
| Temporary (post hospital) | | | |
| Chronic serious illness | | | |
| Oxygen use | | | |
| Restricted hand movement | | | |
| Oxygen use | | | |

The table below sets out those groups and the support customers can expect.

Actions We Will Take

| Priority 1 | Priority 2 | Priority 3 | Priority 3 |
|--|--|--|--|
| Call the customer to make them aware of the incident and discuss individual needs | Proactive contact to make them aware of the incident | Proactive contact to make them aware of the incident | Proactive contact to make them aware of the incident |
| Deliver bottled water within 3 hours | Deliver bottled water within 3 hours | Deliver bottled water within 3 hours | Deliver bottled water within 3 hours |
| Dialysis patients may be advised to contact the nearest medical facility | For customers who are unable to answer the door, we will leave the bottled water or request access to the property | Communicate in the customer's chosen format | Communicate in the customer's chosen format |
| Where customers have a nominee on their account, we will attempt to contact them first | Where customers have a nominee on their account, we will attempt to contact them first | Where customers have a nominee on their account, we will attempt to contact them first | Where customers have a nominee on their account, we will attempt to contact them first |
| Advise customers where/how to find updates on the incident/event | Advise customers where/how to find updates on the incident/event | Advise customers where/how to find updates on the incident/event | Advise customers where/how to find updates on the incident/event |



ISSUES WITH SEWER FLOODING

We know it can be stressful if sewage floods someone's home. When we're notified about the flooding, we can help work out what caused it. Customers can:

- Report the problem online
- Speak to our team on web chat
- Call us on **0800 085 8033**

We're open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We know how important it is for customers to contact us whenever they need us and we operate a 24/7 operational contact centre.

For customers in our Wrexham area, their waste services are provided by Dŵr Cymru. For any issues with these services, customers should contact Dŵr Cymru direct on **0800 052 0130** for support.



WHAT WE WILL DO

Our friendly Customer Operations team will help work out what's caused the flooding and what to do about it. We can send someone to investigate whether a public sewer or private drain was the cause.

If the flooding is inside the property, we will be out to attend the property within four hours; for anything external (for instance, in a garden), we aim to attend within 12 hours. We will always keep customers updated if timescales change and let them know when we are on our way.

For external sewage clean ups, we'll do what we can to prevent damage to lawns, landscaping, gravel or garden furniture. This clean up includes removal of water by suction,

removal of most solids and fibrous material and the disinfection of affected external hard surface areas.

We're not able to do anything that may risk causing further damage to the customer's property. Therefore, they may need to arrange a thorough clean-up by professional cleaners through their insurance company.

Priority Services Register

If a customer is on our Priority Services Register, once we're notified of what has happened, our duty Catchment Lead will be their point of contact. They will make sure the work is prioritised and that our customers get the support they need, depending on their personal circumstances.



SUPPORTING YOU AFTER AN EVENT



Sewer flooding can be a hugely stressful experience and we know this can have an impact on people's mental health. This is why we work in partnership with local charity, Ponthafren, to offer free mental health support to customers who have been impacted by a sewer flooding.

This is a free service that we can give you access to.



SUPPORTING BUSINESSES IN OUR AREA

We supply water to around 7,000 businesses in the Hafren Dyfrdwy area.

Our aim is to help all our business, large or small, to provide the most efficient and cost-effective service.

Our dedicated Business Team is based in Wrexham. Their job is to provide the service you expect, and build strong relationships with business customers so we can keep improving.

Customers can meet the team to talk about their account in person at our office over in Packsaddle. Or, if customers need some support with something on-site at their business, we'll see if we can send someone out to help.

The Business Team are available on **0330 678 0646** from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. They can help with anything from bill payments to setting up a new business account.

For problems with supply, customers can call us 24 hours, 7 days a week on **0800 085 8033** for support with the incident.

Supporting businesses in an incident

We understand how important it is to support our businesses during a supply interruption.

We have a process in place for all business sensitive customers, such as hospitals and care homes. If the business is without supply for over two hours, our 24hr emergency team will call them direct to see whether the customer has any storage or back up supply, then liaise with them direct during the event in case an alternative supply is needed.

Customers that live and work on the same premises, such as a farm who need additional support during a supply interruption, can also be registered for Priority Services during an incident. Customers would just need to call us free on **0800 085 8033** to register.

SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS WITH BILLS

If a customer is struggling with their bills, it is important that they talk to us. We want them to feel like they are not alone and that we are there to help. We recognise that it can seem like a scary or uncomfortable conversation, but it is the first step towards getting things sorted. Our dedicated Care and Assistance team will take the time to talk our customers through their options and find ways we can help:

Bill Cap Scheme WaterSure

This scheme can help customers with low income who use a lot of water due to either a large family or a medical condition requiring additional water usage. Any condition that a doctor confirms requires extra water would be eligible. If a customer meets the criteria, including being on a water meter, and use our sewerage and water services, we will cap their bill. The bill is capped at our average yearly charge which will change each year. If the meter reading is lower than the capped amount, customers will only pay for the water they have used.

Here2Help Scheme

The scheme is open to every Hafren Dyfrdwy customer, regardless of age, employment status, or whether they receive benefits. Customers do not need to be behind on their bills to apply. Eligibility is based on an assessment of the overall household income and qualifying customers could receive a discount up to 30%-70% off our average charges.

Debt Support - Matching Plus

If a customer is struggling with debt, they may be eligible for debt support through Matching Plus, where we will match their payment each month to help reduce the account balance.

Our Better Off Calculator

For customers who need bill support but are unsure what option is best for them, we have our [Our Better Off Calculator](#). It's a simple online application that tells the customer what support they are eligible for on their water

bill, alongside any additional support, such as Government benefits and other local or national schemes available to maximise a household's income.



MAKING PAYMENTS MORE MANAGEABLE

Payment breaks: If customers have short-term financial problems, we recommend they contact us, and we may be able to offer a temporary payment break for 28 days to give them some time to review their circumstances.

Water Direct: If a customer receives certain benefits from the Government, they may be able to pay their water bill through Water Direct, straight from their benefits payment.

The Water Direct scheme gives customers peace of mind, knowing that the water bill is taken care of, and they can use the money in their account for something other than paying bills.

Switching to a water meter: A water meter measures the amount of water used, so customers will only pay for what they are using. It can also help save water - many customers find that their bills are cheaper after switching to a water meter as they make a conscious effort to use less once they have a meter fitted, meaning it is a benefit for both their pocket and the environment. Using less water means less needs to be heated, so it can also save on energy bills and reduce their carbon footprint.

Our customers also have 2 years to revert back to standard charges if they decide they no longer want a meter.



Here2Help Scheme

Case Study

As part of our work out in the community we regularly run drop-ins at local Job Centres which is just another way we're able to support our customers face to face.

Our Community Connector Lucy met with our customer Ian at Newtown Job Centre in January 2024, when Ian came in for support on his water bill. During the visit Ian was accepted onto our Here2Help scheme and received the maximum discount of 70%. This took Ian's monthly payment from £30 per month to £9. When we met with Ian again at the Job Centre and were able to see how he was getting on.

Ian told us:



I've saved half the amount of my water bill, which means every little penny helps, be it with heating or food.



This is one of the many ways we receive feedback from our customers and help shape our plans and measure the benefits of our schemes and services.



OUR COMMUNITIES

Community means everything to us at Hafren Dyfrdwy. Our community that we have created with our colleagues allows us to work together better. This not only means high standards of service to customers, but, just as important, support for the places where our customers live.

Talking to our customers face to face is really important to us and customers tell us they like it too. That's why we invested in our community

vehicle: "Dilys" allowing us to travel all over our region, helping in the more rural hard to reach areas. Customers can come onboard and talk to our Community Connector team about anything — from how we can support with bills, accessing Priority Services, or just to have a friendly chat! We also work with our partners to organise events so customers can access all kinds of different support and information in one place like a "one stop shop".

Employability and Education

We are also passionate about the role we play in our communities to help create inclusive employment opportunities and support with unemployment across our region. Alongside our new Vulnerability Strategy, we are developing our Community Strategy. The Community Strategy outlines the work we do with our customers and partner organisations around affordability as well as our Societal work and commitments. We're working hard to strengthen our partnerships with local schools and partners to inspire young minds about high-quality careers in the water industry, through support with the provision of employability training such as CV building, interview techniques, digital skills, careers fairs and talks.

We also want to highlight the genuine career opportunities for people in our local community allowing them to stay close to their roots. This is why we consider it important to nurture and develop young talent by providing insight into what it might feel like to work for Hafren Dyfrdwy and the job roles that are available. Whether that's joining us through our apprenticeship scheme, maybe part of our Operations team as an electrician, in our labs or treatment works, or working with our Digital and Marketing team as a content creator. These are just some of the exciting opportunities we offer.

In 2023 we partnered with Careers Wales supporting young people leaving education with various initiatives, such as employability training,

which includes CV writing skills workshops, mock interviews, careers carousels and mentoring secondary schools. As a result of our work, we were really pleased to have been nominated and short-listed for the 'Outstanding Achievement' award by Careers Wales (Katie Wood and Lucy Bates pictured at the awards below).



More recently we have partnered with the Game Changers Project. The Game Changers is a not-for-profit organisation based in Powys, Mid Wales. They support young people to raise their aspirations, build confidence and improve well-being by taking part in fun and engaging outdoor activities. Some of the young people the Game Changers Project support don't attend mainstream education. By partnering with Game Changers we can offer young people not in education the same support and opportunities.

Community Fund

As customers struggling to pay can be a sign that local communities need extra support, we set up the Hafren Dyfrdwy Community Fund in 2020. Each year, we put £50,000 into the Fund, which then provides grants to local community projects and charities. Last year, we held one round of applications and awarded grants to six projects. For AMP8, we intend to increase funding to £60,000 a year to support organisations with core funding.



Home-Start Wrexham

Case Study

Home-Start is a family support charity rooted in the local community, supporting families in Wrexham with a variety of needs through home visits by trained family support workers, play, learning and support for parents of pre-school children and parenting programmes. The families they support are wide ranging — families may be experiencing difficulties such as abusive relationships, poor physical and/or mental health, disability, poverty, insecure housing, parental learning difficulties and low confidence. Support is tailored and there is no time limit on how long a family can access it for. Over the last few years the landscape and opportunities for charities has become much more challenging and competitive, which has put additional pressure on the organisation at a time when the need for their service and costs of running it has increased. Referrals continue to increase year on year. We awarded Home-Start £8,000 in November 2023, to help with their energy and utility bills. Home-Start told us:



The grant allowed us the breathing space and time to assess our position and needs. During that time, we have been able to cover our day to day costs so we can continue supporting families. We have now been able to move to our new premises with lower energy costs, which will help us be more financially sustainable long term. Thank you.

WORKING WITH TRUSTED PARTNERS

To successfully deliver our tailored support services to customers, especially those in diverse and hard to reach areas, we need to work closely in partnership with local organisations.

We are proud of the work we do with external partners across our region to maximise awareness of our extra help and make sure we get the right support to our customers.

Through partnership arrangements with housing providers, local authorities, and charities, we can identify customers in financial hardship and streamline the process so they can access our support schemes more readily. These partnerships can also help remove barriers which may have prevented people from previously accessing support.

We have a team of Community Connectors active in communities daily, to help customers who may struggle to communicate over the phone or online.

We can attend community meetings and events to raise awareness of the support available, deliver talks to organisations so they can help to spread our message to their own clients, or arrange drop-ins or outreach sessions to help customers directly. If you are an organisation



TRUSTED PARTNERS – HOW WE SHARE YOUR DATA

that would like to work with us, please contact our Community Connector team on: CommunityConnectors@HDCymru.co.uk.

Trained Approvers

Another example of the benefit of partnership working is our Trained Approvers programme. Organisations such as Age Cymru, Warm Wales and Citizens Advice are all trained on how to assess our customers' eligibility for our financial assistance schemes and tell them what support they're entitled to. The programme means we can raise awareness through trusted partners who are out in the community and more importantly make the process of reaching out and applying for support so much easier for our customers.

Dŵr Cymru

We also work closely with Dŵr Cymru, as we have a significant number of our customers in Wrexham who receive waste services from Dŵr Cymru – services that we bill on Dŵr Cymru's behalf.

Some of the partnerships, other organisations, and charities we work with that can offer help and support to our customers include:

It's important to protect our customers' data and Hafren Dyfrdwy takes this very seriously. We are committed to complying with Data Protection laws. We know that with responsible and governed data sharing, we can provide customers with the support they need, with personalised solutions through a number of trusted partners.

Priority Services Register

Hafren Dyfrdwy holds data sharing agreements with several Distribution Network Operators including National Grid and SP Energy Networks, so we can share information of the needs of our Priority Services customers automatically.

This means customers do not need to tell them separately. By registering with us for the Priority Services Register, they can automatically be added to the register of their energy network operator and supplier. We will contact customers at least every two years to check in and make sure their situation has not changed, so we can keep up to date with their needs and ensure we continue to capture any additional extra help needs.

To make it easier for our customers applying for any of our financial support schemes, we have an agreement with Dŵr Cymru to automatically passport our customers onto their equivalent scheme for sewerage charges. If you are eligible for our bill cap scheme, WaterSure or Here2Help, you will be eligible for Dŵr Cymru's equivalent discount on your sewerage. So, just one application for support on your whole bill.



Bereavement

Dealing with the death of a loved one can be a stressful and emotional experience, which is why we partner with Life Ledger bereavement service, to provide a free and easy-to use 'Tell-us once' service to help families.

Support for Care Leavers

In 2024 we launched our support for care leavers which involved working alongside local councils, such as the leaving care team within Wrexham County Borough Council.

The scheme provides financial support to young adults leaving care into independent living. Our Care and Assistance team works direct with the young adult to support them in the setup of their water account, which includes automatically passporting them onto a reduced tariff of up to 70% off the average household bill. We then look to identify any extra support they might need, whether that's through any of our Priority Services or additional signposting to support through one of our many trusted partners.



I'm so grateful for the support my water company and leaving care team have given me. My water bill has dropped significantly without me having to do a thing!

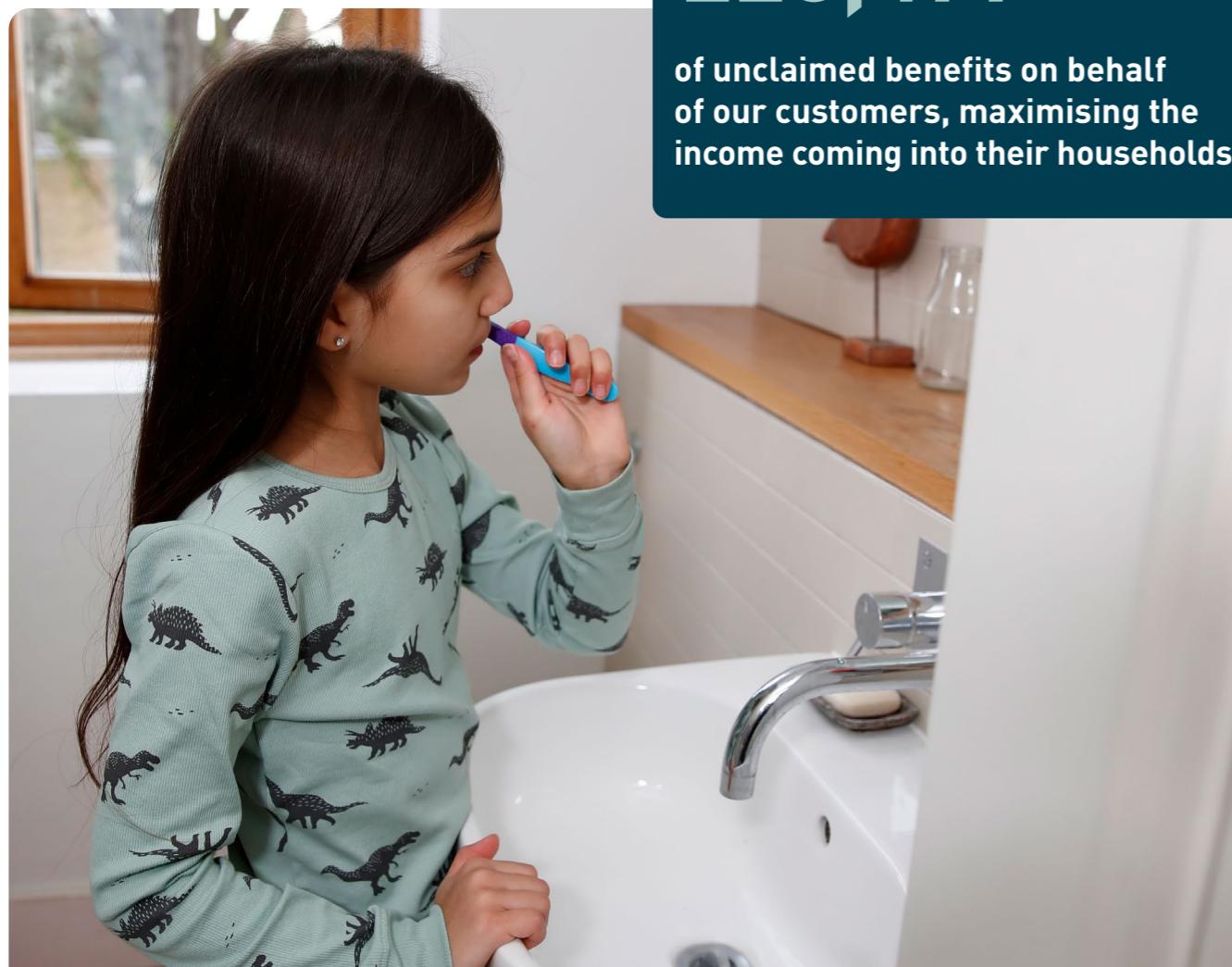


For more information on how we handle our customer information you can access our Privacy Policy at: hdcymru.co.uk/privacy

Better Off Calculator

Customer feedback throughout regular tracker surveys tells us that customers are happy with the support we offer and we work hard to raise awareness of the support we offer. Although feedback is largely positive in these areas, our customers told us that it's difficult to know what support they are eligible for, or which support is best for them.

This is why we have partnered with Policy in Practice to introduce our 'Better Off Calculator'. The 'Better Off Calculator' is an online tool which gives the customer a full holistic review of their circumstances, assess them for the support we can offer them on their water bill, as well as support through government benefits and more.



Since the launch of the calculator in July last year:

102

applications
have been
completed by
our customers

92

of which we
have been able to
support through
our schemes

We've identified

£28,477

of unclaimed benefits on behalf
of our customers, maximising the
income coming into their households.

Our Memberships

- Business Disability Forum – by us signing up to the Business Disability Forum we are playing our part in creating a disability-smart world by linking in with other businesses, disabled people and the Government. We can access advice, support and learning from the 500 organisations who have signed up, helping us to improve the experience of our disabled employees, candidates, and customers by removing barriers to inclusion.
- Disability Confident – this is a Government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. We are currently at Level 2 'Disability Confident Employer'. This ensures we stay up to date with advice and guidance to help those with disabilities.
- Support The Sunflower – we recognise not all disabilities are visible and living with a disability can make daily life more demanding for many people, but it can be difficult for others to identify, acknowledge or understand the challenges you face. We have introduced sunflower lanyards, pin badges and identifying cards to give our employees that little bit of extra support, but to also embody this across Hafren Dyfrdwy so all employees, whether they are customer facing or not, can recognise the importance of hidden disabilities.



THE RIGHT SERVICES FOR OUR CUSTOMERS

In 2018, we formed Hafren Dyfrdwy as a small local water and wastewater company, dedicated to serving our local communities across the Wrexham area and in Powys.

Since the launch we have made big strides in improving the experience our customers have with us. The main drivers for this have been our role in the community, giving us the insight we gain from face-to-face interactions with our customers, and our own internal data helping us improve our services. All of which have helped us shape our new Vulnerable Customer Strategy.

This next section highlights some of the key insights from our customers, partners, and different data sources that have helped shape our future plans.

Customer insights

Over the past three years we have carried out a wide programme of customer research (including vulnerable customers) to understand customer views on the support we offer.

Some of the key findings were:

- The support we provide needs to take into account the unique communities we serve, as well as the fact we are the smallest water and sewerage company with only 100,000 customers. Our communities in Powys are particularly keen on face-to-face interactions,

and internet usage can be less widespread than in other areas. A desire for a close, "old fashioned" community is common in Powys. Whilst Wrexham is a more urban area, customers recognise challenges of low incomes, poor housing and infrastructure including healthcare provision, poor transport networks and less opportunities from larger employers, businesses closing and fewer educational opportunities.

- A reliable water service is seen as critical to those in vulnerable circumstances, and there is support for investment in resilience to protect those who need it against interruptions.
- Customers typically express positive views on the support services we offer, but there is more to do to promote awareness.
- There is crossover between supporting those in financially vulnerable circumstances and those with other vulnerabilities. In-depth research with our stakeholders tells us that support organisations are helping more people with complex problems, learning disabilities and mental health issues. Customers tell us how health, security, capability and support networks are all layers that if now present mean they are more exposed to the shocks of life.

"I think the biggest marker for good or bad customer service is often how easy it is to get hold of a person to talk to, or, if it's all computer based, how quickly your problem is identified and solved. Normally most people would rather call a number and talk to a human as opposed to going through robotic 'say in 3 words what your call is about'."

"Essential but why single out Welsh speaking communities rather than all customers?"

Q. Overall, and from what you can tell from this summary, how do you rate this area of their long term strategy?
 Q. Please read through and add the emojis on the words or phrases you particularly like or dislike.

In July 2022 we also carried out research on our Strategic Direction Statement, the findings were as follows:

Overall, positive about this priority area: it demonstrates Hafren Dyfrdwy cares about customers

Few are aware of the support from Hafren Dyfrdwy for those in water poverty or how to access it; there is an opportunity to communicate more widely about the support available

Confidence in high quality, affordable service

Very/confident(4&5)=18 people, neither/nor(3)=8 people, Not at all/not confident(1&2)=1 person

Deliver a high quality affordable service

- Offer customer support when needed
- Eliminate water poverty in the region
- Understand customers better
- Deliver excellent customer service

Overall the plan looks **comprehensive**: shows Hafren Dyfrdwy making it easy to get in touch

- Identifying customers who are **vulnerable**: suggests they will be prioritised
- Signposting to **customer support** key – accessibility is important to customers
- Resolving issues first time**; frustrating being passed around with no solution
- Offering preferred channel: shows **company cares**

But very few aware of support available for customers struggling to pay:

- Just 3 in this sample aware of support
- Some unaware customers might be in water poverty, or what this means

A few concerns:

- Some **sceptical the support** is achievable – suspect they could be let down
- Some surprise: **Welsh speaking communities** singled out over other groups
- Older and vulnerable customers** often less IT literate and may be left behind – feel they need more additional support

No suggestion that plans lack ambition. Opportunity for more communication to customers to ensure those who need support are aware.

EXTERNAL AND PARTNER RESEARCH

OFWAT and OFGEM

Ofwat and Ofgem recently published research that explored the customer service experiences of water and energy customers in vulnerable circumstances.

Participants had either a health and well-being vulnerability and or a financial vulnerability, and as part of the research they were asked to go on a “journey” (e.g. find out about financial support options, find out more information and sign up for the PSR).

The key findings were:

1. Participants lacked awareness and understanding of services available. **This is an area of improvement for us and will be a focus in our strategy.**

2. They had mixed experiences of getting support. There are negative experiences where it was difficult to find the information and specific circumstances were not understood. **We aim to develop our online hub and further develop our strategy and customer summary document to ensure information is easy to find, displayed clearly, intuitive and easy to understand.**
3. Customers in vulnerable circumstances want pro-activity and flexibility, simplicity and ease, kindness and empathy. **Along with other areas of our strategy we aim to tackle this with increased training for our customer-facing teams and innovative use of internal and external data to identify customers needing support.**



Being proactive and flexible

- ✓ Proactively communicate available services and support.
- ✓ Be as specific as possible about what help is available as some customers do not feel comfortable asking.
- ✓ Allow customers autonomy by providing tailored information based on their specific circumstances.
- ✓ Engage with customers during interactions to find out who is vulnerable, including interactions such as moving home or reporting a problem.
- ✓ Be transparent and keep customers informed about planned works and pricing changes.
- ✓ Optimise digital platforms to enhance customer understanding of bills and usage.

Ensuring clear, simple and easy customer journeys

- ✓ Communicate clearly by using limited jargon and technical terminology.
- ✓ Be specific about the difference available help could make to customers.
- ✓ Explain what certain schemes or tariffs actually mean for customers and set clear expectations.
- ✓ Provide multi-channel support services to allow customers to access information in the way that best suits them.
- ✓ Reduce friction in a customer journey by using clear signposting to support services.
- ✓ Keep regular contact during on-going issues or when a customer is identified as struggling.
- ✓ Ensure digital tools (e.g. chatbots, customer portals and websites) are optimised, intuitive and responsive.
- ✓ Ensure FAQs contain concerns from customers in vulnerable circumstances so that they reflect this group.

Kind and empathetic interactions

- ✓ Focus on two-way communication to give customers a sense there is mutual respect and opportunity to receive empathy.
- ✓ Use reassuring, non-judgemental language, and frame responses with a focus on support.
- ✓ Treat customers with dignity and respect, acknowledging their emotions as part of communications.
- ✓ Use trained agents who understand and can empathise with complex needs.
- ✓ Use positive and solution-oriented language

Many participants felt their water/energy providers don't understand individual circumstances or specific needs, and don't see how they can be met through the support and services that their companies offer. Participants reported a mix of positive and negative experiences and tend to believe that companies care more about billing than being customer centric.

Some negative points identified in the research:

- Evidence required to apply for tariffs.
- Lack of clarity on what the tariff means.
- Queues on phone taking too long being cut off.
- Sometimes the phone can feel daunting, but it appears to be the only option to get tailored information.
- Customer service staff not being trained on financial support.
- Support options not feeling relevant to long-term financial challenges.
- Approach to support not feeling genuine.

Positive experiences included straightforward PSR sign up with no forms and being proactively linked to other services.

Rural England

Rural England recently held a Rural Vulnerability Day in which they presented recent research with vulnerable customers about rural energy and water experiences. We believe this to be a key piece of research for our customers in our more rural areas of Powys, in addition to this the respondents were on the PSR with the following conditions:

- Mental health and or dementia.
- Dependent on electrical medical equipment (e.g. stair lift, ventilator, apnoea monitor).
- Blind or partially sighted.

Some thoughts to consider that are relevant to Hafren Dyfrdwy as a water company:

Do we think about discolouration of water and blind/partially sighted customers?

Impact of pedestrian route diversions on blind / partially sighted.

Running water needs for washing - bottled Water just isn't sufficient for washing.

Disruption to routine for those with mental health / dementia.

Visually impaired customers – three quarters are partially sighted not blind. Do other comms take this into account. e.g. text colours.

Use trusted third parties to promote the PSR.

Digitisation of phones / lack of signal - customers not getting texts when power out, so more difficult to contact people.

Would like to see more data matching and PSR coordination (a bit like the Tell us Once service).

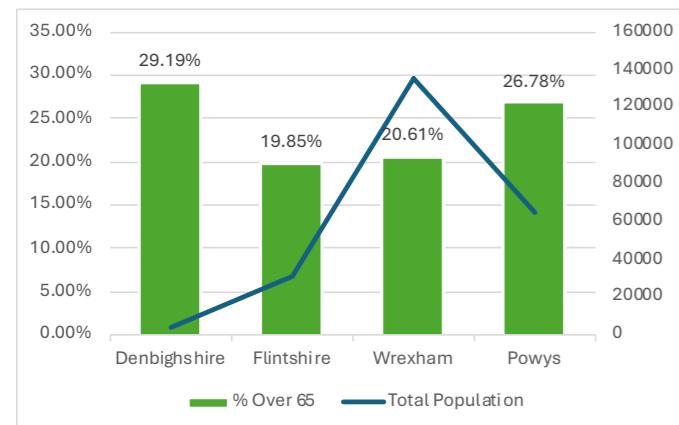
Link vulnerability to financial situation - vulnerable customers in this research are more likely to need financial support too.



Demographic analysis

Using Census and LSOA data we looked at 2 separate customer groups: over 65s and disabled population.

This data shows us which areas within our region have the highest percentage population of each of these two customer groups – we also compared this against all other water companies.



Although we are one of the smallest water companies, we were still in some of the higher percentage in these two customer groups.

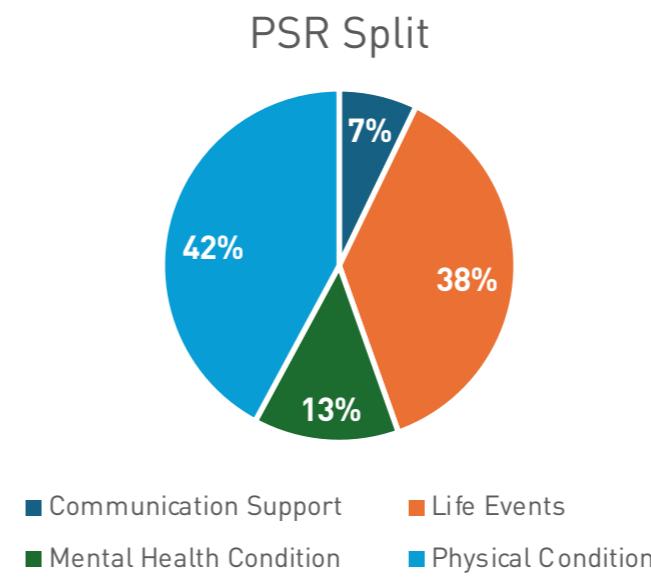
HD ranked

4th highest population of over 65s at **22.36%** – the highest being Southwest and Bournemouth **25.11%**

HD ranked

3rd highest disabled population **19.75%** – the highest being Dŵr Cymru **24.52%**

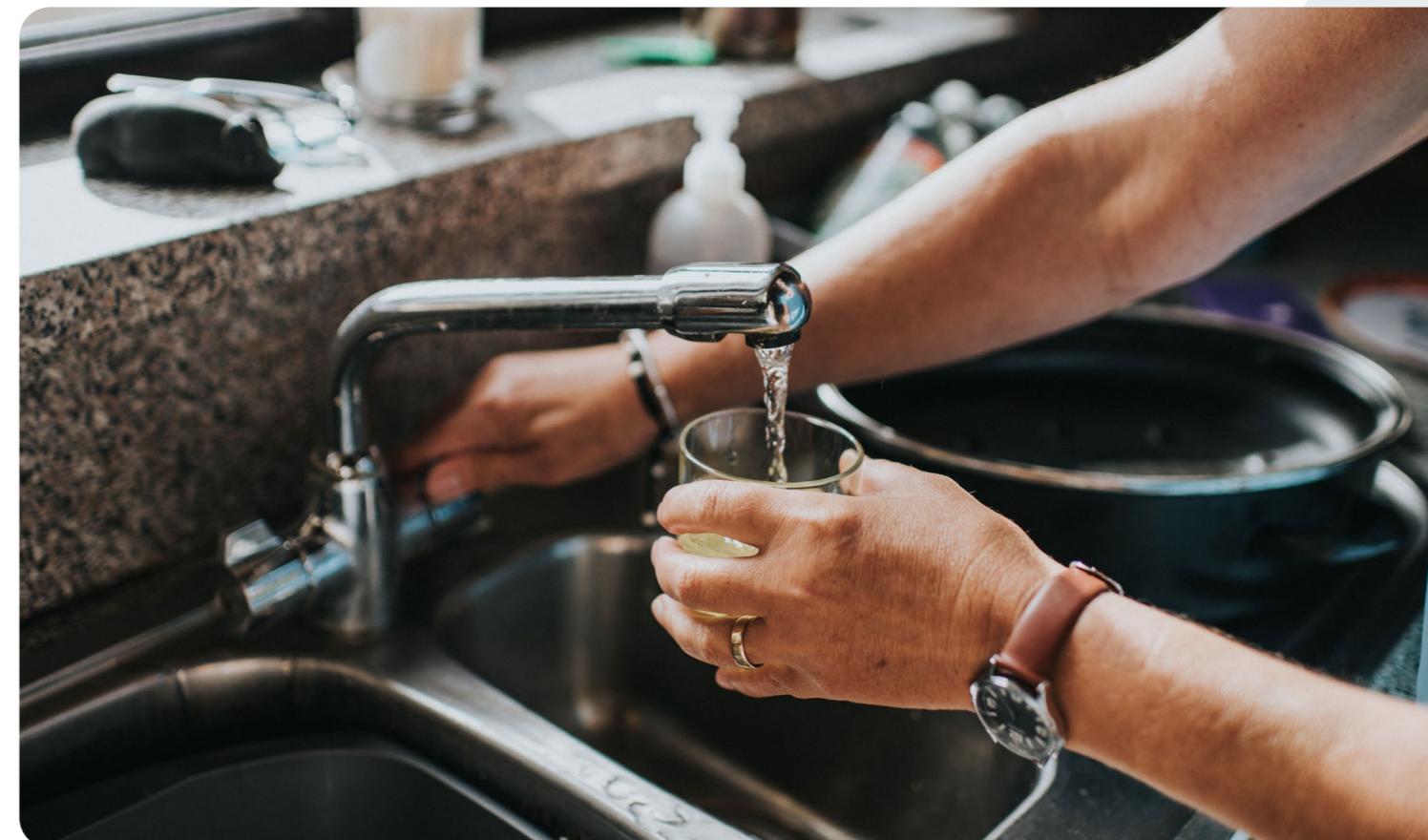
Internal Data source – HD 2024/25 PSR Split



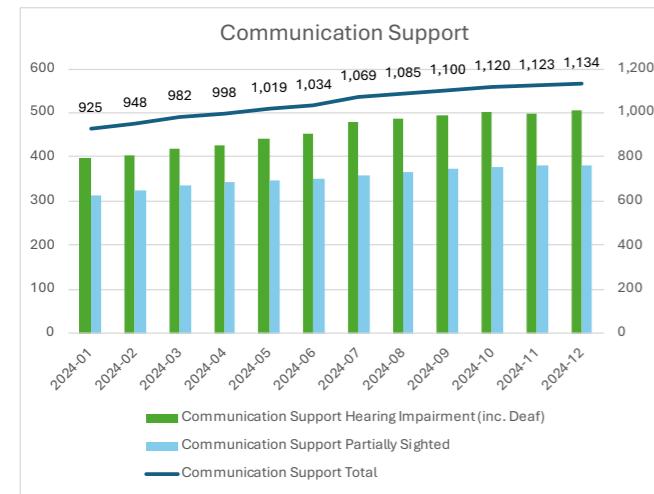
As of December there were 15,830 active needs codes on customers accounts (note: each household could have a number of needs codes). Looking at current split over four main categories:

- Communication support
- Life events
- Mental health conditions
- Physical conditions

You can see the largest split is physical condition followed by life events. As part of our analysis we drilled down into the specific needs codes within the four main categories, to see if there is any correlation with external data sources.



Internal Data source – HD 2024/25 PSR data



This data tells us 3,146 of the population have some sort of sight or hearing impairment. The data notes that this number is likely to be under-estimated. With our Powys customers making up the majority, this tells us we have a way to go in raising awareness of support in this area.

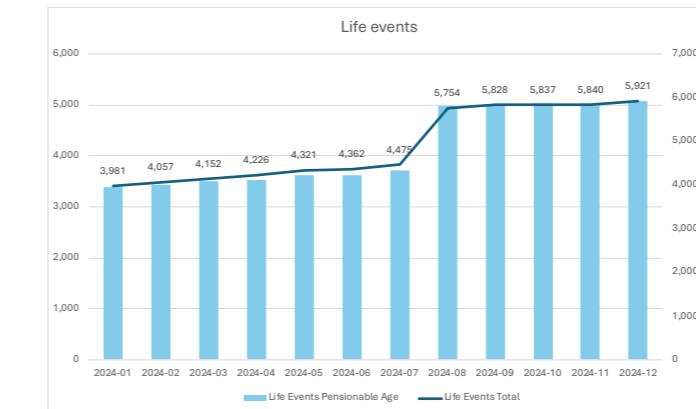
Communication Support

- Makes up 7% of the split, with hearing impairment and partially sighted being the highest 886.
- In 2021/22 Stats Wales published data on physically/sensory disabled persons by local authority, disability and age range.

Source: Physically/sensory disabled persons by local authority, disability and age range.



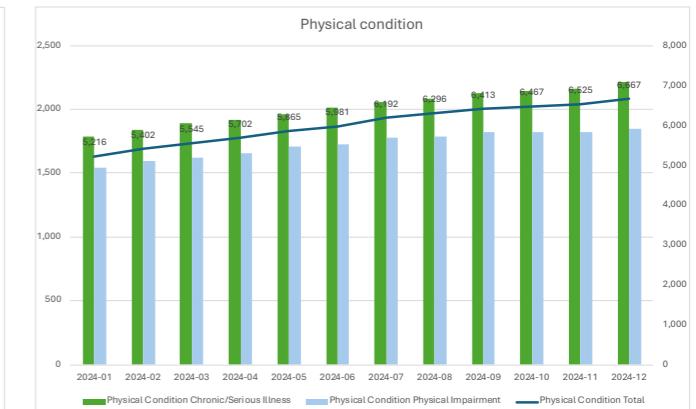
Internal Data source – HD 2024/25 PSR data



Life Events

- Makes up 38% (5921) of the split, with pensionable age being the highest (5069).
- The latest estimates show that there are 866,444 people over the age of 60 living in Wales. This number is estimated to rise to 956,000 (30% of the population) by 2026, and to 1,015,000 (31% of the population) by 2031.
- Conwy and Powys have the highest percentage of older people aged 60, at 35%.
- Life expectancy on average for men in Wales is 78.3, but healthy life expectancy (the number of years on average lived in good general health) is only 61.
- Life expectancy for women in Wales is 82.3, whereas healthy life expectancy is 62, a difference of over 20 years.

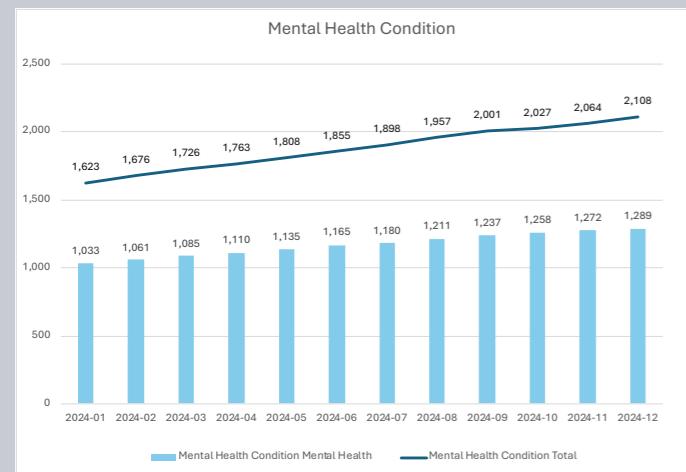
Internal Data source – HD 2024/25 PSR data



Physical Conditions

- Make up 42% (6,667) of the split, with physical impairment and chronic/serious illness being the highest (4,063 combined).

Internal Data source – HD 2024/25 PSR data



Mental Health Conditions

- Make up 13% (2108) of the split, with Mental Health being the highest (1289)

Money and mental health

Research tells us that higher degrees of financial worries are significantly associated with poor mental health. Research carried out by the Money and Pension Service in 2018 and then again in 2022 confirms the continuation of the relationship between money and mental health. [\[Source\]](#)

Mental health and financial vulnerabilities can be both the cause and the driver of each of these:

VS

**Poor financial health
= poor mental health**

**Poor mental health
= challenges with
financial difficulties**

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living situation the challenges between both mental health and poor personal or household finance faced by many people in the UK have now been exacerbated. For example;

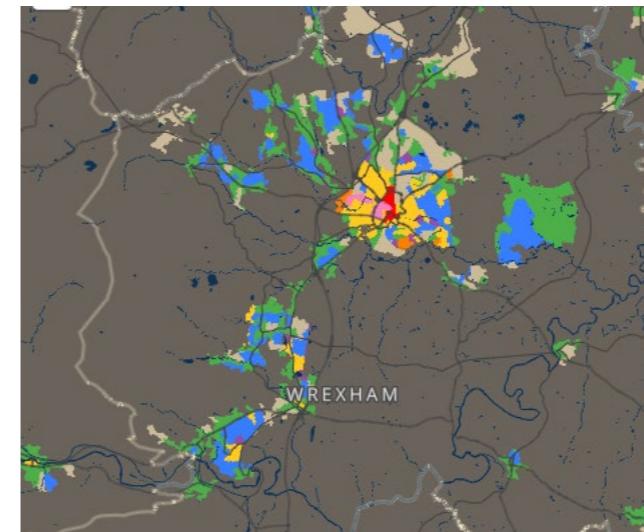
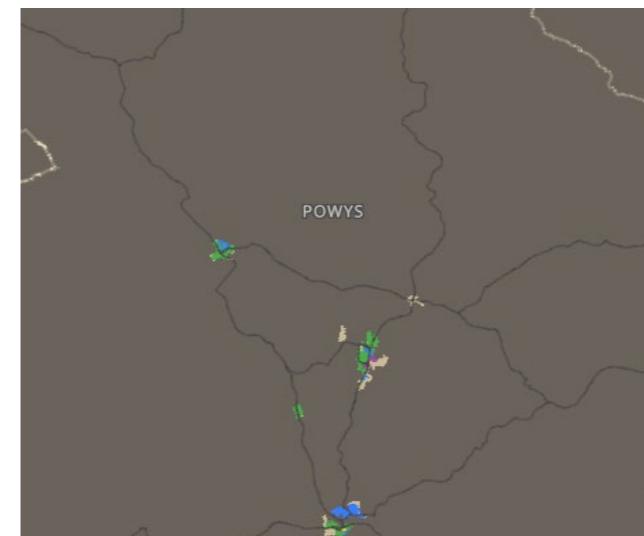
- 1 in 4 people experienced a mental health problem for the first time during COVID-19. Source: Bond and D'Arcy, 2021.

These patterns have continued.

Awareness

We've previously mentioned how important raising awareness of the support we offer is. Whether it's through working with partners, sharing data, internal and external communications, training and awareness and our hyper-local approach to our community activity.

It's really important that we always keep in mind the factors that make the two areas of our region very different, which you can see from the maps below:



Our customer research from 2022 told us our communities in Powys are particularly keen on face-to-face interactions, with internet usage being less widespread, meaning a desire for a close, "old fashioned" community engagement is preferred. Whereas in Wrexham, although our customers encourage our hyper-local approach and encourage face-to-face interactions, they are much more accepting of some of the more digital channels we use to raise awareness of support.

When developing our Community and Communications strategies, some of the channels and approaches we use will be the same. However, we will increase the community focused approach in Powys by visiting some of our more rural areas in our Community vehicle 'Dilys' and increasing partnership work to build strong relationships and deliver training to organisations that can help spread the word.

A recent pilot we're currently running is adding small support cards into prescription bags through local pharmacies to help raise awareness of support with vulnerable customers in rural areas of Powys. This is in the very early stages and something we will track as part of our strategy.

OUR PLAN TO RAISE AWARENESS

Raising awareness of the support we offer is a pivotal part of our plan now and in the future.

We will be focusing on four work streams, as shown in the visual below, to help us achieve our target of 65% and deliver on our customer promises.

Our plan for the community

We believe that the best way to work with communities is to be a part of them. We have a dedicated team of Community Connectors whose role is to engage with organisations and communities across our region, increasing awareness of the support we offer. We will be expanding our team of Community Connectors by employing a Welsh-speaking Connector, so we can continue to focus our hyper-local approach overall and improve our offering to Welsh-speaking communities.

Our plan for partnerships

We will build on our existing list of trusted partners, adding in new strategically-aligned organisations that underscore our commitment to supporting customers in ways that deliver direct, meaningful value.

We will work alongside organisations that specialise in certain areas, such as supporting our aging population and visually impaired customers, like Age Cymru, RNID, and RNIB. In doing this we will aim to address key barriers ensuring people can easily access essential services and resources through their preferred contact channels.

These partnerships will give us access to expert knowledge and help us gain valuable insights into customers' specific needs, so we can tailor the messaging and channels around the support we offer. This could include helping digitally excluded customers with the skills they need to use our online services, or continuing to raise awareness through more traditional contact channels, such as local community groups, doctors' surgeries and trusted partners. In all cases, we want the support we provide to be impactful, measurable, and sustainable, creating a lasting positive difference for customers and stakeholders alike.

Our plan for data

There is more we can do to identify customers who might need help, let them know what's available and how it could help them. We'll use the detailed information we have on our customers, with strong and engaging communications to make more people aware.

Our new billing system Kraken, which we're introducing in 2025, will support this, giving us a single customer view. This means we can tailor communications for each customer group, giving them their own journey and using messages that will be relevant to them.

For example, we could do this to help resolve a current issue where in certain area we know the potential for water poverty is higher, while reach of PSR and support schemes is relatively low. Using geographic and socio-economic information, overlaid with customer preference data, we can build a targeted campaign that increases take-up of PSR and applications to our Here2Help scheme.

By using data like this we can make our communications more effective while strengthening relationships with customers. We can more easily group customers based on internal factors like water usage patterns alongside other characteristics. This could help us identify customers more likely to need help or qualify for specific schemes. When we're creating communications, we can then customise them with clear and simple messages using the customer's preferred channels.

Building on this, we can make proactive contact through our Community Connectors and trusted partners, alongside a further-developed Here2Help Hub, to make sure we get full coverage. Not only will we be raising awareness of support available, but we'll also seek to build trust and engagement, demonstrating the genuine care we have for customers' well-being.

We've shown how this can work in passporting or auto-enrolling to our Here2Help social tariff. Identifying some 500 non-paying customers where we've already attempted recovery, we used credit and demographic data to directly 'passport' them to the tariff. At the same time as reducing their financial burden, we also saw improved engagement from affected customers.

As our Kraken system comes on-stream we'll look for further opportunities like these to raise awareness and make sure customers get the help they need and the service they deserve.

Our plan for people

Our partnership relationships are an excellent source of expert advice and knowledge that will help us shape future plans. We will make the most of this in training our own in-house teams so they can better support the specific vulnerabilities of our customers. Having staff with these improved skills can only further strengthen the service we offer.

At the same time, we will expand our list of Trainer Approvers, helping our partner organisations improve their own offering by being better able to identify clients who need support and sign them up for support from us.

DEVELOPING OUR STRATEGY

Co-development

When developing our strategy, we reached out to some of our most trusted partners for feedback on our current offering, their views on the strategy as a whole and what they thought we could do better. Amongst the responses were comments from Citizens Advice, Warm Wales and PAVO (Powys Association for Voluntary Organisations).

Our partners told us:

“A very comprehensive document”

“I doubt customers would want to read all that information”

“Good background information to give to clients before signposting on to Hafren Dyfrdwy”

“A lot of additional support, just a matter of ensuring that customers know about it”

“I’m unsure how HD is tracking performance”

“Quite a long document - suggest a shorter easy read version with condensed information”

“A visual flow chart or diagram simplify the document”

“Make the contact information of how to speak to someone directly more obvious and have a whole page detailing different methods of contact”

“Ultimately when looking for support I feel that people prefer to speak to someone to clarify the information they have received and any support available”

Shared customers

At Hafren Dyfrdwy a large proportion of our region in Wrexham is shared with Dŵr Cymru, where we supply customers with clean water and Dŵr Cymru provide waste service.

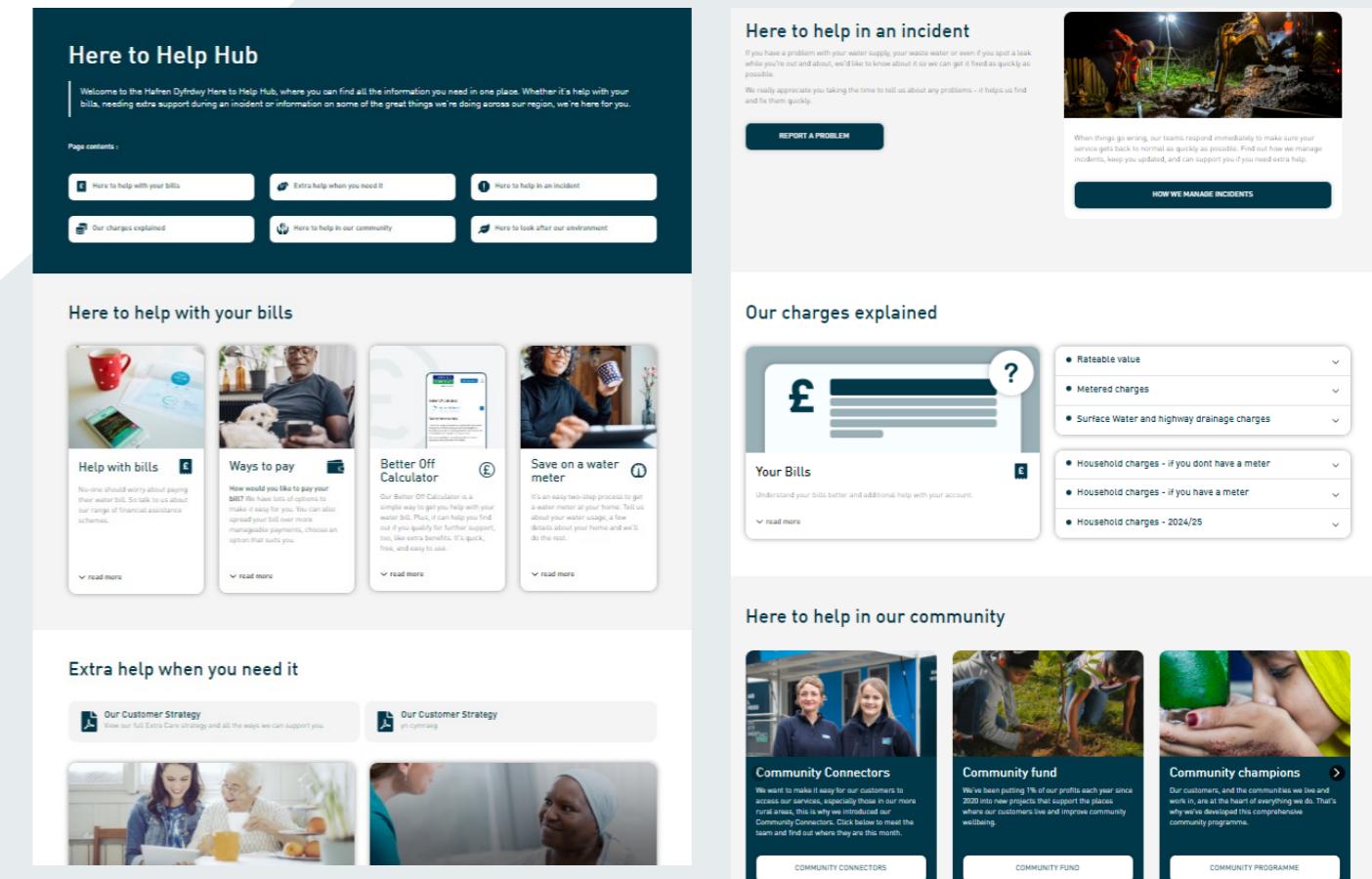
As part of developing our strategy we felt it was important to have regular check in with Dŵr Cymru to ensure that our strategies largely align due to our shared customers. We intend to continue and strengthen this relationship through the development of our strategy.

Customer views on our strategy

As we have built our plans, we've engaged with our customers to understand their priorities and help us improve the support we give. We've carried out two bespoke pieces of research on our 'Here to Help hub' and our 'Vulnerability Strategy' document.

Here to Help Hub

It is important that customers feel the support we offer is accessible. We have built a new hub on Hdcymru.co.uk that puts all the information about what support is available in one place. The hub is a brand new page, built with the intention of bringing together our support offerings under a single landing page.



The screenshot shows the 'Here to Help Hub' website. The main header reads 'Here to Help Hub' with a sub-copy 'Welcome to the Hafren Dyfrdwy Here to Help Hub, where you can find all the information you need in one place. Whether it's help with your bills, needing extra support during an incident or information on some of the great things we're doing across our region, we're here for you.' Below the header are several navigation buttons: 'Here to help with your bills', 'Extra help when you need it', 'Here to help in an incident', 'Our charges explained', 'Here to help in our community', and 'Here to look after our environment'. The 'Here to help with your bills' section includes links for 'Help with bills', 'Ways to pay', 'Better Off Calculator', and 'Save on a water meter'. The 'Extra help when you need it' section includes links for 'Our Customer Strategy' and 'Community Connectors'. The 'Our charges explained' section includes a 'Rateable value' calculator and a 'Your Bills' section. The 'Here to help in our community' section includes links for 'Community Connectors', 'Community fund', and 'Community champions'.

This should make it easier for vulnerable customers to review their options and make appropriate selections.

As the Here to Help Hub has been built to offer support to our vulnerable customer base, we felt it was imperative that the hub is both intuitive and functional.

Our approach – surveys

We conducted research through a survey, recruiting volunteers via a pop-up on the 'My Account' homepage upon login and a banner on the Here to Help Hub page itself.

Our results and customer comments

79% of customers told us they fully or mostly understand the contents of the Here to Help Hub.

79% of customers felt they would definitely or probably know which service to choose if they needed support. This suggests that most customers feel that the content on the Here to Help Hub is clear.

94% of customers considered the services on the page to be at least moderately useful, 40% of which found them very useful.

This would suggest that our customers view our support services as largely fit for purpose.

Customers also told us that financial support was most important to them, followed by PSR and other ways of helping.

We received 257 responses from a self-selecting audience.

Further customer comments



Fast set-ups and overall looks clear. Thanks.

Really easy and straight forward to use. Which is great for a forgetful busy mom who runs a small business.

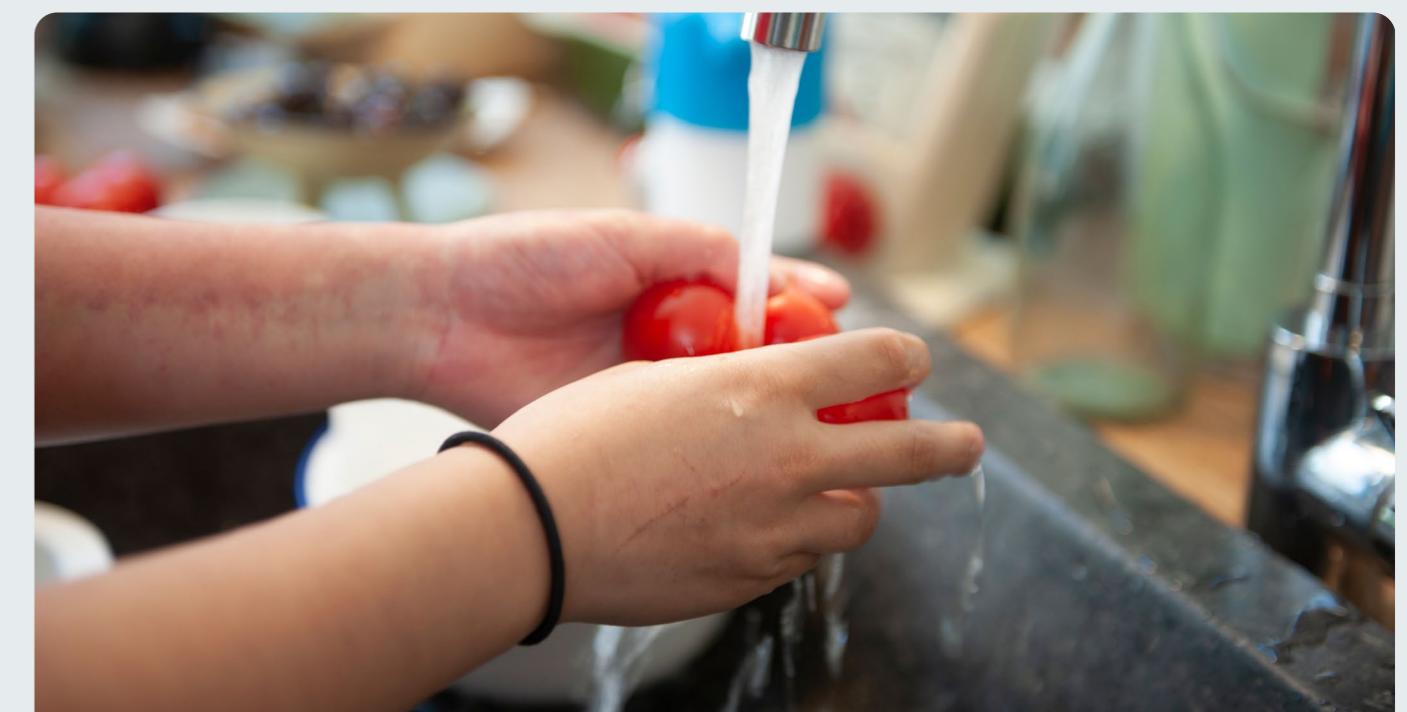
Keep the information as simple as possible so that its easier to absorb. As many older people find websites hard to follow as we were not brought up with technology.

The here2 help procedure is very long. We have to keep calling to get an answer.

Keep the information as simple as possible so that its easier to absorb. As many older people find websites hard to follow as we were not brought up with technology.

I think incident report page and having quick access to contact information would be useful. Also, regular update on water usage (not smart metre) would be useful service too.

Extremely grateful for this service, it is helpful as my time as a student.



THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

Why conduct research?

- By gathering customer feedback on the document, it lets us know whether or not our customers agree with what we are doing and allow them to tell us where we can improve.
- It also allows us to check that the content in the document makes sense and is easy to navigate.
- Requesting feedback direct from our customers also lets them know that we value their opinion, and that they have the opportunity to make a difference.

Our results and customer comments

85% of customers considered the document easy to understand

82% of customers found the document relevant to them

For customers who didn't find it relevant we asked them to comment on how we could improve.



You need to use more bold text as I am visually impaired registered blind.

Although I have a chronic illness I don't see myself as vulnerable so it's not really applicable.

We are both over 60 but at the moment quite capable. It's good to know you have it though.

Looks a great document for somebody who is the target audience, whereas I don't consider myself to need any help (currently), but some of the information was all the same somewhat interesting/useful.

Document is like a maze.

Plain speaking not so much pontificating.

Our approach - survey

- Participants were selected randomly from our email database.
- The survey consisted of 10 questions.
- A random sample of 30,000 customers were emailed, out of a possible 45,000 as we wanted everyone's opinion.
- We received 1,740 full responses in total.

82% of customers felt we were doing enough to provide extra care to our customers

For customers that didn't feel we were doing enough to offer extra help, we asked for their suggestions on how we could improve.



Stop obsessing about providing help to the internet savvy generation - Take out the 'need' to ask for help for the older generation by making your billing clearer. This generation won't ask - they will 'go without' rather than ask - they are ashamed of debt. You have put the cart before the horse... take out the need to ask.

Remember that a lot of your customers are old and can't send an email let alone go online!

Provide more financial support for people in hardship like myself. I lost my partner to cancer a few years ago and struggle with finances. I am almost 60 so it is hard to get employment as I do not earn enough to live comfortably any more.



85% of customers felt the document was easy to navigate

88% of customers found the document clearly showed how a customer could access support for them or someone they know



ALWAYS LISTENING

We also asked our customers if they felt there was anything missing on the document. The most common comment was to emphasise that customers felt there was nothing missing and customers were largely happy with our strategy.



Lots of images but not particularly useful, just brochure infill images. Can't click on the contents to skip to section.

No, the information seems to be covering many areas/scenarios and it's all in one place.

No. To be fair Hafren Dyfrdwy has covered all possible eventualities and provided possible solutions to each.

No, all was there perfectly but due to dyslexia I struggle anyway but over the phone they help explain in a way I can understand.

I have in the past felt uneasy calling to discuss help with bills so it is good to be able to chat to someone online, it can be less stressful

Easier for customers to be able to identify whether they are vulnerable and what they should do in terms of getting in touch – bullet points.

I think putting a clear page of all the offers on one of the first pages with reference to which page contains this information would make it clearer.



Alongside the bespoke research we're always actively reaching out to our customers to gain feedback and listen to what they need. Whether that's over the phone, through our community activity, or through customer surveys.

Here are some of the other ways we work with our customers to ensure we gain their invaluable feedback and provide the services they need:

- **Six monthly tracker surveys** - these are held by an independent research agency, which include questions focusing on the support we offer and the customer's awareness of it.
- **Retail customers experience tickets** - we actively reach out to customers that have contacted us the previous week. Asking them to rate their experience, and tell us how we can improve. This action is also carried out in the operational side of the business.

- **KCI incident surveys** - we actively reach out to customers after all incidents to ask how we did. Did we keep them informed and was there anything else we could have done?

and finally,

- **No Supply incident texts** - More recently, we have actively started reaching out to customers where an incident has caused them to be without supply. We ask them if they were happy with the service and then more specific questions around PSR:

1. Whether they were happy that their additional needs were met; and
2. If they're not already on PSR is this a service they would like.

All of the activities above are hugely beneficial as not only do they give us feedback direct from our customers, but they also allow us to identify those that need additional support, and enable us to get it to them.



Summary of Research

We have learned a lot from our customers in the first five years of Hafren Dyfrdwy, and we have worked hard to make changes based on feedback from our customers and partner organizations. Here are some of the key changes we have made from 2020 to 2025.

| What Our Customer Told Us | | What We've Delivered to Date |
|---|--|--|
| Quick and simple access to support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced a free phone number for our Care and Assistance Team, making it easier for customers to reach us. Launched our Trained Approver programme, enabling trusted partners to assess customers' eligibility for support schemes, thus reducing barriers to access. Relocated front office contact channels in-house to our local office in Wrexham, ensuring better control and customer service. Simplified the income evidence requirement for our social tariff from three months to one month, making it easier for customers to qualify. Implemented an auto-enrol process for care leavers in collaboration with local authorities, ensuring they receive the support they need. Developed the Here to Help Hub, an intuitive online platform where customers can access all our support services in one place. Introduced the 'Better Off Calculator' in partnership with Policy in Practice, providing a comprehensive assessment tool for customers to understand their financial situation and available support. | Details |
| Invest in communities | | Regional differences |
| The support we offer is valued. However, ensuring customers are aware of the support available is key. | | There is a strong and growing link between mental health and finances. |
| Offer and promote non-digital contact channels | | We have an aging population with an increase in chronic illness in both the older and younger population. |
| Face-to-face interaction | | Increased number of customers needing support due to a mental health condition. |
| Build relationships with our Welsh communities | | Promote support in short, easy-to-read formats with more visual representation. |

| Details | What We've Delivered to Date |
|--|---|
| Regional differences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognized and addressed the unique needs of different regions to ensure tailored support. |
| There is a strong and growing link between mental health and finances. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored proactive contacts to promote support, such as sending text messages to customers with registered mental health conditions instead of calling them, to reduce stress and improve communication. |
| We have an aging population with an increase in chronic illness in both the older and younger population. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established close partnerships with Age UK and Age Cymru to provide targeted support. Auto-enrolled customers of pensionable age onto Priority Services to ensure they receive necessary support. Introduced an auto-renew process for customers of pensionable age benefiting from our Social Tariff, allowing them to simply confirm their circumstances haven't changed instead of reapplying. |
| Increased number of customers needing support due to a mental health condition. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed partnerships with Mind and local mental health charities to provide specialized support. Introduced a counselling referral service in collaboration with PontHafren, a local charity, to assist customers needing mental health support. |
| Promote support in short, easy-to-read formats with more visual representation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted customer research to improve our strategy document and the new Here to Help Hub, ensuring information is accessible and easy to understand. |
| Increasing population of customers with sight and hearing impairments, especially in Powys. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnered with RNID and RNIB to raise awareness of the support we offer and ensure it is accessible to customers with sight and hearing impairments. |

OUR FUTURE PROMISES

When we started this strategy we worked hard to understand what it was customers wanted from us. This helped us set out our customer promises. We've now redefined and tailored these promises to outline our future plans,

how we will measure progress, and how we will hold ourselves accountable. Below we've shared our short, medium and long-term commitments we've set to deliver on our plans.

| Short-term plans 2025-26 | We will | Measured by | Service for all |
|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Provide services that meet our customer needs | Continue to ensure the Extra Care support we offer is in line with our customer needs and the 'Service for All' guidance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work with partners such as RNID and RNIB to support the increasing number of hearing and sight impaired customers across our region. Aligning our 'Extra Care' offering with the new Priority Services Standards. The introduction of our annual PSR customer satisfaction survey to track progress against our target of 95%. The addition of a GSS table into our strategy once the new GSS is in effect. | 1,2,3,4 |
| Support our customers now and in the future | Be innovative in the way we do things, to allow us to offer schemes and services that will support our customers and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act goals for years to come. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of our 'Better off Calculator' to identify extra care needs as well financial support offerings, to help raise awareness and identify more customers needing our support. | 3 |
| Be easy to talk to | Make it easy for our customers to reach us by offering a wide range of support on varied contact channels, whilst ensuring we offer an inclusive and accessible service across all operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review our current PSR welcome letter to ensure it has clear messaging outlining the individual support the customer will get during an incident. Creation of an easy-to-read, customer friendly vulnerability strategy and roadmap. Additional training for our front-line staff, such as dementia champions and mental health awareness, enabling us to identify specific vulnerabilities. Introduction of virtual video calls for our Care and Assistance team to support our hearing impaired customers. Recruit a Welsh speaking Community Connector allowing us to extend our community offering to Welsh speaking schools and customers. | 1,2,3 |
| Make it easy to access support | Work hard to raise awareness of the support we offer, by growing our network of trusted partners and, finding innovative ways to make accessing support easier. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a partnership matrix with clear partnership tiers distinguishing the relationship level and how we work with them. Exploration of live data share agreements with local authorities in partnership with Policy in Practice to auto enrol customers onto schemes making it easier to access support. Setting up new referral agreements with partners to offer holistic support and share data to improve our customer journeys. | 3 |
| Broaden support in our communities | Grow our current community offering and societal strategy, to support our customers, not just with their bills but with some of the wider challenges they face, such as unemployment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued growth of our partnerships with schools and businesses across our region to support children and young adults into work outside of education, helping tackle water poverty across our region. | 1,3 |
| Offer affordable and fair bills | Work hard to tackle water poverty across our region and continuing to offer one of the lowest bills in England and Wales. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 75% of our struggling to pay customers through making bills more affordable and manageable within our current offering The launch of our new income and expenditure assessment criteria to support households with high income and low or no disposable income, in partnership with debt advice agencies, addressing the link between mental health and financial vulnerabilities. The design and implementation of new tariffs to create the right incentives for customers to be more water efficient and tackle water poverty. Supporting the drive toward smart metering, upgrading 24% of properties to the latest smart meters to reduce leaks and save customer money. | 3 |

Service for all Key

1 High standard of service and support
2 Inclusive by design

3 Identifying customers 4 Recording needs
5 Vulnerability strategies

Our Future 2025-2030

The aims and commitments below are what we aim to deliver by 2025-2030.

| Medium to long - term plans 2026-2030 | We will | Measured by | Service for all |
|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Provide services that meet our customer needs | Continue to ensure the Extra Care support we offer is in line with our customer needs and the 'Service for All' guidance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the introduction of our new billing system, Kraken we will introduce anytime opt in/out of communications. Hosting annual community events alongside partner organisations to raise awareness of the support available across our region and get vital feedback from our customers and external stakeholders. The introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel, alongside consulting with CCW. Bringing together customers and partner organisations to gain insight and improve our services. An annual review of our Vulnerability Strategy internally and through our Extra Care Advisory Panel and Hafren Dyfrdwy Executive team. Achieving a PSR reach target of 20% of household connections by 2030. Continually monitoring our changing customer demographic and make changes to our strategy to suit the changing climate. Aim to extend our PSR offering to our Non-Household customers that may need support. | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| Support our customers now and in the future | Be innovative in the way we do things, to allow us to offer schemes and services that will support our customers and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act goals for years to come. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of an accredited British Sign Language course for at least one member of our Care and Assistance Team. Mental health awareness training for all members of staff, addressing the strong link between physical and financial vulnerabilities Working alongside Independent age to look at ways we can support our ageing population. Aim to gain Plain Numbers Certification. Creation of a Hafren Dyfrdwy Extra Care training pack. Working alongside Charities to create a pack to support front-line staff on how to identify vulnerabilities and support the customer along the customer journey. The partnerships will involve at least six monthly contacts to review the content. | 1,2,3,4 |
| Be easy to talk to | Make it easy for our customers to reach us by offering a wide range of support on varied contact channels, whilst ensuring we offer an inclusive and accessible service across all operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of new accessible contact channels. Aiming to undertake ISO 22458 inclusive design and consumer vulnerability once our Kraken migration is complete. Further development of our Here to Help Online Hub making online service more accessible and easy to find. | 1,2,3,4 |

Staying on track

Alongside the introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel and our regular contact and quarterly liaisons with CCW, we have set the following targets to track our progress against our commitments, and measure our performance.

| Medium to long - term plans 2026-2030 | | We will | |
|---|---|--|---------|
| Make it easy to access support | Work hard to raise awareness of the support we offer, by growing our network of trusted partners and, finding innovative ways to make accessing support easier. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing any barriers when applying for affordability and extra care support by increasing our number of trusted partners by 20%. Aiming to increase the awareness of Priority Services to 65%. Playing an active role in phase two of the water/energy data share project and the Government's proposed Share Once Support Register. Delivery of a robust comms campaign to raise awareness of both financial and extra care support, clearly defining the different focus needed for Wrexham and Powys. Focussing on a hyper-local approach in both areas, with an emphasis on face to face community approach in Powys. The introduction of home visits alongside trusted partners to vulnerable customers needing support. Increase our number of data share agreements with Local councils, housing associations, fire services to make it quick and easy for customers to get the support they need. Whether that's support with their bills or through Priority Services | 1,2,3,4 |
| Broaden support in our communities | Grow our current community offering and societal strategy, to support our customers, not just with their bills but with some of the wider challenges they face, such as unemployment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of 2,500 employability hours through our Community Connectors. 20 young people given work experience annually (10% of workforce). Increasing our Community Fund donation to £60k per annum. | |
| Offer affordable and fair bills | Work hard to tackle water poverty across our region and continuing to offer one of the lowest bills in England and Wales. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The increase the number of customers supported through social tariff to 8.2% of our customer base. Work with Policy in Practice to measure the impact of our support against water Poverty. The expansion of our Care Leavers project across our region through work with the Care leavers Covenant and explore opportunities to auto-enrol other customer groups. | 1,2,3 |

| Measure | Where we are now | 2030 Target |
|---|--|---|
| PSR reach | 9% | 20% of household connections, tracked via an internal dashboard. |
| PSR Data Checking | Actual 41% Attempted 98% | Aim to maintain actual contact of 41% of households on PSR every 2 years, and attempted contact of 98% every 2 years. |
| % of customer supported through Social Tariff | 4% | 8.2% of household connections, tracked monthly, yearly and over the AMP via a dashboard. |
| % growth of trusted partners | This will be tracked after completion of our new Partnership Matrix. | Increased by 20%, tracked via the partnership matrix. |
| Number of data share agreements with local authorities/housing associations and partners | Currently hold a data share agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council. | At least double the amount of data share agreements, tracked via the partnership matrix. |
| Training and awareness delivered to external partners | 6 organisations currently trained | Increased to 30, tracked through the partnership matrix. |
| % of customers aware of Priority Services | 52% | 65% Tracked through a twice annually tracker survey. |
| % of customers satisfied with Extra Care support | This is a new measure | 95% Tracked through an annual tracker survey carried out through an external agency |

APPENDIX 1

Compliance with Service for All

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
|---|------------|---|--|---|---------|
| <p>Companies should adapt their services to customers in line with any known extra help needs. This is especially important during times where there is increased risk of harm; for example, during incidents.</p> <p>Exceeding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Our customers will need extra help and some point in their life and we know that this can be temporary/transient or it can be longer term. We encourage customers to make us aware of their needs or changes in their needs by raising awareness of our Priority Services Register (PSR) and by checking in with customers when they interact with us. We capture the individual customer needs as long as we receive explicit consent which allows us to tailor the support we offer. We will continue to check in with customers every 2 years to confirm we are supporting their current needs. We have a diverse range of contact channels including face to face at our Head Office in Wrexham - this is something that our customers especially those who need extra support really appreciate e.g. customers with learning difficulties or language barriers. We have also introduced over the last few years digital contact channels including a text message service and two-way messaging (WhatsApp) to suit customers day to day lifestyle meaning they can reply to us when it is convenient for them and are working on introducing virtual face to face appointments with our Care & Assistance team. We offer a comprehensive range of alternative bill and communication formats such as braille, large print and coloured paper When operational works are required, we'll provide advanced notice in writing. During supply incidents we utilise our Priority Service Register and offer an 'always on' service, which means customers will receive a constant supply of water during an incident, which includes bottled water for all of our customers registered on PSR. In AMP7 we introduced an ODI for this and we have delivered 100% year on year across the AMP. We will also set up bottled water stations at various points in the community if needed. For our High Priority customers such as dialysis patients or water dependant, we'll proactively contact these customers to make them aware of the incident. During incidents we also update our phone lines to include personalised messages when customers' postcodes are recognised, and the most relevant information is shared. We offer nine different payment methods to our customers. This includes being able to pay via third party deductions from their benefits, paying by Direct Debit or by a Watercard. We also offer different types of frequencies and payment dates to suit customer needs. For customers who do have a Power of Attorney, as soon as we are made aware we will deal with them going forwards and ensure all essential interactions are done with the nominated Power of Attorney. We offer protection from bogus callers and the option for customers to sign up to our doorstep password scheme when customers join the Priority Service Register. Any of these contacts are managed by our Care and Assistance team. For new meters, we aim to install these externally so we can access them without disturbing our customers. When they are sited outside, we do not expect customers to need to access their meter outside and if they require a meter reading we will arrange for one to be taken for them. We are the first water company to introduce a Mental Health referral process direct with Ponthafren for customers impacted by Internal Sewer Flooding where we will fund sessions for customers who require additional support. Continually look to improve our services through twice yearly tracker surveys, giving us direct insight from our customer's, partner organisations and stakeholders. As part of this strategy we have outlined our plan to raise awareness of support and any future plans to widen the support we offer. | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly benchmarking and sharing best practice across the industry and wider. Completing our customer research and feedback to inform our decision making when adapting services. Continue to track through the 'Paying Fair' guidelines which we are currently ranked as 'exemplary'. Monitoring complaints regarding supply interruptions ensuring these are kept to a minimum. Using our ODI to ensure we are supporting those customers we need to in the event of an incident and learning from incidents over this AMP to help shape this moving forward. Growing our PSR and looking at more innovative ways to raise awareness - posters in GP Surgeries, hospitals etc. Introduce additional questions into our annual customers research tracker Introduction of post incident CSAT so we can understand how we managed an incident and if there were any challenges for our customers that we need to address. The introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel, alongside consulting with CCW. Bringing together customers and partner organisations to gain insight and improve our services. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Making sure customers feedback to us - especially those who may be digitally challenged/excluded. Finding innovative ways for engagement - community events, integrate into customer journeys within the application process. Climate change could create an increased risk of supply interruptions therefore creating an increase in demand for bottled water. Funding to partner with organisations and technology to support all customer needs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to provide bottled water to all PSR customers. We are committed to maintaining the minimum PSR reach target of 20% of HH connections by 2030. With recent developments in phase two of PSR data sharing project with Energy sector and the Government's proposed Shared Once Support Register (SOSR) we believe we can substantially increase volumes. By 2026 we aim to introduce a video relay service or similar, to assist customers with communication needs through British Sign Language. We will also investigate similar services to help assist blind customers and customers who are visually impaired. We will achieve Actual contact with 35% of households on the PSR every two years and Attempted contact with 90% of households in the same period. | |

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
|---|------------|--|---|--|---------|
| <p>Companies should ensure that the level and nature of support available to customers is presented in a way customers can understand.</p> <p>Exceeding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We've recently redesigned our website and created a 'Here to Help' hub which is accessible to customers. We have also conducted customer research specifically on the language and usability of this page, which highlighted in our strategy. We will also be designing an easy to read one page roadmap outlining support so we can use this at community events and display in local "hot spots" for customers who may be digitally challenged/excluded. Make all contact channels and contact details easy to find so customers can get in touch easily. Updated descriptors for all of our schemes following CCW's Affordability Review to ensure these are aligned and consistent across the industry. Our schemes are now more recognisable and customers better understand the level of support we can offer. We have launched our Better of Calculator in Partnership with Policy In Practice in Summer 24 where customers can complete a single application form; this will then carry out a full income maximisation and benefit check and identify the most suitable scheme to give the customer the most benefit. This will ensure that information and support can be accessed quicker and easier. As a wholly Welsh water company we will ensure all new processes and documents are available in Welsh and we be adhering to the Welsh Language Standards by August 2025. We are working with partners, such as local authorities, housing associations, charities and food banks to identify customers who are struggling and to increase awareness of the support we provide. As part of this we bring together advice and support agencies at events for customers in our local communities most in need of support to put all the help in one place for customers. We are working with local authorities to proactively identify customers in financial hardship to passport these customers directly onto our affordability schemes and identify any extra care needs - we have a data share agreement in place with Wrexham BC and will be introducing one with Powys CC over the coming 12 months. This enables us to directly support those customers who might not engage with us through our usual channels and remove any barriers that the application process might create for some of our customers. We are building awareness of support across social media, the press, and targeted emails to reach those we believe are most in need. We will use our Community Strategy to further promote our support; this is highly collaborative e.g. we provide employability training via Communities for Work and Careers Wales which means we can also share information with schools for parents about how to access our services and support. We continue to work with partners such as the RNID and RNIB to continually look at ways we can improve our support and services making them more accessible to our customers, and ever change customers needs and demographic. | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly undertaking customer research and feedback surveys with wider customer groups to provide us with insight on design, content and how easy our support is to understand. Our Community Connectors host regular events in our communities to gather feedback from customers and organisations around how our support schemes and extra help is presented. We will monitor engagement rates on our 'Here to Help' online hub and ask customers for feedback. This will allow us to continue to improve the content making it even more accessible for customers and easy to understand. Engaging with CCW and industry groups regularly, sharing best practice and learnings to inform industry wide changes with a focus on Wales. The introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel, alongside consulting with CCW. Bringing together customers and partner organisations to gain insight and improve services and shape our future plans. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We don't envisage any challenges and are on track to meet our targets | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit one new Welsh speaking Community Connector to allow us to deliver bilingual events, training and awareness sessions with customers and partners Completion of an accredited British Sign Language course for at least one member of our Care and Assistance Team. | |

1.2

1.1

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets | Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
|--|------------|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Companies should seek to continuously improve the service they provide to customers who need extra help. This may include finding innovative ways to design or implement services. | Compliant | <p>1. We have developed personalised and tailored debt journeys to ensure the effectiveness of our collections approach and have sufficient guidelines to ensure the highest of standards are achieved. We have built different 'debt personas' within our debt collections system based on data we have developed during the end-to-end debt journey. This approach means we apply tailored interventions dependent on the history of the customers' circumstances, particularly if they require extra help.</p> <p>2. We are working closely within our communities. In particular, in hard-to-reach communities, we host face to face events designed to engage with customers who may struggle to contact us due to personal obstacles. The introduction of our 2 Community Connector roles means we can be visible on a daily basis and can also support visit customers to support them face to face if needed.</p> <p>3. We've recently reviewed our Watersure reapplication process in light of feedback from customers with long term and permanent medical conditions. Rather than requesting these customers reapply each year to remain on the scheme we have introduced a Watersure "Lifelong" category meaning these customers will now only be contacted every five years to confirm their eligibility and receipt of welfare benefits.</p> <p>4. When we design products, communications, or services within our business we do carefully consider accessibility needs. When we are in contact with our customers, we provide a wide range of ways they can manage their accounts online themselves using the functionality of 'ReciteMe', which is inclusive by design.</p> <p>5. With the pending launch of Kraken, we have taken some learnings from our data such as complaints and contacts regarding design of our bill, and other services we offer, and we're implementing customer feedback into our workshops. Our new bill design has been carefully considered based on feedback from customers who need extra help, making it much easier to understand, and available in many different formats.</p> <p>6. We also share learnings and actively collaborate with wider industry working groups to understand and learn where improvements have been implemented and made a difference to customers who need extra help.</p> <p>7. We have recently redesigned our private leakage policy to offer free repairs for customers who are vulnerable ensuring we take away the burden for them.</p> <p>8. In 2023 we launched our 'Customer Promise' register to identify customers who have experienced repeat supply issues. This ensures we fairly compensate customers and when we are looking at investment, we are considering customer impact.</p> <p>9. We are introducing feedback surveys after supply incidents to all customers requesting feedback around how we can improve and promotion of the Priority Service Register so we can continue to improve our customer experience - when things do go wrong we want to make sure all of our customers have the right support that they need.</p> <p>10. We introduced a scheme for young adults leaving the care system and transitioning to independent living. Working in collaboration with local authorities allows us to 'passport' individuals directly onto our social tariff, reducing the effort for individuals.</p> | <p>1. Using customer research to evaluate and trial our innovative plans and approaches to improve our service.</p> <p>2. Continue to collaborating with other organisations regularly to gather insight and enhance our service offering and enabling us to tailor our approach and offer tailored interventions.</p> <p>3. Working with industry wide working groups and CCW to share best practices and learnings before we implement changes.</p> <p>4. Sharing best practice with DCWW as we have "shared" customers and want to be consistent with supporting customers across Wales.</p> <p>5. The introduction of our annual PSR satisfaction survey</p> <p>6. Post incident text message to all customers impacted by loss of supply.</p> <p>7. The introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel, alongside consulting with CCW. Bringing together customers and partner organisations to gain insight and improve services.</p> | <p>1. Engagement with the wider industry to share data and learnings, this has historically been a challenge with companies reluctant to share.</p> <p>2. Ensuring our innovations happen at the right pace for our customers, particularly those with extra help needs.</p> <p>3. Engagement with some local authorities/ councils can be challenging.</p> <p>4. Challenges faced with rural communities and those customers digitally challenged/excluded.</p> | <p>1. Complete half yearly customer research to understand improvements and other innovative ways we can support customers who need extra help.</p> <p>2. Continue our active participation in wider industry working groups once a quarter, sharing learnings and best practice where we can.</p> <p>3. A dedicated "Here to Help" campaign which focuses on hard to reach communities.</p> <p>4. 95% satisfaction of customers on PSR through annual survey.</p> | <p>Companies should interact with customers in a way that is inclusive for a diverse range of audiences. This should be underpinned by relevant insights, which may include research, engagement and accreditation.</p> | | <p>1. We offer a wide range of different contact channels to suit customers' needs including text message service and two-way messaging to suit customers day to day lifestyle meaning they can reply to us when it's convenient for them.</p> <p>2. We offer a comprehensive range of alternative bill and communication formats such as braille, large print and coloured paper and fully translated services available across channels.</p> <p>4. We recognise some customers with extra needs benefit from having a single point of contact, and we offer a case management service to these customers experiencing complexities.</p> <p>5. For customers who prefer to use our website and manage their accounts online we offer the 'ReciteMe' accessibility software on our websites, which is inclusive by design. Our digital platform has been assessed against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) achieving AA-level compliance ensuring our digital services and websites are accessible to a broader audience, including people with disabilities.</p> <p>6. Our Community Connectors are visible in our communities with our new community vehicle "Dilys" - this helps us engage with hard to reach communities and can better support customers who may struggle with over the phone or online communications with us.</p> <p>7. We have recently redesigned our website and created a 'Here to Help' online hub and have conducting customer research specifically on the language and usability of this page, as highlighted in our strategy.</p> <p>8. We are increasing our number of Welsh speakers so we can better support the communities we serve by introducing Welsh Language learning to all customer facing employees.</p> <p>9. Working with external partners and charities to provide additional training/accreditations for employees e.g. Dementia Friends/champions</p> <p>10. As our Customer Solutions team is small, we are able to gain insight direct from our colleagues and other customer facing teams which we can use to better shape and improve our services.</p> <p>11. We are looking to introduce Virtual "Here to Help" appointments so our friendly team can help guide the customer through the application process or discuss their needs with them over video call.</p> <p>12. We make sure our communications a jargon free and written in plain Welsh and English and work with organisations such as the RNIB to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.</p> <p>13. By 2026 introduce a video relay service or similar, to assist customers with communication needs through British Sign Language.</p> | | <p>1. Progress will be tracked through successful completion of training and benefits will be shared.</p> <p>2. Customer research to understand customer preferences when it comes to communication.</p> <p>3. Volume of customers being case managed by our dedicated Care and Assistance team.</p> <p>4. Recording the individual needs of our customers such as language barriers so we know when interacting with them they have all the information they need regarding our extra help services in a way that is understandable for them.</p> | <p>1. Maintain WCAG AA-level compliance for digital services.</p> <p>2. By 2026 have 1 Community Connector trained in British Sign Language to assist customers with communication needs.</p> <p>3. By 2026 have 1 Dementia Champion in each business area(Retail, Water, Waste) and all of our Customer Solutions team trained as Dementia Friends.</p> <p>4. By 2025 have a Welsh speaking Community Connector in role.</p> |
| Companies should use a range of data to monitor the effectiveness of their extra help services, and the satisfaction levels of customers who have made such needs known. | Compliant | <p>1. We have recently introduced feedback surveys to all customers impacted by supply incidents which will also promote Priority Service Register.</p> <p>2. Customer engagement through our half yearly internal research tracker survey</p> <p>3. We will analyse verbatim scores and comments from customers at varying contact touch points to identify areas of improvement. The option to provide feedback is provided to all customers - this feedback is tracked and reviewed regularly by our Service Recovery team.</p> <p>4. Participation in several customer panels, including specific vulnerability panels and also customer service networking meetings and working closely with Dŵr Cymru.</p> <p>5. We continue to monitor customer outcomes through internal measures of complaints and our C-MeX performance.</p> <p>6. As we move into Kraken, we will be using sentiment checking as part of our new 'CHI' - (customer experience happiness index).</p> <p>7. We have recently 'claimed' the Hafren Dyfrdwy Trust Pilot page and are working on our communications plan to introduce this to our customers.</p> | <p>1. Monitoring through our C-MeX & complaints performance, diving into root causes of dissatisfaction and understanding where we can make improvements.</p> <p>2. Utilising Speech Analytics to provide insight on specific topics, and enabling us to gather direct customer insight through interactions with us to identify areas of further improvement, coaching and effective training.</p> <p>3. Customer panel groups providing insight and benchmarking on other companies.</p> <p>4. Tracking of our CHI (customer happiness index) measure now we're moving into Kraken - including Trust Pilot reviews.</p> <p>5. Feedback and accountability through the introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel.</p> <p>6. Introduction of our annual PSR Satisfaction survey.</p> <p>7. Twice annually customer tracker surveys.</p> | <p>1. Limited engagement from customers following survey.</p> <p>2. Engagement with hard to reach customers e.g. digitally excluded/challenged.</p> <p>3. Effectiveness of support may also be dependent on other external circumstances, for example employment availability.</p> <p>3. 95% of customers on Priority Services are happy with our service.</p> | <p>1. Committing to ensuring less than 1% of customers being supported with extra help complain about service or satisfaction.</p> <p>2. We will conduct customer satisfaction surveys following an incident including those customers on our Priority Service Register to understand the impact and effectiveness of support during an incident.</p> | Companies should offer their customers a range of ways to interact and communicate. This includes allowing customers to opt for third party billing where appropriate. | <p>1. We provide tailored communication and different types of alternative format . We also offer case management to customers experiencing complexities. When we design products, communications, or services within our business we do carefully consider accessibility needs. When we are in contact with our customers, we provide a wide range of ways they can communicate with us and manage their accounts including online, including using 'ReciteMe' accessibility software on our websites, which is inclusive by design.</p> <p>2. In terms of third-party billing, we do not have any agreements with local authorities, housing associations or other social housing providers unless it's via a bulk supply property. If a housing association is taking responsibility of charges for a block of flats or accommodation then we will ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for paying these charges. For customers within these types of agreements experiencing any issues with supply etc they are able to contact us and report this without having an account with us. We do provide access to all of our schemes and services as part of our vulnerability strategy so housing associations can sign post their customers where necessary for extra help.</p> <p>3. Some customers might need someone to help them at times, which is where our nominee scheme helps make things easier. If a customer has dementia, suffers from anxiety, or there is anything else that makes managing their account with us difficult, they can appoint a nominee. We simply ask for them to give us details of a third party e.g. friend, relative or carer who they allow to speak to us on their behalf. We can even send information directly to them if this is requested, so they can help make sure bills are always up to date, and we can also move the billing charge into the name of their nominee if requested.</p> <p>4. If there is a water emergency such as a supply interruption, we will contact the nominee as well as the customer, in case they need any extra help.</p> <p>5. We will be introducing Virtual "Here to Help" video calls to better support customers who can find standard telephone communication challenging and prefer face to face (virtually).</p> <p>6. We will continue to promote our "Customer Hatch" in our Wrexham Head Office for customers to visit and discuss queries face to face with our team.</p> <p>7. Our community vehicle "Dilys" continues to be an integral part of how we engage with hard to reach communities - our new Here to Help online hub holds a calendar of where the vehicle will be and on what days so customers can plan ahead and find a suitable time and location to visit us.</p> | <p>1. Volume of nominees registered on accounts and opted in for third party billing and to receive communications.</p> <p>2. Volume of supply interruption incidents that have impacted customers on the PSR.</p> <p>3. CSAT from customers impacted by supply interruptions</p> <p>4. Monitoring system functionality to record third parties such as nominees, including Kraken functionality.</p> <p>5. Introduction of our annual PSR satisfaction survey</p> | <p>1. Increase risk of fraud if we have incorrect or out of date information such as contact details.</p> <p>2. Ageing populations leading to more third party communication and associated costs for example bills sent to multiple people.</p> <p>3. Accounts billed through third parties such as local authorities or housing providers may miss out on specific help such as social tariffs.</p> | <p>1. Continue to ensure system functionality is available to record PSR needs and individual needs, even when we bill for consolidated accounts.</p> <p>3. 95% satisfaction of customers on PSR.</p> | |
| 1.4 | | | | | | | | | | | |

| 2.3 | 3.1 | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
|--|-----------|------------|---|---|---|--|
| Companies should consult with CCW, and engage with stakeholders and other customer representatives, when making significant changes to their proposed service offering around vulnerability. | Exceeding | | <p>1. We have established strong relationships with CCW and prior to changes and introducing new proposals we liaise directly with them.</p> <p>2. We have frequent in month catch ups with CCW, and provide information to them on a regular basis. We have a quarterly liaison with our representatives at CCW to discuss innovation, performance and changes.</p> <p>3. We spent time with CCW walking them through our communications strategy around how we can better communicate changes to our customers.</p> <p>4. CCW hold us to account on our wider performance commitments, including ODI's and we share our progress half yearly.</p> <p>5. We are regular attendees at forums hosted by CCW, e.g. the Household complaints forum, campaign workshops and vulnerability panel groups.</p> <p>6. We are committed to testing changes with our customers via online research panels making sure our changes are supported by our customers.</p> | <p>1. Quarterly CCW liaison meetings a year.</p> <p>2. Quarterly HH complaints forums a year.</p> <p>3. Attendance at all campaign workshops hosted by CCW.</p> <p>4. Engaging with CCW frequently on any customer facing innovations, including sharing customer communications and research.</p> <p>5. Feedback and accountability through the introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel.</p> | <p>1. Ensure we are speaking to the right people to help deliver changes</p> | <p>1. Complete half yearly customer research to understand improvements and other innovative ways we can support customers who need extra help.</p> <p>2. Regular CCW review to discuss engagement and create a forward plan of priorities important to them and to Hafren Dyfrdwy.</p> |
| Companies should take active steps to identify customers who require extra help who have not yet been identified. | | | <p>1. Our strategy involves working closely with local authorities/ partners to identify customers in financial hardship to passport them straight onto our support schemes. This has enabled us to support customers who might not have previously engaged with us through our usual contact channels and has helped remove barriers in the application process. We will continue to grow this list of trusted partners.</p> <p>2. Other approaches include improvements to our debt recovery journeys for those customers who may be financially stressed. Using credit bureau information we have identified customers who we will be working with to promote the appropriate support - some of these customer may be passported onto schemes and will be reviewed individually by our Care and Assistance team.</p> <p>3. We are continually looking at ways that we can raise awareness of our schemes and support across radio, social media and through the press. We have been using targeted campaigns to reach customers who are most in need, using CACI demographic data to improve accuracy.</p> <p>4. We use our Intelligent Kickouts programme to identify customers where their water consumption has increased out of their ordinary usage. We will then contact customers to discuss potential changes in their circumstances, or to help them identify if there are any leaks. Through these conversations we proactively look into any needs that have not yet been identified and offer the extra help they require. We also offer free leak repairs for vulnerable customers.</p> <p>5. We will be using our CSAT surveys to customers impacted by service interruptions which will also provide the option to join the Priority Service Register.</p> <p>6. Additional training for front-line staff on how to identify signs of vulnerabilities alongside the introduction of our own internal training pack created with trusted partners.</p> <p>7. Continue to identify customers through data share agreements with energy providers and other trusted partners.</p> <p>8. In the last 12 months we've used credit and demographic data to assess non-paying customers who've been through all potential recovery action, and proactively enrolled approximately customers directly to our social tariff, resulting in them receiving a bill reduction.</p> | <p>1. Participation in Phase 2 data share across Energy/ Water sector targeting a 'tell us once' solution to improve customer experience and maximise support available.</p> <p>2. Volume of new partnerships and data sharing agreements signed.</p> <p>3. Volume of customers identified with extra needs through our intelligent kickouts process.</p> <p>4. Take a data driven approach to proactively enrolling customers on support schemes</p> | <p>1. Increase metering penetration required to unlock additional data that can highlight needs, e.g. high consumption.</p> <p>2. Successful implementation of Phase 2 data sharing across energy and water sector/ Government proposed Shared Once Support Register (SOSR)</p> | <p>1. We are committed to a PSR minimum reach target of 20% of HH connections by 2030.</p> <p>2. We will increase the number of data sharing agreement held with external third parties to help identifying customers requiring extra help.</p> <p>3. Continue to enhance our Intelligent Kickouts process and proactively reach customers with large consumption to identify if there are any extra needs.</p> <p>4. 95% of PSR customers are satisfied with our service.</p> |

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
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| Companies should take steps to proactively increase customer awareness of the extra help available to those who need it. | | <p>1. Introduction of 2 Community Connector roles who are out and about in our communities on a daily basis, promoting the range of support we offer, raising awareness of how to save water, and hosting events and drop-in sessions. These events are hosted across our region particularly in hard-to-reach communities and designed to engage with customers who may struggle to contact us due to obstacles such as language.</p> <p>2. We are continually looking at ways that we can raise awareness of our schemes and support across radio, social media and through the press. We have been using targeted campaigns to reach customers who are most in need, using CACI demographic data to improve accuracy.</p> <p>3. We regularly visit foodbanks, community centres and outreach centres to raise awareness of the support we provide and our services to engage with customers. This enables us to engage with hard-to-reach customers, including family and friends of those who need help. We assist customers in the completion of applications for our financial support schemes.</p> <p>4. Our Community Strategy aims to address underlying poverty and we work closely with Communities for Work and Careers Wales to raise awareness of our employability training and support. We've been embedding ourselves directly within communities through pop-up learning and support hubs to offer a range of workshops and advice, supporting both employment and affordable bills.</p> <p>5. Partnership work making is easy for customers to access support, remove any barriers and encourage them to promote the support we offer.</p> <p>6. Introduction of Welcome Letters promoting our support as part of our Home Mover journey.</p> <p>7. Proactive communications are sent at times when there is a heightened risk to customers, e.g. summer hot weather comms include links to support available and winter campaigns promote affordability support as we recognise cost pressures can increase during this period e.g. energy bills.</p> <p>8. Additional training for front-line staff on how to identify signs of vulnerabilities alongside the introduction of our own internal training pack created with trusted partners.</p> <p>9. All of the above and more is detailed in the awareness plan section of our strategy.</p> | <p>1. Volume of customers supported through attendance at our drop-in clinics and hosted events.</p> <p>2. Using insight from our customer tracker to shape our plans to increase awareness of support available.</p> <p>3. Volume of customers across our region supported through our employability and skills package.</p> <p>4. Feedback and accountability through the introduction of our Extra Care Advisory Panel.</p> <p>5. Introduction of our annual PSR Satisfaction survey.</p> <p>6. Twice annually customer tracker surveys, tracking awareness of PSR</p> | <p>1. Recruiting a Welsh speaking Community Connector.</p> <p>2. Ensuring our community team is visible at events hosted or organised by third-parties and other organisations.</p> <p>3. Publicising and promoting the whereabouts of our community teams to maximise awareness for customers. Organising events within communities where there is a need, utilising data such as IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) to identify these locations.</p> | <p>1. Complete our customer research through our company tracker to monitor and track awareness of our support</p> <p>2. Achieve a minimum PSR reach target of 20% of HH connections by 2030.</p> <p>3. 65% awareness of Priority Services</p> <p>4. We will host a minimum of 2 support in the community event per year across our region.</p> |
| Companies should train their staff to spot potential requirements for extra help, even when a customer has not previously declared it. | | <p>1. Through our bespoke onboarding training, not only do we teach colleagues how to use our systems, but also how to have really good conversations with our customers and how to spot signs proactively where a customer may be vulnerable either financially or physically but not obvious and how to handle this sensitively. For example, for a customer who has phoned us in a panicked state about debt and worrying about paying their bill, our specialist Care and Assistance team will be available to support and will also case manage where required.</p> <p>2. As a small team our Customer Solutions team are multi skilled and can handle multiple queries. They have also been trained to pick up on "trigger words" from our customers and if they believe the customer will need additional support they will refer to our Care & Assistance team for advice or signpost the customer for external support.</p> <p>3. Our dedicated Care and Assistance team who go through bespoke in-depth training into how they can identify hard to spot signs of vulnerability and when to intervene to ensure we are delivering the best service to our customers.</p> <p>3. We've trained our field teams to identify vulnerabilities allowing them to offer extra help e.g. free leak repairs on private properties - we also provide annual training to all field teams around how we can support customers financially so they are better equipped to deal with customer queries.</p> <p>4. We will be working with external partners and charities to deliver training to our customer teams to provide them with additional skills such as Dementia Friends, alongside the introduction of our own internal training pack created with trusted partners.</p> | <p>1. Volume of customers identified needing extra support through front line contacts.</p> <p>2. Team leaders completing monthly one to ones with front line staff to ensure training is embedded and providing additional coaching and support where needed.</p> <p>3. Quality framework to include "Here to Help" assessment so we can ensure that learning is embed.</p> | <p>1. We don't envisage challenges. We're a small team, with low staff turnover, which allows us to retain experience and knowledge. We are on track to meet our targets.</p> | <p>1. Minimum expectation of all existing contact centre staff and new starters to complete our vulnerability e-learning module every 12 months.</p> <p>2. Upon completion of our migration to Kraken and new operational structure we aim to introduce specialist training through external partners, alongside the introduction of our own internal pack.</p> |

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets | Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets | |
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| 3.4 | Companies should actively consider how they can reduce communication burdens on customers who need extra help; this could include establishing data sharing arrangements with partner organisations. | Compliant | 1. We are exploring more data sharing partnerships, and the potential of data purchasing with third parties. We currently have Data Sharing Agreements through our monthly Priority Services activities with Energy Distribution Network Operators (DNO's). We are also active members of Phase 2 of this project aimed to increase data sharing with Energy firms. 2. We are also exploring additional data sharing arrangements with local authorities, social housing and social impact providers to identify customers who require extra help. 3. Our Community Strategy is also highly collaborative, and we work closely with Communities for Work and Careers Wales to deliver long-term relationships in our communities. 4. Our website is AA rated for accessibility, meaning customers can manage their accounts online themselves using the functionality of 'ReciteMe', for customers with extra needs such as visual impairments, which is inclusive by design. 5. Using different communication channels such as WhatsApp meaning customers can contact us at a time convenient for them and allowing the conversation to move at a pace that is suitable to their needs. 6. Making "Dilys" our community vehicle more visible in our hard to reach communities and sharing a calendar of locations and dates for customers to plan ahead to meet us face to face. 7. Our Care Leavers programme helps young adults leaving the care system by passporting them onto our schemes helping them transition into independent living. | 1. Liaising with other organisations regularly to gather insight and enhance our service offering and enabling us to tailor our approach and reduce burdens on customers through data sharing. 2. Conducting frequent customer research to understand customer preferences when it comes to communication. 3. Increasing the number of data share agreements we have in place as well as our list of trusted partners. 4. Increase the reach of Priority Services across our region growing the number of customers on our register over time. | 1. We explored data share with DWP as part of the Digital Economy Act but found this would not be financially viable given our small size. In its place, we are taking a much more localised approach that will see us continuing to grow our relationships with local partners, with the ultimate aim of setting up Data Share Agreements locally. 2. Achieve a minimum PSR reach target of 20% of HH connections by 2030. | Companies should consider how their records of customers' needs can be designed in a way that can help deliver wider benefits to their customers; for example, reducing communication burdens for customers through data sharing. | Compliant | 1. Alongside our existing data share agreements with local energy providers we will look to set up further agreements with local partners, such as local councils, housing associations. We currently have Data Sharing Agreements through our monthly Priority Services activities with Energy Distribution Network Operators (DNO's). We are also active members of phase 2 of this project aimed to increase data sharing with Energy firms. 2. We also have a data sharing arrangement with Wrexham BC and are working on getting this in place with Powys CC to identify customers who require extra help. These partnerships can also help remove barriers which may have prevented people from previously accessing support. 3. Our system has the ability to keep a record of individual customer needs in one place, so if a customer is speaking with us about multiple different topics, their needs are easily identifiable to ensure that nothing is missed and that the conversation is tailored appropriately. 4. When we are made aware of a customers' circumstances, we will also capture individual customer needs as long as we receive consent from them, for example if a customer is visually impaired and can only read off yellow paper, we will capture this need in its entirety ensuring any extra support is tailored and completely individual. | 1. Monitoring system functionality to record customers' needs appropriately, including Kraken functionality. 2. Liaising with other organisations regularly to gather insight and enhance our service offering and enabling us to tailor our approach and reduce burdens on customers through data sharing. 3. Increasing the number of data share agreements we hold. | 1. We've explored data share with the DWP (Digital Economy Act) but have found this is financially viable given our small size. Instead, we are focusing on expanding our network of local partners with a view to share data. | 1. We will introduce a data sharing agreement with Powys CC to help identifying customers requiring extra help. 2. We will approach 3rd parties to explore how they can help us identify customers who require extra help. | |
| 4.1 | Companies should take appropriate steps to record customers' extra help needs. These records should be held securely and in line with wider data protection requirements. | Compliant | 1. Recorded through individual needs codes and in line with the wider data protection requirements. 2. Capturing extra detail which will allow more tailored support to be provided for customers in addition to the standard needs codes. We hold Priority Services data on a stand-alone register that is accessible only by staff who have a need to use it in their roles including during incidents. 3. Our systems are robust and secure. When we speak to customers, we hold a clear record of the contact we have had, and our calls are recorded and kept for 12 months. As part of our identity checks we do check that customers' contact details are up to date. 4. When a customer that requires extra help makes themselves known, if they consent to us recording this information, we will keep a record of this on their account via a 'flag' and depending on what needs they require, their account is then individually managed through different journeys. 5. We review this information regularly to ensure it is accurate and correct. | 1. Monitoring system functionality to record customers' needs appropriately, including Kraken functionality. 2. Liaising with other organisations regularly to gather insight and enhance our service offering and enabling us to tailor our approach and reduce burdens on customers through data sharing. | 1. We don't envisage any challenges and are on track to meet our targets | 1. To continue to achieve our 'Goal Zero' vision that no one gets hurt or made unwell by what we do, ensuring we protect our systems and customer data from potential cyber threats. 2. Attempt to contact 90% customers on our Priority Services Register every two years. 3. Actual contact with 35% customers on our Priority Services Register every two years | In designing their approach to recording and, where relevant, sharing customer vulnerability data, companies should clearly explain to customers how their data will be used, including any choices available to them. Companies should take steps to understand how their customers who need extra help feel about the use of their data. | Compliant | 1. We know it is important to protect our customers data and we take the security and use of personal data very seriously and is committed to complying with Data Protection laws - Outlines in our privacy policy 2. Priority Service Register - we hold data sharing agreements with District Network Operator SP Energy Networks so we can share information of the needs of our Priority Service customers automatically. This means customers do not need to tell them separately. By registering with us for the Priority Services Register, they can automatically be added to the PSR of their energy network operator and supplier. We will contact customers at least every two years to check in and make sure their situation has not changed, so we can keep up to date with their needs and ensure we continue to capture any additional extra help needs. 3. Bereavement - We know that dealing with the death of a loved one can be a stressful and emotional experience, which is why we partner with Life Ledger bereavement service, to provide a free easy-to-use 'Tell-us once' service helping families. 4. Managing preferences - We recognise that customers are keen to ensure their data is protected and used in the right way. With the introduction of our partnership with Kraken, customers will have the ability to manage their own preferences when it comes to Data sharing, this will include choosing what information they would like to receive from us in terms of communications and notifications. 5. Customers will have the ability at any time to opt out of communications that are not deemed as mandatory. | 1. Monitoring complaints regarding data sharing. 2. Utilising Speech Analytics to provide us with insight on dissatisfaction from customers regarding data sharing. 3. Customer research to understand how customers feel about the use of their data particularly when it comes to extra help needs. | 1. Increase risk of fraud if we have incorrect or out of date information such as contact details. | 1. To continue to achieve our 'Goal Zero' vision that no one gets hurt or made unwell by what we do, ensuring we protect our systems and customer data from potential cyber threats. 2. 95% of our customers are satisfied with our priority services. 3. Attempt to contact 90% customers on our Priority Services Register every two years. 4. Actual contact with 35% customers on our Priority Services Register every two years |
| 4.2 | Companies' records should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date. | Compliant | 1. When we are made aware of a customer's circumstances, we will also capture individual customer needs as long as we receive consent from them, for example if a customer is visually impaired and can only read off yellow paper, we will capture this need in its entirety ensuring any extra support is tailored and completely individual. 2. Our systems are robust and secure. When we speak to customers, we hold a clear record of the contact we have had, and our calls are recorded and kept for 12 months. As part of our identity checks we do check that customers' contact details are up to date. 3. When a customer that requires extra help makes themselves known, if they consent to us recording this information, we will keep a record of this on their account via a 'special condition,' and depending on what needs they require, their account is then individually managed through different journeys. We review this information frequently, or on a basis that suits the customer. For example, if the customer has a long-term disability and they have identified themselves to us, we would contact them again but it would be to understand if there is any other extra help required that we need to identify. 4. 12 months after a customer sets up a new account with us (Home Mover) we contact them to see if they're happy with their service and to see if there's any additional services they need, whether that's through PSR or financial support. | 1. Monitoring system functionality to record customers' needs appropriately, including Kraken functionality. 2. Complying with GDPR laws and the Data Protection Act 2018. 3. We will contact customers at least every two years to check in and make sure their situation hasn't changed, so we can keep up to date with their needs and identify if there are any new needs we need to record. | 1. We don't currently envisage challenges and are on track to meet our targets | 1. Achieve the 'PSR Standards' attempted contact and reach targets as part of the new agreed standards. | Companies should consider how their records of customers' needs can be designed in a way that can help deliver wider benefits to their customers; for example, reducing communication burdens for customers through data sharing. | Compliant | 1. Alongside our existing data share agreements with local energy providers we will look to set up further agreements with local partners, such as local councils, housing associations. We currently have Data Sharing Agreements through our monthly Priority Services activities with Energy Distribution Network Operators (DNO's). We are also active members of phase 2 of this project aimed to increase data sharing with Energy firms. 2. We also have a data sharing arrangement with Wrexham BC and are working on getting this in place with Powys CC to identify customers who require extra help. These partnerships can also help remove barriers which may have prevented people from previously accessing support. 3. Our system has the ability to keep a record of individual customer needs in one place, so if a customer is speaking with us about multiple different topics, their needs are easily identifiable to ensure that nothing is missed and that the conversation is tailored appropriately. 4. When we are made aware of a customers' circumstances, we will also capture individual customer needs as long as we receive consent from them, for example if a customer is visually impaired and can only read off yellow paper, we will capture this need in its entirety ensuring any extra support is tailored and completely individual. | 1. Monitoring system functionality to record customers' needs appropriately, including Kraken functionality. 2. Liaising with other organisations regularly to gather insight and enhance our service offering and enabling us to tailor our approach and reduce burdens on customers through data sharing. 3. Increasing the number of data share agreements we hold. | 1. We've explored data share with the DWP (Digital Economy Act) but have found this is financially viable given our small size. Instead, we are focusing on expanding our network of local partners with a view to share data. | 1. We will introduce a data sharing agreement with Powys CC to help identifying customers requiring extra help. 2. We will approach 3rd parties to explore how they can help us identify customers who require extra help. |

CONTACTS

| Minimum Expectation | Compliance | Implementation | Monitoring | Challenges | Targets |
|--|------------|---|--|--|--|
| Companies should develop and maintain a vulnerability strategy setting out how they plan to support the extra help needs of their customer base. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our Vulnerability Strategy sets out our short, medium and long-term plans and targets we are holding ourselves to account on. 2. We've designed a new "Here to Help" online hub. This gives our customers a single place to visit to understand the help we provide and how they can access the help. Our new hub also outlines the minimum expectations set out by Ofwat in this guidance, what we're doing to meet these expectations, and what targets we have set ourselves, along with other enhanced services we have to offer. 3. Our strategy clearly outlines our commitments and targets we are expecting to meet, whilst weaving in both customer and stakeholder input and feedback along the way. 4. Our strategy will be published on our website and easily accessible for anyone who wishes to read this, and can be available in other formats if required. 5. We will be producing a one page flyer/poster with a roadmap to our support so this can be used at community events and displayed in key community "hot spots" to make our support more visible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board level accountability for Vulnerable Strategy. 2. Regularly undertaking customer research and feedback surveys with wider customer groups to provide us with insight on design, content, how easy our support is to understand. 3. Through customer research understanding what our customers key priorities are when it comes to extra help needs and ensuring these are frequently reviewed as priorities change. 4. Reviewing our strategy on a yearly basis as our partnerships and support increases, our strategy should maintain up to date information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wider environmental, social and political factors that could mean a change to our strategy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete our customer research through our company tracker to understand and track awareness of our assistance schemes. 2. Reviewing our strategy on a yearly basis or more frequent as our strategy continues to evolve. 3. We have implemented a Priority Services satisfaction survey to enable us to gain insight and understand customer sentiment of the services we provide. |
| Companies should take steps to understand the likely underlying requirements for extra help in their areas. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When we are made aware of a customer's circumstances, we will also capture individual customer needs as long as we receive consent from them, for example if a customer is visually impaired and can only read off yellow paper, we will capture this need in its entirety ensuring any extra support is tailored and completely individual. 2. We are using CACI demographic data to improve our accuracy in understanding our customer base and who are most in need of extra help. 3. 42% of our PSR customers are registered due to a physical condition (chronic/serious illness, physical impairment, dialysis). We are exploring opportunities to create partners with external charities. 4. Additional steps outlined in the demographic analysis sections of our strategy. 5. Funding for our customers and the communities where we live including our Community Fund where we invest £50k per annum to help charities improve the communities we serve, increasing to £60k this AMP. 6. Our Community strategy will deliver Hyper-local approach, focusing on local partnerships and regional partnerships to ensure we can identify as many customers as possible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysing our CACI data regularly to look for trends now and in the future so we can better understand our customer base and their needs. 2. Regular review of partnership strategy to identify any changing needs or new customer groups that may be emerging, e.g. Covid-19 created new demand for support. 3. Analysing customer need data to identify relevant partners, organisations, and charities. 4. Monitoring customers change of payment behaviour e.g. we contact customers if a payment is reversed to check if they need any support or if they miss a payment we will contact them to. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate change and extreme weather increasing the risk of strain on our supplies, meaning more customers may need our support. 2. Aging populations leading to more customers requiring extra support and therefore increasing demand on interventions available - c28% of our PSR customers are of Pensionable Age 3. The effectiveness of customer education to ensure responsible water use in times of extreme weather. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have committed to supporting 8.2% of our household customers with their bill by 2030. 2. Investing £60k a year into our Community Fund from 2025 helping make a real tangible difference in our communities. 3. Achieve a minimum PSR reach target of 20% of HH connections by 2030. 4. A commitment to deliver our employability training in communities and schools. |



Bills and payments

You can register to manage your account online if you are not already signed up. All you need is your Hafren Dyfrdwy account number.

hdwater.co.uk/login



Connect with our team

Contact our team through WhatsApp.



Bills, payments, and water meters telephone

0330 678 0679 Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

We have a textphone service to help our customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and the number is **0800 328 1155**.



Water and waste services telephone

0800 085 8033. Emergencies and supply issues. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Emailing us

Customer.care@hdcymru.co.uk



Writing to us

Hafren Dyfrdwy, PO Box 507, Darlington, DL1 9XF



Numbers we use when we call you back

If you have tried to call us and you're waiting in a queue, you might choose to arrange for us to call you back. If you do, we will ring you from a number starting with **02477**.

HAFREN DYFRDWY

VULNERABILITY STRATEGY

How we're supporting customers
who need extra help.



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