

Yorkshire Water: By Your Side

Our strategy for providing extra help,
for those that need it the most.



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YorkshireWater

How to view this document

Contents page

Our contents page links to every section within this document. Clicking on a specific section will instantly take you to it.

- 1 Click on the contents button to return to the contents page.
- 2 This button takes you to the previous page.
- 3 This button takes you to the next page.

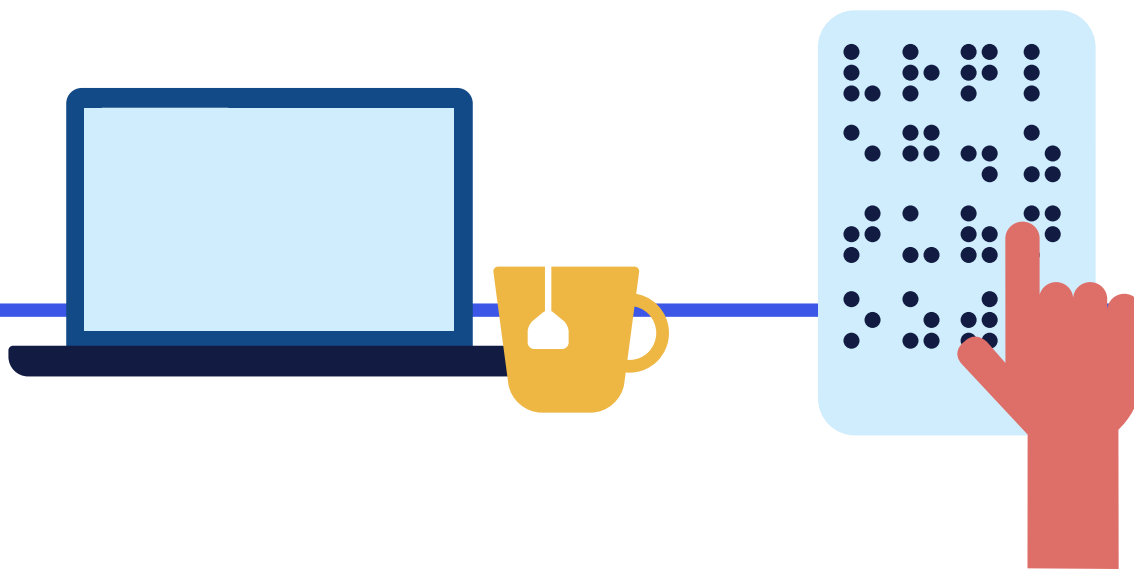
There are also many other clickable links within this document which we've made easy to spot by underlining and **highlighting** them in blue.

Accessibility matters.

It's really important that everyone can navigate and understand our By Your Side strategy, and what it means for them.

To help with this, we've taken steps to make sure this document supports accessibility needs:

- Screen readers will recite content in a logical order, as well as spotting headers and using different text for images.
- Compatible with text-to-speech programmes and Braille displays.
- Easy navigation with contents table and bookmarked links.
- Simple text structure with clear headings, paragraphs and tables.
- Comfortable colour contrasts.



Contents

We've created colour-coded sections to help you to navigate this document easily. Just click on the section you're interested in on the contents page, and it will navigate you to that section.

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“Providing excellent service to all our customers is incredibly important to everybody at Yorkshire Water. It’s a fundamental part of helping Yorkshire thrive. We want to make sure that everyone feels supported and knows that extra help is available when needed.”

We’re committed to making our services inclusive, accessible, and easy to use, especially for those who need extra help and support. This may be due to changes in financial situations, long or short-term medical needs, disabilities, specific requirements or life circumstances.

Our goal is to be **‘by your side’** when you need us most, building a sense of community where every customer can feel valued and supported. By prioritising ease of access, compassionate care, and meaningful engagement, we aim to make a positive impact on our customers’ lives, adding real value every step of the way.

We promise to keep reviewing and adapting this strategy to make sure it stays relevant and responsive to the needs of our customers who need extra help.

Imran Patel
Director of Customer Experience



Yorkshire Water: By Your Side

This document sets out what it means to be ‘by your side’ at those times when you need extra help. It’s our strategy to make sure that we’re with you every step of the way, throughout your life, trusting us to always meet your needs, whatever they may be and whenever they may arise.

This is a part of our ambition to play an active role in helping Yorkshire thrive now and for future generations.

As you read through, you’ll learn about the good things we’re already doing but we know there’s lots more to do. We want to keep growing and evolving, with you and for you, by really understanding how best to meet your needs. We know society doesn’t stand still, the world moves on, and new challenges arise for all of us, every day. With this in mind, we at Yorkshire Water will strive to stay ahead of changing needs and circumstances and be ‘by your side’ throughout your journey.

You won’t always see us, but you can trust and have confidence that we’ll be there when you need extra help.

To guide us in delivering our strategy, we have three simple commitments:

To our customers:

You won’t be asked to do anything complicated to be part of this – we’ll make it straightforward, easy and tailored to your needs.

From our teams:

We’re always listening and learning so we can continually make our systems and processes simpler and more effective for customers.

To our customers:

You’ll get the highest levels of customer service, being mindful of who you are, and your personal needs and circumstances.

To our customers:

You’ll have access to services at no extra cost with a genuine desire to help you in the best way possible to live your life with water.

From our teams:

We’re always looking to get to know our customers better, so we really know what they need from us.

From our teams:

We’re always working hard behind the scenes so we’re ready and prepared to help you now and into the future.



Who might need extra help



Our region, our customers



We supply 5 million people within 2.3 million homes. Our region is vast, spanning West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, the East Riding of Yorkshire, part of North Lincolnshire, the majority of North Yorkshire and parts of Derbyshire. We supply major cities, coastal towns and rural communities.

Our diverse region is home to a diverse array of customers and communities. Whatever their individual needs, we aim to make sure that everyone can depend on our continuous and reliable service, all the time. However, we know that some customers require extra help due to specific circumstances or needs in their lives.

Whether it's due to long-term or short-term health, wellbeing, or life circumstances, we are here to support everyone in Yorkshire, providing the right help tailored to their individual needs.

Put simply, our customers trust us to be there, by their side, when they need us most.



1.3 billion

Litres of water we collect, treat and supply every day



1 billion

Litres of wastewater we collect, treat and safely return to the environment every day



3,600 jobs

We provide for people across Yorkshire



£1.5m

Invested every day to maintain and enhance Yorkshire's pipes, pumps and networks



£950m

Contributed to the wider economy, on goods and services from 1,200 suppliers each year



£1 billion

Worth of bills managed every year

Who might benefit from extra help?

Here's a few examples...

Physical health

- Medically dependent on water
- Restricted physical mobility
- Impaired vision or hearing
- Restricted smell or taste
- Speech impairment

Mental health

- Conditions such as anxiety, depression and agoraphobia
- Dementia / cognitive needs

Life events / location

- Temporary health needs
- New parent / young children at home
- Young adult householder
- Age
- Isolated communities

Access needs

- English not first language
- Reading ability
- Visual access needs e.g. dyslexia, colour blindness
- Neurodivergence

Not all needs are visible...



We've built this strategy together

Our approach has been built with feedback and engagement from customers and organisations with expertise in supporting those with extra help needs. We've had 45,000 quality conversations with customers through various channels, to understand their **needs and priorities** for our service, this has helped us better support them when they need it most.

Our extra help customers told us...

Areas of strength:

- Delivering bottled water during a supply outage for customers who are unable to leave the house
- Range and quality of communication channels available, meeting different customers' needs and preferences
- Simple online registration process for the Priority Services Register
- Helpful, responsive and empathetic colleagues

Areas of opportunity:

- Increase customers' awareness of the support available
- Make it easy for customers to find the help they need
- Continue working to develop our understanding of customers' needs

Our extra help expert organisations told us...

Areas of strength:

- Easy for customers to tell us about priority service needs
- Identifying customers with extra help needs
- Core services provided to support customers during water and wastewater issues
- Range and quality of communication channels available

Areas of opportunity:

- More services to support customers with billing queries
- Further work to validate the accuracy of the information we gather about extra help needs
- More effective, targeted support when delivering services to those with extra help needs
- Enhanced approach for extra help customers who may have raised complaints

How we get the right assurance and challenge for our approach

Supporting those with extra help needs is embedded into how we operate. Our service hubs monitor how we're performing in meeting our customers' needs and our vulnerability hub helps coordinate improvement activity in the right areas.

Our approach is reviewed externally by the Yorkshire Forum for Water Customers, an independent challenge group of organisations representing different customer groups in the region. Internally, governance is provided through our executive leadership team and Board. Two of our Board members also act as sponsors for our strategy, bringing expertise from other sectors and challenge to make sure we're focused on the right areas.

Annual review

Board

CEO & Executive Leadership Team

Quarterly review

Yorkshire Forum for Water Customers: Vulnerability Group

Monthly review

Yorkshire Water Vulnerability hub

Weekly performance hubs

Operational Contact Centre

Billing Contact Centre

Clean Water Field Team

Wastewater Field Team

Brand & Communications

By Your Side in action



Case Study:

Community Trust:

Thanks to our partnership with Experience Community, we've hosted groups of visitors with disabilities at our Swinsty and Fewston reservoirs.

Experience Community specialises in providing inclusive outdoor activities and specialist equipment, such as mountain trikes, which allows people with disabilities to explore our reservoirs with ease. This experience significantly boosted the community interest groups' confidence in accessing our beautiful Yorkshire countryside.

We're delighted that our collaboration has facilitated greater access to our sites for individuals with disabilities. It's given us valuable insights on enhancing our facilities to ensure a more accessible and enjoyable experience for a broader range of visitors.

We've had some lovely feedback from Sue, who attended the ramble!

"I had a lot of fun at the ramble around Fewston and Swinsty reservoirs. The car park has plenty of disabled parking spaces and the paths around both reservoirs are fully accessible to Mountain Trikes – and where there were steps, an accessible route had been built around them. I liked that the route was not completely level and there were some quite steep parts that were challenging to descend – it was really enjoyable now that I am more confident in going downhill. I always feel I learn a bit more about Mountain Triking with each ramble I take part in."

Coming in the future...

We'll continue to work closely with Experience Community to make sure our reservoirs are accessible for all and run wheelchair rambles to help disabled people gain confidence in accessing the countryside.




Our strategy and commitments

Over the following pages we set out what it means to be 'By Your Side' now, and what we plan to do in the future. As you'll see, we've set ourselves some stretching goals but with your help we know we can achieve them together.

When we refer to customers we mean you, our valued customers, who sometimes need extra help with your water services.



1. High standards of service & support

Commitments	Our goals	Our measures
 <p>We'll make it easy for you</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will understand what support is available to them • Every extra help customer will be engaged to understand their needs during any work we do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSR Reach: 230,000 by 2025 • PSR data checking: 100% • Repeat calls from customers regarding extra help: <10%
 <p>We'll deliver our services with care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will receive the support they need, when they need it • Every extra help customer will be signposted to the right external support when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottled water delivered to priority customers in under 5 hours: 100% • Dialysis customers contacted during supply interruptions: 100% • Increase in accurate referrals from support partner network • Increase in partner organisations who support provision of extra help
 <p>We'll add value to your life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will get a service that is right for their current needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSR Satisfaction: 90%

By Your Side now: How we're delivering on this

Helping customers understand the support available

One of the easiest ways to support customers is by registering for our Priority Services, which customers can do over the phone or via our [dedicated webpage](#). Through this, we provide a wide range of support across a number of core service needs, as listed in the table (as listed on page 15). Through information on our website and dedicated training for all colleagues in our call centre, we aim to make it really easy for customers to understand what's available to them.

Once customers have signed up to the Priority Services Register, they'll receive a letter confirming their registration and the extra help services they need. Customers on the PSR are provided with a telephone number which has a priority routing to our customer centre for a quicker handling time.

Delivering a rapid responsive service during incidents

During major incidents, our skilled Customer Incident Team work hard to provide extra help to customers, making sure they receive the appropriate level of service and onsite support. The team ensures prompt delivery of bottled water, communicates accurate and timely updates, and provides face-to-face support, particularly for customers with the most urgent needs.

We also deploy our dedicated Customer Centre, which offers a safe space for customers requiring more support during an incident. This includes providing extra bottled water and information on external support organisations.

Providing a personal service for those on dialysis during supply interruptions

We contact customers individually to understand their dialysis needs and collaborate with them to lessen the impact of planned or unplanned interruptions. This may involve rescheduling planned work or providing an alternative water supply during unplanned interruptions and interventions. We also actively track the experience and number of dialysis patients to make sure they receive a prompt and coordinated response during any event.

Giving live updates through neighbourhood texting

Customers that need extra help have told us that they don't always feel confident they'll receive bottled water in the event of a loss of water supply. To tackle this, we've developed a bespoke 'Neighbourhood Text' messaging service for registered customers to confirm bottled water deliveries during supply interruptions. In addition, customers receive both incident updates and estimated delivery times for bottled water through this service. To support this, we're also providing new skills to enable those in our contact centre and field teams, together with an enhanced performance framework, to help them identify and support those who need this vital support.



Who is most likely to benefit from the Priority Services Register?

The following criteria (temporary or permanent) are examples of customers who may benefit most from Yorkshire Water's Priority Services register.

-  **Water dependent**
-  **Oxygen concentrator**
-  **Dialysis, feeding pump and automated medication**
-  **Oxygen use**
-  **Medically dependent showering/bathing**
-  **Pensionable age**
-  **Chronic/Serious Illness**
-  **Physical impairment**
-  **Developmental condition**
-  **Stair lift, hoist, electric bed**
-  **Dementia(s)/Cognitive impairment**
-  **Unable to answer door**
-  **Medicine refrigeration**
-  **Heart, lung and ventilator**
-  **Restricted hand movement**
-  **Temporary - life changes**
-  **Blind**
-  **Additional presence preferred**
-  **Mental health**
-  **Hearing impairment (inc. deaf)**
-  **Partially sighted**
-  **Poor sense of smell/taste**
-  **Temporary - post hospital recovery**
-  **Speech impairment**
-  **Careline/telecare system**
-  **Temporary - young adult householder (<18)**
-  **Families with young children 5 or under**
-  **Unable to communicate in English**
-  **Nebuliser and apnoea monitor**
-  **Geographically isolated (e.g. rural community)**

Prioritising customer safeguarding

To be truly by their side, effective safeguarding of our customers is of most importance to us.

In emergency situations, our colleagues will contact emergency services or appropriate local authorities to ensure customer wellbeing and safety. For non-emergency concerns about a customer's wellbeing, our trained colleagues will compassionately engage customers about the extra help options available to them, including a secure referral through to relevant organisations.

Underpinning this, our dedicated Operational Vulnerability Lead handles specific escalated safeguarding concerns. As well as this, our Health & Safety team reviews and maintains processes, training, and audits to ensure effective customer safeguarding.

Monitoring and improving the effectiveness of our services:

- **Driving improvement through call listening:** Our customer contact centre uses regular call listening to spot areas for improvement in customer service or colleague training.
- **Enhancing development through Colleague Coaching:** We use feedback from call listening and learning reviews to tailor coach our colleagues. This includes a 'Vulnerability Focus of the Month' to target improvement in our processes and ensure those improvements are sustainably embedded.
- **Targeting improvement by Talking Performance:** We're enhancing our performance frameworks to set clear goals for customer-facing staff, integrating an understanding of customers who need extra help across all our teams. This ensures customers and their extra help needs are a part of our continuous improvement practices.



- **Open collaboration through Industry benchmarking:** As you'd expect, we participate in industry seminars and working sessions, including those with regulators and customer support organisations, such as the CCW Vulnerability and Affordability Forums and the Debt Network. This helps us to ensure our customers and our teams benefit from open collaboration, learning and development.
- **Acting on customer surveys:** Requesting feedback helps us to understand how customers feel about the services we provide and where we can improve. This includes:
 - Our monthly tracker asks about overall levels of satisfaction and other areas such as general perceptions and value for money
 - Our 'Customer Voice' survey, sent via SMS, collects feedback from recent customer interactions to help us understand specific areas of improvement.

Supporting customers when our service falls below expectations

Our Customer Charter sets out a wide range of commitments to customers with compensation available when we fail to deliver on these. As well as specific commitments around water supply and sewerage incidents, our Charter covers inconvenience experienced by customers and a commitment that all PSR applications will be reviewed within 5 working days, with a payment made to customers if we fail to do this.

**High standards of service & support:
Our plans to do more**

**When we'll have
done this by**

We're implementing a dedicated support service for customers who require extra help with sewerage issues such as sewer flooding and restricted toilet access.

End of 2024

We'll have greater visibility of planned repair work so we can support customers who need extra help while this is taking place.

2025

We'll continue to bring our 'By Your Side' strategy to life by encouraging all our colleagues to challenge the quality of the personal service they provide. This will start by embedding our Customer First Programme through the coaching of colleagues.

2025

We'll deliver faster response times for those with the most urgent needs, by improving how we prioritise extra help support based on impact and needs.

2026

We'll roll out our collaboratively designed **streetworks training** to increase colleague awareness of the challenges blind customers face and how we can create an inclusive and accessible space when putting street works in place. This includes broader accessibility considerations such as mobility vehicle and pram users.

2026

[Find out more about our plan](#)



By Your Side in action



Case Study:

TellJo:

Digital wellbeing for customers:

TellJO
– Are you ok? –

In 2023, we launched an exciting new partnership with a company called TellJo to help our customers who might have money problems.




TellJo helps us to understand why customers may have missed payments and they use award-winning technology to show customers where they can get more help. With TellJo's help, we can offer better support to our customers, such as setting up payment plans, helping them join debt relief and support programmes and adding them to the Yorkshire Water Priority Services Register. In our first trial with TellJo in Autumn 2023, we asked around 2,000 customers to fill out a short questionnaire to see what kind of help they needed.

When they completed it, TellJo gave them personalised advice which helped us to offer customers the support that they need. From this trial, over 1,000 people were directed to extra help and more than 150 got special support with their water bills.

Coming in the future...

The trial was a great success, so we're going to expand it further. By the end of 2024, we plan to invite over 12,000 customers to complete the TellJo questionnaire and get the help they need.

2. Inclusive by design

	Commitments	Our goals	Our measures
	We'll make it easy for you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer can get the support they need through a channel that works for them • Every extra help customer finds our services simple to access and use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 6 accessible channels available • 100% journey completion rates within preferred channel
	We'll deliver our services with care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer can have their say on big changes to the services that affect them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of customers engaged in service design
	We'll add value to your life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help support is evidenced in insight and has appropriate accreditation • Every interested stakeholder will be engaged in the development of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO22458 Inclusive Customer Service accreditation • Increase number of stakeholders engaged in service design

By Your Side now: How we're delivering on this

We strive to make sure that whenever our customers need help, our services are easy to access and understand, regardless of their needs.

Making all our services and communication accessible

We've tailored our digital services to enhance accessibility and comprehension. For customers requiring extra help, we offer a number of different resources to help. These include: ReciteMe facilities on our website, subtitled resources, and British Sign Language communication services and translators for phone and face-to-face interactions. Our bills are also available in various formats, including large print, braille, listen to formats (available digitally and on CD-rom), and spoken over the phone.

Helping customers access extra help as simply and quickly as possible

Customers tell us that our application process for support is straightforward, leading to increased satisfaction and engagement, particularly around bill support. This registration process is consistent across all contact channels, including online, over the phone, via traditional paper forms, and through external organisations that can apply on behalf of customers.

For customers who contact us directly, or through our partner organisations, we aim to confirm the support provided immediately. This approach eliminates barriers, such as delays, to accessing the right support and importantly provides those who may feel vulnerable with instant reassurance.

However, we aim to build on this success. In our plan, we'll review and update our online registration process for extra help service, including Priority Services and Financial Support.

Customers have expressed a desire for even more transparent eligibility criteria for things like financial support. To do this and reduce barriers to engagement, we plan to design and deliver additional improvements to our website and online application forms, making them even easier to understand and use, which will help third parties (i.e. a carer or a guardian) who also register customers on their behalf. Based on customer insights, we've already delivered improvements in how we describe the extra help services during the registration process.

We've also transitioned to a new Customer Management System (CRM) to improve the coordination and management of our extra help services. This new single system offers greater visibility for all colleagues across the organisation, which highlights which extra help services customers are registered for. This system is already available to our contact centre colleagues and will extend to operational and field colleagues in the near future.

Inclusive Service BSI Kitemark™

We strive to make sure that whenever our customers need help, our services are easy to access and understand, regardless of their needs.

Making all our services and communication accessible

Yorkshire Water is accredited with the BSI Kitemark™ for Inclusive Service, which is awarded to companies who've met strict criteria for protecting customers when they're in vulnerable situations. In achieving the Kitemark™, Yorkshire Water has shown that our services are accessible to all, that our colleagues are trained to identify and support customers in vulnerable situations and that we put inclusivity at the heart of our business. It includes accreditation with the British Standard for consumer vulnerability, BS ISO 22458.

Linked to this, we've demonstrated that our website conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2 Level AA.



We're constantly building a deeper and richer understanding of our communities...

1,055,000 with a disability It's estimated that approximately 17% of people in East Yorkshire live with a long-term health problem or disability (2021 Census).

670,000 with cardio vascular disease (11.7%)
BHF.

1,010,000 over 65's (20.2%)
ONS.

178,000 with sight loss (3.22%)
RNIB.

833,333 living with mental health issues
54.9% of people in North Yorkshire have a long-term physical or mental health condition, disability or illness.

76,000 people living with Dementia
More than 15,000 of these people are across South Yorkshire.

820,000 with very poor literacy (16.4%)
National Literacy Trust.

1 in 5 living with hearing loss
Action on Hearing Loss.

7% have no English or speak English 'not very well' 0.4% of these people live in West Yorkshire (2021 Census).

320,000 economically deprived (6.4%).

£26,000 is the median gross annual income in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Females account for 50.9% of Yorkshire and the Humber's 5,581,431 population.

By listening to our customers and communities, we understand more about their specific needs, so we can truly deliver the right extra help for them.

Engaging with stakeholders in the design and deployment of our extra help services

We're committed to increasing our visibility and community engagement to better support customers, especially those who need extra help.

By 2030, we aim to double the number of customers receiving our support through partner organisations.

In 2022/2023, over 12,000 customers were assisted via external organisations such as debt charities, housing groups, and councils. Based on feedback, we plan to expand our successful partnerships to provide more awareness and access to support for customers from Yorkshire Water.

As part of the expansion, we'll continue to use data mapping to identify under-represented communities, places and groups to target collective efforts more effectively.

To better our response during incidents, we proactively partner with Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). These partnerships help us to provide essential resources such as setting up warm hubs and supplying warm food during large-scale events. We regularly participate in exercises with LRFs and other community groups, including faith groups, to improve our support for customers with extra help needs.

For example, we collaborate with the fire service to include fire safety inspections, enhancing our customers' safety. In the next strategic period, we'll focus on building partnerships with organisations such as care homes and the NHS to reach new customers who may not be aware of our services.

In 2023, we carried out a sector leading **"Affordability & vulnerability"** study, exploring the challenges our customers face in today's cost of living crisis. This allowed us to view the scale of the issue in Yorkshire and shape our support for customers who are struggling to pay their water bill, such as how we communicate with our customers when trying to collect payment and making sure our simple to use application process remains that way.

The research told us that, overall, our customers have a high satisfaction with the financial support schemes Yorkshire Water offer. However, only 40% of our customers are likely to contact us if they're struggling to pay for their water. We're here to break down those barriers and help customers in need - **to find out if these schemes can help you, [click here](#).**



We offer our customers a range of ways to interact and communicate:



Website



Online Account



Email



Paper Forms



British Sign Language



Telephone



Text Messaging



Social Media

This includes allowing customers to choose another company to handle their payments for them (also known as “third party billing”). Here’s a few ways customers can do this:

- Through our Priority Services Register, where customers can add a nominee onto their account.
- Arrangement through another recognised/approved organisation, such as a housing association.
- Agreeing a repayment plan via a financial support organisation.



To help us be by their side, we offer customers a variety of additional support. This includes...

Customer accounts

- We're providing online accounts for more customers to view their bills digitally and access online services quicker and easier.
- We can add a nominee to your account. This could be a family member, a carer or a support agency to help manage a customer's bills and support them in emergencies.

Collecting payments

- We're sensitive to how we collect outstanding payments from customers, where we recognise they may need some extra help. This includes how we proactively communicate with our customers and, given permission, we can visit them to offer help schemes.

Accessibility

- ReciteMe and British Sign Language are available on our website. We're adding 'translation services' to our Priority Services Register, to help customers who speak English as a second language.

Support services outside of Yorkshire Water

- We show customers where they can get support outside of Yorkshire Water, such as financial and mental health services. These services support many of our customers, even those who aren't signed up for extra help from us.

Saving water

- We provide customers with water efficiency devices and advice, to help them save water and money.
- We offer free leak repairs for customers struggling to pay their bills.

Visiting customers

- We call customers before visiting them, to make sure we never turn up unannounced.
- When we visit a customer's address, we'll use an agreed password to make sure customers know it's us and we're not a bogus caller.
- We visit customers' homes during significant incidents, to make sure they're okay and they have everything they need.

**Inclusive by design:
Our plans to do more**

**When we'll have
done this by**

We're enhancing engagement by proactively enrolling customers in our Priority Services Register (PSR), extending support to over 230,000 customers. Services will include bottled water delivery, bills and communications in alternative formats (such as audio and braille), and account passwords for added security and reassurance when interacting with Yorkshire Water.

2025

We'll build an extra help customer community to help with the testing of new support services.

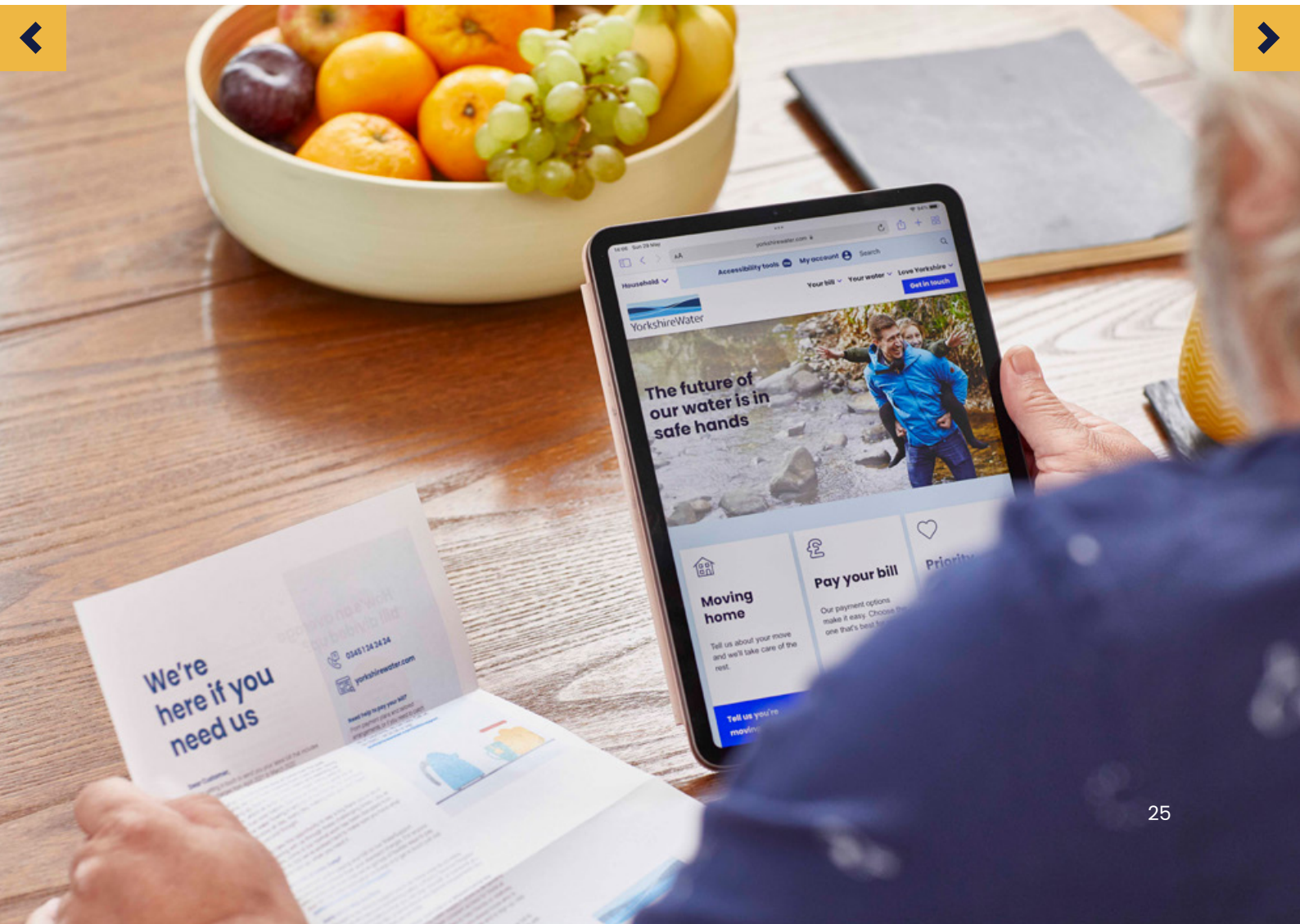
2025

We aim to double the number of customers receiving our support through partner organisations.

2030

We'll focus on building partnerships with organisations such as care homes and the NHS to reach new customers who may not be aware of our services.

2030



By Your Side in action

We design customer journeys for all our key services.

This helps us to really understand what happens and continually improve – making experiences easier for customers, whilst providing an appropriate level of care and delivering extra value where we can.

This is a simple version of our customer journey for a loss of water supply. It illustrates how customers with extra help needs are supported with bottled water and how we'll make this even better in the future.

1.

A customer on our Priority Services Register with a need for continuous water supply finds they have no water.



2.

"It took me no time to find out who I need to contact at Yorkshire Water and how to do it the way I want to."



3.

Customer contacts us through their channel of choice. We know from their details that they have a priority need.



6.

Customer receives message from us confirming the delivery time of bottled water to their home.



5.

Our teams are busy working out if the water supply is likely to be restored within 5 hours.



4.

"That was easy, I understand what's happening and feel reassured by how they immediately took control of the situation."



7.

"Professional and friendly, making me and my community feel respected. Bottled water delivered within 5 hours of the report being made."



8.

Meanwhile our teams are fixing the issue to make sure water supply is returned as quickly as possible.



9.

We follow up with the customer to check they have what they need and are happy with the service received.



Coming in the future...

Enhanced safeguarding: Providing customers with the named person who will deliver the bottles of water, and when they're there, ensuring customers have everything they need.

Integrated extra support: Signposting customers to potential partners who can, based on need, provide additional help during a loss of supply.




Restorative visit: At the end any interaction, checking in with customers to not only make sure their water is running, but also ensure any further help needs are understood and actioned.

10.

"That was a great experience. Yorkshire Water were by my side every step of the way."



3. Identifying customers

Commitments	Our goals	Our measures
 We'll make it easy for you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will be encouraged to sign up for Priority Services • Every extra help customer will find it easy to sign up for Priority Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSR Awareness: 60% • PSR signs ups via online channels (100% of attempted are complete) • Increased customers added to the PSR through data sharing with energy providers
 We'll deliver our services with care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will receive support from colleagues who are trained to spot and support their needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleagues with up-to-date training on PSR support: 100%
 We'll add value to your life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every extra help customer will have any complaints prioritised and resolved compassionately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer satisfaction with complaint handling: 4.8/5

By Your Side now: How we're delivering on this

Being visible and inclusive to all customers

We're always striving to help more customers find out what's available to them. This means we're able to offer the right extra help to both those we already know about, and those customers we don't but who may benefit from it. This means, we need to be visible and accessible to all customers.

Despite various awareness campaigns since 2020, research shows that only approximately one third of customers know about bill support and our Priority Services Register (PSR). Also, many of those customers who are aware think the help offered does not apply to them.

To tackle these challenges, we're improving engagement by being much more proactive when registering customers for Priority Services. A good example of this is that we now automatically include all households with residents over the age of 85 for bottled water delivery in the event of a water outage.

Helping colleagues to be by the side of customers from the start

Our colleagues receive ongoing training to recognise and identify customers' additional support needs. This begins with their induction, which includes exploring real life scenarios for Priority Service needs, accessibility support and bill assistance.

After induction, training continues with masterclasses on topics like Dementia, offering additional Priority Services, bill support and bereavement support, alongside ongoing coaching focused on always delivering inclusive services.

In 2023, we reviewed and relaunched our 'Recognising Customer Needs' training programme for operational roles where colleagues work directly with customers. ISO accreditation highlighted the need to better monitor training effectiveness, so we're integrating this into team and individual performance goals.

We're always working to embed extra help needs into our customer service culture, empowering all colleagues to take ownership of customer needs and provide additional support where it's needed.

**Identifying customers:
Our plans to do more**

**When we'll have
done this by**

We'll use our full range of communication channels to continually drive awareness and explain eligibility for our extra support. We'll personalise messaging to customers with targeted communications and visibility in online accounts. 2025

We'll proactively offer extra help based on customer data. To support this, we'll share data with external organisations. For customers who are happy for us to do so, we'll share PSR data with the energy sector, benefitting around 900,000 Northern Powergrid customers in Yorkshire and the Northeast. 2025

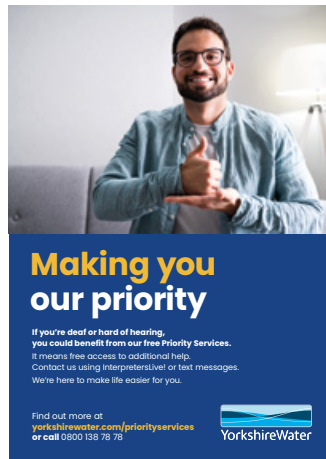
We'll use text message responses from our neighbourhood communications to identify customers' additional needs. This will trigger a phone call to confirm if a customer needs support. We'll monitor and record the actions taken following responses and the number of PSR sign-ups completed with customers. 2025



By Your Side in action

We have lots of different campaigns, designed with customers in mind, that generate awareness and help signpost customers to where they can access extra help. Here's a few examples...

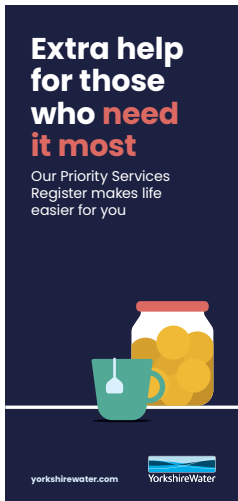
PSR poster and press ad



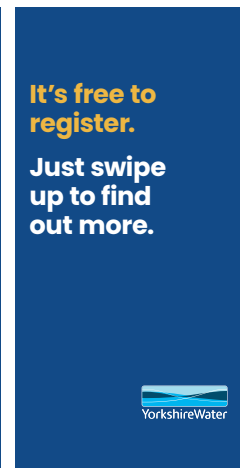
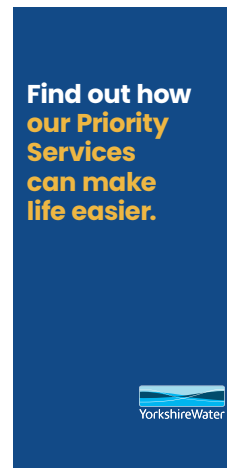
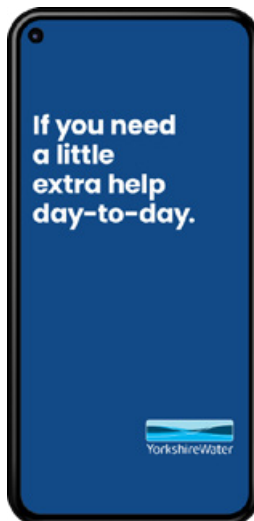
We have a PSR ad on appointment cards in GP surgeries in Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley from May 1st.

This is for a period of 12 months on a trial to see what the awareness is like. Essentially, it will be given to all patients that visit the surgeries. Anyone that can't get to surgery, they'll be posted out with their appointments on and given to young parents, expecting parents, elderly, anyone with illnesses who have regular appointments e.g. dialysis.

PSR leaflet



PSR Social media posts






Coming in the future...

Enhanced awareness through more partners: Expanding our activities through a diverse range of partners who are better placed to help raise awareness of and access to our extra help, such as the NHS, schools, care homes or community groups like food banks.

Increased accessibility: Building on our success in using accessible formats for our bills and other materials, by firmly embedding them in all our campaigns, whether hosted by us or our partners.

Joined up campaigns: Collective campaigns with Yorkshire wide organisations with a similar extra help challenge, for example energy network providers such as Northern Powergrid.

4. Recording needs

	Commitments	Our goals	Our measures
	We'll make it easy for you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every extra help customer will understand, have control and be consulted on how their data is used and stored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSR records checked every two years (100%)
	We'll deliver our services with care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every extra help customer will have their data recorded securely, accurately and kept up-to-date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISO27001 Data Security Protection accreditation
	We'll add value to your life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every extra help customer can provide feedback in a way that works for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of customers who have taken part in feedback surveys

By Your Side now: How we're delivering on this

Actively protecting customer information

We keep customer information around their extra support needs safe and secure, following data protection laws. We're currently upgrading our systems so all colleagues can see and focus on relevant customer care needs at the right time. This system will allow for easy Priority Service sign-ups and secure referrals to support services.

We regularly review and update customer information, aiming to refresh our records every two years.

To do this, we contact customers to validate their information, making multiple attempts if we can't connect first time.

1
Reviewing support needs during customer interactions in the Billing Contact Centre.

2
Sending proactive outbound texts and emails to review PSR service needs.

3
Mailing customers about financial and non-financial support services and understanding if they're still needed by the customer.

4
Updating billing records based on shared data, indicating any changes to customers' needs.

Understanding customer satisfaction

We regularly monitor feedback from customers with additional support needs on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

We're developing a customer satisfaction tracker to understand how customers experience our extra help services. This makes sure we're meeting the needs of customers and identifies areas for improvement.

We track customer and colleague feedback, allowing us to address any issues with and provide support to colleagues for their training and development. This information is also used to manage and improve our extra help services.

Recording needs: Our plans to do more

When we'll have done this by

We'll automatically request feedback from customers who've received extra support during an event or incident so we can understand the effectiveness of our response. This will include a blend of text messages and phone calls to suit each customer.

2025

We'll develop the use of prompting in the online account to help customers make sure their recorded needs are up to date.

2026



By Your Side in action

The Priority Services Register is one of our primary ways to provide extra help to customers. It makes things easy for customers and we can make sure we provide the right support, at the right time, and in a way that customers trust.



Communication needs:

Multi-channel – phone, email, online account, call-back

Large print comms

Braille comms

Audio bills: ‘talking bills’ or CDs

Notification of planned works

BSL translation through ‘Interpreters Live!’

Language translation service for telephone calls

Recite Me



Supply/Operational needs:

Bottled water delivery

Water efficiency devices and advice

Free leak repairs for financially vulnerable customers

Calling before visits



Welfare needs:

Password: a Yorkshire Water colleague at the address uses an agreed password to guard against bogus callers.

Nominee: family, carer or support agency added to account to help manage bills, and support in emergencies.

Customer visits during significant incident.

Signposting internal and external financial support.

Tailored debt strategies for customers in potentially vulnerable circumstances.

Coming in the future...

Enhanced sign-up approach: Customers can already select the services they wish to gain alongside their needs. This helps us prioritise our extra help for them. Coming soon, we intend to also help customers to sign up for support from other regional providers at the same time, which includes explaining how their data is shared and used.

Flexible systems: Our new and improved CRM system will enable colleagues to identify new customers with extra help needs, saving customers vital time and effort in contacting us.

Tailored engagement: Using PSR data intelligently to inform and preplan what format information will be needed to effectively engage with customers, when an incident or major situation occurs, e.g., privacy statement in a non-digital format.

Our Partnerships

We work with partners across the region to develop and delivery strategies to identify and support customers with extra help needs



Get in touch with us

If you or someone you know needs extra help, you can contact us in the ways below:



Call us
0345 124 24 24



[Visit our website](#)



[Sign up to our
Priority Services Register](#)



Thank you for reading



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YorkshireWater