



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Water Voice - Accountability Session

Summary report

Water company: Yorkshire Water

Accountability Session date: 14.04.2026

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
Research & Energy Saving Trust

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Questions created and asked by community members



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Community members identified three priority questions they wanted to put directly to Yorkshire Water during the Accountability Session.

The questions were developed through a structured process involving the full Water Voice community (c.50 members). In January and February 2026, members collectively identified and refined priority themes through Spotlight surveys. These priorities were then shaped into draft questions during a dedicated briefing session, before being finalised and formally put to Yorkshire Water at the Accountability Session.

Each question was led by a community member and explored in depth during the session. Yorkshire Water provided on-the-record responses, with commitments and actions discussed in real time.

	Topic	Community member question
Q1	Communication: Transparency and customer contact	<p><i>"Too often, the information customers need is buried on the website and only available to people who know where to look..</i></p> <p><i>How will Yorkshire Water enhance the way it communicates with customers so important information is clear, timely and easy to access, especially for those who are most affected or may struggle to find it?"</i></p>
Q2	Bills and value for money	<p><i>"We understand that investment is needed, but we feel bill rises are not being explained clearly enough..</i></p> <p><i>How will Yorkshire Water:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Clearly explain rising bills and show customers what their money is paying for?</i> <i>2. Make support easier to access for households who are struggling?"</i>
Q3	Pollution and environmental performance	<p><i>"We are deeply concerned about sewage spills and pollution in rivers and coastal areas..</i></p> <p><i>What will Yorkshire Water do now and in the future to reduce pollution and sewage discharges, make rivers and coastal waters safer and show customers clear evidence of progress?"</i></p>

The sections that follow set out each question in turn, alongside the actions discussed and the expectations community members have for delivery through the company's published action plan. This will be published on **Friday 22nd May**.

Executive summary - insights by question



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The Accountability Session for Yorkshire Water highlighted customers' calls for clearer, more proactive communication, better explanation of bill rises and support and more transparent evidence on pollution reduction and water safety; Yorkshire Water acknowledged these concerns, outlined ongoing improvements and broadly accepted the actions raised.

Q1.

Communication: Transparency and customer contact

Yorkshire Water acknowledged that its website is not easy to navigate and outlined a broader communication approach including website improvements, testing channels such as WhatsApp, work with Councils and resilience forums, community outreach, school engagement, site banners and postal communication.

Community members welcomed the range of activity but felt parts of the response were still too vague, particularly around how vulnerable and offline customers would be identified, contacted and supported and initially challenged the apparent timescale for website improvement.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer visibility of website improvements prioritisation and communication, alongside a stronger and more joined-up approach to reach vulnerable and hard-to-reach customers through local partnerships, postal routes and tailored contact preferences.

Customers welcomed broader communication activity, but wanted clearer progress on website improvements and a stronger, more joined-up approach to reaching vulnerable and offline customers.

Q2.

Bills and value for money

Yorkshire Water said current bill increases reflect a long period in which bills did not keep pace with inflation, alongside higher expectations of the network, climate pressures and major investment needs and pointed to annual bill communications, specific infrastructure examples and existing financial support schemes.

Community members welcomed the fact that support exists and valued the examples given, but many still wanted clearer explanations of rising bills. Others were concerned about limited visibility of what support people may qualify for, insufficient local specificity on where money is going and a reliance on customers finding information themselves.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer, more direct explanations of bill rises and investment, more proactive and targeted communication about eligibility for support and easier access to person-to-person help through channels that work for a wider range of customers.

Customers felt bill rises and support options were still not explained clearly enough, with a need for more direct, proactive and accessible communication.

Q3.

Pollution and environmental performance

Yorkshire Water outlined a substantial programme of work on combined sewer overflows, bathing waters and wider pollution reduction, including past investment, a larger programme through to 2030, published pollution reporting and partnership work with councils, regulators and other bodies.

Community members recognised that action was underway, but many still felt there was a disconnect between the scale of investment described and the clarity of evidence available to customers, particularly on when places would become safer, how priority areas are chosen and how progress should be measured in ways that reflect real-world impact rather than headline numbers alone.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer, more local and more transparent communication on safety, timelines, prioritisation and progress, alongside simpler explanations of storm overflows and more accessible tools to help customers understand what is happening in their area.

Customers felt investment alone was not enough; they wanted clearer local evidence, clearer safety information and more transparent reporting on where progress is being made.

Actions agreed during the Accountability Session



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Q1.

Communication: Transparency and customer contact

- Clearly communicate how website improvements will be prioritised, delivered and updated over time.
- Strengthen identification and support for vulnerable customers through joined-up records, preferences and partner links.
- Use proactive offline and local communication routes alongside digital channels to reach hard-to-reach customers.
- Improve frontline and targeted communication so vulnerable customers receive timely, appropriate and accessible support.

Q2.

Bills and value for money

- Provide clear, direct and regular explanations of bill rises, spending and local investment outcomes for customers.
- Proactively tell customers what support is available, who may qualify and how to access it through clear communications.
- Capture customer circumstances early and use them to guide eligibility checks, tailored support and communication routes.
- Offer accessible person-to-person contact options beyond the phone, especially for vulnerable customers needing support.

Q3.

Pollution and environmental performance

- Communicate local improvements, timelines and outcomes so customers can see what investment is changing and when.
- Explain storm overflows, pollution and bathing water safety in plain English, including what customers should expect locally.
- Strengthen information on spills, pollution and improvement plans through online tools and on-location signposting.
- Be transparent about how areas are prioritised and use the clearest available measures of progress and safety.



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Water Voice - Accountability Session

Summary report

Our findings in detail

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
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Q1. Communication:

Transparency and customer contact



Question asked by Yorkshire Water Community member:

“Too often, the information customers need is buried on the website and only available to people who know where to look..

How will Yorkshire Water enhance the way it communicates with customers so important information is clear, timely and easy to access, especially for those who are most affected or may struggle to find it?”

Yorkshire Water acknowledged that its website is not easy to navigate and outlined a broader communication approach including website improvements, testing channels such as WhatsApp, work with councils and resilience forums, community outreach, school engagement, site banners and postal communication.

Community members welcomed the range of activity but felt parts of the response were still too vague, particularly around how vulnerable and offline customers would be identified, contacted and supported, and initially challenged the apparent timescale for website improvement.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer visibility of website improvements prioritisation and communication, alongside a stronger and more joined-up approach to reach vulnerable and hard-to-reach customers through local partnerships, postal routes and tailored contact preferences.

Actions

- Clearly communicate how website improvements will be prioritised, delivered and updated over time.
- Strengthen identification and support for vulnerable customers through joined-up records, preferences and partner links.
- Use proactive offline and local communication routes alongside digital channels to reach hard-to-reach customers.
- Improve frontline and targeted communication so vulnerable customers receive timely, appropriate and accessible support.

“with regards to the website... how long has that been an acknowledgement... and where are they at with it at the moment?”

“There needs to be some sort of system where we can actually identify vulnerable people and then [know] how they would actually like to be notified.”

“They’ve mentioned the WhatsApp and comms channels but there’s not enough emphasis on offline or hard to reach customers.”



Customers welcomed broader communication activity, but wanted clearer progress on website improvements and a stronger, more joined-up approach to reaching vulnerable and offline customers.

Q1. Communication:

Transparency and customer contact



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"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
<p>Clearly communicate how website improvements will be prioritised, delivered and updated over time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged the website is not easy to follow and needs improvement. Reviews top reasons customers contact Yorkshire Water to understand how communication should improve. Said work is underway to improve communication journeys and test different channels, including WhatsApp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear visibility of website improvement priorities and progress. Explain what is being improved, why, and in what order. Keep customers updated on how changes are being made over time. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Clarified that this is not a one-off website rebuild – improvement via ongoing sprints, addressing issues in sequence as priorities become clear.</p>
<p>Strengthen identification and support for vulnerable customers through joined-up records, preferences and partner links.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed work with Councils, resilience forums, local hubs and communities to help reach customers more quickly. Said letters are already sent annually with bills and ahead of works in local areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain clearer records of vulnerable customers and their contact preferences. Improve use of Priority Services information across all relevant communications. Work with Councils, NHS, GPs and community partners to better identify and reach vulnerable or hard-to-reach customers. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Confirmed much of this is already underway (inc. ~330k customers on Priority Services Register), accepted more can be done to link data at different contact points. Further detail expected in company action plan.</p>
<p>Use proactive offline and local communication routes alongside digital channels to reach hard-to-reach customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Described community events, school visits and site visits as existing outreach activity. Uses site banners to explain local works and disruption. Said postal communication is already used through bills and letters ahead of works. Said local hubs and councillor/community routes can help reach customers who may not use digital channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use postal, face-to-face and local community routes more deliberately for offline customers. Use pop-up stalls and extend school outreach into higher education and the workplace to improve reach, awareness and knowledge. Make sure hard-to-reach customers are not dependent on digital channels alone. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Yorkshire Water confirmed annual letters and advance works notifications are already in place. Discussion showed support for more visible use of local offline routes; further detail expected in company action plan.</p>

Note: This table is an excerpt from the full Action Plan. Yorkshire Water will provide formal responses to each action within 28 days of the session date. The updated plan will then be shared with participating community members for review and agreement.

Q1. Communication:

Transparency and customer contact



The voice for water consumers
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"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
<p>Improve frontline and targeted communication so vulnerable customers receive timely, appropriate and accessible support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Said communication needs differ by circumstance, including billing issues, crises and local incidents. • Said more effort is needed to communicate more often and in the right format for different customers. • Referred to exploring two-way channels and more tailored communication methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a more dedicated support response for vulnerable customers. • Improve staff awareness of hidden vulnerabilities. • Trigger early support where repeat contact, missed payments or life events may signal need. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Yorkshire Water said the overall list looked doable in principle and accepted the need to think further about some of these areas.</p> <p>No firm timeline was committed.</p>

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Q2. Bills and value for money



The voice for water consumers
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Question asked by Yorkshire Water Community member:

"We understand that investment is needed, but we feel bill rises are not being explained clearly enough..."

How will Yorkshire Water:

- 1. Clearly explain rising bills and show customers what their money is paying for?*
- 2. Make support easier to access for households who are struggling?"*

Yorkshire Water said current bill increases reflect a long period in which bills did not keep pace with inflation, alongside higher expectations of the network, climate pressures and major investment needs, and pointed to annual bill communications, specific infrastructure examples and existing financial support schemes.

Community members welcomed the fact that support exists and valued the examples given, but many still wanted clearer explanations of rising bills. Others were concerned about limited visibility of what support people may qualify for, insufficient local specificity on where money is going, and a reliance on customers finding information themselves.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer, more direct explanations of bill rises and investment, more proactive and targeted communication about eligibility for support, and easier access to person-to-person help through channels that work for a wider range of customers.

Actions

- Provide clear, direct and regular explanations of bill rises, spending and local investment outcomes for customers.
- Proactively tell customers what support is available, who may qualify and how to access it through clear communications.
- Capture customer circumstances early and use them to guide eligibility checks, tailored support and communication routes.
- Offer accessible person-to-person contact options beyond the phone, especially for vulnerable customers needing support.

"Yeah, more specifics and why our bills are going up."

"I wouldn't know where to get that information from now."

"The once-a-year annual bill is probably not enough... we definitely want to see where that's been allocated and where it's been delivered by the business."



Customers felt bill rises and support options were still not explained clearly enough, with a need for more direct, proactive and accessible communication.

Q2. Bills and value for money



The voice for water consumers
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"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
<p>Provide clear, direct and regular explanations of bill rises, spending and local investment outcomes for customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bills have risen after ~10 years in which they did not keep pace with inflation, alongside rising demands and investment needs. • Annual bill communications already explain spending. • Gave examples e.g. £1.5bn on storm overflows between 2025–2030 and around 1,000km of water main replacement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visibility of support and investment information online. • Clearly explain why bills are rising, what customers' money is funding and what this means at the <u>local level</u>. • Provide direct-to-customer, easy-to-follow updates on spending, delivery and outcomes. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Existing pages already cover 'Help Paying Your Bill' and 'Investing in Yorkshire'. A six-monthly update document would be shared widely, but direct communications are constrained by marketing rules unless customers have opted in.</p>
<p>Proactively tell customers what support is available, who may qualify and how to access it through clear communications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of support schemes already exists, not only for low-income households. • Over 200,000 customers were supported in the last year, with around £60m of support. • Support is promoted through debt agencies, charities, Citizens Advice, local government and other partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate eligibility more clearly through email, text, letter and other channels. • Make it easier for customers to understand whether they may qualify them for support. • Reduce reliance on customers having to discover support for themselves. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Company will continue using a range of channels and partnerships to improve awareness/access to support. Further comment expected in company action plan.</p>
<p>Capture customer circumstances early and use them to guide eligibility checks, tailored support and communication routes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are different schemes for different circumstances, including households with more children. • Highlighted the option to move to a meter, with a two-year guarantee to move back if not better for customer. • Some support links already operate through direct connections with local government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for relevant customer information at first contact or account set-up - use this information to target support efforts. • Explore ways of helping customers check likely eligibility without creating extra barriers – for example, a website 'eligibility calculator'. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Company open to website calculator, but stressed complexity and risk of excluding eligible customers if oversimplified.</p>

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Q2. Bills and value for money



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"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
<p>Offer accessible person-to-person contact options beyond the phone, especially for vulnerable customers needing support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Said customers can call for support and that Yorkshire Water is working to make support better known. Referred to broader communications through media, local mailing lists and social channels. Stated app had been discontinued due to low take-up, investment had been re-prioritised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide real-person chat (non-AI agent) or WhatsApp support alongside phone contact. Ensure vulnerable customers can access help through channels they are comfortable using. Maintain accessible, practical alternatives to digital self-service only. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Company accepted the need to keep improving communication routes for vulnerable customers.</p>

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Q3. Pollution and environmental performance



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Question asked by Yorkshire Water Community member:

“We are deeply concerned about sewage spills and pollution in rivers and coastal areas...

What will Yorkshire Water do now and in the future to reduce pollution and sewage discharges, make rivers and coastal waters safer and show customers clear evidence of progress?”

Yorkshire Water outlined a substantial programme of work on combined sewer overflows, bathing waters and wider pollution reduction, including past investment, a larger programme through to 2030, published pollution reporting and partnership work with councils, regulators and other bodies.

Community members recognised that action was underway, but many still felt there was a disconnect between the scale of investment described and the clarity of evidence available to customers, particularly on when places would become safer, how priority areas are chosen and how progress should be measured in ways that reflect real-world impact rather than headline numbers alone.

Discussion focused on the need for clearer, more local and more transparent communication on safety, timelines, prioritisation and progress, alongside simpler explanations of storm overflows and more accessible tools to help customers understand what is happening in their area.

Actions

- Communicate local improvements, timelines and outcomes so customers can see what investment is changing and when.
- Explain storm overflows, pollution and bathing water safety in plain English, including what customers should expect locally.
- Strengthen information on spills, pollution and improvement plans through online tools and on-location signposting.
- Be transparent about how areas are prioritised and use the clearest available measures of progress and safety.

“To me any pollution is serious, it doesn't matter how big or how small...it's all serious and it affects the people...around those areas immediately”

“I've tried to read up on how this...overflow thing works and to be honest it's too technical, I need...in plain English, how it happens, why it happens...and what are they going to do about it?”

“I'd rather them be honest but to give specific dates and times as to when [a pollution incident] is going to be clean.”



Customers felt investment alone was not enough; they wanted clearer local evidence, clearer safety information and more transparent reporting on where progress is being made.

Q3. Pollution and environmental performance



The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
Communicate local improvements, timelines and outcomes so customers can see what investment is changing and when.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explained three areas of focus: combined sewer overflows, bathing waters, and wider pollution incidents. £180m invested across ~100 locations, with £1.5bn planned investment 2025-2030 across ~450 locations to halve discharges. Gave examples of improvement and further focus (e.g. Ilkley). Pollution incident reporting published to be updated next year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly set out what customers should expect to improve over the next 5 years. Clearly communicate whether key improvements are delivered, including local examples and outcome evidence. Host regular open-rooms between customers and company representatives. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Company confirmed more specific examples could be communicated.</p> <p>Bi-annual regional meetings are held.</p> <p>It also said some interventions already show results, but others will take 2-4 years to design and deliver.</p>
Explain storm overflows, pollution and bathing water safety in plain English, including what customers should expect locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that overflows are automated and said that the system is complex and heavily affected by rainfall and wider network pressures. Said bathing water quality is also affected by agricultural runoff, roads, harbours, birds and dogs. Confirmed 80% of bathing waters in Yorkshire Water's area are currently rated Excellent, Good or Sufficient, with only four below sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a plain-English explanation of why and how storm overflows happen. Communicate clearly and frankly on bathing water safety and quality, including where waters are sub-standard. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Company accepted the need for clearer plain-English explanation and said it would keep working on this.</p> <p>Noted that bathing water ratings are based on a four-year rolling average, which can delay visible improvement in official classifications.</p>
Strengthen information on spills, pollution, and improvement plans through online tools and on-location signposting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollution Improvement Programme is published on its website. A map showing discharging assets and where investment is planned is already available. Said risk forecasting and local signage are used at some beaches when bathing is unsuitable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signpost heavily polluted areas more clearly. Provide simple online tools showing spills and local information. Make Pollution Reduction Programme information easy to find on the website. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: These tools exist in part, inc. improvement plan and online overflow map.</p> <p>Confirmed signage is used in some locations through existing arrangements with the Environment Agency and councils.</p>

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Q3. Pollution and environmental performance



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"You said" (Community member actions)	"We did" (Yorkshire Water response on the night)	What is the 'Ideal' Yorkshire Water response? (In the eyes of our community)	Timescale / Company comments
<p>Be transparent about how areas are prioritised and use the clearest available measures of progress and safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Said the company prioritises according to legal and regulatory duties, including bathing waters, reducing spills by 2030 and areas of scientific or environmental importance. Said customer concern also informs additional focus. Reports progress via spill numbers and duration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify how Yorkshire Water prioritises locations for action. Use clearest possible measures of progress, not just spill counts. Be transparent on performance and safety where volume data is not available. 	<p>Timescale: To be provided in the company action plan.</p> <p>Final comments from water company: Flow-rate and total volume data is not currently possible – only duration and spill numbers.</p> <p>Prioritisation is already shaped by legislation, regulators, environmental impact and customers</p>

Note: This table is an excerpt from the full Action Plan. Yorkshire Water will provide formal responses to each action within 28 days of the session date. The updated plan will then be shared with participating community members for review and agreement.

What happens after the Accountability Session?

After the Accountability Session, there is a clear and structured follow-up process.



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Publication and transparency

Within 5 working days

A full (anonymised) transcript of the session was [published](#) on **Wednesday 22nd April**

Within 10 working days

A plain-English summary is published, setting out:
The questions asked.
The key points raised by Community members.
The actions agreed for inclusion in the action plan.
Anything recorded as *not yet agreed*.
Tuesday 28th April



Action plan

Within 28 days

The water company must share its **action plan**, setting out how it will deliver the agreed actions.

The action plan will be **shared with the Water Voice community on Friday 22nd May**



Customer feedback

Participants will be asked, via a short survey, whether they feel the action plan:

- ✓ Reflects what was agreed in the session
- ✓ Goes far enough to address customer concerns

This feedback forms part of CCW's ongoing monitoring and follow-up with the company and helps inform future accountability work.



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Water Voice - Accountability Session

Summary report

Annex: Research approach

Delivered by Taylor McKenzie
Research & Energy Saving Trust

Background



What is an Accountability Session?

An Accountability Session is a formal, facilitated meeting where **water consumers directly question senior executives from their water company** about performance, service failures and issues of concern – and **agree the actions they want the company to take**.

They sit at the heart of CCW's statutory role to strengthen consumer voice and ensure companies respond transparently and meaningfully.

*<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/5/enacted>

Why do they exist?

Accountability Sessions exist because customers deserve a real say in how their water company performs. They give people a direct line to the people in charge – not through a survey, not through a complaint form, but face-to-face.

For years, customers have felt that water companies weren't listening closely enough. *Water (Special Measures) Act 2025** requiring a relevant undertaker to have arrangements in place for involving consumers in decisions of the undertaker that are likely to have a material impact on consumer matters.

These sessions make that happen. They create a space where customers can:

- Ask honest questions
- Raise the issues that really affect them
- Agree the actions they expect the company to take next.

It's all about making the process fair, open, and focused on what matters most to the people who actually use and pay for the service.

Objectives

What the session aims to achieve



1. Give customers a real voice

These sessions make sure customers aren't just "heard" – their views actually guide the conversation and shape what happens next.

2. Make companies answer directly to the people they serve

Senior water company leaders must respond openly, honestly, and in real time. No hiding behind reports or press statements.

3. Agree clear actions that lead to real improvements

By the end of each session, everyone should be clear on:

- ✓ what the company will do
- ✓ how they'll do it
- ✓ how customers will know things have improved.

4. Build trust through transparency

Everything is published – the questions, the answers, the agreed actions – so customers can see what's happening and whether companies are following through.

5. Make sure all types of customers are represented

People from different backgrounds, ages, abilities and regions take part, ensuring the outcomes reflect real experiences across the community.

Outputs

By the close of the process, this Accountability Session will have:

- Provided CCW with **robust, publishable evidence** of consumer concerns and company responses.
- Established a clear and transparent set of customer-agreed actions that the water company must reflect in its published action plan. The action plan itself is published by the company following the session, in line with the accountability process.
- Given consumers confidence that their participation leads to **real scrutiny and follow-through**, reinforcing the credibility of the accountability process.
- Informed future regulatory engagement by highlighting **systemic or recurring issues** requiring wider attention.

Together, this ensures the session delivers both **immediate accountability** and **longer-term value** for consumers and the sector.

Methodology

How does it work?

CCW

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01



Prioritising what matters most

1. We listen to what customers tell us each month

Through Barometer & Spotlight surveys and the online community

2. We play back what they said

In the January Spotlight survey, we show customers the issues they raised & ask them to prioritise the most important ones.

3. Confirm their priorities

In the February Spotlight survey, customers confirm if they agree with which points matter most.

02



Getting ready (Briefing session)

Selected 12 customers join a 2-hour online (via Zoom) briefing before the main meeting.

Everyone gets clear, easy-to-read information beforehand so they feel confident and prepared.

The facilitator talks them through:

- How the session will work
- The issues they've prioritised
- How to shape their questions & come up with a set of questions for each priority.

We will brief the CCW Chair separately at this point & remind them on their role, share guide & prioritised topics / Priorities will be sent the Water Companies at this point

03



The Accountability Session (Main meeting)

12 customers take part in an online session (via Zoom) with a senior water company representative for 2 hours.

TMcK facilitator & Chair guiding the conversation:

- Customers ask their prepared questions
- Challenge the company's answers
- Explore what needs to change.

Live polls let everyone share honest views – even those who prefer not to speak out loud.

Welsh panels will be given the option of English, Welsh or simultaneous translation .

04



Agreeing what should happen next

During the main accountability session, after each issue is discussed, the facilitator checks whether customers feel the company's proposed actions are good enough.

Together, they work towards a clear **consensus** on what actions the company must take.

05



Publishing the outcomes and following up

A summary is produced showing: the questions asked, how the company responded, and the actions agreed.

- CCW publishes a **transcript within 5 working days**
- CCW publishes a **summary within 10 working days**
- The company must publish its **action plan by day 28**

Panellists are asked short follow-up questions about whether the plan reflects what was agreed.

CCW then tracks progress and updates panellists before the next session.

[Priorities will be shared with the ISG]

Sample

Who takes part in an Accountability Session



We brought together a **small, representative group of around 12 people** for each accountability session.

This number keeps the conversation manageable and ensures everyone has the chance to speak.

Each person is selected by the panel manager from their panel of 50 participants.

Our panel managers are responsible for selecting a representative range of participants and ensure that anyone who has expressed a keen interest in taking part in an accountability session is included at this stage.

We make sure each session of 12 includes the following types of panellists:

- **Age** - younger adults, middle-aged adults and older customers (2 per age bracket)
- **Gender** - a balanced mix (at least 5 males & 5 females)
- **Income levels** - including low-income households (3 financially vulnerable, 3 x 20-40k, 3 x £40k-60k & 2 x £60k+)
- **Location** - Rural and Urban water users (different house-types represented)
- **Ethnic backgrounds** - reflecting the local population, 2-3 from an ethnic minority background
- **People with accessibility, neurodivergent or additional support needs** (at least 1)
- **Different customer types** - e.g metered/unmetered, renters/homeowners
- **Different attitudes** – including 3 x positive, 3 x neutral & 3 x negative customers
- **Bathing water users** – 3 regular users (for WaSC panels)
- **Welsh speakers** – at least 2 Welsh speakers within our two Welsh panels & options for accountability session language

This ensures all voices are represented, not just the loudest or most confident.

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The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Thank you!



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