

# State of the market 2018-19 case study

## Queen Mary University of London

Queen Mary University (QMUL) is one of the UK's leading research-focused higher education institutions. With around 25,000 students and an estimated annual water consumption of around 570,000m<sup>3</sup> across 39 supply points, they are one of the biggest University of London colleges.

### The challenge

Led by Glyn Lee and Richard Frost, QMUL's Energy & Sustainability Team sought improvements in meter reading and billing, among other things in order to streamline administrative handling of water services. In addition, it was thought that an improved understanding of consumption trends would allow significant water efficiency gains to be made. With QMUL setting ambitious targets for reducing their water consumption, they were keen to look beyond short term unit rate savings and encourage long term efficiency.

### The solution

Based on QMUL's specification, LASER – a specialist in utilities procurement for public sector bodies - built a mini-tender with a strong focus on water efficiency services. Following bids from four retailers, the winning bidder's offer included the following:

- Half hourly AMR metering for all supplies at no additional charge
- A retail price saving of ~£6,500 per annum
- A single monthly consolidated bill for the entire portfolio
- Provision of invoice data electronically for LASER to validate
- QMUL fresher's fair engagement, offering free water efficiency products for students
- Accredited training for QMUL staff in trade effluent matters
- Wholesale tariff optimisation aimed at correcting any errors in arrangements with the wholesale set up, with the potential to deliver further price saving.

## The results

Strong supplier engagement throughout the transfer process led to a seamless switch of water services retailer. Working closely with the meter reader ensured that all meters were read.

As a result, the initial billing run produced highly accurate invoices; and the electronic billing format used highlighted any incorrect billing or suspect consumption patterns. AMR meters are also being installed which should aid more rapid identification of any leaks (as illustrated in the graph below), where new real time data monitoring of a supply point allowed a 1,750 litre per hour leak there to be identified and fixed. The University have also identified a possible saving on sewerage charges from water not returned to the sewer which are yet to be quantified.

*“We should exceed our three-year water savings target in the first six months of the water contract and have the data to look in-depth for more potential savings. Water AMR has also revealed two supplies where we have operational concerns due to low water turnover in water tanks. It is unlikely we would have known about or identified these issues without water AMR and are delighted we included it in the water supply contract”*

Glyn Lee, Sustainability Energy Surveyor, Queen Mary University of London

