

CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR



MarketingSciences
Unlimited...

Web Usability and Benchmarking Research 2015



Table of Contents

1.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1.1	Overarching aim of the project and methodology	4
1.2	Note on terminology	4
1.3	Overall summary of findings	4
1.4	Key findings: Engagement with water supply/provider	5
1.5	Key findings: The layout and feel of the website	5
1.6	Key findings: Navigation of the site	6
1.7	Key findings: Information on the CCWater site	6
1.8	Key findings: Competition in the water industry	7
1.9	Key recommendations: Conclusions and recommendations	7
2.	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY	8
2.1	Specific research objectives	8
2.2	Overview of the methodology	8
2.3	Sample overview	9
2.4	Details on the accompanied surfs: eye tracking and interpreting the images	11
2.5	The flow of the accompanied surf interviews	13
2.6	Details about the focus groups	13
2.7	The flow of the focus group discussion guide	14
2.8	Pilot outcome	14
2.9	Dates and locations of fieldwork	15
3.	ENGAGEMENT WITH WATER SUPPLY, WATER PROVIDERS AND INFORMATION ON WATER	16
3.1	Key findings	16
3.2	Experience of and relationship with water provider	16
3.3	Finding information and advice – household customers	17
3.4	Finding information – scenario 1	17
3.5	Finding information – scenario 2	18
3.6	Finding information – scenario 3	19
3.7	Business customers finding information on competition in the water industry	19
4.	REACTIONS TO CCWATER'S HOMEPAGE	21
4.1	Key findings	21
4.2	Layout of the homepage	21
4.3	Eye tracking results	21
4.4	What do business customers want to see	23
5.	THE 'ABOUT US' SECTION	25
5.1	Key findings	25
5.2	Information gaps in the 'About Us' section	25
6.	'SAVE WATER AND MONEY' SECTION	26
6.1	Key findings	26
6.2	Information in the 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' section	26
6.3	Information in the 'Water Saving Tips' section	28
6.4	The Water Meter Calculator	29
7.	THE 'ADVICE AND COMPLAINTS' SECTION	30
7.1	Key findings	30
7.2	Lack of clarity around title 'Advice and Complaints'	31
7.3	The 'How can I contact the CCWater office in My Area?' page	32
7.4	How to make a complaint	33
8.	THE 'WATER ISSUES' SECTION	34
8.1	Key findings	34
8.2	Water issues section	34
8.3	Current key water issues	35
8.4	'How is my company doing?'	36
9.	CONSUMER RESEARCH	39
9.1	Key findings	39
9.2	What will the information be?	39
9.3	Appeal of this information	39
10.	FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PAGES	41
10.1	Key findings	41
10.2	Look and feel of the FAQ pages	41
10.3	Navigating the FAQ pages	42
10.4	Presentation of information	44
11.	NON-HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS' VIEWS ON THE MARKET REFORM INFORMATION	46
11.1	Key findings	46
11.2	Awareness of market reform	46

11.3	Suitable providers of information on market reform	47
11.4	Navigation to the market reform page	47
11.5	Presentation of information on the market reform section	48
11.6	What business customers want to know	50
11.7	Out of date information	50
12.	FEEDBACK ON OTHER CONSUMER BODY WEBSITES	52
12.1	Overview of findings – household	52
12.2	Overview of findings – non-household	52
12.3	Household: The Legal Ombudsman	53
12.4	Household: Passenger Focus	53
12.5	Non-Household: British Chamber of Commerce	54
12.6	Non-Household: Federation of Small Business (FSB)	55
13.	CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	56
13.1	Conclusion	56
13.2	Recommendations to improve the layout, look and feel	56
13.3	Recommendations to improve navigation	57
13.4	Recommendations to improve information	57
13.5	Recommendations to improve information on competition in the water industry	58
14.	APPENDICES	59
14.1	Household accompanied surf recruitment questionnaire	59
14.2	Non-household accompanied surf recruitment questionnaire	63
14.3	Non-household focus group recruitment questionnaire	67
14.4	Household accompanied surf discussion guide	71
14.5	Non-household accompanied surf discussion guide	76
14.6	Non-household focus group discussion guide	82

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overarching aim of the project and methodology (full detail in sections 2 to 6):

The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) commissioned Marketing Sciences Unlimited to test customer perceptions of its website, looking at how useful and accessible it is currently, what areas can be improved and how it can continue to be relevant, particularly following market reform¹ which will create new information needs amongst non-household customers.

To address this, Marketing Sciences Unlimited conducted 30 qualitative accompanied surfs. There were 20, one-to-one, eye-tracked depth interviews lasting approximately one hour with household consumers and 10 with non-household customers. During the hour respondents were asked to review and feedback on the usability of CCWater's website and those of two other consumer body websites.

Two focus groups each lasting 90 minutes were conducted with non-household customers; one with SME business customers, the other with larger businesses. These groups explored how CCWater's website should develop to meet their anticipated information needs for the liberalisation of the water market.

1.2 Note on terminology

Throughout the report, participants from households are referred to as consumers rather than customers because the household sample was a mix of bill-payers (18) and non bill-payers (2). The non-household sample comprised bill-payers only, and so non-household respondents are referred to as customers. Where 'consumers' is used on its own in the report, this refers to both household and non-household participants.

Key findings from the research are as follows:

1.3 Overall summary of findings

The CCWater website is on the whole performing adequately given that it is generally not seen as the first avenue for information by consumers. However, there is more the site could do to explain its (and CCWater's) purpose, advertise to visitors what information is available, help them find the information that is relevant to them, and provide that information in language that they can understand and relate to.

Four key themes were identified in this research:

The first major theme to emerge from this research is the need for clear labelling, navigation and separation between the household and non-household sections of the website. This could be achieved by having two choices on entry to the site (household customer v business customer), or clear navigation buttons on the main

¹ From April 2017, customers at non-household premises in England can choose who provides their customer service, meter readings and bills; in Wales, non-household customers using more than 50,000m³ of water a year can do this, and this will continue after 2017.

menu at all times. This would immediately let both audiences know this site is for them and filter them through to information on the topics of most relevance.

The second major theme is the way information is provided. The general tone currently is one of **internal or governmental communications**, rather than something that is trying to speak to the general public. A relatively simple way for CCWater to communicate its messages to customers better would be to use **less text, broken up into sections, with clear headings matching the questions visitors are asking themselves, and in written plain English**. A further potential development would be to use video. The current expectation from websites is that key information is provided in short, succinct videos; potentially linked to a branded YouTube or Vivo channel.

The third main theme is around content. There is a need for a full content review of the site to ensure that everything is relevant, up to date and unique i.e. not needlessly duplicated or fragmented across different areas. There were instances of out-of-date and contradictory information and, although this may not have been discovered without the extensive probing of this research, this could still lead to visitors being misinformed.

The final theme is about consistency of design and the look of the website. The use of a bolt-on for the FAQs section is not necessarily a problem, but it has a different look and feel to the rest of the website which provides a disjointed experience for the consumer. The style used for the FAQs also makes it hard to digest the information.

1.4 Key findings: Engagement with water supply / provider (full detail in section 3):

- Consumers have low engagement when it comes to their water supply. For them it feels very low maintenance with little input needed from them to make it happen
- Few have ever experienced a problem with their supplier and most feel that, if there was a problem, they would be able to resolve it on their own with their provider
- Consumers have a lot of trust in their water provider and have often had a long relationship with them; this means their provider is the first place they tend to go for information
- **Awareness of CCWater is very low** with none of the participants being aware of it or having visited the site prior to the research
- Lack of awareness of the CCWater site can be a barrier to consumers using it as a source of information, particularly for **business customers** who are looking for a familiar or 'official' source such as a site **ending in gov.uk**.

1.5 Key findings: The layout look and feel of the website (full detail in sections 4 and 13.2):

- Consumers like the layout, look and feel of the main site; it has a clean and uncluttered feel due to the separation of information through the use of boxes, clear headings and large text
- Information pages are laid out well where clear headings and bullet points are used. However, some pages can feel too long, with too much detail which can make the information difficult to digest. This is particularly relevant for those with **accessibility issues who would like information to be communicated more visually or in a video**

- It is clear from their style that the FAQ pages are not part of the main site; while having this as a 'bolt on' is not a problem in itself, the style used here can make the information difficult to follow and understand. This is because:
 - The text is too small for some
 - The contrast between the black text on a white background is stark
 - The FAQs appear as long blocks of text which do not feel interesting or engaging to the reader
- The site works well on a mobile device and is optimised well

1.6 Key findings: Navigation of the site (full detail in sections 6.4, 7, 10.3, and 11.4):

- For business customers, finding information specific to them can be difficult and so is finding information on competition in the water industry; it feels quite buried in the site
- For household consumers, navigation is good when looking for the 'About Us' section, 'FAQs', the 'Water Meter Calculator,' and 'Complaints'; this is driven by the clear boxes and heading on the homepage
- However, navigating other areas on the site can be difficult with some of the headings on the main page not feeling logical to consumers, such as the 'Water Issues' section, and subheadings which contain very different information from what is expected
- While finding the 'Water Meter Calculator' is easy, the name can confuse consumers with some expecting this to estimate how much they *should* be paying rather than how much they *might* pay if they switched to a meter
- The 'Advice and Complaints' heading can also cause confusion with consumers expecting this section to have general advice rather than advice on the complaints process.
- It can also be difficult to find a telephone number for CCWater which for many is their preferred method of contact
- Navigational issues are also seen with the FAQ section. It is felt that there are too many answers leaving consumers overwhelmed and likely to leave the site

1.7 Key findings: Information on the CCWater site (full detail in sections 5 to 10)

- For consumers, the language used in much of the information feels too official or lacks relevance for them, with some of it being completely dismissed as 'not for me'. This is particularly true for 'Water Issues', 'Consumer Research', and 'How is my water company doing?' which appear to be aimed at people in the water industry
- Much of the information around 'Saving Water and Money' is useful. However, it can be difficult to absorb due to the length and amount of text. There is also some repetition of information in the different sub-sections and on the FAQs
- In terms of the FAQs, some information is useful but it can lack clear 'next steps'. Answers can often feel too long and repetitive with there being more than one relevant question / answer
- While the heading can cause confusion, the functionality of the 'Water Meter Calculator' is liked and works well; the fields for completion feel relevant and the result is clear

- There are some information gaps around who CCWater is; the 'About Us' section is not thought to adequately explain this and is thought to lack information about who runs CCWater, what its role is, and if it is an official body

1.8 Key findings: Competition in the water industry (full detail in section 11)

- Awareness amongst business customers of upcoming changes to the water industry in 2017 is low
- Information on these changes can also feel official and it is written very much from a policy perspective. Some of the information can also cause confusion or be out of date
- It is thought to lack details on what the changes mean in real terms for a business consumer, such as who they can switch to and when businesses need to do something
- There is also confusion about what a megalitre is in real terms, so that business customers can work out whether they might be eligible
- For businesses in Wales, whilst it is clear what the rules are for Wales in terms of competition, some can feel perplexed as to why the rules are different for Wales, and this can lead to a feeling of being discriminated against. The adding of an explanation as to why this is would help this.

1.9 Key recommendations: Conclusions and recommendations (full detail in section 13)

There are some clear easy wins that could be taken in the short term to improve the navigation, content and presentation of the site:

- Review the headings to better describe what each section covers
- Re-format key information pages to reduce block text, use more bullets, increase the size of charts
- Make it clearer and easier to contact CCWater directly from the site
- Remove any repetition and contradictory information
- Review the information on competition in the water industry to make it clear and up-to-date

However, there are some more substantial changes that CCWater could make in the longer term that would fundamentally improve the navigation, usability and accessibility of the site:

- Create two distinct household and business sections of the site
- Review the style and language used across the site to make it more succinct and consumer-focussed
- Change the style of the FAQ area so it is line with the much preferred style of the main site, or actually incorporate the bolt-on into the main site
- Improve the search function of the FAQ section
- Consider introducing videos to replace some large text sections (particularly for those with accessibility issues and English as a second language)

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

CCWater works to protect the interests of water consumers in England and Wales. As a voice for the consumer, CCWater needs to understand how it can best serve consumer needs through its website, looking at how useful and accessible it is currently, what areas can be improved and how it can continue to be relevant to consumers, particularly following market reform which will present new information needs amongst non-household customers. It also wishes to compare the website with other consumer body sites.

2.1 Specific research objectives

Understand

- Expectations of what should be on the site and what would be useful
- How CCWater's website compares against those of other consumer bodies

Evaluate

- Ease of navigation
- Usability
- Accessibility, particularly how it complies with legislation
- Current content
- Presentation

Identify

- Additional information and/or tools currently missing
- What comparative information about water companies consumers would like to see
- Anticipated changes to the site for business customers in the lead up to, and after market reform

2.2 Overview of the methodology

Marketing Sciences Unlimited conducted 30 face-to-face qualitative accompanied web surfs, which involved a one on one eye-tracked depth interview lasting approximately one hour looking at CCWater's website in a central location with an experienced qualitative moderator. Twenty interviews were conducted with household consumers and 10 among business customers.

Two focus groups were held with business customers, each lasting 1.5 hours. One group covered bill-payers/decision makers from Small to Medium Enterprises (7 respondents) and the other with large businesses (8 respondents). The sample is broken down on the next page.

2.3 Sample overview

Breakdown of the 20 household interviews:

Description	Number
Bill- Payer/Non	
Bill-Payer	18
Non-Bill-Payer	2
Metered/Not metered	
Metered	13
Unmetered	7
Gender	
Male	8
Female	12
Age	
18-24	1
25-39	5
40-54	9
55-74	4
75+	1
Frequency of Internet Usage	
Every day	15
Every other day	4
Several times a week	1
Accessibility	
Dyslexia	2
MS	1
Device Tested on	
PC	19
Tablet	1
1st Language	
English	18
Turkish	1
Russian	1
Social Grade	
ABC1	13
C2DE	7

Recruitment challenges:

- Two replacement household respondents had to be recruited to count against two lost due to CCWater's website going down one morning.
- Two people with accessibility issues that use software or hardware adaptations (both with dyslexia) took part, but neither reviewed CCWater's website whilst using their software. One person had Multiple Sclerosis and mobility issues but this did not impede their ability to access the internet.
- One person over 75 took part, instead of a minimum of two as per the recruitment target.

Breakdown of the 10 non-household interviews:

Description	Number
Company size	
Under 10 employees (2, 3, 7 & 9)	4
10-49 employees	5
50-250 employees	1
Metered/Not metered	
Metered	5
Unmetered	5
Gender	
Male	8
Female	2
Business sectors	
Taxi Firm	1
Insurance	1
Building/construction	1
Lettings	1
Retail	1
Print	1
Pet food and garden supplies	1
News agency	1
Estate Agency	1
Charity	1
No. of Sites	
One site	7
2 sites	1
3 sites	1
28 sites	1
Location of Sites	
Wales only	2
England & Wales	1
England	7
Agreement with statement: 'Company depends on water supply'	
Strongly agree	6
Agree	3
Neither agree nor disagree	1

- 10 Non-household customers overall
- All billed directly for their water
- All responsible for either paying or managing their company's water bill, or making decisions about who provides their company's utility services
- All companies have their own business premises
- All were able to speak on behalf of one or all of these sites

Recruitment challenges (company size):

The target was for a maximum of two small businesses (less than 10 employees) to be interviewed so as not to over represent them. However, larger businesses proved more difficult to find and due to timing constraints it was necessary to continue the interviews with more small businesses (four) than planned.

The two non-household focus groups comprised:

Group 1: 7 respondents from SME businesses (one cancelled shortly before the group)

Group 2: 8 respondents from larger businesses

	Group 1 SME Businesses	Group 2 Larger Businesses
Description	Number	Number
Company size by number of employees		
<10 employees	2	
10-49 employees	4	
50-250 employees	1	
270-350 employees		3
500-750 employees		4
5k + employees		1
Metered/not metered		
Metered	3	3
Unmetered	4	5
Gender		
Male	4	6
Female	3	2
Business Sectors		
Financial services	1	
Hotel	1	1
Restaurant	1	
Music and entertainment	1	
Retail eye-ware company	1	
Driving school	1	
Shipping company	1	
Horticulture and visitor attraction		1
Communications		1
Auction house		1
Travel agency		1
Building property logistics		1
Recruitment		1
Education		1
Number of sites		
1 Site	5	3
2 Sites	2	2
4 Sites		2
20 Sites		1
Sites in Wales		
None	7	8
Agreement that company depends on water supply		
Strongly agreed	4	4
Agreed	2	4
Neither agreed nor disagreed	1	

2.4 Details on the accompanied surfs: eye tracking and interpreting the images

Eye-tracking technology through software called Tobii was used. This captures where respondents look as well as how they navigate around the screen. Image-capture software recorded both the screen session as well as the respondents' image via web-cam to create picture-in-picture video.



Tracking participant eye movement in addition to traditional qualitative discussion enables researchers to listen to consumer feedback whilst observing their actual behaviour as they navigate around the site and performed tasks. This gives good insight into how consumers actually use the site and where their eyes are drawn to.

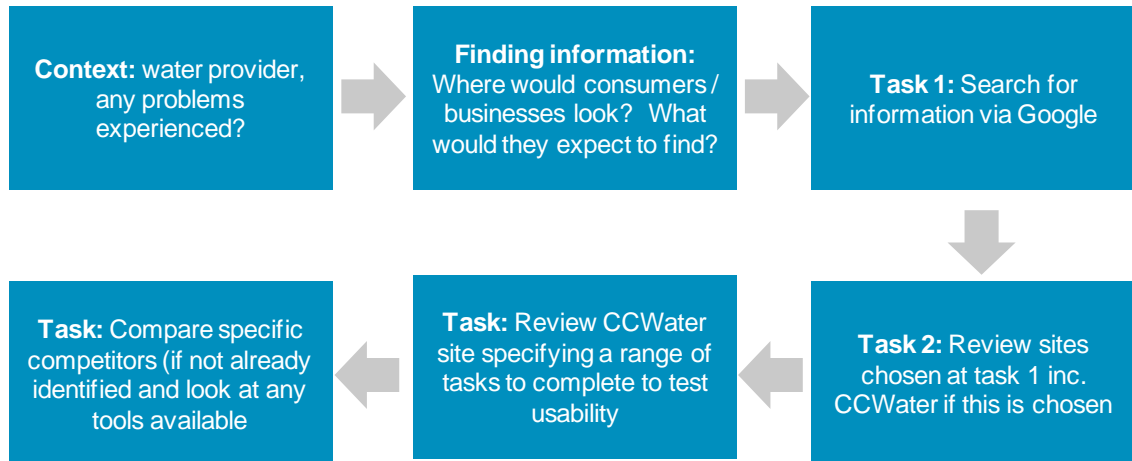
Eye tracking also enables two additional levels of output to be created - heat maps and gaze plots.

Heat maps of the web page have been used to combine data from multiple respondents to show key areas of attention, as well as those blind spots where things are being missed. Areas of a heat map that are red show where on the page consumers are most drawn to and spend most time looking at. Where the colour fades from red, through to orange and then green it indicates that consumers are paying less attention for one reason or another.

Gaze plots look at the data from each individual interview and map the fixations (moments the eye focuses on something on screen) and the saccades (the jumps from one focal point to another). This shows the order in which an individual takes in and absorbs the information on screen, how quickly they find what they are looking for, and how long they look at each spot.

2.5 The flow of the accompanied surf interviews

The flow of the discussion during these sessions was as follows (see appendix 14.4 and appendix 14.5 for full copies of the household and business discussion guides):



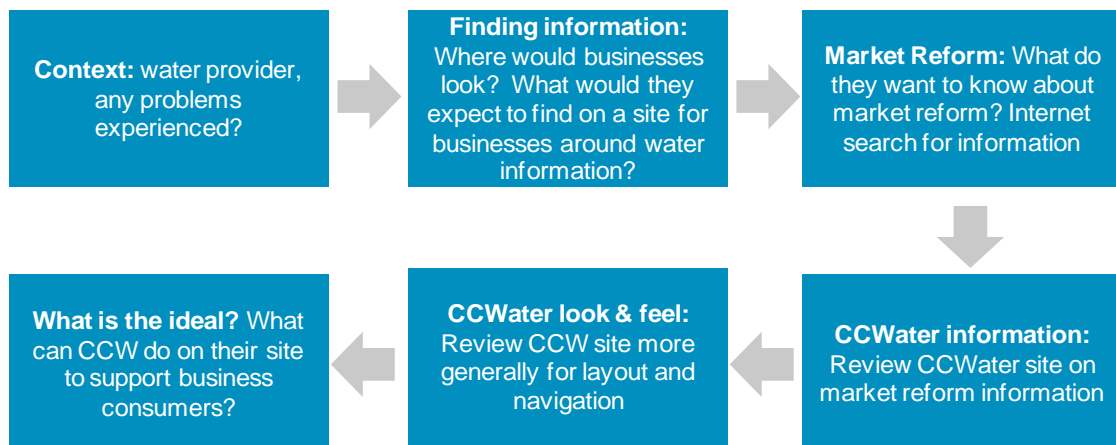
It should be noted here that where respondents had an issue in mind or something they would like to know about their water supply / provider they were asked to try and find an answer to this rather than a preselected scenario (task 1), to try and make the search as relevant and organic as possible. This mainly occurred amongst those who were unmetered and curious about whether they would be better off with a meter. However, in these cases the moderator still ensured that the FAQ pages outlined via the scenarios in the discussion guide were reviewed; for example for scenario 1 (for metered customers) the 'My measured bill is high' FAQ page.

2.6 Details about the focus groups

The two focus groups held with business customers each lasted 1.5 hours and were moderated by an experienced qualitative researcher. Focus groups were used to allow for creative discussion between business customers. The aim was for them to identify what they would ideally want to be able to find out from CCWater's website and what it would look like, now, and in the context of market reform. Both groups were video-recorded.

2.7 The flow of the focus group discussion guide

The flow of the discussion during these groups was as follows. See appendix 14.6 for a full copy of the guide:



2.8 Pilot outcome

Three pilot accompanied web surfs were conducted, and these all went well. However, changes were made to the guide as the interviews were running over by around 15-20 minutes.

In order to reduce the length the:

- Number of FAQ pages each respondent reviewed was reduced. During the pilot, respondents were asked to review four FAQ pages and, if unmetered, test the water meter tool
- Following the pilot, respondents were asked to review just two FAQ pages. The four FAQ pages identified in the original guide were reviewed by splitting these pages evenly over the sample

2.9 Dates And locations of fieldwork

Location	Fieldwork dates	Type of research	No. Household consumers	No. Business customers
Winchester	19 th (pilot day) 20 th , 26 th & 28 th Jan	Accompanied web surfs	9	0
Sutton Coldfield	21 st Jan	Accompanied web surfs	4	3
Leeds	22 nd Jan	Accompanied web surfs	2	3
Cardiff	23 rd Jan	Accompanied web surfs	4	2
Richmond	4 th February	Accompanied web surfs	1	2
Kingston upon Thames	22 nd Jan	Focus groups	0	15 (1 group of 7, one of 8)

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH WATER SUPPLY, WATER PROVIDERS AND INFORMATION ON WATER

This section outlines the engagement of consumers with their water supply and provider, and details how they go about finding information on a problem specified from the discussion guide or an issue they might currently be experiencing.

3.1 Key findings

- Consumers have low engagement when it comes to their water supply. For them it feels very low maintenance with little input needed from them to make it happen
- Few have ever experienced a problem with their supplier and most feel that, if there was a problem, they would be able to resolve it on their own with their provider
- Consumers have a lot of trust in their own water provider as they have often had a long relationship with them, this means their provider is the first place consumers go for information
- Awareness of CCWater is very low; none of the household or business customers had heard of CCWater or visited CCWater's website prior to the research
- Lack of awareness of CCWater's website can be a barrier to use as a source of information, particularly amongst business customers who are looking for a familiar or official source

3.2 Experience of, and relationship with water provider

Household and non-household consumers have low engagement with their water provider; this is because:

- The vast majority of consumers are not able to choose their own water provider
- Consumers rarely experience a problem with their water and sewerage services

Few say they have questions about their water supply or need information. However, some unmetered household consumers are curious about what they would pay if they had a water meter - although none had ever tried to find an answer to this question.

While engagement is low, water consumers do have a lot of trust in their water provider meaning that they are often the first point of contact if consumers have a problem or want information or advice.

Given the low engagement and lack of issues experienced with water services and the service provider, none of the respondents are aware of CCWater as an organisation which might help them in some way, or, of CCWater's website. The impact of this is that few would ever choose CCWater's website if it came up as an option from a search engine when searching the internet for information or advice.

3.3 Finding information and advice – household consumers

When asked to find information and advice on different scenarios, household consumers often go straight to their own provider via google or type a question and look for a trusted site. Below is a summary of the scenarios used:

	Scenario	No. respondents:
1	My metered bill is considerably higher than the last bill I received. I don't think I've used any more water than normal so what could have caused it	10
2	Would I be better off with a meter? <i>(selected due to pre-existing interest in the information)</i>	6
3	How to save water in my home?	4

3.4 Finding information – scenario 1

My metered bill is considerably higher than the last bill I received. I don't think I've used any more water than normal so what could have caused it

For questions around billing or water usage consumers tend to go straight to their water provider with a preference for calling rather than looking online. When asked to look online consumers search for:



Consumers who search for their water provider go straight to their to try and find an answer to their question. However, many stated they would prefer to call to talk through the bill and what might have changed.

Those who typed in a question chose Money Saving Expert as:

- It is a trusted site – Martin Lewis is seen giving information and tips on television and is a trusted source of information
- It is familiar to household consumers who use this site for help and advice on other financial matters

None actively searched for a governmental source of information about this.

3.5 Finding information – scenario 2

Would I be better off with a meter?

When looking for information about a water meter, household consumers are much more likely to search on the question rather than their own water provider. Examples can be seen below:



Two key sites emerge from the searches, Money Saving Expert and Which? Again these sites are well know and trusted websites that consumers use for guidance and advice on other financial matters.

Those choosing Which? are the only consumers to land on CCWater's website spontaneously during the free search. They do this via a link to CCWater's Water Meter Calculator in an article on Which?'s site:

The screenshot shows a webpage article with the following content:

- Switching to a water meter 'saves £100 a year'**
- Water meter calculator reveals how much you can save**
- 27 April 2012
- The average household would save £100 a year if it switched to a water meter, the Consumer Council for Water claims.**
- Its online water meter calculator - a tool designed to help people work out whether they'd save cash by having a meter installed - has identified around £250,000 in savings for 2,500 consumers in England and Wales since the start of April.
- With most households still paying a fixed charge for water and sewerage, that's an average of £100 saving per home, while people living alone could save even more if they chose to switch to a meter.
- Water meter benefits**
- Water meters are free for most people in England and Wales, meaning any savings made go straight into the pockets of consumers.
- Consumer Council for Water chair Dame Yve Buckland says: 'People can ask their water company for a water meter to be fitted free of charge.
- 'They can switch back within a year if they change their mind, or don't make the savings they were expecting. If the water company finds a meter can't be fitted at the property, it must offer an average charge which may also save customers money.'
- Water meter calculator**
- The [water usage calculator](#) is available at the Consumer Council for Water's website and works on most computers, tablets and mobile phones, or consumers can call 08457 023 953 for advice.
- Some water companies such as Thames Water are trialling smart water meters to make water use even simpler to monitor, so it's likely that more consumers in the future will switch, particularly if they can see that they will save money.

Fig. 1 Screenshot of Which? Website with link to Water Meter Calculator

Three consumers found the Water Meter Calculator following this link and completed the calculator without prompting. The link from Which? website reassures them that the website and calculator they have been sent to is reliable and can be trusted.

3.6 Finding information – scenario 3

How to save water in my home?

When looking for information on saving water, household consumers type questions into google to find the answer:



Money Saving Expert is prominent again here with all those searching for tips on saving water going to this page to review the content.

3.7 Business customers and information on market reform of the water industry

When business customers were made aware of the liberalisation of the water market from 2017², many started to think about how to switch and who they can switch to, and this influences how they search for information, as shown below. Business customers are not looking for information on the background or the policy, but rather what it means for them in very practical terms:



The language used by business customers when trying to find information on competition is centred around who and what the options are, specifically which water suppliers are potential providers. However, the results returned by these searches

² Customers in non-household premises in England will be able they will be able to choose who reads their water meter, sends their bills and provides their customer service; non-household customers in Wales will continue to need to use more that 50,000m³ of water a year to have this choice.

was rarely relevant, often providing links to sites in Scotland where business customers already have this choice, or to businesses providing water coolers etc.

Those who include '2017' in their search are able to find some relevant information via Ofwat or a government website ending gov.uk, although neither website provides the information that business customers seek on what the changes mean for them in practical terms. In addition, business customers say there is a lot of information on the subject, particularly gov.uk which provides the whole policy. While lots of information can be good this needs to be relevant to business customers otherwise it can just be overwhelming.

5. REACTIONS TO CCWATER'S HOMEPAGE

This chapter discusses consumers' immediate reactions to CCWater's website and their feedback on the homepage in terms of the layout and the look and feel of the site.

4.1 Key findings

- Consumers like the layout, look and feel of the homepage which is thought to be clean and uncluttered due to the separation of information through the use of boxes, clear headings and large text
- However, the page is too long with nothing to indicate that the consumer should keep scrolling
- Most stop scrolling once they see the 'Latest news' heading thereby missing anything included below this point
- Navigationally, this is problematic for business customers due to the link to the Business Consumer Support section located at the bottom right of the homepage

4.2 Layout of the homepage

Consumers like the way in which information is presented on the homepage with some aspects working particularly well:

- ✓ The style of the page is looks modern and professional
- ✓ The boxes on the main page are clear and create a clean and uncluttered feel
- ✓ The grey background colour and pattern help the boxes stand out and make the page less severe
- ✓ The lower menu stands out well
- ✓ The colours, style and size of font are liked and make the text easy to read

Some aspects of the page could be further optimised, specifically:

- ✗ The top menu on the site can be missed
- ✗ Some question why there are two menus on the homepage and why these can't be combined into one main menu on the site
- ✗ There is nothing to indicate that consumers should keep scrolling past the 'Latest news' heading meaning everything from this point can be missed, particularly for business customers who expect to see a menu option at the top of the page
- ✗ Lack of scrolling is especially problematic for business customers due to links to the Business Consumer Support section being located at the bottom right of the page

4.3 Eye tracking results

Heat maps* from the eye tracking footage show how the attention of consumers trails off as they reach the latest news section. There is more engagement of household consumers compared to business customers with this information although it is still limited.

** See section 2.4 for detailed explanation of eye tracking methodology and on how to interpret heat maps*

Business customers are likely less engaged than household consumers as:

- They are much more time poor than household consumers who are more likely to browse
- Business customers are used to finding links to information at the top of website pages



For business customers, not realising that they are expected to scroll to the bottom of the page can make navigation difficult as this is where the main link for them can be found.

As shown on the left, there is good interaction with the menu at the top indicating a link for business customers in this area would be noticed.

A separate section accessed at the top of the homepage would improve navigation for business customers and prevent confusion over who the information is applicable to.

"The only place I see something specific to business is in the bottom right hand corner." (Non-Household)

"I think there should be a separate section or login. Very much like a bank has a business section and a personal section." (Non-Household)

"What I'd like to see is you've got these boxes here - what about a box that says 'are you a business user?'" (Non-Household)

Fig. 2 Screenshot of CCWater website homepage

4.4 What do business customers want to see

During the focus groups, business customers said that they wanted their own section of the website; this is what they wanted it to look like:

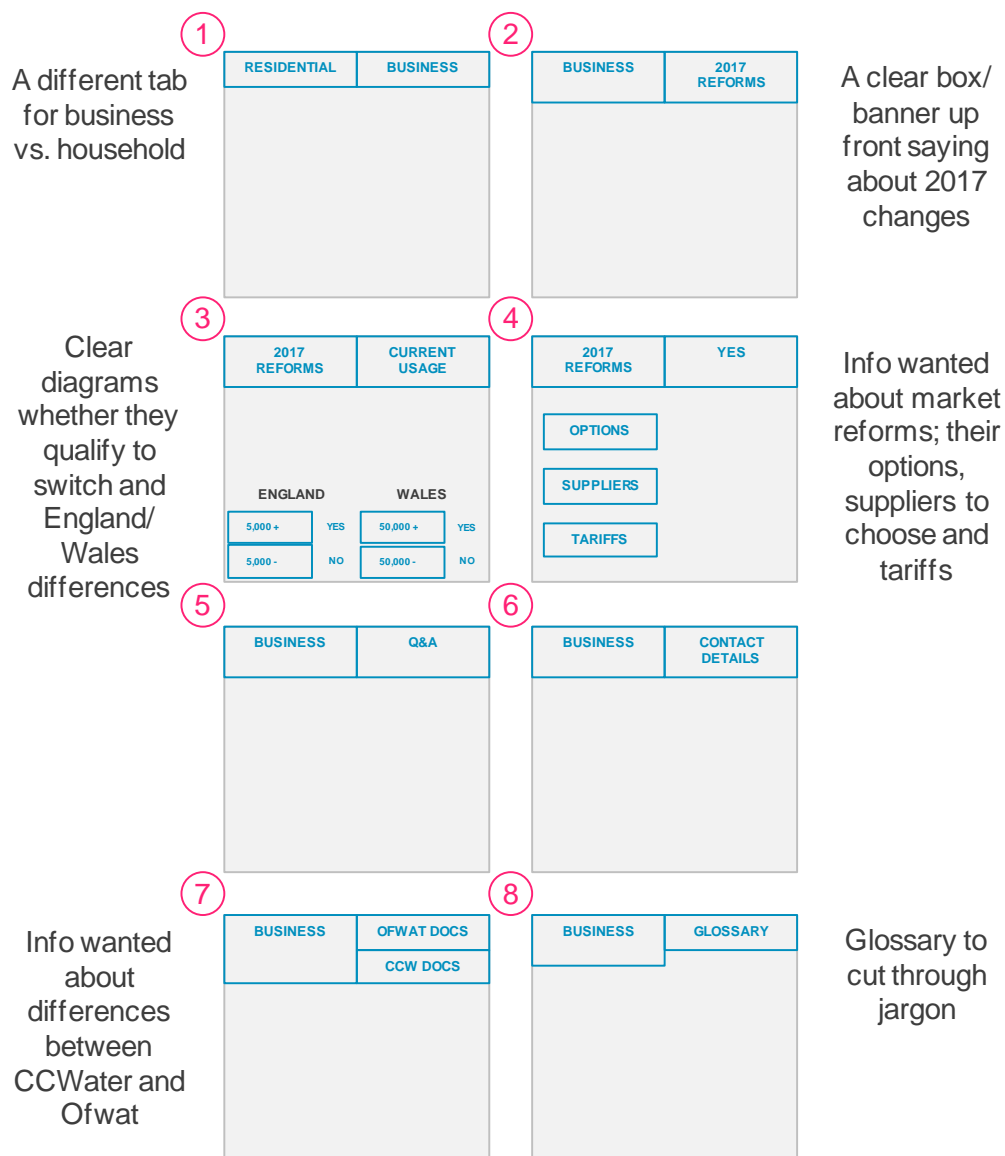


Fig. 3 Representation of flip-chart generated by respondents in the focus groups



Eye tracking indicates that household consumers spend more time browsing on the homepage than business customers.

This means that household consumers are more likely to scroll to the bottom half of the page than business customers.

Fig. 4 Heat map of the homepage showing 17 household consumers, 15 seconds in

6. THE 'ABOUT US' SECTION

This chapter discusses the response to the 'About Us' page of the site, particularly views on the content and the success of explaining who CCWater is.

5.1 Key findings

- There is a lack of awareness of CCWater's site amongst both household and business customers which can be a barrier to use as a source of information, particularly amongst business customers who are looking for a familiar or official source that they feel they can trust
- This means that the 'About Us' section is an important area for consumers who are new to the site
- Consumers tell us that for a site like this it is important that it explicitly outlines who the organisation is and whether it is an official / governmental organisation. The 'About Us' section is not thought to do this adequately

5.2 Information gaps in the 'About Us' section

The 'About Us' section is easy to find for consumers and is thought to have a logical position on the site. However, there is a lack of clarity around who CCWater is.

Consumers are particularly concerned with who the council is funded by, what the role of the council is, and whether or not it is an official body i.e. governmental. After reading the 'About Us' section, many say that they are still unsure who they are.

"I'm still not sure who they are." (Household).

"Are they privately funded, publically funded? It's not clear." (Household)

Consumers, particularly business customers, are interested to know who the organisation is run by in order to establish the reliability of the site.

Specifically, consumers want to explicitly be told in this area:

- Who it is funded by / who runs it
- What the exact role of the Consumer Council for Water is
- Who they report to
- If they have links to Ofwat or not

6. 'SAVE WATER AND MONEY' SECTION



Fig. 5 Screen shot of homepage showing location of Save Water and Money tab

This chapter reviews the information and layout of the 'Save Water and Money' section, found on the first tab of the lower menu bar on the homepage. The main focus here is the layout, look and feel, ease of navigation and overall usability of the pages included in this section.

6.1 Key findings on this chapter are detailed below:

- Whilst much of the information around 'Saving Water and Money' is useful, it can be difficult to absorb due to the length and amount of text.
- There is also some repetition of information in the different sub-sections and in the FAQs.
- Combining the information in 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' and 'Water Saving Tips' into one overarching category on 'Saving water and energy' could reduce repetition, aid clarity and encourage consumers to read on.

6.2 Information in the 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' section

While some of the information here is useful, consumers do not always read on because the large blocks of text appear time consuming. The heat map below shows how consumers tend to stop reading after the first paragraph (see fig. 6 below)

See section 2.4 for detailed explanation of eye tracking methodology and explanation on how to interpret heat maps



- The heat map here shows that consumers tend to read the heading and the first paragraph but trail off as they get further down the page
- Consumers say that this is due to the amount of text on the page – there is too much

Fig. 6 Heat map of 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' page showing 17 consumers, 30 seconds

6.2.1 Information that could be condensed in the 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' section.

There text under each heading could be condensed to aid clarity. Examples where this is most apparent are below:

- The text under 'Consider switching to a water meter' does not add a lot more information and could be replaced by one bullet saying: 'Consider switching to a water meter, try our Water Meter Calculator to see if you would be better off'.
- The 'Save water and save money' paragraph has information which is also detailed in the 'Water saving tips' page, so one could be removed.
- The 'Are you paying for a service you don't receive?' paragraph's two main points are: 'If you have a septic tank check you are not paying for sewerage services' and 'If you have a soak away check you are not paying to have surface water removed'. The rest could be removed to make it more easily readable.
- The 'Help for those struggling to pay' could be reduced to say "if you are struggling to pay your water provider may have a scheme to help you. Contact

your water company to see what is available. Click here to find their contact details'

6.3 Information in the 'Water Saving Tips' section

Like the 'Top tips to cut your water bill' section the information here is longer than necessary and discourages further reading.

Information that could be condensed in the 'Water Saving Tips' section:

- Some of the water saving tips appearing on this page are also briefly outlined in the 'Top tips to cut your water bill'; moving this information into that page will help reduce repetition.
- Long paragraphs could be reduced to the first line of information, which would still get the point across but make it easier for the consumers to digest, for example bullet points 1 and 3 highlighted in figure 7 below, around replacing worn washers on leaky taps and running the dishwasher.
- Some consumers talked about introducing information boxes, this could aid clarity by having shorter statements, but then being able to click to read more if they are interested.

"They should keep the first line and put the rest in an information bubble or something." (Household).

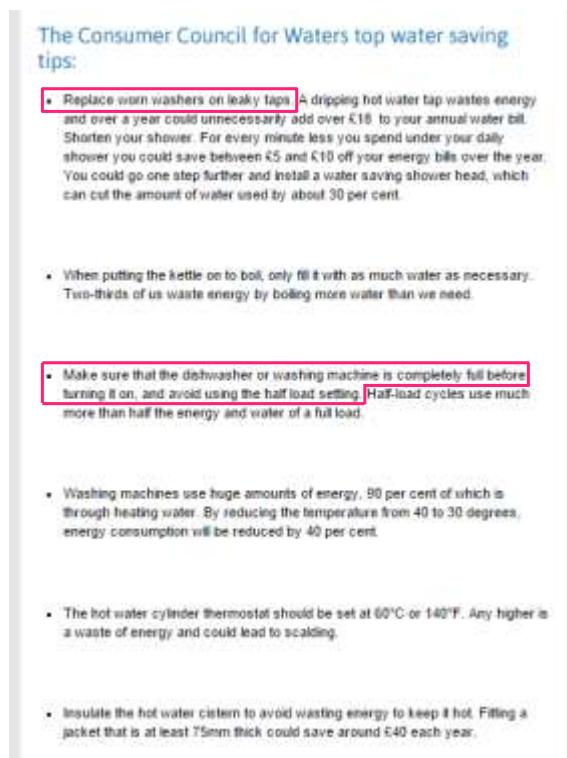


Fig. 7 Screen shot of homepage showing Water Saving Tips page.

6.4 The Water Meter Calculator

Household consumers love the 'Water Meter Calculator' and say this is a great tool for establishing whether you would be better off with a water meter. However, there is some confusion around the purpose of the calculator, with some thinking it will tell you how much you *should* be paying instead of what you *would* pay if you switched to a meter.

The usability of the calculator is good in that:

- ✓ The fields consumers are asked to complete feel relevant and make sense
- ✓ The text is large enough and well spaced out
- ✓ The auto fill of the sewerage company is liked as many are unsure who this would be
- ✓ The result at the end is really clear
- ✓ The ability to recalculate is liked as consumers do not need to re-enter all of the information

Some improvements could be made however:

- Some are unsure how many times they flush the toilet in a day and expect the information bubble to provide an average
- While the result at the end is clear, showing a monthly charge as well would further optimise things since consumers often pay monthly and can be more familiar with this charge

Fig. 8 Screenshot of Water Meter Calculator from CCWater website

7. THE 'ADVICE AND COMPLAINTS' SECTION

This chapter discusses consumer responses to the 'Advice and Complaints' page of the site and particularly views on its content.

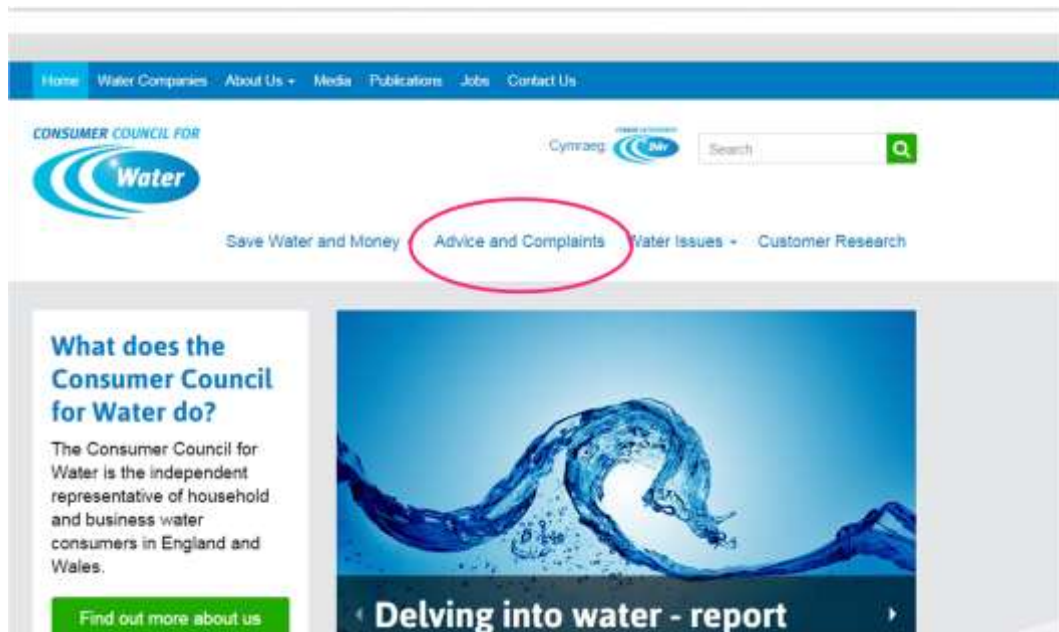


Fig 9 Screen shot of the CCWater homepage showing the location of the 'Advice and Complaints' tab.

7.1 Key findings

- The title of 'Advice and Complaints' is not clear. To consumers, it implies that this section will have general information and advice rather than specific advice on making a complaint
- The 'How can I contact the CCWater office in My Area?' screen is confusing respondents by the large number of links to contacts for different areas
- Finding out how to make a complaint could be clearer; the area which consumers click on to contact CCWater is not being looked at

7.2 Lack of clarity around title 'Advice and Complaints'

When asked to find information to help with one of the scenarios³ many spontaneously click the 'Advice and Complaints' tab as the perception is that this will have information and advice in general rather than advice on a complaint. Changing the title to 'Making a complaint' would make it clearer that this page is for those who are thinking about a complaint and want to know how to do it.

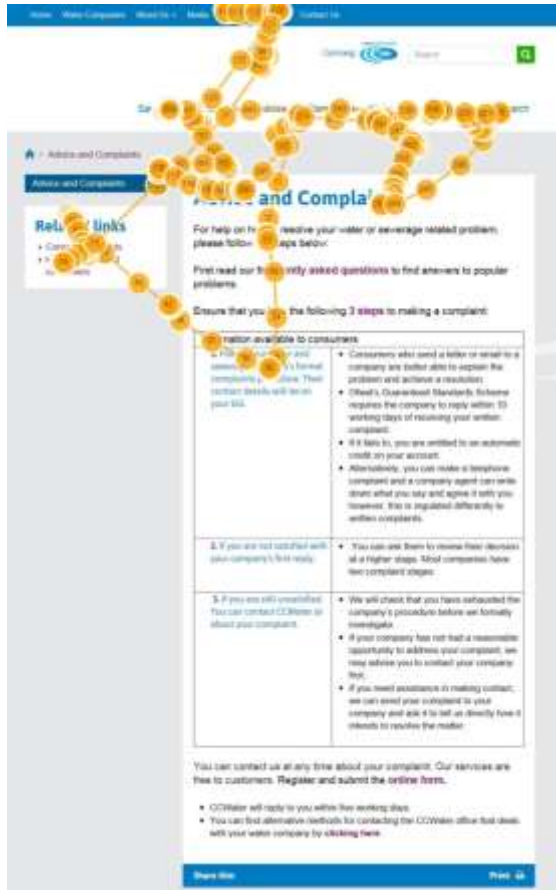


Fig. 10 Gaze plot showing where one respondent looks in the first 10 seconds of seeing the 'Advice and Complaints' page.

The gaze plot in fig 10 indicates the number of fixations on this page within the first 10 seconds of viewing this page. There are 359 fixations in this time; this is a high number for this period, explained by the respondent telling us that he is looking for an 'Advice' section here.

³ Respondents were given 1 of the below scenarios and allowed to access Google. They had 5-10 minutes to find and read the information to answer their problem.

Scenario for metered consumers - my metered bill is considerably higher than the last bill I received. I don't think I've used any more water than normal so what could have caused it?
Navigate to 'my measured bill is high' FAQ if not found spontaneously

Scenario for non metered consumers – my metered water bill is expensive but I already am as frugal as I think I can be. Is there anything else I can do?

Navigate to 'How can I save water in my home?' FAQ if not found spontaneously

7.3 The ‘How can I contact the CCWater office in My Area?’ page

How can I contact the Consumer Council for Water office in my area?
Published 21/08/2009 08:59 PM | Updated 17/11/2014 01:55 PM

How can I contact the Consumer Council for Water office in my area?

We recommend you click the ["Find Answers"](#) tab above to search easily for answers to your questions.

Or use the ["Contact Us About a Complaint or Enquiry"](#) tab to register a query directly onto our system which allows us to address it by reply e-mail within five working days (usually much sooner). If you provide us your phone number we can call you if you prefer.

If you prefer to contact us via alternative means, please click the "Contact Details" link for the CCWater office nearest you:

Area in England or Wales	CCWater Office	Representing consumers of
Central & Eastern	Central Contact Details	Severn Trent South Staffs Independent Water Networks Veolia Water Projects (Tidworth) Albion Water SSE Water Ltd Peel Water Networks Ltd
	Eastern Contact Details	Anglian Cambridge Essex & Suffolk Affinity Water East
London & South East	London & South East Contact Details	Portsmouth Southern South East Sutton & East Surrey Thames Affinity Water Central Affinity Water Southeast
Northern	North West Contact Details	United Utilities
	Northumbria & Yorkshire Contact Details	Hartlepool Northumbrian Yorkshire

Fig. 11 Screen shot of ‘How can I contact the Consumer Council for Water Office in my area?’

The current page with CCWater contact numbers (see fig. 11 above) can confuse; the table is not immediately clear for consumers who see lots of links and are unsure where to click.

“It’s takes a while to understand what it’s trying to tell you.”(Non-Household)

Attention can be drawn to the water company links with consumers clicking this by mistake. Using a clear drop down menu which allows consumers to select their water company would be easier, and it could then link to the correct CCWater information. Tips could be taken from the Chamber of Commerce site here; see fig. 12 which shows a drop down for different area contacts.

The screenshot shows a website header with the text "Become a member. Find your local chamber". Below this is a search bar containing "Chambers of Commerce" with a dropdown arrow. The dropdown menu is open, listing various regions: Aberdeen & Grampian, Ayrshire, Barnsley & Rotherham, Bedfordshire & Luton, Black Country, Bradford, Business West, and Cambridgeshire. The background of the page features a stylized map of the United Kingdom.

Fig. 12 Screen shot of Chamber of Commerce contact page

7.4 How to make a complaint

Finding out how to make a complaint could be clearer. The text at the bottom of the 'Advice and Complaints' page which includes links on how to contact CCWater is being missed as shown in fig. 13 (highlighted by the pink box) where the heat map shows very little coverage (no red and very little green) in this area, indicating it is not being looked at.

Consumers, particularly those with accessibility issues, tell us they would like to be able to call CCWater and so it should also state here that consumers can call if they wish, and provide a link to find the number.

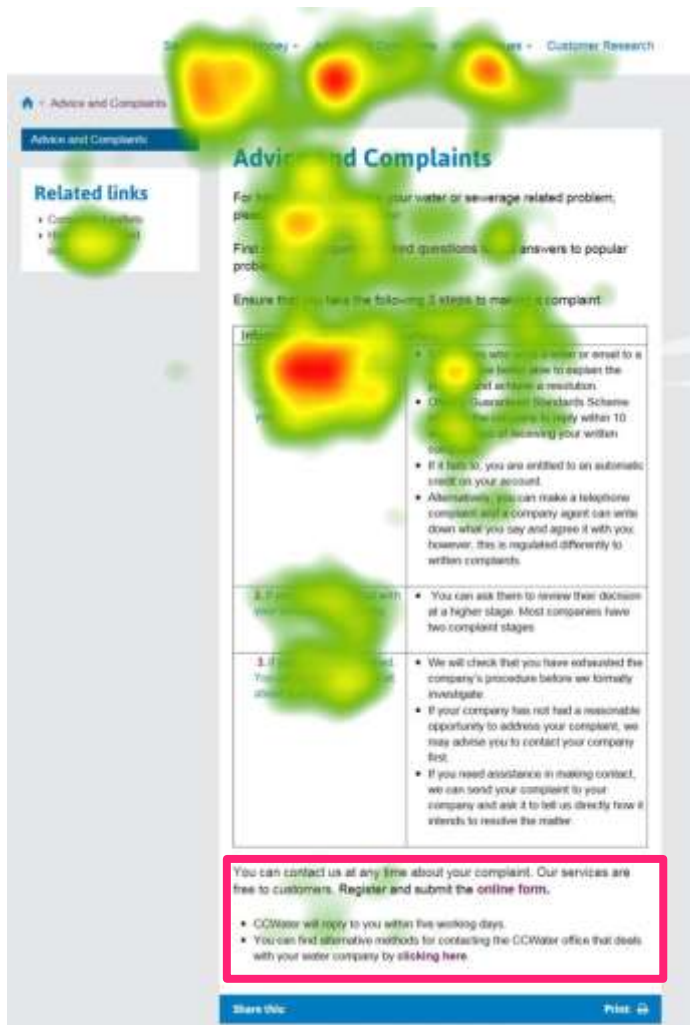


Fig. 13 Heat map of 'Advice and Complaints'

Lack of clarity around the purpose of the 'Online form'

There was some confusion over the purpose of the 'online form', which is used by consumers to register before they can make a complaint. Some text explaining this or changing the link title to 'registration form to make a complaint' may help make its purpose more explicit.

8. THE WATER ISSUES SECTION

This chapter outlines feedback on the Water Issues section of the webpage in terms of the layout, look and feel, ease of navigation and overall usability of the pages.

8.1 Key findings

- Consumers are unsure who this information is for, with most assuming it is not meant for them as general consumers
- The headings and language drive this perception with consumers saying it feels too official or lacks relevance for the end consumer
- In addition, some of the headings do not feel logical with consumers expecting 'Water Issues' and 'Current key water issues' to detail operational work happening across the UK
- The information can be difficult to absorb due to the lengthy amount of text on each topic

8.2 Water issues section

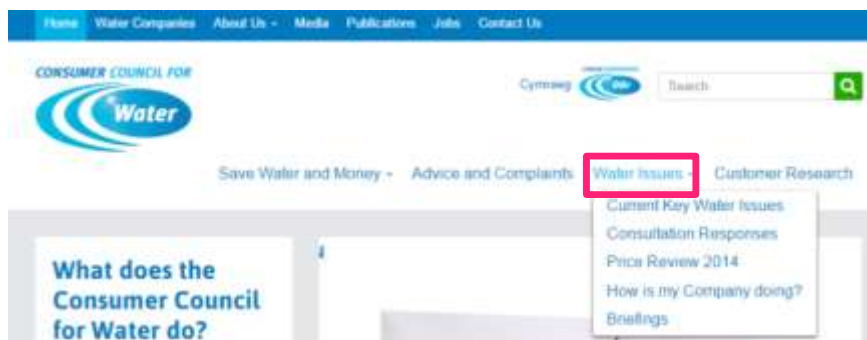


Fig. 14 Screenshot of CCWater homepage banner with Water Issues drop-down menu

The 'Water Issues' section causes some confusion amongst consumers. Most expect it to show any works being done, or problems with the water supply around England and Wales. Once reviewed it is clear that this is not the case, with some interpreting the information as what is happening in the water industry but in the background, and therefore not things that directly impact the consumer.

While there is an expectation that this section will detail information on works and problems, most say they would get in touch with their own water provider to find this information rather than look on CCWater's website. This means it is not necessary for CCWater to start providing this information, but rather the title of this section needs to better represent what it is about.

After reviewing what is included here, consumers say that they would not look at this information as it does not feel relevant to them. This is especially true for 'Consultation Responses' and 'Briefing' which are thought to be internal documents available on the site for transparency. The interpretation of this is only a problem if its inclusion is for something other than transparency and it is intended for the

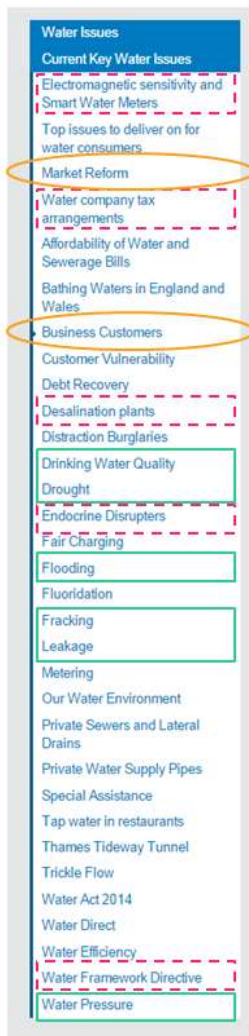
general consumer. If that is the case the headings and language would need to be reviewed to make it more consumer friendly.

8.3 Current key water issues

What do consumers expect?

Like the 'Water Issues' heading, consumers expect this subsection to detail works being done or problems with the water supply in the UK. When reviewed, the content does not meet this expectation, and it seems to contain information not relevant to the consumer.

Relevance to the consumer



After reviewing this information and the menu of topics, consumers do not think that this section is for them. Some of the topics feel completely alien to consumers (those outlined in pink/dashed boxes to the left) which imply this section is for those in the water industry who understand the technical language used.

Some topics feel more familiar (those outlined in green/solid boxes to the left) however, few know what to do with the information or when they would ever need it.

It is necessary to explain to the consumer what this information is for and what its use to the consumer is. Without this, it might be dismissed. If the information is relevant to the consumer, then using less technical language in the headings will better communicate what the information is about i.e. 'Desalination plants' could be changed to 'Water treatment: removing salt from drinking water'.

Now I would have thought that would come up saying issues that were problematic at the moment - e.g. water down in this area, we have people out trying to fix it - just like the highways agency. This is like policy on water issues; this is like reports and what the council are doing to stop flooding. But it doesn't really involve me. Household consumer

Fig. 15 Screenshot of options menu on the Water Issues page

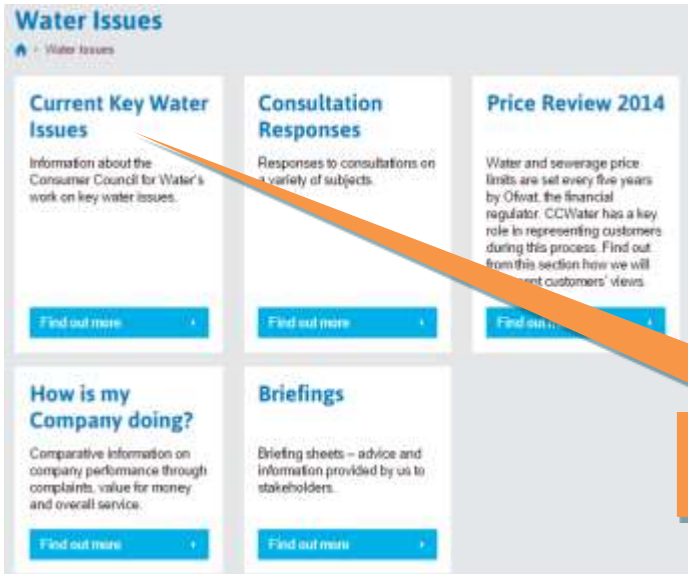
Positioning of information

It is not clear to business customers why 'Business customers' and 'Market Reform' are located in this area (highlighted in orange/ellipses above). Most suggest moving these topics to a section dedicated to providing information for business customers to make it easier to find and more logical.

8.4 'How is my company doing?'

Finding this information

When asked to find this information consumers can have difficulty as links to it do not feel logically placed, specifically:



- Consumers do not expect it to be located under 'Water Issues' as it is not thought to be a problem with the water supply
- Locating the information here is then illogical for consumers

*"The word 'issue' means problem to me, that isn't a problem."
(Non-Household)*

Fig. 16 Screenshot of Water Issues page on the CCWater website



- As previously highlighted, consumers are often not scrolling all the way to the bottom of the page, or if they do it is very brief.
- The link at the bottom left of the page can then be missed

Fig. 17 Heat map of participants finding information

Relevance of this information

When asked to review the information, household consumers say that some of it is interesting, especially the number of complaints. However, in reality, they have little use for it since they are unable to switch provider.

For business customers however, given the upcoming changes in 2017, many do say that this information will have a lot of relevance. It is important to them that this information is easily accessible in a Business Consumer section. It is also essential that there is a clear differentiation between household and non-household information.

Presentation of the information

While this information does not feel relevant to household consumers, it will be very relevant for businesses post-2017. This means it is important that the information is presented clearly and is easy to understand going forward.

Currently consumers are able to easily interpret the data in the charts, but it needs context to be clearer, become more meaningful and more trusted. Specifically:

- It is not clear in the summary who the research was with (business or household, complainant or a sample of general consumers)
- It doesn't say next to the graphs or in the summary what the sample size was
- It is difficult to see what the different columns of the graphs are referring to due to the size of the graphs
- Graphs are clickable but do not lead anywhere

Addressing these points will help better communicate the performance of the different water companies.

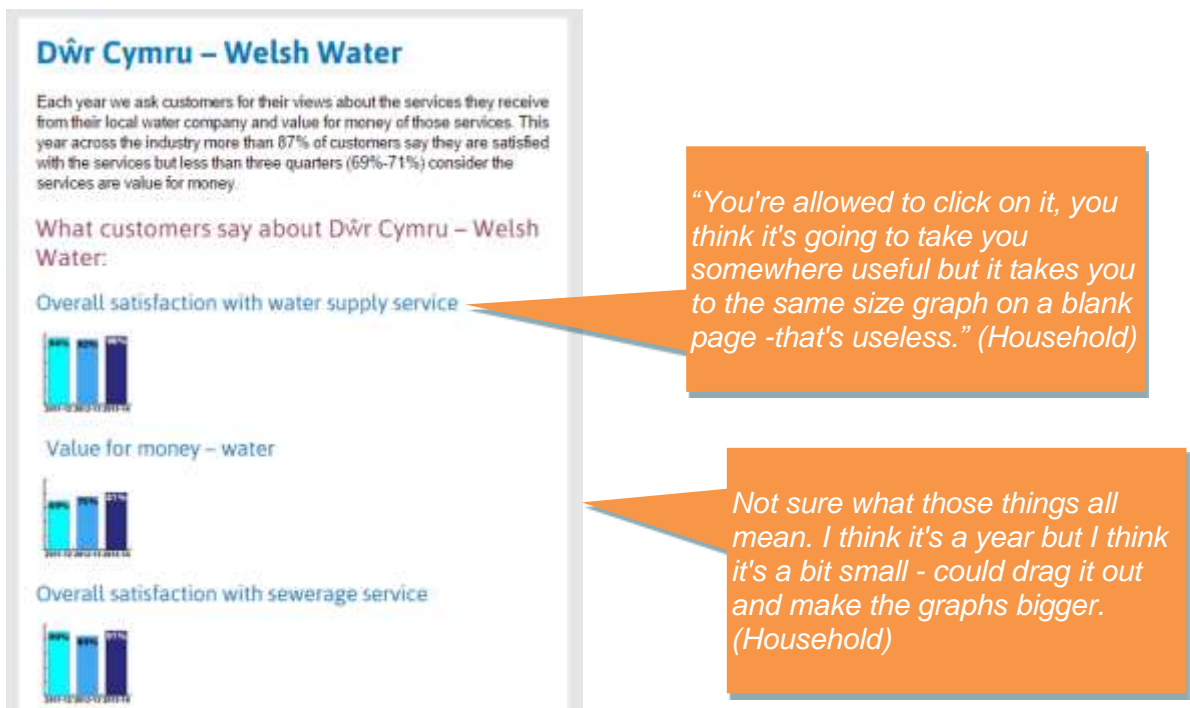


Fig. 18 Website shot of graphs

9 CONSUMER RESEARCH

This chapter will outline the feedback given on the Consumer Research section of the webpage in terms of what consumers expect from this section and how appealing the information is:

9.1 Key findings

- Before reviewing the information in this section, some expect the research to be about CCWater's service rather than research done by them about industry services
- When reviewed, it is clear that this section details the research undertaken by CCWater. However, few think this is aimed at the general consumer
- The perception is that the information here is included for transparency rather than an expectation that consumers will genuinely read it

9.2 What will this information be?

When asked what consumers expect from this section it is thought to be one of two things:

1. A section with reports on research similar to the current project
2. Comments and reviews on CCWater's service

The title is thought to be driving this:

"Who is the consumer?" (Household)

"I'm not sure about 'Consumer Research'. Does that mean it's done by their consumers or by them with consumer?" (Household)

"Maybe it should say consumer research or research with water consumers" (Household)

9.3 Appeal of this information

When reviewing the information in this section the titles are very important for communicating what the research is about. Currently these feel very official and not aimed at the general consumer.

In addition, few say they would download a PDF and read the information. If this information is relevant or useful to the consumer, then creating a plain English, consumer friendly one page infographic of the key findings would be more appealing and accessible.

*"I wouldn't come here; I don't think this is for me."
(Household)*

*"PR14 Draft Determination, I don't have a clue what that would be."
(Household)*

The screenshot shows a website layout with a main content area and a right-hand sidebar. The main content area is titled "Research Reports" and contains three sections: "Delving into water", "Retail Exit", and "PR14 Draft Determinations". Each section has a brief introductory paragraph and a "Continued" link. The "Retail Exit" section includes a small image of a drain. The sidebar is titled "Categories" and lists various report types such as "Annual tracking reports", "Business Customers", "Changing and bills", "Competition in the water industry", "Customer service", "Other utilities", "Regulation of the water industry", "Research on specific water companies", "Sewerage service and infrastructure", "Vulnerable customers", "Water efficiency", "Water environment and sustainable development", and "Water supply and infrastructure".

Research Reports

Delving into water
During 2013 we asked water companies across England and Wales to change the way that they reported performance data to us, so that the information was customer focussed and comparable. 'Delving into water' summarises this information and comments on company performance for the past four years.

Retail Exit
Understanding non-household customers' views of incumbent water companies exiting the retail market. The main aims of the research were to find out non-household customer views about the sale or transfer of their account to a new retailer with the market ...
[Continued](#)

PR14 Draft Determinations
Understanding customer acceptability of Ofwat's draft decisions on price limits. The main aims of the research were to find out how acceptable the proposals were to customers and to establish the role of affordability in unacceptability. The research is broken ...
[Continued](#)

Categories

- Research Reports
- Annual tracking reports
- Business Customers
- Changing and bills
- Competition in the water industry
- Customer service
- Other utilities
- Regulation of the water industry
- Research on specific water companies
- Sewerage service and infrastructure
- Vulnerable customers
- Water efficiency
- Water environment and sustainable development
- Water supply and infrastructure

Fig. 19 Screenshot of research reports

10 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PAGES

This chapter outlines the feedback given on the FAQ pages in relation to the look and feel of section, ease of navigation and presentation of information.

10.1 Key findings

- It is clear from their style that the FAQ pages are not part of the main site; while having this as a 'bolt on' is not a problem in itself, the style used here can make the information difficult to absorb due to:
 - The size of the text being too small for some
 - Stark contrast of black text on a white background
 - FAQ pages looking like a Word document which does not feel interesting or engaging
- Navigational issues are seen with the FAQ section. It is felt that there are too many answers and too much text contained within each answer leaving consumers overwhelmed and likely to leave the site
- In terms of the FAQs, some information is useful but then can lack clear 'next steps'
- Answers can often feel too long and repetitive with there being more than one relevant question / answer

10.2 Look and feel of the FAQ pages

While consumers do not mind the FAQ pages being outside the main site, the style of these pages can be a barrier to engagement; as shown by the heat map, consumers are not reading all of the information. Consumers tell us that this is due to:



- The layout is not interesting or engaging
- Text is too small
- The stark contrast of black text on a white page
- The pages looking more like a Word document

"It's not easy on the eyes so I'd rather it be the colour it was before as that was a lot more gentle, just a plain white with a blank text over it. This is like a text document." (Household)

"It's drab. It's all bullet point all the way down the page. You know when you get tiny info at the bottom of a contract or receipt. It needs to be in basic English, not rambling down the page. I'd rather have a video of somebody telling you how to do it. Someone that you and I could trust on TV. e.g. 'do you think your water bill is too high? Here's what you need to do'' (Household/ accessibility).

Fig. 20 Heat map of FAQ page on the CCWater website

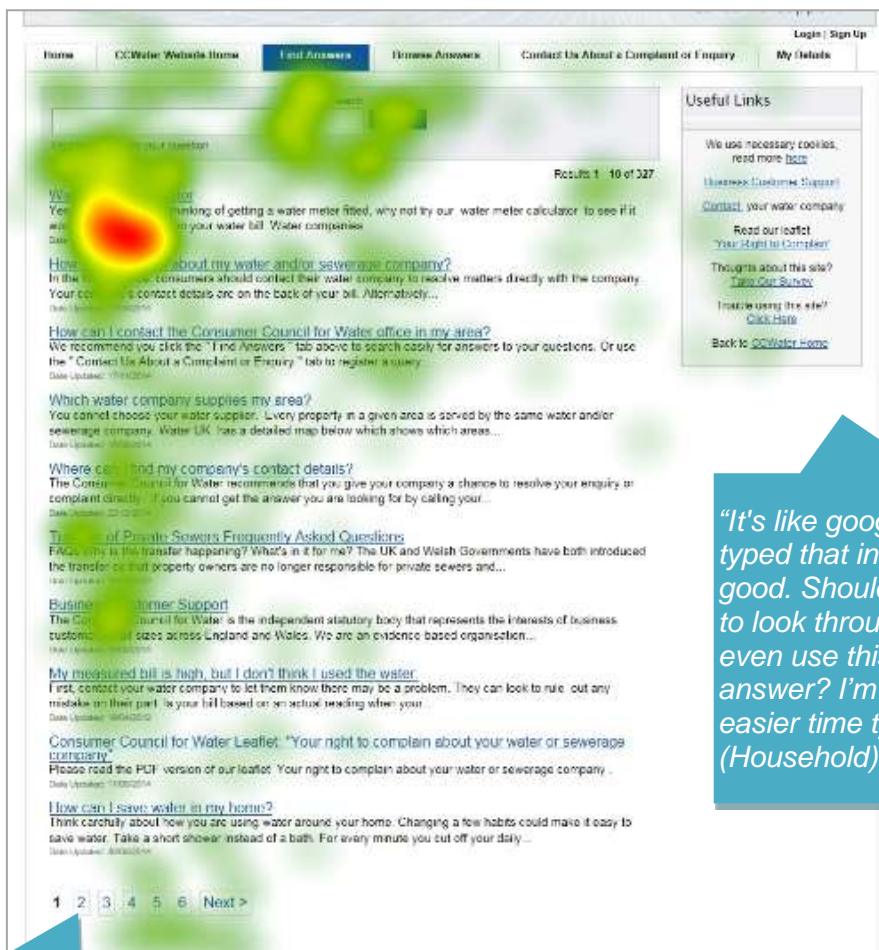
Moving these pages into the main site or adopting the style of the main site in the bolt on will make these pages more appealing and easier to read.

10.3 Navigating the FAQ pages

Finding answers in the FAQs using the search function can be difficult for consumers for a number of reasons:

- There can be confusion over what is being searched – CCWater’s website or the wider internet
- Returned answers feel too specific and there are too many – FAQs are thought to be a short list of common questions and answers
- As the heat map shows, consumers tend not to look further than the first 3 results in the list and can therefore miss the answer
- The number of answers which shows both the question and some of the answer can make the page feel long
- The search function looks at both the question and answer text which increases the number of answers that are returned.

Reviewing how the search works and reducing the number of answers will improve the navigation here. However, opting for a set of categories with answers would work better.

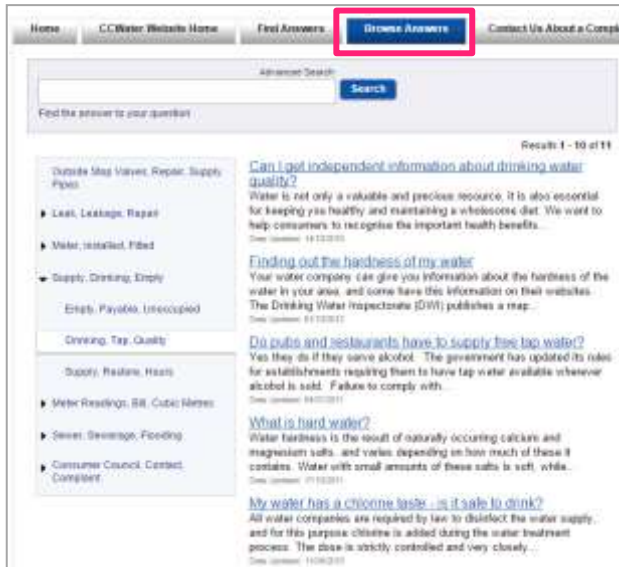


“It’s like google - I may as well have typed that in google - it doesn’t look good. Should it be that hard that I have to look through 327 results, would I even use this if I needed to find out the answer? I’m pretty sure I’d have an easier time typing it into google.” (Household)

“See if I was at home I would have given up by now. I didn’t instantly get what I was looking for so I would have given up.” (Household)

Fig. 21 Heat map of search functions

The Browse Answers function:



While CCWater’s site does have a ‘Browse Answers’ section that allows consumers to search via categories, this isn’t always available to consumers as the tab only appears when ‘Find Answers’ is selected and most miss it. Few understand why there are two sections ‘Find Answers’ and ‘Browse Answers’ – for consumers, these represent the same thing.

While ‘Browse Answers’ does provide answers in categories, the list can again feel overwhelming with the questions having lots of text beneath them which makes the list feel long and overwhelming.

Fig. 22 Screen shot of search functions

Getting rid of the ‘Find Answer’ tab and improving the ‘Browse answers’ by only displaying the questions will make the FAQs easier to navigate.

Anglian Water is a good example of an FAQ page as:



- There are clear categories for consumers to choose from to find their answer
- There isn’t a huge list of questions, rather questions and answers appear when the category is clicked
- The language and category titles are consumer friendly
- In addition the design feels interesting and engaging

Fig. 23 Image of Frequently Asked Questions

10.4 Presentation of information

Information in the FAQ pages can feel very long, this means that the information is not easily digestible and can be overwhelming.

If looking for information to assist with a sewer flood consumers say they would want to see a short, step by step guide to tell them what they need to do, or, for those with accessibility issues, a short video.

Information in the FAQ feels too long, with information that is not relevant for those who might be experiencing sewer flooding:

Sewer Flooding
Published 05/05/2009 03.41 PM | Updated 21/09/2012 11.40 AM

Sewer Flooding

We tend to take water and sewerage services for granted until we experience a blocked **sewer** or drain, and suffer the **flooding** and distress that results.

We are pressuring the companies to step up their investment programme to reduce the risk of **sewer flooding**. CCWater sees it as a priority for companies to tackle **sewer flooding**, which is probably the most distressing thing that could happen to you as a water customer. Nationally, we are collecting evidence of consumers' experience of **sewer flooding** and producing guidance on how to address it.

So what should you do if you suffer sewer flooding?

If the problem is linked to something in the private drain, you will need to hire a drainage contractor

If there is a problem with the public **sewer**, contact the sewerage company straight away.

If sewage has entered your property from a public **sewer**, the company should send someone out to visit you as soon as possible (the time it takes for the company to respond may be affected by severe storms and how widespread the **flooding** is).

The sewerage company should offer to help clear up your property

If it isn't possible to make your home suitable to live in by cleaning alone, you may need to stay in other accommodation. Your insurance company should tell you what it can provide: your sewerage company may offer to help with the cost, but this will depend on the circumstances of the **sewer flooding**.

Can you claim compensation?

There is a statutory Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS) that pays a minimum amount if your property is **flooded** inside. This is equal to refunding your yearly sewerage bill (upto £1,000) for each time **flooding** happens. However, if the **flooding** was caused by exceptional weather, the company does not have to make any payment. Details of GSS can be found [here](#).

*"If I had a sewer leak I would just want a quick to the point answer, there's too much here."
(Household)*

*"They can get rid of all of this and just tell me what I need to do."
(Household)*

Fig. 24 Screen shot of FAQs

Feedback on 'My measured bill is high' FAQ:

As with the 'Sewer Flooding' FAQ, consumers would like to see a more succinct summary of what to do if they have a high bill. It should also be noted that consumers report that they would contact their water provider if they had a billing issue, therefore there is the potential to remove this question as consumers are unlikely to come to CCWater's website for it:

My measured bill is high

Published 28/11/2007 12:52 PM | Updated 01/10/2012 12:18 PM

Why is my metered bill so high?

Water meters are checked at the factory when assembled and are usually accurate.

The Water (Meters) Regulations 1988 state "Where undertakers fix charges in relation to any premises by reference to volume, a reading from the meter installed in relation to those premises proved in accordance with this regulation shall be evidence of the volume of water supplied to those premises, unless the meter is proved to register incorrectly."

This means that the company is entitled to base your charges on the reading from your meter, unless you can show it was not working properly. You can ask the company to independently test the meter. However, if it is shown to be operating properly, you will have to pay the cost of having it tested.

In our experience, consumers who receive a bill which is higher than expected usually find that water has been lost through leakage either from the underground supply pipe on your property or from a faulty fitting or appliance inside the property.

A water company may adjust the bill if there is a leak on the external supply pipe if you arrange to have it repaired. They will not make an adjustment if:

- The leak was from an internal pipe, a water-using appliance or fitting inside the house or an external overflow pipe. Private plumbing is the responsibility of the property owner or occupier.
- You had a previous adjustment because of a leak at the same property. (But if the leaked water did not return to the sewer, you can ask them to adjust your sewerage charges.)

You can do a simple check to find out if you have a leak.

- Make sure all water using appliances are turned off and that no tanks or cisterns are filling.
- Isolate your internal supply pipework by operating the inside stop valve.
- Go to your water meter - it may be outside in the footpath or your front garden, or inside your home.
- If it is outside, only proceed if you feel able to do so because you will need to kneel down to open the inspection cover and bend down to check the meter. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO LIFT A HEAVY METAL COVER
- If it is outside, lift the cover using a screwdriver blade and remove the polystyrene frost protector to reveal the meter dial face - it will be about 18 inches below ground level.
- Ignoring the black and white dials, check for movement on the red and white or on the red rotating pointers.
- Any movement will indicate a leak between the meter and the inside stop valve.
- If there is no movement, open the ISV and return to the meter to check if there is any movement to indicate a leak within the property.
- If there is a leak, you will need to get it repaired, or in some cases your water company may offer to do it for you free of charge if the pipe is easy to reach.
- If your water company has recently re-calculated your budget plan payments based on the high recorded should ask them to review the payments once you have had the leak repaired.

Affinity Water Central has a video guide showing you how to check your meter [here](#).

Was this answer helpful?

*"I only need to see these points here, does it need to be so long."
(Household)*

Fig. 25 Screen shot of FAQs

11 NON-HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS' VIEWS ON THE MARKET REFORM INFORMATION

This chapter outlines the feedback given by business customers on the information on CCWater's website about changes to the water industry in 2017.

From April 2017, all non-household customers in England will be able to choose which water supplier provides their retail services include handling consumer queries and complaints, billing and meter reading. This will not change for businesses in Wales, for whom currently only those using over 50,000 cubic meters of water a year will be able to switch.

Business customers were asked first to find information via Google on the changes in the water industry before being directed to the CCWater site for this. If they were unable to find the information - which all were - they were directed to the Market Reform section under 'Water Issues'.

11.1 Key findings

- Awareness is low about upcoming changes to the water industry in 2017
- Information on competition in the water industry for business customers can feel official and written very much from a policy perspective. Some of the information can also confuse or be out of date
- Business customers feel it lacks detail on what the changes mean in real terms for them, such as who can they switch to and when businesses need to do something
- There is also confusion about what a mega litre is in real terms, when it comes to working out eligibility criteria
- Business customers are incredibly time poor, meaning it is essential that any information is provided in a clear and succinct way, and they are only given the information that they need to know at that point in time
- For businesses in Wales, whilst it is clear what is relevant to Wales in terms of competition, some can feel perplexed as to why the rules are different for them which can lead to a feeling of being discriminated against. The adding of an explanation as to why this is would help this.
- In terms of finding out about the market reform, there is an expectation that the changes will be communicated both via advertising in the media and through their water supplier
- Finding information on the CCWater site about market reform is difficult with none of the respondents being able to find this on their own

11.2 Awareness of market reform

All of the business customers were unaware of the upcoming market reform meaning that most were of the opinion that they have no choice over their water supplier (with the exception of 1 person in the larger business focus group). As such, there is no point in seeking out information about water and their provider.

"You have no choice, you just have to go with it, you can't turn round and say you'll shop around because you have no choice" (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

Like household consumers, there is a lack of engagement with information around water and sewerage services meaning few have ever thought about what they would expect from a water industry consumer body website other than information on tariffs.

11.3 Suitable providers of information on market reform

In terms of finding out about the changes coming in the water industry, there is an expectation that the changes will be communicated both via advertising in the media and through their water supplier.

Business customers say that CCWater's website could be a suitable place for information around competition in the water industry. However, in reality a lack of awareness of the existence of this website is a significant barrier to uptake by consumers. Another potential barrier for business customers is the 'About us' section, as the information fails to reassure business customer that CCWater is an authority in the water industry that they can trust as a source of information.

11.4 Navigation to the market reform page

When asked to find information on the upcoming changes on CCWater's website, none were able to find the Market Reform page (see fig. 26) on their own. It is located under 'Water Issues', in the 'Current Key Water Issues' section, and after unsuccessful attempts to find it, consumers were guided to it by the interviewer, showing its difficulty to access.

11.5 Presentation of information on the market reform section

The screenshot shows a webpage titled 'Market Reform' under the 'Water Issues' section. The page is divided into three columns of text and bullet points. The first column discusses the background of the market reform, mentioning the Water Act 2014 and the Open Water Programme. The second column discusses market awareness, customer satisfaction, and research findings. The third column discusses the Consumer Council for Water research, including qualitative and quantitative research findings.

Water issues
Market Reform

Background

In May 2014, the Water Act 2014 received Royal Assent which paved the way for all non-household customers in England to be able to switch their supplier of water and sewerage retail services from April 2017. Retail services include handling customer queries and complaints, billing and meter reading.

Currently all non-household customers in England using more than 5 megallitres of water a year can switch supplier of water retail services. In Wales those using more than 50 megallitres of water a year can switch, and this will not change in 2017.

The Open Water Programme (<http://www.openwater.org.uk>) has been tasked with designing the new market arrangements. They are working with water companies and other key stakeholders, including CCWater, to produce wholesale-retail operational and market rules so that each market participant knows what is required of them.

Objectives and priorities

CCWater's key objectives for the new retail market include:

- ensuring that competition works for non-household customers that choose to switch supplier; water;
- protecting domestic customers (with smart meters) or non-household customers who choose not to switch supplier.

We are working with Government, Ofwat, Open Water and water companies to help shape the market so that it delivers for customers. CCWater's short, medium and long-term priorities, based on evidence from what non-household customers tell us in our research, and when dealing with their complaints and enquiries, are to achieve:

Customer protection

- Avoidance of contracts that automatically roll-over and/or fix customers in
- Avoidance of pre-emptive, auto billing and the 'trial and error' practice with a hidden ending-off period;
- Avoidance of obstacles to those customers forced to switch retailer through 'trial and error' – the process to allow incumbent water companies to exit the non-household retail market;
- Prompt resolution of operational issues;
- Level of competitor costs and their recovery do not impact eligible customers.

Market that is ready and easy to navigate

- Market participants are ready for competition and the systems and process to support the open market are fully tested;
- Early navigation and transparent switching process that meets customer needs;
- Standardised and well-communicated non-household tariffs.

Market awareness

- Increased awareness of the competitive market and customer rights across all groups of business customers.

Customer satisfaction

- Monitor satisfaction of water and sewerage services and value for money;
- Work collaboratively to deliver benefits to non-household customers in Wales that are eligible to switch retailer, through improved services and innovation.

Research

The key findings from the latest CCWater market reform research are:

The Consumer Council for Water research – Uncharted Waters: Non-household customers' expectations for competition in the water industry – June 2014

Qualitative research of workshops with small and medium enterprise customers, engaging with 62 customers in total, and 18 face-to-face in-depth interviews with large and cross-border businesses across England and Wales:

- For most non-household customers, the business satisfaction with their water company is good;
- The biggest to switch differ by business size and include cost reduction, consumption reduction, bill consolidation, and the possibility of a better product or service;
- Based on experience in other competitive markets, non-household customers are keen to avoid auto billing, auto bills which auto debit in or bill over automatically, complicated tariffs and poor customer service;
- Support for standardised or bespoke contracts offers by business size, but all non-household customers want to avoid complex tariff structures;
- There is broad support for the idea of market competition providing a reflects business needs and protects customers against adverse market conditions;
- There is a lack of awareness across all business sizes about the retail market changes in England from April 2017.

The Consumer Council for Water and Ofwat research – Understanding the needs of small and medium enterprise customers – July 2012

Qualitative research of 40 in-depth interviews across England and Wales, and quantitative research of 2,029 telephone interviews with micro, small and medium enterprise customers across England and Wales:

- Businesses of the developing competition regime in England to very low of 8%;
- Micro, small and medium business customers, are generally positive, however, with 60% thinking that competition in the water industry is, at best, a good thing;
- 33% would be interested, in principle, in changing supplier – 36% of these would switch to save money and 12% for a better service;
- When asked what percentage level saving on their water and sewerage charges would prompt their business to switch supplier, the median level of saving was 15%, with the maximum being 2% and the maximum 60%;
- 81% are unconcerned about the development of competition. Where there are concerns, these relate to on-billing (13%), the back-bill (13%), potential effect on supplier service/performance (9%) and potential impact on bills (9%).

The Consumer Council for Water research – Small and Medium Business Customer Views of Competition in the Water and Sewerage Industry – June 2010

Qualitative research of 5 mini focus groups in England and Wales, and a quantitative survey of 1,515 small and medium business customers across England and Wales:

- Small and medium business customers are generally positive about the prospects of competition in the water and sewerage industry, with 68% thinking it is a good thing;
- 78% think this because it would lead to lower prices;
- 57% say that they would be likely to switch if they had the chance to do this;
- Just of those 57%, 66% say that this would be because of the chance to get charges cut;
- 62% were unable to think of any new services they would like to see introduced as a result of competition;
- 37% would switch for savings of up to 10% on free bills (17% for savings up to 5% and 25% for savings of between 5 and 10%);

Our responses to the various consultations on market reform can be viewed [here](#).

The business customer support area is available [here](#).

This web page will be updated on a regular basis.

James Mackenzie has responsibility for this area
Telephone – 0161 206 8541
Email – james.mackenzie@ccwater.org.uk

Fig 26 Screen shot of Market Reform page under 'Water Issues', 'Current Key Water Issues'

The Market Reform section has a lot of information. Fig. 26 shows all the information which is on this page, shown here side by side on 3 pages; whereas on the site you would scroll down to keep reading. Business customers fed back that they would prefer less, but more tailored information, around what the changes mean for them. Business customers are time poor and dealing with utilities is just one of their roles. Taking time to search through information on changes in the water industry which may affect them is not a priority, therefore it is essential that information is succinct and to the point.

Importance of relevance

Once on the page, business customers feel that the Market Reform information is too focused on policy and lacks clarity and relevance to themselves as end consumers.

"It's useful but I would want it to just to tell me what it means for me in reality"
Business consumer from focus group. (Non-Household, Larger Business)

"It's good that they've researched it and I would want to know some of the thinking behind it but there's too much here." (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

"There is a lot of information here but it's not telling me, right this is what you can do and this is when you can do it." (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

Use of language and confusion around eligibility

It is not clear to business customers from looking at the site how they work out if they are eligible to switch, either now or from 2017. Information needs to be clearer and avoid jargon, particularly around quantities, as few are aware of how much water they use or what this is in mega-litres. In reality consumers would look at their bill to find out their usage.

“So where it says this is equivalent to two Olympic size swimming pools - I don't think about my water usage in terms of swimming pools. A better reference is cups of tea. If you're on a meter you'll check your meter. I just don't think that's relevant. And also 5000 cubic litres [sic] doesn't seem that much to me - should be related to the size of your business rather than some abstract measurement.” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

Business customers think that a diagram could aid their understanding in terms of working out whether they are eligible to switch or not (see fig. 27 for an example from one of the focus groups), depending on whether in England or Wales, current water usage and the rules pre and post 2017. Some mentioned that a tool which calculated your current usage, by putting in your details could also be helpful.

“Could do it with some sort of diagram, much easier than reading through 10 sentences.” (Non-Household, Larger Business)

“If you put your postcode in so it could include your current usage that would be good. Then you'll be able to work out if you're using a lot.” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

2017 REFORMS		CURRENT USAGE	
ENGLAND		WALES	
5,000 +	YES	50,000 +	YES
5,000 -	NO	50,000 -	NO

Fig. 27 Diagram drawn in the large business focus group as an example of a diagram to aid them understanding whether they can switch or not.

11.6 What Business customers want to know

Rather than lots of context and policy details business customers want to know what the changes mean in real terms, specifically:

- Why is it happening? A short overview of the reasoning behind it.
- How will it affect them? And will it benefit them?
- Are they eligible to switch?
- Who are their choices of supplier?

“Does that mean my bill is going to get cheaper?” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

“What are the benefits? Is it just financial?” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

“Who’s responsible for bursts and problems?” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

“How easy is it to switch to different companies?” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

“Ties - once you’re in there have you got to stay there for a certain amount of time?” (Non-Household, Larger Business, Focus Group)

11.7 Out of date information

Apart from the Market Reform page reviewed above (found under ‘Water Issues’, ‘Current Key Water Issues’) there are several other pages which talk about competition in the water industry. Having this information in multiple places is confusing and can leave room for error when some and not others are updated. For example fig. 28 shows the Business Consumer area under ‘Current water issues’ showing current rules on eligibility to switch, i.e. in England you can switch if you use more than 5 mega-litres a year, but not making reference to upcoming changes, this page was last updated in October 2013.

Fig. 29 shows two other pages which discuss competition in the water industry, found on the Business Consumer Support section; these also do not make reference to the upcoming changes. When asked to find information on the CCWater site about market reform, search terms used often made reference to changing supplier (see section 3.7) which could lead business customers to these pages and cause confusion around whether they are eligible to switch or not.

Business customer area under 'Current water issues:

Competition for business customers

Since 1 December 2005, competition has been open to large business customers who use at least 50 megalitres of water a year.

In 2011 UK Government reduced the competition threshold to allow business customers in England using more than 5 megalitres of water a year to switch supplier.

The threshold in Wales remains at 50 megalitres of water a year.

This means that around 26,000 business customers can now choose their water supplier. The competitive regime currently only applies to water and not to the provision of sewerage services.

Christina Blackwell has responsibility for this area.

Telephone – 0121 345 1014

Email – Christina.Blackwell@ccwater.org.uk

Last updated: October 2013

Last updated
October 2013

Fig. 28 Screen shot of Business consumer area under 'Current water issues' showing current rules on eligibility to switch and last updated October 2013.

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots of the CC Water website. The left screenshot is titled "Who can I change my water supplier to?" and discusses eligibility criteria for business customers. The right screenshot is titled "What are the eligibility criteria for competition?" and provides a detailed list of criteria for business customers to be eligible for competition.

Who can I change my water supplier to?
Published 04/04/2011 11:38 AM | Updated 04/02/2014 11:52 AM

Who can I change my water supplier to?
If you are a business customer whose non-household premises receives a supply of water of at least 5 mega year using the supply system of a company whose area is wholly or mainly in England, you may be able to change water supplier.

Or if you are a business customer whose non-household premises receives a supply of water of at least 50 m a year using the supply system of a company whose area is wholly or mainly in Wales, you may be able to change supplier (i.e. if you are currently a water customer of Abertawe Water or Rhondda, Cynon Taf Water, or Dyfed, you may be able to change supplier if you use at least 50 megalitres of water a year).

Currently the competitive regime applies only to water and not the provision of sewerage services.

In order to supply an eligible customer under the Water Supply Licensing regime, a company must first obtain licence from Ofwat.

There are two types of licence:

- Retail licence:** the licensee can purchase a wholesale supply of water from an undertaker and provide retail customer.
- Combined licence:** the licensee can introduce its own water into an undertaker's supply system and provide customer.

There are currently ten companies licensed by Ofwat. These are listed below alphabetically.

Anglian Water Business (National) Limited - Combined Licence

Address	Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd Anglian House Rushbury Rd Huntingdon PE29 3AZ
---------	---

Fig. 29 Screen shot of two Business Consumer Support pages which also discuss competition in the current climate

12. FEEDBACK ON OTHER CONSUMER BODY WEBSITES

During the research, participants were asked to review 2 other consumer body websites to assess whether they were doing anything better than the CCWater site. This chapter will outline consumers' reactions to these sites which were:

Household consumers reviewed:

The logo for the Legal Ombudsman, featuring the word "LEGAL" in a pink, cursive font and "OMBUDSMAN" in a pink, sans-serif font.The logo for Passengerfocus, featuring the word "Passengerfocus" in a grey, sans-serif font and a stylized grey figure with a red circle above its head. Below the text is the tagline "putting passengers first" in a smaller, grey font.

Business customers reviewed:

The logo for the British Chambers of Commerce, featuring a large, stylized black letter "B" with a white shape inside, and the text "British Chambers of Commerce" to its right.

Federation of Small Businesses
The UK's Leading Business Organisation

12.1 Overview of findings – household

- In terms of look and feel, the CCWater site performs well and much better than Legal Ombudsman which is thought to have too much text on the homepage
- Passenger Focus is thought to be slightly better than CCWater's site in terms of the look and feel because it is quite colourful and engaging
- On both sites the phone number is much easier to find than CCWater's site, due to being on the homepage – this is beneficial for those who have difficulty reading and writing
- It is clear how to make a complaint on Passenger Focus and it feels better in terms of navigation as there is a clear link to the FAQ pages on the side menu
- The text used on the Legal Ombudsman site to direct to the complaints area is preferred as it feels more logical than that used on the CCWater site
- Video on the Legal Ombudsman site to explain the complaints process is thought to work better than the explanation on the CCWater site, particularly for those with accessibility issues
- The length of the pages on both sites is better than CCWater with less scrolling needed

12.2 Overview of findings – non-household

- Again the CCWater site performs well in terms of the look and feel and is thought to look better and be easier to navigate than both the British Chamber of Commerce and the FSB
- While thought to look nice, the British Chamber of Commerce site is not easy to navigate as it does not feel clear, lacks symmetry and the adverts are distracting
- The FSB is liked as it feels more ordered, and the pictures and icons used on the homepage prevent it from feeling boring
- Again the telephone number on both sites is easily found via the homepage which is liked by business customers
- The site map at the bottom of the FSB page is also liked to assist navigation

12.3 Household: The Legal Ombudsman

First impressions of this site are that there is too much text on the homepage. Household consumers, particularly those with accessibility issues, tell us that this can be overwhelming.



Fig. 30 Screen shot of website for The Legal Ombudsman

There are some positives from this site however which CCWater could learn from:

- ✓ Having the telephone number clearly available on the homepage is liked
- ✓ Calling the complaints section 'Making a complaint' feels logical and consumers know exactly what this page will be about
- ✓ Having a video explaining the complaints process works well and is preferred by those who have difficulties reading and writing
- ✓ The pages require less scrolling

12.4 Household: Passenger focus

Household consumers respond well to this site and say that overall, it is working better than the CCWater site. Some key learning points for CCWater are:

- ✓ In common with CCWater's site, the look and feel of the Passenger Focus site is liked; however, it is thought to be more colourful which makes it feel more interesting and engaging
- ✓ Like the Legal Ombudsman site having the telephone number clearly available on the homepage is liked
- ✓ While this site also calls the complaints section 'Advice and Complaints' this title is thought to better represent what is there due to clear links to FAQs in a side menu
- ✓ Having short statistics on the homepage communicating interesting things learnt from research is preferred over downloadable PDFs



Fig. 31 Screenshot of the website for Passenger Focus

12.5 Non-Household: British Chamber of Commerce



Fig. 32 Screen shot of the website for the British Chamber of Commerce

This site had mixed reviews; however, it is thought to be working well in some areas that CCWater could learn from:

- ✓ Site is thought to look modern due to the visual nature i.e. the use of icons
- ✓ It is easy to find a telephone number for your local branch
- ✓ The pages require little scrolling so nothing is missed
- ✓ It feel clean and professional

CCWater can also learn what not to do from this site as well:

- ✗ The highly visual nature can make it difficult to navigate
- ✗ The advertisements at the sides are thought to distract
- ✗ There are 3 menus, 2 at the top of the page and one detailing news etc. at the bottom right – this can be missed so there is a preference to have more of the menu headings in one place

12.6 Non-Household: Federation of Small Business (FSB)



The FSB site works well for business customers as:

- ✓ There is order to the site which makes it easy to navigate
- ✓ While it can feel a bit 'boring' the images are thought to make it engaging
- ✓ Like the CCWater site the page is quite long however the consistent blue heading help communicate that there is more to see
- ✓ Having a telephone number available on the page next to a happy person implies that the company are available and happy to help you
- ✓ Having the site map at the bottom is useful if the consumer can't find something

Fig. 33 Screen shot of the website for the Federation of Small Business

13. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Conclusion

As we stated at the very beginning, CCWater's website is on the whole performing adequately for its purpose. However, there are some clear easy wins that could be taken in the short term to improve the navigation, content and presentation of the site:

- Review the headings to better describe what each section covers
- Re-format key information pages to reduce block text, use more bullets, increase the size of charts
- Make it clearer and easier to contact CCWater directly from the site
- Remove any repetition and contradictory information
- Review the information on competition in the water industry to make it clear and up-to-date

However, there are some more substantial changes that CCWater could make in the longer term that would fundamentally improve the navigation, usability and accessibility of the site:

- Create two distinct household and business sections of the site
- Review the style and language used across the site to make it more succinct and consumer-focussed
- Change the style of the FAQ area so it is line with the much preferred style of the main site, or actually incorporate the bolt-on into the main site
- Improve the search function of the FAQ section
- Consider introducing videos to replace some large text sections (particularly for those with accessibility issues and English as a second language)

Each of these actions would improve the site's navigation, usability, accessibility, content and presentation.

13.2 Recommendations to improve the layout, look and feel

1. Reduce the amount of block text in general, making it easier to read and digest, but with specific attention to:
 - a. 'Top tips to cut your water bill'
 - b. Information under 'Current key water issues'
2. Bring the style of the FAQ and complaint pages into line with the main site in terms of the layout, font size, and colour scheme
3. Make charts in the 'How is my company doing?' page larger to make them easier to read

13.3 Recommendations to improve navigation

1. Create two distinct business and household sections on the main site with a menu at the top to direct consumers to the right area containing specific and relevant information for them
2. Review the headings on the main site to better describe what is included under each tab, specifically:
 - a. Change the 'Advice and Complaints' heading to 'Making a complaint' to make it clear that this area is specific for complaints rather than general advice and complaints
 - b. Consider changing the 'Water Issues' heading to 'What we're doing in the water industry' or a title which gets across this meaning, so consumers do not expect to see information and updates on works or problems with the water supply in the UK, which is what is associated with 'issues'
3. Make how to make a complaint on the 'Advice and Complaints' page clearer by:
 - a. Adding a fourth step called 'How to contact the CCWater'
 - b. Changing the 'online form' text link to 'online complaint form'
 - c. Say 'or call us, click here to find the number for your local office'
4. Make the FAQ area easier to search by removing the 'Find Answer' tab, and improve the 'Browse answers' function by only displaying the questions to make the FAQs easier to navigate; a good example of this is Anglian Water's website
5. If the 'Find Answer' tab is retained, reduce the number of returned results by ensuring key words are only searched for in the question text and not the answer as well

13.4 Recommendations to improve information

1. Review the language used throughout the site to make it less governmental and more consumer friendly, specifically:
 - a. Describe 'Current key water issues', 'Consultation responses', and 'Briefings' so consumers better understand what these are. Also explain why these are included, and if they are there for transparency, tell consumers that
 - b. Rework the titles within the 'Consumer Research' section to make it clear what the documents are e.g. consumers do not understand what the 'PR14 Draft Determination' is or what it is there for
2. Review information on the site to reduce repetition, specifically:
 - a. Combine the information in 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' and 'Water Saving Tips' into one overarching category on 'Saving water and energy'
 - b. Remove much of the text in 'Top Tips to Cut Your Water Bill' to provide short bullet pointed 'top tips', provide information boxes next to each one or links to more information for those it is relevant to
3. Better communicate who CCWater is under the 'About Us' section outlining who the Council is funded by and where they sit in the chain of command
4. Look at the information in the FAQs to provide more succinct information with clear next steps

13.5 Recommendations to improve information on competition in the water industry

1. Review the information on upcoming changes to competition in the water industry, ensuring:
 - a) Make it clear that the current rules around competition in England are only relevant until 2017 to avoid confusion
 - b) Detail what the changes mean in real terms for business customers rather than from a policy perspective. Look at posing questions with short answers, specifically:
 - i. What is happening and why? Include a short explanation on the reasoning behind it.
 - ii. What does it mean for you as a business consumer?
 - iii. How can you switch water provider?
 - iv. When do you need to do something?
 - c) Explaining why the rules for Wales are different might mitigate any dissatisfaction over this fact. This should be included on the Market Reform page rather than as a separate FAQ

14. APPENDICES

14.1 Household Accompanied Surf Recruitment Questionnaire

MS 15290L

PROJECT FAUCET

JAN 2015

Recruitment Questionnaire household for Web Usability depths

- 20 household consumers overall
- Max 6 non-water bill-payers
- Aim for 50/50 split on:
 - Metered vs unmetered
 - Male vs Female
 - ABC1 vs C2DE
- Min 2 people with accessibility issues that use software or hardware adaptations
- Aim for a mix for the following
 - Frequency of internet usage
 - Age
- Min 1 max 2 Smartphone or tablet consumers
- Min 2 whose first language is not English

SAY: Good morning/afternoon, I wonder if you could help me. My name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Marketing Sciences Ltd., an independent market research agency based in Winchester. We are looking to invite a small number of people to take part in research on your information needs around your water and sewerage services. We are offering a thank you of £50 to take part in an interview lasting approximately 1 hour. The aim of the research is to review a website to ensure the needs of consumers are being met.

In order to do so we would like to ask you a few questions to see if you are eligible.

1. Could you spare 5 minutes?

Yes **CONTINUE**

No..... **TRY TO MAKE APPOINTMENT, IF NOT CLOSE AND READ OUT**

“Thank you very much for your time and sorry to have disturbed you”.

2. Firstly, may I ask whether you or any of your family or close friends work in any of these occupations?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|---|
| * Water industry | 1 | * |
| * Advertising | 2 | * |
| * Journalism | 3 | * |
| * Market research | 4 | * |
| * Public relations | 5 | * |
| * Marketing | 6 | * |
| * Energy sector | 7 | * |
| None of these | 8 | |

IF ANY MARKED * MENTIONED, CLOSE

3. Are you the water bill-payer in your household? INSTRUCTION: If respondent says that they pay their water bill as part of rent code as 2

Yes

No - **RECRUIT MAX 6**

Don't know **THANK AND CLOSE**

ASK IF YES

4. And which of the following applies to the way you pay your bills... READ OUT

Sole bill-payer

You share payment of the bill with spouse/partner

You share payment of the bill as part of shared house

Other (specify)

Don't know

5. Does your home have a water meter?

Yes

No

Don't know **THANK AND CLOSE**

AIM FOR MIN 8 CODE 1 AND CODE 2

6. RECORD GENDER DO NOT ASK

Male

Female

AIM FOR MIN 8 CODE 1 AND CODE 2

7. What is the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?
-

AIM FOR MIN 8 ABC1/ C2DE

8. Do you have an illness or disability which makes it challenging for you to use the internet? For example visual impairments, cognitive and learning disabilities e.g. dyslexia or attention deficit disorders, motor skills impairments e.g. arthritis, RSI, stroke or auditory disabilities?

Yes - ASK Q9

Could you please say what this is?

No - GO TO Q10

Don't know/refused – GO TO Q10

IF YES AT Q8

9. Do you use special software or hardware designed to help you use the internet?

Yes

If Y – what?

No – GO TO Q11

10. Which best describes how often you use this when on the internet?

I always use it

I often use it

I have it but do not really use it

MIN 2 PEOPLE WITH ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES THAT USE SOFTWARE OR HARDWARE ADAPTATIONS ALWAYS OR OFTEN

11. How often do you look for information on the internet?

Every day

Every other day

Several times a week

Once every few weeks

Never – **THANK AND CLOSE**

AIM FOR A MIX

12. What device do you mostly use to access the internet?

PC

Laptop

Smartphone

Tablet (e.g. iPad etc)

MIN 1 MAX 2 CODE 3 OR 4 (SMARTPHONE/TABLET CONSUMERS)

13. May I ask your age?

18-24 – Min 1

25-39

40-54

55-74 – Min 2

75+ - Min 2

AIM FOR A MIX

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF RESPONDENT IS SPEAKING WITH AN ACCENT OR RECRUITING WELSH RESPONDENTS ASK Q13

14. As we are looking for a number of people whose first language is not English, can I ask, is English your first language?

Yes

No – ASK WHAT IT IS AND RECORD BELOW

MIN 2 WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH

We would like to invite you to take part in research on a website providing information for consumers on water and sewerage services. This will involve a 1 hour interview on INSERT DATE at INSERT VENUE where you would be asked to look around a website while being asked questions. We will be offering an incentive of £50 to take part. We will be using technology which record where you are looking on the screen. A video recording will also be made of the interview.

15. Would you be willing to take part and be recorded? The recording will only be used for the purposes of this research and seen by those working on the project.

Yes – **Make appointment**

No – **Thank and close**

14.2 Non- Household Accompanied Surf Recruitment Questionnaire

MS 15290L

PROJECT FAUCET

JAN 2015

Recruitment Questionnaire for B2B Web Usability depths

- 10 Non-household customers overall
- Must be billed directly for their water
- Must either pay or manage their company's water bill, or make decisions about who provides their company's utility services
- Min 1 max 2 from businesses with under 10 employees, then aim for a mix of the other company sizes
- Aim for a mix of the following
 - Business sectors
 - Extent to which their company depends on water and sewerage services
- Aim for min 3 each metered and non-metered
- Company must have own business premises
- Min 3 companies with multiple sites
- Min 2 who have a site located in Wales
- All must be willing to be video and voice recorded

SAY: Good morning/afternoon, I wonder if you could help me? My name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Marketing Sciences Ltd., an independent market research agency based in Winchester. We are looking to invite a small number of people to take part in research on your information needs around your business's water and sewerage services. We are offering a thank you of £65 to take part in an interview lasting approximately 1 hour. The aim of the research is to review a website to ensure the needs of businesses are being met.

In order to do so we would like to ask you a few questions to see if you are eligible.

16. Could you spare 5 minutes?

Yes **CONTINUE**

No..... **TRY TO MAKE APPOINTMENT, IF NOT CLOSE AND READ OUT**

“Thank you very much for your time and sorry to have disturbed you”.

17. Firstly, may I ask whether you or any of your family or close friends work in any of these occupations?

* Water industry.....	1	*
* Advertising.....	2	*
* Journalism.....	3	*
* Market research.....	4	*
* Public relations.....	5	*
* Marketing.....	6	*
* Energy sector.....	7	*
None of these.....	8	

IF ANY MARKED * MENTIONED, CLOSE

18. Are you billed directly by your water company for the service they supply or is it paid as a part of your building fees?

Billed directly

Water is billed as part of building fees **THANK AND CLOSE**

19. Are you responsible for:

Paying or managing your company's water bill? Y/N

Making decisions about who provides your company's energy, telecoms or other utility services? Y/N

Yes – TO EITHER OF THE ABOVE, NOTE WHICH, CONTINUE TO Q6

No – TO BOTH OF THE ABOVE – GO TO Q5

IF NO ASK Q5

20. Can you please give a contact number for the person who is responsible for one or both of these?

Yes – take name and number before thanking and closing

Contact name: _____

Contact number: _____

No - THANK AND CLOSE

ASK ALL

21. How many employees does your company have?

Less than 10 – MIN 1 MAX 2 (MICRO SME)

10 to 49 – (SMALL SME)

50-250 – (MEDIUM SME)

250 or more (LARGER COMPANIES)

AIM FOR A MIX

22. And what business sector best defines the core activity of your company?

RECORD ACTUAL RESPONSE

AIM FOR A MIX

23. Is your business based at your home or the home of another of the company's employees or does it have its own business premises?

At home **THANK AND CLOSE**

Own business premises

Refused **THANK AND CLOSE**

24. Do your business premises have a water meter?

Yes

No

AIM FOR MIN 3 CODE 1 AND CODE 2

25. Does your business operate from more than one site?

Yes

No **CONTINUE TO Q15**

Don't know **CONTINUE TO Q15**

AIM FOR MINIMUM 3 CODE 1

26. From how many sites does your business operate?

..... **WRITE IN**

27. Are all of your business sites located in England?

Yes

No

IF NO AT Q12

28. Are any of your business sites located in Wales?

Yes

No

AIM FOR MINIMUM 2 CODE 2

29. Does each site make its own decisions about choice of utility suppliers?

Yes

No

30. Are you able to speak on behalf of one or all of these sites?

Yes

No

31. How much do you agree or disagree that on a day to day basis, your business depends on its water supply and sewerage services (e.g. removal and treatment of used/waste water) in order to operate?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

AIM FOR A MIX

We would like to invite you to take part in research on a website providing information for consumers of water. This will involve a 1 hour interview on INSERT DATE at INSERT VENUE where you would be asked to look around a website while being asked questions. We will be offering an incentive of £65 to take part. We will be using technology which record where you are looking on the screen. A video recording will also be made of the interview.

Would you be willing to take part and be recorded? The recording will only be used for the purposes of this research and seen by those working on the project.

Yes – **Make appointment**
No – **Thank and close**

14.3 Non-Household Focus Group Recruitment Questionnaire

MS 15290L

PROJECT FAUCET

JAN 2015

Recruitment Questionnaire for B2B groups

22nd January

Group 1: 8 respondents SME businesses

- Min 1 max 2 from businesses with under 10 employees, then aim for a mix of the other company sizes

Group 2: 8 respondents larger businesses

Requirements across groups

- All must be billed directly for their water
- All must either pay or manage their company's water bill, or make decisions about who provides their company's utility services
- Aim for a mix of the following within groups
 - Business sectors
 - Extent to which their company depends on water and sewerage services
- Aim for min 3 each metered and non-metered
- Company must have own business premises
- Min 3 companies with multiple sites
- Min 2 who have a site located in Wales
- All must be willing to be video and voice recorded

SAY: Good morning/afternoon, I wonder if you could help me? My name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Marketing Sciences Ltd., an independent market research agency based in Winchester. We are looking to invite a small number of people to take part in a focus group about information needs for your business's water and sewerage services. For which we are offering a thank you of £75 to take part in. The group will last approximately 1 ½ hours. The aim of the research is that the views of businesses can be used to ensure their needs are met on a particular website.

In order to do so we would like to ask you a few questions to see if you are eligible.

32. Could you spare 5 minutes?

Yes **CONTINUE**

No **TRY TO MAKE APPOINTMENT, IF NOT CLOSE AND READ OUT**

“Thank you very much for your time and sorry to have disturbed you”.

33. Firstly, may I ask whether you or any of your family or close friends work in any of these occupations?

* **Water industry**..... **1** *
* **Advertising** **2** *
* **Journalism** **3** *

* Market research	4	*
* Public relations	5	*
* Marketing	6	*
* Energy sector	7	*
None of these	8	

IF ANY MARKED * MENTIONED, CLOSE

34. Are you billed directly by your water company for the service they supply or is it paid as a part of your building fees?

Billed directly

Water is billed as part of building fees **THANK AND CLOSE**

35. Are you responsible for:

Paying or managing your company's water bill? Y/N

Making decisions about who provides your company's energy, telecoms or other utility services? Y/N

Yes – TO EITHER OF THE ABOVE, NOTE WHICH, CONTINUE TO Q6

No – TO BOTH OF THE ABOVE – GO TO Q5

IF NO ASK Q5

36. Can you please give a contact number for the person who is responsible for one or both of these?

Yes – take name and number before thanking and closing

Contact name: _____

Contact number: _____

No - THANK AND CLOSE

ASK ALL

37. How many employees does your company have?

Less than 10 MIN 1 MAX 2 TO GROUP 1 (MICRO SME)

10 to 49 – RECRUIT MIN 1 TO GROUP 1 (SMALL SME)

50-250 – RECRUIT MIN 1 TO GROUP 1 (MEDIUM SME)

250 or more RECRUIT TO GROUP 2 (LARGER COMPANIES)

38. And what business sector best defines the core activity of your company?

RECORD ACTUAL RESPONSE

AIM FOR A MIX

39. Is your business based at your home or the home of another of the company's employees or does it have its own business premises?

At home **THANK AND CLOSE**
Own business premises
Refused **THANK AND CLOSE**

40. Does your business premises have a water meter?

Yes
No

AIM FOR MIN 3 CODE 1 AND CODE 2

41. Does your business operate from more than one site?

Yes
No **CONTINUE TO Q16**
Don't know **CONTINUE TO Q16**

AIM FOR MINIMUM 3 CODE 1

42. From how many sites does your business operate?

..... **WRITE IN**

43. Are all of your business sites located in England?

Yes
No

IF NO AT Q12

44. Are any of your business sites located in Wales?

Yes
No

AIM FOR MINIMUM 2 CODE 2

45. Does each site make its own decisions about choice of utility suppliers?

Yes
No

46. Are you able to speak on behalf of one or all of these sites?

Yes
No

47. How much do you agree or disagree that on a day to day basis, your business depends on its water supply and sewerage services (e.g. removal and treatment of used/waste water) in order to operate?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

AIM FOR A MIX

We would like to invite you to take part in research on a website providing information for consumers about water and sewerage services. This will involve a 1.5 hour focus group with other business people on INSERT DATE at INSERT VENUE. We will be offering an incentive of £75 to take part. A video recording will also be made of the groups.

Would you be willing to take part and be recorded in the session? The recording will only be used for the purposes of this research and seen by those working on the project.

Yes – **Make appointment**

No – **Thank and close**

14.4 Household Accompanied Surf Discussion Guide

Project Faucet (15290L) DISCUSSION GUIDE - CONSUMER

Introduction

- Thanks & welcome. Introduce myself
- Explanation of research – what’s going to happen? How long we are here?
- Eye tracking - explanation
- Switch off mobile phone
- Confidentiality
- Consent to pass on copies to our client

Section 1: Introduction (3 mins)

Objective: *To allow the participant to ease into the interview, introduce themselves and understand the company they work for*

- Name, age, household, occupation
- Metered or non-metered – thoughts on this?
- Who pays the bill?

Section 2: Information needs (4 mins)

Objective: *To understand respondent’s current engagement with information around water*

- Thinking specifically about water, who provides your water and sewerage services?
 - How do you feel about the service they provide?
- Have you ever experienced any problems with them?
 - If no, would you know what to do if you were dissatisfied with your water supplier or had a problem with it?
 - What would you do? Who would you contact?
 - If yes, what happened?
 - What did you do? What was the outcome?
 - Were you satisfied with this?
 - If no, why not? Did you follow this up anywhere / with any formal bodies?
 - If contacted a formal body: What did you do?
 - How easy or difficult was it?
 - What was the outcome?
- When it comes to your water and sewerage service provider, what sorts of information do you need?
 - Do you need any?
 - If yes, what do you need to know?
 - Probe: saving water tips, general information, tools to determine metered vs. non-metered, average bill prices, what to do if there is a leak/flooding, how their company compares to others, anything else?
 - Where would you look first for this kind of information? And then where?

- Probe: Google search, your water supplier, Ofwat, CCWater, online, media, social media, formal communications from the company, Yellow Pages, anywhere else?

For those who are already engaged with information on water and sewerage services:

- How easy is it to find information about water and sewerage services?
- Where do you look?
- How easy is it to understand the information?
 - How clear is it? (MODERATOR: clarify what site they are referring to if respondent has comments)
- What could be improved for you?

Time check: 7 minutes

Section 3: Finding help and advice (18 mins)

Objective: To understand what respondents search for if they want to find help and advice when they have a problem

MODERATOR: GIVE RESPONDENT THE 1 OF THE BELOW SCENARIOS (ROTATE THE ORDER) AND ALLOW RESPONDENT TO ACCESS GOOGLE – THEY CAN SEARCH OR GO STRAIGHT TO A SITE OF THEIR CHOICE. GIVE RESPONDENT 5-10 MINUTES TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION TO ANSWER THEIR PROBLEM. IF THEY SEARCH, MAKE A NOTE OF LANGUAGE USED

Scenario for metered consumers - My metered bill is considerably higher than the last bill I received. I don't think I've used any more water than normal so what could have caused it? NAVIGATE TO 'My measured bill is high' FAQ IF NOT FOUND SPONTANEOUSLY

Scenario for non metered consumers – My metered water bill is expensive but I already am as frugal as I think I can be. Is there anything else I can do? NAVIGATE TO 'How can I save water in my home?' FAQ IF NOT FOUND SPONTANEOUSLY

- Before you start, can you tell me how you will go about finding this info?
- Where do you expect to find it?
- How do you feel about the prospect of finding this information?

AFTER 5 MINUTES:

- How easy or difficult was it to find information to answer this?
- Why did you choose this site?
- How clear is the information you have found?
- Do you still have questions?
- Is this where you would have expected to find the information?

MODERATOR: REDIRECT TO THE CCWATER WEBSITE

Section 4: The Consumer Council for Water website specifically (23 mins)

Objective: To gain feedback on this site specifically

- We are particularly interested in the Consumer Council for Water website and I would like you try to find information on the same problem but on this site specifically

Task 1: Find information from the scenarios

**MODERATOR: ALLOW 5-10 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENT TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION
IF NOT FOUND ROUTE TO THE RIGHT PAGE VIA CAMTASIA SKIPPING OVER ANY IRRELEVANT PAGES**

- How easy or difficult was it to find information about this?
- How clear is the information you have found?
- Do you still have questions?
 - If yes, what? Are there any gaps?
- How does this site compare with the first site we looked at?

Task 2: I'd now like to look at the wider information on the site. Let's go back to the home page and look at what's on the site (MODERATOR – DO THIS VIA CAMTASIA)

MODERATOR: ALLOW 5-10 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENT TO HAVE A LOOK AROUND THE SITE

REVIEW OF SITE GENERALLY

- What are your thoughts on this site?
- Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about it at this point?
- Who do you think this site is aimed at?

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like or dislike?
 - What do you think about the style i.e. font used?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included in each of the tabs?
 - Is this logical?
 - Would you change how any of the tabs or headings are described?
 - What about what is included under each of these?

INFORMATION:

- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - If not, what is missing? What would you like to see?

EASE OF UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why/why not? Are there any sections in particular you find confusing / using jargon / difficult language / unsuitable tone?

ACCESSIBILITY SECTION TO BE REINSTATED WHEN THOSE WHO USE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ARE IDENTIFIED

COMPLAINTS AND FAQs SECTION:

Task 3: IF NOT FOUND SPONTANEOUSLY: The site has a section to submit complaints and an FAQ section. Can I ask you to find this please:

- How easy was it to find this section?
 - What are your thought on the layout?
 - What about ease of navigation?

- Is it clear how to make a complaint / what to do?
 - Could anything be improved?
- In terms of the FAQs how clear are the questions and answers?
 - What are your thoughts on the ease of navigation of these pages?
 - How could these pages be improved?

MODERATOR: Review 1 of the following with each respondent:
Sewer flooding
Where can I find my company's contact details?

WATER METER TOOL

Task 4: (Unmetered consumers only) There is a tool to see whether you would be better off on a water meter. Can I ask you to find this use it to calculate whether you would be better off switching?

- How easy was it to find it?
 - Does its location on the website make sense?
 - Does it stand out?
- How easy is this tool to use?
 - What could be improved?
- How clear is the result?
 - Is it clear what to do next?
- Can you think of any other tools that would be useful to include?
- What are your thoughts on a tool which would help consumers on low incomes find out if they might be eligible to apply for a reduced bill?
 - What would you expect this to be?

HOW IS MY WATER COMPANY DOING

Task 5: Please find this page and have a read of what's there:

- How easy was it to find it?
 - How useful / appealing is this page?
 - Are there any other measures you would like to see here?
 - Probe: sewer flooding, leakage, interruptions to the water supply, metering, daily water consumption, average bill prices, drinking water quality.
 - What would make you look at this page?

CONSUMER RESEARCH TAB

Task 6: Please find this page and have a read of what's there:

- What are your thoughts on this?
- How appealing is this?

OVERALL

- After reviewing this site what do you think is the most useful / important information included here?
 - Does this fit with what you would expect from a site for consumers about the water industry? Why?

[Section 5: Competitor review](#) (12 mins)

Objective: To compare the website to 2 competitor sites (6 minutes per site)

Task 7: I'd now like you to look at a couple of other similar sites and tell me what you think: rotate the order via Camtasia

Legal Ombudsman (www.legalombudsman.org.uk)

Passenger Focus (www.passengerfocus.org.uk)

- What are your immediate reactions to the site?
 - How would you describe it?
 - Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about this site? Why?
 - Is this site doing anything better / worse than the site we just looked at? Why?

MODERATOR: REVIEW SITE ON SAME ASPECTS AS CCWATER SITE

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like?
 - What about dislikes?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site (spontaneous)?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included?
 - Is this presented logically? Why do you say that?

INFORMATION:

- What do you think about the information included on this site (spontaneous)?
 - What do you think this site is trying to deliver?
 - What do you think about that?
- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - If no, what is missing?
 - Where would you expect this to be on the site?
- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why / why not?
 - Are there any sections in particular you find confusing / using jargon / difficult language / unsuitable tone?
 - If yes, what are these? Why is this confusing?

REPEAT FOR 2ND COMPETITOR SITE

THANK & CLOSE

Time check 60 minutes

14.5 Non-Household Accompanied Surf Discussion Guide

Project Faucet (15290L) DISCUSSION GUIDE – B2B

Introduction

- Thanks & welcome. Introduce myself
- Explanation of research – what’s going to happen? How long we are here?
- Eye tracking - explanation
- Switch off mobile phone
- Confidentiality
- Consent to pass on copies to our client

Section 1: Introduction (3 mins)

Objective: *To allow the participant to ease into the interview, introduce themselves and understand the company they work for*

- Name
- Company – size, employees, no. sites, in England, Wales or both, type of business?
- Position in the company
- Responsibilities in terms of utility payments, decision over provider
 - What about across other sites?
 - For water are you metered or unmetered?
 - How do you feel about this?

Section 2: Information needs (8 mins)

Objective: *To understand respondent’s current engagement with information around water – ensure feedback is regarding their business needs only (not household)*

- Thinking specifically about water and sewerage services, who is your provider or providers?
 - How do you feel about their services – satisfied/dissatisfied?
- Have you ever experienced any problems with your water and/or sewerage services?
 - If no, would you know what action to take if you were dissatisfied with your water and/or sewerage services?
 - What would you do? Who would you contact?
 - If yes, what happened?
 - What did you do?
 - What was the outcome? Were you satisfied with this?
 - If no, why not? Did you follow this up anywhere / with any formal bodies?
 - If you contacted a formal body: Who were they and what did you do?
 - How easy or difficult was it?
 - What was the outcome?
- When it comes to your water and sewerage services, what sorts of information do you need?
 - Do you need any?
 - If no, why do you say that?
 - If yes, what do you need to know?

- Probe: competition in the water industry, saving water tips, reporting leaks, tariffs for businesses, how to complain/make contact, guaranteed standards of service, general information, tools to determine metered vs. non-metered, anything else?
- Thinking specifically about market reform / competition in the water industry, what specifically do you need to know about this?

MODERATOR: if asked for more info on market reform explain that competition in the water industry is being expanded so that from April 2017 all non-households in England will be able to choose who reads their water meter, sends their water & sewerage bills, and provides consumer service. In Wales things are different and only non-households using more than 50,000m³ of water a year can do this

- If necessary prompt: how it works, when will other non-household customers in England be able to switch and what services can they switch, who are the new service providers and what can they offer me?
 - What is the most important thing for you to know?
 - How should this be communicated?
- Where would you look first to get this kind of information? And then where else?
 - Probe: Google search, your water supplier, Ofwat, CCWater, Defra, online, media, social media, communications in your company (e-mails / memos), representative organisation i.e. FSB, MEUC, anywhere else?
- What general information for businesses would you expect to see on a site dedicated to information about water and sewerage services?
 - Probe: Ways to reduce bills, information on billing and charges, performance of water companies, environmental activities of water companies, how to prevent leaks, info about surface water drainage, FAQs for consumers, anything else?

For those who are already engaged with information on water provision:

- How easy is it to find information about water and/or sewerage services?
- Where do you look?
- How easy is it to understand the information?
 - How clear is it? (MODERATOR: clarify what site they are referring to if respondent has comments)
- What could be improved for you?

Time check: 11 minutes

Section 3: Finding information on competition in the water and sewerage industry (12 mins)

Objective: *To understand what respondents search for if they want to find information on competition in the water and sewerage industry*

MODERATOR: GIVE RESPONDENT THE BELOW SCENARIO AND ALLOW RESPONDENT TO ACCESS GOOGLE – THEY CAN SEARCH OR GO STRAIGHT TO A SITE OF THEIR CHOICE. GIVE RESPONDENT 5-10 MINUTES TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION. IF THEY SEARCH, MAKE A NOTE OF LANGUAGE USED

Scenario: Market reform in the water industry means that from 2017 all businesses in England and some in Wales (those using over 50,000 cubic meters of water a year) will be able to choose another company to read their water meter, send them their water and sewerage bills and provide consumer service. I would like you to try and find some useful information about being able to choose one of the new service providers and general competition information

- Before you start, can you tell me what you think you might want to know about this? What questions immediately come to mind?
- How do you think you will go about finding this information? Where do you expect to find it?
- How do you feel about the prospect of finding this information?

AFTER 5 MINUTES:

- How easy or difficult was it to find information about competition in the water and sewerage industry
 - Why do you say that?
- Why did you choose this site? Is the site familiar to you?
- How clear is the information you have found?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Do you still have questions?
 - If yes, what?
- Is this where you would have expected to find the information?
 - Why / why not?

MODERATOR: REDIRECT TO THE CCWATER WEBSITE

Section 4: The Consumer Council for Water website specifically (25 mins)

Objective: *To gain feedback on this site specifically*

Task 1: Review information on competition in the water and sewerage industry

- We are particularly interested in the Consumer Council for Water website and I would like you try to find answers to the questions you have about competition in the water and sewerage industry on this site specifically

MODERATOR: ALLOW 5-10 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENT TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION

- How easy or difficult was it to find information about this?
 - Why do you say that?
- How clear is the information you have found?
 - Why do you say that?

- Do you still have questions?
 - If yes, what are they?
 - Are there any information gaps?
 - What else do you need to know?
- Did you expect to find the all information on this website or be directed to another website?
- What, in your opinion, should be on this website about competition in the water and sewerage industry?
- How does this site compare with the first site we looked at?
 - Why do you say that?

Task 2: I'd now like to look at the wider information on the site. Let's go back to the home page and look at what's on the site (MODERATOR – DO THIS VIA CAMTASIA TO OBTAIN THE CORRECT URL)

MODERATOR: ALLOW 5-10 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENT TO HAVE A LOOK AROUND THE SITE

REVIEW OF SITE GENERALLY:

- What are your thoughts on this site?
 - Why do you say that?
- Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about it at this point?
 - If yes, what? Why?

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like?
 - What about dislikes?
 - What do you think about the style i.e. font used/layout?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included in each of the webpages?
 - Is this logical? Why do you say that?
 - Would you change how any of the webpages or headings are described?
 - What about what is included under each of these?

INFORMATION:

- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - Probe: market reform / competition in the water industry, saving water tips, reporting leaks, tariffs for businesses, how to complain/make contact, guaranteed standards of service, ways to reduce bills, information on billing, performance of water companies, environmental activities of water companies, how to prevent leaks, info about surface water drainage general information, tools to determine metered vs. non-metered, anything else, anything else?
 - If not, what is missing? What would you like to see?
 - Where would you expect this to be on the site? (MODERATOR: IF THE INFO IS THERE BUT NOT WHERE THEY EXPECT OR NOT SEEN, PROBE ON THIS)

EASE OF UNDERSTANDING:

- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why / why not?
 - Are there any sections in particular you find confusing?

- If yes, what are these?
 - Why is this confusing?

COMPLAINTS AND FAQs SECTION:

Task 4: The site has a FAQs section, can I ask you to find this and have a look at some of the information included there:

- How easy was it to find this section?
 - What are your thoughts on the layout?
 - What about ease of navigation?
- What about the information on the section?
 - Is there enough for you as a business consumer?
 - If no, what is missing?
- How clear are the question and answers?
 - Why do you say that?
 - How could this be improved for you as a business consumer?

CHOOSING CCWATER'S SITE

- Now you have seen this site, what do you think would make you come to this site specifically for information about water and sewerage?
 - Why do you say that?
- What would be a barrier to you choosing this site for information?
 - Probe: lack of awareness of it, lack of relevant information, navigation issues, difficult to understand, other sites better – which ones?, anything else
 - Why do you say that?
 - What would improve the site?

MODERATOR: IF A SPECIFIC SITE MENTIONED ABOVE, REVIEW THIS FIRST

Section 5: Competitor website review (12 mins)

Objective: To compare the website to 2 competitor sites (6 minutes per site)

Task 5: I'd now like you to look at a couple of other similar sites and tell me what you think.

Federation of Small Business (<http://www.fsb.org.uk/>)

Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/>)

Go to relevant site:

- What are your immediate reactions to the site?
 - How would you describe it?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about this site? Why?
 - Is this site doing anything better / worse than the site we just looked at? Why?

MODERATOR: REVIEW SITE ON SAME ASPECTS AS CCWATER SITE

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like?
 - What about dislikes?
- What does the look and feel say to you about the brand? Does it say anything?

- Is this important about a website? Why / why not?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site (spontaneous)?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included?
 - Is this presented logically? Why do you say that?

INFORMATION:

- What do you think about the information included on this site (spontaneous)?
 - Why do you say that?
 - What do you think this site is trying to deliver?
 - What do you think about that?
- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - If no, what is missing?
 - Where would you expect this to be on the site?
- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why / why not?
 - Are there any sections in particular you find confusing?
 - If yes, what are these?
 - Why is this confusing?

REPEAT FOR 2ND COMPETITOR SITE
THANK & CLOSE

Time check 60 minutes

14.6 Non-Household Focus Group Discussion Guide

Project Faucet (15290L) DISCUSSION GUIDE – B2B

Introduction

- Thanks & welcome. Introduce myself
- Explanation of research – what's going to happen? How long we are here?
- Ground rules – everyone speak and share views. Understand that the research is exploring early stage discussions and we are collecting feedback and guidance on these before developing further.
- Switch off mobile phone
- Confidentiality
- Audio / video recording
- Consent to pass on copies to our client

Section 1: Introduction & warm up (10 mins)

Objective: *To allow the participant to ease into the interview, say something and establish rapport with the group. To also allow participants to introduce themselves and the company that they work for*

- Name
- Company – length of time at company, size, employees, no. sites, location / area covered, type of business?
- Position in the company and a brief description of role and day-to-day management
- Responsibilities in terms of utility payments, decision over provider
 - How often are these reviewed? Why?
- Thinking specifically about water, are you metered or unmetered?
 - Has this always been the case?
 - Do you have a choice?
- Tell me about how you use water as part of your business
 - Moderator: Probe for high/low usage

Section 2: Information needs (20 mins)

Objective: *To understand participants' current engagement with information around water –*

Moderator: *STRESS that feedback should be with regards to their business needs only (not household).*

- Now I want us to focus on water and sewerages services:
- Who is your water and sewerage services provider or providers?
 - How long have they been your provider/s?
 - And if you had to rate them on their level of service, what would you be saying?
 - What are the good points? Why?
 - What are the frustrations? Why?
 - Have you ever had any issues with your water and/or sewerage providers?
 - What?
 - How did you go about resolving this, if at all?

- Did you contact any formal body? Who were they and why did you choose them?
 - How easy or difficult was it?
 - What was the outcome?
- **Team task: Moderator, split the group into two teams of 4 and ask them to work as a team to complete the following exercise. Give them access to flip charts and pen**
- When it comes to your water and sewerage services, what sorts of information do you need?
 - Do you need any?
 - If no, why do you say that?
 - If yes, what do you need to know?
 - Once covered spontaneously, moderator prompt: have these on A5 card and probe reactions. Do you need to know about:
 - Competition in the water industry
 - Saving water tips
 - Reporting leaks
 - Tariffs for businesses
 - How to complain/make contact
 - Guaranteed standards of service
 - General information
 - Tools to determine metered vs. non-metered
 - Moderator: once clear on reactions to these, ask the teams to rank these in order of most-least important for them as a business consumer
- **Moderator led flipchart exercise:**
 - What information **for businesses** would you expect to see on a site dedicated to information about water and sewerage services?
 - You shout them out and I'll list them on the flipchart...
 - If not mentioned, probe: Ways to reduce bills, information on billing and charges, performance of water companies, environmental activities of water companies, how to prevent leaks, info about surface water drainage, FAQs for consumers, anything else?
 - Let's rank these according to what is most / least important and why. We'll do this diplomatically so that we get everyone's individual rankings.

Time check: 35 minutes

Section 3: Information on competition in the water and sewerage industry (20 mins)

Objective: To understand awareness of market reform and what respondents search for if they want to find information on competition in the water and sewerage industry

- Thinking specifically about the water and sewerage market and competition in the water industry, are you aware of any changes that might be happening?
- **Team task: Moderator, put them back in to two teams of 4 and ask them to work as a team to complete the following exercise. Give them access to flip charts and pen**

MODERATOR: explain that competition in the water industry is being expanded so that from April 2017 all non-households in England will be able to choose who reads their water meter, sends their water & sewerage bills, and provides consumer service. In Wales things are different and only non-households using more than 50,000m³ of water a year can do this

- What you might want to know about this?
 - What are the questions that immediately spring to mind?
 - What do you need to know for your business? If necessary prompt; restrictions, what services can they switch, who are new providers?
 - Why?
- How should this change be communicated?
- Where would you look **first** to get this kind of information?
 - Why would this be your first stop?
- And then where else would you look? Why?
 - Moderator probe: Google search, your water supplier, Ofwat, CCWater, Defra, online, media, social media, communications in your company (e-mails / memos), representative organisation i.e. FSB, MEUC, anywhere else?

MODERATOR: STILL IN THEIR MINI TEAMS, GIVE THEM THE BELOW SCENARIO. ALLOW RESPONDENTS TO ACCESS GOOGLE – THEY CAN SEARCH OR GO STRAIGHT TO A SITE OF THEIR CHOICE. GIVE RESPONDENTS c.7 MINUTES TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION. ASK THEM TO MAKE A NOTE OF THEIR FEEDBACK / PROCESS / JOURNEY

Scenario: Market reform in the water industry means that from 2017 all businesses in England and some in Wales (those using over 50,000 cubic meters of water a year) will be able to choose another company to read their water meter, send them their water and sewerage bills and provide consumer service. I would like you to try and find some useful information about being able to choose one of the new service providers and general competition information

AFTER SEARCH:

- Let's re-group and each team give their summary:
 - How easy or difficult was it to find information about competition in the water and sewerage industry
 - Why do you say that?
 - Why did you choose this site? Is the site familiar to you?
 - How clear is the information you have found?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Have you answered all of the questions that you said you wanted answers to?
 - If no, what's not been answered?
 - Do you have any new questions?
 - What are they? What prompted this need?

MODERATOR: REDIRECT TO THE CCWATER WEBSITE

Section 4: The Consumer Council for Water website specifically (30 mins)

Objective: *To gain feedback on this site specifically*

Task 1: Review information on competition in the water and sewerage industry

- Moderator: put the participants back in their mini-groups with the brief that...
- ...We are particularly interested in feedback on the Consumer Council for Water website and I would like you try to find answers to the questions that you have about competition in the water and sewerage industry on this site specifically

MODERATOR: ALLOW c.7 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENT TO FIND AND READ THE INFORMATION

- How easy or difficult was it to find information about this?
 - Why do you say that?
- How clear is the information you have found?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Do you still have questions?
 - If yes, what are they?
 - Are there any information gaps?
 - What else do you need to know?
 - Did you expect to find all information on this website or be directed to another website? Why?
 - What, in your opinion, should be on this website about competition in the water and sewerage industry?
- How does this site compare with the other sites you just looked at for information?
 - Why do you say that?

Task 2: I'd now like to look at the wider information on the site. Let's go back to the home page and look at what's on the site

This is a moderator led exercise

REVIEW OF SITE GENERALLY:

- What are your thoughts on this site?
 - Why do you say that?
- Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about it at this point?
 - If yes, what? Why?
- Is it clear who the CCWater are as an organisation?
 - Why do you say that? Does it affect how you feel about the site? Probe how this affects their likelihood to use CCWater for complaints/information

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like?
 - What about dislikes?
 - What do you think about the style i.e. font used/layout?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
 - Does it flow in the way you would want to search this information? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included in each of the webpages?
 - Is this logical? Why do you say that?
 - Would you change how any of the webpages or headings are described?
 - What about what is included under each of these?

INFORMATION:

- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - Moderator, have these listed on the flipchart and use as a checklist to identify what is missing and the significance / impact of this: market reform / competition in the water industry, saving water tips, reporting leaks, tariffs for businesses, how to complain/make contact, guaranteed standards of service, ways to reduce bills, information on billing, performance of water companies, environmental activities of water companies, how to prevent leaks, info about surface water drainage general information, tools to determine metered vs. non-metered, anything else, anything else?
 - How relevant do you think the information on the website is to you as a business consumer?
 - What should be on there in order to support you as a business consumer?
 - For the information that you feel is missing, where would you expect this to be on the site? (MODERATOR: IF THE INFO IS THERE BUT NOT WHERE / HOW THEY EXPECT OR **NOT SEEN**, PROBE ON THIS)

EASE OF UNDERSTANDING:

- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why / why not?
 - Are there any sections in particular you find confusing?
 - If yes, what are these?

- Why is this confusing?
- Is the tone in which the information is written, what you want / expect? Why / why not?

COMPLAINTS AND FAQs SECTION:

Task 3: The site has a FAQs section, let's take a look at some of the information included here:

- How easy is it to find this section?
 - What are your thoughts on the layout?
 - What about ease of navigation?
- What about the information on the section?
 - Is there enough for you as a business consumer?
 - If no, what is missing?
- How clear are the question and answers?
 - Why do you say that?
 - How could this be improved for you as a business consumer?
 - Are all the questions that you want answered there?
 - Are they presented in a tone / style / language that agrees with you? Why / why not?

CHOOSING CCWATER'S SITE

- Now you have seen this site, what do you think would make you come to this site specifically for information about water and sewerage?
 - Why do you say that?
- What would be a barrier to you choosing this site for information?
 - Probe: lack of awareness of it, lack of relevant information, navigation issues, difficult to understand, other sites better – which ones?, anything else
 - Why do you say that?
 - What would improve the site? Why? What difference would this make?
 - Not appropriate? I.e. feel the information should be on a different site?

MODERATOR: IF A SPECIFIC SITE MENTIONED ABOVE, REVIEW THIS FIRST

Section 5: Competitor website review (10 mins)

Objective: To compare the website to 2 competitor sites (c.5 minutes per site)

Task 4: I'd now like you to look at a couple of other similar sites and tell me what you think.

Federation of Small Business (<http://www.fsb.org.uk/>)

Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/>)

Go to relevant site:

- What are your immediate reactions to the site?
 - How would you describe it?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Is there anything you particularly like / dislike about this site? Why?
 - Is this site doing anything better / worse than the site we just looked at?
 - What? Why?

MODERATOR: REVIEW SITE ON SAME ASPECTS AS CCWATER SITE

LAYOUT / LOOK AND FEEL:

- Purely on a visual basis what do you think of this site?
 - Is there anything you particularly like?
 - What about dislikes?
- What does the look and feel say to you about the brand? Does it say anything?
 - Is this important about a website? Why / why not?

NAVIGATION:

- How easy is it to navigate the site (spontaneous)?
 - Why do you say that?
 - Does it feel consumer friendly? Why / why not?
- What do you think about the information included?
 - Is this presented logically? Why do you say that?

INFORMATION:

- What do you think about the information included on this site (spontaneous)?
 - Why do you say that?
 - What do you think this site is trying to deliver?
 - What do you think about that?
- Is all the information you would expect to find on a site like this available?
 - If no, what is missing?
 - Where would you expect this to be on the site?
- Is the information on the site easy to understand? Why / why not?
 - Are there any sections in particular you find confusing?
 - If yes, what are these?
 - Why is this confusing?

REPEAT FOR 2ND COMPETITOR SITE

Final thoughts

- Is there anything else you want to tell me about what we have discussed today?
- Finally, what should I be telling CCWater about their website and information?
- How can CCWater support you as a business?
- Is the CCWater website, the best place for all the information that you need? Why / why not?
 - If no, where should this information be? Why?

THANK & CLOSE

Time check 90 minutes