



Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Robbie Moore MP
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18 March 2024

Dear Andrea,

Thank you for your letter of 23 January to the Secretary of State about the motion by Kirklees Council on water quality. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

In October 2023, the water industry announced a planned £96 billion of investment between 2025 and 2030. This represents the largest investment in infrastructure ever made by our water industry, and a 63% increase in investment compared to the current five-year price review period.

Business plans for Price Review 2024 include more than doubling the investment from the last price control to improve hundreds of storm overflows across the country. It shows the sector is responding to the actions of this Government to clean up our rivers and seas, drive more investment and jobs in the UK, ensure stronger regulation and tougher enforcement to achieve a step change in the water industry.

There is a balance to be struck in terms of priorities – ensuring there is prioritised spending on infrastructure to reduce environmental harm and secure supplies for the future without unduly hitting billpayers with a big rise. We recognise that household bills have risen in recent years, but the public has also made clear that clean and plentiful water supply and environmental protection are priorities.

Ofwat (the economic regulator) are now scrutinising company investment plans for 2025-2030, to ensure they meet the targets for environmental improvements and other obligations, without unduly impacting customers' bills. Ofwat will confirm their decisions for the price controls between 2025-2030 in December 2024.

The sector has a range of measures in place to help households that do need support with their bills. In 2022/23 over 1.3 million households benefitted from social tariffs in England and Wales and the average bill discount was £151 per annum. Water companies should ensure that their customers know what support schemes are available and how to use them if they need help.

We are confident that industry regulators are using their powers to hold water companies to account, and we will continue to work with them to drive improvements which benefit customers and the environment.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robbie Moore', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

ROBBIE MOORE MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs