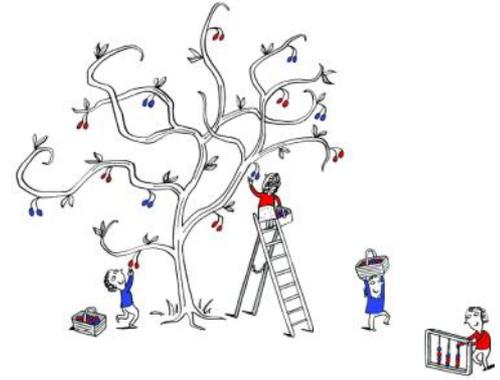


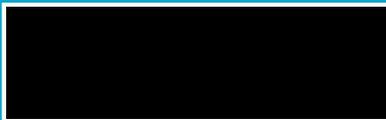


Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water



Post Incident research

Welsh Water



May 2018
3192rep01



Cert No 0462



Company Partner

Accent is registered to the market, opinion and social research
International Standard ISO 20252

Contents

1 Background & methodology

2 Main findings

3 Conclusions

Background

- In early March the very bad weather caused by Storm Emma led to c4,500 households in Wales being without water
- Additionally, some households experienced low water pressure and/or discoloured water
- Areas particularly badly affected were:
 - Blaenau Ffestiniog (Gwynedd),
 - Pencader (Carmarthenshire)
 - Synod Inn, Llandysul and Talgarreg (Ceredigion)
 - Letterston (Pembrokeshire)
 - Abertillery (Blaenau Gwent)
 - Clydach Vale (Rhondda Cynon Taff)
- Welsh Water commissioned research to help understand the impact on customers of the resultant loss of service and its impact on Welsh Water's reputation and customer satisfaction

"The supply problems have been caused by burst water mains and higher than usual demand for water which has placed additional pressures on our network. Over the past 24 hours, we have put more water into the network than during the peak period last summer." Welsh Water

Methodology

- 400 telephone interviews were conducted with a mixture of those affected and those not directly affected by the bad weather incident
- 200 interviews with customer affected...
 - by complete loss of water
 - by reduced water pressure
 - by discoloured/cloudy water
- 200 interviews with customers not affected
- Interviewing took place between 6th and 10th April

OBJECTIVES

To measure and understand the **impact** of bad weather and resultant loss of service on **Welsh Water's reputation** and **customer satisfaction**

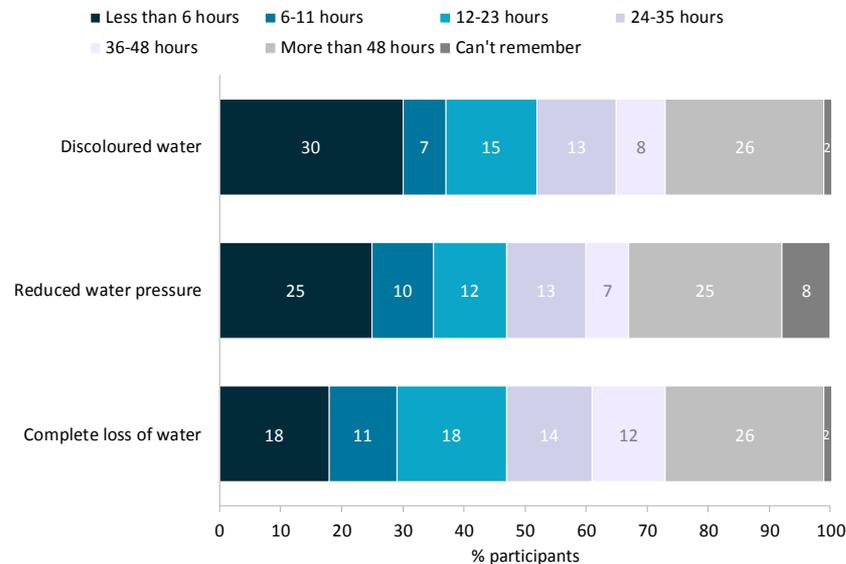
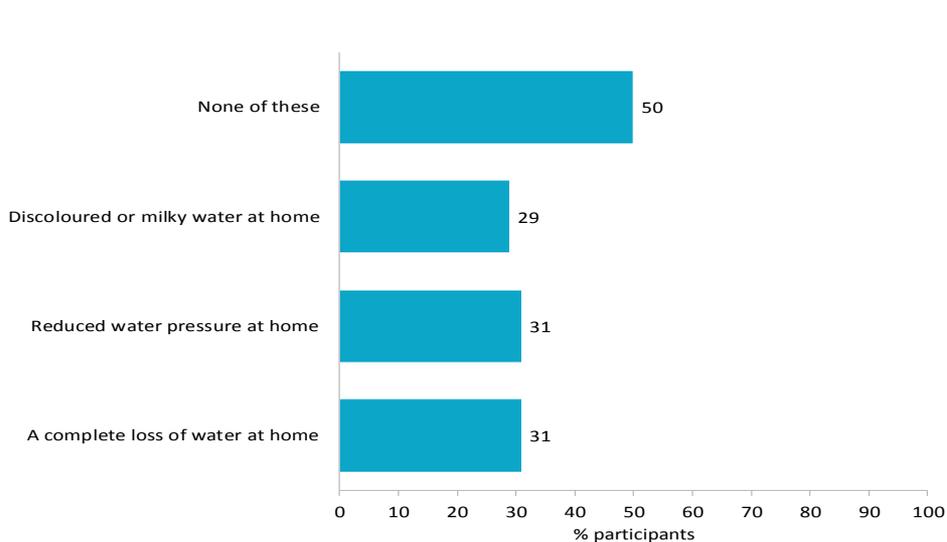
To **compare attitudes** of those affected in different ways and those **unaffected**

Revealed preference element to establish the amount of bottled water purchased and other **costs incurred** by customers

Main Findings

Experience of the incident

Those who were affected tended to have experienced more than one issue – mainly for less than 24 hours



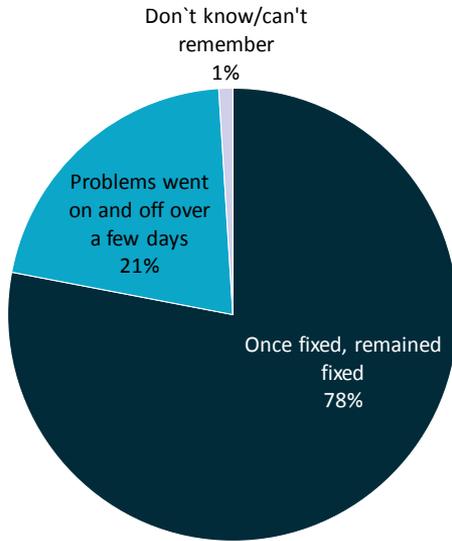
Those who were not affected by the incident were more likely to be in socio-economic group DE (60%), to be on a meter (58%) and not to have a disability or increased reliance on water (53%)

While most of those affected experienced the problem for less than 24 hours, one in four of those affected had a problem for more than 48 hours

Qp1 During the recent spell of very bad weather in late February/early March, was your water supply affected in either of the following ways?
Base: All participants (400)

Qpi2 How long were you without water in total? Qpi3a For how long did you have reduced water pressure at home? Qpi3a for how long did you have discoloured or milky water at home? Base: All participants who were affected. Water loss (124); reduced water pressure (122); discoloured water (117)

For one in five the problems went on and off over a few days



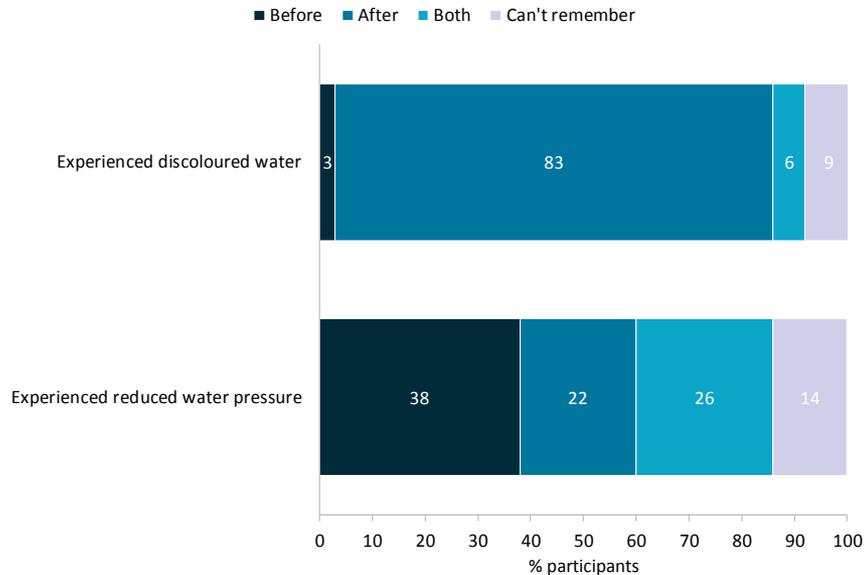
- However, for most once the problem was fixed it remained fixed
- This was especially the case where they were affected for less than 24 hours (86% said it remained fixed)



Qpi3b During this period, once the problems with your water were fixed, did they remain fixed, or did the problems go on and off over a few days?

Base: All participants who were affected (200)

Discoloured water was generally experienced after complete loss of water, reduced water pressure more likely before



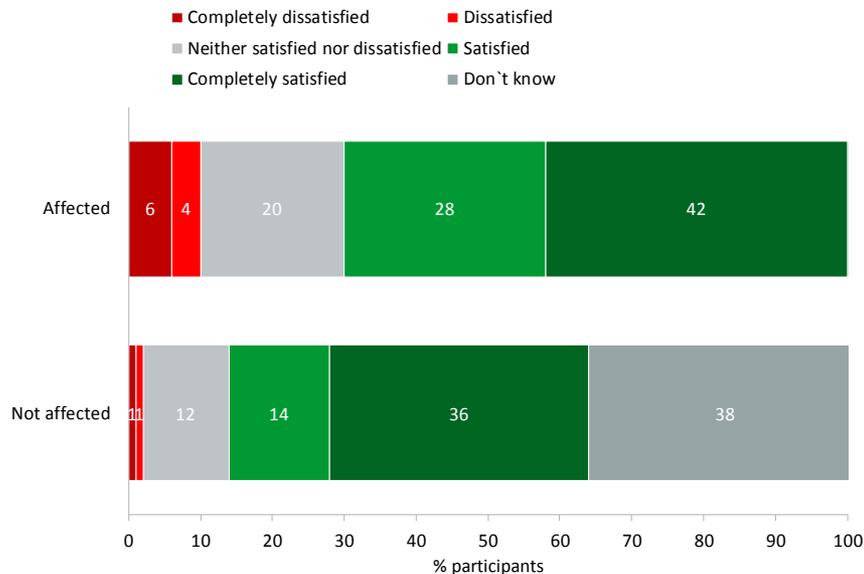
- Among those who suffered both loss of water and discoloured or milky water, eight out of ten saw this **after** their loss of water
- With reduced water pressure, this was slightly more likely to happen **before** the loss of water (38%) but one in five experienced it **after** and one in four both **before and after**

Qpi4/4a: Did you experience reduced water pressure/discoloured water before or after the complete loss of water or both?

Base: Experienced discoloured water (69); Experienced reduced water pressure (69)

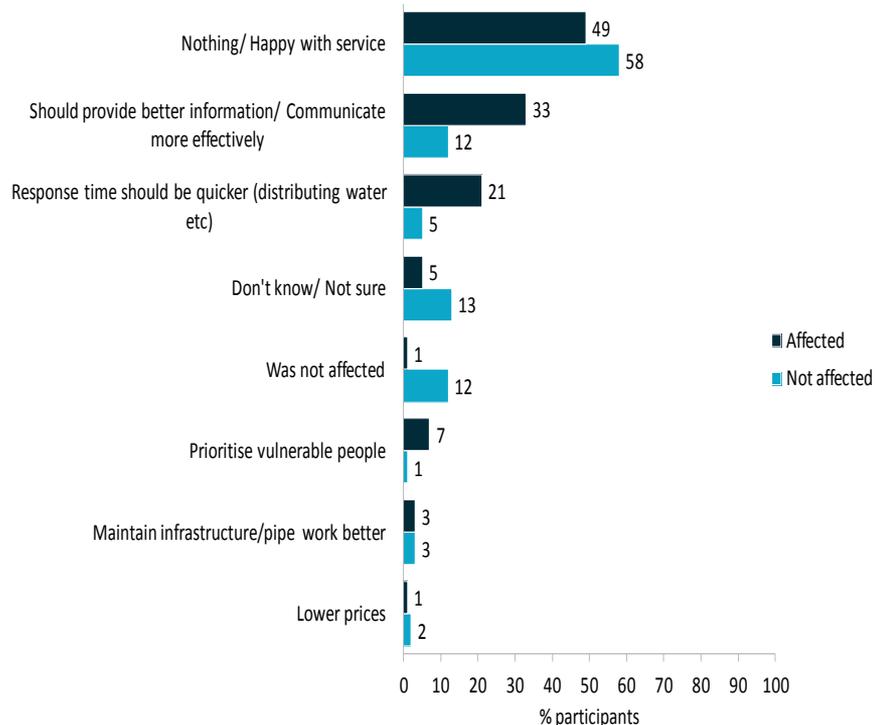
How Welsh Water dealt with the incident

7 in 10 of those affected were satisfied with how Welsh Water dealt with the bad weather incident



- One in ten of those affected were dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied with how it was handled
- 48% of over 65 year olds were very satisfied with how the incident was dealt with

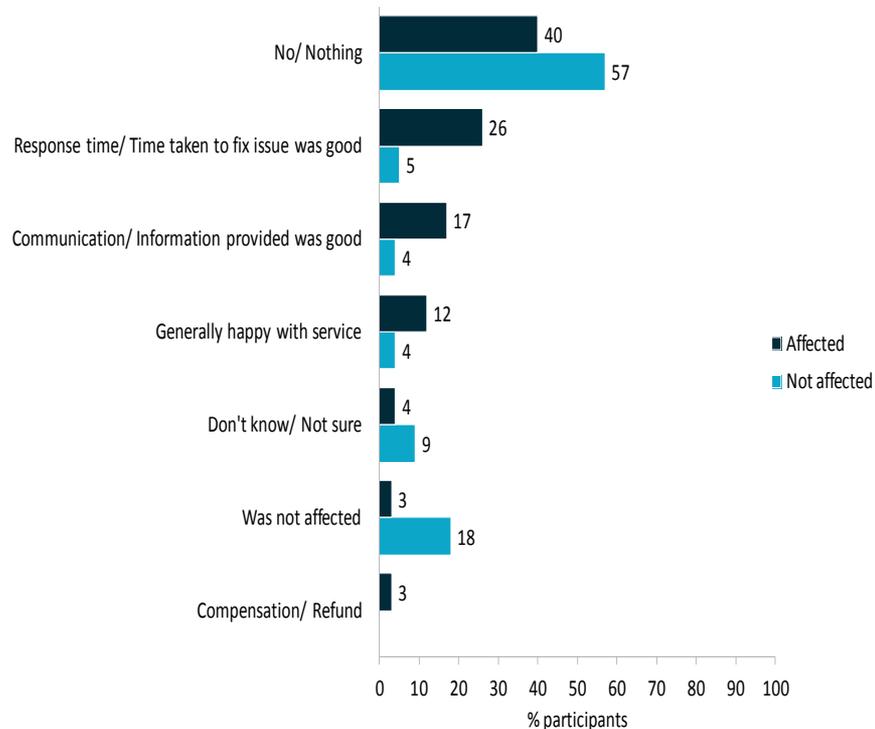
Most can't suggest improvements for future incidents but better information/communication is key



- Those who were affected for 24 hours or more were significantly less likely than those affected for a shorter time to say that they were happy with the service
- These customers were in fact more likely to say that Welsh Water should provide better information or communicate more effectively (42%)
- And it was even more pronounced where they were without water for more than 24 hours (53% suggested better information or more communication)

Qpi20: Is there anything which you think Welsh Water could do better if there was an incident like this again in the future? Base: those affected (200); those not affected (200)

One in four of those affected said that Welsh Water's response time was good



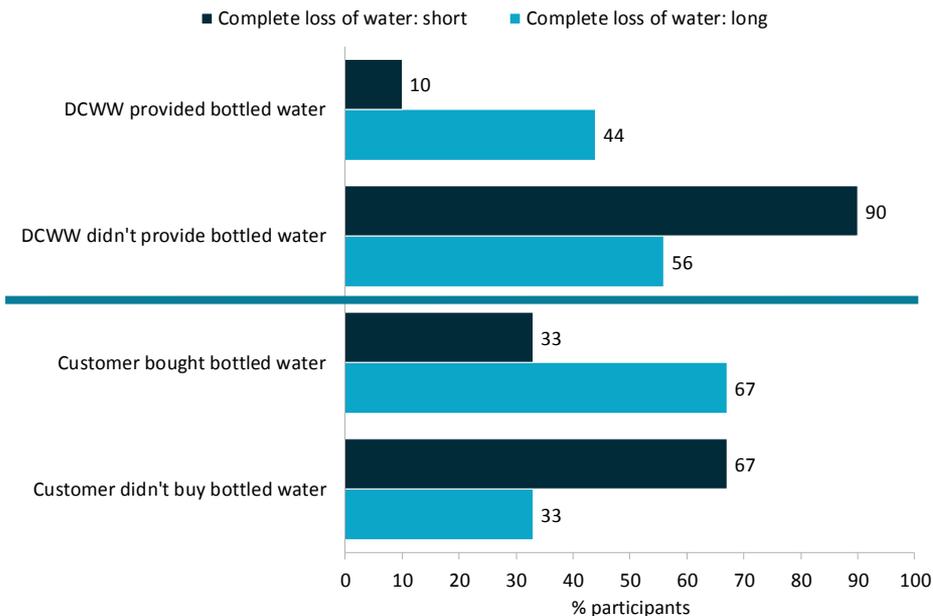
- Four in ten of those affected did not think Welsh Water did anything particularly well with regard to the incident
- 17% of those affected said that the communication or information provided was good



Qpi21: And is there anything which you felt they did particularly well? Base: those affected (200); those not affected (200)

Actions taken and cost

Just under half of those with a 24+hour loss of water were provided with water by Welsh Water. Two-thirds of them bought water

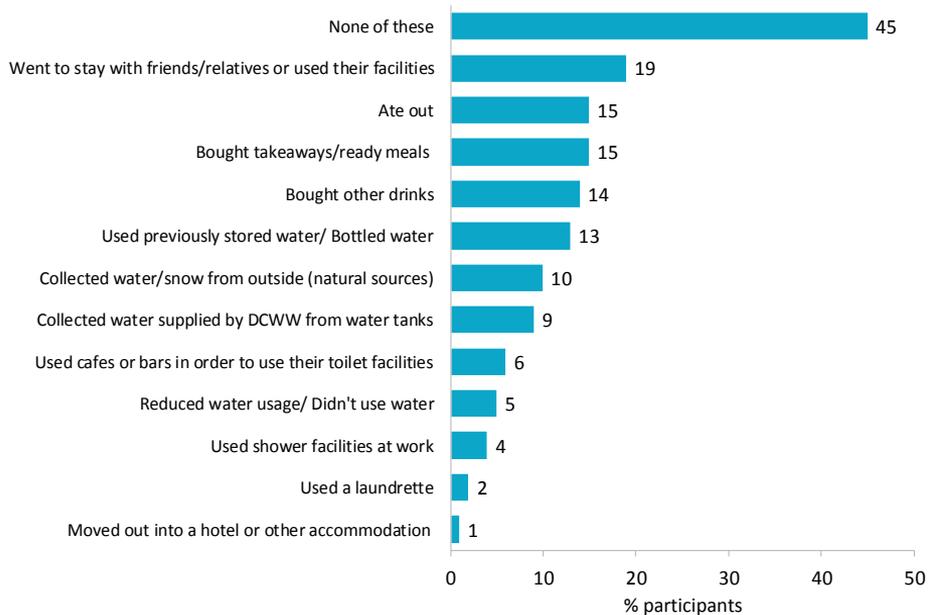


- 27% of those who suffered complete loss of water were provided bottled water by Welsh Water
 - 44% where it was a loss >24 hours
 - 10% where it was a loss <24 hours
- Mean amount of water bought by customers who did so was 11 litres (median 9 litres)

Qpi5: While you were without water, did Welsh Water provide you with any bottled water? Qpi6: While you were without water did you buy any bottled water?

Base: Those with complete loss of water (124)

Just under half of those with complete water loss did nothing other than buy bottled water

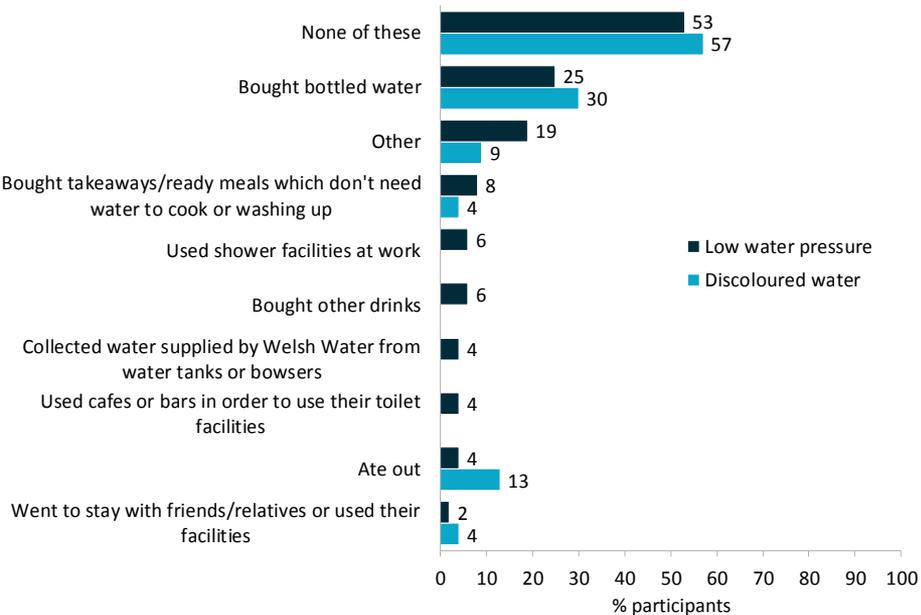


- 21% of those with 24hr+ loss did nothing; 71% of those with <24 hour loss did nothing
- One in five went to stay with friends or relatives
 - This was significantly more likely where the customer had a disability or increased reliance on water (30% compared to 14% among those who had no disability)
- Those aged under 65 much more likely to have bought takeaways or other drinks than those 65 or older



Customers were most likely to spend £10 or less on these other actions but the mean amount spent was £31

Just over half of those affected (but didn't have total loss of water) did not take any actions



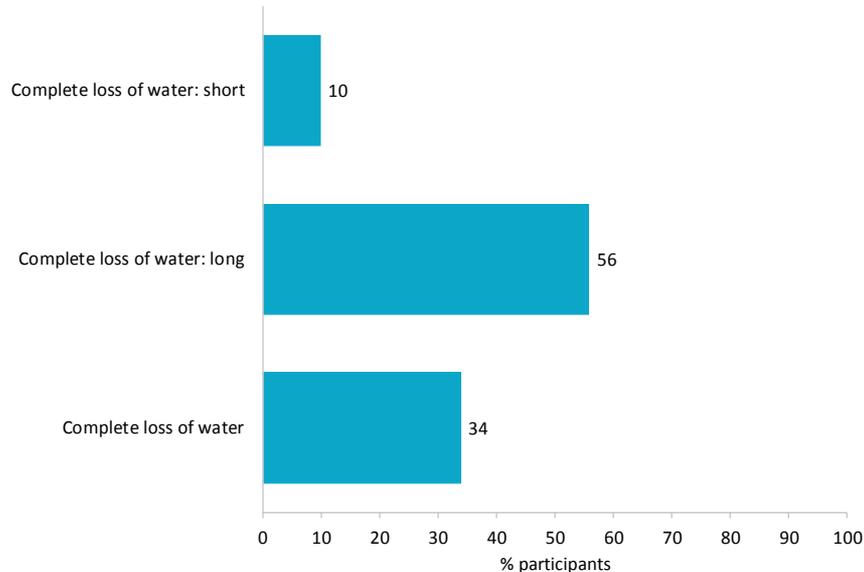
- One in four of those with low pressure and 30% of those with discoloured water bought bottled water



Customers who had low water pressure but without total loss of water spent an average of £12

Customers who had discoloured water but without either low water pressure or total loss of water spent an average of £11.50 (low base)

A third of those affected received some compensation



- 38 out of 41 people (98%) said they received £75 in compensation
- Two of the people who received £75 did not think it was appropriate and one person didn't know. The other 39 (93%) said it was an appropriate amount



Qpi16: Did you receive any compensation from Welsh Water as a result of your loss of water? Base: those with complete loss of water (124)

Qpi17: How much did you receive? Base: those who received compensation (41)

Qpi18: And do you feel that amount was appropriate or not? Base: those who received compensation (41)

Revealed Preference data

	No of households	Sample base	% that bought water	no of litres bought	Spend on water £(ii) (iv)	% that did other activities (iii)	average spend on other activities (iv)	total spend	Total spend per hh
Complete loss of water	29,416	124	51%	11	3.3	29%	£31	£313,957	£10.67
Low water pressure(i)	3,275	53				23%	£12.30	£9,265	£2.83
Unaffected	1,436,080	200	0	0	0	0	0	0 0	
								£323,222	£0.23

Therefore overall impact on customers was £323k (23p per household overall, £10.67 per household affected by loss of water)

Notes

- (i) As DCWW's low water pressure figure may double count (ie also have loss of water), we have only used those in our sample who had low water pressure but not complete loss
- (ii) 30p per litre is an amount used in similar work for other water companies
- (iii) For the low water pressure sample, 'other activities' included buying bottled water
- (iv) Average spend used is the mean based on those able to give an amount

Communications

Just over one in five of those affected made contact with Welsh Water

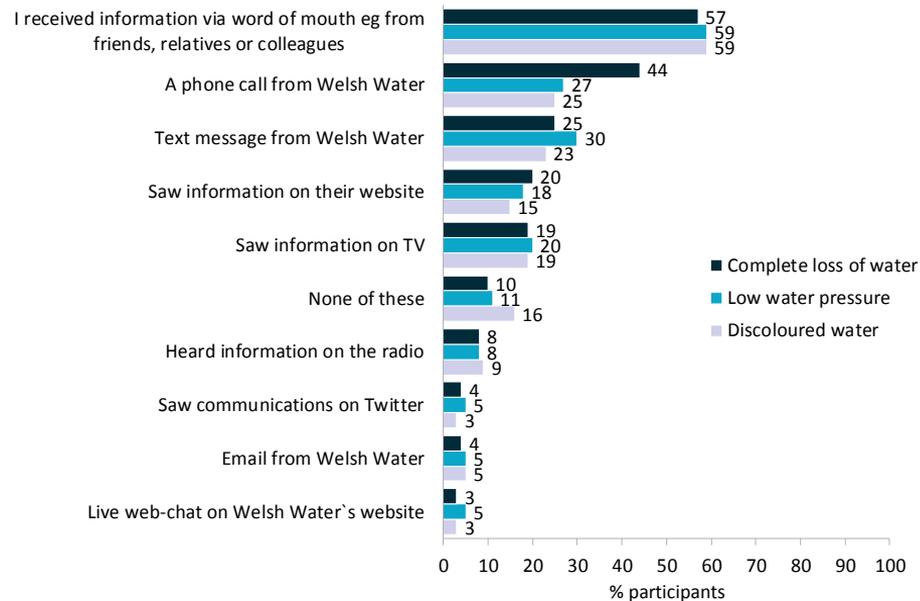
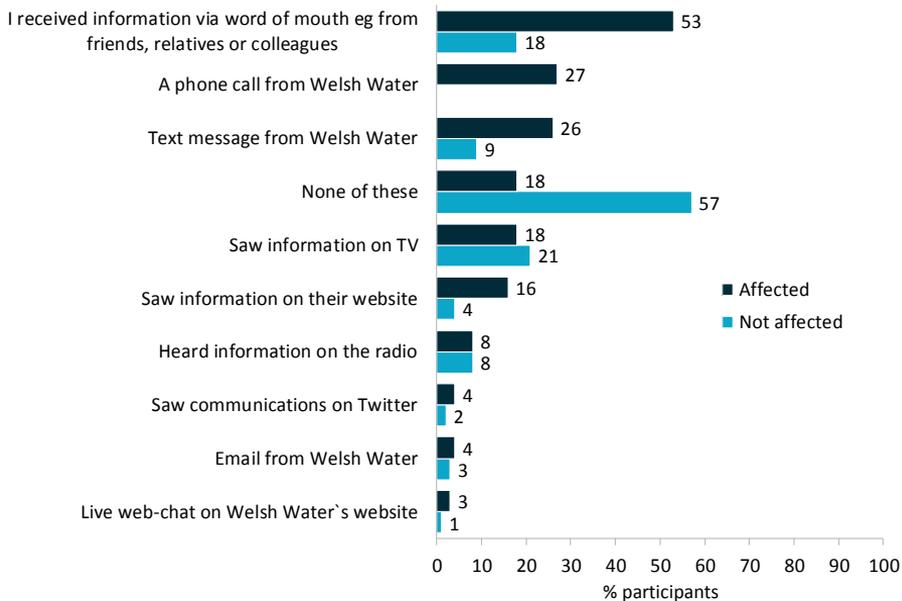
- 27% those affected by the incident made contact with Welsh Water
 - 34% of those with complete loss of water
 - 47% of those with a loss of water >24 hours
- Those with a disability/increased reliance on water significantly more likely to have contacted (20% compared to 11% of those without increased reliance)
- Of those who made contact 98% did so by phone, 2% by email and 2% used both methods



Qpi14c: And did you contact Welsh Water during the bad weather caused by Storm Emma? Base: all participants (400)

Qpi14d: How did you contact Welsh Water? Base: those who contacted during the bad weather (53)

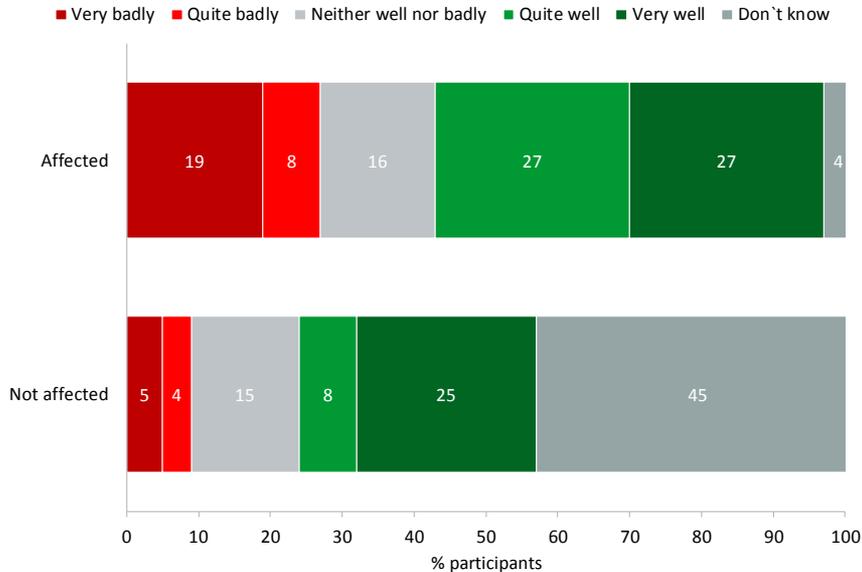
Word of mouth was the most common form of communication about water supply problems



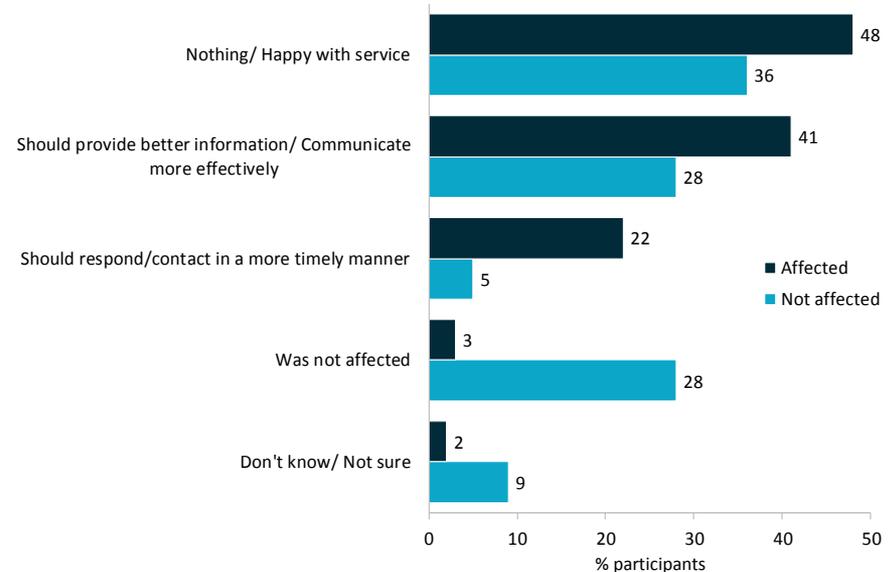
44% of those with a complete loss of water received a call from Welsh Water. 18% of those affected said they saw or heard none of these communications

Those with a disability or increased reliance on water significantly more likely to see information on the website or to use the live webchat

Just over half of those affected felt that Welsh Water communicated well. However, one in five said very badly

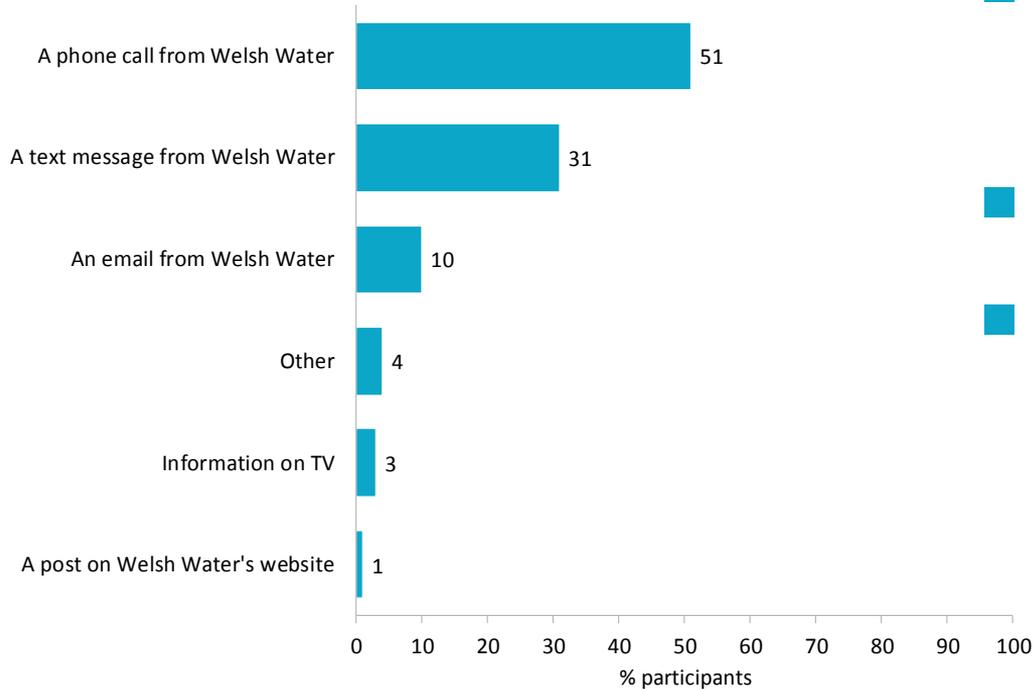


How could Welsh Water have communicated better?



Over 65s are most likely to say that Welsh Water communicated very well (37%)

Around half would prefer a call from Welsh Water in the event of a future incident

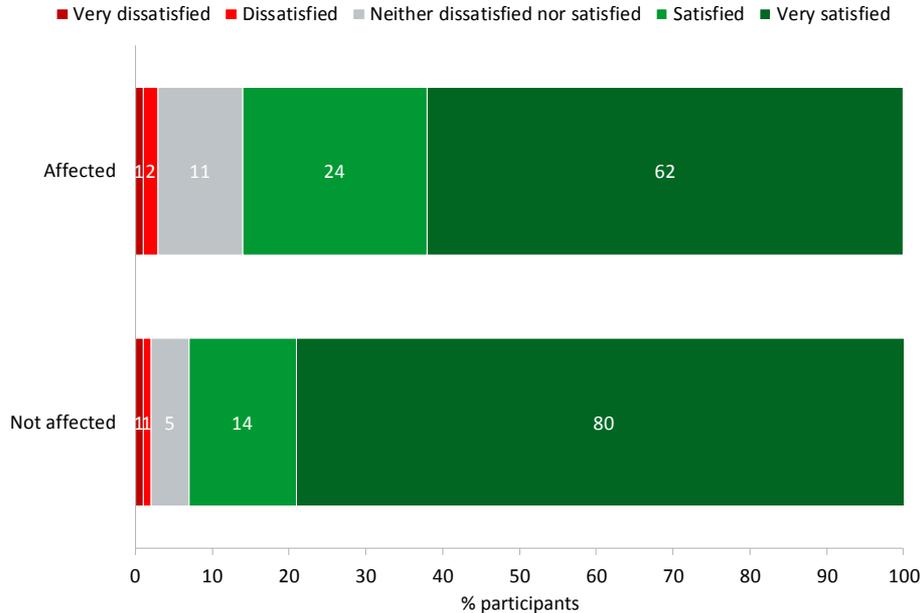


- Low income households, DEs and over 65s are significantly more likely than other groups to say they would want a phone call
- Under 65s prefer a text message over a phone call
- ABs are much more likely than other groups to choose an email (18% do so)



Impact on Reputation

Overall satisfaction with Welsh Water is high but impacted by the incident

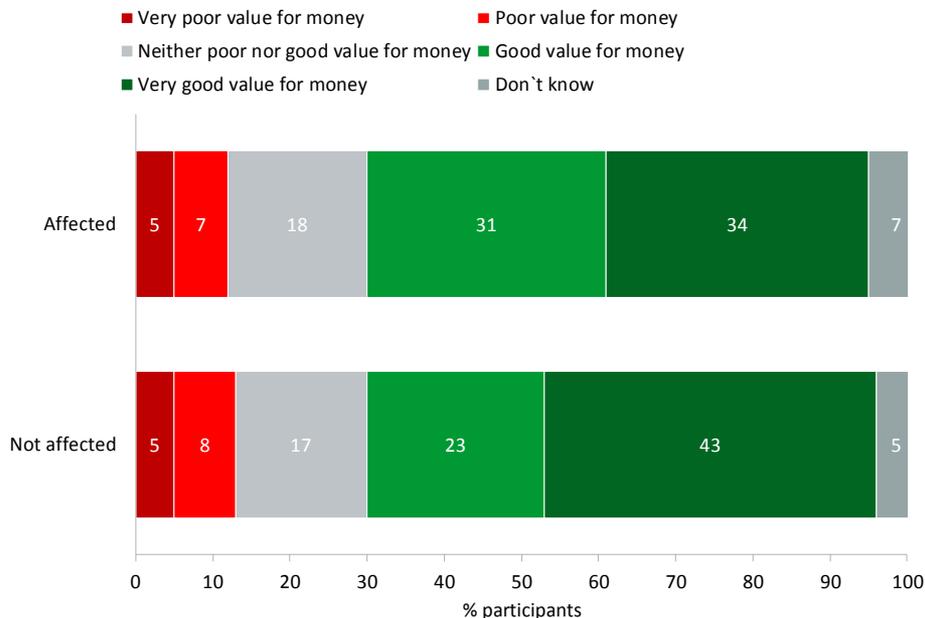


- Customers who were not affected were significantly more likely to say that they were very satisfied than those who were affected
- However levels of dissatisfaction were very low for both groups
- Overall satisfaction increased with age: 78% of those aged 65 or over said that they were very satisfied compared to 66% of under 65s

Q11: Overall, how satisfied are you with your water supply service from Welsh Water using a scale or 1 to 5 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?

Base: Affected (200); Not affected (200)

Value for money is not impacted by the bad weather incident



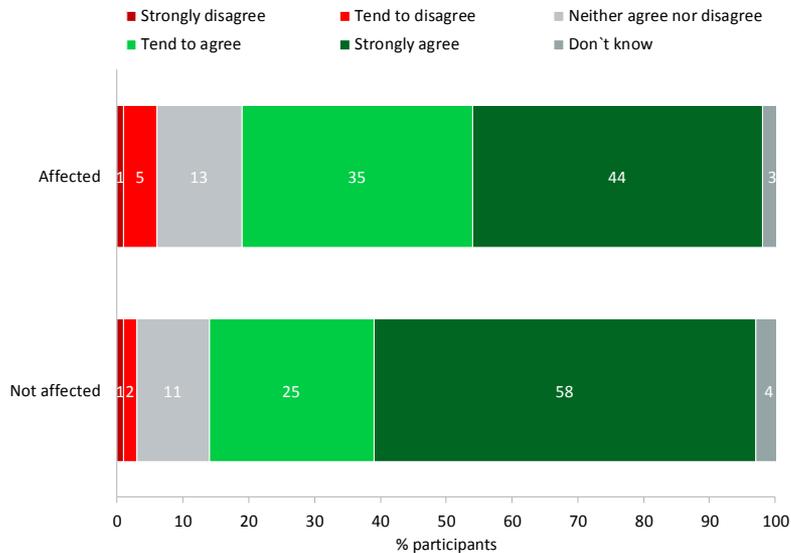
- While slightly more of those not affected than those affected say that the service they receive offers **very good** value for money, the difference is not significant
- Lower income households (<£15k pa) are especially likely to rate as **very good** value for money (47%)
- So too are over 65 year olds (45% say **very good** value for money)

Q12: How do you rate the service you receive from Welsh Water in terms of value for money?

Base: Affected (200); Not affected (200)

Levels of trust with Welsh Water remain high even among those affected by the bad weather incident

- There were no significant differences between this measure with customers across the board trusting Welsh Water to do the right thing

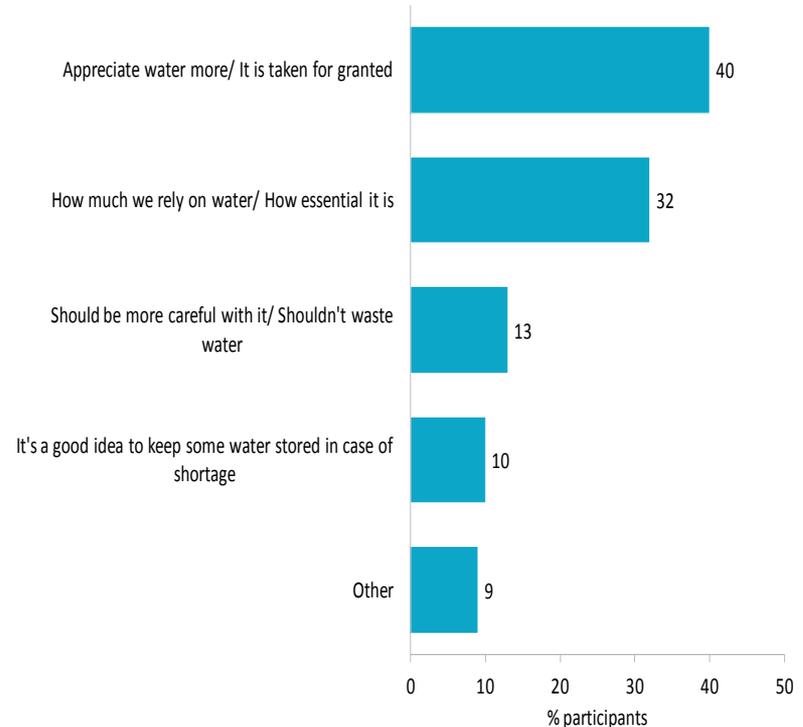


Qpi21a: On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that you can trust Welsh Water to do the right thing?

Base: those affected (200); those not affected (200)

Three in ten of those affected now feel differently about water as a result of the incident

- 30% of those affected and 9% of those not affected say the experience has made them think or feel differently about water
- Those with a disability or increased reliance on water were significantly more likely to say they now thought differently about water than those without a disability (30% versus 16%)



Qpi22: has this experience made you think or feel differently about water? Base: those affected (200); those not affected (200)

Qpi23: In wat way do you feel differently about it? Base: those who now feel differently (77)

Conclusions

Conclusions

- Where customers were affected, they were likely to have had more than one issue but the problems were most likely to have lasted less than 24 hours
- However, one in four experienced problems for 48 hours or more
- Customers were broadly satisfied with how the incident was dealt with; one in ten were dissatisfied
- Just under half of those with a complete water loss for 24+ hours were given water by Welsh Water
- Most of those with a longer water loss bought bottled water but only around half took any other actions
- A third of those affected received compensation – mainly £75 which most felt was appropriate

Conclusions

- Revealed preference data suggests the average financial impact on a household with complete water loss was £10.67
- Just over one in four of those affected made contact with Welsh Water (generally by phone) and the same proportion received a call from Welsh Water. A phone call is most customers' preference
- Among those affected there is room for improvement in the communications; one in five said it was done very badly and better information or more effective communications are the most suggested improvement overall
- The incident seemingly impacted on overall satisfaction with Welsh Water (fewer of those affected being very satisfied)
- While there are small differences in the scores for value for money and trust between those affected and not affected, differences are not significant so no evidence of an impact on these measures

Accent

