



In this document we explain our water supply services, how we supply you with water, information on quality, what to do if you have a problem with your water and who to contact. We deliver about 160,000 litres of water a day.

Your water supply is provided by The Dartington Hall Trust. The water supply is regulated, and all water produced has to meet the requirements of The Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016. The regulations are based on strict European guidelines and cover the chemical, microbiological and aesthetic quality of the water. The Local Authority (SouthHams District Council) monitors all private water supplies carrying out its duties under Section 77(1) of the Water Industry Act 1991. We must make sure we manage our supply in order to provide you with enough water for normal domestic and commercial purposes.

Our number one priority is making sure you have excellent quality drinking water 24 hours a day.

## **Where does your water come from?**

The water is taken from two wells adjacent to the River Dart and is pumped into 2 Raw Water Reservoirs. The water is then treated by chemical dosing and filtration through pressure filters. The clean water is then pumped into 2 clean water reservoirs from where the water gravitates to your tap.

## **What do we do to ensure your water is clean and safe to drink?**

We ensure that all the water we supply for normal domestic purposes, which include drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitation, meets the Government's high standards. We routinely monitor the water quality by taking regular samples at the treatment plant and at locations around the distribution network. The water we supply has to meet the requirements of The Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016. The result of the testing is forwarded to South Hams District Council who have a responsibility to ensure that the water is compliant with the Regulations and that the processes and chemicals we use are fit for purpose and safe in the water industry.

## **What you can do if you have concerns about your water quality.**

If you have any concerns regarding the quality of water that we supply, please call our estate team telephone number and report your concerns. If it is considered necessary samples will be taken for analysis, free of charge, and we will aim to provide you with the results within 10 working days.

## **What happens if there is a Water Quality problem?**

In some rare instances, we may need to issue notices advising customers of a problem and of precautionary actions such as boiling before drinking or cooking. We will always advise you in writing of any such actions and will notify you in writing when the problem has been resolved.

## **What we will do if your water supply is interrupted.**

We endeavour to provide water 24 hours a day. However, bursts in the mains or the failure of pumps or their electricity supply can interrupt the flow of water. Also, your water supply may be interrupted to allow us to undertake planned maintenance. As part of our programme for identifying and stopping leaks we sometimes turn off sections of water mains. We will endeavour to provide notice to you if we intend to interrupt your supply but in an emergency this may not be possible. If we plan to interrupt your supply for more than 2 hours, we will give you at least 48 hours written notice, including notification of the time by which the supply is expected to be restored.

If you have a medical condition which would mean that your health would be at risk if you are without water or if you need us to provide notice in a particular way, please let us know so that we can register this and make appropriate arrangements.

## Are you responsible for your pipework?

As a customer, it is very important for you (or your landlord) to be aware that you have a responsibility to maintain the service pipe which delivers water into your home. If your property is some distance from our water main, it's likely that you will have a very long service pipe. Remember you are responsible for the entire length of the service pipe from your house, all the way to the boundary of the street in which the water main is laid. A simple diagram to explain the above can be seen below.



## What you should do if you detect a leak and who will repair it?

If you detect a leak on your service pipe, it is you or your landlord's

responsibility to repair it. No allowance will be granted where water escapes from a leak or faulty plumbing located above ground; or where a leak has been caused by a customer's negligence or willful damage; nor where a leak has not been repaired within 30 working days of the date on which the customer became aware, or should have become aware, that there was a leak. It is also your responsibility to take reasonable precautions to insulate any exposed pipework to prevent freezing.

## **How are your water charges calculated?**

The Dartington Hall Trust (Dartington) has a legal right to charge occupiers for the provision of water. The scheme of charges is shown on the Dartington Website (Water Terms & Conditions).

[www.dartington.org/water](http://www.dartington.org/water)

### **Metered/Measured Charges**

Where the occupier of a property, at which a meter has been installed, is liable to pay water charges the basic measured charges will apply unless there is an agreement between Dartington and a customer to pay a different tariff; or Dartington has confirmed to a customer that unmeasured charges will apply. The standard measured charges will also apply where a customer moves into a property at which a meter has been installed previously, even if the outgoing occupier of the property was not paying measured charges.

### **Unmetered/Unmeasured Charges**

Where the occupier of a property is liable to pay water charges and a meter has not been installed at the property, the standard unmeasured charges, or the relevant Assessed Charges, or any special unmeasured tariff will apply.

### **Water Charges**

For both measured and unmeasured water charges, the fact that a property might receive water through a shared service pipe does not affect liability to pay the standard charges in full and no reduction will be made to the standard charges.

## **Assessed Charges for Domestic Customers**

An Assessed charge may only be valid in a property where a meter is not already installed and is not possible to be installed.

A single person Assessed Charge will be granted only where a customer provides evidence of entitlement to a single person discount for Council Tax purposes.

Assessed Charges will be granted where a property is a person's second home and is occupied by that person.

Where a second home is occupied for only part of the year as someone's second home and is let commercially at other times of the year, the owner will have no entitlement to an Assessed Charge where the installation of a water meter is impractical, or the cost of installation is unreasonable.

## Payment of water charges

### Metered/Measured water

Measured water customers will receive 2 invoices a year, based on actual meter readings, in April and October. These readings will be taken by Dartington representatives. Measured charges are payable in arrears within 14 days of an invoice being issued.

### Payment arrangements

Measured invoices can be paid by either:

- Direct Debit – payment will be collected on 24<sup>th</sup> April and 24<sup>th</sup> October. Please contact our accounts team to set up a Direct Debit instruction.
- Direct Debit – monthly payment plan – see details below
- Credit/Debit card – please call our Accounts team
- Direct Bank Transfer – using our bank details quoted on the invoice and quoting the invoice reference number

### Monthly payment plan – metered/measured water

To help you manage your payments, Dartington operates a monthly payment plan for measured water customers, payable by Direct Debit on the 24<sup>th</sup> of each month. To enquire about setting up a payment plan please call our accounts team.

We will review your account annually in April, to decide if your monthly payment amount is adequate. If it has been set too high, and the account is in credit, you can choose to have the over-payment refunded or have it carried forward to

reduce next year's payments. If not enough has been paid, the unpaid amount will be carried forward to the next year and monthly payments re-set to clear this amount.

## **Unmetered/ Unmeasured water**

Unmeasured water charges are payable in advance, in 2 instalments on 1<sup>st</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> October.

### **Payment arrangements**

Unmeasured invoices can be paid by either:

- Direct Debit – payment to be collected on 1<sup>st</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> October. Please contact our accounts team to set up a Direct Debit instruction.
- Direct Debit – monthly payment plan – see details below
- Credit/Debit card – please call our accounts team.
- Direct Bank Transfer – using our bank details quoted on the invoice and quoting the invoice reference number

### **Monthly payment plan – unmetered water**

To help you manage your payments, Dartington operates a monthly payment plan, paying by 12 instalments by Direct Debit. This service is available on request.

To enquire about setting up a payment plan please call our accounts team so that your requirements can be discussed and a suitable plan agreed.

We will always require a payment plan to be set at a level which clears the current year's charges by the end of the charging year. However, if there are arrears on your account we may be able to agree a longer period of time to clear these to make instalments more manageable for you.

## **Failure to pay charges when they are due**

If we do not receive payment when it is due, we will send you a reminder.

If we do not receive payment or contact to discuss the outstanding amount after sending a reminder, we will send notice of our intention to ask the County Court to issue a Court Claim for non-payment.

The issue of a Court Claim is likely to incur legal costs. If a customer does not respond to a Court Claim the court may make an order against the customer for the payment of the full debt. Further legal action, such as the issue of a warrant for the seizure of goods, can then be taken by the court. A Court Order for payment may affect a customer's future ability to obtain credit.

## Changes in occupancy

### What to do if you are moving house

You need to tell us that you are moving by calling, emailing or writing to let us know your change of address details. If you have a water meter and are moving house, please tell us at least two working days, but preferably five working days before you move, so that we can arrange to take the final meter reading. If you are unable to provide adequate notice, we may not be able to read your meter on the day you move and may have to issue an estimated final bill based on previous usage. Alternatively, you could read your own meter on your last day and call us with your reading and new address details.

Your responsibility for the water supply ceases on the day you vacate the property (or sell the property, if owned). However, if you give us less than two days' notice you will remain responsible for the metered charges up to:

- 28 days after we find that you are no longer responsible for the account, or
- the date the meter is normally read (the end of the charging period), or
- the date a new occupier tells us they are responsible for the account. If you move into a property where there is a meter you will be charged on this basis. You will not be able to revert to unmetered charges. If you are moving out of our area, we will send a final bill to your new address for anything you owe, or, if you have overpaid, we will send you a refund. If you are moving into a

property within the area for which we are the water supplier, we will transfer any balance to the account for your new address. We will also bill you from the date you move in.

If you are the owner of the property and vacate before a sale or transfer of ownership, you will remain responsible for water charges up until the date the property is either occupied by another or sold (whichever is earlier). The same principles apply to final meter readings as set out above.

## **Where you can find out about having a water meter**

If you are not on a water meter and you wish to have one fitted you can put in a request through the estate office who will arrange for an engineer to call and assess a suitable location.

A meter will be installed free of charge if the cost of doing so is not unreasonable and it is practical to install a meter. If you chose to have a water meter fitted and then find that you do not benefit by having one then you can opt to revert back to unmetered charges within 12 months of the meter being installed (or within one month of receiving a bill showing a full 12 months water usage). Should you choose to revert then you will be liable for metered charges up until the time we receive your request. Reversion is only applicable the first time you opt to have a meter.

The meter will remain in place should you move house and the new occupants will be charged on a metered basis. The option to revert back to unmetered will not be available for new occupiers even if within the 12 month window.

## **Where will it be installed?**

Usually, meters will be installed in a meter box externally from the property. We will advise you of our preferred location. If you would like the meter installed in a different location, you can request this and the meter can be fitted in your preferred location as long as it is practicable and any additional costs incurred by doing this are met by you.

### **When will it be installed?**

We will aim to install your meter within 3 months of receiving your request. If we do not, we will use readings taken after the meter has been installed to backdate charges to the date by which the meter should have been installed.

### **Who is responsible for the meter?**

The meter and its connections are the responsibility of Dartington. It is an offence to carry out any work which might prevent your meter from registering volumes accurately or which might affect the working of the meter or require its disconnection.

### **Sewerage charges**

If your property is connected to a mains sewer and you are on a water meter your sewerage charges are based on water consumption and are payable to South West Water. If your property is not on a water meter your charges will be based on rateable value as per your water charges and will be payable to South West Water who will issue an invoice twice a year. Any queries relating to sewerage charges should be directed to South West Water (<http://www.southwestwater.co.uk>).

## Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint about your water supply please contact the estate team on 01803 847036.

If you wish to make a complaint about your bill or account, please contact the accounts team on 01803 847045.

We recognise that complaining in writing may not be possible for all our customers so, if this is the case, we will make arrangements either to telephone or visit you to get details of your complaint. If you require our assistance with registering a complaint, please call our estate team on 01803 847036.

### How soon will we deal with it?

If you contact us by telephone or in person, we will try to resolve the complaint immediately. If we cannot, the details will be passed to someone who can deal with it effectively and call you back. We will tell you when this happens. If your complaint requires a site visit or further investigation, we will aim to provide a full response within 10 working days. If you contact us to complain in writing either by letter or email we aim to reply within 10 working days of receipt of your complaint.

## Keeping Appointments

When we make an appointment with you in writing or by telephone, we will, as a minimum, tell you whether we will visit in the morning (8am-12pm) or in the afternoon (12pm- 5pm) or you can ask for an appointment within a two-hour time-band. Where possible we will set a time for an appointment for which we will not be late by more than 30 minutes. We will always aim to keep the appointment, but if we must change it, we will give at least 24 hours' notice.

## Account Queries

We will reply within 10 working days of receiving a written query about your water account.

## Payment Arrangements

If you notify us in writing that you wish to change your payment method, we will confirm to you within 10 working days if for any reason your request is not possible.

## Who should you contact if you have a query or an urgent emergency call?

### General enquiries

Estate team

The Dartington Hall Trust

The Elmhirst Centre

Dartington Hall

Totnes TQ9

6EL

Tel. No. **01803 847036**

Mobile **07050 611986** (Outside normal office hours)

E mail **[waterservices@dartington.org](mailto:waterservices@dartington.org)**

## Accounts and billing

Accounts team

The Dartington Hall Trust

The Elmhirst Centre

Dartington Hall

Totnes TQ9

6EL

Tel No. **01803 847045**

E mail: **waterservices@dartington.org**

The Dartington Hall Trust is registered in England as a company limited by guarantee (Company no. 1485560) and a charity (Charity no. 279756).

Registered office: The Elmhirst Centre, Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EL

The Dartington Hall Trust is committed to offering the highest possible levels of service to its water customers.