



**Southern Water provides £98m support to cut costs and fight the corner for thousands of customers facing cost of living crisis**

- **Boosting minimum bill discounts for 104,000 households from 20% to 45%**
- **Bill discounts of up to 90% for those customers in greater need**
- **Funding warm spaces and fighting hardship for communities**

Southern Water is providing a £98m package of support for customers to combat the cost-of-living crisis, which is disproportionately hitting the most vulnerable households hardest, across Sussex, Kent, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Coming to the aid of people facing financial hardship, we will boost the minimum discount on bills offered to 104,000 households, from 20% to 45%, whilst adding another 21,000 households to that number, offering these customers at least an average annual saving of £200 on a dual service bill. The support will also continue to help customers that are in greater need, to access bill discounts of up to 90%.

Katy Taylor, Chief Customer Officer at Southern Water, said:


“While Christmas excitement may be growing for many families in our region, we know that there will be lots who are worried about how they will afford it and also pay for their heating and other bills.

“As water is an essential service that people cannot live without, we believe it is critical that we support thousands of vulnerable households in our region who need a break.

“Our customers live in the same communities as our colleagues and their families, people we speak to and serve every day. We are in an extremely fortunate position where we can help, which is why we have put together a package worth £98m to support customers who need help, until 2025.

“I would urge anyone who needs help to reach out and we will do everything we can to support you.”

To help those facing the challenge around rising food and energy costs, Southern Water is also giving out 20 community centre energy grants of £1,000 each this winter to ensure



community hubs and spaces can stay open and stay warm, supporting around 6,000 people each week to continue to attend foodbanks, befriender cafes, support groups, and wellbeing classes.

Meanwhile, Southern Water teams are working closely with many organisations who have direct contact with customers struggling financially, such as the Citizens Advice, Job Centres and Food Banks, running face-to-face support surgeries with customers. The funding is also providing a £30 food voucher to around 3,700 families in West Sussex as part of a Free School Meals initiative.

Michael Barnes, Policy Manager at the Consumer Council for Water (CCW), said: “This will be a tough winter financially for many households so we’re really pleased to see Southern Water stepping up its efforts to help customers who are currently struggling to pay their water bill.

“With so much focus on energy costs, it’s often overlooked that about 1 in 5 households currently struggle to pay their water bills. There are many ways to get help with your bill and we’d urged anyone with money worries to reach out and ask for support from their water company.”

Southern Water will be making this change as simple as possible, with bill discounts being automatically applied to essentials tariff customers by April 2023. Anyone who is not on an existing discount tariff but thinks they may be entitled to discounts on their bills can complete [an online form on the Southern Water website](#), where they can also find out information about community grants and further support.

If customers do have questions about bills or need help they can contact us for free on 0800 027 0363 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).