

WESSEX WATER

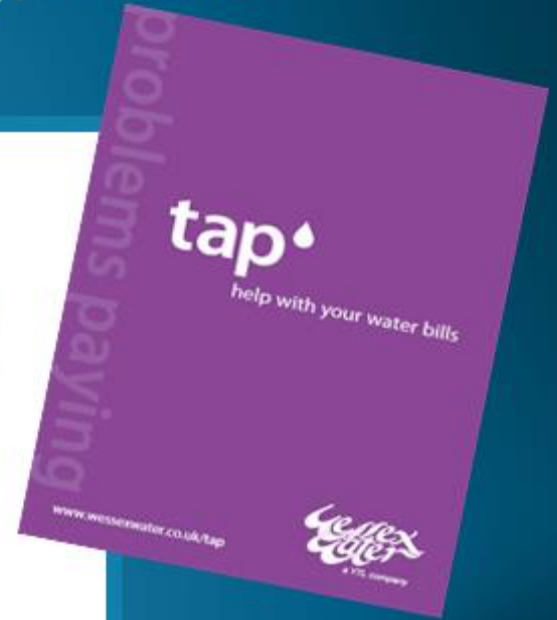
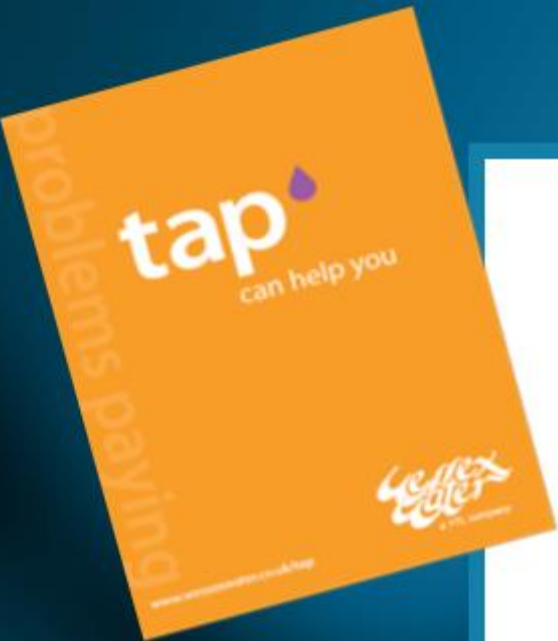
Support for vulnerable customers – a case study

**Sue Lindsay
15 April 2015**

OUR AFFORDABILITY OFFERING

Affordability
advisory group 
a YTL company

Restart and Restart Plus



Debt advice
grants

tailored **assistance** plan

WaterSure
Plus

Flexible
payment plans

Free water
meter

Water Direct



Money Matters Awards

REACHING THE VULNERABLE



Struggling with your water bill? we can help you...

The month of January can be a tough time for us all, especially after the costs of Christmas – and for people who are struggling to afford their water bill for reasons that aren't their fault. It can be particularly hard.

But help is on hand to people in Western Somerset. Here and surrounding areas, Bristol Water and Wessex Water, who are leading a drive to assist struggling people to come forward and get the help they need.

The two water companies will be offering advice on how you can spread the cost of your water bill, reduce your bill or even request debt.

North Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau will also be there to provide support and free debt advice for those who are worried about their finances. So if you, or someone you know, is having the black the month and struggling with bills and finances you could share all the money there and join others who have benefited from similar advice from Bristol Water.

Come and talk to:
Bristol Water and Wessex Water
Monday 2 February
(12.00pm to 4pm)
Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare

Did you know?

- We have helped more than 17,500 people facing problems paying their water bills
- More than 4,900 people are benefiting from lower bills
- 90% of people in debt who asked for Bristol Water or Wessex Water for help are now debt free.

So you can come along to the drop-in session knowing that you're not the only one in your situation and that many people are getting the help they need.

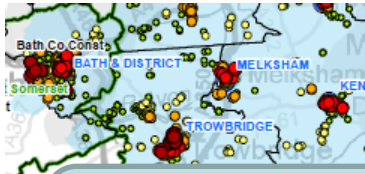
There will be some fun activities on hand for children. You can also pick up your free water bill and a free water meter.



WIDER PROMOTION – multiple channels, multi-media, often with partners

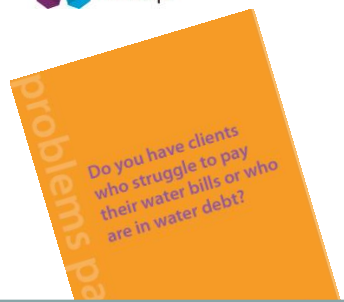
EXTENDING NETWORK OF PARTNERS – inside and outside debt advice

AFFORDABILITY ACTION PLAN



IMPROVING INFORMATION – for customers and staff

REFERRALS PROCESS – online application forms, hotkeys, funding structure



Don't drown in debt

- ✓ Lower your water bills
- ✓ Save money and water with a meter



Sign in to online services

Please complete fields marked with *

Email address*

Password*

Debt adviser application for help with water and sewerage bills

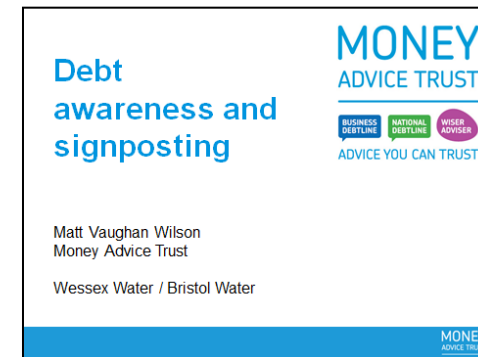
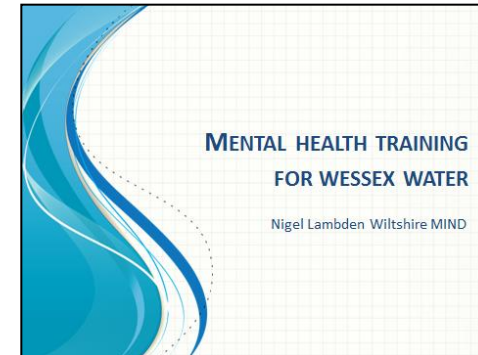
A list of all your recent forms is shown. Click on a form you would like to edit or complete.

Active applications (name)	Created on	Edit	Remove
Application form Ref: 18030403 for name unknown	Created on the 12/19/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 11	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 10	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 9	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 8	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 7	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 6	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 5	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 4	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 3	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 2	Created on the 12/29/2014		
Application form Ref: 18030403 for Me 1	Created on the 12/29/2014		

TRAINING INITIATIVES TO DEAL WITH VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS



- Often one opportunity to get it right
- Giving staff more confidence and ability to:
 - Spot signs of vulnerability when interacting with customers
 - Resolve the customer's query or problem
 - Signpost to specialist organisations
 - Promote our register of additional needs
- Will achieve full compliance with BS18477 standard for inclusive services by end April
 - Demonstrates our commitment to vulnerable customers



- **Affordability is a much wider problem than water**
 - **Holistic advice is key**
- **Tailored solutions for customers who are having difficulty paying**
 - **No one size fits all**
- **Reaching vulnerable customers is a challenge**
 - **Community engagement and partnerships do work**
- **Need to give staff the right tools and training**
 - **Often only one opportunity to get it right**
- **Benchmark yourself or go for compliance with the BS Standard**
- **Overall approach builds trust and confidence in the sector and raises its reputation**