

# Moving from private to public water supply

If you currently have a private water supply and wish to consider the option of connecting to the public water network, this guide will provide important information to be aware of.

Scottish Water understand that connecting to the public network may not be your preferred choice, so before making a decision it may be beneficial to contact your local council as they are responsible for regulating private water supplies under the Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006. They should be able to provide you with advice on how you might improve the quality and/or sufficiency of your existing supply.

Please refer to your local council website for more information regarding any grant support which can be offered to improve a private supply, or the Private Water supply website for more general advice: [www.privatewatersupplies.gov.uk](http://www.privatewatersupplies.gov.uk)

## To transfer a single house to the Scottish Water network

The process to transfer from a private to public supply is very similar to the process for new buildings covered in our document 'Single House New Connections: A quick Reference Guide'. This document is available from our document hub [www.scottishwater.co.uk/Help-and-Resources/Document-Hub/Business-and-Developers/Connecting-to-Our-Network](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Help-and-Resources/Document-Hub/Business-and-Developers/Connecting-to-Our-Network) By following the guide you will be able to progress through the application process to completion and connection to the public network. There are some key differences which must be clarified however as detailed below:

### Distance to nearest available water main

As many properties on private supplies are in rural areas the nearest public water main may be some distance away. To prevent stagnation and maintain high quality water there is a limit on the distance properties can be from the water main, this is different for each location and will be assessed by Scottish Water for each customer. Local network maps can be obtained from one of our approved providers (please note there may be a cost for these services):

### National One-Call

Tel: 0800 0853 865  
Email: [swplans@national-one-call.co.uk](mailto:swplans@national-one-call.co.uk)  
Web: [www.national-one-call.co.uk/swplans](http://www.national-one-call.co.uk/swplans)

### Site Investigation Services (UK) Ltd

Tel: 0333 123 1223  
Email: [plans@siteinvest.co.uk](mailto:plans@siteinvest.co.uk)  
Web: [www.sisplan.co.uk](http://www.sisplan.co.uk)

### Cornerstone Projects Ltd

Tel: 0151 632 5142  
Email: [enquiries@cornerstoneprojects.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cornerstoneprojects.co.uk)  
Web: <http://www.cornerstoneprojects.co.uk/index.php/scottishwaterplans/>

If you are having difficulty in identifying the nearest public water main, you can contact us at: [PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk) for assistance in identifying the nearest water main.

### Sufficient pressure and flow

Due to the distances often involved in laying a pipe to the water main there may be pressure/flow issues in reaching your property. Scottish Water recommend that internal storage is fitted to your property – usually enough to last for 24 hours. There is sometimes a requirement for you to fit a private pump to your supply pipe also to ensure a constant supply of water. As part of the connection process Scottish Water will have a representative attend and check the pressure at the nearest public hydrant so we can advise of this.

### Existing pipework

No existing pipework currently used to carry water from your private source to your property can be reused, so please ensure that you have made plans to lay new pipework from the water mains location right into the property up to the kitchen sink.



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Trusted to serve Scotland

## Internal plumbing

Our byelaws team will also require to inspect your property to ensure there are no potential issues with existing fittings to avoid any risk of water quality.

If at any point during this process you are unsure or require additional information please contact [PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk) where we will be happy to help.

Please be advised that Scottish Water is not able to assist financially with a transfer from a private supply to a public supply, and all standard costs for a new connection would be applied to a new application, as they would for all new single house connections to our public network.

## Licensed Plumbers

We would always recommend the use of licensed plumbers. Scottish Water supports and promotes the WaterSafe scheme. WaterSafe is a dedicated online search facility to help customers to find the nearest qualified plumbing and heating professionals in their area. Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF) runs the Plumbing Industry Licensing Scheme and this is part of WaterSafe.

To find a licensed plumber in your area, visit WaterSafe at [www.watersafe.org.uk](http://www.watersafe.org.uk) or SNIPEF at [www.needaplumber.org](http://www.needaplumber.org).

## To connect multiple properties to the public network at the same or near location

In some circumstances, more than one customer in a community may be interested in converting from a private supply. If this requires the extension of the public water main then Scottish Water can provide advice on the process by which this can be applied for and completed.

Provision of new mains to an area requires specialist planning and design, so it is crucial that all customers liaise in the planning, funding and delivery of this new infrastructure and the associated individual supplies to ensure that the project can be successfully co-ordinated locally. This is also useful if all customers are using the same contractor.

In these situations, Scottish Water may apply a cost contribution towards the additional infrastructure installed to the boundary of a customer's land, on the condition that it is offered to Scottish Water for adoption and meets our criteria.

The criteria primarily relates to the pipework meeting our standards to transfer it into public ownership. Design and installation should be as per our technical specification document 'Water for Scotland'. A copy of this is available from our website [www.scottishwater.co.uk](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk)

To initiate this process it is essential to submit a pre-development enquiry application to allow our connections team to confirm the available water capacity and the best option for your community. The application should contain as much information as possible and clearly indicate the number of properties potentially seeking a transfer to the public supply.

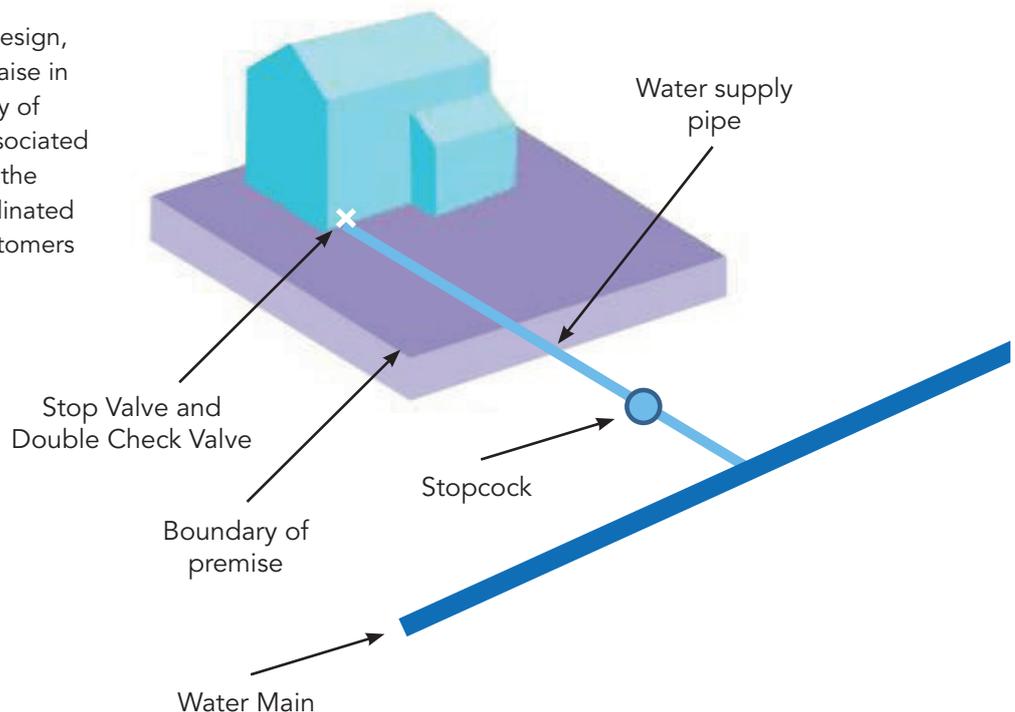
We would also encourage anybody who is seeking to obtain a new water main into their community to contact our specialist team at:

[PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:PrivateSupplyTransfers@scottishwater.co.uk)

who can provide further information on the application requirements, nearest public mains and advice on how to approach the planning and implementation of this installation.

We can also organise a site visit from one of our representatives to meet and discuss with communities.

## Typical Pipework Arrangement



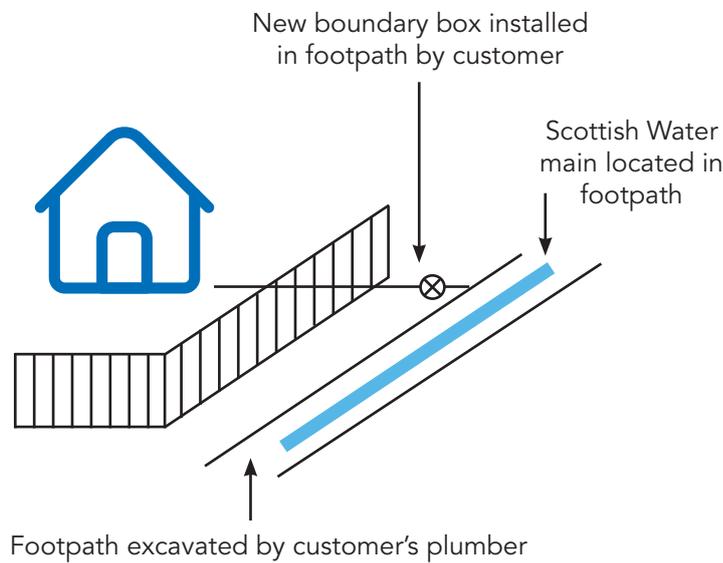
# Case studies

The below case studies are examples of real life private water supply customers who have applied to Scottish Water seeking a new connection.

Please note the following scenarios capture approximate costs charged by Scottish Water. Over and above this, all customers associated with the case studies will have incurred contractor costs for carrying out the work ahead of Scottish Water making a connection. Please note that these types of costs can vary based on the contractor, ground conditions and the specifics of each scenario.

Below Scottish Water has given a directional estimate of possible costs, however for true costs, quotes should be sought from local contractors.

## Case Study ONE



**Location:**

Aberdeenshire

**Requirement:**

Mr D enquired about a connection to the public network after his private water supply was no longer suitable. Mr D contacted Scottish Water who provided him with details on the location of the nearest public water main. The nearest water main was a short distance away on the footpath outside his property.

An application was made to Scottish Water and Mr D was given permission to connect to this water main.

Mr D arranged for a local plumber to lay a service pipe from his property to the existing public water main on the footpath. The plumber had to arrange permission to dig up the footpath with the local authority as part of the works. Scottish Water inspected this work and connected within 10 days.

**Time taken:**

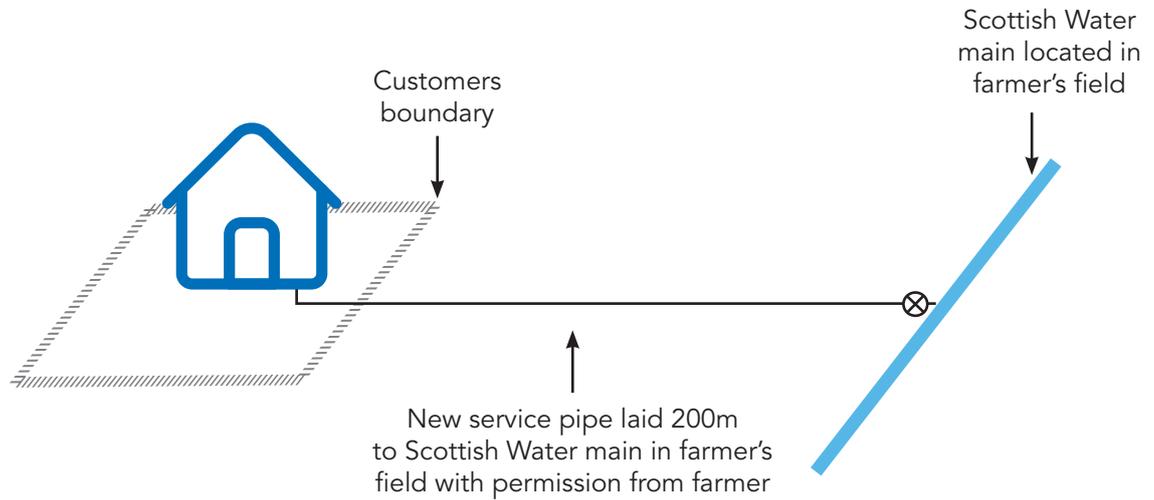
4 weeks

**Scottish Water cost:**

£890.00

**Directional estimated contractor costs:** £2,000-£5,000

## Case Study TWO



**Location:** Aberdeenshire

**Requirement:** Mrs S looked to get a connection to the public network as the warm summer weather caused her private water supply to dry up. She contacted Scottish Water who provided her with details on the location of the nearest public water main. The nearest water main was approx. 200m away in a neighbouring field.

An application was made to Scottish Water and Mrs S was given permission to connect to this water main. Due to the distance from her property to the water main, Scottish Water recommended Mrs S install storage to her property to ensure a reliable supply of water at her taps.

Mrs S had a good relationship with the farmer who owned the land where the water main was situated. Mrs S told Scottish Water that she had heard from neighbours that the farmer had previously charged £1,000 for permission to allow their service pipes to be laid in the field so she was relieved that this was a cost she had not had to incur during the process.

Mrs S obtained permission to lay a service pipe in the farmers land to reach the water main. She and her husband dug and laid the service pipe themselves and arranged a plumber to install the required fitting and fixtures. Scottish Water inspected this work and connected within 10 days.

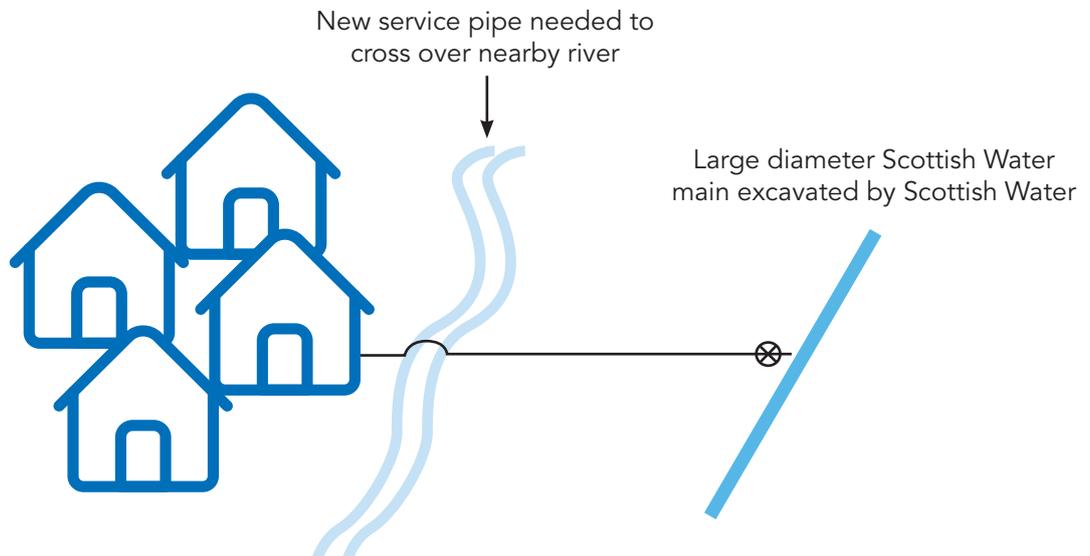
**Time taken:** 6 weeks

**Scottish Water cost:** £890.00

**Directional estimated contractor costs:** £10,000-£20,000



## Case Study **THREE**



**Location:** Scottish Borders

**Requirement:** Mrs K and a small group of neighbours were on a private water supply that had dried up during the summer. Mrs K asked Scottish Water if they could provide a temporary water supply in the short-term but unfortunately Scottish Water was not able to offer this service and advised Mrs K they would need to apply for a connection.

Mrs K co-ordinated with her 4 other neighbours to enquire about a connection to the public network. Mrs K appointed a consultant to make an application to Scottish Water for a connection. The consultant arranged for a design to be drawn up along with all the other relevant documentation. This included designs for crossing a nearby river to reach the public network.

The application was submitted to Scottish Water who were able to assess and grant permission to connect to the public water supply. The nearest public water main was large in diameter so Scottish Water arranged for a specialist contractor to do the connection which was reflected in the cost.

Mrs K also organised on behalf of her neighbours for a contractor to carry out all works associated with laying a new small water main to the properties. The contractor liaised with Scottish Water for all necessary on-site inspections and the connection was made.

**Time taken:** 3 months

**Scottish Water cost:** £6,000.00

**Directional estimated contractor costs:** £20,000-£40,000



## Case Study **FOUR**



Nearest Scottish Water main over 2km away

New water main infrastructure required to serve whole development

**Location:**

Highlands

**Requirement:**

Mr S on behalf of his community wished to investigate the possibility of connecting the village onto the public network. The community was situated a considerable distance from the nearest public water main (approx 2km). After consultation with Scottish Water, it was identified that a new main would have to be installed to ensure the community received a sufficient water supply. Investigations were also required into the available capacity within the public network to accommodate the community. This would all have to be funded by the community. Scottish Water have no grants available for this type of work, however they were able to offer a contribution to the costs if the new water main complied with Scottish Water's requirements and could be adopted.

Due to insufficient support within the community to take this forward as a group and due to the costs involved from capacity investigations, water main design and construction, Mr S determined it wasn't possible to take the connection forward and alternatively looked to reinforcing the private water supply serving the community.

**Directional estimated contractor costs:** Over £100,000





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[developmentoperations@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:developmentoperations@scottishwater.co.uk)

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Development Operations  
Scottish Water  
The Bridge,  
Buchanan Gate Business Park,  
Cumbernauld Road,  
Stepps,  
G33 6FB

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline on **0800 077 8778**.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you may need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Priority Services Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.