

CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR

CYNGOR DEFNYDDWYR



What we have delivered for water consumers already

Our key numbers below show that we continue to deliver on the issues that matter to consumers, and show the difference we have made since 2005 when we were established.



1 billion – our work contributed to the 2009 price review being better for customers by the equivalent of over £50 per customer, compared to the 2004 review.



50 per annum for each household customer of South West Water from April 2013 from Government after we, alongside other parties, helped the UK Government recognise the exceptionally high bills for customers of South West Water created by underinvestment prior to privatisation.



306 million - we helped return this to customers, consisting of:

- £290 million - the extra investment, customer assistance or price reductions we secured with water companies over the last four years. Recently, one company committed to bring forward investment in resilience schemes worth around £150m while another has provided £3m of additional funding for customer assistance schemes.
- £16 million – the amount we have helped return to domestic and business customers in compensation and rebates since 2005.



21p – approximately what we will cost each water bill payer in 2012/13, down from almost 25p in 2008/09.

MENU

What we have delivered for water consumers already

290,000 - complaints and enquiries about water companies handled by us since 2005

Almost four times as many customers signing up to the WaterSure scheme for vulnerable consumers since CCWater's project in 2007 to rebrand the scheme and introduce a standard simplified application form.



73% increase in consumers registered on companies' Special Assistance Registers since 2008, when we focused on encouraging companies to raise awareness of the availability of the registers.



40% reduction from the 2007-08 peak in customer complaints to water companies due to CCWater's continued pressure on companies to get it right first time.



22% point improvement in customer satisfaction to 75% in 2011/12 with CCWater's quality of service when resolving complaints against water companies since 2005.



Value for Money - A Fair, affordable charge for the service and help for those who cannot pay, creating a sustainable water and sewerage service now and in the future.

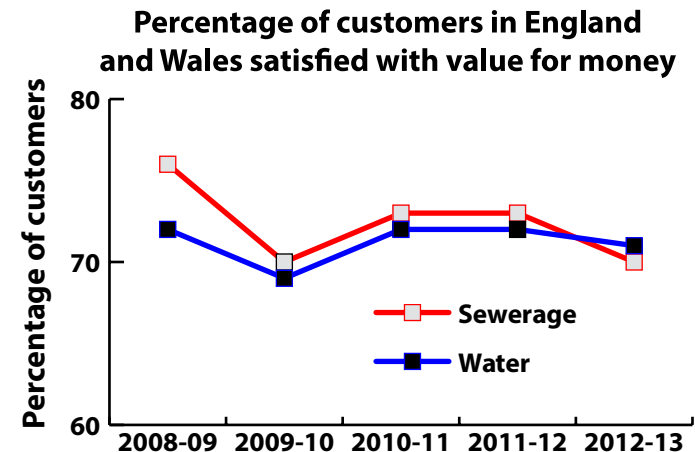
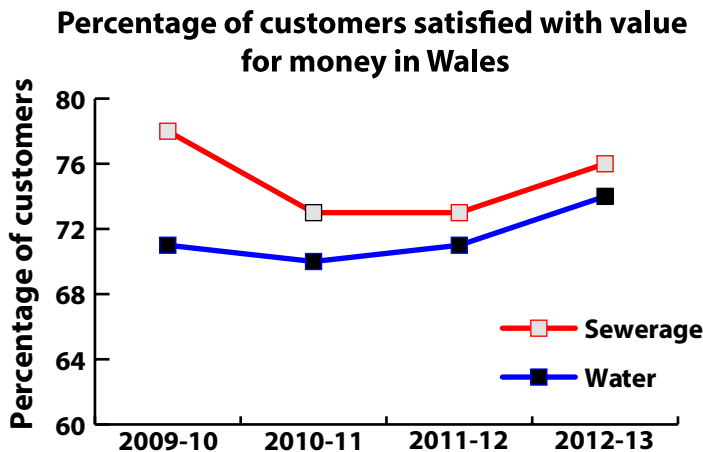
What we said we would do:
 Improve the percentage of consumers satisfied with the value for money from the water and sewerage services.

Trend improving but still gap with satisfaction with service which is around 90%

Water - The overall percentage of England & Wales customers satisfied with the value for money of their water services has remained steady at 71% and the percentage saying they are 'Very Satisfied' continued an upward trend by increasing by 1% in 2012/13 to 28%

Sewerage - The overall percentage of England and Wales customers satisfied with the value for money of their sewerage services has reduced by 3% to 70% but the percentage saying they are 'Very Satisfied' continued an upward trend by increasing by 1% in 2012/13 to 28%.

CCWater has put pressure on water and sewerage companies to engage with customers to find out their priorities on service and cost when making new investments. An increased level of engagement with customers should improve customers' satisfaction with value for money, as they begin to understand what they are getting for their money and influencing how it is spent. Customer engagement is now well understood and is getting most prominence through the current Price Review process, where consumers' preferences on service and cost are being explored both for long-term (25 year) and short term (5 year) plans.



Continued ...

Value for Money - A Fair, affordable charge for the service and help for those who cannot pay, creating a sustainable water and sewerage service now and in the future.

What we said we would do:

Press water companies to provide extra services, additional investment or reduced bills for their water customers where they have greater than expected profits or our performance

Fair Profits - Good Progress

Since 2005, there has been £290 million extra investment in customer assistance, services or price reductions following our negotiations with water companies. During 2012-13 one company committed to bring forward investment in resilience schemes worth around £150m while another has provided £3m of additional funding for customer assistance schemes.

We continue to support and advise the reinvestment of Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water profits in its business for the benefits of its customers. In June 2012 we welcomed Dŵr Cymru's announcement of £100m of additional investment over the next three years on a wide range of infrastructure projects across Wales, Herefordshire and Deeside.

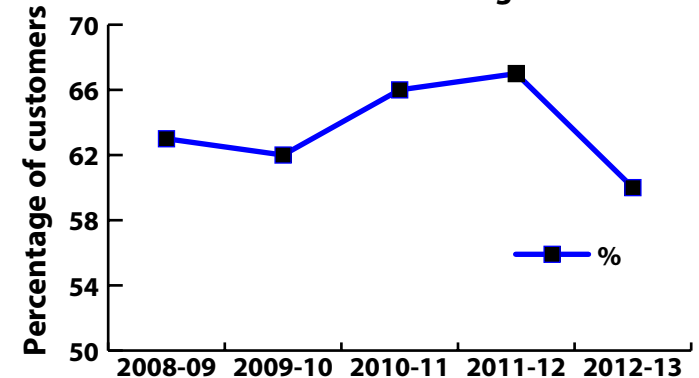
What we said we would do:

Improve the percentage of customers who feel their water and sewerage bill is fair.

Fair Charging - More focus need in England

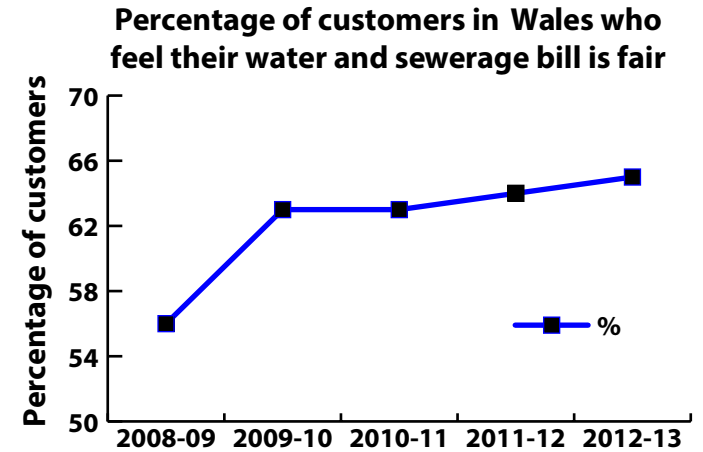
The percentage of customers who agree that the water and sewerage charges they pay are fair decreased from 67% in 2011/12 to 60% in 2012-13.

Percentage of customers in England & Wales who feel their water and sewerage bill is fair



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The number of customers in England who are satisfied with the fairness of their bill has dropped. We are investigating if this is in areas of England where customers have been compulsory metered, or whether it is a more general trend. We are also continuing to work with companies and encouraging them to educate and interact more with their own customers. If customers are more aware of the service they actually receive and their options the 'fairness' of charges should increase.



We will continue to review companies' charges schemes and tariff proposals to get more consistency of charges and to make sure the charges customers are offered are fair. We will also give additional focus to our work on 'informing consumers' helping them understand the tariff choices available to them; and continue to work with companies on the development of customer funded social tariffs which may help some low income households feel their charges are fairer.

In 2012-13 we have been successful in working with companies to deliver more consistency on:

- 1) **Charging for Empty Properties** – We recommended companies to specify that they would not charge if the sole occupier of a property was in a nursing home and or hospital for an extended time period. We have had success with 15 companies who have added some form of our recommended wording to their 2013-14 Charges Schemes. The other applicable companies agreed to the principle but wouldn't add the wording to their charges scheme. We will continue to press companies on this issue.
- 2) **Security Deposits** – We suggested companies that pursued security deposits with Business customers change their wording in the Charges Scheme to include length of deposit, amount required, reasons and interest paid. All four companies that currently pursue this as a charging option agreed to our request and we will monitor companies going forward in case they look to do this in the future.
- 3) **Single Occupier Assessed Charge (SOAC)** – Three companies had no single occupier charge and many others had a higher SOAC when compared to their usage equivalent data. One company agreed to introduce a SOAC and a further five reduced their SOAC charge. We need to continue to do some more work in this area.

Value for Money - A Fair, affordable charge for the service and help for those who cannot pay, creating a sustainable water and sewerage service now and in the future.

What we said we would do:

Ensure there is help and protection for those who are less advantaged, vulnerable or cannot afford to pay their water bill. Including social tariffs, if supported by customers

Affordability Social tariffs implemented in some companies and assistance increased

We have worked with companies, in line with Government guidance, as they have developed and tested customer acceptance for social tariffs. One company has introduced a new scheme and two companies have expanded existing social tariff schemes – opening up or enhancing help to around 25,000 customers.

The number of customers receiving assistance through WaterSure increased by a further 21% in 2011/12.

Welsh Water Assist also increased in 2011/12 by 35% and includes assistance to unmeasured customers. Promotional work by companies and CCWater continued to build on our earlier project to boost take-up.

What we said we would do: Improve the percentage of customers who consider their water and sewerage bill is affordable

But more work is needed - Economic climate means more finding bills are not affordable

In England and Wales

- The percentage of customers who agree that their water and sewerage charges are 'affordable' fell significantly from 74% in 2011-12 to 67% in 2012-13.

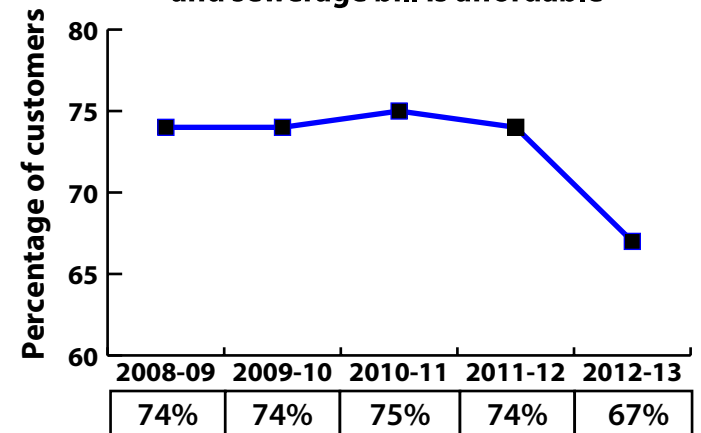
- The number who said their charges were 'Unaffordable' increased slightly from 12% to 13%.

Wales only

- 70% of customers think their water and sewerage charges are 'affordable'.

- The number who think their water and sewerage charges were 'unaffordable' was 10%.

Percentage of customers who feel their water and sewerage bill is affordable



Continued ...

Value for Money - A Fair, affordable charge for the service and help for those who cannot pay, creating a sustainable water and sewerage service now and in the future.

What we said we would do:

Make sure any extension of compulsory metering programmes in some water stressed areas of England is paced appropriately, provides suitable protection for vulnerable consumers and has considered customers' views and concerns and the impacts on water customers.

Affordability Good progress - Awaiting results

We have been closely monitoring the roll out of water metering by Southern Water (SRN) and South East Water (SEW).

In order to understand customers' experience under SRN's universal metering programme and to identify what was working well and not so well, we undertook research to be able to share lessons learned with the industry.

Qualitative research has been completed and a series of recommendations have been agreed. This project was undertaken in collaboration with SRN who have already implemented changes as a result of this exercise. The report will be published in May 2013.

What we said we would do:

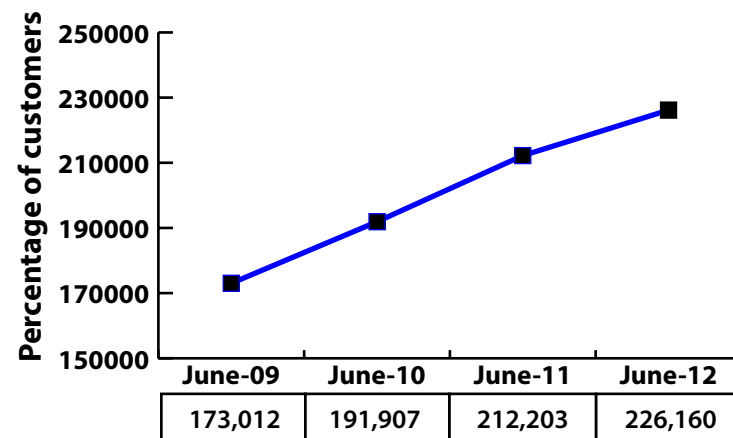
Increase numbers paying through Water Direct

Debt - Target Achieved

The number of benefit recipients paying their water charges through Water Direct in England and Wales has increased

by 11% from the previous year. The majority of companies have increased the numbers using Water Direct and we have worked with them and DWP to maintain awareness of this scheme which protects vulnerable customers.

Number of customers paying by Water Direct



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What we said we would do:

Helping drive good practice across the water industry in dealing with the growing problem of outstanding revenue from unpaid water bills.

Debt- Some progress - assess how much more progress can be made through our review of current information available on customer debt practice with a view to identifying good and innovative debt management practice:

CCWater made the following recommendations to companies in our assessments of company debt management:

- An income and expenditure form when assessing payment plans as in some cases customers were being given payments they clearly could not afford
- Visiting officers to promote services including WaterSure and Water Direct to customers

We identified and reported the following good practice to all companies:

- Visits –home visit officer also offers advice about ways to reduce bills, or suggest customers seek independent advice from money advice centres or CAB if appropriate.
 - Enforcement action –Companies have identified the need to build in processes of automatic enforcement depending on customer circumstances.
 - Debt Collection Agencies (DCA) – for smaller debt below £100.
 - Text messaging – many companies reported the success of text messaging customers to prompt payment.
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Value for Money - A Fair, affordable charge for the service and help for those who cannot pay, creating a sustainable water and sewerage service now and in the future.

What we said we would do:
Press for the PR14 methodology to have appropriate incentives for companies to build their Business Plans around customer requirements and acceptability, and states that customers will be engaged with the decisions that affect their water and sewerage bills at the next price review.

The Review of Water Prices in 2014 (PR14) - Aim Achieved

Ofwat's draft methodology for the 2014 review includes proposals we have pressed for since 2011 through Ofwat's 'Future Price Limits' redevelopment of the price setting. This covers:

- how company Business Plans and longer term strategies should focus on the delivery of outcomes driven by evidence of customer preferences and expectations.
- how companies should work with their local Customer Challenge Groups to identify appropriate methods of measuring and incentivising the delivery of outcomes.

What we said we would do:
Press for companies' customer engagement strategies to reflect recognised good practice and effectively capture evidence of customer views.

Good Progress

CCWater have been working to ensure that consumers' views are at the heart of water companies long-term strategies, and to make sure that outcomes companies' develop reflect and account for consumers' views.

To achieve this, CWater have been closely involved in the development of water company engagement strategies, and in the detail of ensuring questionnaires are not leading, appropriate methodology is used, the customer sample is representative of the local area, and that the results are being interpreted fairly.

By close of 2012-13, water companies' customer engagement strategies for the 2014 review were reflective of CWater's principles for good customer engagement, published in 2012.

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What we said we would do:

Get companies to demonstrate to local Customer Challenge Groups (CCGs) and Wales PR14 Forum that their proposals are built around credible customer evidence.

Good progress

At the close of 2012-13, seven out of twenty water companies had identified outcomes that they will aim to deliver, reflecting credible and representative evidence of customer views. Other companies still had to report.

CCWater have been at the centre of ensuring that customers' views are reflected in the outcomes that companies have developed by challenging companies to show how the research has influenced thinking and the final outcomes, and making sure the measures of success that accompany the outcomes are fair measures of the outcome.

What we said we would do:

Press for the UK and Welsh Government requirements for 2014 Price Review (PR14) and the statutory drinking water quality and environmental programmes take into account customers' willingness to pay.

Aim Achieved

Defra published a strategic policy statement to Ofwat in March 2013, setting out its requirements for PR14 (including the delivery of statutory requirements). This includes requirements on Ofwat to ensure that water companies

- effectively engage with customers and focus service delivery on evidence of customer needs and expectations.
- provide a 'fair deal' for customers that takes into account affordability and evidence of willingness to pay.

This reflects CCWater's views on Ofwat's priorities, which informed the development of Defra's statement. We have also raised the same views with the Welsh Government, which is expected to publish its PR14 requirements in 2013-14.

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What we said we would do:

Contribute to the European Commission's review of its water policies, so the needs of and the costs imposed on water consumers are considered throughout the review.

Europe - Aim Achieved

We contributed to the consultation on the Blueprint for Safeguarding Europe's Resources, which examined existing policy on the issues affecting Europe's water resources.

There were many contributors but the final document reflected a number of points that we made, such as the need for guidance on water trading and the need to integrate European agriculture and water policies. The overall theme is one we support and refers to tackling water pollution by implementing buffer zones and preventing floods and drought by utilising wetlands.

Business Customers

What we said we would do:

Press for water companies' policies reflect best practice for issues that affect business customers.

Some progress – consider reviewing services to business customers across England & Wales

Our regular meetings with business customers have allowed their concerns to be raised direct with us. For example, this year we have had success in getting one of those issues resolved by changing how some companies operate security deposit policies. We have also worked on many individual business customer complaints that we have received through members of the forum.

We have gained some valuable insight into issues that are important to them in the areas of competition and charging and will be taking these forward as market reform develops, or discussing them further at future business customer meetings.

What we said we would do:

Work so Government policies take into account evidence of business customers' views and preferences.

Good Progress

This is an on-going issue that will continue to feed into our work on competition. We have taken into consideration business customer views (from research, complaints information and meetings) through various pieces of evidence we have given, such as that given at the EFRA Committee's Pre-legislative scrutiny of the draft Water Bill.

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Market Reform

What we said we would do:
Press for increased choice and benefits for business customers without detriment to those that cannot switch, or choose not to switch, water and sewerage provider.

What we said we would do:
Make sure consumers' interests are central to the proposals around water resources management and the proposed extension of market reform in England to resources, treatment and distribution of water and the treatment of sewage.

Good Progress

CCWater have ensured Governments know business customers' views on their wish to have increased choice in the water market place. We have also made it clear that this increased choice should be achieved without detriment to customers who cannot switch water supplier, including those in Wales.

CCWater's representations to the EFRA Committee inquiry on the Water Bill, particularly on this issue was recognised by the EFRA Committee in its report. CCWater also represented the interests of all ineligible customers at a National Assembly for Wales Inquiry (Environment and Sustainability Committee) in March 2012. We await their report.

Good Progress

The EFRA Committee reflected CCWater views in their report - that the Bill should make clear that the development of upstream competition should not lead to disadvantages for customers who are ineligible for competition. We have also made these points to the National Assembly for Wales who are still conducting their inquiry.

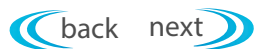
We have highlighted the importance of engagement with customers on water resources management at Customer Challenge Groups (CCGs) and through pre-consultations on the Water Resources Management Plans (WRMP) and will be responding to WRMPs consultations in the coming year.

Other

What we said we would do:
Get the voice of water customers involved in the process leading to abstraction reform.

Some progress – early stages

We are representing consumers' views with Defra as the options are being developed. We have also represented consumers' as the Welsh Government develop their Water Strategy.



What we said we would do:

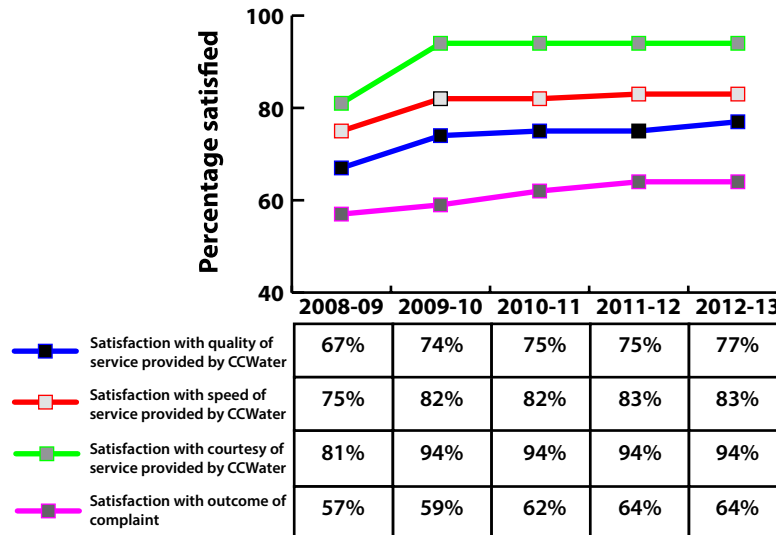
Improve consumers' satisfaction with the quality of service provided by CCWater for customers whose water companies have not resolved their complaint towards our benchmark target of 80%.

Good Progress

Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) shows that we exceeded all our Operational Business Plan (OBP) targets and improved the overall quality of service that we offer to consumers.

Consumers tell us they are also very satisfied with the speed of our handling and highly satisfied with the courtesy of our staff:

Customers' satisfaction with the quality of service provided by CCWater



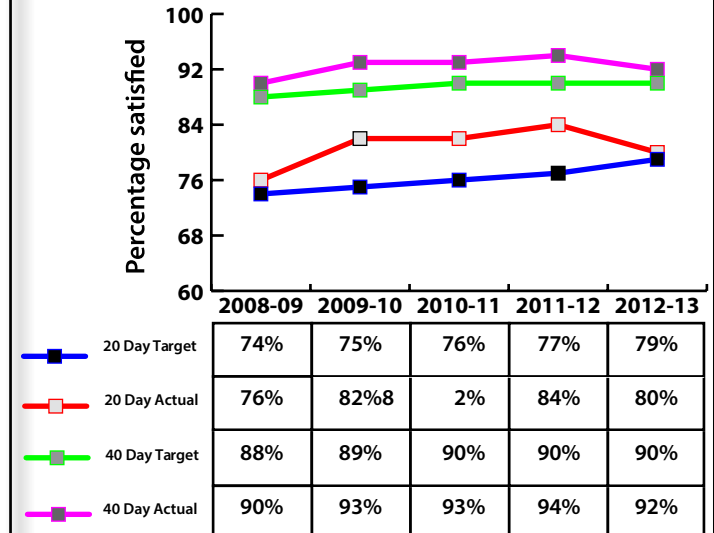
What we said we would do:

Provide a fair, effective and consistent complaint handling service across our local and Welsh offices.

Exceeding targets

We exceeded OBP targets in 20 and 40 days to bring quick resolutions to consumer complaints and avoid a backlog of unresolved complaints:

Customers' satisfaction with the quality of service provided by CCWater



Continued ...

What we said we would do:

Get more compensation and rebates for customers

Aim Achieved

Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) shows that we exceeded all our Operational Business Plan (OBP) targets and improved the overall quality of service that we offer to consumers.

Consumers tell us they are also very satisfied with the speed of our handling and highly satisfied with the courtesy of our staff:

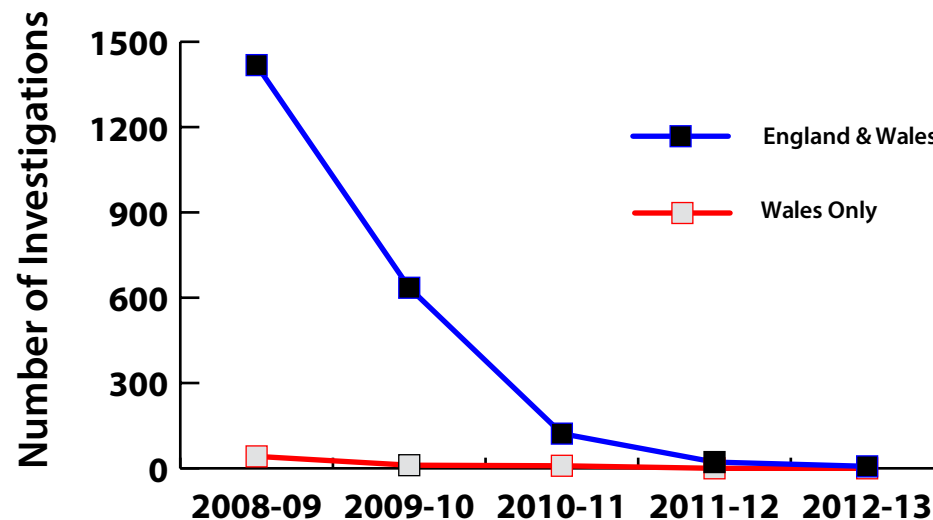
What we said we would do:

Aim for a yearly reduction in CCWater investigations, indicating increased consumer satisfaction with companies' handling of complaints through their own procedures.

Target Achieved

Our staff continued to press companies at earlier stages in their complaint procedures to resolve customer concerns quickly. As companies listen to us earlier on, investigations continued to decrease.

Number of CCWater investigations into customers' complaints against water companies



What we said we would do:

Make sure our complaint handling work compares well with similar organisations by benchmarking ourselves against comparable consumer bodies.

Good Progress

CCWater outperformed comparable bodies in acknowledgement and resolution of complaints.

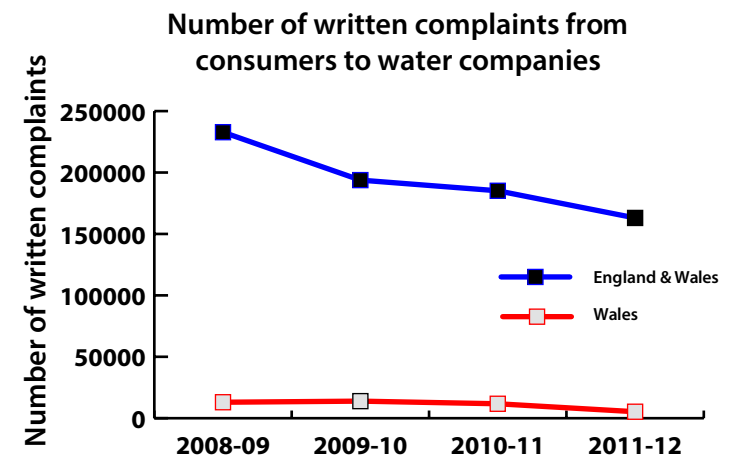
We compared favourably with all utility ombudsman schemes for overall customer satisfaction with service and were close to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman for courtesy and outcome.

What we said we would do:

Aim for a yearly reduction in written complaints from consumers directly to water companies.

Target Achieved

Written complaints from consumers to their water companies reduced by almost 12% as indicated in our 2012 September complaints report. This is the fourth year running since the peak in 2007-08 that complaints have reduced.



What we said we would do:

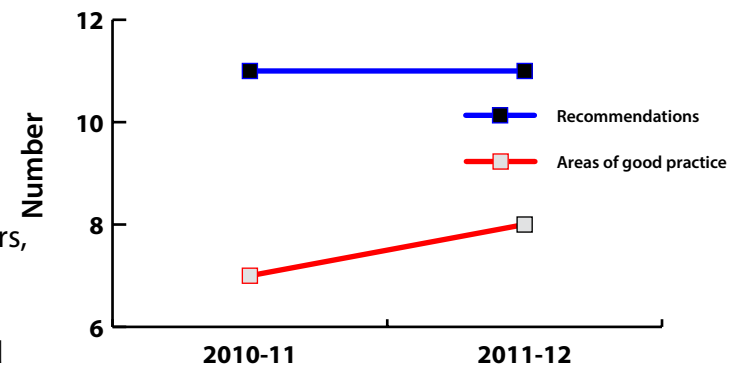
Improve customer service by recommending improvements to companies' debt and complaint handling services through our risk based company customer-service assessments

Aim Achieved

Our risk based assessments continue to deliver benefits to customers, allowing us to focus our resources where they are most needed.

Assessment panels continued to identify areas of good practice and make recommendations where companies could do better. In the year we undertook six assessments with water companies. The assessment panels made eight recommendations to companies and identified 11 areas of good practice.

CCWater risk-based assessments- areas of good practice identified and recommendations made



Good progress

What we said we would do:
Improve help for consumers who consider themselves vulnerable

We adopted the British Standard Institute's definition of vulnerability in order to help classify those who contact us who are vulnerable in late 2011. After modifying our contact system to allow evidence of vulnerability to be gathered, we found and assisted 370 who identified themselves as vulnerable with a resolution to their complaint.

In future years we will focus on whether there are any trends, patterns or issues with how companies are dealing with vulnerable consumers.

What we said we would do:
Monitor Service Incentive Mechanism (SIM), and use it as a tool to press companies to improve service to customers

Progress by industry in response to pressure from ccwater and through SIM

The industry improved its performance in the SIM compared to the previous year:

- All but three companies had a better score than the previous year.
- Written complaints reduced in our September report by almost 12%, repeat complaints and investigations also reduced.
- We contributed to an industry steering group which looked at the options for refocusing SIM and pressed for more consistent measures. We have consistently expressed the need to include a measure for the overall perception of all customers and to address the gap in value for money.

The industry SIM Qualitative scores, from the quarterly surveys where customers were asked how satisfied they were with the company contact improved on the previous year from 4.21 to 4.34 out of a maximum 5. The water industry compared well to other utilities in the qualitative SIM and the quarterly survey results also showed improvement on the previous year, moving to 4.44 from 4.34 in 2011-12.

What we said we would do:
Helping consumers get a better service by negotiating policy changes on their behalf with water companies

Good Progress - A Southern Water customer approached us as they were being refused the WaterSure tariff because they were on an assessed charge. They were on an assessed charge because the company couldn't fit a meter. Consequently the company refused to consider WaterSure because the property was not metered. CCWater believed that a customer shouldn't be refused this tariff because they couldn't have a meter as this wasn't their fault. The company agreed to change their policy so that customers on the assessed charge can also be offered WaterSure if this is more beneficial option.

A customer of one small new company (a Newly Appointed Variation) complained to us about the company placing an administrative charge for a debit card payment. CCWater investigated and asked the company when this was approved as it was not evident in their Charges Scheme, but included in their code of practice. The company accepted our argument and suspended the debit card charge and agreed to refund all customers who had previously paid this charge.

A water company in Wales has committed to more consistent application of rebates where these can be applied proactively without any doubt. Call centres have been briefed. A water company in Wales has expanded its team and is reviewing its developer services and communications following a series of ongoing complaints and contacts to CCWater.

We have worked with one company in Wales to ensure that reprioritisation of its AMP5 investment targets effectively areas with ongoing customer issues and complaints.

Continued ...

What we said we would do:

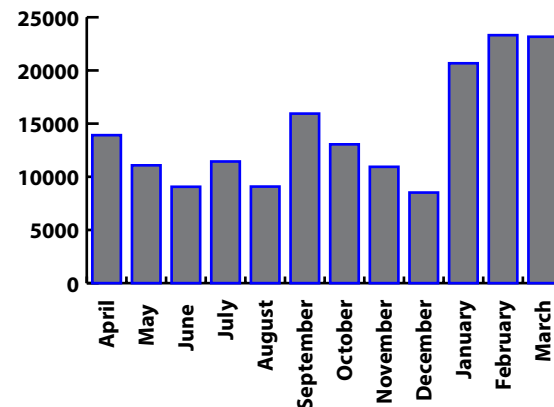
Help consumers save money through giving them access to our Water meter calculator which can show if they could save money by switching to a meter.

Good Progress

The new water meter calculator has been running for 12 months now. Consistently month on month the calculator was CCWater's most visited area of the website. In 2012-13 we had over 170,000 visitors to the calculator. Of these, we recorded a potential saving of £4.4m if customers where to have water meters fitted.

The calculator also has the benefit of educating customers on how changing their consumption will reduce their bills, and encourage water efficiency. The table below shows the numbers of consumers using the calculator and the potential savings they could make if they switched to a water meter.

Number of visitors to the Water Meter Calculator



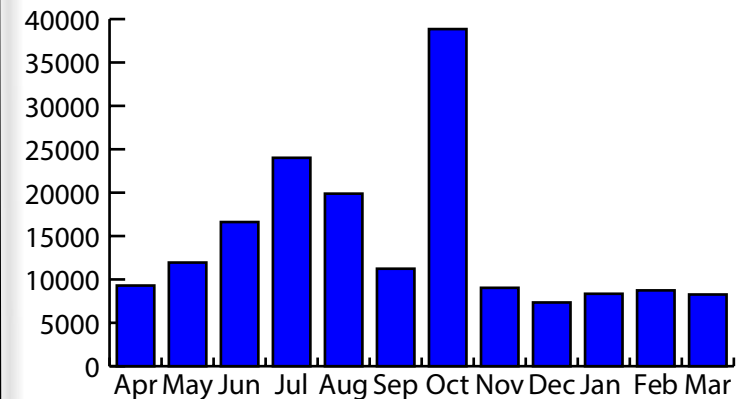
What we said we would do:

Giving consumers easy access to the information they need.

Aim Achieved

By the end of 2012-13, over 170,000 users had visited our consumer support site – which helps consumers with their queries and questions. Consumers had viewed nearly 150,000 answers. Of these, 99.2% found the information they were looking for, with only 0.8% (1,519 people) going on to raise a query via the built-in web form.

Number of visitors to Consumer Support Site



MENU

Water on Tap - Safe, reliable, good quality tap water that is sustainable and consumers use wisely.

What we said we would do:

Ensuring consumers' priorities are considered as companies focus on maintaining service and quality standards through water supply infrastructure resilience

Aim Achieved

Our influence at an industry level project on resilience for investment planning, means industry guidance now has a strong customer engagement section for the companies to use and consider during their investment planning process. This follows our pressure to ensure that customers' water services are maintained and improved at an affordable price and after consultation with them.

What we said we would do:

Reducing leakage/ promoting water efficiency

Ongoing - Awaiting research results

To help target messages to consumers on saving water and to help water companies' understand customers' perspective on leakage, we have conducted research in to customers' attitudes to leakage and water saving to help us and companies shape our approach to helping consumers and communications. Conclusions will be available during the Summer of 2013.

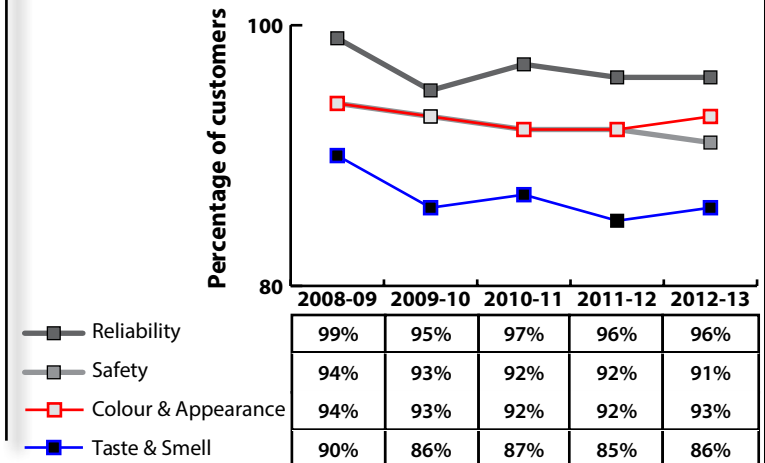
What we said we would do:

Help improve the percentage of consumers who are satisfied with the taste and the smell, colour and appearance, safety and reliability of supply of their tap water.

Patchy progress – while trend is now improving, and change since 2008-09 isn't significant – attention is needed on consumer complaints in these areas as companies present business plans

We have worked closely with the Drinking Water Inspectorate to ensure consumers get appropriate and timely information about their water supplies and any water quality concerns are addressed.

Percentage of consumers who are satisfied with the taste and the smell, colour and appearance, safety and reliability of supply of their tap water across England & Wales



Water on Tap - Safe, reliable, good quality tap water that is sustainable and consumers use wisely.

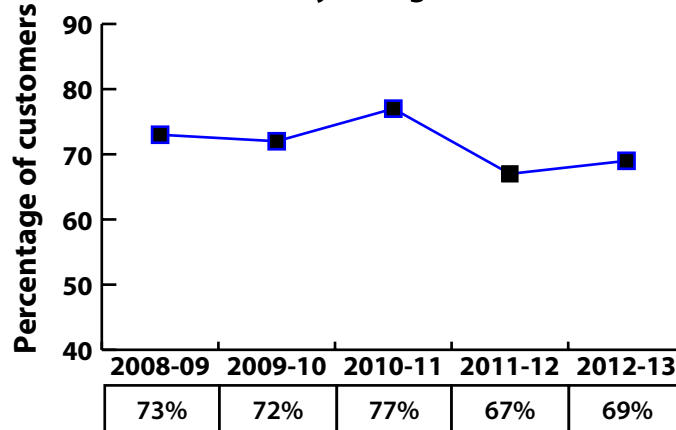
What we said we would do:

Help more consumers recognise the need to use water more wisely.

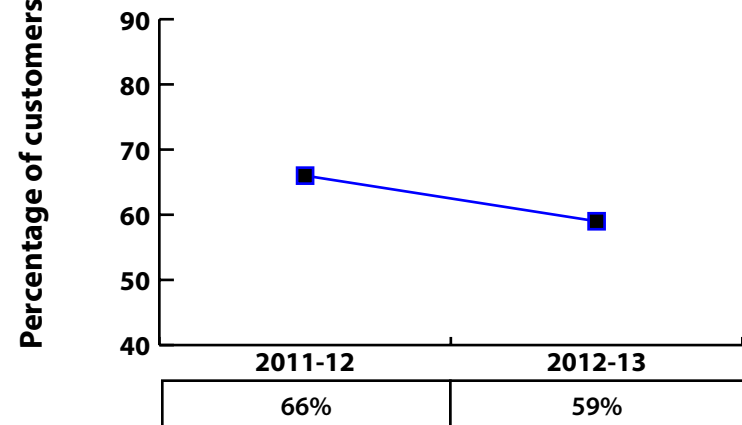
Not achieved – current research will start to unpick consumer motivation to allow better targeting of messages

We have continued to promote the need for water efficiency and conservation and provide consumers with the advice and information they need to help them use water wisely.

Customers who said they made efforts to use water wisely in England & Wales



Customers who said they made efforts to use water wisely in Wales



A Sewerage System that Works - Successful delivery of a sustainable wastewater service with minimal sewer flooding.

What we said we would do: Help press for a reduction in 2011-12 levels of sewer flooding.

Aim Achieved – In 2011-12, the ten water and sewerage companies reported a reduction in the number of properties on their sewer flooding registers. This reflects the delivery of sewer flooding alleviation schemes funded in the 2009 price review, investment that CCWater pushed for.

What we said we would do: Work with water and sewerage companies to ensure they have an effective communication strategy so that customers are informed of the changes to ownership of private sewers and lateral drains

Aim Achieved – We completed research to understand customer views of the effectiveness of sewerage companies' communication strategies on the transfer of private drains and how this could impact on bills. This gives us the evidence base to press companies of the need to continue to raise awareness and comment should any companies submit an interim determination (IDoK) to Ofwat during 2013/14.

In Wales we worked with Dŵr Cymru to ensure effective communication of the second phase of private sewers and lateral drains transfer, the introduction of the mandatory adoption and build sewer standards.

What we said we would do: Help deliver better prioritised sewer flooding investment decisions, so consumers believe how sewer flooding expenditure is prioritised is fair.

Aim Achieved – After our involvement in a working group on sewer flooding, Ofwat has promoted the introduction of a new methodology to record sewer flooding incidents. The companies have worked together towards a risk based approach that recognises the consequences and impact on customers, as well as the type of flooding experienced.

What we said we would do: Help raise awareness so fewer consumers suffering sewer flooding caused by inappropriate disposal of fats, oils and grease (FOG) into sewers and drains.

Good progress – profile raised of issue– CCWater is actively engaged in the Water Industry FOG Forum with a particular emphasis on controlling FOG at source.

In Wales we have worked with Dŵr Cymru to provide better information to customers on the appropriate disposal of fats, oils and grease.

Speaking up for Consumers - Achieve improvements for water consumers and help local consumers' views be the drivers of key decisions that affect their water bill and services.

What we said we would do: Make sure water consumers' views on key topics are properly presented through the forthcoming Water Bill's legislative process.

Aim Achieved – The issues that could affect water consumers were reflected in [our response](#) to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny into the Draft Water Bill, and through oral evidence at the inquiry's formal Committee hearing. [You can view our appearance on 30 October 2012 through this link - <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=11659>]

The EFRA Committee reflected our views in [their report](#) - that the Bill should make clear that the removal of the 'costs principle' and the development of upstream competition should not lead to disadvantages for customers who are ineligible for competition.

We also presented written and oral [evidence](#) to the National Assembly for Wales' inquiry into the draft Water Bill. The issues from the draft Bill that could detrimentally affect customers in Wales were presented by CCWater for the Committee's consideration. This included pressing for help for customers at the border between Wales and England, and to ensure customers in Wales who cannot change supplier don't experience increased bills, the costs of competition indirectly impacting them.

What we said we would do: Make sure water consumers' views on key topics are properly presented to the Welsh Government as they create and consider views on their Water Strategy for Wales.

Aim Achieved - We have contributed evidence of consumers' priorities and views on the topics the Strategy will be covering through a pre-consultation process. The consultation of the Welsh Government Water Strategy for Wales is still pending and we will be responding to the consultation formally.

We have also submitted evidence to a National Assembly for Wales Inquiry that sought our views on the contents of the water strategy for Wales with specific reference to competition and affordability.

Speaking up for Consumers - Achieve improvements for water consumers and help local consumers' views be the drivers of key decisions that affect their water bill and services.

What we said we would do:

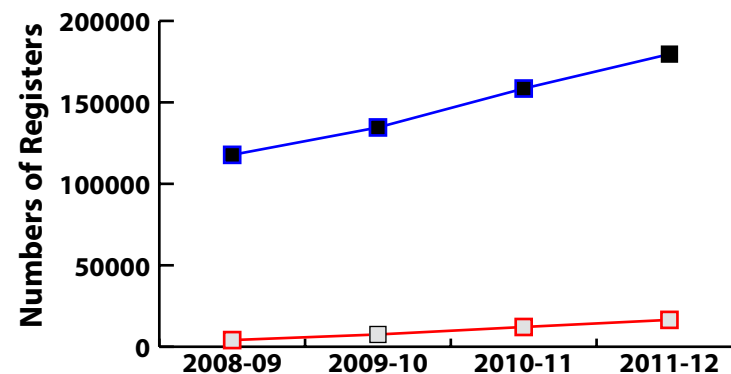
Improvement in time spent by us on our website, updates and interaction with consumers.

Exceeded Target – During 2012/13 we have had over ¼ of a million visitors to our website.

What we said we would do: Work with water companies to raise consumers' awareness of any special assistance services available to them.

Aim Achieved – We have continued our work with water companies to increase consumers' awareness of Special Assistance Registers. During 2011 -12 this resulted in a 13% rise, with the number of consumers registered reaching a total of 179,620 across England and Wales.

Customers on Special Assistance Registers



	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
England & Wales	117,787	134,606	158,495	179,620
Wales Only	4,099	7,542	12,136	16,504

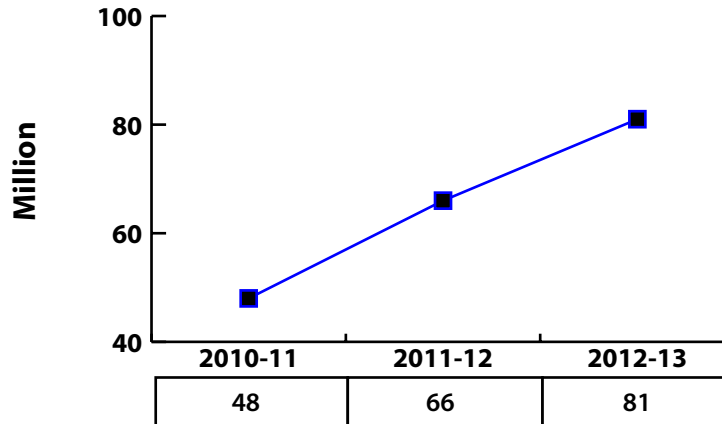
Speaking up for Consumers - Achieve improvements for water consumers and help local consumers' views be the drivers of key decisions that affect their water bill and services.

What we said we would do: Media - Gain media coverage for each of the main CCWater priority areas in the Forward Work Programme, measured through Opportunities to See (OTS) and Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE).

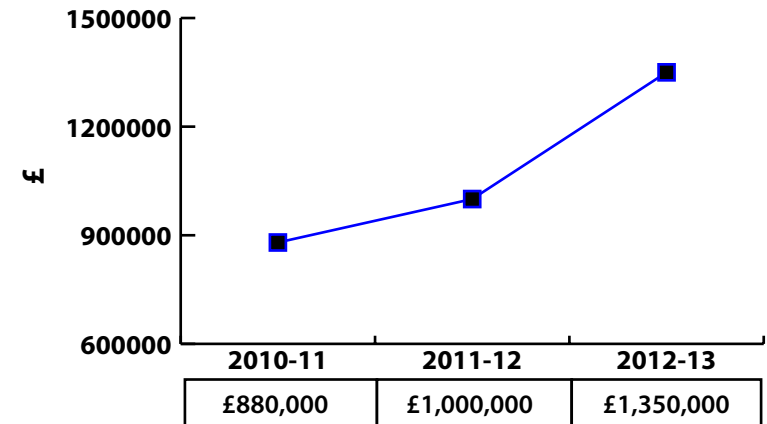
Increase Media Coverage – We achieved 81m Opportunities to See. This means our messages had the chance to be seen by a potential 81 million people.

We achieved £1.35m worth of Advertising Value Equivalent. This means that if we had paid for our messages to be heard through advertising, it would have cost £1.35m.

Opportunities to see (OTS)



Advertising Value Equivalent

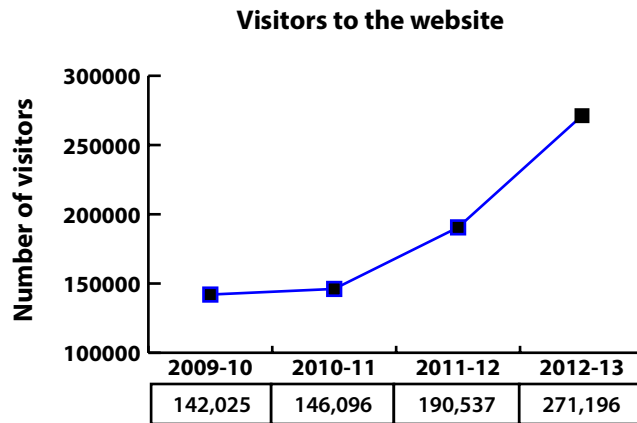


Speaking up for Consumers - Achieve improvements for water consumers and help local consumers' views be the drivers of key decisions that affect their water bill and services.

What we said we would do:

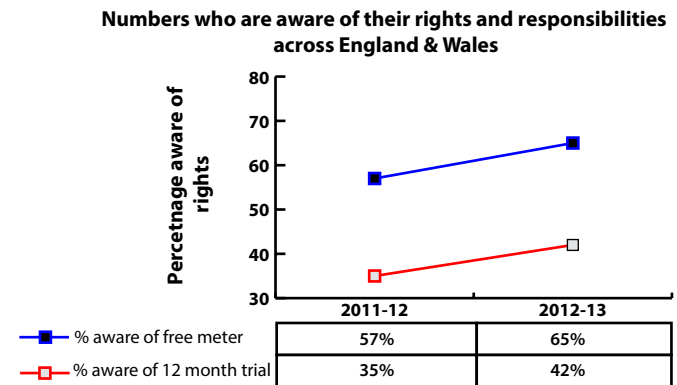
Web site - Increase the number of people visiting the website by 27%.

Exceeded Target – We have exceeded the target of increasing the people visiting the website by 42% from 190,000 to 271,000.



What we said we would do: Improve consumer empowerment by shown by an increase in the numbers who are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

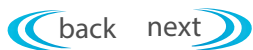
Aim Achieved – There was an increase in customers who were aware of the free meter option up from 57% in 2011-12 to 65% [68% Wales] in 2012-13. There was also an increase in those respondents who were aware of the year's trial for a meter up from 35% in 2011-12 to 42% [41% Wales] in 2012-13.



What we said we would do:

Increase in Twitter followers and interaction with followers from current levels measuring links clicked, 'retweets' and responses to direct questions.

Exceeded Target – Since the launch of CCWater's new water meter calculator the time spent on CCWater's website has increased. From an average of 1.5 minutes to 2.5 minutes, this shows are users find CCWater's website increasingly engaging and informative. CCWater's Twitter presence has increased over the year. We have had a 96% increase in followers from 577 to 1,134. We have had a number of interactions with followers through tweets, retweets by our followers and customers directly messaging us to ask for help and advice.



Cost of Delivering our Forward Work Programme

What we said we would do:
Providing a Value for Money service to consumers.

Aim Achieved – We absorbed inflationary rises and held our 2012/13 cost to water customers at £5.13m which is approximately 21p per bill payer.

What we said we would do:
Working effectively and efficiently.

Aim Achieved –

- CCWater paid 99 per cent of undisputed invoices within 10 working days.
- CCWater staff numbers increased to 73 from last years average staffing figure of 67. This temporary increase enables us to deliver our price review work.
- Internal Auditors reviewed CCWater's Risk Maturity; Delivery of Forward Work Programme; Key Financial Controls; Financial Planning; Budget setting and Management and Follow up of Previous Internal Audit Recommendations. All were rated as 'Green' - no major weaknesses and only a few low level priority recommendations were made.