HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Chris Train, Chairman
South East Water
Rocfort Road,
Snodland,
Kent, ME6 5AH

12 January 2026

Dear Chris

We are writing to you as concerned MPs about our increasing frustration with the leadership of David Hinton, the Chief Executive Officer of South East Water, and are calling for you to initiate the necessary steps to bring his tenure to an end.

The areas we represent have all had failures of water supply in recent months and in some cases years. For some of our constituents, these have lasted many days. Not only is it unacceptable for people to be without a water supply, the response from South East Water to support people while they are without mains water has been grossly inadequate. This was the case when there were supply outages in the summer in East Kent, in Tonbridge earlier last year and this weekend an unacceptable situation in Kent and Sussex.

Residents with no water supplies have again been expected to travel miles to their nearest water station. There appears to have been no recognition of the distances involved for some people. There has been a failure to set up community water stations despite parish councils and village halls offering to help. Sites reported as open with water when this was not the case, and this is unacceptable. Ongoing communication vacuums have often left our constituents in the lurch and in the dark on real information they can count on.

Supplies of water to people who are vulnerable and on the Priority Services List have been inconsistent. Some who received water have run out and cannot find out when they will get their next supply. Others say they are on the list but have not received supplies.

Many people with livestock have been given no water provision and misleading communications. This problem was raised with South East Water and with David Hinton personally during the summer water outage in East Kent and in Tonbridge earlier last year but the approach to the problem is just as bad – and complacent - this winter.

The communications from South East Water have been shockingly inadequate, with customers coming to us as MPs to find out what is going on because of the lack of updates from the water company. In turn, we as MPs have had patchy updates including too often misleading or unclear information and spokespeople who have no answers to basic questions.

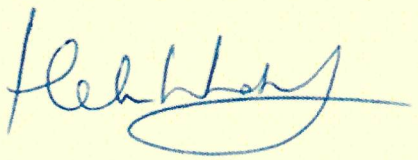
In an emergency situation we expect a better response from South East Water including effective communication, local water stations and a solution for people with livestock.

Water shortages are happening far too frequently with the same problems not being addressed each time. Our businesses, schools and the most vulnerable need to see action and we need to see real accountability.

David Hinton has consistently failed to address these problems including how South East Water responds when there is a crisis. While we recognise weather and aging infrastructure is a challenge, there is no excuse for this abysmal handling of supply outages, and our constituents need to believe this company has the leadership, energy, and drive to achieve the change needed. David Hinton is clearly in no position to offer this to the company.

We therefore respectfully urge you and the Board to take decisive action and begin the process of appointing new executive leadership capable of properly addressing emergency situations and restoring confidence in South East Water.

Yours sincerely



Helen Whately MP, Faversham and Mid Kent

Mims Davies MP, East Grinstead and Uckfield

Rosie Duffield MP, Canterbury

Helen Grant MP, Maidstone and Malling

Katie Lam MP, Weald of Kent

The Rt Hon Tom Tugendhat MP, Tonbridge

cc. Emma Hardy MP, Minister for Water and Flooding,

Chris Walters Chief Executive of Ofwat