Willingness-to-pay research to support PR19 - Focus on retail attributes

Methodology Statement v5

This report was prepared by

Impact Utilities

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South Staffs Water

incorporating CAMBRIDGE WATER COMPANY

Contents

Glossary

Abbreviation	Term
CCG	Customer challenge group
ECP	Engaged customer panel
HH	Household
NHH	Non-household (commercial)
Ofwat	The economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales
PR14	2014 price review
PR19	2019 price review
PSR	Priority services register
SME	Small or medium enterprise
SP	Stated preference
SSC	South Staffordshire Plc
SSW	South Staffordshire Water
WTP	Willingness-to-pay

Definitions of terms

Term	Definition
Business sector SIC code	The United Kingdom Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (SIC) will be used to classify businesses by the type of economic activity in which they are engaged for analysis purposes.
Business size	For the purposes of this research, small and medium enterprise (SME) size has been defined in line with the European Commission (Enterprise and Industry) classification as follows: Micro – 1-10 employees (turnover of less than £2 million pa) Small – 11-50 employees (turnover of less than £10 million pa) Medium – 51-250 employees (turnover of less than £50 million pa).
Difficult to pay	Ofwat's Affordable for All report identifies domestic customers who are at risk of finding it difficult to pay their water and sewerage bills as those where 3% or more of the household income is spent on water and 5% or more on sewerage.
Geographical classification	The 2011 Rural-Urban Classification of Local Authority Districts and other higher level geographies will be used to classify survey participants into geographical categories as follows: • Mainly rural (rural population including hub towns ≥ 80%) • Largely rural (rural population including hub towns 50-79%) • Urban with significant rural (rural population including hub towns 26-49%) • Urban with city and town • Urban with minor conurbation • Urban with major conurbation. This geographical classification will be coded automatically from postcode information collected in the survey. These six categories can then be aggregated to rural versus urban.

Term	Definition
Vulnerable or 'hard to reach' customers	Ofwat's Vulnerability Focus Report defines a customer whose circumstances make them vulnerable, 'A customer who due to personal characteristics, their overall life situation or due to broader market and economic factors, is not having reasonable opportunity to access and receive an inclusive service which may have a detrimental impact on their health, wellbeing or finances.' The water sector has adopted a number of approaches to protect customers whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those with transitional or temporary vulnerable classifications. These include: • Special assistance registers or priority services register • Financial assistance schemes to help with the cost of their bills • Special tariffs linked to social welfare payments (such as WaterSure) • Water efficiency measures to help customers manage their consumption • Direct debit schemes where customers receiving certain social benefits can arrange to have their bills directly debited on a weekly basis. Customers classed as vulnerable may or may not be included on a priority service register (PSR). Throughout this methodology statement, the term 'hard to reach' customers will be used to refer to vulnerable customers for consistency.

Introduction

This report outlines the proposed approach to conducting 'follow-up' customer valuation research for South Staffordshire Plc (referred to as SSC) to support its 2019 price review (PR19) for Ofwat. Impact Utilities, the agency commissioned by SSC, conducted extensive customer engagement in the later part of 2017 to understand customers' priorities for service investment. Results from this will then be adapted to feed into SSC's IO model and ultimately the business plan for the next regulatory period, due for submission to Ofwat in September 2018.

This early phases of research consisted of a literature review and qualitative research (group discussions with customers), followed by a large pilot survey of 700 customers. On the basis of the learnings from each of these phases a final questionnaire was agreed with SSC and a main large-scale survey of over 2,000 customers of all types conducted across the South Staffordshire and Cambridge regions served by SSC. Statistical modelling was then conducted to produce objective measures of customers' priorities for improvements and their willingness to pay for future service improvements.

These customer valuations of service levels were verified against other sources of data from SSC and secondary sources including:

- Results of the willingness-to-pay (WTP) analysis for SSC during PR14
- Information published by other companies or Ofwat during PR14
- Publicly available information eg publications from the Environment Agency, Defra or Ofgem.

A final step was to Impact Research to work with SSC evaluation team to adapt the results for appropriate use in SSC's IO model. This process, together with appraisals of the research results by the wider SSC team and CCWater, raised a number of questions which require further testing. These are identified in the Research Objectives below.

Background

Research objectives

The research and analysis to date has been carried out following best practice and in accordance with Ofwat's latest guidance. This notes the value of methods that were used in submissions for PR14 (most commonly, SP choice experiments) but encourages innovation to address the shortcomings identified with these.

The most pertinent challenges were:

- To gain more insight in to why customers responded to the service improvement levels presented, the attribute wordings and the way they valued multiple improvements.
- How to build confidence in the valuations through the use of appropriate triangulation with data sources from within and external to the research.

These two themes translated into the following research objectives for this phase of follow-up research:

- To test the level of sensitivity of WTP attributes to alternative definitions.
- To identify customers' willingness for different *combined* service and investment levels for water services – both wholesale and retail
- To identify if a lower bill starting point with an improved level of service alters the WTP values.

Project overview

The Key steps and latest timings for the project are given below in Figure 1. The key topics summarised in the research objectives are explored first in a qualitative forum (the Engaged Customer Panels). There will then be a short pilot study to finalise the questionnaire and then the main-stage survey.

Figure 1: Timings and deliverables

	Revised timing 3 (delayed pilot)	Responsibility
Project commission	w/c 15th Jan	SSC
Project KO meeting	w/c 23rd Jan	Impact and SSC
Methodology Statement	w/c12th Feb	Impact
Qual group (if chosen)	w/c19th Feb	Impact
Pilot script signed off	9th March	SSC
Pilot survey	soft launch 14th march, full launch 19th - 23rd March	Impact
Feedback from panel on pilot qnaire	23rd March	SSC
Impact analyse pilot and feedback recommendations for mainstage	29th March	Impact
SSC confirm sign off mainstage questionnaire and conjoint	3rd April EOD	SSC
Re-script and test	4th-9th April	Impact
Mainstage survey	10th April - 30th April	Impact
Data analysis	1st May - 8th May	Impact
IO Model Data sheet provision	9th May	Impact
Presentation deck available	w/c 14th May	Impact
Project completion	w/c 21st May	Impact and SSC

Stage One: Engaged Customer Panel

Objective

To gather qualitative insights that will inform the design of the follow up WtP survey.

Approach

We re-contacted participants from the three SSW Engaged Customer Panel (ECP) groups, who met twice in South Staffordshire in July and August 2017. The groups were comprised of two HH groups (one social grade ABC1 and one social grade C2DE) and one NHH group of SME businesses. The ECP panellists are sufficiently educated with regards to SSW, and have already provided valuable feedback on the attribute wording and survey design for the main WTP quantitative survey conducted in October 2017.

We conducted one group of 8-10 HH customers and one group of 6 NHH customers, across one evening (21st February 2018). The discussion was a more 'focussed' discussion then is typical in qualitative sessions (which tends to be more discursive in nature). Specific feedback was sought on the following:

- Feedback on a summary infographic based on the findings of the first phase of WTP research.
- Reactions to results from the quantitative WTP survey (top level results will be emailed in advanced to panellists). Are the top priorities as they would expect? Any surprises?
- Feedback on potential changes to attribute wording or improvement levels for the following attributes from the initial WTP survey:
    - Water not safe to drink
    - Lead pipes
    - Water hardness
    - Unexpected temporary loss of water supply
    - Leakage levels
    - Protecting wildlife habitats
    - Managing impacts on rivers & streams
- Feedback on the retail attribute wording, supportive explanatory text and requirement for any images
- Feedback on explanatory text to introduce the concept of a lower bill value yet associated improvements.

Outcome

The outcome of the deliberation stage is a cognitively appraised survey instrument for piloting, optimised for customer comprehension and consistent interpretation of terms. Communication materials to support the survey have also been produced and refined according to feedback received at the ECP meetings. Detailed findings from the qualitative research are now available in an ECP report submitted 6 March 2018.

Stage Two: Quantitative Testing

Approach

The main purpose of the study is to revisit key attributes tested in the 2017 research. It is likely that most attributes will be included, to allow for consistency across the studies, but certain changes will be made to test the sensitivity of results to attribute definitions. Figure 2 summarises the attributes and actions for re-testing.

- To identify customers' willingness for different *combined* service and investment levels for water services – both wholesale and retail
    - This relates to an issue identified in the literature relating to a 'budget' effect. That is, the simple addition of WTP values for individual service improvements is likely to overstate the total amount that customers are willing to pay for multiple improvements. We can measure WTP for a large number of service improvements introduced together, compare this with the sum of the individual WTP values from the last phase of research and produce appropriate adjustment factors. This will require purpose-built 'fixed task' scenarios to be included in the questionnaire.
- To test the level of sensitivity of WTP attributes to alternative definitions.
    - These are results that delivered either a high WTP value (eg lead pipes, water hardness) or may indicate some bias or lack of understanding among customers (eg leakage, environmental attributes). More specifically:
        - When comparing the levels across the water quality attributes customers would have been presented with longer period frequencies of events happening for taste and smell and unable to drink water and then for lead and hard water there are more stark jumps in levels, which are non-frequency based. Could this difference have impacted on the results?
        - The wording of lead pipes and water hardness have words like 'children', 'risk' and 'unwanted damage' in them which are more emotive than for other attributes. Could this have influenced customers' trade off choices?
        - In the mid-level hard water wording it says 'provides a free device' in description. Again could this offer of a free product influence customer choices?
        - For water hardness the wording 'have hard water' may suggest more of a problem, particularly when illustrated in terms of the effect on appliances, even though technically all urban areas have hard water. So again the wording might have influenced customers that this is something negative.

- The environment attributes (eg river management) indicate increases in the scope of expanding the scope of maintenance, expressed in terms of area. This is very different from showing levels that reduce the chances of decreases in the quality of the environment, such as pollution incidents. The recommendation here is to measure WTP for avoiding a reduction in quality.

- Some attributes also contained levels that suggested that some events could be eliminated altogether (eg 0% discolouration or removal of all lead pipes). This may be unrealistic or beyond what customers require, so there is value in testing levels that do not reach this ideal level but capture a large part of the total potential WTP value.

- There was also a debate as to whether customers could express preferences for specific attribute levels with much precision – that is, to what extent are the variations in WTP values for different attribute improvements reflective of the different values they attach to the attribute as a whole and the actual magnitude of each improvement. This points to the value of creating attribute improvement levels that are broadly comparable in:
  - the way they are described and
  - their magnitude across the attributes and across the levels of improvement.

  It was agreed that the most consistent way of representing attributes was as a likelihood of an event occurring (eg "this happens once every 40 years"). Realistic levels of change were agreed to be:
  - 'some' improvement = 25% better /negative impact reduced by one quarter
  - 'significant' improvement = 50% better / negative impact reduced by half.

- To identify if a lower bill starting point with an improved level of service alters the WTP values.

  - This reflects the likely future scenario of service improvements being introduced while bills actually fall. The challenge here is that lower bills at the current point in time will be perceived as a discount. This may encourage higher WTP values, simply because many customers are being asked to trade money that they will regard as a surplus. This is why the main quantitative research of 2017 based WTP around current bill levels.

Questionnaire

The Stated Preference (SP) exercises will form the core of the questionnaire, as they did in the previous research. We propose to present attributes in a 'Public' context only. The previous research showed some interesting differences between 'Private' and 'Public' definitions, mainly in relation to quality attributes ('Private' values are generally higher, reflecting the personal impact). However, the use only of the 'Public' context is most appropriate going forward, for two reasons:

- SSC's IO model seeks to reflect the opinions of all customers, not just those directly impacted (eg by flooding) and it is not practical to produce a 'blended' private/public average, where the former applies to directly affected customers and the latter to the remaining customers.
- Many of the attributes can only be presented in a 'Public' format (eg leakage and environment), so use of mixed formats may undermine the consistency of WTP comparisons across attributes.

In the previous wave of research, the number of years that customers were invited to think ahead was varied across respondents. While some differences in the results were picked up, there was not a systematic pattern that suggested that the number of future years under consideration was a major influence on customers' priorities. We therefore propose not to include this in the current phase.

There is no longer a requirement to include a max diff exercise, so this will allow two SP exercises to be presented to each respondent, doubling the effective sample size. However, there is an additional group of retail attributes, making four sets of attributes in total.

The proposed structure of the questionnaire was as follows:

- Background information on the respondent (demographics, etc)
- First SP exercise: random selection from one of four possible topic areas (quality, security, environment, retail attributes)
- Second SP exercise: if retail attributes not selected the first time, show retail attributes, if retail attributes were shown make a random selection from one of three remaining topic areas (quality, security, environment)
- 'Budget effect' question presenting the two 'blocks' of attributes and one other randomly selected, all as improvements that are made simultaneously
- Follow up questions

Pilot Survey

In an initial pilot stage we conducted a cognitive assessment of the retail attribute wording. Face to face interviewers probed respondents for feedback on clarity of the conjoint exercise and specifically the attributes contained within, and respondents overall survey experience

Interviewers also provided their feedback on respondents' comprehension and survey experience. A target sample of 160 customers was aimed for, 80 in each region. A minimum of 10 hard-to-reach groups was to be surveyed (SSC providing sample) and also a minimum of 30 NHH customers.

NHH customers were initially approached by phone and then directed to online for completion (though online panellist eligible for the NHH criteria will be interviewed as a NHH customer). Hard to reach HH customers were offered face to face or recruit to online interviews. Customers approached face to face or by phone will receive an incentive for participation (£10 HH, £20 NHH).

In the event, a total of 142 pilot surveys were completed in the time available, 112 HH, 20 NHH, with 88 in South Staffordshire and 24 in Cambridge.

Figure 2: Pilot Survey Sample

Region	HH	NHH	Total
South staffs	64	22	88
Cambridge	48	8	56
Total	**112**	**30**	**142**

The small numbers meant that full modelling of the results was not feasible, but a number of useful observations could be made about the way customers responded to the survey. The main observations from the pilot survey were:

- Overall satisfaction with the survey was high (74% top 2 box score – T2B). Satisfaction with the length of survey is also acceptable (63% T2B, 15% bottom 2 box score – B2B), especially for those completing online.
- While some participants found the survey repetitive, overall understanding of levels was high and the average length of interview was 23 minutes; this is brought up by the face to face interviews which are typically longer (closer to 30 minutes).
- Customers appeared more price sensitive than in the previous wave of WTP research. However, this may reflect the fact that the data has not been weighted. There were also a higher proportion of face to face interviews within the sample, and these cover groups that tend to be more price sensitive.
- A small base of NHH customers means that comparative analysis between HH and NHH is not robust and only indicative. The results were broadly similar across the two groups, however, a greater emphasis was placed upon leakage levels by NHH with HH placing more emphasis on the use of renewable energy.
- As in the previous PR19 results, water hardness has a greater emphasis placed upon it than the other attributes.
- Apart from the use of renewable energy, environmental attributes still have the lowest priority. This is consistent with the previous PR19 results, despite there being some substantive changes in the way these attribute levels were defined.

- Leakage levels were previously rated very highly in the PR19 research, early indications from the pilot are that less emphasis has been placed upon this. This is may reflect the smaller incremental improvements being offered.

Outcome

The outcome of this step was a finalised survey instrument and WTP experiment thoroughly tested with customers. This ensured that customer understanding would not be a barrier to accurate consideration of the scenarios in the survey and therefore results can be relied upon as a credible representation of customer priorities for future investment.

Attribute definitions

The specific impacts of changes to attribute definitions to WTP values when compared to the previous wave of WTP research cannot be assessed from the pilot data, as the sample sizes are too small to support meaningful statistical models. However, there were no qualitative indications that the new wording was difficult for customers to comprehend or make meaningful trade-offs.

Further discussions within SSC led to some minor alterations to the attribute levels, notably in the additional contextual information added to the community and environment attributes. For reference, Annex A presents the attributes as covered in the previous PR19 wave of research and now presented in the main survey.

The pilot data will be included in the final modelling, but sensitivity tests will be applied to determine if there is any significant impact from wording changes made after the pilot. These changes comprised:

- Water hardness: added more to the description after further feedback from the WQ team and changed the levels based on working out number of customers we could support at 25% / 50% based on the S1 pot value from the 2017 survey

- Wildlife & habitat: returned to 2017 survey levels approach, although using 25% / 50% improvement. Description altered as well as decided to go down the route of flagging up % area SSC supports v total sensitive sites as it would be low (and no doubt look negative to some customers)

- Rivers and streams: tweaks to the description and levels wording to more accurately reflect SSCs intended focus of activity in this area.

Package Question

Feed back from the Customer Panel raised concerns as to whether the ‘package’ exercise should cover all blocks and whether it was possible to test more than one package level (in the pilot this was 1 block or 3 blocks only). It was considered that showing 4 blocks of attributes is, firstly too much information for customers to take in and make a meaningful trade off, and also goes beyond what would actually be implemented in reality by SSC. However, to obtain an extra measurement point, the ‘Budget effect’ question will be modified in the main survey so that some respondents will only see the two ‘blocks’ of attributes while some respondents will continue to see these and an additional, randomly selected, block.

A further question was also added for the 'package' test. The approach we are using is appropriate because it is a simple extension of the Choice Exercise. However, the method used in PR14 for this packages test is a contingent valuation (CV) question (ie a direct 'how much would you be willing to pay extra for these improvements'). Such a direct question is known to deflate WTP more than a choice question, so the PR14 approach probably had additional deflation built into it. Including this after the package choice question in the current survey allows a further point of comparison with the PR14 results.

Main Survey

The target sample structure for the main sample is summarised in the Table below (this includes the pilot survey numbers).

The cell set aside for re-testing WTP at the lower bill will use the exact same attributes and wordings as the main sample to allow for a like for like comparison. The question this is designed to answer is whether the WTP values increase as a result of the base bill level being lower than current, or whether it has no impact (ie, customers respond only to the absolute annual bill increase). Because sample sizes are limited, this will only apply to HH customers.

Figure 3: Main Survey Sample

Cell		SSW HH	CC HH	SSW NHH	CW NHH
One	Lower bill starting point – 3 sets of attributes (security, quality and environmental)	150	75		
	Minimum per attribute set	*50*	*25*		
Two	4 attribute groups (security, quality, retail, environmental)	400	160	145	90
	Minimum numbers per attribute group	*100*	*40*	*45*	*30*
Total		550	235	145	90

The survey employs a predominantly online approach, consistent with the previous survey. Hard-to-reach groups will be targeted face to face or via recruit to online (SSC will provide sample), though also free found via online panels

- NHH customers are initially approached by phone and then directed to online for completion (though any online panellist eligible for the NHH criteria is interviewed as a NHH customer).
- A target for a minimum 100 HH hard-to-reach customers was included.

Quotas are set to ensure a representative profile by gender, age and socio-economic profile for HH customers and by business size for NHH customers – to maintain consistency with the 2017 survey.

Outcome

An updated set of inputs to be provided to SSC in appropriate form for use in the IO Model. A summary of current inputs is given below in Figure 3.

Figure 4: Summary of IO inputs (from 2017 research)

Measure	Unit	Working range	SSC Mean WTP
Water not safe to drink	per prop affected	0-9125 props	£1,194
Discolouration of your tap water	per prop affected	0-48600 props	£279
Taste and smell of your tap water	per prop affected	0-12100 props	£568
Lead pipes	per prop affected	0-243000 props	£79
Water hardness	per prop affected	0-730000 props	£22
Unexpected temporary loss of water supply	per prop affected	0-8000 props	£949
Temporary use ban	per 1% risk change	0-2.5% reduction	£1,533,589
Low pressure	per prop affected	0-54750 props	£157
Flooding from a burst pipe	per prop affected	0-9125 props	£1,080
Leakage SST	per Ml/d reduction	0-53 Ml/d reduction	£128,336
Leakage CAM	per Ml/d reduction	0-10 Ml/d reduction	£238,304
Metering	per new metered prop	0-410000 new metered props	£3
Use of renewable energy	per 1% increase in renewable proportion of power use	0-39% increase	£128,310
Protecting wildlife habitats	per additional hectare	0-30 additional hectares	£19,028
Restoring rivers and streams and the land around them	per additional hectare	0-200 additional hectares	£9,677
Traffic disruption	per roadwork	0-365 roadworks improvement	£1,758

There will be a range of sensitivities that will be tested and delivered around the values that come out of this second phase of research:

- Impact of new attribute definitions
    - We shall compare the new WTP values against the previous research to identify any significant differences – that is, does the final IO unit value remain fairly consistent or do the new forms of presentation significantly alter the results? If so, we shall investigate for any explanations for the difference.
    - We shall compare results against external WTP values from other studies, to see if any changes are more or less in line (eg we saw that environment WTP was very low compared to most other studies; will the new attribute definitions change this?)
- Impact of 'budget' effect
    - We shall compare the inferred WTP when all improvements are introduced together and compare this with the sum of the individual attribute WTP values. The result will be a 'scaling factor' that represents the limit of actual bill increases that customers will accept. Experience from other studies suggest this could be substantial.
- Impact of lower bill base v results from the previous study
    - The main comparison will be at an overall level (ie average WTP across the attributes), because of the small sample size
    - More detailed comparisons by attribute will also be made, but these are not expected to be significantly different (unless very large) due to the sample size.

Deliverables

The deliverables on this project have been designed to meet a range of different end users requirements and include:

- A methodology statement and draft questionnaire reviewed by SSC and available to key stakeholders such as the SSC and their independent customer panel for review and input before the survey work commences
- An executive summary of observations during the ECP and pilot phases discussed via a conference call with SSC
- ECP and pilot survey summary report in PowerPoint including recommendations for changes to the survey instrument and a finalised version of the instrument. This final version will also incorporate any changes suggested by CEPA or the independent customer panel
- Transcripts and videos from the ECPs
- A key findings report in PowerPoint including recommendations for HH and NHH customers for PR19 (<30 slides)
- Final presentation delivered by Impact Utilities face-to-face at SSC's offices and to include key stakeholders such as the independent customer panel
- A written, full technical report of project findings suitable for input to the internal and final business plans. This report will be to a publishable standard and subject to peer review
- A 'customer friendly' PowerPoint report to disseminate the decisions which have been made by SSC through engagement with customers in terms which the customers can understand.
- Documentation of all project information for use in PR19 submission for Ofwat and subject to peer review
- Dataset from pilot and mainstage quantitative surveys in .csv format
- Infographics/posters for use across the business
- Excel sheet of verbatim comments.
- Summary input values suitable for use in SSC's IO model, in the format requested by SSC.

Annex A: Attribute level definitions

These are for South Staffordshire HH only

Quality

	PR19	PR19 version 2
Taste and smell of water	Your tap water tastes and smells different (e.g of chlorine) for a period of 3 days. (You do not know whether it is safe to drink or not until you contact your water company)	Your tap water tastes and smells different (e.g of chlorine) for a period of 3 days. (You do not know whether it is safe to drink or not until you contact your water company)
Discolouration of your tap water	The tap water at your property is discoloured for 24 hours. Running the tap for a few minutes will not remove this discolouration. (You do not know whether it is safe to drink or not until you contact your water company)	The tap water at your property is discoloured for 24 hours. Running the tap for a few minutes will not remove this discolouration. (You do not know whether it is safe to drink or not until you contact your water company)
Water not safe to drink	Due to contamination, you are unable to drink the water at your property for a period of 2 weeks.	Due to contamination, you are unable to drink the water at your property for a period of 3 weeks.
Lead pipes	Approximately every 3rd property in the water company's area is served by a lead pipe, most of these are pipes are owned by the customer. (A harmless additive is added to the water supply to ensure the lead pipe poses no risk to health)	Approximately every 3rd property in your water company's area is served by a lead pipe, most of these are pipes are owned by the customer. (A harmless additive is added to the water supply to significantly reduce any risk to health from lead pipes)
Water hardness	Hard water causes appliances, taps, tiles, etc to scale which can reduce their usable life. Softening the water is an option but this can alter the taste of your water.	Hard water is proven to be good for your health as it has a high mineral content, but it can lead to limescale forming on taps and appliances. Softening the water using a device is an option, but this can also alter the taste of your water and water companies recommend customers still have an unsoftened supply for drinking and cooking.

Security and reliability of supply

	PR19	PR19 version 2
Unexpected temporary loss of water supply	There is an unexpected problem with the network, such as a burst main, that means your property is without water for up to 24 hours.	There is an unexpected problem with the network, such as a burst main, that means you are without water at your property for 1-5 hours.
		There is an unexpected problem with the network, such as a burst main, that means you are without water at your home for 6-11 hours.
Temporary use ban	There is a hosepipe ban in your area for 5 months from May to September.	There is a hosepipe ban in your area for 5 months from May to September.
Drought restrictions	Because of a water drought, most of the region would have to get all their water from a standpipe located in your street for between 2 to 4 weeks.	Not taken forward
Low water pressure	The water at your property loses pressure a number of times throughout the day and night which reduces the water flow to a slow trickle.	The water at your property loses pressure a number of times throughout the day and night which reduces the water flow to a slow trickle.
Traffic disruption	The water at your property loses pressure a number of times throughout the day and night which reduces the water flow to a slow trickle.	Not taken forward
Flooding from a burst pipe	A pipe that supplies water to your property (either a water company owned mains or your own supply pipe) bursts and floods the ground floor of your property.	A pipe owned by your water company that supplies water to your property bursts and floods the ground floor of your property

Environment

	PR19	PR19 version 2
Leakage levels	Around 24% of the water supplied by your water company is lost through leaking pipes. The majority of this is from the water company's pipe network and the rest from the supply pipe that serve customers' properties (which is the responsibility of the property owner). As new leaks are always appearing they can't be reduced to 0.	Around 24% of the water supplied by your water company is lost through leaking pipes. The majority of this is from the water company's pipe network and the rest from the supply pipe that serve customers' properties (which is the responsibility of the property owner). As new leaks are always appearing they can't be reduced to 0.
Water metering	The vast majority of business customers and 33% household customers have a water meter fitted in this region which means they pay just for the water they use. The remaining properties pay a fixed amount per year depending on the rateable value of their property.	The vast majority of business customers and 36% household customers have a water meter fitted in this region which means they pay just for the water they use. The remaining properties pay a fixed amount per year depending on the rateable value of their property.
Giving customers control of their water usage	To help you understand and manage your water consumption your water company is able to give you a water meter reading via a device in your home.	Not taken forward
Protecting wildlife habitats	All water companies have a legal duty to protect and improve areas for wildlife and plants in the places where they operate. They currently protect and improve 99 hectares - which is the same areas as 138 football pitches	All water companies have a legal duty to protect and improve areas for wildlife and plants in the places where they operate and ensure no land they operate on is permanently damaged. They currently protect and improve 99 hectares in the region – which is the same area as 138 football pitches. This is less than 7% of the area of land in the region that is known to need specific protection from the impacts of all human activity.
Managing impacts on rivers & streams	In order to supply customers your water company has to take water from the environment. This can impact on rivers and streams and the land around them (e.g. floodplains) in your area. Your water company has a legal duty to restore the river and the wildlife around it in your area.	Around 50% of the water used in your region is drawn from the River Severn and the Blithefield reservoir which is fed by the river Blithe. Taking water can impact on rivers and streams and the land around them (e.g. floodplains) and your water company has a legal duty to restore the river and the wildlife around it. Your water company also works actively with farmers/big business to protect water taken by your water company from any harmful run-off (e.g. pesticides and fertilisers being picked up by water into the rivers).
Use of renewable energy	To pump water to customers' homes your water company uses a lot of electricity. Currently, 11% of the electricity used by your water company comes from renewable sources - eg solar panels, wind	To pump water to customers' homes your water company uses a lot of electricity. Currently, 11% of the electricity used by your water company comes from renewable sources – e.g. solar panels, wind power Note - 1% of its electricity comes from renewable energy sources that the company owns and 10% via the energy provider they are with

Community

	PR19	PR19 version 2
Investing in community projects	Not included	Your water company currently provides paid time off for all employees so they can give their time for free to support a range of community projects – such as painting buildings, helping to create green spaces, or charity volunteering days. Your water company could go further and employ a team of people whose job role is to support community projects on a daily basis and provide additional support for those who are in most need of extra help.
Educating future generations	Not included	Your water company currently employs one education officer who goes in to schools (primary and secondary) in your area to help educate young people on how to use water more responsibly at home to help ensure there is always enough water to go around for everyone in the future. Your water company could employ more staff to ensure more people are educated on a more regular basis to help ensure attitudes towards water use change and help to reduce consumption
Supporting customers experiencing difficult situations	Not included	Your water company currently provides extra support with water related services for 11,000 customers who have some form of disability (permanent or temporary) and/or are struggling with paying their bills. Examples of support include home visits to fill out forms, or advise on where they can get more help from charities, offering bill payment advice and options, to providing bottled water in the event of a supply interruption. Your water company could go further and pro-actively identify and support even more customers who are experiencing genuine hardship.