

Objectives

This research aims to underpin how customers consider that SWW can best meet its pledge to be an environmental leader in the South West region. What do customers think it means to be an environmental leader and how does a regional business like SWW demonstrate environmental leadership?

Format	Focus groups
Households (number)	6 (n46)
Non households (number)	
Vulnerable customers	✓
Future customers	
Retailers	
Stakeholders	
South West Water	✓
Bournemouth Water	✓
Bristol Water	

Impact on our plan and ways of working

The research helped to highlight the critical importance of explaining and demonstrating SWW's performance on environmental measures as well as communicating clearly and consistently about SWW's commitment to improving its performance on the environment.

Feedback from the groups has led on to development of the WaterFit engagement campaign to clearly set out the work we complete in the region to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the South West.

Date	June 2021
Supplier	ICS

Key messages – what matters most

What we did

- The qualitative groups were used to investigate how customers currently perceive SWW and its position on environmental issues and what being an environmental leader means to customers
- The key questions explored were:
 - What makes an environmental leader?
 - Is South West Water seen by its customers as an environmental leader, and if not, how is South West Water's environmental leadership best demonstrated.

What matters most

- Being an environmental leader was described by customers in terms of:
 - Having the right environmental behaviours and culture in place within the business – e.g., recycling and minimising waste, minimising carbon footprints
 - Targeting and delivering stretching performance on environmental measures (including leakage)
 - Being a good neighbour in the region, helping to support tourism and recreation by improving bathing waters and river quality
 - Supporting national environmental challenges, e.g., climate change
 - Innovating and pioneering environmental changes – and sharing knowledge with others (within and outside the water industry).
- There was a good level of understanding about SWW's impacts on the environment. This was clearest in respect of its direct impacts on rivers and coastal waters
- There was however less awareness of the 'non-core' activities that SWW takes leadership on (e.g., habitat protection) and less appreciation of SWW's impact as a consumer of energy
- The groups increased customer views of SWW as an environmental leader following the discussions about our non-core activities
- For a position as an environmental leader to be credible with customers there are two foundations:
 - Demonstrating action – Doing what you say
 - Communicating effectively – Saying what you do.

Are there differing views?

No significant differences.

Next steps

The changing priorities will continue to be tracked via our BAU research.