

Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

By email

11 February 2016

Freedom of Information Act - Request For Information

Reference: Fol 17022016

Dear 

Thank you for your request for information concerning:

Information regarding Thames Water in relation to the “fairness” of their current domestic charging scheme.

Your request has now been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

Under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you.

The information you have requested regarding Thames Water’s current charging scheme can be found on their website which is accessible via this link:

<http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/16135.htm>.

For your information Ofwat has not received any additional evidence privately and I can advise that Ofwat no longer approves company charges schemes directly.

Instead there are set charging rules that companies must comply with. The ‘assurance statement’, set out at the link above, confirms that Thames Water has provided assurance to us that they have complied with these rules.

To help provide us with independent assurance, companies are required to consult with the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) on their charges scheme proposals before they are published. CCWater report any problems with companies meeting their obligations, including charges rules, to Ofwat.

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As a final measure the company must publish a 'statement of significant changes' (this can also be found at the link above) which confirms that there are no major changes in charging policy this year.

Ofwat can enforce our charging rules at any point during the year and we have stated that we will focus our efforts on the highest risk areas. This includes where for example customers or other stakeholders (including CCWater) raise charging issues with us and also where companies have made changes to their policies from the previous year. We can direct companies to change their charges if we are not satisfied that they have complied with their obligations.

If you would like more information on our charging rules, these can also be found [on our website](#). Rules 12-17 are the most closely associated with the obligation on companies (as set out in their licences), that charges must show no undue discrimination or preference and what this means in practice.

I hope you find this information helpful.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of the decision, please contact:

Programme Office
Ofwat
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham B5 4UA
mailbox@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk

If you are not happy with the outcome of that review you can ask the Information Commissioner's Office to consider your complaint. Generally, the ICO will not make a decision unless you have exhausted Ofwat's complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

<https://ico.org.uk/>

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or

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow

Yours sincerely,

Christine Manise
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Operations
Ofwat
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7 Hill Street
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