Engagement summary

Priorities Focus Groups

South West Water

Objectives

To gain qualitative insight into customer priorities and how they differ across different audiences.
To understand which priority areas identified in our engagement strategy customers prioritise and why.

Format	Focus groups
Households (number)	3 (n31)
Non households (number)	
Vulnerable customers	✓
Future customers	✓
Retailers	
Stakeholders	
South West Water	
Bournemouth Water	
Bristol Water	✓

Impact on our plan and ways of working

This research filled a gap in our understanding since COVID-19 and confirmed that customer priorities have not changed significantly over the period.

Customers expect an additional focus on the importance of affordability and vulnerability in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

Date	August 2022
Supplier	Traverse

Key messages – what matters most

What we did

- Held three focus groups in July and August 2022 which included hard to reach customers including the financially vulnerable, future customers, vulnerable customers and mixed domestic customers. 1-2-1 online depth interviews were held for customers in vulnerable situations
- Participants were provided with key information about nine different priority areas and were asked to discuss and reflect on their priorities. They were also asked to consider if there were any issues not covered by the priority areas.

What matters most

- Participants found all priorities important, but particularly: affordability and vulnerability, water quality, resilience and leakage, and reliability
- Working with communities was seen as important, but least favoured because it was considered outside of BRL's core responsibilities
- Affordability and vulnerability were both considered 'must have' priorities by all groups, to ensure clean water is accessible for all
- Water quality, reliability, and resilience and leakage were felt to be core activities, so maintaining current levels of service should be a priority
- Climate change, biodiversity and environmental concerns were seen as important priority areas, but the impact a water company could have in these areas was debated and therefore how important they should be for BRL
- Perception and performance were generally categorised as 'must have' but participants debated that perception is a 'nice to have' while performance is a 'must have'.

Next steps

This has been used to inform our customer strategy.

Reference:
Priorities Focus Groups August 2022 - Traverse.