



How the Code of Practice and Market Health Check benefit Scotland's business customers



Clearer information before and after signing up with a retailer



Smoother transfers between retailers



Stronger incentives for retailers to deliver higher standards of service



Confidence and trust that retailers are delivering on their commitments

The Code of Practice

When Scotland's non-household water market opened, it created real choice and encouraged innovation for business customers. Those early years showed what a competitive and dynamic market could deliver.

But, like any system, markets need regular maintenance. Without ongoing improvement and clear expectations, customers can begin to question the value that competition brings.

That is why WICS¹ has introduced two important new tools: the **Code of Practice**² and a **Market Health Check**.




A more customer-focused market

Together, these tools mark an important evolution in how the market operates. For business customers, they mean clearer information when choosing or switching retailer, more consistent standards of service, and stronger accountability across the market.

What does the Code of Practice mean?

The Code of Practice was developed collaboratively by WICS with input from retailers, Scottish Water, Consumer Scotland and the Central Market Agency. It provides a practical but ambitious framework that puts customer outcomes first.

At its core, the Code sets out what customers should reasonably expect and requires retailers to deliver consistently higher standards of service, including:

-  A cooling-off period if customers change their mind
-  Clearer information so customers fully understand what they are signing up for
-  A simpler switching process, making it easier to choose the right option for their business

The Code of Practice applies across the full customer journey – from the very first contact through to any decision to switch retailer. This recognises that good service is not a one-off event but an ongoing relationship. Customers can therefore expect a consistent level of service from start to finish.

Consumer Scotland³ will chair a new Governance Group to maintain and update the Code and ensure it supports continual improvement across the sector.

Although the Code is voluntary, it carries real weight. Retailers who sign up must embed its principles in their customer contracts and demonstrate compliance through WICS's independent Market Health Check.



Click or scan the QR code to learn which retailers have signed up to the Code of Practice or for updates on the Market Health Check

1 See page <https://wics.scot/what-we-do>

2 See page <https://wics.scot/publications/retail-market/code-practice/about-code-practice>

3 See page <https://consumer.scot/about-us>

How will customers know if retailers are meeting their commitments?

To give customers confidence that retailers are delivering on their promises, we have introduced a Market Health Check. This provides an independent assessment of whether retailers are meeting their obligations under the Code of Practice and whether the market is delivering the right outcomes for customers.

The Market Health Check is designed to drive improvement. It creates a feedback loop that helps retailers strengthen their service and share best practice.

The first Market Health Check will conclude in July 2026. We will publish the results, setting out whether retailers have met their commitments to customers.

This leaflet was developed by WICS in collaboration with Consumer Scotland. WICS and Consumer Scotland cannot provide legal, contractual or financial advice regarding individual circumstances.

The information provided as part of this leaflet does not constitute legal or contractual advice. This leaflet is solely intended to provide a brief overview of the Code of Practice and Market Health Check for information purposes and is accurate as of November 2025.

Find out more

To find out more click or scan the relevant QR code/s below:



To learn which retailers have signed up to the Code of Practice or for updates on the Market Health Check.



To learn more about the Scottish retail non-household market.