



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

David Hinton
Chief Executive
South East Water
Rocfort Road
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5AH
By email

4th February 2026

Dear David,

I am writing to ask if you can share with me the data on customer demand and leakages over this winter and how this compared to previous years.

Yesterday, one of your team replied to a constituent's comment on my Facebook page stating the following: "As soon as customer demand for water has reduced to manageable levels and our supply has been restored, meaning it is no longer breaching the limits of our drought plan, the temporary use ban will be lifted."

This is a shift from the statement in a customer email on 28th January that the reason for the continued hosepipe restrictions is the aquifers taking longer to recover than normal, a statement contradicted by Environment Agency data on groundwater levels.

This is also a shift from 9th January where you and your colleague, Doug Whitfield, briefed MPs on water supply issues. You told MPs that normal demand was currently 530 million litres a day and lower than summer demand of 600 million litres a day, and that the impact on supply was actually being driven by a significant increase in leakage up from its usual 90 million litres a day to 150 million litres.

I hope you can understand my concerns. In early January the issue was leakage, in late January it was groundwater levels and now in early February it is apparently customer demand.

My constituents' patience with South East Water has been wearing thin for a long time and shifting statements like this do not help them rebuild confidence and trust in you as Chief Executive. I look forward to receiving the data from you so we can understand what the problem actually is.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Bennett

cc Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP