

Appointments to the Consumer Council for Water Board

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The new board members will serve three-year terms.

Three independent board members have been appointed to the Consumer Council for Water.

Alison Austin and Hilary Florek have begun three-year terms today (1 April 2026). Peter Judge's three-year term will begin on 1 November 2026. These appointments have all been made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, as published by the Cabinet Office. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process.

The Consumer Council for Water is the independent, statutory body that represents all water and sewerage consumers across England and Wales. It provides advice and information on water matters and investigates complaints. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Biographies

Alison Austin

Alison Austin has extensive experience as a public sector Non-Executive Director and runs an independent sustainability consultancy supporting businesses with environmental, social and governance strategy. She spent 25 years at Sainsbury's in roles spanning marketing, food technical, and sustainability, developing a strong understanding of consumer needs in the food sector. Since leaving Sainsbury's 16 years ago, she has remained active in areas linking consumer interests and sustainability across both corporate and public sector organisations. Her previous roles include Non-Executive Director of the Consumer Council for Water and Independent Board Member for Seafish, where she represented Northern Ireland for six years. She has also served as a Trustee of WRAP, focusing on food waste, packaging reduction and the circular economy, and has worked with SGS UK Ltd and the Soil Association on governance of auditors for certification and accreditation standards. Alison was appointed to the Food Standards Agency's Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes in June 2021, a role in which she represented consumers' interests. She resigned in November 2025 to join the Agency's Board as a Non-Executive Director.

Hilary Florek

Hilary Florek is a strategic communications and marketing specialist with extensive experience in both the public, private and third sector. She was Chair of the Marine Management Organisation from February 2018 until December 2024. She is currently Chair of North East Access to Finance and a member of the Board of Advance Northumberland. She sits as a Member of Court at Newcastle University and is the Chair of Court Steering Committee. She is a member of the Board of the Durham County Cricket Foundation and a Trustee of Lawnmowers, a Theatre Group for young people with learning difficulties. Prior to this, she was Chairman of the Port of Tyne for three years having served previously as Deputy Chairman. She also served on the Board of the Glasshouse International Centre for Music. She began her career with the Vaux Group PLC and became PR and Communications Director, a position she held until 2000 when she established her own PR and Marketing consultancy.

Peter Judge

Peter Judge's early career was as a corporate lawyer in private practice before moving in-house to be the Legal and Procurement Director and Group Company Secretary of the Regional Development Agency, One North East (2003-2012), where he developed a reputation for strong leadership, innovation and for improving efficiency, governance and stewardship of public resources. Peter chairs the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute and is Senior Independent Governor of Northumbria University, together with a number of other non-executive roles. Peter was appointed as a Non-Executive Director of the Marine Management Organisation in 2019. As Attorney General of the British Overseas Territories of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (2014-2017), Peter was responsible for both Governments' legal functions including prosecution, regulation, fisheries enforcement and new legislation. He successfully sponsored an international agreement on closer cooperation between British Overseas Territories. Peter was awarded an MBE for services to Economic Development and the North East region in 2012 and named UK In-House Lawyer of the Year by The Lawyer Magazine in 2010.

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