Why does the pH of my water matter?
The main reason that there is a standard for pH in the regulations is that water with low pH can be corrosive to any metal plumbing, causing the water to contain excessive concentrations of metals such as copper, nickel, zinc and lead. Signs that corrosion is taking place include excessive leaks and staining of sanitary ware (often green where copper is present). High pH water can cause taste problems and irritate skin.

Could low pH water affect my health?
Although not generally a health issue in itself, water that has a slightly low pH can have a tendency to dissolve metals used in water pipes and fittings. Consuming water containing high concentrations of metals such as copper, nickel and zinc can have health effects. If your property is older it might contain lead plumbing and the consumption of lead has been clearly shown to be harmful to health.

How do I know if my water is the wrong pH?
Most natural waters in upland areas have a low pH due to dissolved natural organic acids. Testing of the pH will reveal that it is lower than 7 – the lower regulatory pH standard is 6.5, meaning the pH needs to be this or higher. Although water corrosivity is a complicated subject, a pH less than 6.5 is a good indication that the water is likely to be corrosive and some action is required.

What can I do to increase my pH?
Treatment to increase pH is relatively straightforward and usually involves passing water through a neutralising filter containing alkaline media such as limestone or magnesium oxide. Advice should be sought from a competent installer. It is important that the sizing of the filter and the blend of media within it is correct for your water supply, otherwise the pH could be corrected too much or not enough.

How should I install a neutralising filter?
The correct installation depends on individual circumstances and it is best to consult a specialist contractor. Neutralising filters should generally be fitted after any other filtration, so that the media does not become clogged by debris.

How easy are these filters to look after?
Neutralising filters rely on alkaline media reacting with the water to create a stable pH. The media is gradually used up in the process, and will eventually need replenishing. It is important that the amount of media in the filter is checked from time to time. This can be done by monitoring pH and watching for any staining of fittings and sanitary ware. If replenishment is necessary, ensure that the correct media is used to top the filter up. It is worth periodically cleaning out the filter vessel and completely changing the media.