

**From:** "rmurchie@yahoo.co.uk"  
**To:** [Water2020](#)  
**Subject:** New submission from  
**Date:** 18 January 2017 14:04:45

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We have received a new response to our "Name of consultation" consultation. Details of the customer response are provided below.

Please email [webpublishing@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:webpublishing@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk) for further information or advice.

**Your name:**

R Murchie

**Your email address:**

[rmurchie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rmurchie@yahoo.co.uk)

**Your company/organisation:**

Individual

**Do you have any comments or suggestions about the consultation?**

If this consultation is aimed at customers you have made it far too long and complex. The vast majority of water company customers are interested in only three things, with a minority interested in a fourth:

1. High quality potable supply of water at all times,
2. Disposal of waste water at all times,
3. Keeping bills low,
4. Protecting the water environment.

As a Southern Water customer am interested in all four issues, but in a previous life I worked for Southern Water Authority so keep in touch with the company. I am aware that they have the worst environmental record in the country, with a £2 million fine in December 2016 for systematic pollution of Kent beaches and further investigations under way very likely to be followed by prosecutions.

The culture of the company is in long-term decline - they have difficulty retaining operators with any commitment to their work, their assets (civil, mechanical and electronic) are often well past end of life and they obstruct regulation. Ofwat allows substantial funding for capital maintenance but does not require this expenditure to be reported, which enables unscrupulous owners to export this money from the company. This profitability is one reason why all major water companies bar two have been taken over by private wealth funds no longer accountable to shareholders. Southern Water also shelters under at least six shell companies and has sold off income streams many years into the future.

As a customer I will have to pick up the bill for long-term neglect of these assets, by which time the company will have been sold on. I am sure you know all this and it is time you did your basic job of protecting the interests of consumers and ensuring that water companies carry out their functions properly.

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