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# Gloom and Bloom research - Measuring emotional engagement with water saving messages

Final Report

July 2023



[ccw.org.uk](https://www.ccw.org.uk)

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# Foreword

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This project is part of CCW's journey to explore what messages are more likely to encourage people to think about and take practical actions on how they use water. From positive and inspiring messages (Bloom) to the more serious and potentially shocking (Gloom) – Bloom and Gloom helped to explore the emotional reactions of people to campaign videos on water saving that have been used in the UK and elsewhere.

The findings from this report will help us in the development of future campaigns and messaging which aim to raise awareness about the need to reduce our water use. The report highlights the tradeoffs when mixing positive images with negative messages, how to think about how the messages are set (time and place) and the best way to end a video to make it more impactful. Messages that are targeted at society need to focus on why saving water matters, whilst messages targeted at individuals should explain how to take action and direct benefits of doing so. The report emphasises that different parts of society have different roles to play in the quest to reduce water use: there is a shared responsibility between people, water companies and government and wider stakeholders. And, there is also a role for education to improve on water conservation.

In summary, there doesn't seem to be consensus in the types of messages that are more likely to encourage people to take action, as some people react better to gloomier messages and others to happier ones. This indicates that a mix of messaging is needed to have maximum reach and impact. As we face up to a water scarce future, it will be increasingly important to develop campaigns that are targeted, impactful, raise awareness of the issues and give practical advice on how to use less water.

The findings from this project, will complement the insights we have gathered in other areas of our People and the Environment programme. These will help us and other stakeholders design campaigns that reach out to, and engage with a wide range of audiences to help them change their behavior by improving their understanding of how their water use can affect the environment and motivate them to take the actions needed to protect it.

Dr Mike Keil Senior Director of Policy, Research and Campaigning





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# Executive Summary and Recommendations



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# Executive summary (1)



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The research finds that that both positive (bloom) and negative (gloom) framing can be used for water saving messages – there is no overall preference. However, there are several nuances to consider in the way these messages are constructed, in order for them to be most effective. The following table (continued on the next slides) outlines these themes and the key findings, and these are reflected in the structure of the main body of the report.

Theme	Key finding
Settings (past vs. present, domestic vs. international)	<p>Generally, evidence suggests that <b>gloom</b> messages work better in settings that present the current issues around water shortages, as it was felt that the messages need to convey a sense of urgency in order to influence behaviour change.</p> <p>Consistency in the presentation of different settings was seen to be important. Participant engagement dropped at videos that mixed present and future settings, and also those that mixed domestic UK settings with international settings.</p> <p>While international videos that show water shortages around the world are impactful, they sometimes lack salience to inspire individual behaviour change in homes/households in England and Wales, with some participants feeling there was little they could personally do to address water shortages abroad.</p>
Messaging and Framing (including framing on why to change vs. how to change)	<p><b>Bloom</b> videos that used practical tips (<i>how to change</i>) presented as new information, were well received by participants, such as highlighting the finite nature of water as a resource by saying only 1% of water on earth is suitable for drinking. It was highlighted that information must be new: to not only reinforce what people already feel they know about saving water but also to provide additional insights – as it is a subject that people already feel reasonably informed about. Previous research into the <u>experiences and perceptions of customers on saving water and kitchen sink habits</u> has also highlighted that individuals are not as well informed as they think they are regarding saving water. Therefore, videos that provide new information can also help challenge common misconceptions. <b>Gloom</b> videos focussing on highlighting <i>why to change</i> were more appealing when using shocking or striking statistics.</p> <p>Generally, participants felt a blend of how and why to change (without overloading on information) would be the best approach to delivering effective messaging. Many felt that messages targeted at wider society should have a ‘why’ focus, while those targeted at individuals should emphasise the ‘how’.</p>





# Executive summary (2)

Theme	Key finding
Tone (humour vs. serious)	There were mixed views on the use of a <b>humorous</b> tone to convey bloom water saving messages. While humour was seen to be memorable and would inspire a 'buzz' if used correctly, messages need to take care to deploy enough of a serious undertone in order to not undermine the severity of the issue.
Call to action	<p>Evidence suggests that a more <b>gloomy</b> call to action is more effective. Participants generally preferred results that were more negative and direct (i.e. straight to the point) message is more likely to inspire behaviour change.</p> <p>It was found that a direct call to action has the most impact for encouraging water conservation. There was consensus that calls to action should be simple and easy to follow, regardless of their tone – and avoid using confusing terms or words.</p>
Messengers	Participants agreed that the messenger of water saving communications must be a credible source with knowledge on the issue, and not be seen to have a particular agenda. In the current environment of eroding trust, partnerships with charities and other organisations could become more important. Participants also felt a multi-channel approach would be the best way to reach a variety of different audiences.
Additional benefits	There was some feedback that including a tangible <b>positive benefit</b> of water saving such as the money you could save by doing it, may be motivational and considered an additional benefit – particularly considering the current cost of living crisis.
Engagement in the topic	Levels of engagement with the videos shown were similar to levels for videos Ipsos has tested on a range of other topics. This indicates that there is scope to engage the public with messages about water conservation through a video format.



# Executive summary (3)



Theme	Key finding
Societal context for water saving messages	<p>Most people agree that saving water is important – to help the environment and protect future generations, and society should treat it as seriously as the preservation of other resources. Most people also see running out of water as a threat to humanity, though fewer think we will feel the impacts of water shortages in our lifetimes.</p> <p>The responsibility to save water is not seen as just being with the public - but with water companies too, who should do more to fix leaks and save water themselves; some would like to see the government take more action.</p> <p>The weather affects attitudes to water saving. In the winter people expect to see water companies collecting and storing water, and in hot weather they expect water use to increase out of necessity. There was a feeling that water saving messages should acknowledge the current weather and context (e.g. if a hosepipe ban is in place); it's harder to talk about water saving when it's raining.</p>





# Recommendations



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## Finding

Communications to educate about the reality of water shortages and its implications is key. The research revealed that participants feel informed about the needs to save water and ways to do it – however many also felt there were misconceptions and an underestimation of the problem, compared to other environmental issues.

Messages should try to include a combination of why and how to change. Although, mixing gloom and bloom tones too much within the same frames may serve to confuse and cause the viewer to switch off.

While results showed humorous messages are more memorable, there is a danger that overly jovial messages may fail to land the urgency of the situation when it comes to water shortages. Participants also preferred any behavioural call to action to have a direct and impactful tone.

The online survey showed that all videos encourage participants to use less water to some extent. However, a direct call to action has the most impact.



## Implication

Future communications could focus on educating the public with new information that challenges the misconceptions about water shortages. Ideally campaigns should use a blend of information (perhaps through a multi-channel approach if not within the same asset) that highlight the urgency of the issue, and practical tips that are presented in an interesting way.

Gloom messages are best used to convey a sense of urgency (*why* to change), while bloom messages work well when presenting practical tips and empowering the viewer (*how* to change). An ideal approach could use a combination of the two framings, but care will need to be taken to ensure that the shift from *why* to *how* is not too jarring.

On balance, ensure that communications ultimately have at least a serious or gloomy undertone, and include a direct and simple call to action in order to inspire behavioural change.

Ensure that water saving communications include a direct, simple and easy to follow call to action to help inspire behaviour change and further encourage water saving habits.







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# Background, objectives and methodology



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# Background and research objectives

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## Background

Through our People and the Environment Programme, CCW is committed to lead efforts to raise awareness among people and businesses of the value of water in society and how our behaviour affects the environment. As part of this stream of work, we have been working to understand what types of messages can help people understand these issues and take action to change their behaviour to reduce their water use.

Despite considerable effort by water companies and stakeholders to develop engaging and effective water saving messages and campaigns, CCW's 'WaterVoice: Views of current customers on water resources' research indicates that awareness of the pressures on our water resources, and the subsequent need to use less water, remains low.

## Research Objectives

- Explore the relevance and importance of emotional engagement when testing different messages.
- Explore how people react to different messages, conveyed in short films, that explain the problem (i.e. why we need to save water) through testing positive and negative framings and different messaging focus/tactics.
- Investigate tone/framing of messages, to understand which elicit different emotional reactions, and have the potential to inspire future and sustained water-conservation behaviour.
- Understand how emotional response affects engagement with water saving messages and what this means for water saving messages.



# Our approach to the research

In order to effectively assess engagement with different existing water saving campaigns, Ipsos undertook a **mixed-method approach** including quantitative and qualitative insight. Our approach allowed us to measure both “System 1” (intuitive, subconscious) and “System 2” (logical, considered) responses to existing videos. A quantitative facial coding survey (phase 1, see next slide) aimed to get respondent’s unprompted reactions to different water saving messages. A qualitative approach through an online community (phase 2) and in-depth interviews (phase 2a) aimed to understand reasoning behind responses.

By measuring both “System 1” and “System 2” responses, results may appear to contradict each other at times. This may be due to the differences in methods used. It should also be considered that preferences for the way in which particular content is conveyed may influence responses (e.g. animation vs. live, people shown, etc.).

Phase 1 used a facial coding survey which automatically coded emotional responses to a range of positive and negative videos. This provided a detailed emotional response to existing content.

Phase 2 involved an online community hosted on the Community Direct platform, which followed Phase 1 to understand: recall of content messages; and intended changes in behaviour.

Phase 2a invited a further 10 participants identified from Phase 2 to gain insight into their current water use, barriers to action, and whether participating in the research had led to any sustained changed behaviours.



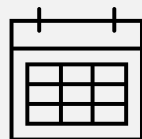
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# Methodology

## Phase 1 overview:



Online Survey of 600 adults in England (567) and Wales (33). Sample drawn from the Ipsos iSay online panel.



Fieldwork conducted between 28<sup>th</sup> February and 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023.



Quotas were set on age, gender and region to ensure the sample broadly reflected the general adult population.



The online survey used a facial coding module to understand initial emotional reactions to 8 pieces of content: 4 with positive (“Bloom”) and 4 with negative (“Gloom”) tones.

8 videos were tested via Facial Coding Technology. 150 participants saw each of the 8 videos, with each participant viewing two videos (the order of presentation was rotated). The facial coding data was processed to give a rolling average number of participants who respond with a different emotional response to each second of the videos shown.

Note: Not all 150 participants were able to complete the facial coding due to technical issues such as low lighting, camera not properly sited, etc. Throughout this report we highlight significant differences in response by those shown different videos. Significance testing was applied at the 95% level of confidence. In some places in this report, we describe differences which, while not significant, are notable and consistent and highlight broader trends in response.

## Phase 2 overview:



Online community recruited from phase 1 with 99 participants. Engagement over 2-week period with a range of tasks to understand reasons behind reactions, and measure recall and self-reported impact on intended behaviours.

## Phase 2a overview:



10 in-depth interviews recruited from the phase 2 online community to gain more in-depth individual-level response and supplement responses from the online community. Explored attitudes towards saving water, and the impact of taking part and watching the videos had on their own behaviour.





# Facial Coding Method

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The facial coding survey was completed online with a broadly representative sample of 600 adults in England and Wales. 150 adults assessed each piece of content. We assessed 8 pieces of content in total with each participant being exposed to 2 pieces of content – one positive, one negative.

With participant's permission, a webcam recorded participant responses, and the Entropik software automatically coded responses: these were classified as engagement, happiness, confusion, disgust, sadness, surprise, and neutral response. An overall engagement metric was also calculated. Aggregated responses were plotted against time-stamps in the content, to look at reactions to the content overall and pinpoint specific scenes, text or musical cues.

Participants were also asked a series of standard survey questions, first relating to their overall attitudes towards saving water, and secondly on their views towards the content they were shown during the facial coding modules.



# Facial coding approach

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## What is facial coding?

Facial coding is used to understand participants' unconscious emotional reactions to stimulus by using a webcam.

As emotions can strongly drive behaviours, it is important to investigate emotional responses when testing different messages. Used well, emotional cues can facilitate understanding and acceptance of messaging, and behavioural intentions: used poorly, they can cause disengagement and/or reinforce existing behaviours.

## The key benefits of using facial coding as a research method include:

- Enables understanding of people's reactions or feelings.
- More holistic view of respondents.
- Identifies and understands true reactions to stimulus, not only rationalised/reasoned response.
- Less prone to research bias than simple observation.
- Provides more differentiation and detail of emotional response than simple engagement/heightened arousal measures from EEGs (electroencephalograms, recording of brain activity) or heart-rate monitors.

Facial coding is an example of an implicit method, which helps to identify unconscious responses. This is paired with rational responses collected through survey questions to understand the sources and impacts of emotions.

Rather than restrict findings to claimed future behaviour, the study recorded multiple touchpoints with the same individuals to understand how messaging continued to resonate, and lead to sustained behaviour change.



# Facial Coding: Selection process

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In order to test the range of framings and messaging focus, Ipsos and CCW worked together in selecting content to check. The selection aimed to focus on whether impacts (intentions/behaviours) come from the nature of the framing (positive/negative), or other aspects of the content (e.g. whether shows domestic or international setting, clarity/nature of call to action).

Ipsos and CCW identified and agreed on similar materials based on a list of criteria for selection to minimise the impact of confounding variables.

All videos used were publicly available online.

**All pieces of stimulus were selected to be similar in terms of length and structure. Pairs of videos were selected to have common themes (shown on the same slide). Within each pair, stimulus was also selected to be as similar as possible in terms of the following:**

- Video format.
- Similar call to action.
- Similar in length, around 30-40 seconds.
- Consistent across the two framings, 'Gloom' and 'Bloom'.

(Please see the following slide for additional information.)



# Facial coding: Pairs of videos were selected to test gloom and bloom messaging, within different framings

## Theme 1: Using one Call to Action (turn off the tap)

The videos [Please turn off the faucet](#) (gloom) and [Save a drop](#) (bloom) were chosen to test the impact of messaging around a direct behavioural call to action (turning off the tap).

## Theme 2: Future (water is precious)

The videos [Future of reservoirs](#) (gloom) and [Water is precious](#) (bloom) focus on the **future** of water, how to safeguard water and the potential consequences of running out of water.

## Theme 3: Why to change (impact) vs. how to save (tips)

The videos [Water is a scarce resource](#) (gloom) and [Have you tried these water saving tips?](#) (bloom) raise awareness of water shortages (why to change behaviours) vs. what to do & how to save water.

## Theme 4: Direct impact on the environment

The videos [Save our water](#) (gloom) and [Sesame Street: water conservation](#) (bloom) were chosen to test messaging about the direct impact of water shortages on the environment.



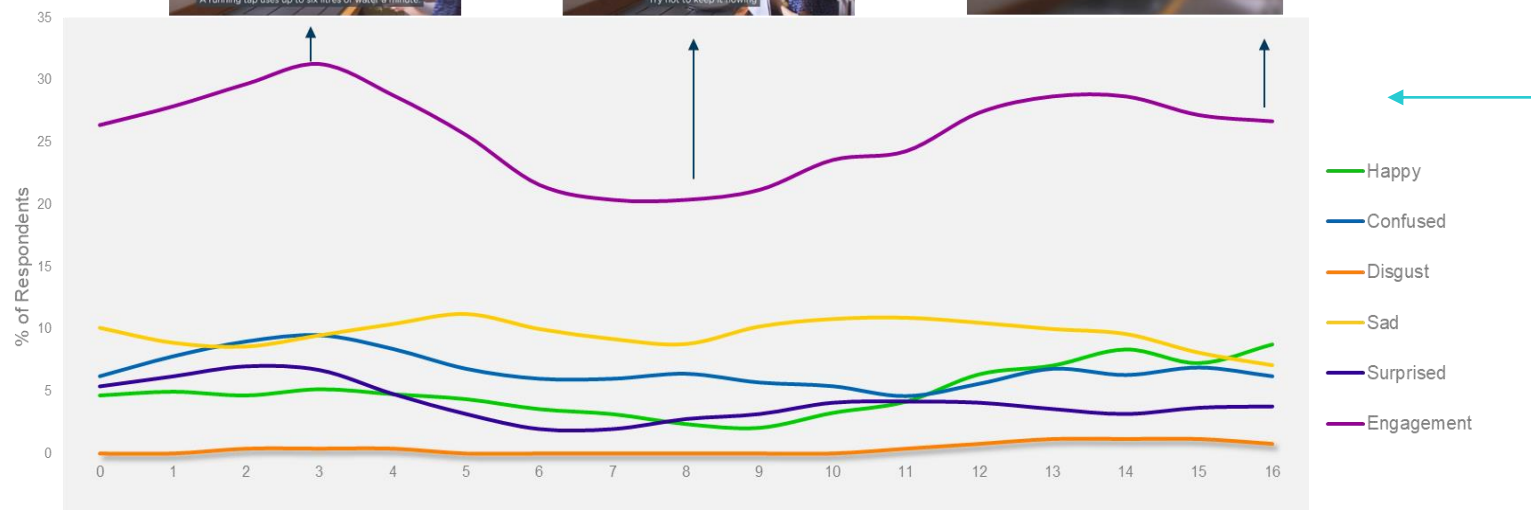


# How to read facial coding charts



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Facial coding is used to measure which immediate emotional response the video evoked, and at which points during the video these emotions spike.



## Different emotions measured:

**Happiness:** Happiness is one of the basic emotions, and synonymous with a smile, indicating the cheeks raising and the corners of the mouth pulling up, respectively.

**Surprise:** One of the basic emotions, and synonymous with a 'shocked' expression - raised eyebrows, eyes wide, mouth open.

**Confusion:** Confusion is synonymous with a lowering of the brows. Confusion is not one of the basic emotions but is a similar expression to anger and displayed at much higher levels in response to advertising.

**Sadness:** One of the basic emotions, and synonymous with the classic downturned mouth.

**Disgust:** One of the basic emotions, and synonymous with an expression of distaste.

**Overall Engagement:** Engagement is a composite metric that captures whether the audience expressed any of the most frequent emotions (Happy, Surprise, Disgusted, Confused, Sadness) throughout the viewing.

	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
Average	5.2%	6.6%	0.4%	9.5%	4.2%	25.9%	73%
Max	11.7%	10.7%	1.2%	11.9%	8.1%	34.5%	80%

Scores are calculated on a rolling average per second of the percentage of participants that reacted to the video (per emotion). A maximum score is also given for each emotion, signifying the maximum percentage of participants who reacted to the video at any point.





# Online community: the research questions and materials chosen for the online community followed key thematic findings identified in the facial coding survey

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## Settings

The research assessed whether different settings had an impact on participant responses to gloom vs. gloom content. The UK heatwave and Manchester City future video showed different time settings (present vs. future). The videos Shower in Indian village and Wild swim to save water contrasted domestic vs. international settings.

## Messaging and Framing

Videos were tested to capture response to different framings used. The video Why water matters and how to save demonstrated why water shortages are an issue and how to save water. While two Yorkshire water videos (TikTok tips and Collective responsibility) focused on individual behaviours vs. societal/systems changes.

## Tone of messaging

Videos were tested to capture response to the tone used. The Tiny Kettle video tested a *humours message* while Please turn off the faucet showed a *serious message*.

## Behavioural calls to action

Different direct call to action images were tested to explore further how people engage with positive (shown through Every drop counts) vs. negative (shown through Sydney turn it off campaign) calls to action. Different end frames were tested to understand which were most memorable.

Please click on video names (underlined above) to go to the 'All Content Tested' page in the appendix. This contains links to online versions of all the videos listed.



# In depth interviews: what was covered

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**10 in-depth interviews were conducted to further explore water saving attitudes and overall reflections. The following themes were discussed in the interviews:**

- Impact of the online community on current water saving attitudes.
- Further exploration into attitudes surrounding the importance of saving water, personal water usage and the barriers preventing people doing more to save water.
- Reflections on the most memorable and motivational content from the facial coding survey and online community to inspire action.
- Consideration on who should be responsible for delivering messages about saving water and the impact of the weather on messages.
- Overall thoughts on whether water saving messages should have a gloom (negative) or bloom (positive) focus.
- Final reflections on any change in attitudes or behaviour change as a result of the research.



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## The context: existing attitudes towards saving water

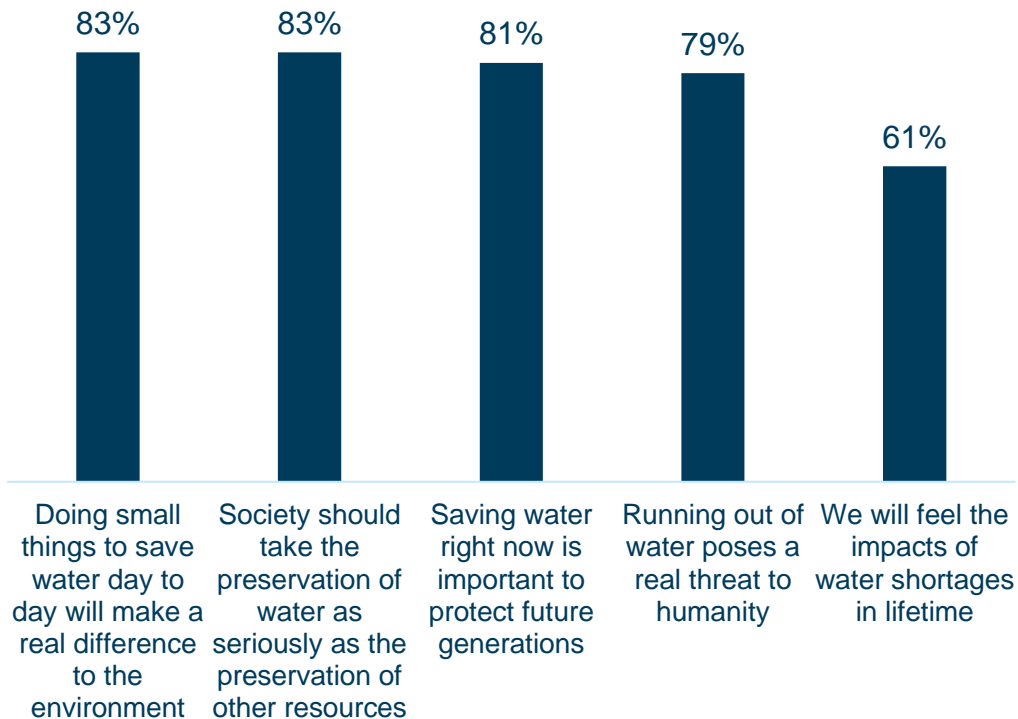
This chapter explores current views towards saving water and perceived barriers to behaviour change. This is important context to consider when assessing the effectiveness of communication campaigns.





# Water saving attitudes among research participants

The majority of participants think it is important to save water, while 6 in 10 (61%) agree we will feel the impacts of water shortages in our lifetime.



B3. To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements, relating to water? (% Agree)

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023).  
Base: Adults aged 18+ in England and Wales (600).

- Findings from the online community and in-depth interviews suggest that many participants feel it is important to save water, although there was some recognition that water is seen as an infinite resource – because of the constant availability in the home. Participants felt that the increasing effects of climate change show the importance of saving water and hosepipe bans have become necessary to prevent water shortages.
- However, there were mixed views about the future, with some participants concerned that the issue would become increasingly serious, and others confident that UK infrastructure would be able to cope.

“We have enough rainfall in the UK for us to never have water shortages if it was stored and collected correctly”

**Online Community respondent, female, 35-44**

“Saving water is going to become more important as the effects of climate change begin to take hold”

**Online Community respondent, male, 45-54**





# Contextual challenges

The online community and depth interviews explored the contextual challenges related to saving water.

## Whose responsibility?

There was a sense that responsibility to save water is not all down to the public and this should be recognised.

Many believe that water companies should do more to reduce leaks and preserve water. There were calls amongst some participants for the government to take more action.

## The weather impacted people's attitudes towards saving water:

1. Participants felt that water companies should be collecting and saving more water in the winter months.
2. Generally, they acknowledged that water usage is likely necessarily higher when it's hot outside.
3. There was a feeling that messaging about water conservation should acknowledge current weather conditions and contexts (e.g. hosepipe bans). It's easier to talk about conservation when it's hot and hosepipe bans are being spoken about, but more difficult when it's raining outside.

“Water companies should look at long range weather forecasts and implement hosepipe bans MUCH earlier; they should also be repairing pipe leaks MUCH faster & more of them! Different seasons certainly affect attitudes to water, in winter/spring when it is lashing rain most of the season.”

**Online Community Participant, female, 45-54**

“It's hard to stress it when you're going through a rainy period.”

**Interview participant, male, 45-54**



# Behavioural barriers

We asked depth interview participants what might prevent people taking steps to reduce their water use. Potential barriers towards saving water included:

Suggestions for mitigating these barriers included:



Laziness / unwillingness



Low saliency and lack of awareness of the issue and/or consequences



Lack of access to water efficient appliances



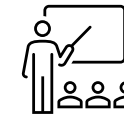
Lack of knowledge and understanding on how to save water



Lack of personal responsibility



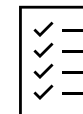
Lack of self-efficacy



Education



Raising awareness of the consequences



Campaigns

“It won’t affect me; it’ll affect other people”.  
**Interview participant, male, 55+**

“A lack of awareness and a selfish attitude ... ignorance”.  
**Interview participant, female, 45-54**

“Education ... some people just don’t think they can make an impact”.  
**Interview participant, female, 45-54**





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# Key Findings



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## 1. Settings

The research assessed whether different settings had an impact on participant responses to gloom vs. gloom content. In this chapter we look at settings based on when (present day vs. future depictions) and where (international vs. domestic).





# Settings: summary

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## Rationale:

Current water saving campaigns have deployed a variety of different settings to communicate messages. We explored which settings appear to work best and how they map to positive or negative messaging, focussing primarily on **when** (present vs. future) and **where** (international vs. domestic).

## Evidence:

Evidence is taken from content in the facial coding analysis that compared a video focussing on the present situation (*Water is precious*) vs. those depicting the future (*Future of reservoirs*). We explored this further in the community exercise with some different, more detailed campaign content (*2022 hosepipe ban vs. Manchester City FC future video*), and supplemented this with evidence from the follow-up depth interviews. Facial coding results also showed that there may be some key differences in engagement with videos that use international or domestic settings, so we explored this further by comparing an international setting (*Shower in Indian village*) vs. a domestic video (*UK wild swim to save water*) in our online community.

## Key findings:

- The present video (*Water is precious*) that demonstrated the current issue of water shortages did not engage participants as well as the more negative video (*Future of reservoirs*) in the facial coding, and evidence from the online community showed that people would prefer videos to get across the urgency of the situation right now.
- In the qualitative research, participants highlighted the importance of presenting new or surprising information about water shortages if using a present setting, in order to challenge existing misconceptions about the *current* severity of the issue.
- In the community, international settings (e.g. *Shower in the Indian village* video) were seen to be more inspirational and impactful in demonstrating the issue. However, they were seen as less personally salient – with some participants feeling there was little they could personally do to address water shortages abroad. This suggests domestic based videos may work best if asking individuals to change their behaviours at home.
- Consistency in the presentation of different settings was seen to be important. Participant engagement dropped at videos that mixed present and future settings, and in those that mixed domestic UK settings with international.



Please see [All Content Tested](#) in the appendix for video links.



# Present vs. future: content tested via facial coding



Two pieces of content that focused on the future consequences of water shortages were tested via the Ipsos facial coding survey. *Future of reservoirs* was more negative in showing a potential future scenario of running out of water, while *Water is precious* (a present-facing video) used animation and a positive tone to show how to safeguard water.

## Future of reservoirs (gloom)



## Water is precious (bloom) - present



Please click on the image to watch the video.

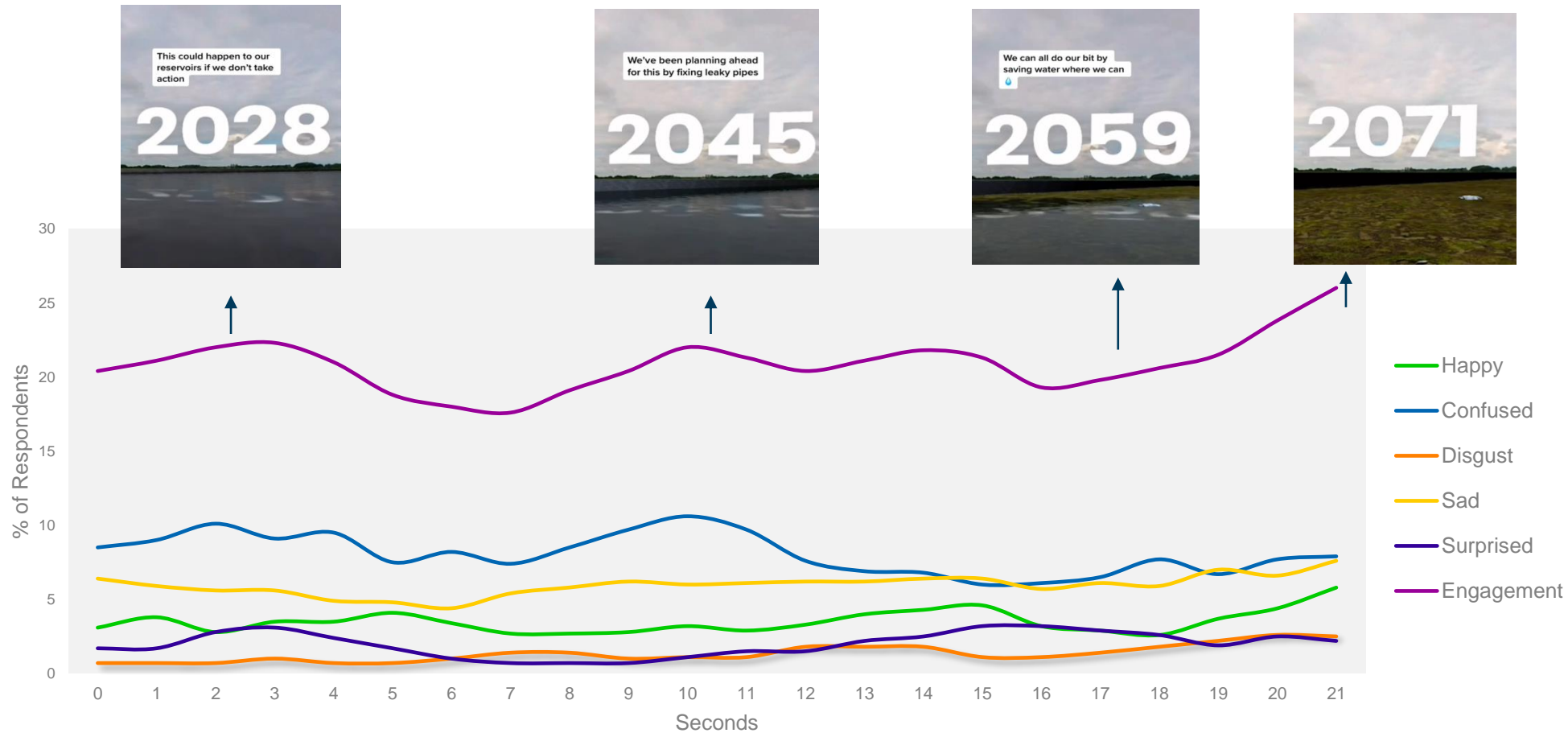




# Future of reservoirs (gloom – future): detailed emotional response



The *Future of reservoirs* video was generally highly engaging, particularly with the powerful end frame depicting the dry reservoir in 2071. However, participant confusion peaked when introducing positive text about planning ahead to fix leaky pipes.



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	3.6%	8.1%	1.4%	6.1%	2%	21.2%	77.3%
<b>Max</b>	7.6%	11.8%	3.3%	8.7%	4.3%	29.8%	81.9%



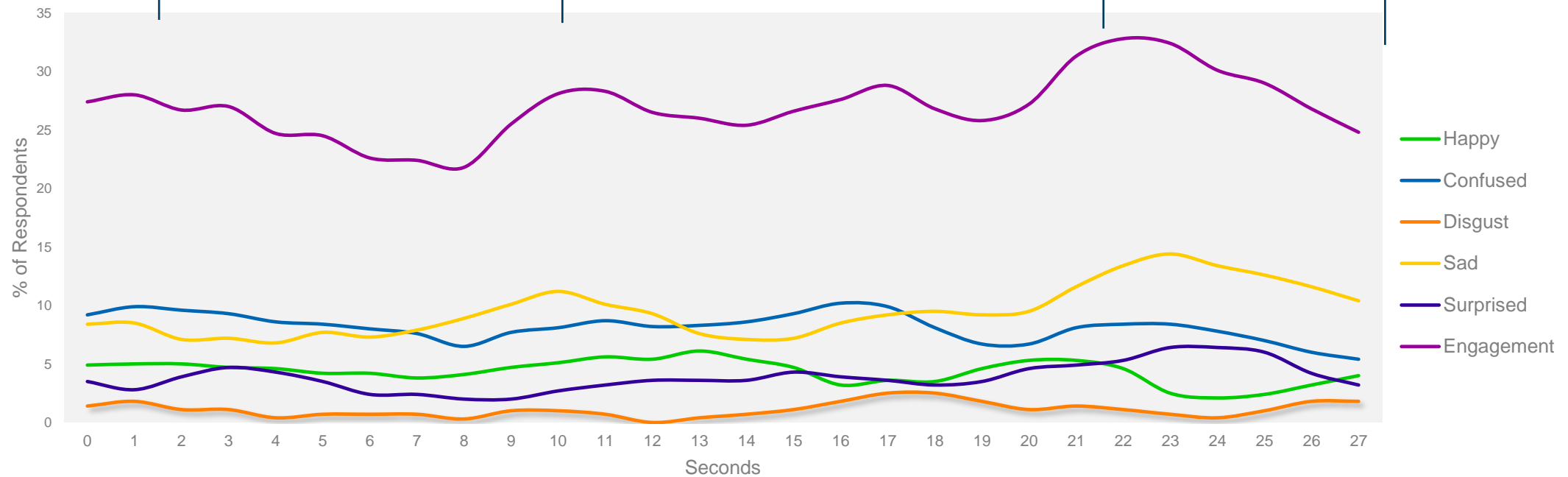


# Water is precious (bloom – present): detailed emotional response



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The *Water is precious* video enjoyed a high average engagement, though this tailed off when using the branded end frame – suggesting ending with powerful imagery is more impactful.



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	4.3%	8.1%	1.1%	9.4%	3.8%	26.8%	71.5%
<b>Max</b>	7.5%	11.5%	3.2%	15.8%	8.6%	34.4%	79.4%

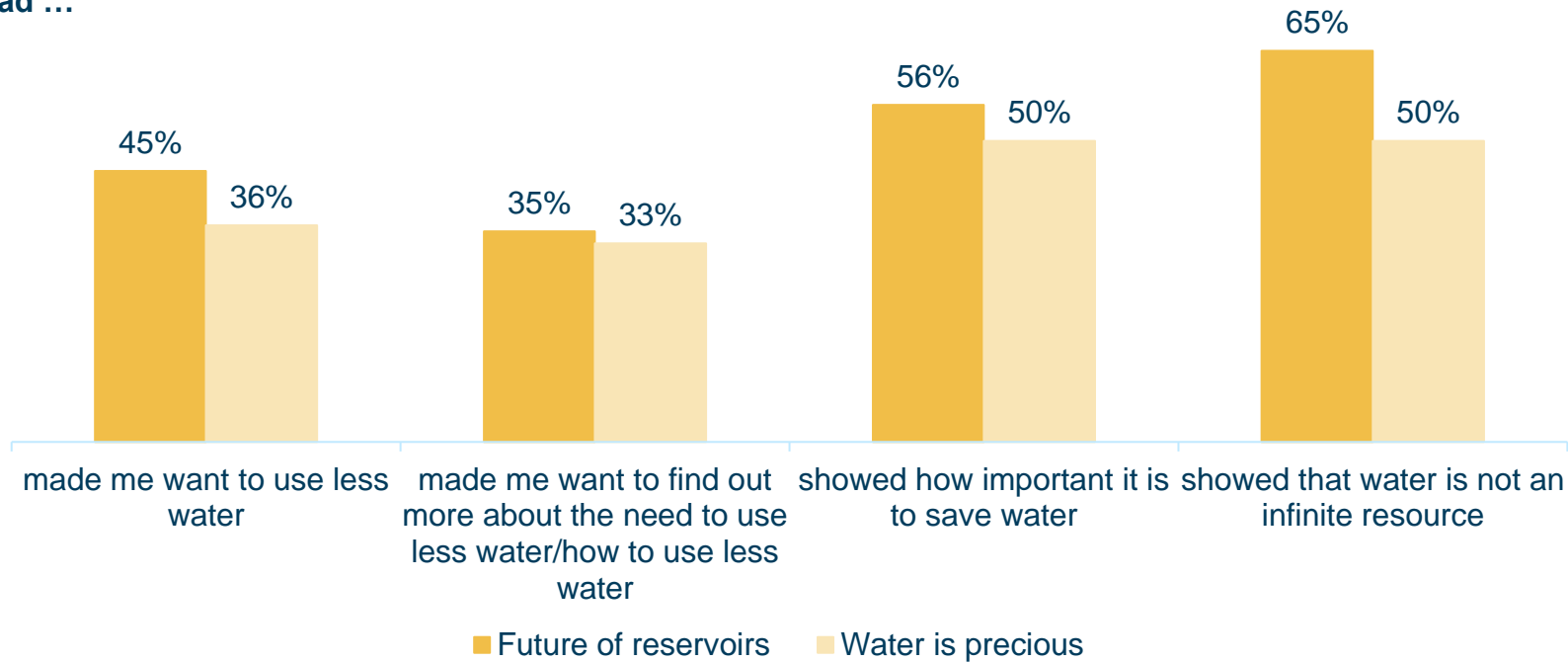




# Present vs. future: survey results

*Future of reservoirs (gloom)* was more likely to inspire action to use less water and the importance of doing so than *Water is precious (bloom)*.

## The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)



# Present vs. future: online community and depth interviews

Present vs. future messages were further explored in the online community by testing further content (as shown below).

2022 heatwave hosepipe ban coverage



Manchester City future video



“I think saving water is an urgent issue now to protect from severe water shortages long term. I think both types of video are convincing, but those that express urgency now are more likely to have an impact on current behaviour”

**Online Community Participant, female, 55+**

“How different society is going to look if they don't make changes”

**Interview participant, female, 45-54**

- Although online community participants did generally agree with the sentiment that water shortages are an issue now to safeguard the future, neither video particularly persuaded participants to take action.
- It was felt the *2022 hosepipe ban* video provided no new information, as they are not a new idea and have been previously introduced years ago. Therefore, the impact of this sort of message was diluted.
- A lack of urgency in future scenario videos was seen as a message that could discourage people from acting now.
- The football aspect was sometimes seen to take the importance away from the actual message it was getting across and not be serious or relevant enough – although some said it was a good way to connect with people.
- Within the depth interviews, participants strongly acknowledge the need for messages to show how water shortages will impact them personally to make them salient right now, while also including the future consequences of not taking action.
- Differences between the facial coding survey results and insights from the online community/depth interviews highlight how system 1 and system 2 preferences\* can have an impact. They show how participants felt in the moment vs. on reflection. Although the gloom messages are more memorable, the bloom video saw higher engagement in the facial coding survey.



# International vs. domestic: online community

Facial coding results (see [call to action](#) chapter) indicated that participants may engage with a UK domestic setting more than those using international settings – we therefore explored this further in the online community by comparing a UK domestic message vs. international based content.

- The *Shower in Indian village* video was seen as a powerful and impactful. This was also remembered well in the final reflection session of the online community.
- It was felt that the negative message (*Shower in Indian village*) struck a chord and hit home, but did not necessarily inspire personal responsibility because it was seen to be far away / people couldn't help from afar.
- The *wild swim* video was seen to be more relevant and led to comments on personal usage and the amount of water wasted in the UK.

Shower in Indian village



Wild swim to save water (UK)



“The first video gave me more motivation, but the second gave practical ideas and put water saving in better context. The first video was much more powerful but I think the positive video was best for encouraging people to make positive changes in their water usage”

**Online Community Participant, female, 55+**

Please click on video names (underlined above) to go to the '[All Content Tested](#)' page in the appendix. This contains links to online versions of all the videos listed. Please see [Call to Action](#) chapter for additional information.





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## 2. Messaging and Framing

This section explores different framings used in existing water saving campaigns, including those that focus on why to change behaviour (i.e. highlighting the importance of the issue) vs. those that focus more on how to change (i.e. offering practical tips)



# Messaging and framing: summary

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## Rationale:

This section explores different framings used in existing water saving campaigns, including those that focus on why to change behaviour (i.e. highlighting the importance of the issue) which tend to be more negative, vs. those that focus more on how to change (i.e. offering practical tips) which tend to be more positive. We also investigated views on the balance of addressing individual behaviour change vs. the lesser-used framing around the need for societal or systems changes.

## Evidence:

Facial coding results contrasted a negatively framed video (*Water is a scarce resource*) highlighting that water is scarce vs. a more positive video (*Have you tried these water saving tips?*) offering practical water saving tips. A video (*Why water matters*) that attempted to combine the two was explored further in the online community. The community and depth interviews were also used to further explore whether videos should focus on individuals or society, and in what context and how these messages might be communicated differently.

## Key findings:

- The *Water is scarce resource* video did get across the message that water is not an infinite resource, which was one of the key misconceptions cited as a barrier to behaviour change in the qualitative research.
- Videos with practical tips on how to save water were also well received, leading to more sustained engagement in the facial coding and also receiving positive feedback in the online community.
- Participants did however mention that any tips needed to be supported by new information and not only reinforce what people already know about saving water in order to maintain their engagement.
- In content demonstrating why to change, striking statistics were well-received to shock people into taking water-saving more seriously.
- Participants generally agreed that a blend of the how and why would be most useful in motivating people to change their behaviour. Messages targeted at wider society should have a 'why' focus, while those targeted at individuals should emphasise the 'how'.





# Why to change (impact) vs. how to change (tips): content tested via facial coding

Two pieces of content that raised awareness of water shortages by highlighting the reasons why to change (*Water is a scarce resource*) and how to make these changes (*Have you tried these water saving tips*) were tested via the Ipsos facial coding survey.

## Water is a scarce resource (gloom)



## Have you tried these water saving tips (bloom)

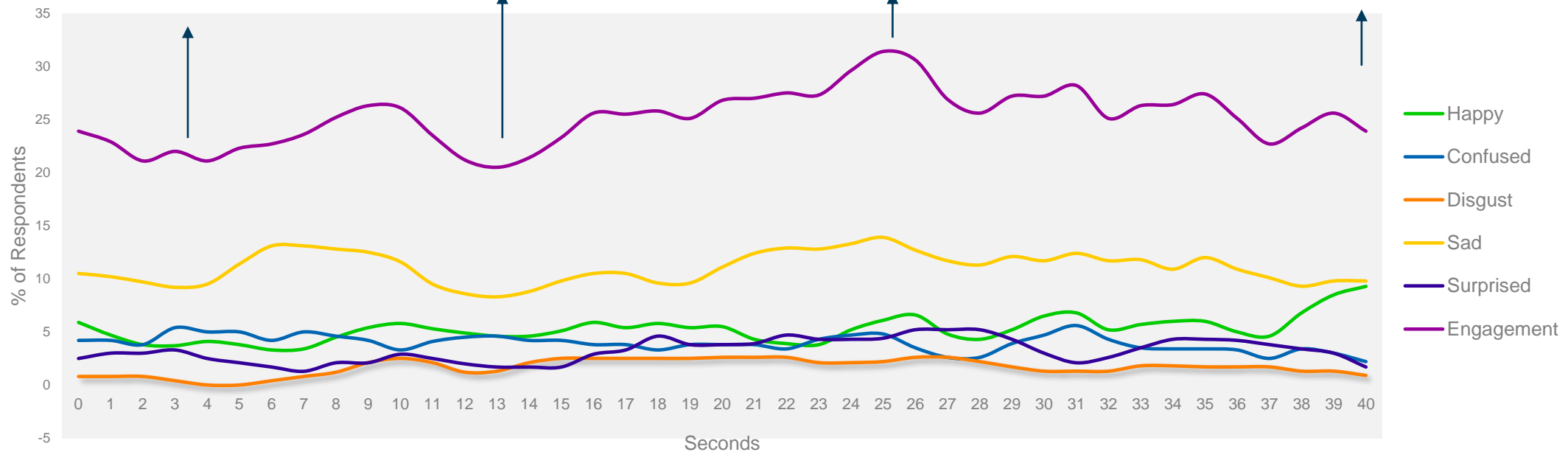


Please click on the image to watch the video.



# Water is a scarce resource (gloom): detailed emotional response

While engagement was reasonably high throughout this video, it dipped at the water tank representing levels of water available – suggesting overly conceptual representations may be less appealing and that these sorts of message should be direct and simplified.



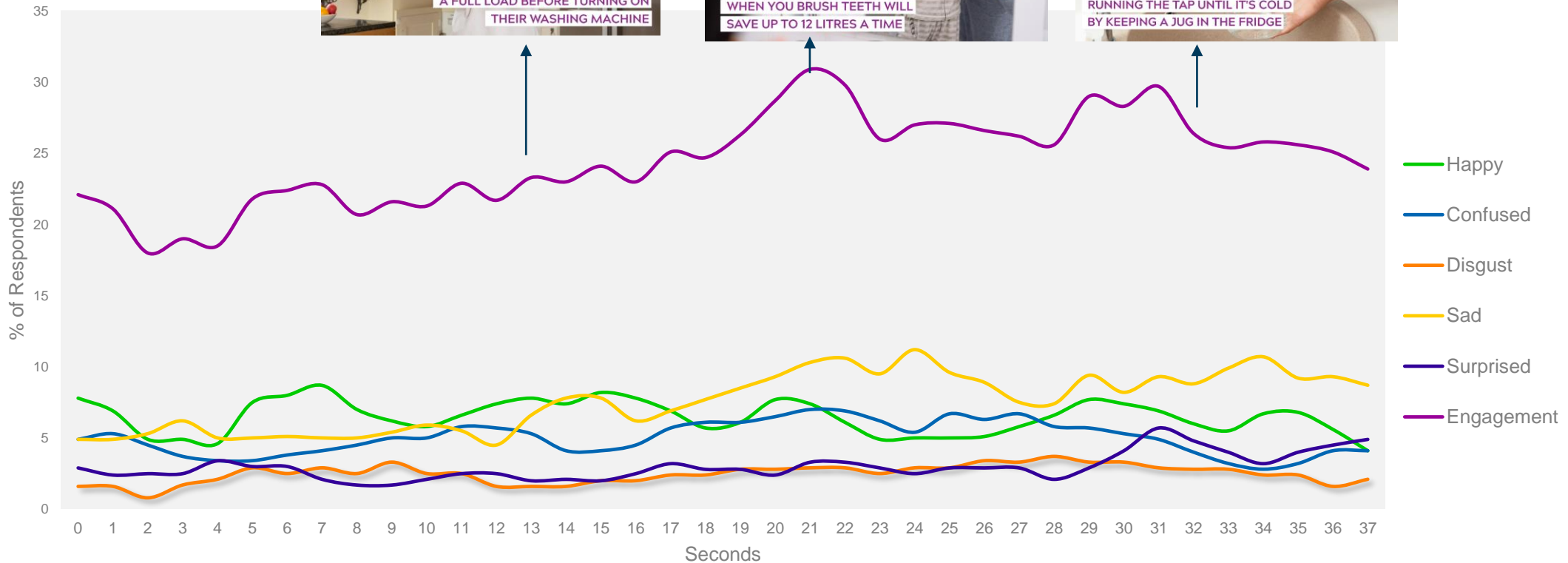
	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	5.4%	3.9%	1.6%	11%	3.1%	25.1%	74.1%
<b>Max</b>	10.3%	7.4%	3.8%	15.8%	5.3%	36.8%	82.6%

Base: All adults shown video water is a scarce resource (144).



# Water saving tips (bloom): detailed emotional response

Engagement with this video peaked when new ways of presenting statistics and helpful tips to save water were presented, with lower engagement with information that was less 'new'.



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	6.5%	5%	2.5%	7.6%	3%	24.5%	74.5%
<b>Max</b>	11.1%	8.8%	3.9%	15.2%	6.2%	37.3%	82.9%

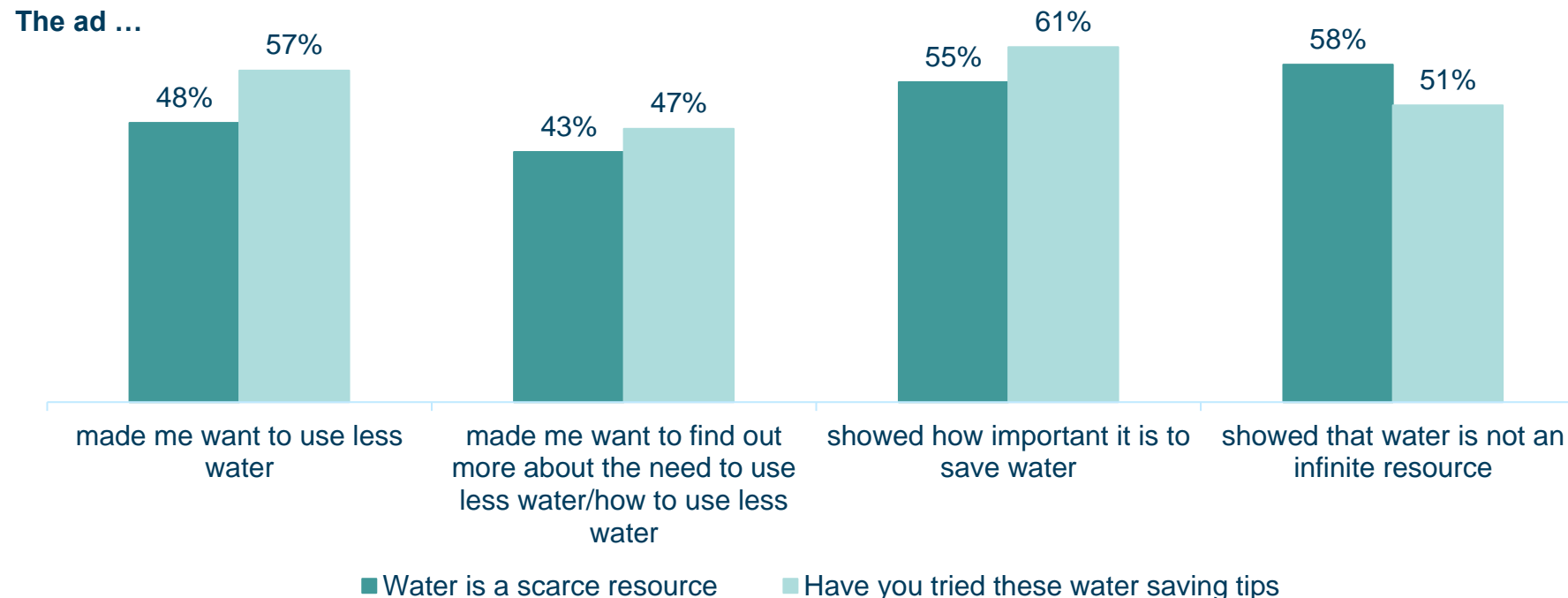
Base: All adults shown video have you tried these water saving tips (144).





# Why to change (impact) vs. how to save (tips): survey response

*Have you tried these water saving tips* (bloom) was more motivational than *Water is a scarce resource* (gloom) in making participants want to save water and showing the importance of this. While *Water is a scarce resource* was more effective at showing that water resources are not infinite. An ideal approach could use a combination of the two framings.



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)



# Why to change (impact) vs. how to save (tips): online community

Anglian Water - Why water matters  
and how to save



- The importance of individuals being shown both the why and how was highlighted by participants.
- Messages that included practical tips were well received. It was also felt that messages that linked to how much you could save were effective and useful.
- The use of statistics was well received when providing new information on why water saving is an issue, though there was some scepticism from a minority of participants about how serious the issue is.
- Certain statistics stood out, such as, how much water it takes to make a loaf of bread or packet of crisps and the percentage of drinkable water. These statistics were seen to provide an understanding of the hidden uses of water and was new information.

“Showing how many litres of water can be saved per action is fantastic! I think it is equally important to tell people HOW and WHY to change their habits”.

**Online Community Participant, female, 55+**

“I think there has to be a blend of how and why. It doesn't make sense to tell someone how, without telling them what the reason for that is”.

**Online Community Participant, male, 35-44**

“I think it is equally important to tell them why we need to reduce water use and it is useful to suggest ways they can do this and be concise of the decisions they make every day”.

**Online Community Participant, female 45-54**





# Individual vs. societal change: online community and depth interviews

When exploring participant attitudes towards saving water, some highlighted that it is not just the responsibility of the individual. We therefore assessed videos aimed at individual responsibility vs. those that promoted collective responsibility – and how bloom vs. gloom tone interacts with these framings.

Yorkshire water –  
tiktok tips



Yorkshire water – collective  
responsibility



- Across both the online community and depth interviews, saving water was widely viewed as everyone’s responsibility. However, it was felt that different parts of society have different roles to play (water companies, government, people) and responsibility cannot be placed solely on the individual.
- Therefore, participants felt that messages should have different focuses depending on the audience. For example, individual messages should focus on immediate individual change while societal messages should have a broader and longer-term focus to create meaningful change.
- Both videos were seen as important as everyone has a role in saving water. Some felt messages targeted at wider society should have a ‘why’ focus, while those targeted at individuals should emphasise the ‘how’.
- The practical tips from the first video were well received, reflecting evidence from other content that use practical tips.

“The responsibility is everyone’s, from the individual at home, to businesses and more importantly the water companies who need to fix leaks faster and more efficiently”

**Online Community participant,  
male, 55+**

Please click on video names (underlined above) to go to the 'All Content Tested' page in the appendix. This contains links to online versions of all the videos listed.





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### 3. Tone of messaging

This section explores tone of messaging, which considers how positive and negative messages impact engagement with water conservation messages and motivations to save water.





# Tone of messaging: summary

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## Rationale:

A key part of assessing positive or negative approaches to water saving messages is the tone used, with some deploying a more serious tone, and others a more jovial or humorous tone. We sought to contrast content with participants to understand how tone impacts engagement with campaigns and motivations to save water.

## Evidence:

We used facial coding and survey analysis to compare two videos that both demonstrate the impact on the environment of water shortages. One was more serious and uses powerful imagery (*Save our water*) while the other (*Sesame street*) uses animation and a humorous narrative. In the communities we further explored this by comparing another more serious video (*Please turn off the faucet*) with a humorous video (*Tiny Kettle*), and collected further feedback on both from the in-depth interviews.

## Key findings:

- Facial coding results showed that while the more serious video (*Save our water*) led to a higher maximum engagement score, participants generally preferred the humorous *Sesame street* video, and found it to be more motivational to save water.
- However, it may be the execution of the *Sesame street* video itself that was popular, as in the communities there was certainly no consensus on the use of humour. Some felt that using humour to depict an issue that should be taken seriously may serve to undermine the message. Conversely, others felt that a humorous tone, if used appropriately, may be more memorable and may create more of a buzz, which could amplify messaging and may in turn lead to behaviour change.
- Generally, participants agreed that regardless of the tone, the use of striking imagery that depicted the urgency of the situation was most impactful in leading to a consideration of water usage.



Please see [All Content Tested](#) in the appendix for video links.



# Humour vs. Serious: content tested via facial coding

Two pieces of content that focused on the direct impact of water shortages on the environment were tested via the facial coding survey. *Save our water* was more negative and direct with powerful imagery, while *Sesame Street* used animation and humorous content to show the impact of wasting water.

## Save our water (gloom)



## Sesame Street – Water Conservation (bloom)



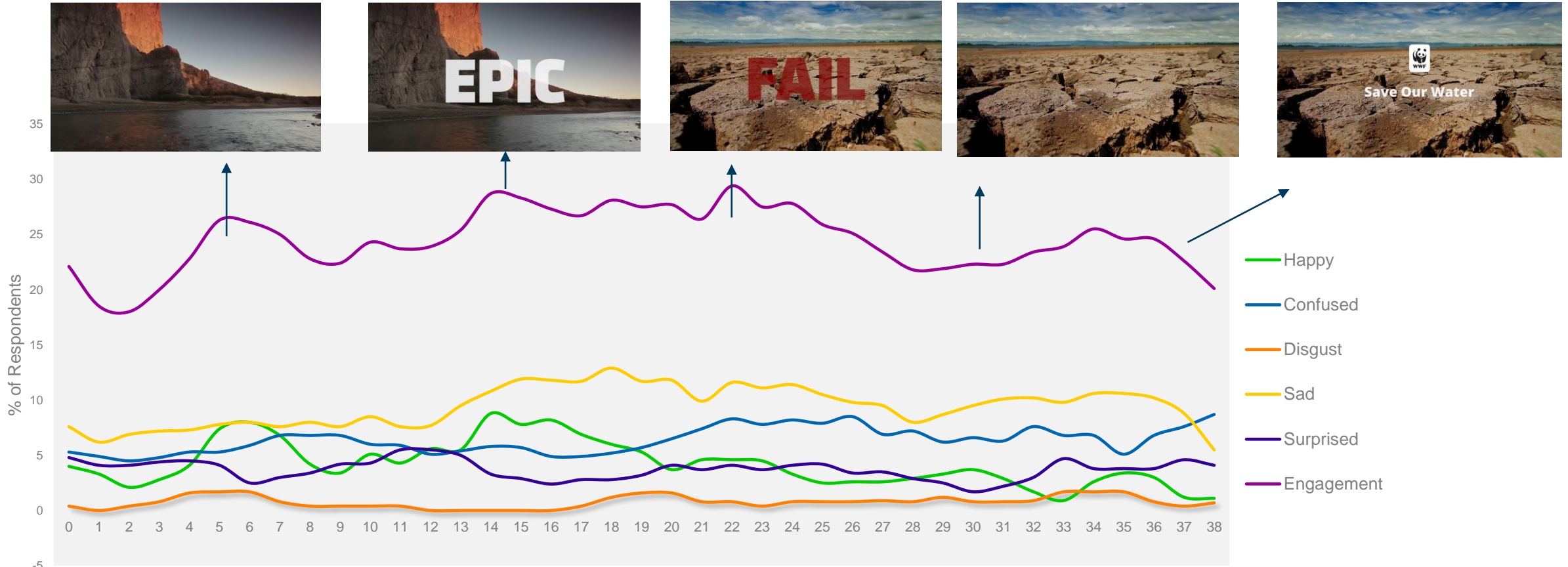
Please click on the image to watch the video.



# Save our water (gloom): detailed emotional response



This video peaked engagement with the shocking transition depicting the direct effect on the environment of water shortages. However, despite the impact of this serious and striking tone, engagement dipped at the end – suggesting accompanying information may be required (e.g. statistics or facts) to help contextualise the imagery.



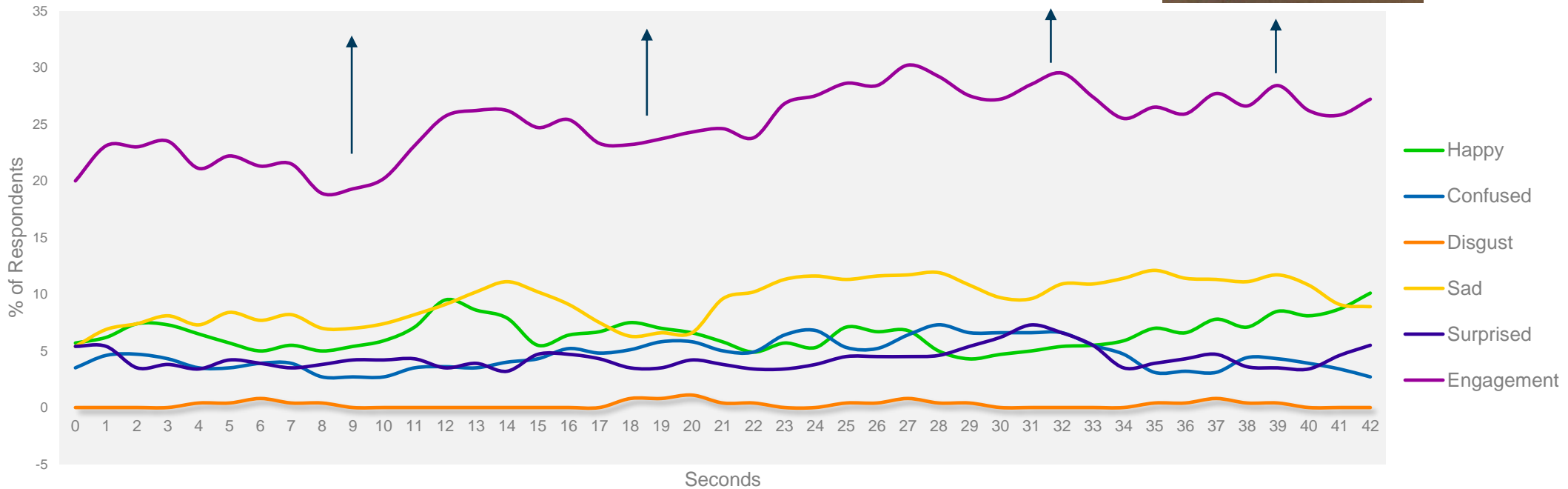
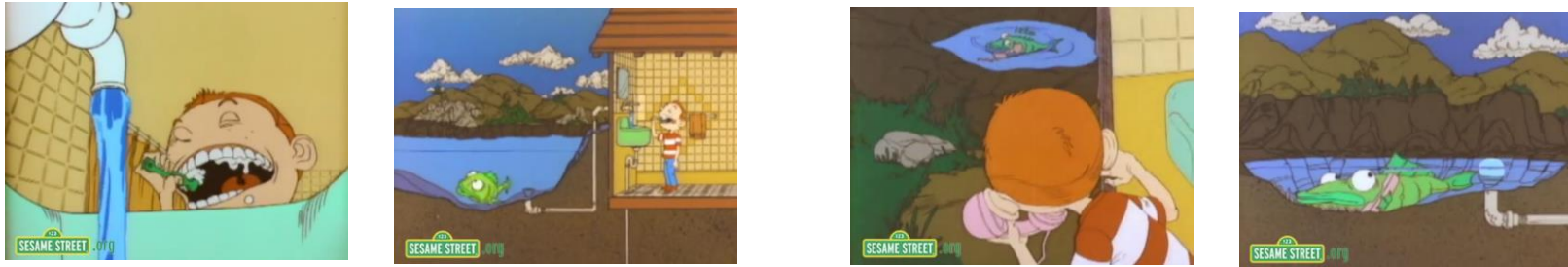
	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	4.2%	6.4%	0.8%	9.2%	3.7%	24.3%	73.8%
<b>Max</b>	11.4%	10%	2.5%	14.8%	7.4%	33.3%	85.4%





# Sesame Street (bloom): detailed emotional response

While this content took more time to engage the participants, the humorous tone to depict the impact of water shortages led to a more sustained engagement through the video.



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	6.6%	4.5%	0.2%	9.3%	4.4%	25.1%	73.5%
<b>Max</b>	12%	8.2%	2.3%	14%	8.2%	31.4%	81.8%

Base: All adults shown video Sesame Street water conservation (155).

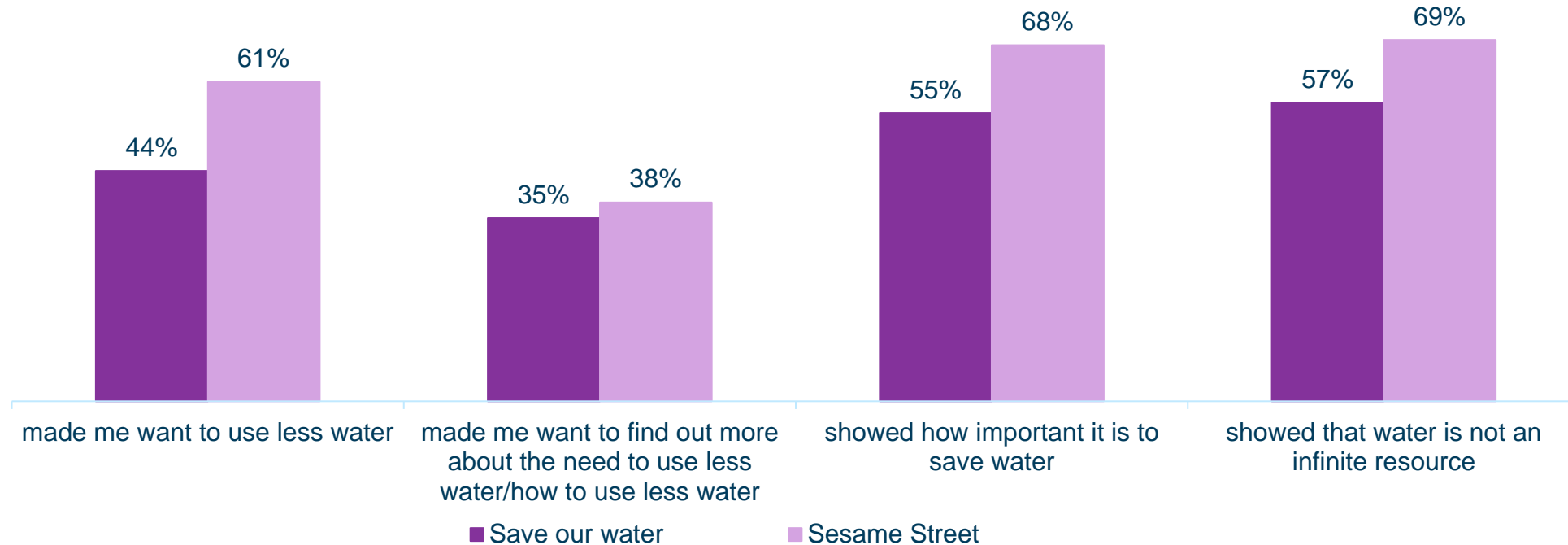




# Humour vs. serious: survey response

*Sesame Street* (bloom) was more motivating in inspiring using less water, showing the importance of saving water and that water is not an infinite resource.

The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)



# Humour vs. Serious: online community and depth interviews

In the online community and depth interviews participants were prompted on their preference for positive or negative water saving messages.

Tiny kettle



Please turn off the faucet



Participants had a mixed response to whether messages should be serious or humorous:

- It was felt that more serious messages could be regarded as more impactful and stress the urgency of the situation. A few participants questioned the appropriateness of humour on such a serious issue.
- However, it was felt by many that a humorous video could be more memorable, and provide a feeling that individuals can make a difference.
- Others felt humour can still get across a serious message if executed appropriately, and can be more memorable.

“Some of the more practical ones are more effective”.

***Interview participant, female, 45-54***

“For this topic in particular, I prefer serious messages that clearly convey why we need to take action now”.

***Online Community Participant, female, 25-34***

Please click on video names (underlined above) to go to the '[All Content Tested](#)' page in the appendix. This contains links to online versions of all the videos listed.



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## 4. Testing different types of Call to Action

This section looks specifically at different calls to action, considering whether negative or positive behavioural messages are more effective.







# Testing different calls to action: summary

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## Rationale:

Existing water saving campaigns have a variety of different call to actions. We tested both positive (bloom) and negative (gloom) calls to action in this research, to see which were more effective in inspiring behaviour change, and why.

## Evidence:

Evidence is taken from two pieces of content, one positive (*Save a drop*) and one negative (*Please turn off the faucet*), that were analysed via facial coding to measure levels of engagement and motivation to save water, supplemented by qualitative evidence from the online community and in-depth interviews.

## Key findings:

- Facial coding results suggested that more negative and direct (i.e. straight to the point) messages are more likely to engage participants and inspire a range of micro-behavioural actions.
- The online community and depth interviews support this generally, with participants preferring a call to action that is direct, straight to the point and demonstrates the urgency around saving water.
- There was consensus that whether positive or negative, calls to action should be simple and easy to follow, and avoid confusing terms or words.
- Some feedback suggested that highlighting a positive tangible benefit in a call to action such as saving money may motivate those who do not currently take steps to conserve water (e.g. “save water, save money”).





# Call to Action: content tested via facial coding

Two similar pieces of content asking people to turn off the tap when not using it were tested via the facial coding survey. *Please turn off the faucet* was more negative and direct, while *Save a drop* was more positive and instructional.

**Please turn off the faucet (gloom)**



**Save a drop (bloom)**



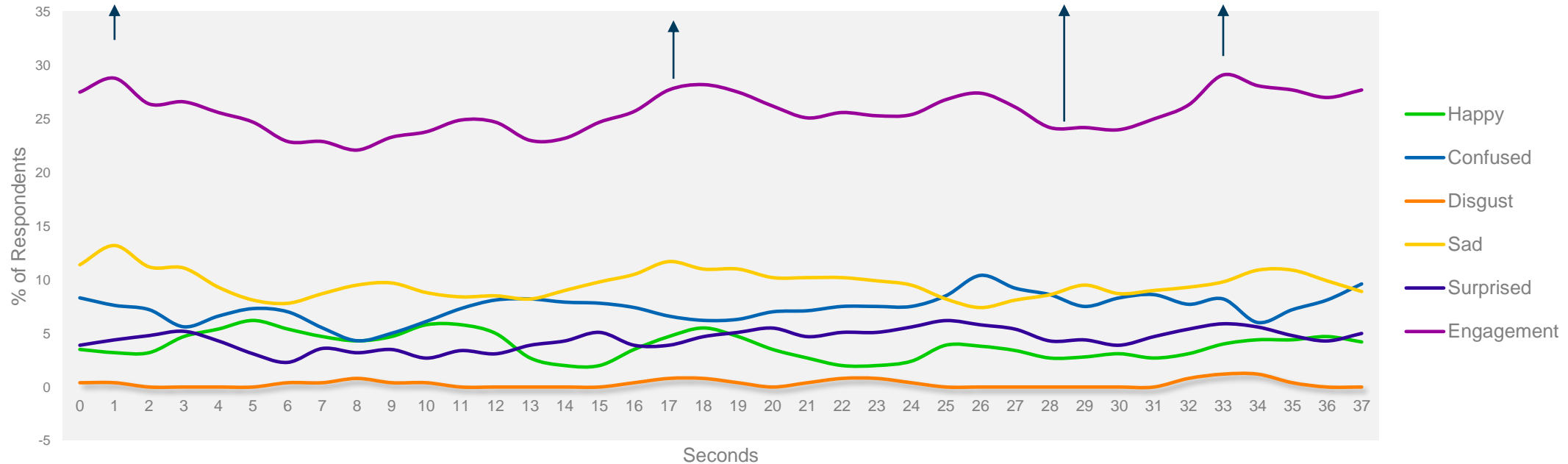
Please click on the image to watch the video.



# Please turn off the faucet (gloom): detailed emotional response



Generally, this video maintained consistent engagement, which may be due to its use of statistics throughout. The direct call to action led to a spike in engagement. Confusion peaked however when 'people around the world' were mentioned, which may be because the video uses a domestic setting with a focus on English speaking audiences.



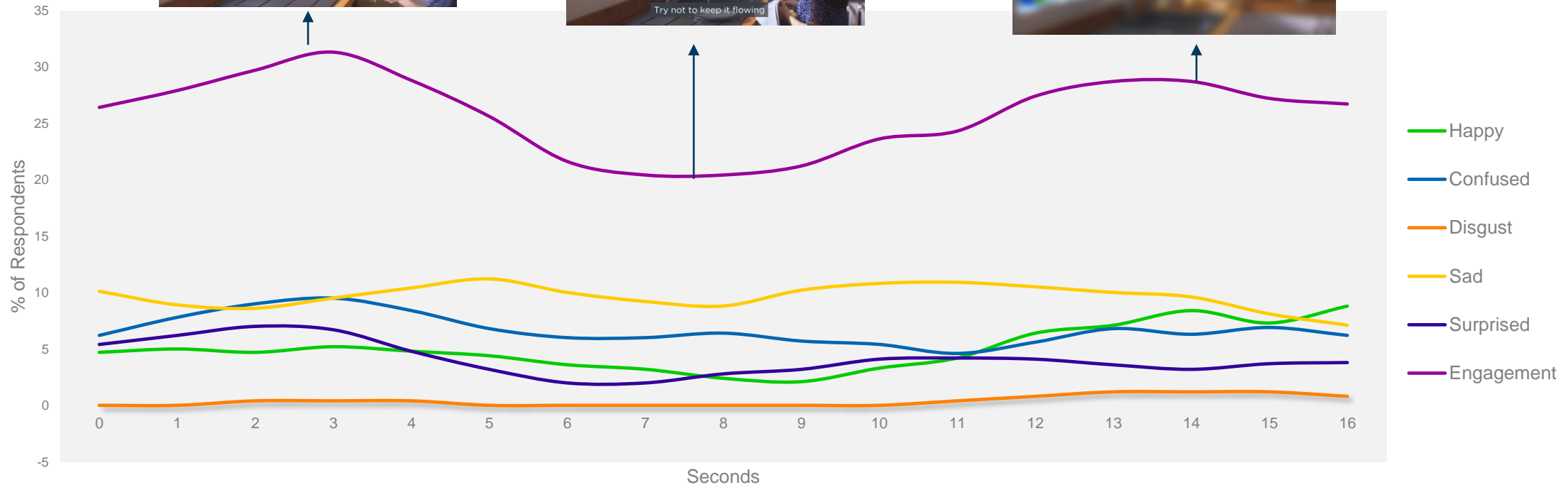
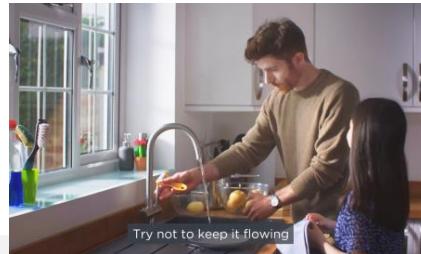
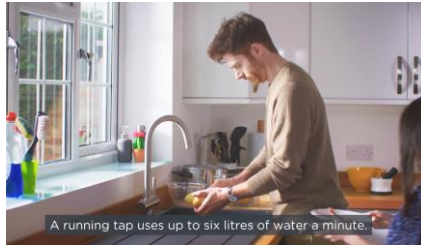
	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	3.9%	7.4%	0.3%	9.6%	4.5%	25.7%	72.8%
<b>Max</b>	8.1%	12.8%	2.4%	15.5%	7.1%	32.1%	78.6%





# Save a drop (bloom): detailed emotional response

While this video engaged participants initially, there was a sustained drop as the video asked people not to keep the water flowing – suggesting this is not new or inspiring information. The call to action did not lead to any significant peak in engagement.



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Average</b>	5.2%	6.6%	0.4%	9.5%	4.2%	25.9%	73%
<b>Max</b>	11.7%	10.7%	1.2%	11.9%	8.1%	34.5%	80%

Base: All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150).

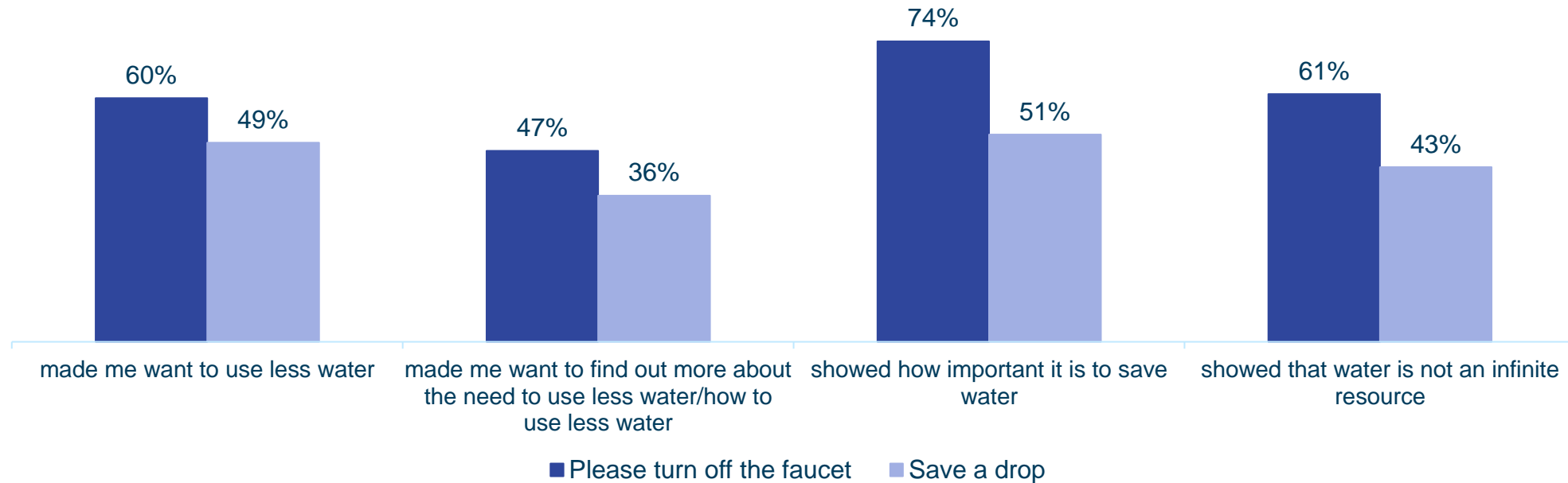




# Call to Action: Survey response

*Please turn off the faucet (gloom)* was significantly more likely to make people want to change behaviours by showing how important it is to save water and that water is not an infinite resource.

The ad ...



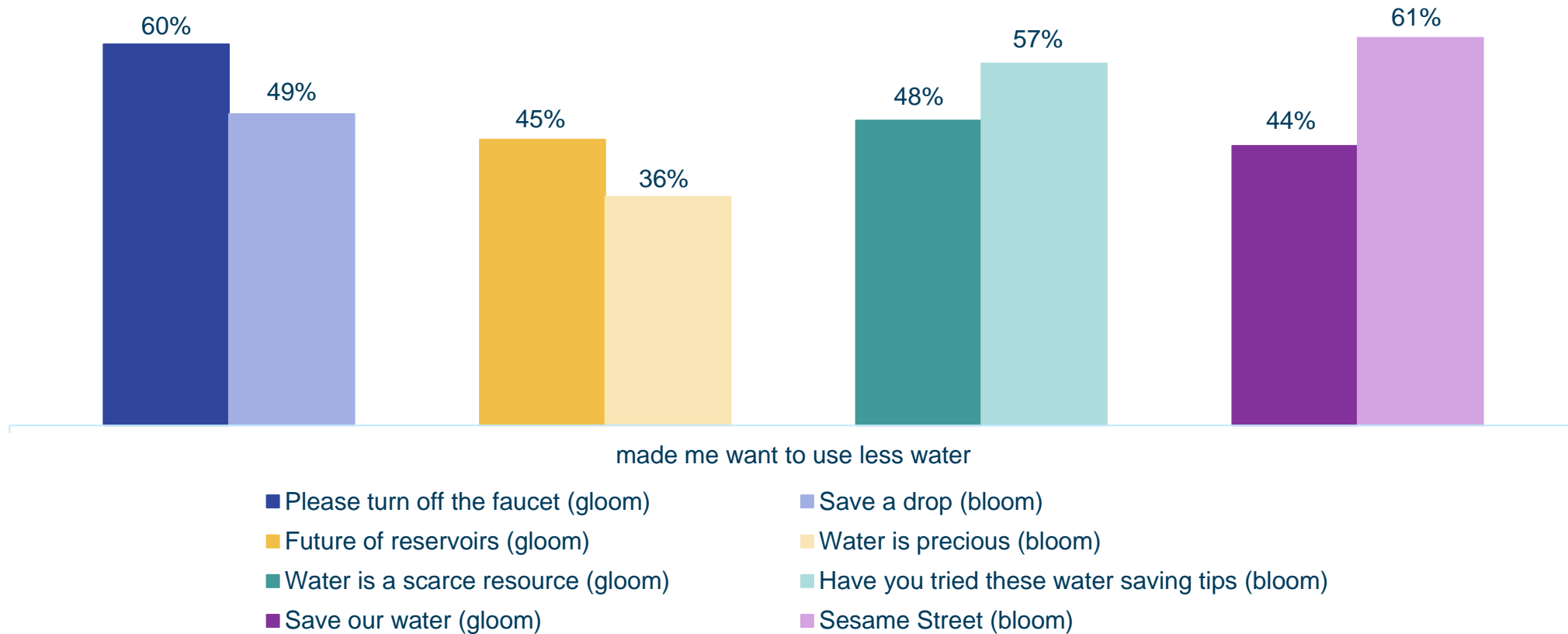
D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video every drop counts (150). All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150).



All videos encourage participants to use less water to some extent, but those including a direct call to action (*Please turn off the faucet* (gloom) and *Save a drop* (bloom)) have more impact

The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video every drop counts (150). All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150). All adults shown video future of reservoirs (155). All adults shown video water is precious (155). All adults shown video water is a scarce resource (144). All adults shown video have you tried these water saving tips (144). All adults shown video save our water – WWF (151). All adults shown video Sesame Street water conservation (155).



# Call to action: online community

## Every drop counts



## Sydney turn it off campaign



“I prefer the first image. It gets straight to the point and addresses the situation. The second image, I get, is trying to be humorous, but it doesn't really explain to you nor can you really guess immediately, what the issue is”

**Online Community Participant, female, 35-34**

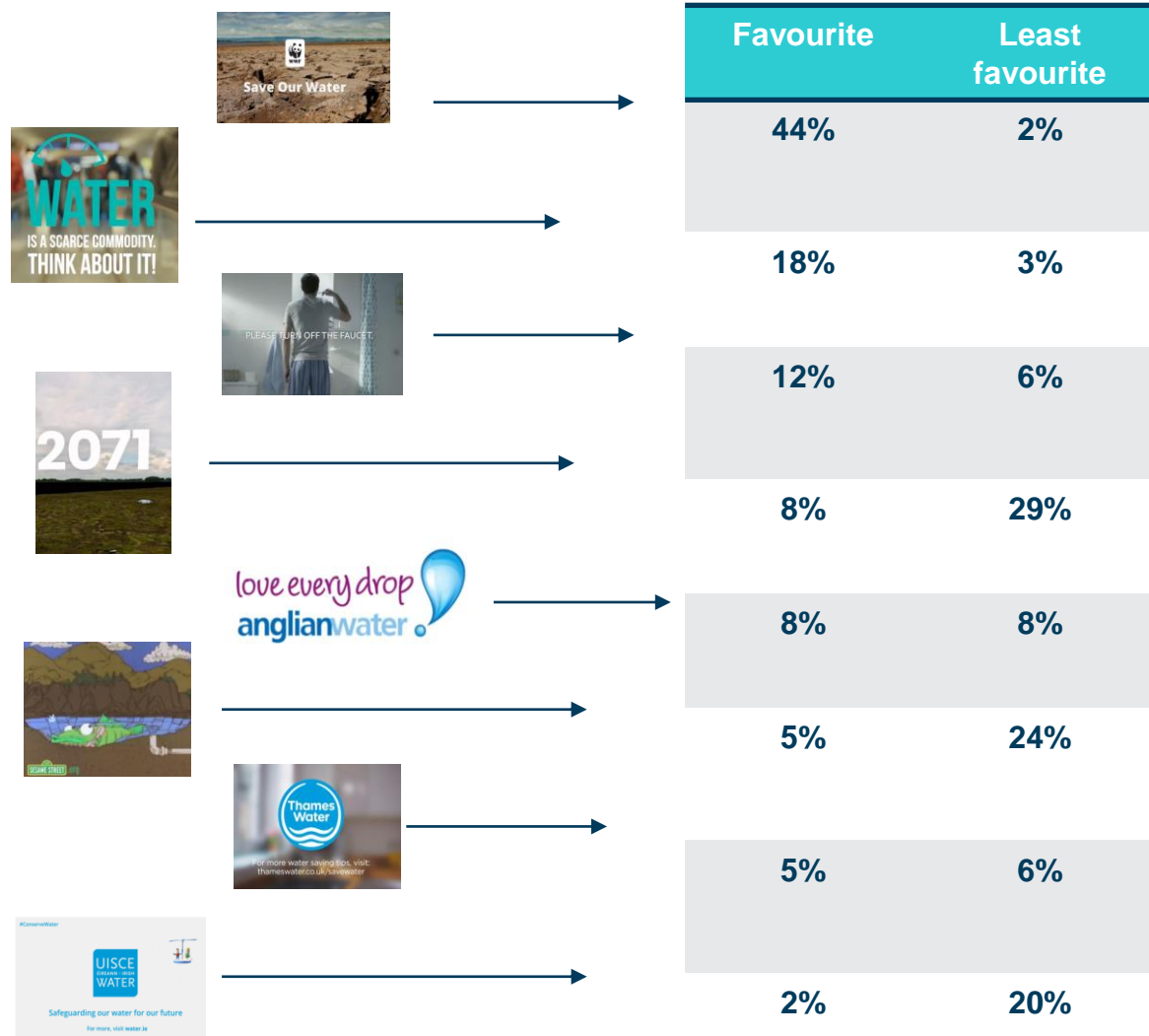
- As per the facial coding results the gloomy image (*Every drop counts*) was preferred by participants in the online community for encouraging behaviour change. This was due to the image being viewed as simple, direct, straightforward and easy to follow.
- Some participants felt a stronger and more impactful / alarming call to action was needed to change the behaviour of those ignoring the need to save water or thinking “it will never happen”.
- Furthermore, it was felt that the meaning of the positive / more light hearted call to action was unclear and not all understood the link between the temperature and saving water.
- There was a sense that people should already be following these call to actions and that it was common sense. This was largely felt for the first image and was not seen as new information. However, it was felt that the messages need to be repeated frequently to ensure the issue is top of mind.
- Some gave feedback that calls to action should link to tangible benefits such as saving money / saving on bills, as this would be motivational for the average individual - for example “Save water, save money”.

Please click on image names (underlined above) to go to the '[All Content Tested](#)' page in the appendix. This contains links to online versions of the images listed.



# End frames

The facial coding analysis revealed that an end frame can have a significant bearing on lasting engagement with content. As part of the online community, different end frames were shown and participants were asked to rank their favourite, and least favourite.



End frames which show a powerful image/message were favoured to highlight the urgency/seriousness of the situation. To make these actionable, participants felt that the end frame should also include a direct call to action. This approach was preferred over end frames which only included branding and links to further information.

There was generally a mixed response on whether end frames should be positive or negative. Participants did have a slightly higher preference for an ending with a positive message, e.g. what people can do to help. This was found in the online community and in-depth interviews.

"I think the ending needs to be hard hitting, or extremely inspiring. Negative or positive is not the issue, extremely memorable is"

**Online Community participant, male, 55+**







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## 5. Messengers and channels

Participants in the online communities were asked to give their views on messengers of water saving videos – including who should be responsible for delivering messages, and which types of messages they would expect to see.





# Messengers and channels

We asked participants in the online community and depth interviews who they felt should be responsible for delivering water saving messages, and which types of messages.

Overall, participants gave mixed views, but tended to focus on the trustworthiness of different messengers. Water companies and non-profit organisations were seen as trustworthy, whereas there were more mixed opinions over government. Comments were also made on the lack of repairs and renewal of water infrastructure from water companies which impacted their credibility as an authority over water saving messages.

- There was no overall consensus on who should present the message, and it was felt by the majority that it is more important that the message has an impact and raises awareness than who provides it. However, it was also felt that the messenger must be a credible source with knowledge on the issue.
- References were made to different messengers' agendas such as making profit, and some preferred to trust charities as they were seen as independent and impartial. However, it was felt that the government and water companies do have facts and credible/reliable information and should play a role – particularly with the use of important statistics in their communication.
- In addition to the messenger, participants highlighted the importance of information reaching all demographics and being accessible on all media sources (especially social media).

“It definitely doesn't matter who/where the message arrives from, the more important thing is that it is able to cut across different platforms, media networks, for respective individuals and generations”

**Online Community Participant, male, 18-24**

“Messages delivered by government agencies or non-profit organisations may be perceived as more trustworthy and credible, as they are seen as having a public service mandate rather than a profit motive”

**Online Community Participant, male, 35-44**



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## 6. Reflection sessions

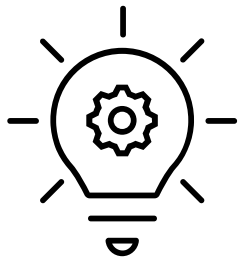
Participants were asked to reflect on the content they had seen over the course of the research, and think about the impact the content had on their own attitudes and behaviours.

A 7-week interval separated the participants' engagement in the facial coding survey from their involvement in the online community, to understand recall of content messages and intended changes in behaviour.



# Impact of the research on participants' attitudes

We asked participants in the online community and in-depth interviews to reflect on the research, including what they had learned, and any changes in their attitudes or behaviours.



“After doing this study my views have changed a little as I now think about it more when doing things like washing dishes, how long I'm in the shower for...”  
**Online community participant, female, 35-44**

- Participants highlighted that they had realised the issue of water scarcity and potential future consequences.
- Videos reinforced existing views and provided additional insights on how to effectively save water.
- Some had reviewed their own behaviours, or at least noticed when they were wasting water unnecessarily (e.g., taking long showers).
- Some participants mentioned they had spoken with others about this issue.
- Participants highlighted the importance of education about water conservation.
- Participants felt a multi-channel approach is needed for sharing water saving information.

“Made me delve deeper”  
**Interview participant, male, 55+**

“Just to review my own behaviours and practice”  
**Interview participant, female, 45-54**

“More conscious of how I use water in the household ... more active in promoting the message to other people”  
**Interview participant, male, 18-24**



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# Conclusion and Recommendations



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# Recommendations



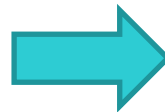
## Finding

Communications to educate about the reality of water shortages and its implications is key. The research revealed that participants feel informed about the needs to save water and ways to do it – however many also felt there were misconceptions and an underestimation of the problem, compared to other environmental issues.

Messages should try to include a combination of why and how to change. Although, mixing gloom and bloom tones too much within the same frames may serve to confuse and cause the viewer to switch off.

While results showed humorous messages are more memorable, there is a danger that overly jovial messages may fail to land the urgency of the situation when it comes to water shortages. Participants also preferred any behavioural call to action to have a direct and impactful tone.

The online survey showed that all videos encourage participants to use less water to some extent. However, a direct call to action has the most impact.



## Implication

Future communications could focus on educating the public with new information that challenges the misconceptions about water shortages. Ideally campaigns should use a blend of information (perhaps through a multi-channel approach if not within the same asset) that highlight the urgency of the issue, and practical tips that are presented in an interesting way.

Gloom messages are best used to convey a sense of urgency (*why* to change), while bloom messages work well when presenting practical tips and empowering the viewer (*how* to change). An ideal approach could use a combination of the two framings, but care will need to be taken to ensure that the shift from *why* to *how* is not too jarring.

On balance, ensure that communications ultimately have at least a serious or gloomy undertone, and include a direct and simple call to action in order to inspire behavioural change.

Ensure that water saving communications include a direct, simple and easy to follow call to action to help inspire behaviour change and further encourage water saving habits.





# Based on the research, here are some tips on presenting gloom and bloom messages

## Gloom messages should...

**Clearly demonstrate the issue using impactful imagery and memorable statistics**

Please turn off the faucet did this by directly demonstrating the behaviour and outcomes with engaging and memorable imagery

**Have a direct, simple and impactful call to action**

Water is a scarce resource offers simple suggestions to conserve water while on holiday: shorter showers, flushing the toilet less often, not leaving a tap running

**Use powerful and striking end frames and shock value**

Save our water video showed a striking image of an empty riverbed to add strength to water saving messages

**Convey the current urgency in the UK**

Future of reservoirs clearly showed the potential impacts of inaction on water conservation in a UK domestic setting

## Bloom messages should...

**Offer new practical tips and advice to engage**

Save a drop showed a simple and easy to implement behaviour (turning off a tap while preparing food or washing hands) in an engaging format

**Focus on individual benefits of changing behaviours**

Have you tried these water saving tips showed the personal benefits of target behaviours (e.g. reductions in energy bills from shorter showers)

**Use humour / animations carefully – to drive engagement**

The Sesame Street video successfully balanced a humorous and engaging setting with a serious message and clear outcomes

**Show how saving water now can help others and future generations**

Please turn off the faucet clearly links the impacts of individual behaviours on others



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# Appendix



[ccw.org.uk](http://ccw.org.uk)





# All content tested in the research



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Phase 1: Facial coding assets		
Asset	Theme	Link
Future of reservoirs	Present vs. future	<a href="#">Future of reservoirs -- Yorkshire Water</a>
Water is precious	Present vs. future	<a href="#">Water is Precious -- Irish Water</a>
Water is a scarce resource	Why vs. how	<a href="#">Water is a scarce resource</a>
Have you tried these water saving tips	Why vs. how	<a href="#">Have you tried these water saving tips? Anglian water</a>
WWF Save our water	Humour vs. serious	<a href="#">Save our Water -- WWF</a>
Sesame Street – Water conservation	Humour vs. serious	<a href="#">Sesame Street: Water Conservation</a>
Please turn off the faucet	Call to action	<a href="#">Please turn off the faucet - Colgate</a>
Save a drop	Call to action	<a href="#">Save a drop with Thames Water</a>

Phase 2: Online community assets		
Asset	Theme	Link
UK Heatwave	Present vs. future	<a href="#">UK Heatwave</a>
Manchester City Future	Present vs. future	<a href="#">The End of Football</a>
Shower in Indian village	International vs. domestic	<a href="#">Start a little good</a>
Wild swim to save water	International vs. domestic	<a href="#">Wild Swim</a>
Anglian Water - Why water matters and how to save	Why vs. how	<a href="#">Why water matters, and how to use it wisely</a>
Yorkshire water – TikTok tips	Individual vs. society	<a href="#">Yorkshire Water - Save water in your evening routine</a>
Yorkshire water – collective responsibility	Individual vs. society	<a href="#">Yorkshire Water -- Water Saving Ad</a>
Tiny Kettle	Humour vs. serious	<a href="#">LOOK! A TINY KETTLE</a>
Please turn off the faucet	Call to action/ Humour vs. serious	<a href="#">Please turn off the faucet - Colgate</a>
Every drop counts	Call to action	<a href="#">Save a drop - MPU</a>
Sydney turn if off campaign	Call to action	<a href="#">Turn it off Bob - Sydney Water</a>





# Facial coding scores (for videos 21-40 seconds)



	Happy	Confused	Disgust	Sad	Surprised	Engagement	Neutral
<b>Please turn off the faucet</b>	3.9%	7.4%	0.3%	9.6%	4.5%	25.7%	72.8%
<b>Save a drop</b>	5.2%	6.6%	0.4%	9.5%	4.2%	25.9%	73%
<b>Future of reservoirs</b>	3.6%	8.1%	1.4%	6.1%	2%	21.2%	77.3%
<b>Water is precious</b>	4.3%	8.1%	1.1%	9.4%	3.8%	26.8%	71.5%
<b>Water is a scarce resource</b>	5.4%	3.9%	1.6%	11%	3.1%	25.1%	74.1%
<b>Have you tried these water saving tips</b>	6.5%	5%	2.5%	7.6%	3%	24.5%	74.5%
<b>Save our water</b>	4.2%	6.4%	0.8%	9.2%	3.7%	24.3%	73.8%
<b>Sesame Street – Water Conservation</b>	6.6%	4.5%	0.2%	9.3%	4.4%	25.1%	73.5%





# Summary of facial coding results

## Please turn off the faucet (gloom)



- *Please turn off the faucet* was more strongly liked by participants in prompted survey response than save a drop video.
- It was also reported as more believable, more informative, and personally relevant.
- Significantly stronger scores on inspiring behaviour change, demonstrating the importance of saving water.
- More likely to inspire a range of micro behavioural actions, including the core call to action of turning off the tap.



- Engagement and confusion in facial coding dropped when mentioning “people around the world”. This may be seen as confusing in a domestic aesthetic (in the home).

## Save a drop (bloom)



- *Save a drop* had slightly higher average engagement from facial coding and reported in the survey as more entertaining.
- Engagement in facial coding peaks at the start with the information about running the tap.
- Higher maximum “happy” emotion from facial coding, peaking at the end frame of the video.



- Scores lower on prompted response on wanting to find out more and telling me something new.
- Engagement in facial coding dropped when the video stated, “try to not to keep it flowing”, suggesting the language could be too soft or indirect.

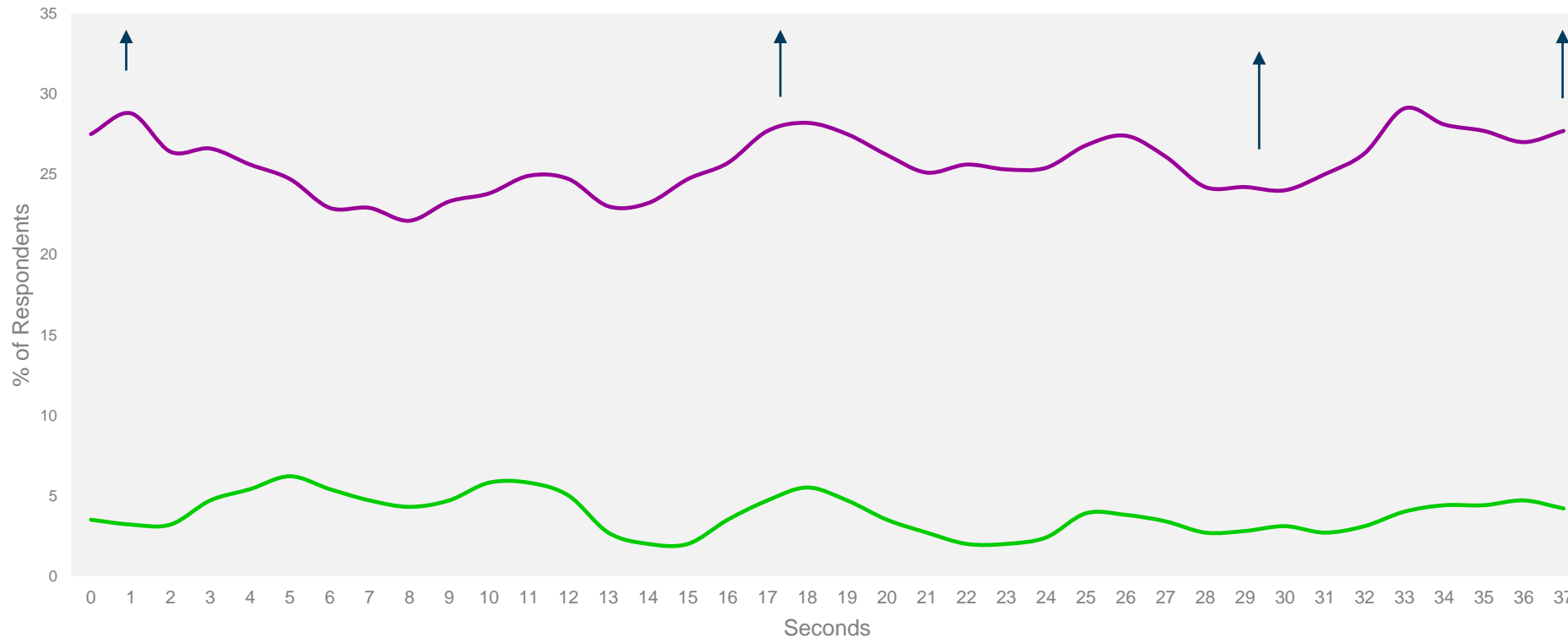
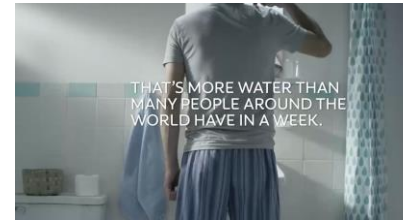


# Please turn off the faucet (gloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



**HAPPY**

**ENGAGEMENT**

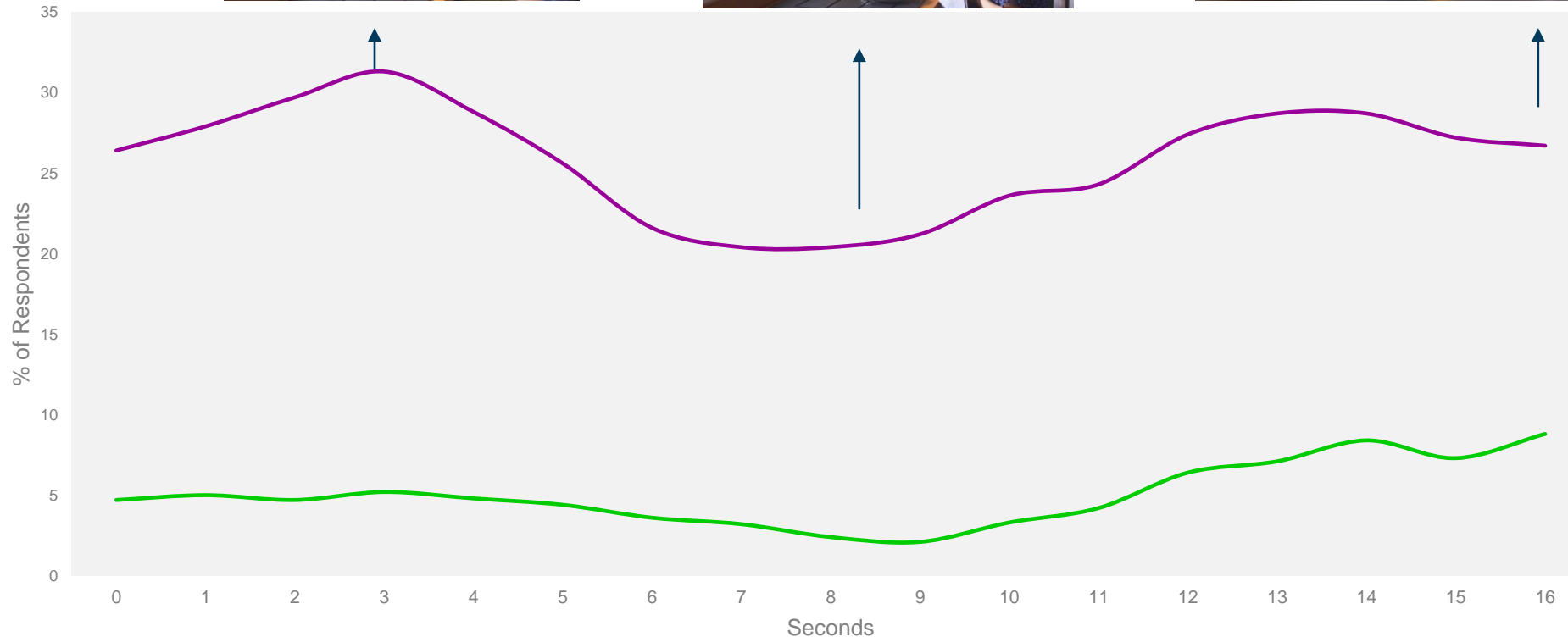
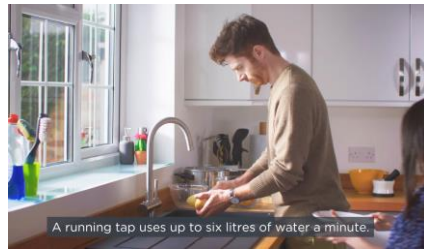
	Happy	Engagement
<b>Average</b>	3.9%	25.7%
<b>Max</b>	8.1%	32.1%





# Save a drop (bloom): Core emotional response

What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



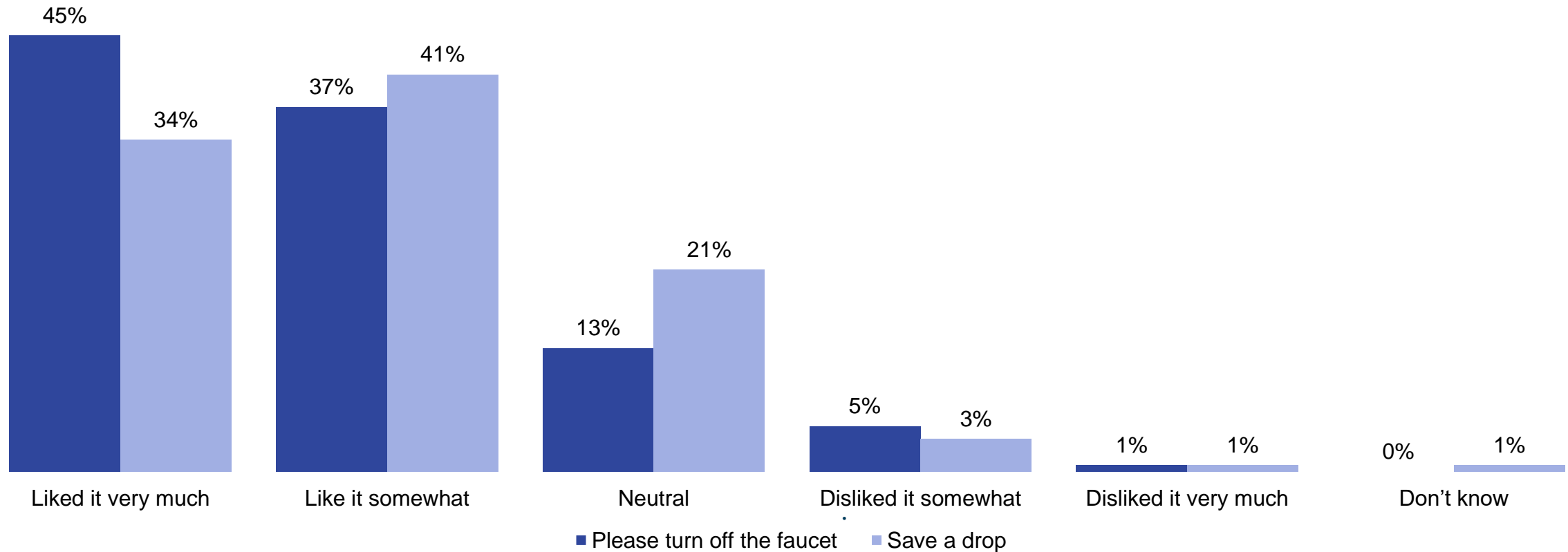
**HAPPY**

**ENGAGEMENT**

	Happy	Engagement
<b>Average</b>	5.2%	25.9%
<b>Max</b>	11.7%	34.5%



# While both videos were generally well received, the *Please turn off the faucet* (gloom) video evokes stronger positive response



D2. Overall, how did you feel about the ad?

Base: All adults shown video every drop counts (150). All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150).

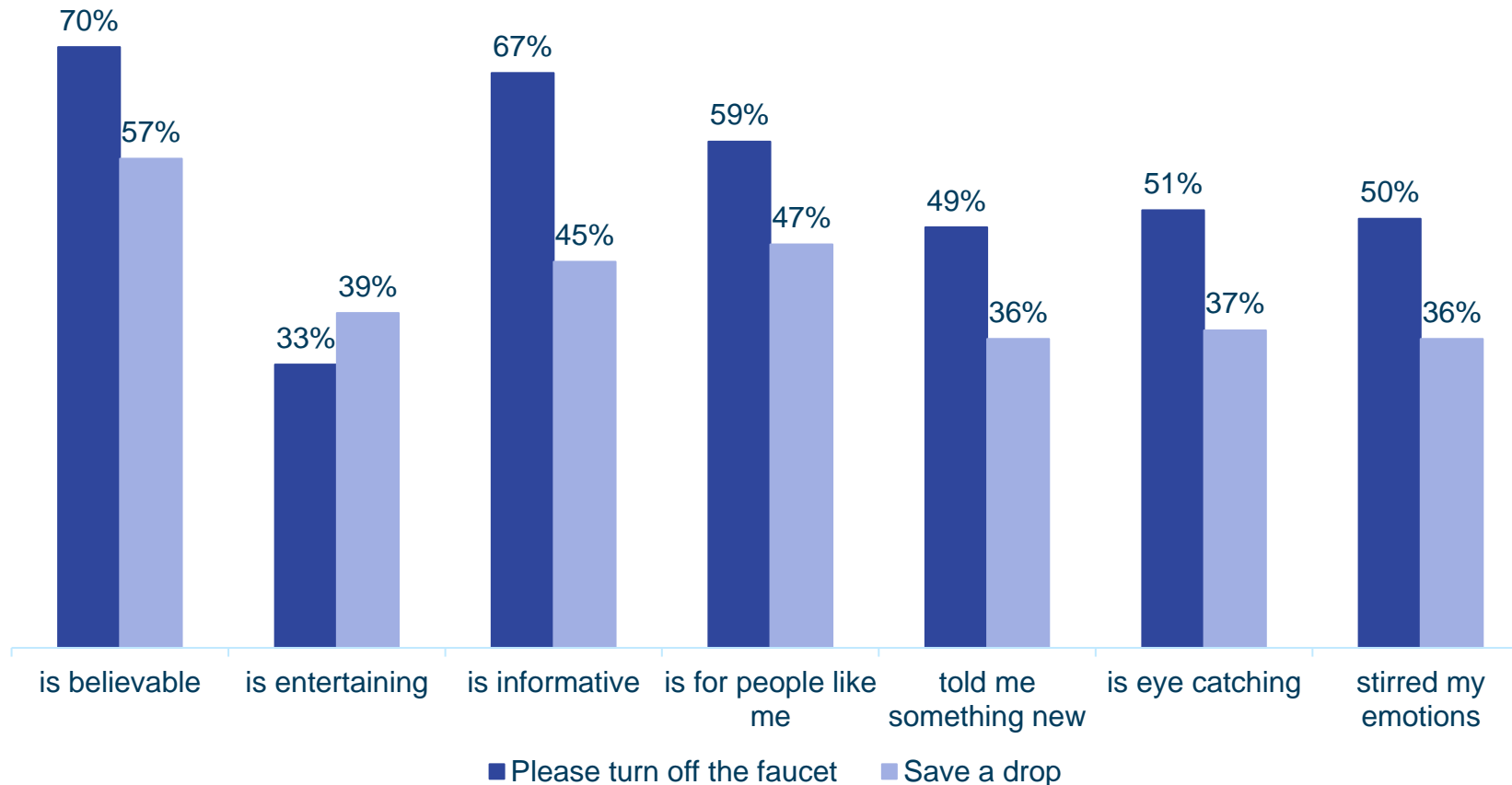




# *Please turn off faucet* (gloom) is seen as more informative and personally relevant, although *save a drop* (bloom) was seen to be more entertaining



The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

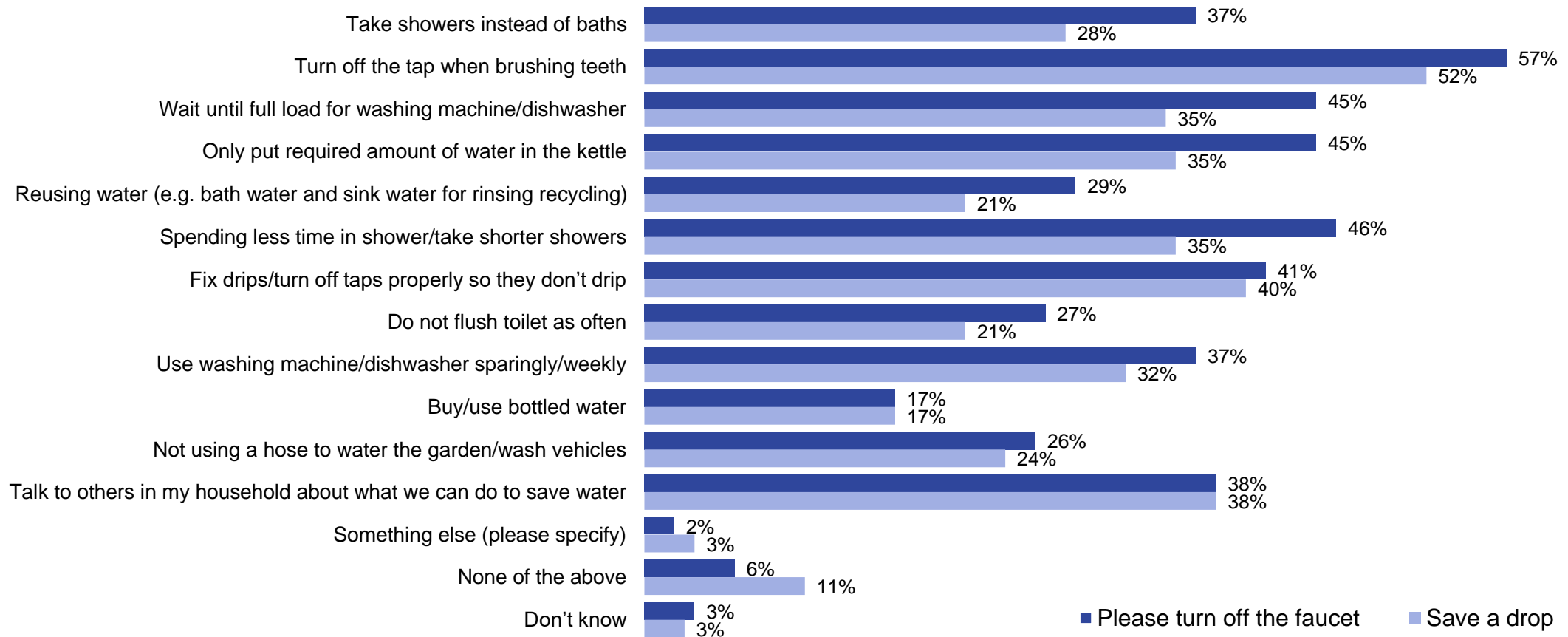
Base: All adults shown video every drop counts (150). All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150).





# Reported behaviour change: survey response

*Please turn off the faucet (gloom)* is more likely to inspire a range of direct behavioural reactions, including turning off the tap.



D4. Having seen this ad, which of the following actions, if any, would you be willing to do to save water (that you don't already do)?

Base: All adults shown video every drop counts (150). All adults shown video turning taps off saves water (150).







# Summary of facial coding results

## Future of reservoirs (gloom)



- Peak facial coding engagement came at the end frame, which suggests a very impactful and striking image may leave a lasting impression.
- While not as well liked overall, this video does elicit stronger emotions and is more likely to inspire behavioural actions in prompted survey questions.



- Peak confusion in facial coding when mixing positive messaging with future warning imagery, which highlights the need for consistency.

## Water is precious (bloom)



- Higher overall facial coding engagement throughout suggests animation and narration are an engaging approach.
- Evoked a very positive prompted survey response and was seen to be more entertaining than *Future of reservoirs*.



- While a generally positive response, it was not as motivating to actually change behaviours and scored lower on stirring emotions, suggesting the video was not impactful enough.
- Branded end frame meant a drop in engagement, suggesting it is better to end with an impactful image.

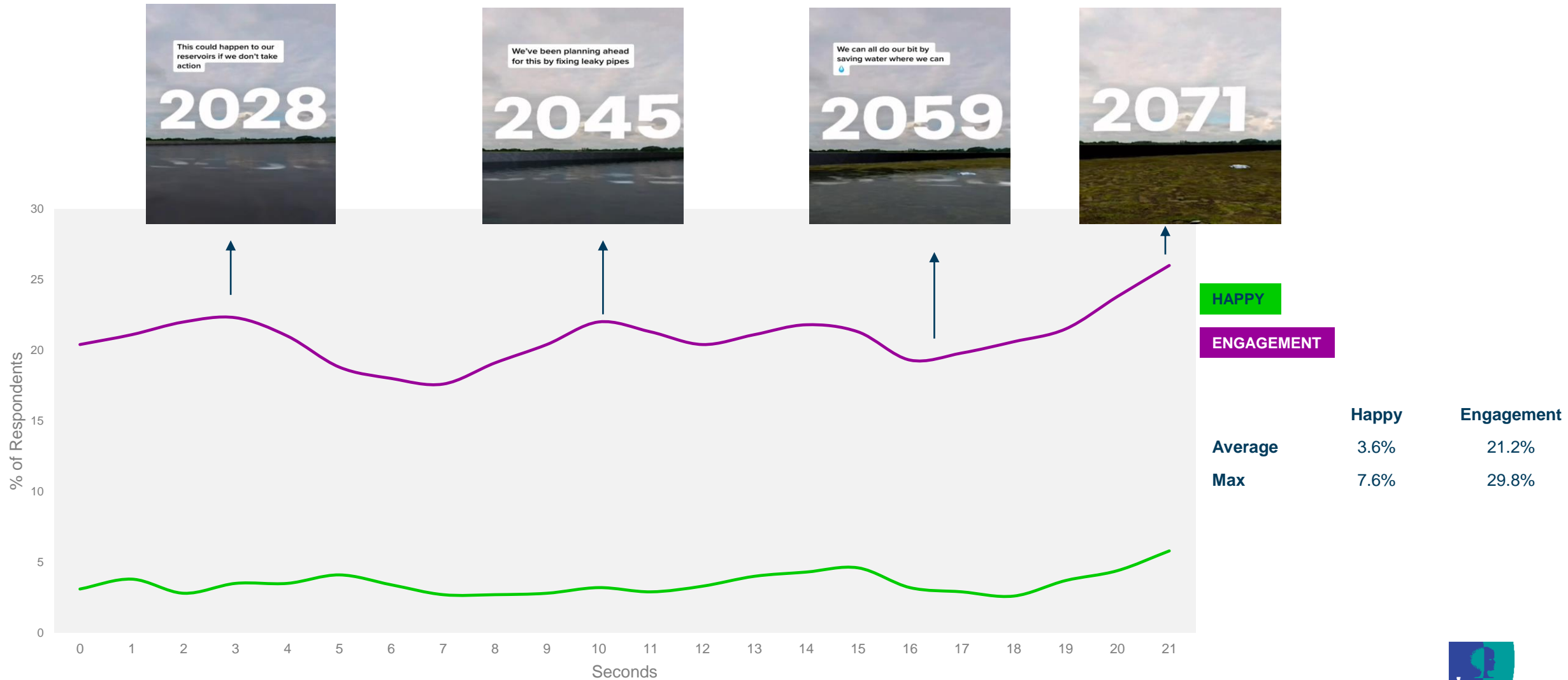


# Future of reservoirs (gloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



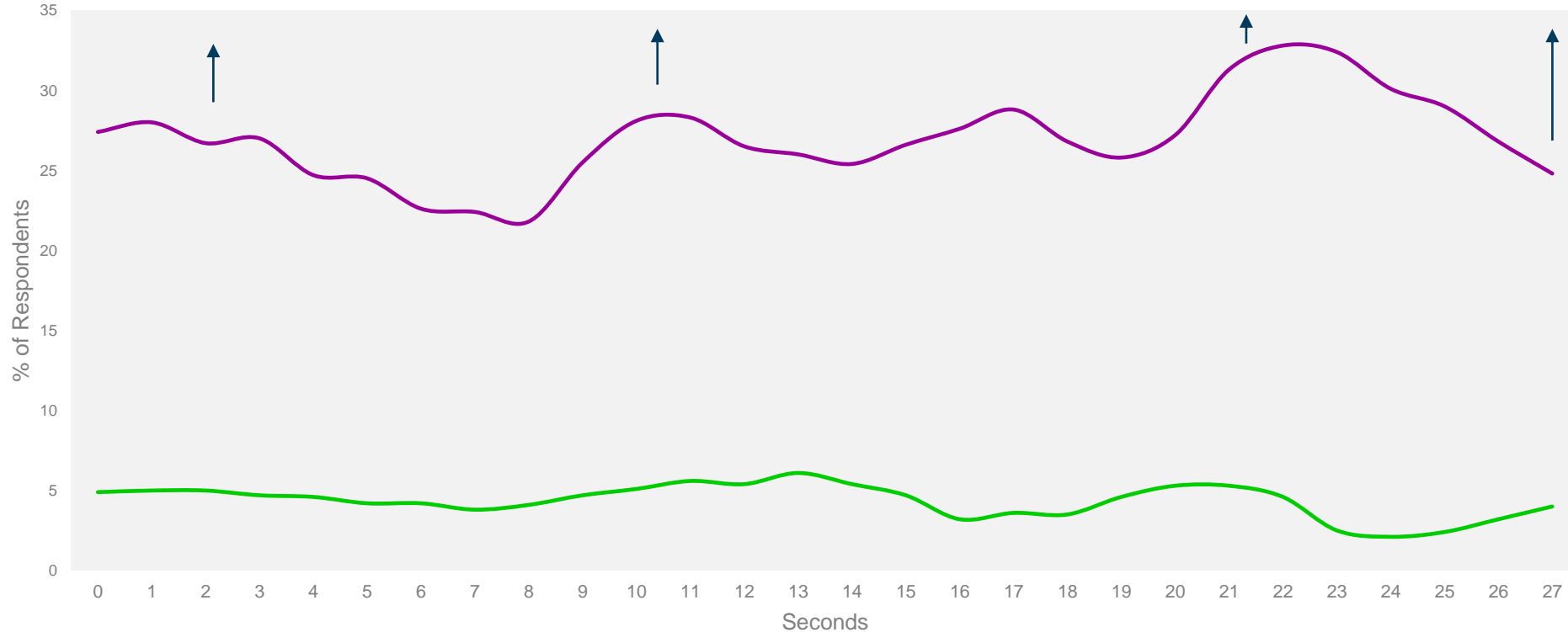


# Water is precious (bloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



**HAPPY**

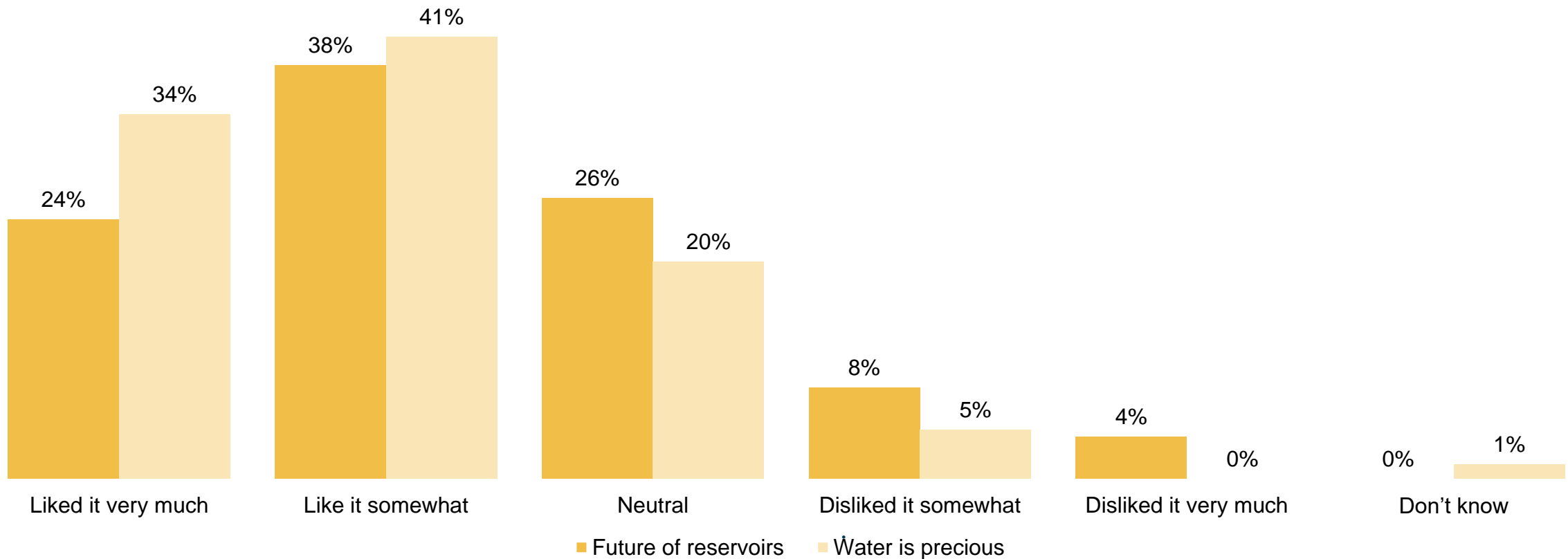
**ENGAGEMENT**

	Happy	Engagement
<b>Average</b>	4.3%	26.8%
<b>Max</b>	7.5%	34.4%





# *Water is precious* (bloom) advert elicited more positive prompted response than *Future of reservoirs* (gloom)



D2. Overall, how did you feel about the ad?

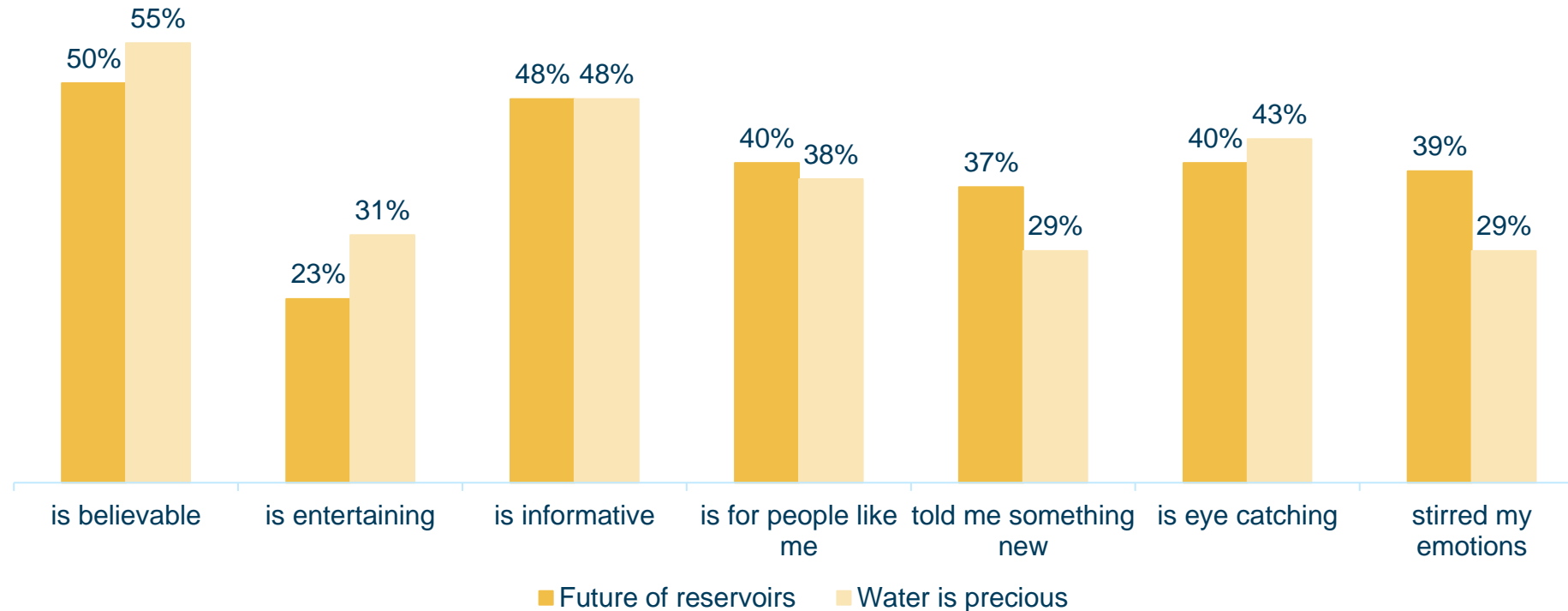
Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video future of reservoirs (155). All adults shown video water is precious (155).



*Water is precious* (bloom) seen to be more believable, *Future of reservoirs* (gloom) seen as new information and more emotionally stirring. Neither were especially entertaining



The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video future of reservoirs (155). All adults shown video water is precious (155).

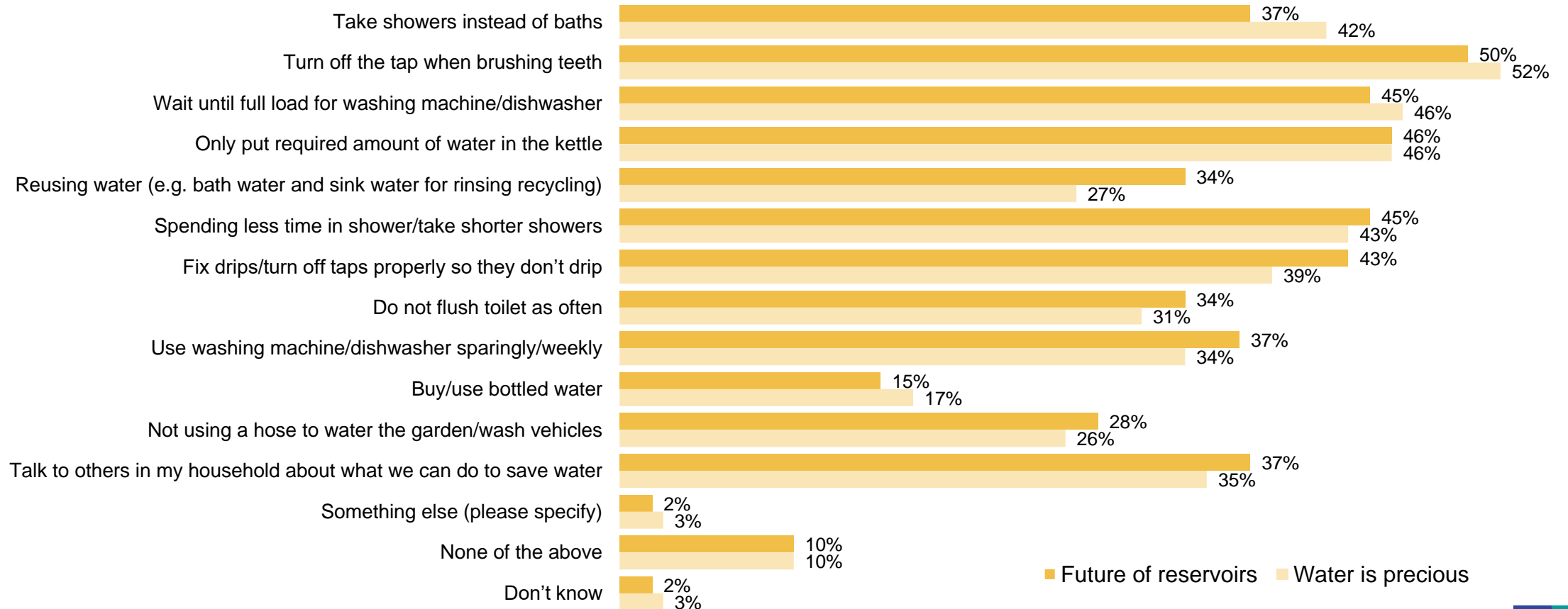




# Reported behaviour change: survey response



*Future of reservoirs (gloom) is more likely to inspire reusing of water, but *Water is precious (bloom)* more likely to make people want to use less water.*



D4. Having seen this ad, which of the following actions, if any, would you be willing to do to save water (that you don't already do)?

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video future of reservoirs (155). All adults shown video water is precious (155).





# Summary

## Water is scarce (gloom)



- Scored high in showing water is not an infinite resource, shown through visual representation, and did inspire *some* actions such as taking shorter showers.



- Facial coding engagement dipped at the water tank image, suggesting overly conceptual representations may be less appealing and the message could be simplified.
- The video was less appealing overall and less motivational to save water despite focus on reasons why to save.

## Have you tried these water saving tips (bloom)



- Facial coding builds to a peak, suggesting the presentation of different tips keeps people interested as it presents new information.
- The video had a very positive prompted survey response, seen to be more informative, salient and motivational to save water. This could suggest that providing practical tips may increase individual capability.
- The use of positive imagery, through a family brushing their teeth, saw peak facial coding engagement.



- However, the branded end frame saw a drop in facial coding engagement.

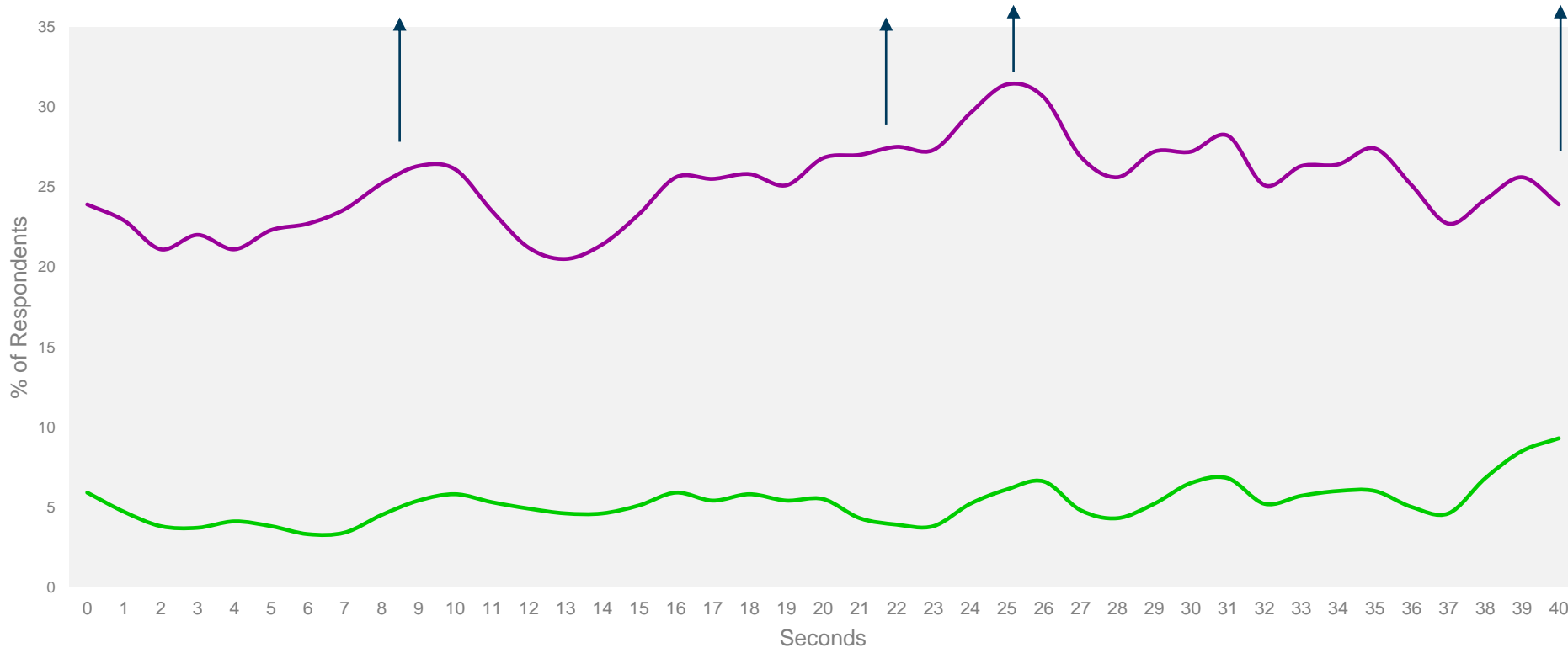


# Water is a scarce resource (gloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



HAPPY

ENGAGEMENT

	Happy	Engagement
Average	5.4%	25.1%
Max	10.3%	36.8%





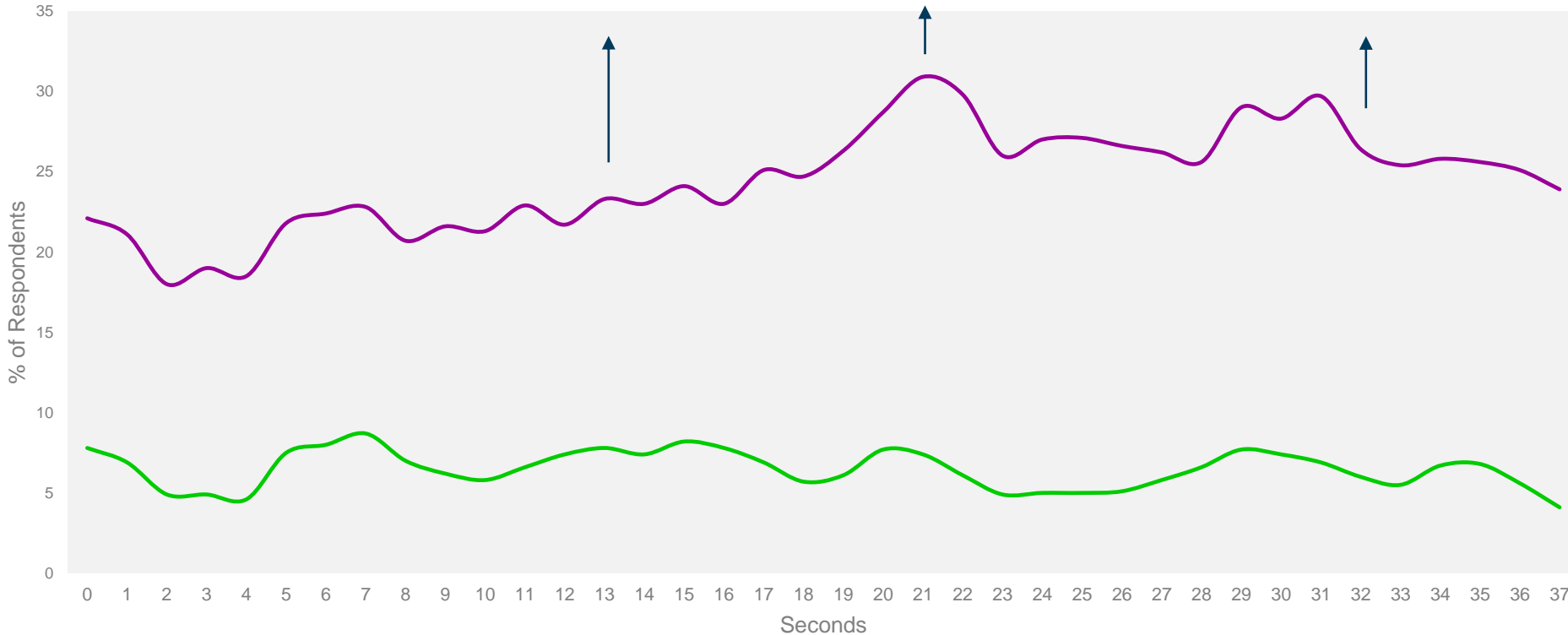


# Water saving tips (bloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



HAPPY

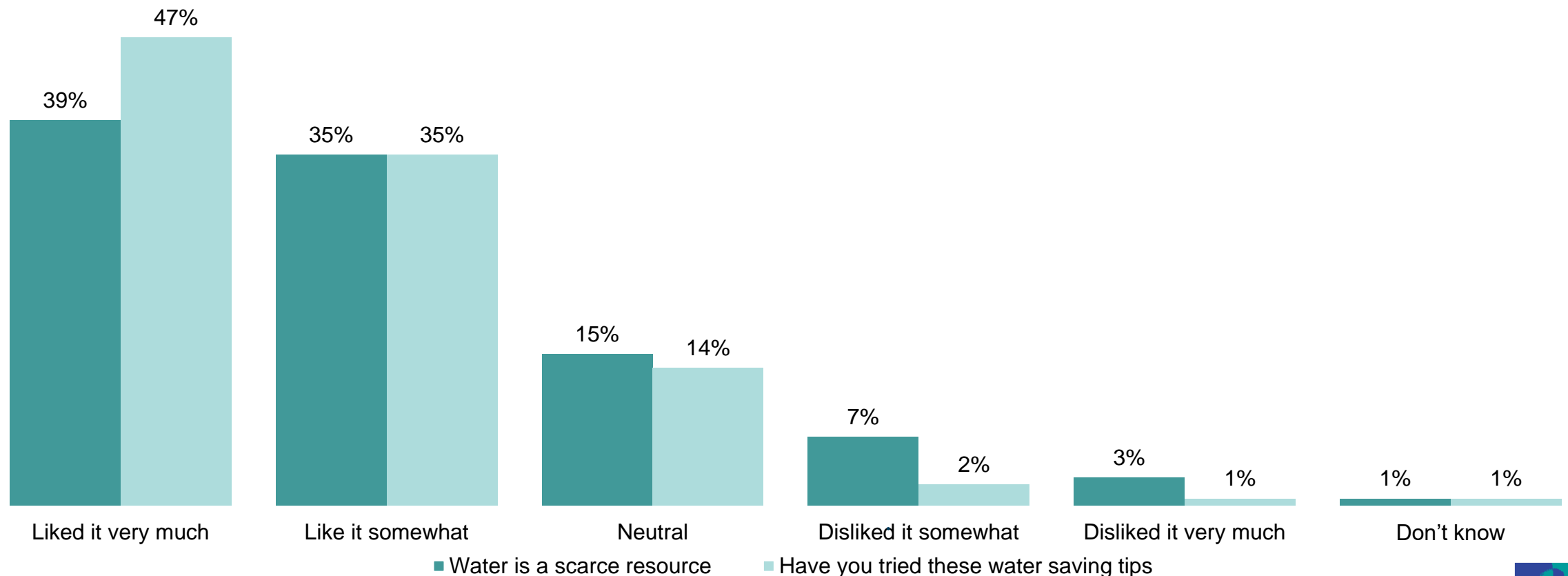
ENGAGEMENT

	Happy	Engagement
Average	6.5%	24.5%
Max	11.1%	37.3%





# While both well received, participants were more strongly positive about *Water saving tips* (bloom) than *Water is a scarce resource* (gloom)



D2. Overall, how did you feel about the ad?

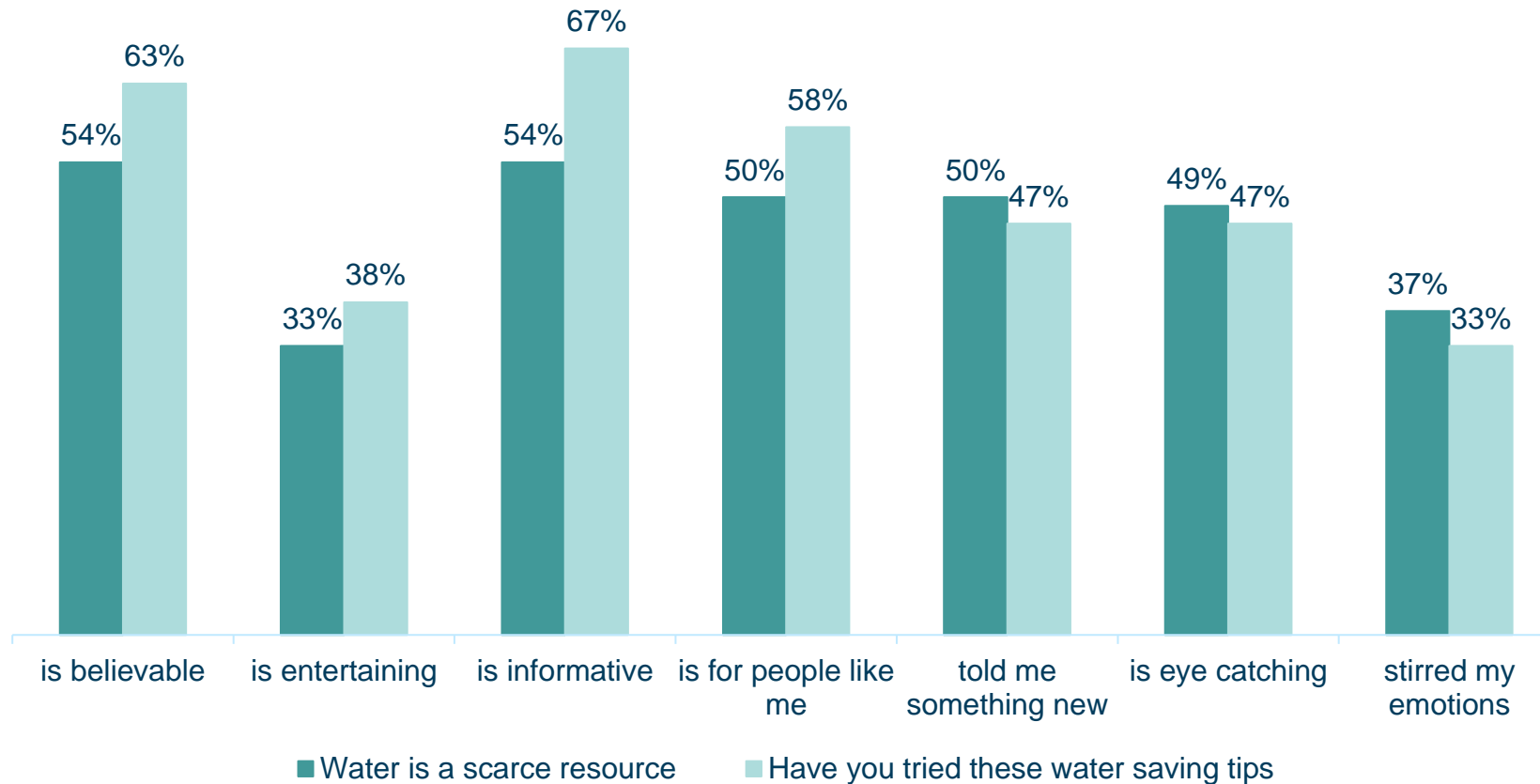
Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video water is a scarce resource (144). All adults shown video have you tried these water saving tips (144).





# Water saving tips (bloom) was seen as more believable, entertaining and personally salient

The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

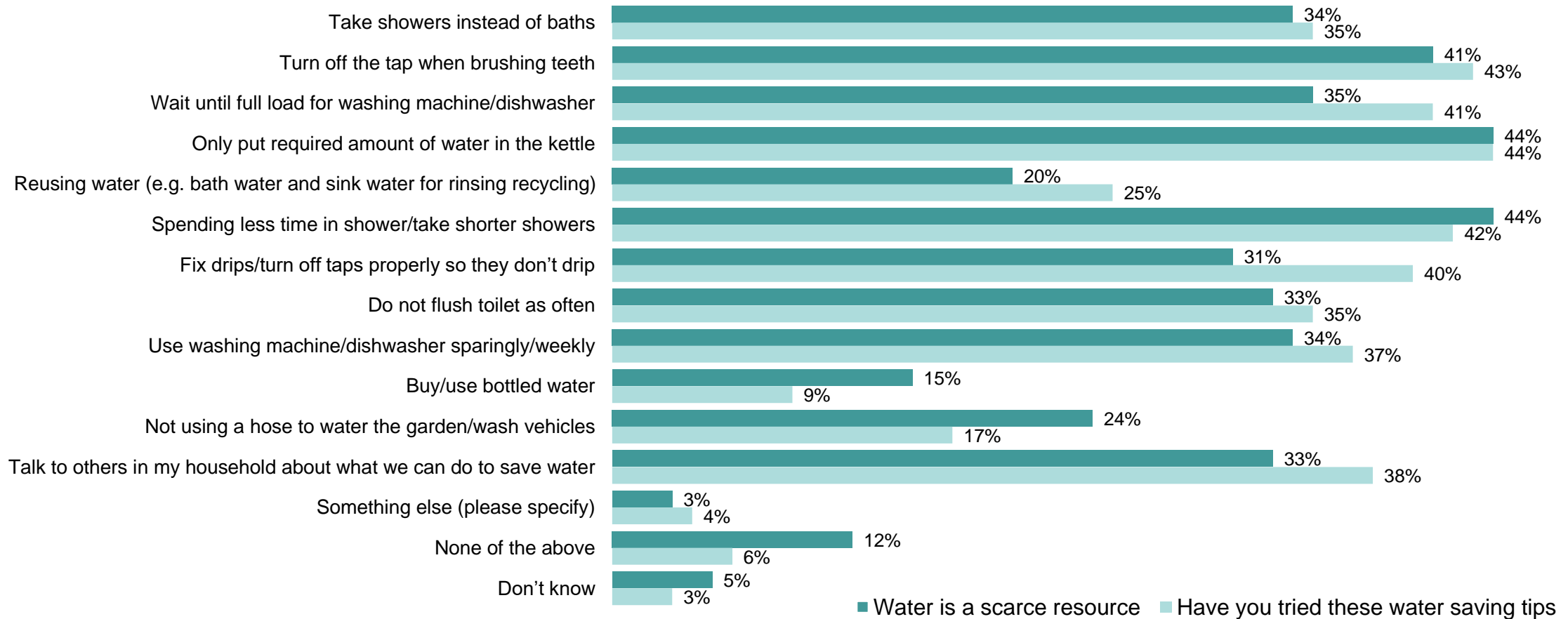




# Reported behaviour change: survey response



Water saving tips (bloom) is better at encouraging many micro-behaviours, and driving advocacy.



D4. Having seen this ad, which of the following actions, if any, would you be willing to do to save water (that you don't already do)?

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video water is a scarce resource (144). All adults shown video have you tried these water saving tips (144).





# Summary of facial coding results

## Save our water (gloom)



- *Save our water* had slightly higher maximum engagement in the facial coding, suggesting the change in framing employed (positive to negative) caught respondents attention.



- However, this video scored less well in the survey on likeability, entertainment and motivation to follow behaviours. This suggests that more accompanying messaging around how to change the situation may be required.

## Have you tried these water saving tips (bloom)



- Facial coding engagement peaked with the visual representation of the fish drowning from human use of water.
- The end frame was positive, which may have led to stronger positive reaction in prompted survey response (but use of animation may also be a factor).
- The video was highly motivational to inspire saving water, finding out more about saving water and likelihood to change behaviours.

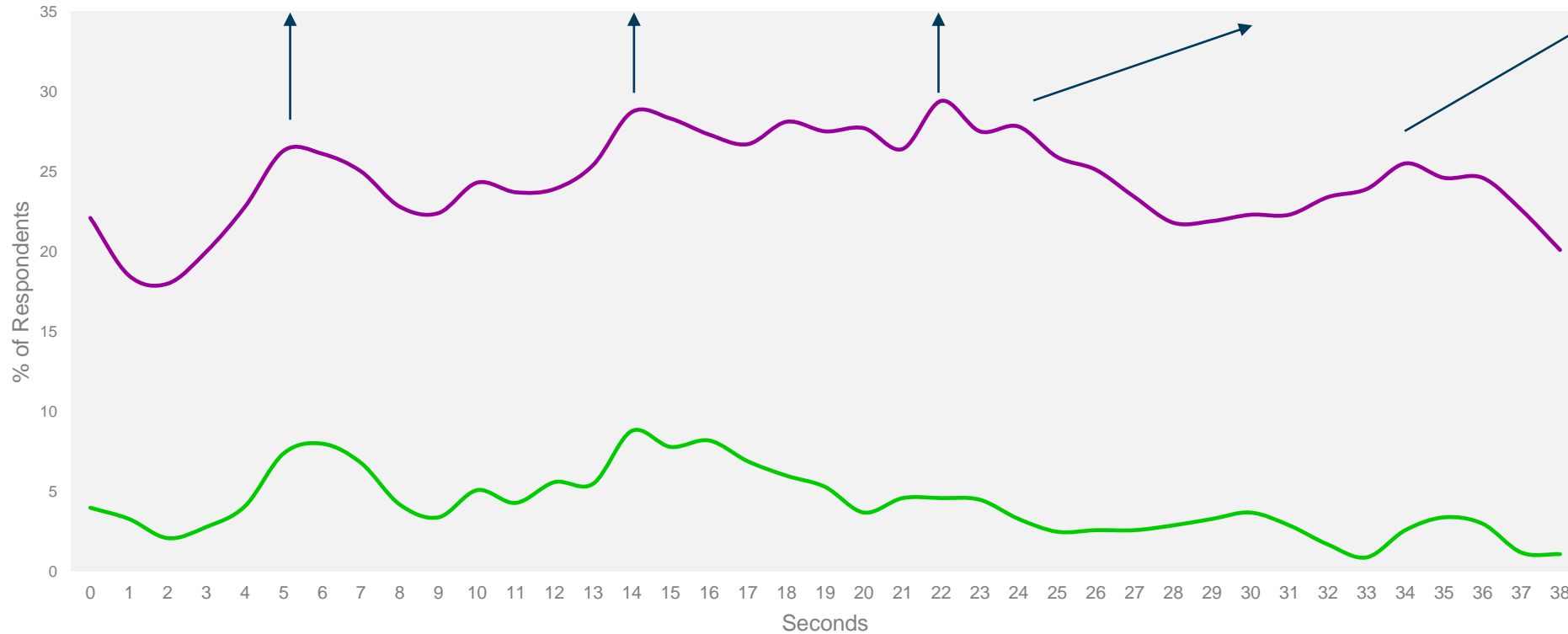


- However, the video scored slightly lower on feeling that the ads told me something new – perhaps due to its focus on entertaining creative treatment and that only one behaviour was shown.



# Save our water (gloom): Core emotional response

What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



**HAPPY**  
**ENGAGEMENT**

	Happy	Engagement
Average	4.2%	24.3%
Max	11.4%	33.3%

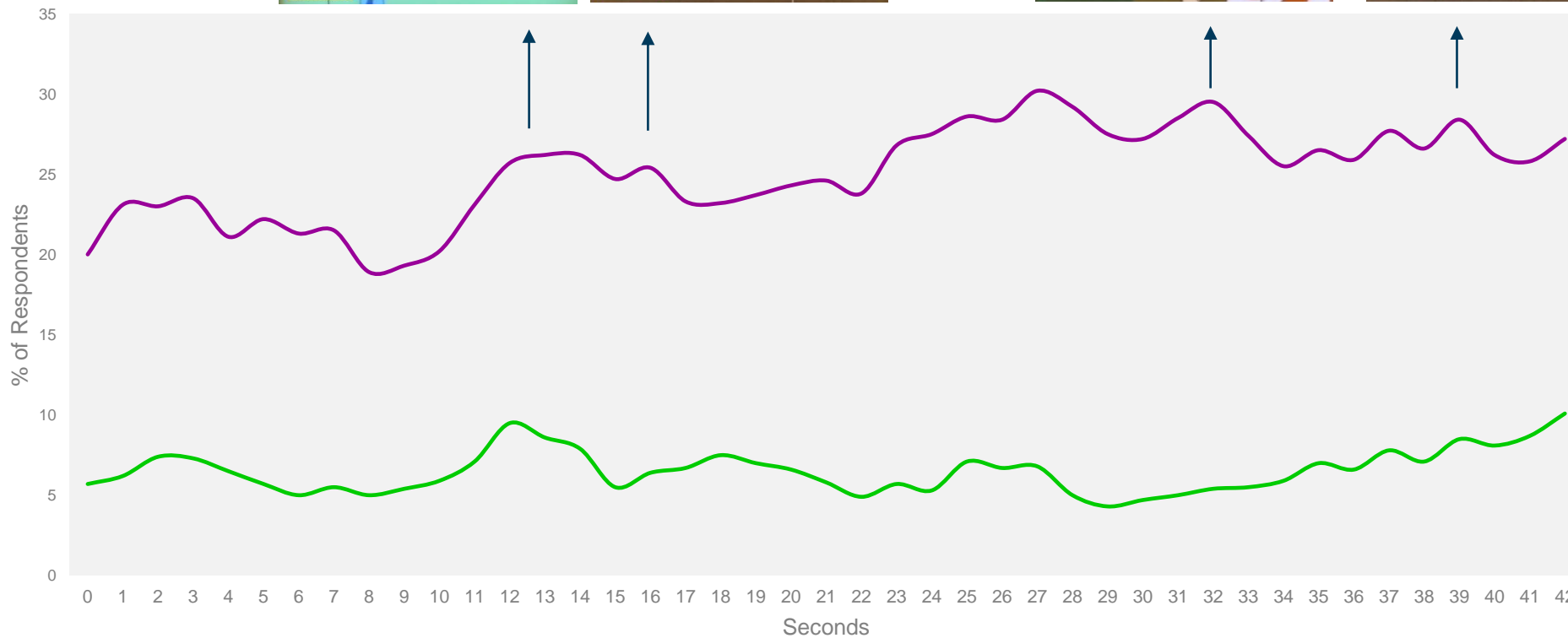
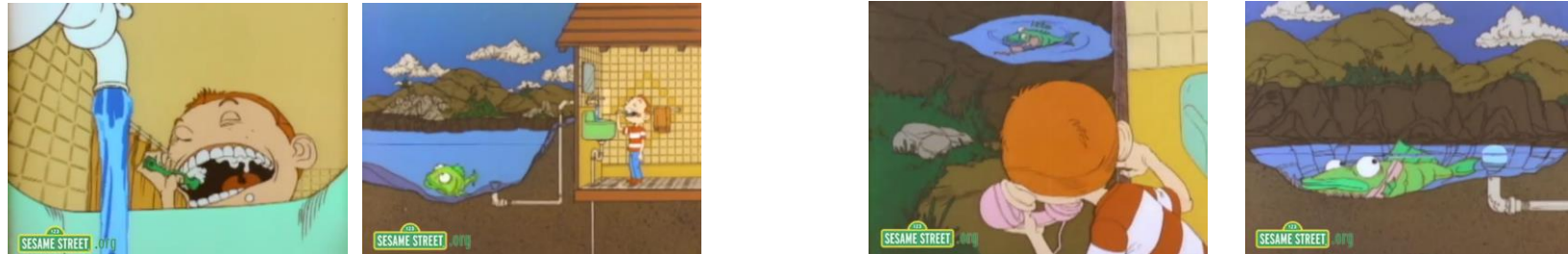


# Sesame Street (bloom): Core emotional response



The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

## What immediate emotional response did the creative evoke, and when?



HAPPY

ENGAGEMENT

Average

Happy

6.6%

Engagement

25.1%

Max

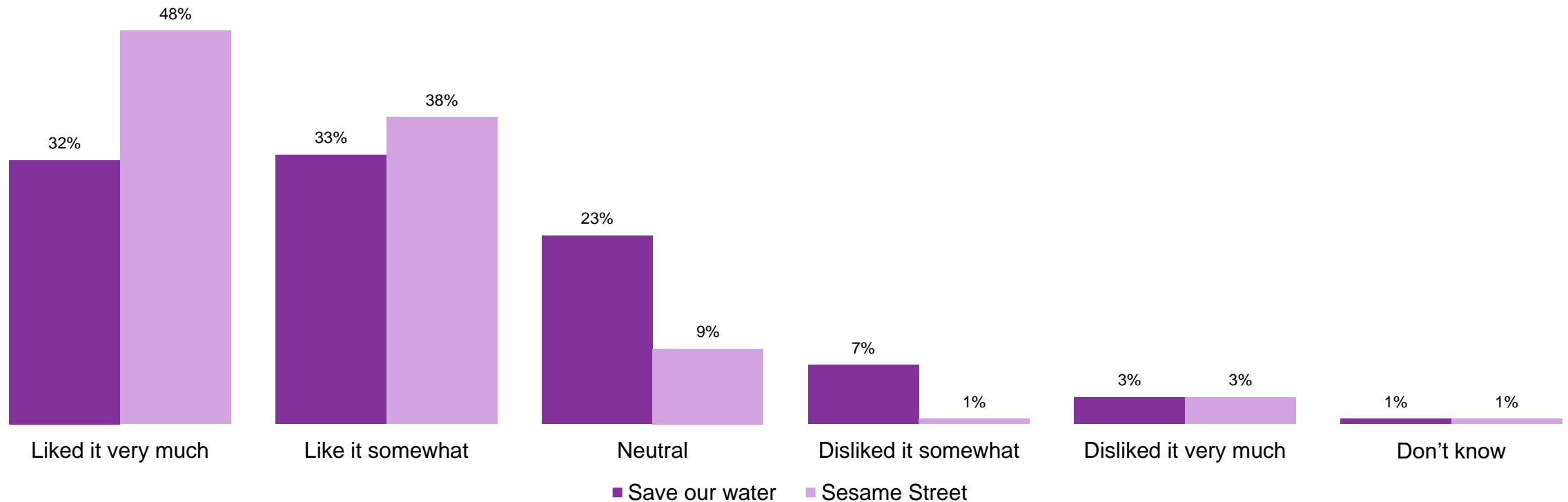
12%

31.4%





# Sesame Street (bloom) evoked a stronger positive reaction than Save our water (gloom)



D2. Overall, how did you feel about the ad?

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video save our water – WWF (151). All adults shown video Sesame Street water conservation (155).

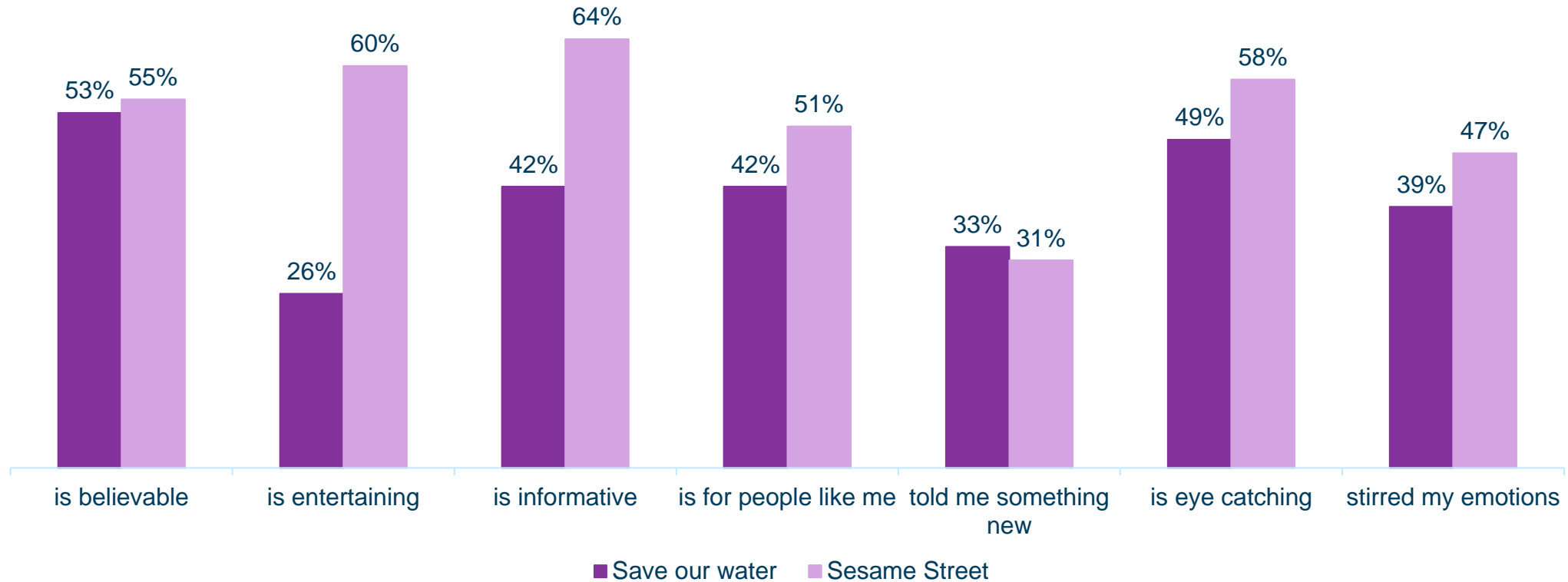




# Across majority of engagement metrics, *Sesame Street* (bloom) was more positive, particularly on entertainment and being informative



The ad ...



D3. How well does each of the following statements describe the ad? (% completely)

Source: Ipsos UK online Survey (28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023). Base: All adults shown video save our water – WWF (151). All adults shown video Sesame Street water conservation (155).

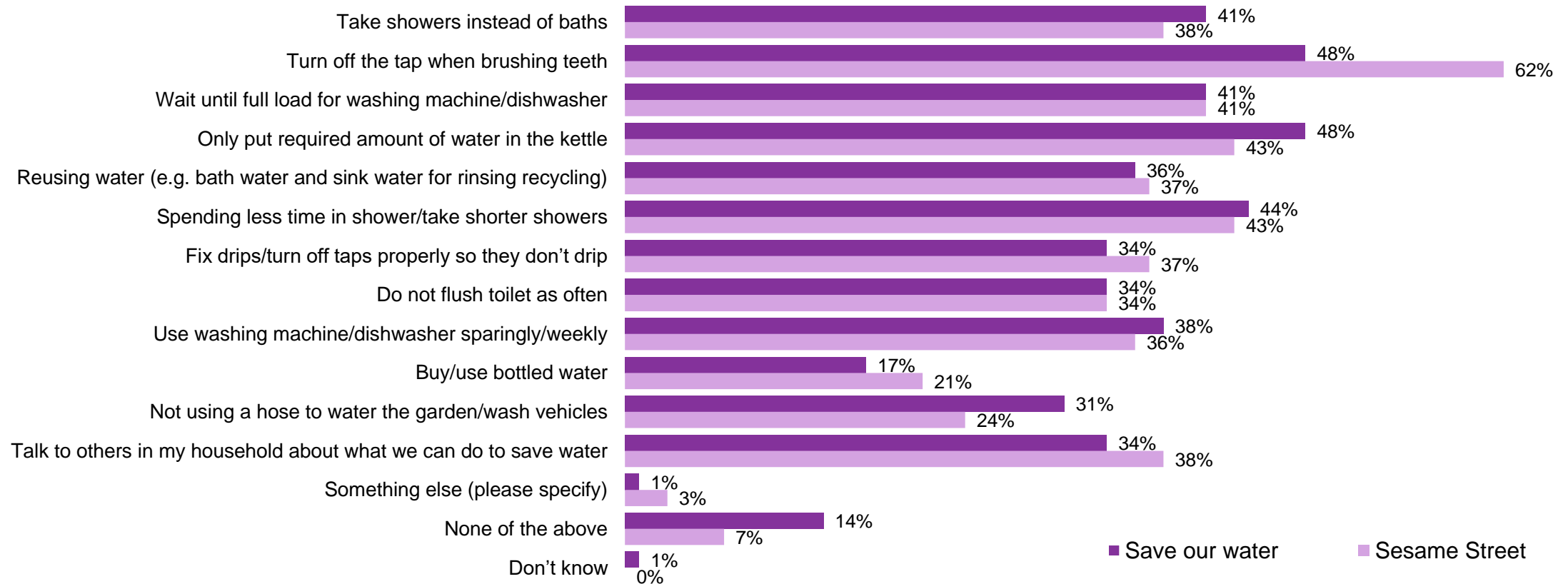




# Reported behaviour change: survey response



Both videos inspire different behavioural actions, with *Sesame Street* (bloom) particularly strong on turning off the tap.



D4. Having seen this ad, which of the following actions, if any, would you be willing to do to save water (that you don't already do)?





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## Contact:

The Consumer Council for Water  
23 Stephenson Street  
Birmingham  
B2 4BH



[ccw.org.uk](http://ccw.org.uk)