

Objectives

To test the feasibility of utility companies' joint advice and messaging to reduce domestic energy and water consumption.

Format	Survey
Households (number)	3 (n200)
Non households (number)	
Vulnerable customers	22
Future customers	
Retailers	
Stakeholders	
South West Water	
Bournemouth Water	
Bristol Water	

Impact on our plan and ways of working

This study has proven to be successful, achieving significant energy and water savings for customers. Expanding the project to a wider public will need careful consideration to make it a practical proposition.

Date	July 2022 - March 2023
Supplier	In-house

Key messages – what matters most

What we did

- BRL, Wales & West Utilities, National Grid, and University of the West of England collaborated to advise customers to reduce their domestic energy and water usage
- Customers from BRL's Online Panel recruited for the 6-month pilot project conducted during the winter of 2022-23
- Customers asked to make behavioural changes in their domestic routines and report results after receiving advice to support the changes
- While 200 customers registered an initial interest in the project, the numbers decreased to 59 for the final survey.

What matters most

- Efficient use of appliances voted the most beneficial assistance area however mixed response to spending more money on efficient devices
- For both Electricity and Gas, customers' main motivation to reduce consumption was to save money while for Water, environmental considerations were most important
- Customer feedback highlights the need to reach a number of people who may need PSR or other support but who are not currently receiving it
- There was a preponderance of older people expressing interest in the project – with majority of them aged 55 or above. This reflects their preference for a single source of advice from trusted organisations
- Over half the respondents implemented change by using appliances more efficiently. A quarter had not made any changes
- Over 1/3 didn't find any problems with following advice to implement suggested changes. A substantial group encountered problems reading meters, interpreting bills and then deciding whether it was worth spending money to make savings
- Reduced water and energy use have delivered financial and societal benefits for customers with minimal investment to date. The perceived savings are estimated at about 7 - 9% for energy and 7% for water.

Are there differing views?

Over 1/3 of participants did not find any problems with following the advice. A substantial group encountered problems reading meters, interpreting bills and then deciding whether it was worth spending money to make savings.

Next steps

The University of the West of England intends continuing with a detailed survey to obtain a deeper understanding of the barriers to change and which approaches are most successful.