SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE AND CAMBRIDGE WATER CUSTOMER PANEL
WRMP24 Challenge Log - 2021/22

The log below details the challenges made by the independent customer panel on SSC's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP24) engagement programme between April 20221 to September 2022.

A dedicated panel of champions drawn from the wider customer panel was involved in challenging the programme. The names of these members are detailed below:

- Simon Sperryn: Chairman of the customer panel until March 2022
- Matt Coles: Chairman of the panel since June 2022
- Nicola Terry: panel member
- Heather Smith: panel member
- John McGlade: panel member
- Paul Quinn: CCW liaison, panel member
- Christina Blackwell: CCW liaison, panel member

Research project	Date	Panel involvement	Challenge/s	SSC Response
1. Research briefs	April 2021	The Panel was invited to review the research briefs for the WRMP24 engagement programme	**Panel member replied with the following comments:** 1. We welcome the ask in the brief for potential agencies to ensure their proposals align with the Blue Marble / CCW report on Engaging water customers for better consumer and business outcomes report.	1. SSC felt it was important to recognise the findings, particularly around ensuring we engage with customers in aeras where they can give considered feedback. 2. All the agencies bidding for this work have confirmed they have had no issues understanding any of the acronyms used. Please be reassured that when we start

			2. Throughout the document there are numerous TLA's without a definition e.g. PCC, PR19, and RAPID. You may wish to address these and run the brief through the spill chucker. 3. In the project background section you make reference to WRW and WRE. I wonder whether some context should be given through reference to the National Framework for Water Resources, particularly as it is referred to later in the brief? 4. The brief references the work being done by WRW and WRE and the need for the agencies to have regard to the outputs from their work. You have also mentioned that water companies are getting together to consider customer engagement on the WRW and WRE outputs. We know the timeline for WRW and WRE reporting is extremely challenging. It's important appropriate customer engagement is undertaken to provide input to the development of WRW and WRE plans and on their outputs that inform development of your WRMPs. Because there are still some unknowns and a tight timetable, you	engaging with customers we will not be using terms like this. 3. We will ensure this context is made clear to customers when we engage with them on relevant topics. We have flagged this Framework to the agencies and believe this is sufficient for this step of the project. 4. Given the overall statutory and regional planning milestones in the programme from now until the draft WRMP needs to be submitted. We will flex the timeline as needed around any WRW and WRE milestones without compromising any critical WRMP milestones. 5. We have now communicated to the agencies bidding that will be an option to consider in the project. For SSW region, this would relate to raw water reuse and waste water from our WTWs discharges. 6. We have clarified our expectations on this to the agencies at several points in the brief and stressed this again in follow up correspondence. 7. An evaluation of the agencies' responses to this point will form an important point when selecting our preferred partners. We are committed to engaging with hard to reach customers throughout the life of the engagement programme. 8. We felt it was important to recognise the findings, particularly around ensuring we engage with customers in areas where they can give considered feedback.

			may wish to build in some contingency. 5. With regard to Theme 2 and consideration of the Supply / Demand issues / options should some consideration be given the customers views on the use of water from waste water treatment plants that is treated to drinking water standards? 6. With regard to the methodology we welcome your commitment to ensuring the research is understandable to customers in terms of clarity and ease of comprehension of complex concepts. You may wish to challenge the agencies to not only identify best practice but to propose innovative approaches. 7. In considering the research sample, does the brief sufficiently address inclusion of the 'hard to reach' customers? 8. Project timings – see point 4 above. **Panel member commented** I have concentrated on the WRMP24 Research Brief. I have one major concern about the research project which is triggered	 This is a key area and we have reflected on this in terms of the brief and also shared your feedback with the agencies ahead of submitting their proposals to us on the 4th May.

			by the brief. In their review of PR19 research, CCW echoed a finding in our own Panel's 'lessons learned' submission: "Customer research should focus on matters that affect customers directly or concern them. It is meaningless to ask customers to comment on technical matters". The examples that followed were relevant to PR19 rather than WRMP, but the point applies. I would like to challenge the agencies to say how they propose to extract from the complex issues that lie behind the regional and local WRMPs simple questions that are relevant to the customer's direct experience and how those limited but meaningful data can then be used to help in selecting options or assigning priorities in the plan. Customers will expect the Company to ensure supplies for the future and to work out how best this should be done. The balances that must be struck (environment versus extraction, water trading versus reservoirs, restricting demand versus increasing supply etc) are matters for experts and stakeholders to argue out, not for customers to decide. It will help in making those decisions to have an idea of how customers rank different environmental issues, or how they feel about compulsory metering, or whether they favour short-term solutions if they are cheaper, or	

			whether they think the cost should fall on today's bill-payers or the future beneficiaries, but they should not be asked to attempt difficult judgements or quantify the unquantifiable.	
			I can see that the regional plans will have to take account of the political and social impact of quite major investment, and the government departments will push for willingness to pay, cost benefit analysis, best value investment and multi criteria analysis, but I hope our own research can ask customers simple questions about things they relate to and have an opinion on. I would not include a Fenland Reservoir in that. The pros and cons of any particular investment are not matters for customer preference - although people who live in the vicinity will certainly have a view!	As detailed in the brief we are aiming to ensure a careful balance of making customers questions where they can have a considered say and the impacts of the decisions we need to make will be felt most by them. There are national club projects looking at customers' views of reservoirs being proposed, so we are going to look at this when it is released and decided if we feel it appropriate to contribute to and Anglian and Affinity are also leading on a "club project" into the Fenlands Reservoir, which again we will evaluate the merits of engaging with this. We will flag that this matter is related to customer preferences over drinking water quality, as mixing surface water with Cambridge Water customers' current borehole only supply will lead to direct impacts on their water quality.
			Panel member commented:	
			1) What is the natural capital accounting scheme to be used for cost benefit checks on environmental ambition? Is this based on the same methodology as the UK natural capital accounts. This is a rather narrow view, which currently only includes services which are relatively easy to put a financial	The team can provide an update at the June meeting as the approach should all be finalised by then. Essentially, the regional plans are using consultants to develop the Natural Capital framework for assessing options. The methodology will comply with the Water Resource Planning Guidelines (WRPG) supplementary guidance, which states that NCA in England should include, as a minimum, the following

			value on. This mean it excludes services such as general health benefits which are only recently recognised as well as the intrinsic value of biodiversity. Will use of this methodology limit the weight of consumer views? (I do recognise the company may not have a choice in this!). 2) How will views and expectations of our customers be integrated into/balanced with regional planning (Water Resources East and Water Resources West)? It may be too soon to answer this question, however, as this is probably uncharted territory for the company too. The document mentions issues such as 'who should pay' - what are the options? :-)	ecosystem services: Biodiversity and habitat, Climate regulation, Natural hazard regulation, Water purification, Water regulation, recreation and tourism In addition, WRW are also adding metrics for health and wellbeing and agriculture. In terms of WRE they are including the following areas from the guidance: Biodiversity and Habitat, Climate regulation, Natural hazard regulation, Water purification. And the approach also includes the following additional metrics: Air pollutant removal, Recreation and amenity value, Food production. We will update more on this point at the June meeting for both WRW and WRE. In summary: WRE is not engaging directly with any bill paying domestic customers, but are holding their next series of planning conferences during Sept and Oct with their 150 odd stakeholder members to discuss different plans and the options and costs associated with these – a co-creation approach to multi-sector regional water planning that is different from the other regional water resource groups. The four water companies covering the WRE region are left to engage with customers through their own WRMP24 engagement programmes and any "club projects" that are agreed, whilst ensuring that these programmes fit with the WRE programme timetable to ensure consistency/alignment between the companies' WRMPs and the WRE regional plan. The water companies will represent the voice of the "bill paying" customer at the WRE planning conferences, and

				could be supported by the customer challenge groups. Water companies will be expected to input planning scenarios which should/could be supported by customer views in the 2nd round of planning in the summer, to be used in the trade-off planning process at the planning conferences. You can find out more about WRE here: https://wre.org.uk/ WRW: we have already completed a “club project” between the four water companies involved (Jan-Mar 2021) to synthesise all the WRMP19 and PR19 customer insights (and insights from projects completed since PR19) relevant to water resource planning – both from a qual perspective to review the differences in preferences expressed by customers from different regions on key topics (e.g. water trading, water metering, leakage, environmental, etc) and from a WTP quant perspective to feed customer valuations for different water supply/demand options into a first run of WRW’s Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) model. As the four water companies progress their WRMP24 customer engagement programmes these insights will feed into the WRW’s regional modelling to ensure alignment.
			3) It sounds like mixing surface water sources into the Cambridge water system is now being considered a practical option. I understood from earlier briefings and from the Greater Cambridge Local Plan study (https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1391/gclp-strategic-spatial-options-assessment-integrated-water-management-study-nov2020.pdf) that this could only be	The team won’t be in a position to discuss this in June, it’s too early on in the process. Mixing surface water sources into the Cambridge system is indeed an option now, and any technical risks will be identified and addressed as we develop the solution. As we progress, we can certainly bring more info on this to future meetings.

			countenanced for isolated sections of the network. I would like to know more about both the technical risks (I have seen hints that there are some, probably to do with leaching minerals from the inside of pipes) and the taste/odour/clarity issues. How far can/should/would these issues be ameliorated by treatment? In addition: *1) Theme 1: Strategic choices 'Environmental destination and ambition – to understand the rate at which customers want non-statutory sustainability reductions in abstractions to protect the environment from climate change to be achieved and how far SSC should go around environmental ambition.* I don't think that climate change is the only threat here. Increasing demand from population increase too, at least in the Cambridge region	 It isn't and we mention the key areas in the intro, just missing from this specific section. To reassure, that we will make this clear to customers, as we did at WRMP19, what all the key challenges are when we engage with them through this programme.
1. Research briefs	May 2021	Observing agency pitches for the SSC research programme	Two panel members observed pitch sessions for four of the suppliers pitching for the SSC WRMP24 research projects and commented on each in terms of strengths and weaknesses	Whilst the panel scoring was not officially taken into the SSC procurement process when awarding research contracts to suppliers the feedback was considered as part of the process
2. WRAP Forum theme 1	July 2021	Commenting on stimulus materials and	**Panel member commented** The activity table says 25 people in each region. Is this allowing for dropouts? Because	We would not usually expect much drop out on the first forum – people who start the first 2 week process are highly likely to finish it. Maintaining numbers for later exercises is

		the agenda of activities for the WRAP Forum run by Community Research	over that time frame there are likely to be a lot of dropouts. The overall program seems very well thought out. I had convinced myself that the environment stuff ought to come before supply/demand balance, and possibly even before resilience. However, I think there are benefits to leaving it where it is too. In practice, the environment comes into every task! I have some suggestions for tweaks to do this and to adjust the emphasis slightly. It is really good to ask them to approach as an individual and also as a citizen. I get the impression you don't mean to ask for two	less certain because we can't give people the exact dates of when the exercises will happen. Having run this type of programme before Community Research has worked hard up-front to make sure people are committed by forewarning them that this is a longer-term process. But yes, we may get some drop-out in later exercises. To some extent this isn't a major problem since we are only speaking to smaller groups on the later themes which take place later this year and into 2022 to inform the development of quant surveys. For the Deep Dives in September, we are trying to reconvene everyone and that isn't a long time away so we are hopeful we will keep most people engaged and we will have on-going communications and updates between the different themes of the programme. Community Research has found from running these types of Forums before that drop our rates are very low when managed correctly. We achieved a low 60% drop out WRAP by the end of the WRAP. That's correct, with the introduction of regional planning we need to understand the household level and wider citizen view and where the differences, are what is driving these. Yes, we will be building this in as prompts throughout the process to make sure this is considered.

			answers, but to make sure that each answer is considered from both points of view. This is great, but I suggest you make sure to remind people of this as they go through the tasks.	
			Tasks 1 and 2 are allocated 3 days and they seem awfully easy to me. You could maybe merge these or allocate to 2 days. This could help with task 4 which is enormous.	Yes, we have been reflecting on this also and have decided to tweak the earlier sections and streamline task 4 in places to make less onerous to complete. We will keep a close eye on this and adapt if needed during the 2 week period if we need to make any further changes.
			Also there is no forum discussion component until task 3 on day 4. I think it would be good to introduce them to discussions on the forum as soon as possible - even if it is just to say hello to each other and what they think about water - if they think it is good value for money or something. I have a suggestion for adding to task 2, below.	The intro session covered outlined at the start of the agenda document covers this off in terms of getting them to meet some of the other Forum members on the Zoom calls on the 19th July. We don't want to introduce subject-specific discussions in the Zoom because we do need some spontaneous starting positions from people at the very start as a benchmark for their later responses. We have, however, added in a forum discussion earlier in the process, after the principles exercise.
			Task 1 ———— I suggest you include specific questions on attitudes to water like not wasting it. I noticed these questions arise in the screening but it would be good to include them here so they can be returned to at the end.	These are included in the individual questionnaire task and will go back to these at the end to see if views have shifted.

			Task 2 principles ————	
			On the sorting exercise, change 'Managing the environmental impact of what they (i.e. SSW) do’ to 'Managing the environmental impact of water supply’. This is because we don’t want people to think the responsibility for protecting the environment is only to do with what SSW does - it is what all water users do too.	The wording, as is, was the one that CCW have used in their recent research into environmental views. We have reflected and have gone with “'Managing the environmental impact of supplying water”
			Still in the sorting exercise, add in something about helping people to reduce their water consumption e.g. ‘Helping people to manage their water use carefully/efficiently’. (Not sure what is the best wording).	Agree. We decided to go with “Providing information and support to customers to help them use less water”
			On the balance question, I think I have let this pass before, but I think that suggesting that protecting the environment is directly opposed to letting people have all the water they want is not quite true. We can provide more water if we invest more in capturing and storing or recycling it. So maybe: 'Looking after the needs of the natural environment first’ <-> Ensuring customers have all the water they ask for at an affordable price.	Agree with the view and tweaked to reflect this. We also challenged this and Community research advised we can’t ask people why they have given the answer on each slider, that would take too much time. Instead have added a quick forum discussion about the trade offs.

			Can we ask people to say why they have given the answers they have? This could be a good place to remind people about the individual/citizen viewpoint. Perhaps you could invite them to discuss their answers on the forum and in particular if they think answers would be different if they consider the questions as an individual or as a citizen. For example the principles about who pays is one where they might differ! Task 3 context/resilience —— It might be good to include in the 'facts' part of this something about how SSW spends its money - how much on fixing leaks, treatment, customer service and so on. The resilience bit is very good! Having it here is good - it shows that SSW has to think long term and planning for climate change and difficult times. You could show some nice pictures of droughts and floods to show the impacts on both nature and people.	We are going to cover this off in the trade-offs exercise noted in point above. Agree. We have added our bill spending donut diagram to the quiz task to inform customers about how the money they bill for their bill is spent. Yes, we have covered this off with some relevant images that have worked well on past projects.

			Task 4 demand (and supply) options —— This task is far too much for 3 days. It involves 5 separate forum discussions (two are numbered 4) and a group task. I know the 3 days include a weekend - but even so. This needs longer time, or possibly splitting. If people are going at their own pace they will get very out of step with each other and the discussions will be of less value.	We have rationalised a few of the tasks in this section to reduce the risk of this occurring. Community Research's team will be politely prompting the customers on the Forum to stay on track with the activities as we go through.
			On the visualisation of what 110 l/p/d would look like, I think it would be good to illustrate this in a calculator style. E.g. 110 litres is 5 toilet flushes (standard) + 5 minute shower + 2 minutes washing hands, half a washing machine cycle… X for cooking and washing up and *nothing* for the garden or washing the car! 80 would mean recycling water for the toilet … (You might get ideas from my water calculator here http://nicola.qeng-ho.org/water/)	We have used your calculator to provide examples to bring 110l/p/d figure to life in a practical way for customers.
			It is not clear to me what you mean here by recycling. In part 2 I think you must mean grey water recycling. Do we really mean to propose this for individual households? In part 3 you probably mean recycling by treatment and re-use.	We are going to touch on it as an option at both levels (household and development scale) in this part of the project. Yes, that is correct.

			Where does rainwater harvesting come in? Task 6 Environment —— I think it would be good to mention other sectors that influence water quality, and aquatic environment not just the water company - farmers, also the effects of runoff when we pave over our gardens. I think this helps to show that the water company is not responsible alone for everything, and there are lots of ways we have influence. When mentioning the chalk streams, remember to include the Cam itself, because most of its tributaries are chalk streams. Task 7 paying for the plan —— Is it really on the cards to suggest that central government should pay for water infrastructure? I don't see the reasoning linking this to large projects covering several supply areas, though it makes more sense from the point of view of projects which will benefit future customers but not current ones. Arguably a government loan guarantee would be a sensible support mechanism for that.	Part 2.We have ensured this is clear in the stimulus materials. We will ensure this is covered off when we get to week 2 materials. Currently this is not on the cards, but we are trying to get a read here of who customers think should pick up the bill - but will reflect on these points as we prepare the stimulus materials. We have asked customer for their views on these topics in a separate section.

			I suggest changing the order a little bit and the wording of these points. 1. Investments the water company is considering might not make an immediate effect on services, but might be more beneficial for the next generation 2. Some argue that because water is a human right, strategic investments should be supported with government funds, not charged directly to customers. 'Is there a human right to water in international law? 1) I am boggled at the idea of level 2 on environment protection meaning reducing demand by 30% Leakage reduction would only supply a small part - even if you fixed 100% of leaks it would only supply half this. My criticism is there is no indication of what this might mean for bills - just a lot! I appreciate you cannot give firm figures now. But could you give an example e.g: This level of reduction would be very hard to achieve without water recycling. At the home level, a greywater recycling unit would typically cost £X,000 and save perhaps 30% of bill - so £Y/year. At a regional level, a treatment plant to recycle sewage into drinking water for 10,000 people could cost £Z,000 per customer, to be paid for over 20 years. But	Thanks for these points, we will have in mind as we work through these materials for week 2 of the Forum activities. This was a slide we were awaiting some final input into from the team (sorry should have put that as a comment) and I have now updated the wording with guidance from the experts it should make more sense. The main point in response is that if the company went for this level of ambition then it will need new supply options to come in and fill the gap, it should have got across the point that we need to take 30% less from CAM groundwater sources, not solely that we need to reduce demand by 30%. I have uploaded the final version to Dropbox so you can see, hopefully it is now clearer. On your point about including cost examples we discussed this with Community Research and we feel its just too much detail for this stage of the programme, and will likely confuse so we are keeping it top level but will respond appropriately with feedback to any customers who may

			perhaps even this is too much detail and could be off-putting. 2) Stimulus 16 slide 3 - '(although businesses can choose who sends them their bills, takes meter readings and handles any customer service queries)'. It sounds like SSW sets business bills whereas in fact they only set the price that is charged for the water. I think it would be clearer to sat '(businesses can contract with another company for billing and customers services, but their water still comes from SSW)'. **Panel member commented** In stimulus 9 slide 3, all the icons are understandable except the one for managing pressure which looks like a hosepipe ban. I don't see the link between banning some uses and regulating water pressure And in slide 7, I'm not sure that 'it gets harder and costs more over time' is right. Time won't change the difficulty or the cost. Presumably this is referring to the escalating cost of progressively reducing the amount of leakage. Maybe something like: 'as reduce leakage more and more, the cost of further reduction goes up and up'	challenge around this point about needing more detail around costs to provide a considered view. Good point, yes on reflection agree and have tweaked to clarify this point. Please ignore this as we have now gone back to include water restrictions as an option so this now makes sense in terms of the visuals used on this slide. Agreed, this is slightly misleading so we have tweaked to a new wording.

			In stimulus 10, slides 2 and 3 are so good I regret having a criticism, but I have one! On slide 3 I don't know what "that doesn't include anything else, like . . " refers to. Do you mean that the consumption represented by the buckets doesn't include usage for washing cars etc? Do you mean the national target is for uses that don't include washing cars etc? Are you pointing out that the illustrations of 110 litres don't include washing cars etc? If it's the last of these I would delete it. The examples you give are great; why comment on examples you might have used but didn't?	Agreed, we have tweaked the wording and the slide to ensure this now works.
3. WRAP Forum theme 1	July 2021	Commenting on the customer feedback on the Forum	**Panel member commented** I have just had another skim of responses on the recollective dashboards and I have to say I am impressed with the depth of engagement that has been achieved - very thoughtful responses from everyone. I did not find any evidence of actual discussions, though. This is a bit of a shame. Possibly I missed this somehow. Overall I am amazed to find the high priority given to the environment - in both regions.	Thanks for checking in again on Recollective and yes having read through all the responses across the various activities I was really pleased with the level of thought the customers put in, including the future customers. There were a few discussions between the Forum members but mainly between us and them when they asked questions. IN future Forums we have built in more discussion points and generated discussions by showing members of the WRAP a summary of their views at the end of each Forum.

			And the relatively low concern about bills. Cambridge's response to this task which was to sort the issues into high/medium/low priority. This was the last but one segment so is definitely 'informed'. For SSW, environment had 15 'high', with reliable clean drinking water top, compared to Cam 20. For 'keeping bills low', SSW had 6 highs, the same as Cam. Classifying the responses from the textual comments is a huge task. e.g the 'what is fair' responses. The word cloud is not terribly helpful. Some people thought that people should all pay the same for water , at the other extreme there were some who said beneficiaries should pay (including subsequent generations!)	Yes, the level of environmental preference was high and continues the theme we have seen over last 18 months of this attribute growing in importance – as we saw in our Priorities tracker year 1 last year vs 2017/18. Given the trends we are seeing over time around environmental attributes moving up the priority rankings in our local engagement, coupled with wider news stories around climate change and what we are seeing across the world in terms of environmental tragedies, I am not overly surprised it we are seeing it come out so high. The chart you copied in from CAM, as you pointed out was from the end of the 2 week activities so was the more informed view – and the chart I have copied in below is from the first activity they did and you can see that environment was ranked 2nd just behind reliable high quality at this stage, and then attracted even more votes by the end. Community Research will be pulling out the differences between the two sets of votes and what is driving any changes between the uninformed and informed view. As you say the Word Clouds that are part of the Recollective platform are not the best way to analyse these (I wills say though the Recollective platform's strength is in the engagement side and the flexibility of activities you can programme and not high tech in-platform analytics, although I think the capability it still decent overall. All the platforms out there seem to have different strengths and weaknesses, but I think we have gone with the right one for what we needed from our engagement journey).

3. WRAP Forum theme 1	August 2021	Commenting on the debrief of the Forum findings	**Panel member commented** Thanks for inviting us to join in Community Research's de-brief. I think they did a great job in design, execution and analysis. As I mentioned at the end of the meeting, I judge the deliberative technique to be a more reliable way of getting meaningful input from customers on a topic that is complex and outside their experience. The reliability comes from the additional data collected from participants on what surprised them, how they justified their choices, and what caveats they lodged against their preferences. Sometimes qualitative surveys seem better at triggering new questions than they are for answering the ones they pose. I was impressed by an apparent emphasis on shared responsibility, collective action, and fairness. This seemed to run through many of the chosen priorities, for example water companies sharing responsibility for environmental protection with other bodies, consumers sharing responsibility for the level of usage with the Company, customers sharing unaffordable costs with financially vulnerable people, or today's generation protecting future bill payers against environmental damage or water shortage. [More evidence of the economic	 Thanks I will share with the team for review and yes the quant will be key working with Accent/PJM and Community Research to ensure reliable and robust quant that complements this qual research.

			fallacy that consumers are driven by price or that willingness to pay measures customer priorities!] Findings that grabbed my attention included • the strength of support for compulsory metering • the preference for more ambitious environmental protection despite the cost • the high level of satisfaction with value for money and • the further evidence that price reductions simply awaken customer suspicion that the company is not investing enough. Harking back to my comment above about fairness, it was interesting that support for major investment in greater supply is conditional on, or will be much greater following, effective attempts to manage demand, and that, similarly, support for pressure on customers to reduce consumption is conditional on company action to reduce its 'consumption' through leaks.	

			Panel member commented I agree the presentation was very interesting and the research has been very well done. The pros and cons of this approach relative to focus groups is something we ought to be interested in. Despite the lack of discussion in the engagement, I do agree that there are definite pros to the online self-paced engagement approach. However, on reflection this could be improved on, perhaps with a plenary session at the end. For example, a facilitator could synthesise a few core messages for the company, from the 'last messages' task. Then the participants could discuss/refine and vote on them. This would add weight to the messages that the company takes from their analysis, as well as giving the participants an opportunity to react to each other and sparking deeper debate. However, it would add to the time commitment. Community Research suggested this at the outset of the theme and this was touched on quickly as a next step in the de-brief. **Panel member commented** The overall impression was excellent endorsing the selection of Community Research to undertake this initial qualitative	We are going to meet to explore whether we want to do this and I know the agency used this approach at the end of the recent environmental engagement work they did for CCW. It might also be the WRE club project can give us some insight here as that uses discussion groups. During the WRAP Forum we went onto run discussion groups to explore topics in more details with Forum members.

			piece of work. The breadth of topics covered was comprehensive. I picked several key themes which were heavily supported. I was surprised by the high level “demand side” actions including leakage detection & rectification, compulsory metering, and education. I was surprised at the wording of the question “you were told that everyone had to have a smart meter” Compulsory metering rightly opens a hornet’s nest with protection for large households and variable tariffs etc & whilst I do support the further rollout of metering, it certainly merits further investigation as part of the quantitative work, but could SSW realistically go it alone. This is an area where I think national collaboration is required. It was good to see protection of the environment as a key theme reflecting, no doubt, the current media coverage of the climate change agenda ahead of COP26 As I mentioned at the session, increasing supply options seemed less popular and appeared to be pushed into the long grass. Whilst its unpopular, in areas such as	This is a consistent theme since WMRP19, as most customers want companies to get their “house in order” before investing in major supply side projects. Metering is a key focus in the deep dive qual stage to follow next month. Agree this will be having an influence we need to account for. In Cambridge there was more support for supply side options, and these will be needed moving forwards.

			Cambridge with an ever-increasing demand from new developments, increasing future supply is an inevitability, and as it's a costly long-term project, it needs addressing sooner rather than later. (Unless the government decides to "level down" Cambridge – which is unlikely). So, there were clearly some major themes which are all individually laudable. As there has been no open discussion, I am not sure that the results have been moderated ahead of moving to the quantitative stage. This opinion could be down to my lack of understanding. I would like to understand SSW's view on this, and the next stage to derive the questions for the quantitative research. There are two parts to responding to this challenge: In terms of moderating the forum itself during the 2 weeks.	There was some low-level discussion between a few members on some tasks and questions posed in group discussions to the company/CR to respond to. Moderating in the forum is fairly light touch and was undertaken by researchers at Community Research responding with their own comments to participants' written responses, with input from SSC when needed for technical responses. This moderation can take the form of: • Encouragement – simply liking comments that are particularly helpful or articulate. • Follow up questions – if someone expresses a view, but doesn't explain why they hold it, or they are unclear in their writing we might ask them to clarify / expand. • Clarifications – where someone directly expresses confusion or asks for clarification on a point, this is always something we respond to. This did occur on a few occasions within the recent forum. Answers were always checked with the SSW / CW team. • Corrections – if someone makes it obvious in the answer they gave, that they misunderstood something (or assumed something that is incorrect), we step in and correct this.

			In terms of the process do we follow to derive the questions in the quant to accurately reflect the findings in the qual	Moderating comments can be done such a way that all participants can see the response, or they can be done privately. For the most part we do this publicly as answers and responses are likely to be helpful for all to see. We would only post privately where there is a danger that to do so publicly might make the participant in question feel undermined or embarrassed. We have the qual deep dive stage next on the Recollective platform and then a set of focus groups which are directly aimed at determining how the first quant study Accent are running will be shaped – this quant stage is about validating this initial phase and the deep dives for the key topic areas that emerge with an uninformed customer base. Accent worked collaboratively with Community Research to convert the key stimulus materials that resonated most with customers to help them make their choices that were used in the WRAP to convert them into suitable materials for an on-line quant survey.
4. WRAP Forum theme 3	Sept 2021	Commenting on stimulus materials and the agenda of activities for the WRAP Forum run by Community Research	**Panel member commented** Universal metering, Stimulus 1 Question 4 answer unclear All water companies share data at an aggregated level about how much water customers who switch to a meter ???? Does the 10% refer to difference between customers with and without or to the	We have corrected the wording.

			average change in usage when people get a water meter. Stimulus 2: In the business plan agreed in 2019, South Staffs Water set themselves a target for metering over the next 25 years. It is not clear who the business plan was agreed with. It is not clear who the business plan was agreed with. Also it makes it sound like the metering target is not very important. Stimulus 3 On slide 2, Probably worth mentioning that AMI meters are more expensive than AMR meters. Also I would guess that AMI meters need more energy than AMR meters so would need frequent battery replacements which adds to ingoing costs. Or would they have a connected power supply? What does 'mobile mast technology' mean? You make it sound like each meter has a big antenna. Is this not the same as our mobile phones, or the same network used by smart electricity meters? I think you should say it uses a mobile network (like your phone, or the same as smart electricity meters, whichever is correct.) Does the AMI actually report hourly or daily? Why not compare them with smart meters	All points corrected and made clearer. Points actioned to improve clarity. Smart meters don't actually need more power according to the manufacturers' info, so left this out. Added a point around data security.

			for electricity. These *store* usage by the half hour and submit this data to your supplier or other authorised data handler *on request*. The difference is important because the data collected centrally is not real time, which lessens security implications. There is a lot of security around access to smart meter data for gas and electricity. Does this apply to water meters too? Possibly this is not needed because the meters cannot be used to turn water off to a property, whereas with electricity and gas meters they can be turned off remotely. In the wrong hands that functionality could be abused. You should say that smart water meters cannot turn the water off (unless of course they can.). Task 3 process options The list for the ranking exercise is not very clear and could be improved. I suggest: • minimise cost • maximise reducing leakage as soon as possible • minimise disruption • prioritise full smart metering with AMI (if I understand correctly). • prioritise customer requests.	We have made some wording changes on the list when it appears on the Recollective platform to improve the options listed.

			As for the new versus retrofit decision, I can't see how to make this judgement at all. Which is likely to lead to the greatest reduction in water use? I don't think the Ghost meters bit is clear, especially on stimulus 6. I think there are two options here with very different implications for customers. I think these should be split. 1) Meters are fitted, customers are informed of their usage, but they do not have to switch to a metered account unless they want to. When someone else takes on the property they will be metered. 2) Meters are fitted , customers are informed of their usage and they have to switch to a metered account within a set time – e.g. 2 years? Actually some of the others should probably be split too, where they are either/or e.g. the 'standard support' two tier charges or capped charge. The latter is a special case of the priority services price promise. I think you should consider splitting these differently.	We have added a sentence to provide some headline context. Took the figures from CAM Watersmart trial and looked at a few other reports on water reduction from providing more regular meter reads with information to customers. We have streamlined this section into 3 support packages as we felt that we would lose the key point of the activity – which is the groups of customers these packages would be aimed at. However, in the questions we subsequently asked we have revamped these to reflect your feedback. We felt this was the best way to approach the topic and get the best insights from the follow up questions. Hope you agree with our final approach taken.

			- Ghost meters with no compulsory switch - Ghost meters with compulsory switch after a period – to be discussed how long - Tiered pricing to encourage low use (for all users or ones that ask for it?) - Flexible payment options for customers struggling with bill (but don't they exist already?) - Capped bill, with the maximum set at e.g. 100% or 125% of what it would have been based on rateable value (for households with large families or medical conditions) - Discounts for buying new appliances that are water efficient (for customers on low incomes) The last two would mean that other customers would have to pay more to subsidise the beneficiaries. **Panel member commented** In Stim 1, Qu 5, there is the first reference to the RV charging method. It would be clearer to state here (if not earlier) that there are two methods of charging household customers, namely RV and meter, and that anyone who doesn't have a meter is charged	Agreed, have added a para at that start of this section to make it clear.

			on RV. What is currently written is clear but allows the participant to think you may have other charging methods you are going to reveal and explain In the answer to Qu 9, it would be logical to reverse the order of the last two paras, so that the interesting anomaly of assessed charges comes after the discussion about how often a meter might not be feasible and why. In the middle of the assessed charge para, I suggest insert 'for their water' after 'the option of paying'; at the moment it might be thought you are referring to the customer paying for the meter installation. In the answer to Qu 9, it would be logical to reverse the order of the last two paras, so that the interesting anomaly of assessed charges comes after the discussion about how often a meter might not be feasible and why. In the middle of the assessed charge para, I suggest insert 'for their water' after 'the option of paying'; at the moment it might be thought you are referring to the customer paying for the meter installation. Neither Stim 1 nor Stim 2 mentions that meters enable the water company to charge fairly - ie charging each customer for what s/he uses. The first mention of fairness is on	Agreed flows better to switch paragraphs and added suggestion. Good points, we added a new slide to stimulus 2 to provide an overview of the main benefits and provide a better balance.

			the second slide of Stim 2 where fairness seems to mean helping people in water poverty. I suggest that that box is adapted to start with the fairness of charging people for what they use, and then adding in, as another sort of fairness, people who can afford to subsidizing those who can't. Surely the strongest argument for metering is that it enables fair charges. That is a desirable aim in itself, independently of whether consumption goes up or down as a result. It is fair enough to hope that the reduction in PCC which has historically followed metering will continue, but since we have 'sold' metering so far only to people who can expect to pay less, that hope might be over optimistic under a scenario of universal metering. But even so metering (a) makes charges fair and (b) gives the Company sight of customer consumption and enables them to target actions to reduce PCC (c) exposes leaks and (d) enables customers to monitor and therefore control their own consumption. In short I think this section over-plays the assumption that historic reductions in PCC can be projected forward in the case of universal metering while under-playing its potential for fairness and for increased intervention by customers and	

			water company in search of reduced consumption. In Task 3 - new versus retrofit options - there is a slight muddle in the descriptions of the option to replace existing meters with new ones. Are we doing it, or would we prioritize it, because they are closest to the end of their useful life or because they are dumb and not as good as we fit now? In the options covered in Stim 5 and 6, the title 'Meter my Street' didn't convey to me anything to me that I could relate to supporting people who can't afford their bills. The water transfer material looks clear and sensible to me. I have only one suggestion. At the very end, where we ask them for one key message for the water company to consider, I suggest it is one each for universal metering and water transfers. It may be that this is what you intend, but the wording suggests it's just one message for both.	 We have now made this clearer. It is not meant to be something that directly supports people who can't afford to pay their bills. It is there to help people make changes before metered charges start, which could help reduce any bill shock when they start to be billed through metered charges. We have now overhauled this section and removed meter my street reference though to improve clarity. Actioned to make clearer.

			Panel member commented Here are my observations of the agenda and stimulus materials for the Customer Forum. Stimulus 1 – I think the quiz and answers were informative. I guessed most of the answers correctly, but it was good to see the underlying facts in the answers some of I which I wasn't aware of. Stimulus 2 – Good thought-provoking slides. Stimulus 3 & 4 – is it worthwhile mentioning that SSW doesn't currently take the opportunity to fit a meter when homes are bought and sold? Other than this, I liked the slides. Stimulus 6 – I liked the "capping" on three of the options. And the mention of activating the meter upon change of occupier. Are you satisfied that your billing systems can cope with any or all these options including the activation dates? Task 4 – good thought-provoking session and good to see inclusion of fitting AMR meters at all household properties who don't currently have one i.e. upgrading dumb meters included in the costings. Water Transfers – I think your questions and tasks are very comprehensive – well done!	We have now added this in a couple of places. It's a concept test at this stage, but our billing system can cope with applying discounts like Assure, so we don't see any major barriers in the future around this type of charging approach.

5. Stakeholder roundtables	Sept 2021	Observing stakeholder online round tables facilitated by Community Research	**Panel member commented** Thanks for allowing me to observe this afternoon's roundtable event. I thought that the information presented by Natalie was clear, but I've a few observations which you might want to consider ahead of the Cambridge roundtable on Wednesday: • It would be helpful to avoid mentioning options of how SSC could ensure there is enough water in the future at the start of the presentation before the first breakout group. This does not appear to be specifically covered on the slides but I noticed that universal metering was mentioned and this then led to a discussion about it at the start of the first breakout group. The co-ordinator did a good job, however, of widened the discussion to consider challenges. • It might help to make the roundtable more interactive, for example, by asking participants to vote using Slido or a similar tool. This could have helped give a steer and encourage discussion on the supply side options. • It might have been helpful to inform participants what SSC is currently doing to generate awareness on water usage	This came up as it was mentioned on a key slide around the challenges that as were now water stressed that meant that SSW were then in their rights to bring in compulsory metering as a demand option. We think that's a key point and this is right place to mention it. I have briefed the moderators accordingly to ensure if it does crop up again they manage it appropriately, as the moderator did yesterday. A good point thanks and one we will take into our next roundtables in 2022. We have decided against doing this for CAM on Wednesday as by the time I had a chance to review your e-mail there was insufficient time to prepare effectively and these types of polls also take away valuable time we don't think we will have in Cambridge from the discussion areas. We are including some questions in our feedback form post the event to collect some feedback. We provided all this information in the briefing pack sent out in advance, but not all may have read it. We felt it was too much to go through on the day alongside all the other topics

			and how customers can help to save water. **Panel member commented** The Company participants came over well; Natalie's presentations were very good as usual, and Caroline had a good try to provoke input from the stakeholders. The breakout group I observed seemed to produce little of value. It may be that the other group produced more. But the representatives were not at senior level and brought no messages from their organisations. The people round the table lacked the knowledge to make a meaningful input on the questions posed. Rebecca's skill is probably stronger in making people feel unthreatened than driving a structured discussion; I imagine she is good with shy or reluctant participants in a focus group, but I suspect that direct questions addressed to the organisations represented might have been more effective. Kathryn did well at the end to challenge the participants' organisations about working with SSW. There were some encouraging noises about partnership made during the event which could be followed up. But I didn't think, despite a good try, you got much out of the exercise, beyond good	we wanted to cover. Again, we will keep this in mind for future events. We were discussing this same issue together as a team today around the representatives at this roundtable, as the other breakout group were similar in nature in terms of how much they could contribute. They were a good mix of organisation types so it was good to hear the vulnerability, environmental and other angles. We agreed that we got a few good ideas from the more proactive members for shaping our plans and it has helped forge some new relationships we can now work on developing, but it wasn't the higher level of engagement from key decision makers we wanted on some of the key questions we wanted to cover.

			PR with some important local players who no doubt appreciate the opportunity you gave them. Also, five little glitches on the presentation slides.	Feedback on the deck itself has all been actioned ahead of the Cambridge Forum.
6. WRAP Forum theme 3	Nov 2021	Commenting on the debrief of the Forum findings	**Panel member commented** I thought yesterday's de-brief on the deep dives was well done by Community Research. I was grabbed by a member's challenge at the end. I hadn't spotted the difference he brought out between the bottom-up approach of your Company WRMP research, concentrating on customer views, and the top-down approach of the research for WRE driven by stakeholders. Not necessarily a problem but a challenge to give due weight to the company-level results	Update provided at the customer panel meeting (held 2 Dec 2021) that this challenge is being worked on as the programme progresses. The following update on this challenge was provided at the March 2022 panel meeting. A further risk review continues to be carried out as regional and WRMP engagement has developed and will be shared by the summer. Current position: • Low risk in SSW/WRW region as smaller scale supply side investment options and close alignment between customer and stakeholder preferences • Medium risk: CW/WRE has larger supply side investment options and greater level of environmental ambition around chalk stream abstraction. Whilst stakeholder and customer views are broadly aligned, the affordability risk of delivering the step change needed in environmental destination and resilience ambition is present. Noted that the WRE multi-sector plan will not just fall directly on customers' water bills.

7. MCDA Quant survey	Dec 2021	Commenting on questionnaire and stimulus materials for the Accent/PJM run survey	A range of minor wording and flow challenges were raised by the panel. Specific ones are detailed below. **Panel member commented** Asking for the top three in Q35 nicely avoids forcing participants to make meaningless choices between options that are all important. And Q37 is a good follow-up question, allowing them to share their views without forcing them to make false choices or put a number on anything. The value of the question is undermined if you make them put the top three in order, and their frustration will be increased by Q36 - the truthful answer to which will probably be "only because you made me pick one". They will try and help no doubt, but we shouldn't ask impossible questions, still less read anything into the answers they get The option descriptions are wordy, unnecessarily complicated, and carelessly worded. To take one example - water transfers: why use the phrase "water that is licensed to another company"? We haven't explained the concept of licensing. How is it relevant to the customer's view on this option? Why add "in order to meet demand"? You are asking for preferences	We have actioned all these points where appropriate. We've kept as it is to provide a read across to the qual and also the DJS survey. We don't think the concern is warranted in this instance. This set of questions has been cognitively tested and piloted and has not resulted in any problems as far as we can tell. Literally no-one has responded with any frustration about being asked to pick a preferred option. We'd be against dropping Q36 here as it has been a useful validity check on whether participants are considering the levels of the metrics, which they have been, as well as encouraging them to do so in advance of them completing the choice experiment. We will monitor in the pilot and taken action if needed. Descriptions have been reworded, where needed and user tested. Information buttons added where relevant to ensure customers have the key information.

			between different options for meeting demand. If this wording is needed here it is needed on every option. "The supply could originate within their region". Whose region? Our water company's or the company's which is providing this transferred supply? ".. but typically comes from outside the region". Again, which region? And what does it matter which region it comes from? The point of this option is that it transfers water from one to another. **Panel member commented** One the showcard options there are 6 possible impacts here - what about resilience in case of drought? (I suggest below that you take off 'human and social well-being and replace it with resilience). In the show cards ppt, you have a fairly prominent explanation about why a green '+' can mean *reducing* carbon emissions or *reducing* flood risk but you could use the space better if it was not necessary! I suggest you say 'Reducing carbon' and 'Reducing flood risk' rather than just carbon and flood risk. Or possibly using thumbs up/down instead of +/-. Then, for example, on the transfer water slide, you could say that water transfer	We have added resilience option, but we can't remove human and social as that is a key metric for the MCDA tool. We have added an example walkthrough for customers to explain the metric levels and provided additional text in the pop-up buttons to help customers understand the way the showcards work. Also, improved the layout through cognitive testing in terms of how the showcard is laid out so metrics all in one line, rather than split. As transfers move water from areas where it is in surplus to areas of deficit, so it means the company can reduce abstraction in areas where the water environment is stressed, by supplying from more water areas we have a

			involves more energy for pumping and sometimes extra treatment. I don't see why this one is good for river flows. There is potentially more risk of drought, if we are relying on external supplies we have less control over, so reduced resilience. Why are all these plans (except reducing water use) detrimental to human and social wellbeing? Why is reducing water use good for social well-being? - many would argue the opposite. I suggest you take this measure off and change it to resilience. Do we really need WtP still? I would have said that having 6 bits to each WtP option was too complex, but having met the same metric in the supply options show cards I guess it is not quite as arduous as it would have been. **Panel member commented**	surplus. Therefore it is good for the river flows in the receiving areas. Water transfer agreements should not impact on resilience. The metrics look at the impact of developing and constructing the scheme. Many of the human and social well being impact scores are influenced by construction where footpaths may be closed or where land use may change to accommodate the new option. We have added resilience though. The structure of the conjoint exercise is driven by the Water Resources West multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) tool. The attached doc gives details of the metrics and how they were chosen. In the MCDA tool, weights are needed to be put against all the metrics and the conjoint exercise was agreed within WRW as the best means of incorporating customer preferences within these weights. Note: the MCDA tool includes eight metrics whereas the conjoint exercise only includes six. This is because two of the metrics in the MCDA tool are based on willingness to pay evidence which is already based on customer preferences. Furthermore, it was considered inappropriate to include more than six metrics in the conjoint exercise for customers as this would make the choices too complex. The remaining six metrics have been defined in the conjoint so as to correspond to the definitions in the MCDA tool and work weas done to make sure they were as customer friendly as possible.

			I presume there is a rationale for excluding those who are clinically vulnerable or shielding (Qs 3-5)? It says something about Covid guidelines so I gather there is some sort of rule against including them, but it seems odd to me that they should be excluded.	We want to ensure that we're keeping customers and interviewers safe – we don't want to run the risk of any potential infections particularly given the doubling rate of the Omicron variant. We will be targeting the face to face interviews on customers who are more likely to be digitally disenfranchised or those from particular customer cohorts who are less likely to respond to an online survey (particularly those in social group E, those from non white ethnic groups and future customer). SSC supports Accent's position on this and we have an agreed risk assessment in place. We are no longer doing house-to-house door knocking, but using our Community Hub and other public venues across the region to try and reach customers. If Government guidelines change we will halt all face-to-face fieldwork to ensure we protect customers and the field teams. Monitoring the situation and customer reaction daily.
			I can see that it's sort of explained on the bottom of the flashcards, but I'd still be concerned that you'd get very noisy data from the positive/negative confusion. Maybe more explicit wording for each metric would help (e.g. carbon: green + mean fewer carbon emissions, red - mean more carbon emissions). Though it's reassuring to know that pilot testing has been done on the flashcards, so perhaps this isn't as big an issue as I fear.	Wording amended. And examples given for each option to cover this off. In addition, DJS conducted 12 cognitive pilot interviews to test comprehension and then a soft launch of the survey for UU and SVT to test length among different customer demographics. These were done in stages; three of them to be precise, these are the learnings. Initial cognitive pilot – this highlighted that the materials weren't working optimally. People were struggling with the wording and querying what exactly a 'moderate increase' actually is etc. It was apparent that, whilst the survey couldn't accommodate full descriptions of the various bits of information, the summary wording was causing issues. We

				then went back to the drawing board and created cards with revamped symbols, rather than words to denote improvements, negative impacts etc (NH: this is how we landed on the + and – symbols) These were then tested again and whilst some 'got it' many did not understand what the symbols were trying to show. This was intriguing because there was a key below the table of metrics and on further delving, the confusion was largely driven by the key being ignored due to the fact that it was at bottom of the slides and therefore wasn't really being read and absorbed. We then re-jigged the slides again, this time moving the key to the top of the charts and this seemed to really make a difference. When people first then encountered the template chart for the first time, they did read the key first – because it was the first thing they encountered. This then set them up to understand the subsequent charts' information (NH comment: this is why we have the final layout shown with the key at the top).
			I don't quite understand Q37. Are you referring to geographic areas? Or areas of impact on the flashcards? Will the respondents understand what you mean?	Wording amended to overcome this potential confusion – we don't mean a supply area, but points like cost, environment, etc. We don't want to state these out and lead people though so tweaked the question wording.
			In general I like the pair-wise approach for this kind of thing, but I'm not sure you have enough comparison questions to be really useful? The survey says the comparisons will be 'plan A' vs. 'plan B' but are these just direct comparisons of the same water	The options in the pairwise conjoint exercise are not linked to the supply-demand options presented previously where customers pick their top 3; they are based on an experimental design that chooses combinations of levels to populate both options in each question in such a manner as to optimise the

			resource options presented earlier? If I understand correctly, you have 10 water resource options, and 8 comparison questions. In a true pair-wise experiment I think you would usually compare each option against every other option, but with 10 options that would lead to a lot of comparison questions and could make the survey too long and complicated. But with only 8 comparison questions, how are you selecting which options get compared to each other? Will each respondent see the same comparisons? How are you sure you'll get enough data to do valid weightings for the MCDA?	statistical efficiency of the end econometric model using an algorithm. There are 13 blocks of 8 questions in this experimental design and each participant is assigned to one of the 13 blocks at random. All possible combinations of attribute levels are feasible within this design except that dominating/dominated pairs of options have been ruled out. This means that it is never the case, for example, that Plan A is better than Plan B on every measure. We have piloted the design already in United Utilities and Severn Trent areas and the econometric model results have come out well, with correct signs on all the coefficients and good degrees of statistical precision. This gives assurance that the design is effective from a statistical perspective. This has been a good checkpoint ahead of starting the SSC survey.
8. WRAP Forum theme 3	Mar 2022	Commenting on the debrief of the Forum discussion groups	**Panel member commented** Looking at the panel papers, I see support for structured tariff is fairly strong but the 'acceptable use limit' is causing doubts. I wonder if reframing this as a reward for saving water would be better, such as 'careful user target'. Was this considered? Forgive me if I have forgotten this, but why is a time based tariff being considered? Would this lead to lower infrastructure requirements cf. electricity, we need enough network and generation capacity to cover peak demand. How much would this save? In	This is the start of a long journey on engaging with customers on tariffs, following a concept test last year on H2Online on a community based reward scheme - which was put to customers again in the SSW group of 6 informed customers. Tariffs we believe at this point in time will play a key part of our plans for WRMP29/PR29 given where we are with smart metering at this point in time and the need to engage with Ofwat about the possibility of bringing in new tariff options. In answer to your question a time based tariff was an option discussed. Your point about the wording is a good one, no we have not got to this point yet of testing the best language to use but for this small scale test point it will obviously be important.

			the electricity sector, no-one is going to be forced onto a time of use tariff but people who have high demands that are shiftable (e.g. EV charging) can benefit from doing so and this helps reduce peak demand. I am not sure how this would translate to water - perhaps these tariffs could be a useful option for businesses but I don't see it for domestic.	Yes time based tariffs are being considered as a mechanism to smooth demand and reduce high demand peaks - as per the elecy sector and to offer better rates to customers to encourage them to engage with changing the times when they might use water. I do agree with you that time based tariffs are more likely to be useful for NHH market, particularly for sectors which use larger volumes of water.
9. Themes 1 and 3 Quant survey	May 2022	Commenting on the questionnaire, stimulus materials and final report	A range of minor wording and flow challenges were raised by the panel. Specific ones are detailed below. **Panel member commented** I like the sample size for CAM (427 compared to 753 for SSW) which reflects the need for a robust study of the smaller area because it is so different socially, economically and geographically. It was interesting to see the catchment areas mapped on slide 7. I don't think I have ever seen those before. The analysis of service issues on slide 8 illustrates the significance of hard water in CAM, which accounts for more problems than any other issue in either area, and fully 25% of service issues in CAM.	 Yes, we are ensuring we reach a sufficient sample base for CAM through the whole programme given the challenges in that region and the need to have confidence in the data at sub-segment levels. Yes this is a new approach we developed for WRMP24 given the move to local catchment management focus in the regional water resource plans. I like it as a way of cutting the data and visualising on maps. In our Customer Promises Tracker we can see water hardness becoming a stronger driver of satisfaction and value for money perceptions and satisfaction vs pre COVID and satisfaction has fallen further in CAM over the last year. We are starting discussion for PR24 about how to take our plans forward for this area of service, which has been made worse by the pandemic and people spending more time at home –

			On slide 10 Accent dutifully draw attention to the failure to mirror in the NHH sample ONS data for employment numbers. Assuming that the figure for 500+ employees is not 43% but 4.3%, the disparity seems to me too slight to throw doubt on the findings. The first bullet of the Executive Summary on slide 12 refers to the unsurprising evidence that cost of living has pushed environmental concerns down the list of priorities. Later on, the planning balances on slides 22 and 23 suggest that it's good-bye to the popularity of investment if it puts the bills up. The WRMP is about a 25 year horizon and will need to address not just the immediate acute problems faced by customers at the time of the research but, probably even more, the chronic problems customers will face in future. The section on drought measures is fraught with the difficulty of interpreting answers to	so therefore appliances and fixtures are liable to scale up faster. We have checked with Accent. The figure is correct so we have a skew to larger companies in both supply regions – which is why this caveat is directly highlighted to the reader. Having reflected that overall, we had a good sample split across the varying sizes of business and whilst ideally the profile should more closely mirror the ONS, we know that as larger businesses consume such large amounts vs smaller companies and this research is all about water resource management, it actually provides a sample split that is more closely aligned to water consumption levels. We need to look at this in more detail though. Yes, this will be a key area for debate through the remaining WRMP24 process and for PR24. We don't view the results as "good-bye to the popularity of investment" – there are still a notable proportion of customers when you look at the overall spread of results of the balance/trade off questions who want to ensure investment and Accent have pulled out significant differences by demographics for key questions through the report – such as AB (higher affluence) customers. In the next step, which is bringing all the insights together into a triangulated report, it will be vital to review each evidence point and the context at the time it was undertaken in order to ensure a clear narrative.

			what are effectively leading questions. If we ask ‘would you like drought restrictions to be needed less often?’ why would anyone say no? More telling is their answer to the open question about how they view the present service level. They are happy with it, and 75% even recommend more frequent restrictions. That seems to me the take-home message. I may have misunderstood slides 18 and 19, and I can’t find the final version of the questionnaire to check what I say, but it looks as if respondents were asked to rank items on a list of environmental statements, or to pick their top three. My concern is that two of the statements listed on the slides are about environmental issues and the other three are about personal behaviour. I would challenge any exercise to rank items which not comparable with each other. Is that what we did? By the way, the scores suggest that it is the top two, rather than the top three, which give a clear message. There is a	The questions about TUBS/NUEBs service levels we did not think were leading and CCW or any panel members did not flag this when sent the questionnaire (although I don’t think you are directing your point to these questions), but we had to ask the question about the EA drought resilience target vs current levels - we did this in the fairest way possible in terms of question wording and the options presented to customers to draw out their preferences. We have spoken to customers about this issue in qual and quant and will looking across all the insights to help guide the decisions the team will take, but I do not disagree that a key consistent message in the qual and quant is the proportion whose preference is for lowering service levels for TUBS/NUEBs given the challenges faced – but we always have to remember that most customers won’t recall or have even experienced a service failure around restrictions. The questionnaire is in the Dropbox file (the word doc). It was not a ranking exercise, the point of the questions was to draw out a profile of the customers attitudes and behaviours to then be able to analyse their responses to key questions to these to look for trends. So it is not intended to trade them off against each other and should not be interpreted in this way. But agree the clear message comes from the top 2 and I asked Accent to specifically focus on any cross tab analysis of results based on customers’ responses to those statements.

			clear gap above the third choice, so I suggest we will concentrate on the two. In slide 20, no surprise that gas or energy prices are of high concern, but 70% is a very high score! The high ranking of water supplies and prices in second place does surprize me. I wonder if the shock waves caused by energy prices has stimulated a new sensitivity to the price and availability of water? There may be a read-across in people's minds, which is illogical though understandable. 12. Support for universal metering is surprisingly strong - over 50% when informed. This support is higher in CAM than SSW but so is the proportion of customers on a meter already and slide 66 suggests that support is higher among metered customers than unmetered. So it may not be clear whether customers in CAM and SSW differ on a like-for-like basis.	70% is a high score but reflects the context of the timing of the survey (late feb-end of March) which was when the media was hammering home the point daily about the rise in the price cap on 1st April of energy bills. We saw exactly the point you make about the ripple impact in the recent customer priorities focus group in April/May where customers were saying they feared water bills may also rise notably and were hoping they weren't going to – so key for the comms this year to re-assure customers that water bills will not be seeing the same gigantic increases that people are experiencing with their energy bills. The results were broadly in-line with what we were expecting given the current levels of metering in each region. Given the supply regions require very different approaches to metering given the challenges faced, decisions will be made at that level around whether universal metering is the right demand option to being in or not. What we can draw from the slide on 66 is that support for universal metering (on a proportional basis) is higher in Cambridge among metred and unmetered customers vs SSW and there is a larger gap when looking at unmetered customers responses in CAM (41% vs 28% in SSW). This highlights that there is more of an awareness of the need for universal metering in the CAM

				unmetered population which aligns with other insights we have through this programme and other insights sources.
10. Theme 4: acceptability testing	July 2022	Commenting on the WRAP Forum stimulus design and agenda of activities	A range of minor wording and flow challenges were raised by the panel. Specific ones are detailed below. **Panel member commented** I have just had a proper look at the WRMP24 acceptability testing draft agenda. 1) I am not sure of the value of asking for people's current water bill (p5). If it was me I would be asking why you don't know already! Why can't you just tell them, rather than having them have to look it up. Is the value in them having a personalised figure, or in provoking them to think about the actual figure? But then on p6 it talks at average bills again. I suggest you tell them what an average bill is and invite them to update this with their figure if they want to personalise the later pages. 2) I think the stuff about inflation is probably in the wrong place and is certainly more detailed and frightening than it needs to be. There is no need to talk about CPI or the bank of England. Saying the water industry	Yes, we are in the qual and quant now decided to show them their latest bill. In the Qual, due to GDPR we can't link the customers taking part to our database we are giving instructions so that they can tell us their latest water bill, so that we can context the bill increases to deliver the plan vs what we think their bill will be in 2025 based on their latest bill. We have moved away from showing average bill that we used at PR19 to make it more meaningful and personalised to the customer. We will clarify on this we are talking to customers about the average bill impact to deliver the plan. We have overhauled this section, you make some good points.

			uses CPI suggests there is a choice! (I do know RPI is different and CPI uses geometric mean while RPI uses arithmetic mean and they have different goods and services in them). You could say, the inflation rate is usually measured by the CPI - the consumer price index - and leave it at that. The main thing is to make clear: (a) Prices have been rising faster recently than we have been used to. Therefore you should not assume that a bill that is affordable now will still be affordable for you in a couple of years: your income may increase more slowly than prices rise (i.e. the inflation rate) (b) if the water bills you show them are fixed or vary depending on inflation. (c) in either case, what CPI has been assumed and how this compares with the current value. I think it would be better to talk about this after giving them the price figures rather than before, because it is easier to think about it with concrete figures than in the abstract. Also, if they find the discussion of inflation frightening this will predispose them in a particular way when they first see the figure.	We are going to move this section to flow better.

			In fact it might be better to ask about acceptability in two stages - before and after discussing the impact of inflation. **Panel member commented** I realize you may not want to adjust the wording of the balances at this late stage but the 7th bullet is worded ambiguously. The final words 'pay for it' look as if they mean 'the more water they use the more they pay' but if this is to contrast with the previous statement, it presumably means 'the cost of maintaining and improving the service falls more heavily on those who use most water'. In other words, does 'for it' mean 'for the quantity they use' or 'for the maintenance and improvement of the service' In the second poll under 'focusing on satisfaction/VFM . . ', you give two examples of the overall service, designed to make them think about all aspects of the water company's work. The first is, quite rightly, the water supply itself, which might have been the only aspect they would have considered if you hadn't intervened to widen their sights. The second example, it seems to me, could be better chosen. You have	Yes, we will be doing this in the qual. There is no evidence from using this previously that customers have been confused and for the sake of comparability back to the start of the programme we are going to leave. We will keep this point in mind for future studies though. We have tweaked for clarity.

			chosen 'the bills you receive'. You may have meant 'the method of billing' but it looks as if you are referring to the cost, which you have already just polled. Why not choose something as far as possible from what they would have thought of unprompted, such as communication with customers, or performance on leakage, or response to enquiries?	
10. Theme 4: acceptability testing	July 2022	Commenting on the quant survey and stimulus material early drafts	A range of minor wording and flow challenges were raised by the panel. Specific ones are detailed below. Q13 - are you really asking people to calculate their bill *.36 or * 0.46? Why not ask them to tell you the whole bill and then do the calculations for them! I think it is hard for people to understand about environmental damage without examples. I get the impression you do not like to be explicit because you are worried about the response. You could say: Only 16% of water environments in England are in good health. Cambridge Water takes water from the underground chalk aquifers to meet customer demand and these aquifers feed many of the chalk streams and rivers across the	Agreed, we changed it so that we asked participants for their total water and sewerage bill and then worked the clean element out for them. Amended wording to improve, we did not follow the wording exactly after feedback from Water Strategy team.

			region. Although Cambridge Water's use is within the limits set by the Environment Agency, the aquifers are well below the natural levels and in dry periods some streams run dry. CW pumps water directly into the most sensitive streams but this is only a partial remedy. Reducing water usage and wastage (Cambridge) Why use numbers for personal consumption (that vary year to year) and %ages for everything else? This makes it harder to compare. I suggest %ages for both, or, allowing less precision, reduce home use (per person) by a fifth and from businesses by a tenth and leaks by a half. Under finding new sources, you should be explicit that water in the new reservoir will be shared between Cambridge Water and Anglian Water. Is that 43 million litres for all or just CW? The additional bill is for the complete plan not just the new sources, right? Because of the layout this is not clear. You could make this clearer by 'To deliver this **whole** plan…',	We actioned this for PCC. Improved wording for clarity. This has been made clearer

			or add a new heading 'The total cost to you' to separate it from Finding New Sources.	
			Final slide on **Informed stimulus material**, with the cost of each plan option is very good! However, calling them options suggests they are optional. Consider 'plan component' ?	Improved wording for clarity.
			Social fund explanation before Q23 not quite clear I think. Can you say: From 2025 the water companies, in partnership with the government, are looking to provide this support through a central fund, so similar levels of support will be available across all the regions, for customers who are struggling the most to afford their water bills.	Adopted.
			Panel member commented I take your point about mentioning other influences on the bills apart from the WRMP plan. Certainly we don't want to introduce confusion; the subject is quite complex on its own. But I would suggest a passing reference to the fact, so as to avoid misleading them into thinking that if this plan goes ahead their bills will change only by the amounts shown. I suggest something like: "Bill charges are fixed by the regulator	We drew on your suggestion to add this prompt to a showcard just before we got into showing the draft plan.

			every five years, but if this plan got support from customers and approval from the regulator, the impact on the average bill would be. . ."	
			I agree with your decision to not mention to CAM customers that costs will be shared by SSW. Their uninformed assumption would surely be that all customers share all costs. You are right to be up-front with SSW customers though, and for them reference to PR19 and swings and roundabouts is only fair.	We stuck with this decision and we fell it has worked well based on the test we did on the Community Research WRAP forum. We made a few tweaks in the quant to make it more obvious in the quant survey when communicating this principle of how the costs are shared, as a couple of participants missed the fact of how this works in the qual.
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			Sorry to be critical but I think the informed stimulus material is not clear or simple, nor well laid out. Having followed the story over the last year I know where it has come from but it needs to be written and designed by someone without that knowledge. I expect it is too late to re-think these pages now. But	The cognitive feedback did not show this was an issue and no comments about this from the WRAP Forum when tested. We decided to leave as is, but will have in mind for future designs of showcard material

			here are a few things that could probably be done. Pages 4 and 5 are set out in two columns. By the time I have read them I am used to reading the left column and then the right. But the next page, which also has two columns, is designed to be read horizontally. The layout needs to make this clear. It would also be more natural if the plan were put on the left and the current situation on the right. **Panel member commented** I was looking for a few key things when thinking about the research and didn't have any concerns after reviewing your email. I was pleased to see the programme plans a mix of face to face and online surveys to avoid any bias from those who are digitally more savvy. I was encouraged that future consumers are very much part of the plan. I assume the profiling will ensure that you are not over or underweight in a particular demographic segment relative to the base in the SSW and CW regions. The only thing that you might want to consider including is something about margin - both previous reported years and also future ambition. In other similar programmes I have seen greater acceptance	To confirm that we set the sample quota targets that are representative by region for bill paying customers and the agency will also weight the data to match the regional demographics if for any reasons we under/over achieve vs the targets. We do normally inform customers about shareholder dividends returns in our strategic research projects, where appropriate. However, in wave 1 of the WRMP acceptability testing we are asking customers about a bill impact from 2025 and at this point we do not know what shareholder returns will be from 2025. As a rule in acceptability testing

			of proposals and at times more ambition from customers when a few myths and legends about 25% margin were debunked. Take your points on board. The only observation about margin (and I found this in a different price review) was that even describing past margin - to act as a benchmark if you like - resulted in a greater willingness for large scale infrastructure investments. Customers talked about being more willing to consider wider change if the network company wasn't even remotely thinking about (or indeed hadn't in the past) a 25% margin. I think what I am saying is that by confirming the Company's low margin in previous years might be beneficial.	we do not like to bring in unknowns as it confuses customers and creates uncertainty and telling them what level shareholders returns are now and then saying we don't know what they will be from 2025 would potentially be biasing the result. We have this to bring in to wave 2 testing next year before the final plan goes in and can show this important context. Agree with this as we have found this also during PR19. We opted to leave this out of wave 1 though given the uncertainty, but will make a note to review this again when we approach wave 2.