

## Motion to be signed by parish and town councils

1. "This Council notes with grave concern the systemic failure of South West Water to manage the sewage system in Cornwall. Despite record bills and government intervention, raw sewage continues to impact our environment and public health. Therefore, this Council resolves:
2. To formally declare a Vote of No Confidence in South West Water.
3. To sign the collective letter to the Secretary of State demanding the removal of South West Water's management through a Special Administration Order.

## Formal Letter of No Confidence

**TO:** Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

**CC:** The Chief Executive of Ofwat; The Leader of Cornwall Council; Cornwall's Members of Parliament.

**DATE:** [Insert Date]

**SUBJECT: Formal Vote of No Confidence in South West Water (SWW) and Petition for Special Administration.**

To the Secretary of State,

We, the undersigned Town and Parish Councils of Cornwall, representing the residents, businesses, and ecosystems of the Duchy, hereby formally issue this **Vote of No Confidence** in the management of South West Water (SWW).

We are no longer requesting "improvements" or "consultations." South West Water has failed for more than a decade to show its capability and willingness to manage our water and sewage system. We are formally petitioning the Government and Ofwat to remove SWW from the management of the Cornish sewage and water systems, and transfer the ownership and management of our sewage and water system to a publicly-owned organisation, run as a public service.

Our decision is based on a systemic and catastrophic failure in the following three areas:

### 1. Failure of Infrastructure and Public Health

Despite Cornwall's residents paying the highest water bills in the UK, our coastline and rivers have become conduits for raw sewage. In 2025 and early 2026, we have witnessed

unprecedented spill durations that have closed our beaches, impacted our tourism economy, and posed a direct threat to public health. The current management has proven incapable of maintaining a sewage system fit for the 21st century.

## **2. Financial Mismanagement and Breach of Public Trust**

While our constituents face further bill increases this April, SWW continues to prioritise shareholder dividends and executive bonuses over essential capital investment. The "investment plans" touted by the company have repeatedly failed to yield results on the ground, leading to a total breakdown of trust between the utility provider and the Cornish people.

## **3. Inadequacy of Governance**

It is the view of these Councils that SWW's leadership has lost the confidence of the Cornish communities and its "social license" to operate. The repeated fines and enforcement cases from Ofwat have acted as a "cost of doing business" rather than a deterrent. We believe the company is now structurally incapable of delivering the environmental protections required by law.

### **Our Formal Demand:**

We call upon the Government to intervene and make this situation stop at once, using powers such as those granted by the **Water (Special Measures) Act** to remove the offending company from operating in Cornwall. We demand that South West Water be placed into **Special Administration**, stripping the current management of their mandate. We call upon the Government to transition Cornish sewage and water assets into a publicly-owned organisation, run as a public service, answerable to elected representatives of Cornish voters, that will prioritise the Cornish environment and its people over private profit.

Cornish rivers and seas are the lifeblood of our economy and our identity. We will no longer stand by while they are managed into decline.

We await your urgent response regarding the steps you will take to revoke SWW's licence in the Duchy.

Yours faithfully,

**[Name of Council]**

*On behalf of the Collective Councils of Cornwall*