

A GUIDE FOR VISITOR ACCOMODATION PROVIDERS IN ARGYLL AND BUTE:



PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES



Visitor accommodation within Argyll and Bute is varied in form and ranges from small bed and breakfast providers who use a single spare room in their property to large purpose built properties and hotels, some may also provide evening meals. This information is applicable to all types of accommodation providers who are served by a private water supply.

Other guidance that may be of interest includes:

- A guide for self-catering providers in Argyll and Bute: Managing Bookings
- A guide for self-catering providers in Argyll and Bute: Safety in Self-Catering Properties

Together these guides aim to provide a general introduction to providing holiday accommodation and as such there may be some guidance which is not applicable to your property.

The information focuses on the issues dealt with by Regulatory Services (which includes Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Animal Health) but is not exhaustive. If you require assistance in relation to any Regulatory Services matter you can contact us using the details provided at the end of this document.

For matters outside of the scope of Regulatory Services further contact details are provided so that you can contact the relevant organisations directly.

The information aims to provide:

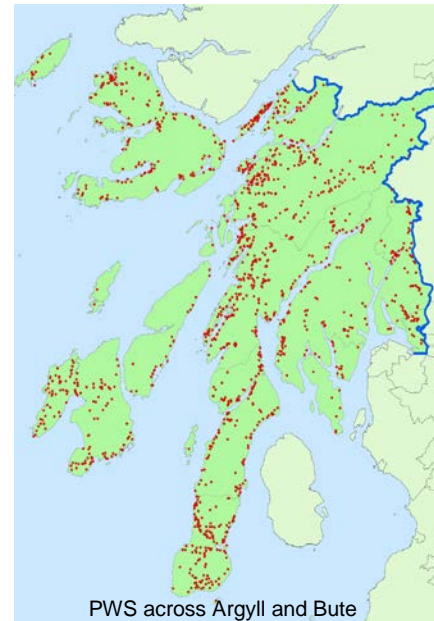
- What you **must** do – legal requirements;
- Best practice – what would be best practice over and above the minimum legal standard.

You should however note that whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the guidance is as comprehensive as possible, other regulations or legislation may apply and you should not rely solely on the information contained within these leaflets.

You should ensure that your guests have an adequate supply of safe water for drinking and washing.

A significant proportion of visitor accommodation, especially those in rural areas, are not on the mains water supply provided by Scottish Water, they are served by a private water Supply (PWS). For those properties on a Private Water Supply, it is important that you ensure your water is safe for guests to use.

Untreated and poorly treated water supplies can contain bacteria, such as *E. coli* O157 and metals which can cause serious illnesses and even death, especially for visitors who are not used to the supply.



Research has shown that children under 10 are five times more likely to suffer stomach upsets when drinking from a contaminated supply – this rate of illness is similar to that in developing countries.

If your accommodation is on a private water supply you:

MUST

Notify Environmental Health so that they can test the water to check that it is safe for guests.

MUST

Display the “Drinking Water Supply Important Information Poster” which can be obtained from your local Environmental Health office or downloaded from www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/pws

MUST

Make the latest sample results available for all users of the water supply.

MUST

Display any boil water notices as required by Environmental Health should the water be discovered to be unsafe.

MUST

Ensure you have appropriate treatment in place to keep the water free from contaminants and ensure it meets the minimum standards.

BEST PRACTICE

Provide general guidance on the use of the water supply including the recommendation to boil water, regardless of treatment, for the very young, elderly and those with compromised immune systems. Further information is available at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/private-water-supplies-your-property#q18>

BEST PRACTICE

Maintain any equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and keep records of maintenance work undertaken (this could help show that you have acted responsibly if there is a disease outbreak connected to your water supply).

If the property is not to be used for **extended periods** the supply should be drained down. When bringing back in use it should be cleaned and disinfected before being used again. If the supply is not being used for **short periods** then the taps should be run for approx. 5 minutes before using again, to clear standing water that can be high in unwanted chemicals/ metals etc due to stagnation in pipes and tanks.

MUST

Provide details of the supply in publicity information or correspondence which is accurate and does not mislead guests.

For example you should only describe water as spring water if it comes directly from a spring, water extracted from a burn or loch should be described as such.

BEST PRACTICE

Make guests aware of any expected interruptions to the supply and provide details of how to obtain water if alternative supplies, e.g. bowzers, are to be provided.

MUST

A risk assessment under these Regulations **MIUST** be carried out at least every 5 years and any changes to the supply in this period **MUST** be notified to Environmental Health.

MUST

You must have your supply tested at least once within any calendar year at times that vary throughout each year to demonstrate that the supply quality meets the required standards. Following any issues identified you must take appropriate action to improve the supply and also take any additional short term measures as required by Environmental Health.

Improvement Grants

A **non-means tested grant** is available to treat, improve or increase storage on private water supplies.

The grant will pay up to £800 *per property* and enables property owners to install treatment and carryout other improvements to make the supply safer.



You will be eligible for financial assistance if:

- Your premises is in the Argyll and Bute area and served by a private water supply;
- The private water supply is the main or sole source of water for human consumption purposes to these premises;
- Your private water supply is in need of improvement to bring it up to modern standards; and
- Your premises have not previously had a PWS grant.

You should not start any of the improvement works before your application is approved and we have agreed that the expenditure is necessary.

A risk assessment of your supply will be carried out by an officer from Environmental Health (if not already completed) to establish the details of improvements required to conform to the Water Supply for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and provide you with further advice.

There are some exceptions to Grant eligibility, the most common being:

- New builds;
- Houses under Closing Orders, Demolition Orders or a Dangerous Building Notice;
- Empty or unoccupied premises.

You can find out more information and apply for a grant at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/pws or by contacting Environmental Health.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Telephone 01546 605519

Email pws@argyll-bute.gov.uk

OTHER COUNCIL SERVICES

- Business Gateway – Advice for businesses can be provided by Business Gateway on 01546 604555 or visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-and-trade/business-gateway-service