


Objectives

To understand how Bristol Water can increase take up of Pension Credit Discount for eligible customers. Engaging expert group and customer groups.

Format	Video group discussions
Households (number)	8
Non households (number)	
Vulnerable customers	8
Future customers	
Retailers	
Stakeholders	4
South West Water	
Bournemouth Water	
Bristol Water	

Impact on our plan and ways of working

With 86,000 eligible customers in our region and only 22,000 who have taken up the offer we needed to address the gap to understand any barriers and how we can work to overcome them.

As a result we changed the name of the scheme from Pension Credit to Discount for Low Income Pensioners and refreshed our communication.

We overlaid our Water Poverty data with customer data so we could identify these customers more readily and make proactive contact.

Date	September 2020
Supplier	Blue Marble

Key messages – what matters most

What we did

- We employed an iterative approach with providers Bristol Water and Wessex Water, charity partners and eligible customers
- We sent examples of communications and asked about current perceptions of scheme, then held group discussions exploring perceived barriers to take up, then co created solutions.

What matters most

- All of the pensioner group rely on the state pension and take up discounts that they know about, but few appear to be inclined to seek out possible discounts
- There was found to be low awareness and uptake of financial discounts and benefits, emotional resistance to benefit related discounts and low awareness of Pension Credit Benefit
- There are also process barriers to applying for the benefit e.g. digital exclusion
- There is a lack of perceived relevance in existing communications, and some was framed negatively. Who was being targeted was felt to be unclear
- The research highlights the need for a fresh approach to promoting the tariff
- Communications should be repositioned with focus away from helping the needy. Targeting should be at the wider population as well as eligible customers. The application process should be reviewed.

Are there differing views?

Specific demographic targeted. Age range 66-79. Including those with long-term health conditions.

Next steps

This research feeds into our vulnerability strategy, and our communication of it to ensure we're supporting vulnerable customers.