

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS

ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

November 2022

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2022 Ofwat published its [draft methodology for PR24](#) which sets out its thinking on bespoke performance commitments for PR24. In response to the draft methodology, we undertook an internal exercise to review our 32 existing bespoke performance commitments and concluded that many of them were unlikely to be considered appropriate by Ofwat at PR24. Our review left us with five bespoke performance commitments which had the potential to meet Ofwat's criteria:

- Repeat Sewer flooding
- Sewer blockages
- Visible leak repair time
- Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours
- Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours

We determined that we would only include these measures in our draft PR24 plan if our customers supported them. This report sets out the findings of the customer research we conducted between October and November 2022 to explore levels of support.

Ofwat's draft methodology states that any bespoke measure proposed must be supported by **compelling evidence** that it is in the interests of customers and the environment. The latest industry research we have on setting thresholds of acceptability is [CCW's 2013 PR14 research](#), which recommends a threshold of 70-75% which we have applied in the table below, summarising all results.

	Household customer support for continued monitoring (after seeing performance information)				Household customer support for financial incentives				Priority ranking			
	Online Survey (quantitative)	People Panels (qualitative)				Online Survey (quantitative)	People Panels (qualitative)				Online Survey (quantitative)	People Panels (qualitative)
	Combined NW and ESW results	NW (13)	E (14)	S (10)	YP (9)	Combined NW and ESW results	NW (13)	E (14)	S (10)	YP (9)	Combined NW and ESW results	Combined People Panel results
Repeat Sewer flooding	80% (1,016)	✓	✓	✓	✓	70% (962)	✓	✓	✓	✓	1st	1st
Sewer blockages	82% (994)	?	✓	?	✓	64% (946)	✗	?	✗	-	3rd	4th
Visible leak repair time	83% (943)	✓	✓	✓	✓	66% (894)	-	✓	✓	?	2nd	3rd
Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours	69% (975)	✗	✓	✗	✗	59% (921)	-	✓	✗	✗	5th	5th
Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours	75% (963)	?	✓	✓	✓	61% (914)	✗	✓	✓	✓	4th	2nd

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Results show that whilst customers support continued monitoring of the measures, they do not support financial incentives.

INTRODUCTION

Ofwat introduced bespoke performance commitments (PCs) to the water industry as part of the 2019 price review. The purpose of bespoke PCs was to provide companies with the opportunity to reflect their customers' preferences and develop innovative performance commitments to measure alongside common industry measures.

We developed our bespoke performance commitments in response to [Ofwat's PR19 methodology](#) and in-line with the preferences of our customers, or our own stretching ambitions. Executives summaries from our PR19 bespoke performance commitments research projects can be found [here](#).

We set 32 bespoke performance commitments at PR19 which related to Ofwat's different price controls – these are the prices Ofwat sets for services customers receive. The commitments were around vulnerability; the environment; resilience and the abstraction incentive mechanism (AIM). Since 2020 we have reported on our performance against these bespoke performance commitments as part of our [Annual Performance Reports](#).

In July 2022 Ofwat published its [draft methodology for PR24](#). Section 5.2.5 sets out Ofwat's thinking on bespoke performance commitments for PR24:

We consider that bespoke performance commitments may be appropriate where:

- 1) there are local circumstances that do not apply to most other companies and there is compelling evidence that a performance commitment is required to provide incentives to drive benefits for customers, communities and the environment; and
- 2) a company provides poor service on a common issue where other companies' performance is generally adequate and the risk of deterioration is low (such a performance commitment is likely to have underperformance payments only)

We will also consider other cases where a company has compelling evidence that there are company-specific circumstances which mean a bespoke performance commitment will lead to significant additional benefits for customers that are unlikely to be realised without it. These circumstances could result from responding to strategic steers on long-term outcomes and priorities from the collaborative approach in Wales.

As with common performance commitments, bespoke performance commitments should be suitable for financial incentives.

Based on our experience from previous reviews, we **expect at most two or three bespoke performance commitments per company at PR24**. Where possible, we propose to use standardised definitions and may require all other companies that don't have the performance commitment to report on these metrics so that we have comparable information across companies.

We propose that companies provide an **early submission for bespoke performance commitments**. This is to enable companies to take account of feedback on their draft definitions and include fully developed proposals for any bespoke performance commitments in their business plan submissions. We propose that **companies provide any proposed definitions for bespoke performance commitments in April 2023**. This should include compelling evidence of why a bespoke performance commitment is in the interests of customers and the environment. The definition of the performance commitment should be clear, unambiguous, complete and as concise as reasonably possible. Companies should demonstrate that the scope of the definition will help to provide appropriate incentives to deliver for customers, communities and/or the environment. We intend to provide feedback on draft bespoke

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performance commitment definitions in July 2023. Companies should take this into account in their business plan submissions. We do not propose to provide feedback on PCLs or ODI rates.

We undertook an internal exercise to review our 32 bespoke performance commitments, considering Ofwat's guidance, and concluded that many of them were unlikely to be considered appropriate by Ofwat. Our review left us with five bespoke performance commitments which had the potential to meet Ofwat's criteria:

- Repeat Sewer flooding: *The number of internal sewer flooding incidents in properties which have flooded internally more than once in the last five years.*
- Sewer blockages: *The total number of sewer blockages on the company's sewer network (including sewers transferred in 2011) in a reporting year.*
- Visible leak repair time: *The average number of calendar days that it takes to find and fix visible leaks reported to the company by customers or third parties.*
- Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours: *Percentage that the average time the water supply is interrupted is greater than one hour and less than three hours in the report year as a proportion of the baseline. This bespoke measure aligns with the common interruptions measure but is calculated for all interruptions above one hour and less than three hours.*
- Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours: *Total number of properties that experience an interruption of 12 hours (or more) in each year.*

We determined that we would only include these measures in our draft PR24 plan if our customers supported them. This report sets out the findings of the customer research we conducted to explore levels of support.

APPROACH

We took two approaches to this research: online surveys and discussions at our monthly people panels:

Online survey

We designed and hosted an online survey in-house, which customers from our customer database, who had agreed to be contacted for marketing purposes, were randomly selected and emailed an invite to take part in.

The surveys introduced the five bespoke performance commitments under consideration and asked participants to indicate whether each measure should be included in our 2025-30 plan based on their initial instinct, after seeing performance information and after the concept of rewards and penalties were introduced. Participants were encouraged to leave commentary to explain their responses.

Results from the online survey are the main focus of this report.

People Panels

In March 2022 we established five People Panels, which are independently chaired and managed by our expert research partner Explain. We've got four separate panels for household customers - Northumbrian, Essex, Suffolk, one for young people and one panel made up of Employees. The panels meet on a monthly basis to hear about and discuss a topic associated with our developing PR24 business plan. The panels ninth sessions took place in November 2022 and the topic was bespoke performance commitments.

Panel members were introduced to the concepts of performance measures and bespoke performance commitments and which, if any, bespoke performance commitments should be included in our PR24 business plan.

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This report focuses on the results of the **online survey**, summarising results from the People Panel sessions where appropriate. Explain’s full report on the People Panel sessions can be found in Appendix 1.

RESPONSES

Throughout this report the number of responses reported varies from section-to-section. This is due to respondents dropping out of the survey or skipping/choosing not to answer questions. Despite this we achieved a high sample size across the survey, which gives us confidence that all results reflect those of the overall populations we serve.

	Number of customers emailed an invite to take part	Number answering the first quantitative question of the <u>first</u> section ¹	Number answering the first quantitative question of the <u>final</u> section ²
 NORTHUMBRIAN WATER <i>living water</i>	36,718	1,112 (3.0% response rate)	921 (17% drop out rate)
 ESSEX & SUFFOLK WATER <i>living water</i>	36,461	996 (2.7% response rate)	817 (18% drop out rate)

Both the NW and ESW surveys (see appendix 2) were designed to have six sections, one for overall acceptance of bespoke performance commitments and one for each bespoke measure. The five sections on each bespoke measure comprised of three iterative questions covering general inclusion of the measure, views after seeing our performance and views after the concept of rewards and penalties were introduced. For example:

Q1. Do you think [NW/ESW] should **include** repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30?

[Participant shown performance graph]

Q2. Based on **performance**, do you think [NW/ESW] should include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30?

Q3. Do you think [NW/ESW] should be able to **earn a reward** for good performance or **pay a penalty** for poor performance in relation to the repeat sewer flooding bespoke performance measure during 2025-30?

During analysis we noted a consistent drop-off in responses for questions Q2 and Q3 relating to performance and incentives across all sections. Overall dropout rates for NW and ESW are shown in the table below:

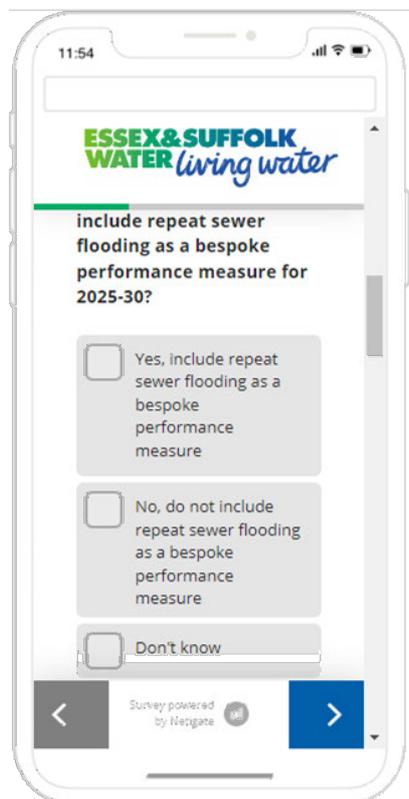
¹ Q1 Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex Suffolk Water should include bespoke performance commitments in our 2025-30 review?

² Q16 Do you think NW / ESW should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours bespoke performance measure during 2025-30?

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Table 1: Overall drop-off in responses from Q1 to Q2 and Q3 in each section

	Repeat Sewer flooding	Sewer blockages	Visible leak repair time	Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours	Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours
Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	2,108	1,906	1,838	1,798	1,738
Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	1,016 (-52%)	994 (-48%)	943 (-49%)	975 (-46%)	963 (-45%)
Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	962 (-5%)	946 (-5%)	894 (-5%)	921 (-6%)	914 (-5%)



We have reviewed the survey design and think the best explanation for the drop in response between Q1 and Q2 is due to how the survey appeared on screens, particularly for participants who completed the survey on a mobile device (66% NW, 59% ESW), as opposed to a desktop (34% NW, 41% ESW). On a mobile screen the participant could see the first question in each section and the blue arrow to move to the next section. As the survey had a prize draw incentive we could not make any questions mandatory, meaning there was no prompt to complete all questions in a section before moving on. This is in line with the [Market Research Society's Regulations for Administering Incentives and Free Prize Draws](#) which states;

Participants must not be required to do anything other than to provide contact details to be eligible for entry to a free prize draw (e.g. participants who fail to complete an activity linked to entry into a free prize draw (e.g. completion of a questionnaire) must not be disqualified from entering the prize draw and are eligible to win)

As such some participants may have completed the first question in each section and clicked the bottom right-hand blue arrow to continue without realising there were further questions to answer.

We have calculated what this means for interpretation of the results:

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Table 2: Margin of error (MoE) based on 1,940,098³ properties served and a 95% confidence level

	Repeat Sewer flooding	Sewer blockages	Visible leak repair time	Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours	Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours
Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	2,108 (2% MoE)	1,906 (2% MoE)	1,838 (2% MoE)	1,798 (2% MoE)	1,738 (2% MoE)
Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	1,016 (3% MoE)	994 (3% MoE)	943 (3% MoE)	975 (3% MoE)	963 (3% MoE)
Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	962 (3% MoE)	946 (3% MoE)	894 (3% MoE)	921 (3% MoE)	914 (3% MoE)

The increased margin of error for the second and third question will be acknowledged and accounted for in the results section of this report.

³ Figure provided by Liz Wright and Katherine Fuller from Edge Analytics growth data.

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ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

This section sets out acceptance scores for bespoke performance commitments in general and each of the five potential bespoke performance commitments we tested with customers. To enable us to interpret the results fairly and transparently we felt it was appropriate to set an acceptability threshold which each measure would have to reach to be included in our PR24 plan.

Ofwat's draft methodology states that any bespoke measure proposed must be accompanied by **compelling evidence** that it is in the interests of customers and the environment. The latest industry research we have on setting thresholds of acceptability is [CCW's 2013 PR14 research](#), which recommends a threshold of 70-75% as this is *"significantly higher than 50% but also allows room for those customers who are unlikely to accept any plan which may be presented."*

On this basis we have set a threshold of 70% support for any bespoke measure to be considered for inclusion in our PR24 plan.

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Summary tables of all results

 ALL SCORES		Yes	No	Don't Know
Overall	Yes, NW / ESW should include bespoke performance commitments in its 2025-30 review	62%	8%	31%
Repeat sewer flooding	Response before seeing performance information	78%	8%	14%
	Response after seeing performance information	80%	36%	13%
	Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	69%	17%	13%
Sewer blockages	Response before seeing performance information	80%	8%	12%
	Response after seeing performance information	82%	7%	10%
	Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	63%	23%	14%
Visible leak repair time	Response before seeing performance information	85%	7%	7%
	Response after seeing performance information	83%	9%	8%
	Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	67%	21%	11%
Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours	Response before seeing performance information	69%	17%	14%
	Response after seeing performance information	69%	18%	13%
	Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	59%	27%	14%
Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours	Response before seeing performance information	76%	13%	10%
	Response after seeing performance information	75%	14%	10%
	Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	61%	26%	14%

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ALL 'YES' SCORES				
Overall	Yes, NW / ESW should include bespoke performance commitments in its 2025-30 review	63% (1,299)	64% (696)	61% (603)
Repeat sewer flooding	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	79% (1,561)	80% (828)	77% (733)
	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	81% (813)	82% (436)	79% (377)
	Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	70% (668)	68% (350)	72% (318)
Sewer blockages	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	80% (1,524)	81% (813)	80% (711)
	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	83% (820)	82% (433)	84% (387)
	Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	64% (596)	64% (316)	64% (280)
Visible leak repair time	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	85% (1,565)	84% (808)	84% (757)
	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	83% (782)	82% (424)	84% (358)
	Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	66% (582)	68% (313)	68% (269)
Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	69% (1,241)	71% (675)	67% (566)
	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	69% (671)	70% (376)	68% (295)
	Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	59% (542)	61% (306)	58% (236)
Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)	77% (1,325)	77% (703)	77% (622)
	Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)	76% (727)	77% (401)	75% (326)
	Yes, rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	61% (553)	63% (310)	59% (243)

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Inclusion of bespoke performance commitments

The survey began by introducing participants to the concepts of common and bespoke performance commitments:

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER *living water*

Ofwat has said that all water and wastewater companies must include some common performance measures in their business plan for 2025-30. Each company will have to measure and report on their performance against each of the common performance measures. This will mean that companies' performance can be compared across the industry. The proposed common performance measures include:

-  **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE** – how customers and business' rate their experience of a company
-  **WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS** - the average length of time a property is without water
-  **WATER QUALITY** – the number of customer contacts about taste, smell and appearance of tap water
-  **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SEWER FLOODING** – the number of incidents of flooding to properties from sewers
-  **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES** – this includes reducing greenhouse gas, improving the environment's biodiversity, reducing the volume of water used by customers, water through leakage, pollutions, treatment works compliance, storm overflows, and river and bathing water quality
-  **HEALTH OF OUR ASSETS** - this includes the number of water mains that burst and sewers that collapse, and the levels of unplanned outages at water treatment works

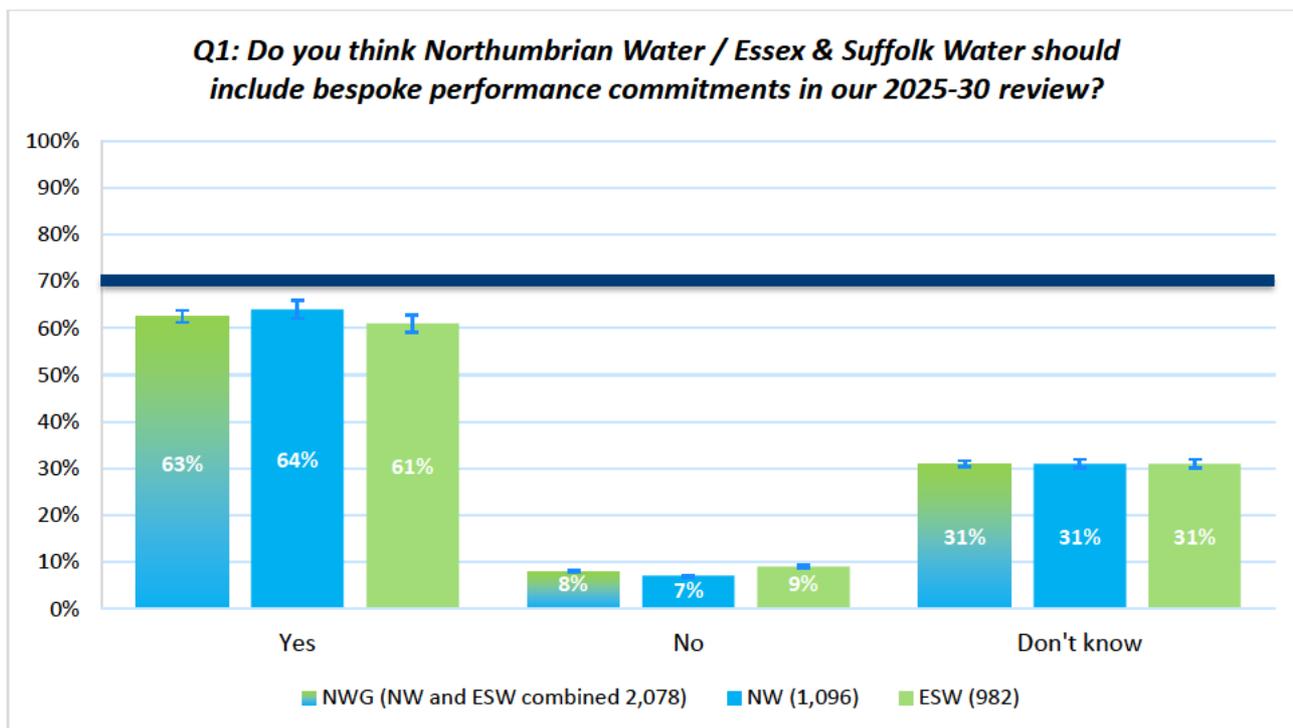
As well as the common performance measures, companies could include some bespoke, or customised, performance measures. These would be performance measures that customers want companies to measure within their plans.

It is very important to Northumbrian Water that any bespoke performance measures included in our business plan 2025-30 are wanted and supported by our customers. This is why we are carrying out this research to understand your views and preferences.

BACK Survey powered by Netigate NEXT PAGE

After reading this information participants were asked if bespoke performance commitments should be included in the 2025-30 review. As the graph below shows the inclusion of bespoke performance commitments did not meet our 70% threshold of acceptability for either NW or ESW.

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On the basis of these results, we do not have sufficient customer support to include bespoke performance commitments in our PR24 business plan. Note, this was before individual measures were presented to participants.

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the response they had given. The remainder of this section sets out our analysis of the comments received supporting the quantitative scores.

'Yes' responses

The graph above shows that 63% of participants (1,299) felt that bespoke performance commitments should be included in our PR24 business plan. 70% (907 NWG / 490 NW / 417 ESW) of participants who responded 'yes' commented to explain their response.

The table below sets out our coding of 'yes' comments stated by 5% or more participants.

Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
Bespoke performance commitments are important as they bring a local focus - covering things which are unique to the areas and populations served.	177	20%	<p><i>"Common performance measures are a good gauge of national statistics, but bespoke performance commitments will allow customers to examine the data more specific to the areas in which they live and give a better indication of local versus national criteria"</i> (NW)</p> <p><i>"They should be bespoke as different areas can have different issues. One size fits all rarely work"</i> (ESW)</p>
It is important for NW/ESW to demonstrate accountability and transparency by publishing performance information.	159	18%	<p><i>"All public service companies should have regular performance and quality checking. it is important to communicate expenditure and how money is spent. it allows customers to understand performance and where their money is being spent"</i> (ESW)</p>

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Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
			<i>"It's important that ALL utilities are fully accountable and that performance is closely monitored. Especially so when the provider is THE sole provider. Accountability prevents organisations hiding behind poor service." (NW)</i>
Bespoke performance commitments should focus on a specific issue. Suggestions made by participants included the environment, reducing spills from storm overflows, improving river and coastal water quality, reducing leakage and improving water quality	141	16%	<i>"There needs to be included leak measuring, pollution measuring and asset measuring and reporting specifically so that customers can see the company working to conserve the assets, fix the leaks and improve their pollution control" (ESW)</i> <i>"Measures should include water pollution details, e.g. sewage discharge into waterways or out to sea." (NW)</i>
Bespoke performance commitments will encourage continuous service improvement	79	9%	<i>"There's always a need for continuous improvements and it is sensible to include bespoke performance measures in future plans as a means to achieve higher standards." (NW)</i> <i>"Because it should always be striving for continuous improvement, looking for ways of enhancing service to residents and delivering value for money." (ESW)</i>
Including bespoke performance commitments in our plan will demonstrate that we're listening to customers and doing what's best for them	58	6%	<i>"Bespoke performance commitments which have been agreed by your customers would better address performance to your actual customers' expectations" (NW)</i> <i>"As a customer I'd like to be listened to and have my feedback of the service provided taken into account for future changes." (ESW)</i>
Measuring all aspects of our performance is important – so that we can provide a complete picture of how we are doing	56	6%	<i>"Provided that bespoke performance commitments are reasonable and relevant, they can help to give a more complete picture of performance" (NW)</i> <i>"E&S should monitor all aspects of their business." (ESW)</i>
General - it's important / a good idea	44	5%	<i>"It seems like a good idea to show what you're doing in specific areas" (NW)</i> <i>"Would look much better than not to" (ESW)</i>

Other comments, provided by lower numbers of participants, suggested that including bespoke performance commitments in our PR24 business plan would push us beyond the minimum regulatory expectations, encourage us to be the best in industry, support planning for the future and help us to gain the trust and confidence of customers.

'No responses'

The graph above shows that 8% of participants (163) felt that bespoke performance commitments should not be included in our PR24 business plan. 78% (127 NWG / 59 NW / 68 ESW) of participants who responded 'no' left a comment to explain their response.

The table below sets out our coding of 'no' comments stated by 5% or more participants.

Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
Just do the minimum required by government - common measures are sufficient	36	29%	<i>"Looking at the common measures, they seem to cover everything. I don't think Essex & Suffolk Water has anything out of the ordinary to track" (ESW)</i> <i>"The common measures seem very comprehensive" (NW)</i>

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Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
We should focus on the basics before introducing other targets to chase - bespoke performance commitments are not a priority	19	15%	<i>"There is a lot to do. Water companies must increase the pace of improvement in order to hit common performance targets in reducing leakage and improving water quality. Bespoke performance measures could detract from the most important issues for customers."</i> (NW) <i>"Need to concentrate on fundamentals"</i> (ESW)
Concern that bespoke performance commitments would take extra time / resource to monitor which in turn would increase customers' bills	18	14%	<i>"It sounds like a costly exercise that will probably be passed on to the customer"</i> (ESW) <i>"I'm worried it will mean an increase in bills"</i> (NW)
Bespoke performance commitments won't be comparable across the industry	16	13%	<i>"It will make it more difficult to compare water companies if they use different performance measures."</i> (ESW) <i>"I believe all Water companies should be measured by the same KPI's so there is a consistency of understanding"</i> (NW)
A cynical view that we will only include them if it works in our favour (i.e. to earn a reward or make us look good)	8	6%	<i>"NWG will seize the opportunity to set and achieve targets that lead to price increases on customer bills rather than reinvesting profits into the business for public good."</i> (NW) <i>"Being cynical they will only be included if they show the company in a positive light"</i> (ESW)

Other comments, provided by lower numbers of participants, suggested that we're performing well and as such there is no need for bespoke performance commitments and that this is a decision for us, not customers, to make.

'Don't know' responses

The graph shows a significant minority of participants (646, 31%) selected 'don't know'. 46% (303 NWG /150 NW/152 ESW) of these participants commented to explain their response.

Three common reasons given by participants were that they felt unable to respond 'yes' or 'no' to the question without more information (11%), understanding more about what bespoke performance commitments are (16%) or knowing which bespoke performance commitments we are proposing (14%). Together these calls for more information total 41% of the 'don't know' comments.

The table below sets out our coding of the 'don't know' comments which accounted for a 5% or more share of responses.

Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
Don't know/unsure	66	22%	<i>"Because I don't know"</i> (ESW) <i>"Just not sure"</i> (NW)
Don't know what a bespoke measure is - need an example or definition	47	16%	<i>"Not too sure what bespoke performance commitments means."</i> (NW) <i>"I have no idea what bespoke performance commitments are"</i> (ESW)
Depends on which bespoke performance commitments we're proposing	41	14%	<i>"It would depend on what the bespoke performance commitments would be, how success would be measured and whether they would be realistic and necessary"</i> (NW) <i>"Since I don't know what bespoke performance commitments you are considering I can't decide"</i> (ESW)

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Coding	No.	%	Illustrative comments
Don't understand the question	36	12%	<i>"Don't really understand the question" (NW)</i> <i>"No idea what the question means" (ESW)</i>
Need more information to be able to make a decision	33	11%	<i>"I don't know enough about it to make a fair decision" (NW)</i> <i>"I haven't got enough information to make an informed opinion" (ESW)</i>
Unclear what the value/benefits of bespoke performance commitments are	14	5%	<i>"I'm not sure how these will benefit either the consumer or company" (ESW)</i> <i>"Not really sure whether it would make a difference" (NW)</i>

Smaller numbers (13% total) that selected 'don't know' gave other reasons including; being unclear on the value of bespoke performance commitments, because they didn't care, the common measures seem comprehensive, they were concerned that introducing bespoke performance commitments would increase bills, they were satisfied with the services they received and so saw no need for bespoke performance commitments and that they were happy to leave the decision of whether or not to include bespoke performance commitments to the experts.

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Repeat sewer flooding

This section of the survey began by sharing the following information with participants:

Repeat Sewer Flooding

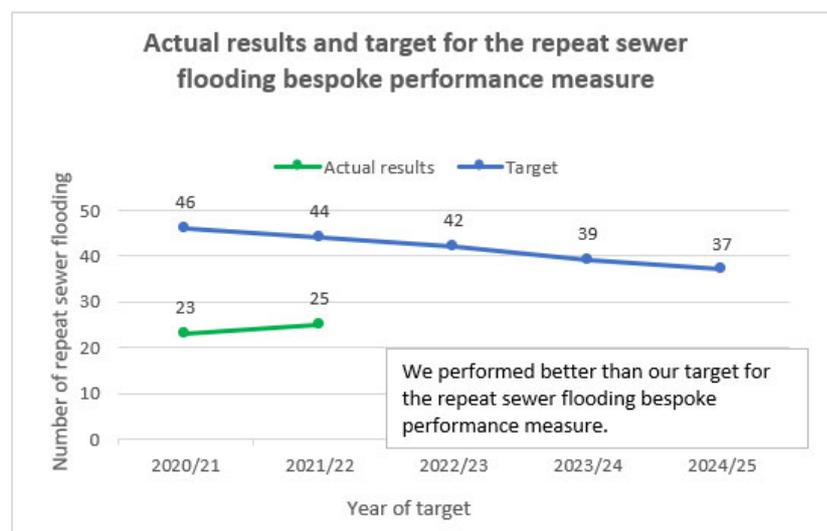
The number of internal sewer flooding incidents in properties which have flooded internally more than once in the last five years. Internal sewer flooding is where sewage from Northumbrian Water's sewers and drains escapes from the network and enters a customer's property.

Ofwat has proposed common performance measures for the number of internal and external sewer flooding incidents. External sewer flooding is where sewage from Northumbrian Water's sewers and drains escapes from the network and enters external areas of a customer's property, e.g. garden or yard.

This is a Northumbrian Water bespoke performance measure.

Participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. After they had answered this question, they were shown the following performance and target performance information:

Since 2020/21, Northumbrian Water has improved performance against this bespoke performance measure.



Northumbrian Water is better than the industry average for the common performance measure for internal sewer flooding.

Participants were then asked if based on performance they thought Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water should include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. Finally, participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the bespoke repeat sewer flooding performance measure during 2025-30.

Overall NWG results from the questions in this section are shown in the graph below.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

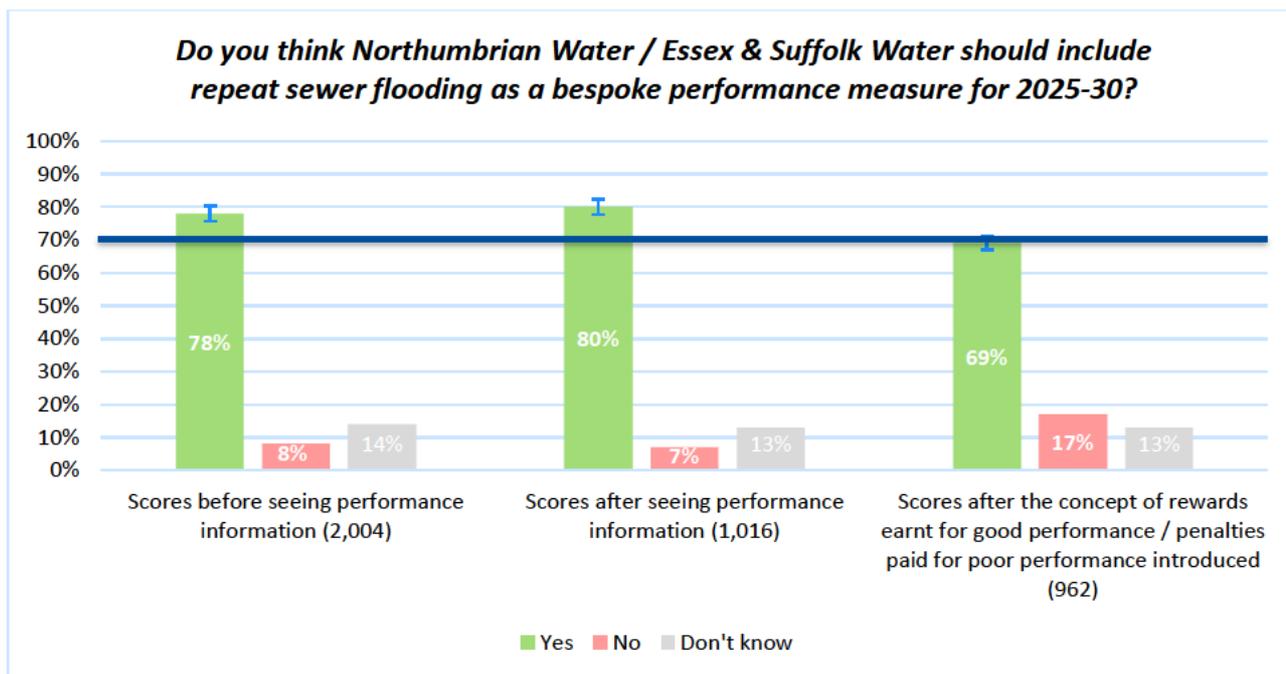


Table 3: Repeat sewer flooding – all scores

	Response before seeing performance information			Response after seeing performance information			Scores after the concept of rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance introduced		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
NWG	78%	8%	14%	80%	36%	13%	69%	17%	13%
NW	79%	7%	14%	81%	6%	12%	68%	18%	14%
ESW	76%	9%	15%	78%	8%	14%	71%	16%	13%

If a margin of error of 3% is applied to the overall NWG scores, after the concept of rewards and penalties is introduced, we have a lower bound score of 66% and an upper bound score of 72% (+2% over the threshold of acceptability).

On this basis it is possible that we have sufficient customer support to include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke measure in our PR24 business plan.

Summary of comments

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the responses they had given. 2,489 comments were received in this section in total.

The majority of customers who responded positively to the inclusion of repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke measure made comments about the importance of performance targets, transparency and environmental impact. 2,034 comments were received by these participants.

Customers who responded no to one or more question made comments on the topics of performance, Ofwat and importance. 257 comments were received by these participants.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Customers who responded 'don't know' to one or more questions made comments on the topic of a lack of knowledge or information, or other factors such as it not concerning their area (ESW customers). 198 comments were received by these participants.

The following table sets out the range of comments received for each question and response option (yes, no, don't know).

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Repeat sewer
flooding -
commentary

Yes

No

Don't know

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)</p>	<p>976 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>246 participants made comments on this measure being considered as a good performance indicator. <i>“it is important to determine the effectiveness of your work” (NW)</i> <i>“This seems essential to measure good service levels” (ESW)</i></p> <p>106 felt this information should be transparent to customers. <i>“This would help people who live in these areas to know if they are at risk of repeat flooding or if they more to the area” (NW)</i> <i>“I believe the more information a company can give on related incidents the more transparent and trustworthy a company may appear to be.” (ESW)</i></p> <p>81 participants felt this had an environmental impact. <i>“Our beaches and waters are threatened” (NW)</i></p> <p>42 felt NWG should take accountability for repeat sewer flooding. <i>“it is your responsibility to make sure the external sewage systems are kept well maintained and clear to prevent overflows into customers properties” (NW)</i></p>	<p>79 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was not relevant in their area.</p> <p>13 participants felt that our performance should be better so repeats are avoided. <i>“You should not have to repeat what you should have done in the first place if it was done properly just make sure it was done probably first time round” (NW)</i> <i>“Repeated flooding should never happen and would be resolved as soon as the initial flooding cause is solved” (ESW)</i></p> <p>11 ESW participants made comments on this not applying to their area. <i>“Didn't think Essex and Suffolk were responsible for sewerage” (ESW)</i> <i>“Essex and Suffolk Water don't deal with our sewage Anglian Water does” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Eight participants made comments regarding Ofwat. <i>“Proposed Ofwat measure sufficient” (ESW)</i> <i>“If Ofwat has proposed a common policy, why duplicate it?” (NW)</i></p>	<p>93 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was not relevant in their area.</p> <p>64 participants felt they needed more information or did not understand enough to make a decision. <i>“I don't know enough to make a decision” (NW)</i> <i>“It depends on how often this occurs. On a regular basis, record as measure. Infrequently, do not record as measure.” (NW)</i> <i>“Not sure the right answer” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Nine ESW participants made comments on this not applying to their area. <i>“Essex and Suffolk Water don't do wastewater management.” (ESW)</i> <i>“Sewage handled by Anglian water” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Two participants felt the question was confusing and lacked clarity. <i>“I think the wording of these questions are confusing and should be put in more simple wording” (ESW)</i></p>
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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)</p>	<p>579 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>The majority of participants (174) suggested that continuing to measure incidents of repeat sewer flooding will encourage us to maintain high standards, avoid complacency and meet our targets</p> <p><i>“It is an issue that needs to be monitored. It's good that NW levels are low, need to ensure it stays that way” (NW)</i></p> <p><i>“If you stop measuring it, how will you know you're still getting better?” (ESW)</i></p> <p>63 participants suggested that keep this bespoke measure is important for accountability, transparency and for building trust</p> <p><i>“Regardless of past/present performance, the general public need reassuring.” (NW)</i></p> <p><i>“Unless this is reported on neither Essex and Suffolk Water nor the public will know if this is an issue or not” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Others stressed how important it is to prevent (repeat) sewer flooding (56), the measure could help us to identify issues in the network and assess how effective remedial work had been after a first instance of flooding (20).</p> <p>Smaller numbers of participants suggested that as the measure is already in place we should keep it (16) and that it will enable us to promote our good performance (11).</p>	<p>48 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. Seven participants suggested that as our performance is good (above industry average) it was not important to continue measuring repeat sewer flooding</p> <p><i>“If it is exceeding targets then no need to include” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Six participants suggested that there are more important things to measure than repeat sewer flooding</p> <p><i>“Hardly worth it - what about the climate challenge with flash flooding/drought management which is our challenge now.” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Four participants felt that repeat sewer flooding should be a common/comparable measure</p> <p><i>“It should be included as a base measure not just bespoke” (NW)</i></p> <p>Three participants suggested that we would create unnecessary ‘admin’ by including this bespoke measure and that this would add costs or give us more statistics to ‘hide behind’</p> <p><i>“The more paperwork you include the more expensive water becomes ... just strive to do your best at all times” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Three participants commented that this was irrelevant to them as ESW customers.</p>	<p>43 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was not relevant in their area.</p> <p>Nine participants suggested they needed more information before they would be able to make a decision</p> <p><i>“Don't know enough about it.” (ESW)</i></p> <p><i>“Not knowledgeable enough” (NW)</i></p> <p>Eight participants commented that they didn't know, weren't sure or didn't care. A further eight ESW participants questioned why they were being asked, as ESW did not provide their wastewater services</p> <p><i>“Essex and Suffolk Water don't do wastewater management.” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Three comments related to our performance being above average and suggested that as such we may not need continue to measure repeat flooding</p> <p><i>“It appears that you are performing well in this area, so maybe it no longer needs to be a specific measure” (NW)</i></p> <p>Two participants expressed that they weren't able to form a view as they weren't experts in the field of wastewater management</p> <p><i>“I'm not a qualified water management engineer” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Two participants felt repeat sewer flooding wasn't an issue for them.</p>
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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Repeat sewer flooding - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance</p>	<p>479 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>266 participants felt that incentives would help motivate good performance. <i>"Keeps people motivated" (NW)</i> <i>"Reward and penalty attached to progress is an encouragement to improve and become more efficient" (ESW)</i></p> <p>79 participants felt that only penalties should be used. <i>"no reward for doing your job but pay a penalty for not doing it" (NW)</i> <i>"No reward for good performance because it should be EXPECTED but penalties for bad performance should be standard" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around customer satisfaction, accountability and fairness.</p>	<p>130 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>The majority of participants (71) felt that preventing (repeat) sewer flooding was part of our core responsibility and shouldn't be eligible for an incentive <i>"Work should be of a good standard at all times and not require reward or penalty. Certainly not a reward for doing work that is expected and already paid for by customers." (NW)</i> <i>"It is part of your job as a company to keep and manage/handle sewage properly. You shouldn't need extra financial incentive to ensure you are already doing your job properly" (ESW)</i></p> <p>29 participants commented that they would accept a penalty only incentive, i.e. they weren't in favour of rewards <i>"No, you shouldn't be rewarded for something you should be doing anyway, but a penalty for bad performance is fine." (NW)</i> <i>"I don't mind penalties; I do mind getting a reward for doing a job you're meant to do." (NW)</i></p> <p>Eight participants expressed concern that penalties would be passed to the customer.</p>	<p>62 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>15 comments suggested that penalties would be supported, but not rewards <i>"You should not get a reward for doing well it is already your job to do as best you can. You should be fined for poor performance" (NW)</i> <i>"You should not get rewarded for doing your job to a high standard. That is the reason for your existence! But absolutely you should be penalised for poor performance" (ESW)</i></p> <p>14 participants stated that they either didn't know or didn't have enough information to make a decision.</p> <p>Six participants suggested that their response would depend on who pays the penalty and who receives the reward <i>"Who pays the penalty? NW, or its customers?" (NW)</i> <i>"Are you talking financial reward? would that be passed to your customers?"</i></p> <p>Five participants felt that managing repeat sewer flooding was part of our core responsibility and shouldn't be incentivised <i>"Not sure the stick or carrot actually works. Work should be carried out regardless of whether a target will be achieved or not" (ESW)</i></p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

The commentary suggests that 97 people selected don't know on the basis of having a lack of understanding, lack of knowledge or it not concerning their area (ESW customers).

If all 'don't know' responses are excluded from data analysis, we see support for repeat sewer flooding increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Table 4: Repeat sewer flooding scores with 'don't knows' excluded

	Yes	No
Response before seeing performance information	91% (1,561)	9% (159)
Response after seeing performance information	92% (813)	8% (73)
Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	80% (668)	20% (166)

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Sewer blockages

This section of the survey began by sharing the following information with participants:

Sewer blockages

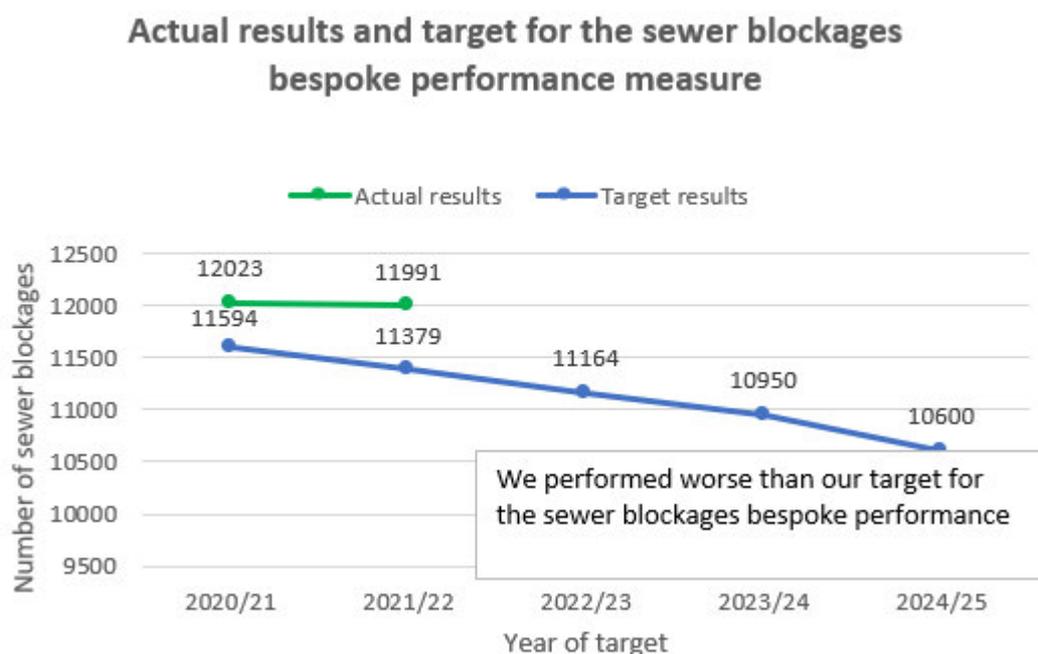
This is the number of blockages Northumbrian Water remove due to debris in sewers, each year. Blockages can occur when items are flushed into the sewer that shouldn't be, this can include wipes, fats, oils etc. Northumbrian Water's sewers are designed to only take wee, poo and toilet paper.

Ofwat has not requested the industry to report on the number of sewer blockages from 2025.

This is a Northumbrian Water bespoke performance measure.

Participants were then asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. After they had answered this question, they were shown the following performance and target performance information:

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water's performance for the sewer blockages bespoke performance measure. Northumbrian Water are currently performing worse than target for sewer blockages. The target for 2021-22 was 11,379 blockages and 11,991 were experienced.



Participants were then asked if based on performance they thought Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water should include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. Finally, participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the bespoke sewer blockages performance measure during 2025-30.

Overall NWG results from the questions in this section are shown in the graph below.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

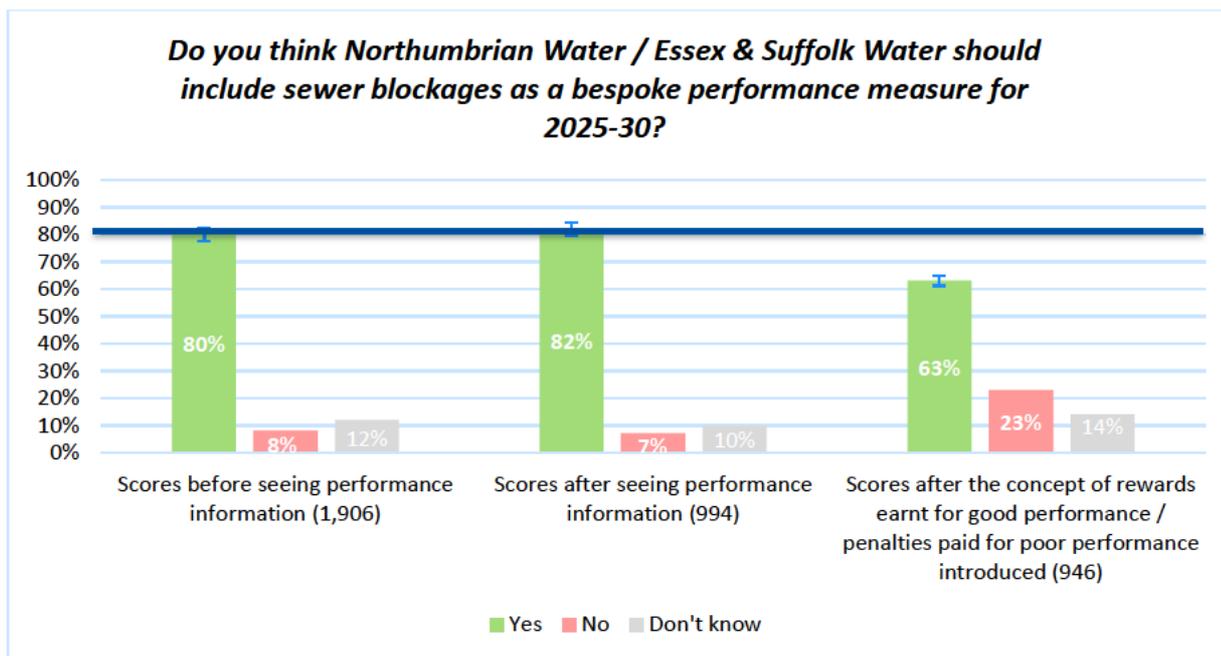


Table 5: Sewer blockages – all scores

	Response <u>before</u> seeing performance information			Response <u>after</u> seeing performance information			Scores after the concept of <u>rewards</u> earned for good performance / <u>penalties</u> paid for poor performance introduced		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
NWG	80%	8%	12%	82%	7%	10%	63%	23%	14%
NW	80%	8%	13%	81%	8%	11%	60%	23%	17%
ESW	80%	9%	11%	84%	7%	9%	63%	24%	13%

If a margin of error of 3% is applied to the overall NWG scores, after the concept of rewards and penalties is introduced, we have a lower bound score of 60% and an upper bound score of 66% (-4% under the threshold of acceptability).

We do not have sufficient customer support to include the sewer blockages as a bespoke measure in our PR24 business plan.

Summary of comments – by measure

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the responses they had given. 2,011 comments were received in this section in total.

The majority of customers who responded positively to the inclusion of sewer blockages as a bespoke measure made comments about the importance of education, accountability, and performance targets. 1,620 comments were received by these participants.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Customers who responded no to one or more question made comments on the topics of accountability, education, and our role. 257 comments were received by these participants.

Customers who responded 'don't know' to one or more questions made comments on the topic of a lack of knowledge or information, or other factors such as it not concerning their area (ESW customers). 134 comments were received by these participants.

The following table sets out the range of comments received for each question and response option (yes, no, don't know).

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Sewer blockages - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)</p>	<p>922 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 239 participants made comments on education. <i>“Use in a publicity campaign to educate customers what not to put in sewers” (ESW)</i> <i>“It will enable you to do education campaigns to try and educate people not to throw inappropriate material into the loo” (NW)</i></p> <p>Further comments from 118 participants were centred around accountability, who is responsible for sewer blockages. <i>“Accountability on the part of service providers, and transparency for consumers who will be able to measure the performance against other providers” (ESW)</i> <i>“Areas where the blockage is removed should be identified and residents informed. Persistent offenders should be taken to task or fined” (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around the use of the measure to measure the performance of the company, the environment and health and safety.</p>	<p>102 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was not relevant in their area. 47 participants made comments on the topic of accountability, many felt that this was not the responsibility of NWG as it was customers who were creating the problems <i>“It is consumer responsibility to only flush what is acceptable down a drain / toilet” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Nine participants suggested that there should be more education into the implications of flushing foreign bodies down the toilet. <i>“It's very difficult for you to control this - it needs public education” (NW)</i></p> <p>The other main comments (34) came from a variety of other comments, this included comments such as <i>“not needed”</i> and <i>“Isn't required”</i>.</p> <p>Other topic of comments included health and safety, performance, a mention of Ofwat and cost.</p>	<p>61 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was not relevant in their area. 28 participants commented they weren't sure, didn't know or didn't understand what was being asked.</p> <p>A further three participants felt there was not enough information to decide. <i>“I think you should include this but what is the point if Ofwat do not require it. Again there is not enough information to make an informed choice” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments came from ESW customers with the query of why they were being asked when it does not concern them. <i>“Irrelevant Anglian Water do that” (ESW)</i></p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Sewer blockages - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)</p>	<p>476 comments were received. We observed no significant between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 145 participants made comments surrounding performance and targets. <i>"A measure of the performance achieved." (NW)</i> <i>"All performances should be taken care of." (ESW)</i></p> <p>47 participants made comments on the education of customers. <i>"This can be used to educate residents on what they should and shouldn't flush down the toilet." (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments surrounded the themes of transparency, health and safety, the environment and the impact sewer blockages can have.</p>	<p>52 comments were received. We observed no significant between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 15 participants commented on the accountability of sewer blockages and felt that NWG had little control over this. <i>"Out of control for Northumbrian water to manage" (NW)</i> <i>"Northumbrian Water is not the cause of the blockages and thus any reduction will be due the public improving their attitude" (NW)</i></p> <p>Four comments suggested it is our job to deal with this issue. <i>"They should be part of the basic contract" (NW)</i> <i>"Part of your duty of care" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments had reference to the performance of NWG and the costs this could lead to.</p>	<p>26 comments were received. We observed some differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. – Some ESW customers commented it was relevant in their area. 17 comments from participants came from broader points around their area and other points. <i>"Not applicable in my area" (ESW)</i> <i>"I think you should include this but what is the point if Ofwat do not require it." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Six of the comments were regarding a lack of knowledge/information of the topic as well as comments of not knowing. <i>"It might be useful to know numbers of sewer blockages if it highlighted structural problems with the sewage network that could be addressed but not sure how it helps as a performance measure." (NW)</i></p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Sewer blockages - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance</p>	<p>222 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 49 participants comment suggested that rewards and penalties would encourage better performance. <i>"Something to which a penalty/reward is attached is more likely to be achieved" (NW)</i> <i>"Enhances performance and rewards great work" (NW)</i></p> <p>34 participants suggested that rewards could be used as an incentive to improve. <i>"As an incentive for improvement" (NW)</i> <i>"It creates incentives for best practice" (NW)</i></p> <p>29 participants commented on penalty alone suggesting that there should be penalty but no reward. <i>"Penalties will help focus your attention, incentives can be used to publicise and improve." (ESW)</i> <i>"It is more likely that the target will be met if there is a penalty" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments made by participants were centred around costs, fairness and education.</p>	<p>103 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 31 participants believed that sewer blockages are part of our job and should not be rewarded or penalised. <i>"you should not get a reward for doing the job right." (NW)</i> <i>"I think it is part of the job to see this doesn't happen" (NW)</i></p> <p>25 comments were made on accountability. <i>"Be better to penalise those who cause the blockages. Don't suppose that's possible?" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around costs for customers, education to customers and fairness.</p>	<p>47 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 15 comments were centred around a lack of information or knowledge on the subject or answers such as 'don't know'. <i>"reward or penalty from whom?" (NW)</i> <i>"Unsure, hence a don't know answer" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Nine participants made comments around rewards and penalties, many felt that only penalties should be imposed. <i>"Penalty for poor no reward for better" (NW)</i> <i>"Set a target if you fall below that target then you pay the penalty." (NW)</i></p> <p>The remainder of comments referred to accountability, costs, and fairness.</p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

The commentary suggests that 52 people selected don't know on the basis of needing more information, being unsure or it not relating to them (ESW customers).

If all 'don't know' responses are excluded from data analysis, we see support for sewer blockages increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Table 6: Sewer blockages scores with 'don't knows' excluded

	Yes	No
Response before seeing performance information	90% (1,524)	10% (162)
Response after seeing performance information	92% (820)	8% (72)
Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	73% (596)	27% (215)

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Visible leak repair time

This section of the survey began by sharing the following information with participants:

This is the average time it takes Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water to fix a leak once it has been reported by a customer.

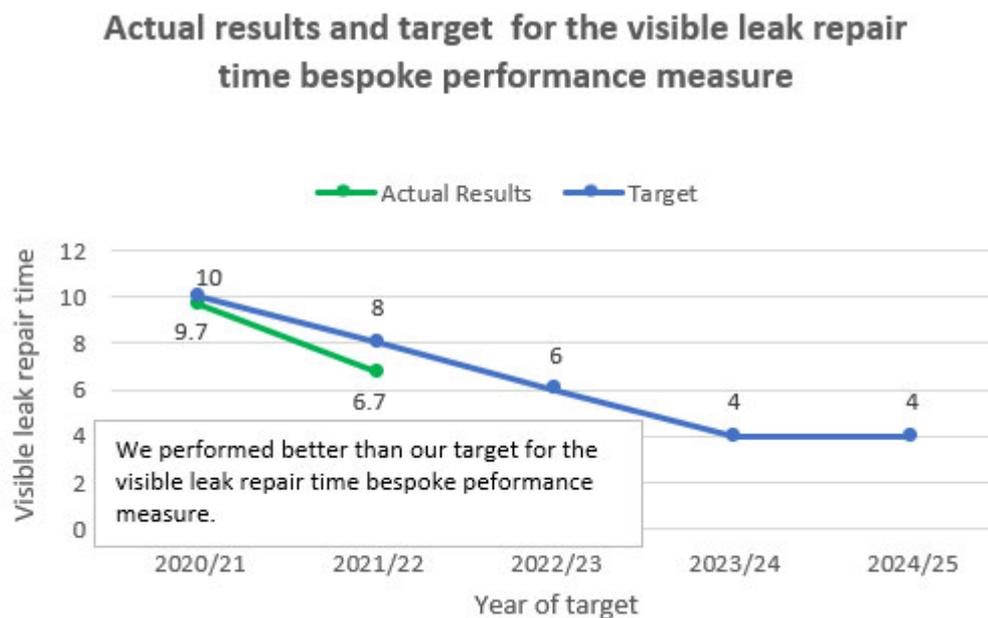
Ofwat does not include a repair time in their common performance measures list.

Ofwat do include the amount of water lost through leaks and the number of pipes that burst and cause a leak as common performance measures.

This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

Participants were then asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. After they had answered this question, they were shown the following performance and target performance information:

Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water have improved performance against this measure. The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's performance targets and actual results based on the bespoke performance measure visible leak repair time.



Participants were then asked if based on performance they thought Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water should include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. Finally, participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the bespoke visible leak repair time performance measure during 2025-30.

Overall NWG results from the questions in this section are shown in the graph below.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

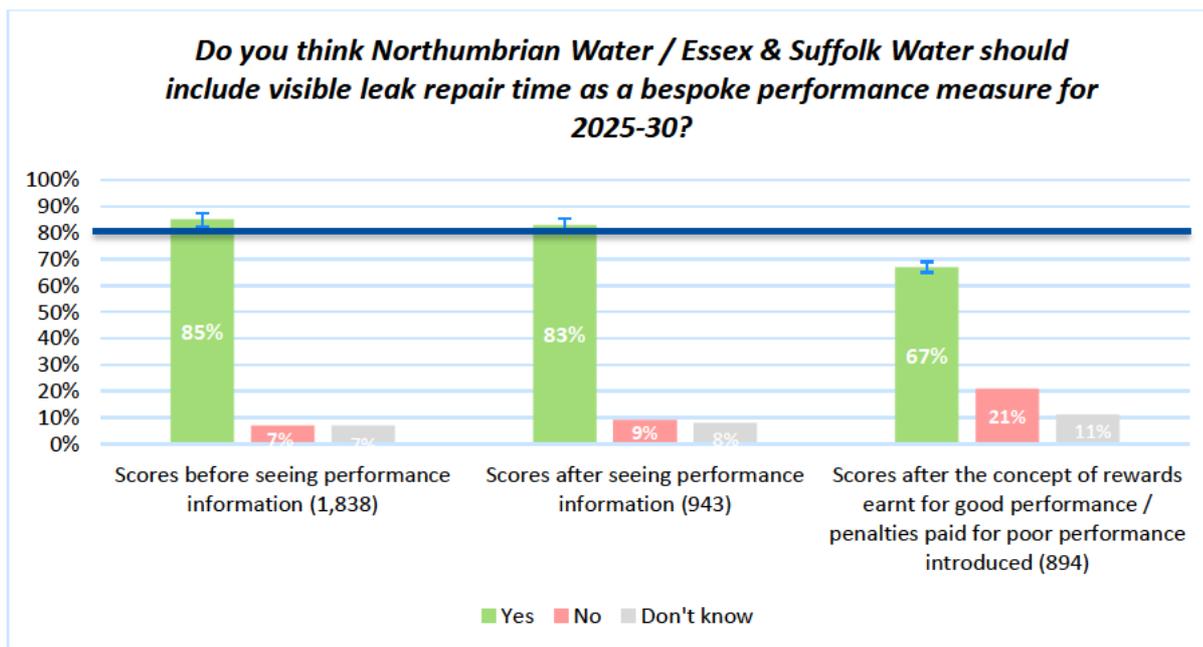


Table 7: Visible leak repair time– all scores

	Response before seeing performance information			Response after seeing performance information			Scores after the concept of rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance introduced		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
NWG	85%	7%	7%	83%	9%	8%	67%	21%	11%
NW	83%	9%	8%	82%	11%	7%	67%	22%	10%
ESW	87%	6%	7%	84%	7%	9%	67%	20%	13%

If a margin of error of 3% is applied to the overall NWG scores, after the concept of rewards and penalties is introduced, we have a lower bound score of 70% and an upper bound score of 64% (on the threshold of acceptability).

It is possible that we have sufficient customer support to include visible leak repair time as a bespoke measure in our PR24 business plan.

If we exclude 'don't know' responses from the data, we see support for repeat sewer flooding increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Summary of comments

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the quantitative response they had given for each question. 2,189 comments were received in this section in total.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Customers who responded positively (responding yes to one or more questions) made comments on the topics of transparency, priorities, and performance targets. 1,788 comments were received by these participants.

Customers who responded no to one or more question made comments on the topics of performance, efficiency, and our role. 290 comments were received by these participants.

Customers who responded 'don't know' to one or more questions made comments on the topic of a lack of knowledge or information, or other factors such as the impact it could have on performance. 111 comments were received by these participants.

The following table sets out the range of comments received for each question and response option (yes, no, don't know).

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Visible leak
repair time -
commentary

Yes

No

Don't know

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)</p>	<p>924 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 146 participants believe this bespoke measure is important for transparency. <i>“Again, how can the customer see how you perform if there are no stats.” (NW)</i> <i>“As a measure of transparency for consumers.” (NW)</i></p> <p>110 participants believe that this measure is essential for measuring performance. <i>“Always good to keep a check on performance” (NW)</i></p> <p>52 participants suggested leaks should be made a priority. <i>“It will perhaps ensure that the repairs are more of a priority rather than it being dependent on the size of the leak/ loss of water volume. Both are important” (NW)</i></p> <p>Other areas mentioned included efficiency and performance, accountability and cost.</p>	<p>92 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 15 participants suggested that the measurement of the repair time was not important, instead it was the volume of water lost. <i>“I think time to repair is less important than the volume lost.” (NW)</i> <i>“It’s not the time it takes to fix a leak but the total volume lost that is important” (NW)</i></p> <p>Nine participants believe Ofwat’s common measure covers enough to not include visible leak repair time as a bespoke measure. <i>“I’m not sure that this is a good measure of performance. I would rather the focus is on the volume of water being lost as for the Ofwat measure.” (NW)</i> <i>“Ofwat measure seems sufficient, the time to respond to report seems meaningless if the network is appropriately monitored” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Seven participants referred to the response time to a leak being more valuable than repair time. <i>“I would say response time was more important as repair will depend on the scale of the issue” (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments referred to it being out job to repair leaks and the necessary work that needs to be done to fix a problem.</p>	<p>42 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 23 participants made comments around needing more information / not knowing. <i>“I don’t know what visible leak repair time signifies” (ESW)</i> <i>“Don’t know” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Six participants commented on the value of the information suggesting it is not needed. <i>“Not sure the time it takes to repair a leak is needed as long as it’s repaired” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were made around the costs this could bring as well as the impact it could have on performance.</p>
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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Visible leak repair time - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)</p>	<p>486 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 135 participants commented on targets and performance. <i>"Help to continue to improve performance" (NW)</i> <i>"To up the above average on target performance" (ESW)</i></p> <p>64 participants commented on transparency of information. <i>"show public something is being done" (NW)</i> <i>"Because its important for customers to see that these leaks are being dealt with properly" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around the impact this could have on response times, costs and the environment as well as making leaks a priority.</p>	<p>64 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 16 participants commented on the performance of NWG. <i>"NW perform better than target for repair time" (NW)</i> <i>"Your data shows an improvement so no need to include in a bespoke measure." (NW)</i></p> <p>Comments around efficiency were made. <i>"Carry on reporting and acting as efficiently as possible this should not be a bespoke issue." (NW)</i></p> <p>Topics of other comments included accountability, costs, comparisons and fairness to technicians.</p>	<p>26 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 16 participants gave comments such as "don't know" or around needing more information. <i>"as you are doing well i am unsure, it is a cost/reward balance which I don't have the figures for" (NW)</i></p> <p>Two participants commented on the impact recording could have. <i>"It could make the repairer feel 'rushed' and so not able to do a proper job." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other responses gave generic comments such as <i>"it matters little when we can't change our water company to a better performing one" (ESW).</i></p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Visible leak repair time - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance</p>	<p>378 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 105 participants made comments on incentives and performance. <i>"An incentive to improve performance" (NW)</i> <i>"Rewards might help to keep meeting or exceeding targets" (ESW)</i></p> <p>31 participants made comments surrounding using penalties only. <i>"Penalty yes but not reward since it's expected that leaks get fixed quickly." (NW)</i> <i>"I believe penalties should be set up for poor performance, however I don't believe the company should be rewarded - it's your job to fix leaks." (ESW)</i></p> <p>15 participants suggested that it is our job to fix leaks and should therefore not receive rewards. <i>"The company should not be rewarded for performances on what I see is their responsibility" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were made on costs, the environment and transparency of performance to customers.</p>	<p>134 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 44 participants gave comments surrounding our role, many felt it was our job to deal with leaks. <i>"No extra reward for just doing your job" (NW)</i> <i>"you shouldn't be additionally rewarded for doing your job" (ESW)</i></p> <p>14 comments were received regarding who would pay for rewards and penalties with concerns around bill increases. <i>"Customers will ultimately pay" (NW)</i> <i>"Your already paid for this and any "penalty" will be passed on to customers" (NW)</i></p> <p>12 participants disagreed with the use of penalties and rewards. <i>"Don't agree with incentives or fines" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other concerns were centred around the environment, investment and fairness.</p>	<p>43 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 17 participants gave comments such as "don't know" or around needing more information. <i>"Not sure as I don't know how leaks are categorised or if these are reported leaks by public or leaks found by company itself. It makes a difference as to the finder and length of time between report and fix" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Six participants thought NWG should only receive a penalty and not a reward. <i>"Penalty yes, reward for doing your job? No" (NW)</i> <i>"Penalties for bad service but good service should be expected & paid for by customers paying rates" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around it being "our job" to fix leaks and costs.</p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

The commentary suggests that 56 people selected don't know based on needing more information or being unsure.

If all 'don't know' responses are excluded from data analysis, we see support for visible leak repair time increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Table 4: Visible leak repair time scores with 'don't knows' excluded

	Yes	No
Response before seeing performance information	92% (1,565)	8% (137)
Response after seeing performance information	90% (782)	10% (86)
Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	76% (600)	24% (192)

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours

This section of the survey began by sharing the following information with participants:

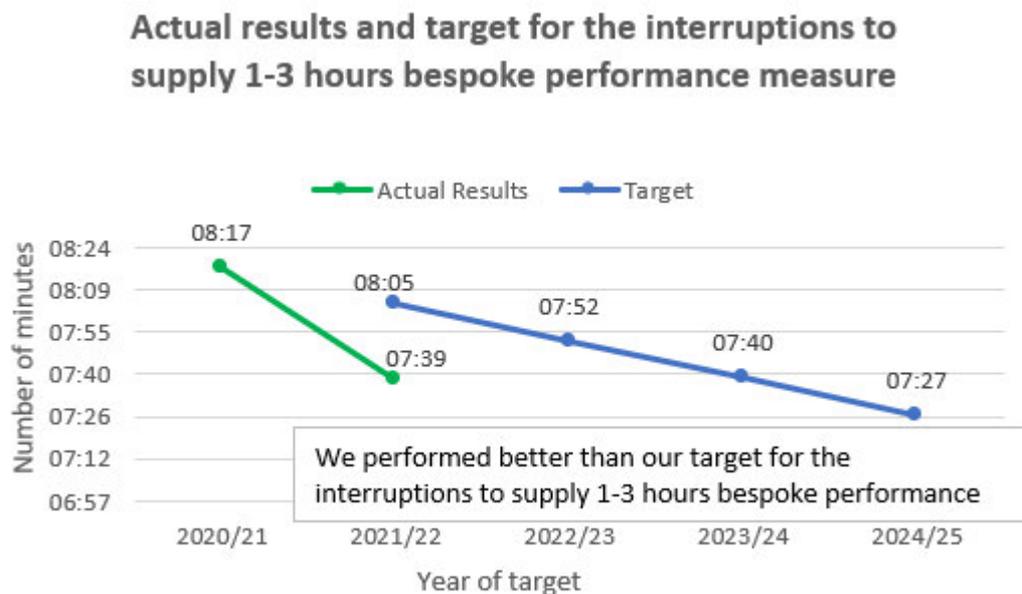
This is the average number of minutes a property is without water when an interruption to water supply lasts between 1-3 hours.

Ofwat expects companies to report on interruptions to supply over 3 hours.

This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

Participants were then asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. After they had answered this question, they were shown the following performance and target performance information:

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's targets and actual results based on the bespoke performance measure interruptions to supply 1-3 hours.



Participants were then asked if based on performance they thought Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. Finally, participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the interruptions to supply 1-3 hours bespoke performance measure during 2025-30.

Overall NWG results from the questions in this section are shown in the graph below.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

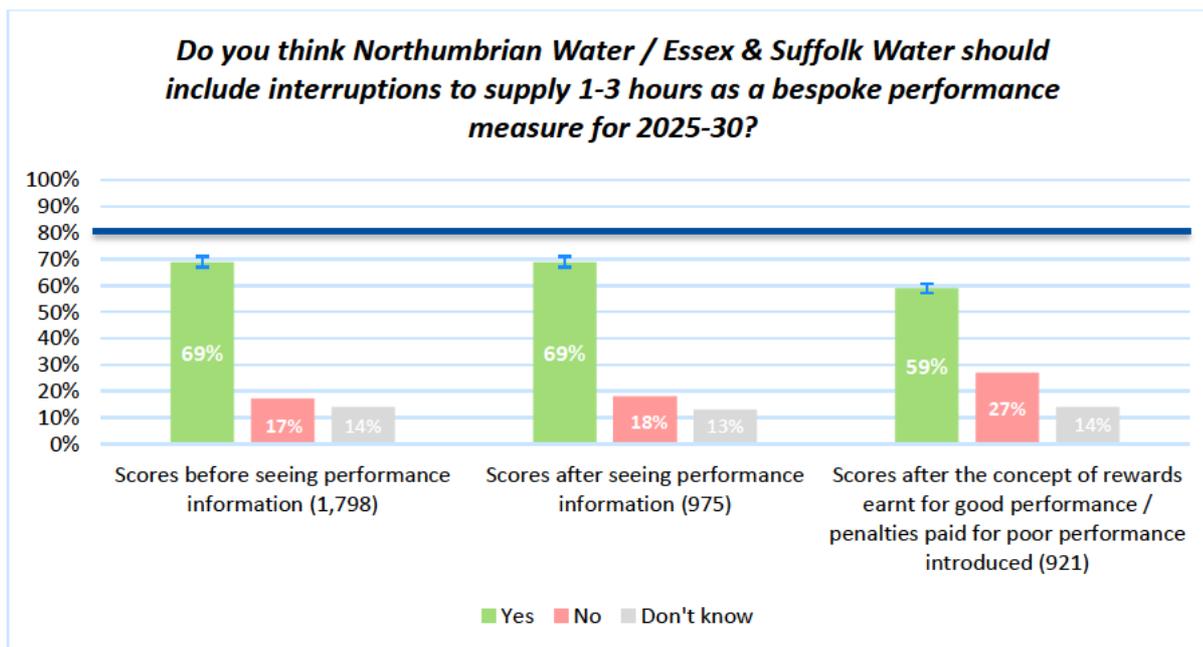


Table 8: Interruptions to Supply 1-3 Hours – all scores

	Response before seeing performance information			Response after seeing performance information			Scores after the concept of rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance introduced		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
NWG	69%	17%	14%	69%	18%	13%	59%	27%	14%
NW	71%	17%	12%	70%	17%	13%	60%	26%	14%
ESW	67%	18%	15%	67%	20%	13%	57%	29%	14%

If a margin of error of 3% is applied to the overall NWG scores, after the concept of rewards and penalties is introduced, we have a lower bound score of 56% and an upper bound score of 62% (-8% below the threshold of acceptability).

We do not have sufficient customer support to include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke measure in our PR24 business plan.

Summary of comments

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the quantitative response they had given for each question. 1,750 comments were received in this section in total.

Customers who responded positively (responding yes to one or more questions) made comments on the topics of transparency, incentives, and performance targets. 1,195 comments were received by these participants.

Customers who responded no to one or more question made comments on the topics of informing customers, time scales, and our role. 431 comments were received by these participants.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Customers who responded 'don't know' to one or more questions made comments on the topic of a lack of knowledge or information, or other factors such as the 1–3-hour time scale. 124 comments were received by these participants.

The following table sets out the range of comments received for each question and response option (yes, no, don't know).

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)</p>	<p>573 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 120 participants commented on performance. <i>"To ensure actual performance is still measured and compared with targets, and to improve targets in future" (NW)</i></p> <p>72 participants felt that transparency to customers was essential. <i>"Yes, the company should be honest and record number of interruptions" (NW)</i></p> <p>49 participants felt that customers should be informed in advance. <i>"We need to be informed asap" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments mentioned our role in providing an essential service to priority customers.</p>	<p>177 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. The majority of participants (90) felt that the time scale of 1-3 hours was too short to be considered as a bespoke measure. <i>"Not that important. More than three hours yes." (NW)</i> <i>"1-3 hours is unnecessary unless there is a big issue with this" (ESW)</i></p> <p>22 participants did not think this was a relevant area to be covered. <i>"Don't think it is necessary" (NW)</i></p> <p>14 participants felt this was acceptable if customers were informed in advance. <i>"As long as advanced warning is given." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments related to our job and interruptions being standard practise when needed.</p>	<p>64 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 38 participants required more information or gave comments such as <i>"don't know"</i>. <i>"I don't know enough about the process to comment" (NW)</i></p> <p>10 participants made comments centred around the 1–3-hour time. <i>"It's immaterial for me as a short space of time...I would be more concerned if you were going beyond that time" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around accountability and transparency of information to customers.</p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (<u>after</u> seeing performance information)</p>	<p>350 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 110 participants made comments around performance. <i>"A useful performance measure to show how you're doing." (NW)</i> <i>"Good to keep a track of, and good performance indicator" (ESW)</i></p> <p>56 participants felt transparency to customers was important. <i>"To ensure visibility of this key customer issue" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around standard practise, accountability and the time of 1-3 hours being acceptable to most.</p>	<p>104 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. 30 participants made comments around the time scale being too small. <i>"These are short term impacts, often at short notice. You can't be held accountable for everything" (NW)</i></p> <p>18 participants made comments suggesting the measure is unnecessary. <i>"This seems a little pointless if already having an outcome to minimise leak time from report and also having a target >3hours. If you're out of water it's inconvenient but 3h is not that long." (NW)</i></p> <p>17 participants referred to NWG's current performance. <i>"NW performs better than target so no need for inclusion" (NW)</i></p>	<p>28 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers. The majority of participants (18) felt that they did not have enough information or did not have a reason. <i>"Don't know enough info" (NW)</i></p> <p>Transparency was another theme within this section of comments. <i>"Transparency for customers is essential" (ESW)</i></p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
Rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	<p>272 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>70 participants made comments on performance. <i>"A useful performance measure to show how you're doing." (NW)</i></p> <p>42 participants believed that rewards and penalties acted as incentives for good performance. <i>"Rewards and penalties provide important incentives to improvement" (NW)</i> <i>"Yes helps focus the business" (ESW)</i></p> <p>17 comments were made on improved customer service. <i>"This drives customer service to a higher level" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were made on accountability, transparency and priority of service.</p>	<p>150 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>40 participants felt that it was our job to deal with interruptions and therefore shouldn't be rewarded. <i>"This is part of the work you should be doing anyway" (NW)</i> <i>"Such an essential response needs no incentives" (NW)</i></p> <p>32 participants felt that this was an unnecessary measure. <i>"As they are well within target this seems unnecessary" (NW)</i> <i>"No reward should be necessary." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments referred to costs, accountability and transparency.</p>	<p>32 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>The majority of participants (20) left comments such as 'don't know' or require more information'.</p> <p>Four participants believed that only penalties should be used and not rewards. <i>"No earned rewards for just doing their job, but yes to penalty, as the customers suffer." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around transparency and priority of supply.</p>

The commentary suggests that 86 people selected don't know based on needing more information or being unsure.

If all 'don't know' responses are excluded from data analysis, we see support for interruptions to supply 1-3 hours increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Table 5: Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours scores with 'don't knows' excluded

	Yes	No
Response before seeing performance information	80% (1,241)	20% (314)

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Response after seeing performance information	79% (671)	21% (177)
Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	69% (542)	31% (248)

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours

This section of the survey began by sharing the following information with participants:

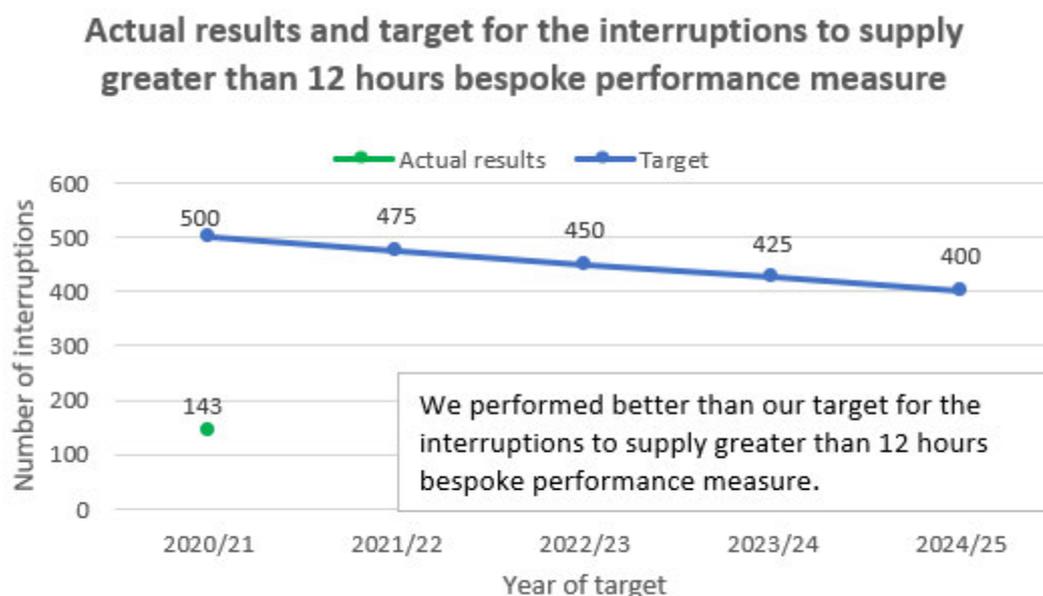
This is the number of properties that have an interruption to their water supply that lasts over 12 hours.

Ofwat plans to include interruptions to supply greater than 3 hours as the industry wide measure.

This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

Participants were then asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. After they had answered this question, they were shown the following performance and target performance information:

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's targets and actual results for the bespoke performance measure interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours.



Storm Arwen on 26th – 27th November 2021 was an abnormally destructive storm, which was particularly damaging to the North-East of England and the East coast of Scotland. The impact Storm Arwen had on power supplies effected Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's network. Due to this, Northumbrian Water are still working out the actuals for 2021/22 and have not included this number in the results.

Participants were then asked if based on performance they thought Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30. Finally, participants were asked if they thought Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in relation to the interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours bespoke performance measure during 2025-30.

Overall NWG results from the questions in this section are shown in the graph below.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

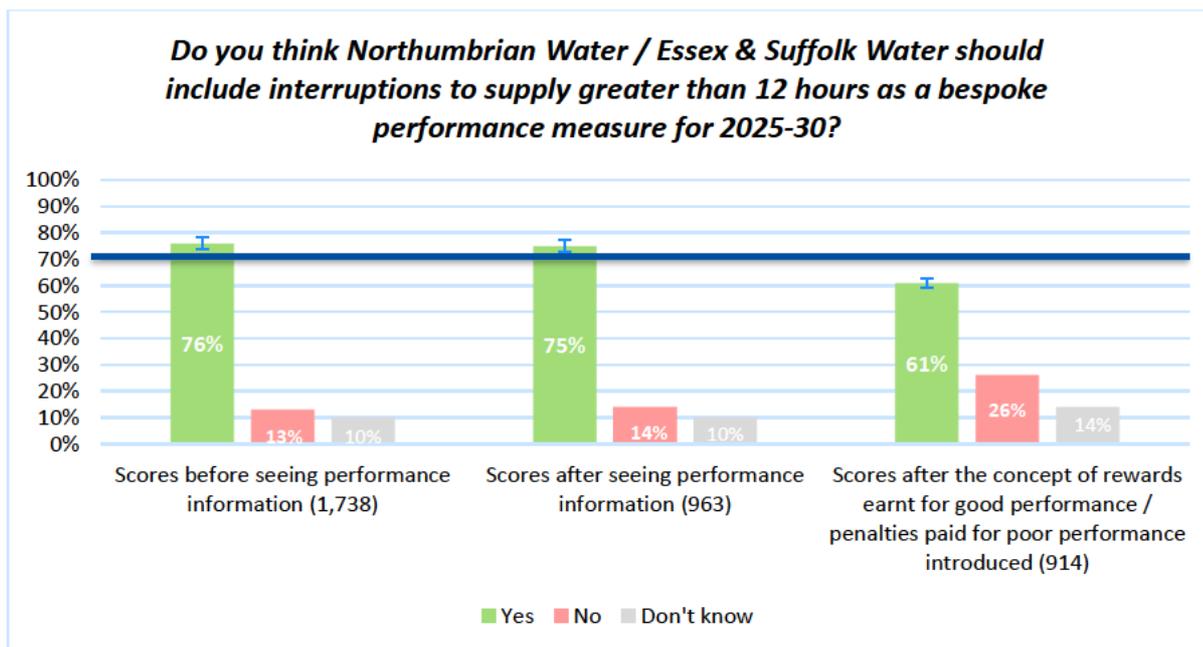


Table 9: Interruptions to Supply Greater than 12 Hours – all scores

	Response before seeing performance information			Response after seeing performance information			Scores after the concept of rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance introduced		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
NWG	76%	13%	10%	75%	14%	10%	61%	26%	14%
NW	76%	13%	10%	76%	14%	10%	62%	24%	14%
ESW	76%	13%	11%	75%	14%	11%	58%	28%	14%

If a margin of error of 3% is applied to the overall NWG scores, after the concept of rewards and penalties is introduced, we have a lower bound score of 58% and an upper bound score of 64% (-6% below the threshold of acceptability).

We do not have sufficient customer support to include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke measure in our PR24 business plan.

Summary of comments

Participants were invited to leave a comment to explain the quantitative response they had given. 2,015 comments were received in this section of the survey.

Customers who responded positively (responding yes to one or more questions) made comments on performance, transparency and the length of time being unacceptable. 1,646 comments were made in this section.

Customers who responded no to one or more questions made comments on complying with Ofwat’s measure, performance and time. 363 comments were made in this section.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Customers who responded 'don't know' to one or more questions made comments on needing more information, not knowing and performance. 141 comments were made in this section.

The following table sets out the range of comments received for each question and response option (yes, no, don't know).

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply
greater than 12 hours -
commentary

Yes

No

Don't know

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (before seeing performance information)</p>	<p>914 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>147 participants made comments surrounding the length of time being unacceptable. <i>“12 hours is a long time to be without water” (NW)</i> <i>“12 hours is a significant time for water supply to be interrupted” (ESW)</i></p> <p>128 participants felt this was a good/essential measure of performance. <i>“Again, this would seem to be a basic service measure and something that should be monitored and reported against.” (NW)</i> <i>“It would seem important to continue improving on this” (ESW)</i></p> <p>93 participants made comments on the impact and inconvenience of 12 hours being unacceptable. <i>“12 hour disruptions to supply could severely impact businesses so to include realistic contingency plans” (NW)</i> <i>“An interruption that long would be a calamity for some people, especially young families.” (ESW)</i></p> <p>70 participants made comments on transparency of information to customers. <i>“Open and honest” (NW)</i></p>	<p>120 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>31 participants felt the length of time was unacceptable. <i>“Far too long a time” (NW)</i> <i>“It’s an unreasonable amount of time” (ESW)</i></p> <p>25 participants believed NWG should comply with Ofwat. <i>“If it’s included in the 3+ hour common measure, I don’t see reason for this to exist on its own.” (NW)</i> <i>“It is covered by the Ofwat measure” (ESW)</i></p> <p>13 participants made comments surrounding performance. <i>“Focusing on the extreme, tail performance issues can disproportionately distract focus from the bulk of the work. By all means look at and understand the reasons for these and fix solvable underlying issues but don’t take your eyes off the ball.” (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments surrounded vulnerability, impact on customers and transparency.</p>	<p>62 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>30 participants made comments on needing more information or commenting ‘don’t know’. <i>“I don’t understand this.” (NW)</i> <i>“Not sure of the reason to do so” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Nine participants felt that NWG should comply with Ofwat. <i>“I am not sure if there is a need, assuming this would become part of the over 3 hours industry standard.” (NW)</i> <i>“Surely you should adopt the Ofwat target of 3 hours.” (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments surrounded cost, length and performance.</p>
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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
	Other comments were made around accountability, vulnerability and compensation for those impacted.		

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours - commentary	Yes	No	Don't know
<p>Yes, it should be a bespoke measure (after seeing performance information)</p>	<p>417 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>90 participants commented on using this measure as a good performance indicator. <i>"For monitoring performance" (NW)</i> <i>"Good to keep a track of, and good performance indicator" (ESW)</i></p> <p>41 participants commented on transparency of information to customers. <i>"Customers should know" (ESW)</i> <i>"I think it's a good way Northumbrian Water shows customers how well or badly they are doing" (NW)</i></p> <p>36 believed the length of time was unacceptable. <i>"12hours or more are unacceptable" (NW)</i> <i>"Because households go without water this long" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around accountability, cost and customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>84 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>11 participants felt that most factors that contribute to this length of time are out of NWG's control. <i>"Simply down to whether the circumstances are out of the boards control." (NW)</i> <i>"You can't be held for a natural disaster. However, we must plan to make sure the infrastructure is in place to prevent future delays due to adverse weather conditions" (ESW)</i></p> <p>10 participants believed NWG should comply with Ofwat. <i>"Fall into line with OFWAT performance measures" (NW)</i> <i>"It's already included above 3 hours." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments centred around transparency and impact on the customer.</p>	<p>30 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>Nine participants answered 'don't know' or would need more information to make a decision. <i>"Would like to know but can you plan that far ahead" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Four commented on performance. <i>"There is insufficient data to tell if this is a good performance measure" (NW)</i> <i>"Looks like a good result already" (NW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were made it not being a relevant measure due to it falling within the 3 hour + Ofwat measure.</p>

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

<p>Rewards earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance</p>	<p>315 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>63 participants felt rewards and penalties were a good incentive for performance. <i>"To support better performance" (NW)</i> <i>"Such interruptions are serious. Rewards/Penalties should provide incentives." (NW)</i> <i>"Incentivises better performance" (ESW)</i></p> <p>46 commented on performance. <i>"This should not be based on the occurrence or severity but rather on the performance vs realistic expectation" (NW)</i> <i>"It will keep improvements in the company going forward" (ESW)</i></p> <p>45 believed only penalties were necessary. <i>"Not reward for something that you should be doing anyway, penalties for under performance are a good incentive" (NW)</i> <i>"Should not be rewarded for supplying water? Should be penalised for excessive interruptions" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were made around it being our job and taking accountability of the problem.</p>	<p>159 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>48 participants made comments on it being our job to fix interruptions and therefore should not be rewarded. <i>"No extra reward for just doing your job" (NW)</i> <i>"This is a basic part of the service that is to be provided. It should not have to be incentivised." (ESW)</i></p> <p>15 participants felt that penalties were acceptable but not rewards. <i>"Whilst I think there should be a penalty for poor performance I don't understand receiving reward for something that is part of the job and should be being done quickly anyway" (NW)</i> <i>"Penalty yes, reward no" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around cost going to customers, control over events and performance.</p>	<p>49 comments were received. We observed no significant differences between comments made by NW and ESW customers.</p> <p>17 participants made comments around needing more information or not knowing. <i>"Lack of understanding of the issue." (NW)</i> <i>"I am not informed enough to know how a reward/penalty would work and as such do not know if i thing it would be effective." (ESW)</i></p> <p>Nine participants believed penalties only should be received. <i>"It is impossible to treat each incident as the same because circumstances vary so much. No reward should be given at anytime, but penalties for water board failure is essential." (NW)</i> <i>"Rewards should not be paid for doing what is expected. Penalties are fine" (ESW)</i></p> <p>Other comments were centred around it being our job to solve interruptions as well as it being made a priority.</p>
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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

The commentary suggests that 56 people selected don't know based on needing further information or not being sure.

If all 'don't know' responses are excluded from data analysis, we see support for interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

Table 10: Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours with 'don't knows' excluded

	Yes	No
Response before seeing performance information	80% (1,241)	20% (314)
Response after seeing performance information	79% (671)	21% (177)
Rewards should be earned for good performance / penalties paid for poor performance	69% (542)	31% (248)

If we exclude 'don't know' responses from the data, we see support for interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours increase beyond the 70% threshold of acceptability across all three questions.

CONCLUSION

Our research suggests that there is not strong support for keeping bespoke PCs with financial incentives at PR24.

However, participants do support continued measurement and reporting of these PCs as this will encourage us to maintain high performance and demonstrate to customers how we are doing.



Northumbrian Water Group

**People Panels –
#9 Bespoke Measures**

Executive summary

This was the ninth round of the People Panels, conducted online via Zoom, which sought to explore five potential bespoke measures with the five panels, to understand the ranking preference of which measures should remain as bespoke for the next business planning period, as well as the reasons underpinning those preferences.

Explain was responsible for developing the session materials alongside NWG, the overall running of the event, and for chairing and moderating the breakout room discussions per group. An NWG representative was also present at each session.

This report outlines the discussions per panel group as well as providing an overall, holistic summary.

The five potential bespoke measures

Panellists were first introduced to the proposed common measures, suggested by Ofwat for the next business planning period, which can be compared against other water companies' performances nationally. Following this, it was explained that NWG, as a company, can present several bespoke measures to Ofwat, which are measured by NWG but not comparable to other water companies nationally, as they are decided by individual water companies. To qualify as a bespoke measure, Ofwat stated one of two conditions needed to be met:

- (1) It concerns an issue of local importance
- (2) A company is performing poorly on an issue which may not be a concern for other water companies

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The table below shows each of the five potential 'bespoke measures' presented to panellists.

Target	How have Northumbrian Water Group performed against each measure?
Repeat sewer flooding*: (overall rank 1 st)	Performed well: 23 repeats (against 21/22 target of 44 repeats)
Sewer blockages*: (overall rank 4 th)	Not meeting: 11,991 blockages (against 21/22 target of 11,379)
Visible leak repair time: (overall rank 3 rd)	Performed well: 6.7 days (against 21/22 target of 8 days)
Interruptions over 12 hours: (overall rank 2 nd)	Performed well / in process of being finalised: 143 properties impacted (against 20/12 target of 500 properties). Storm Arwen has impacted 21/22 figures, which are being finalised
Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours: (overall rank 5 th)	Performed well: 7 minutes 39 seconds (against 21/22 target of 8 minutes 4 seconds)

**Please note that both of these measures are specific to Northumbrian Water only as they concern drainage and wastewater systems. All five measures were discussed by all panellists (including Essex and Suffolk customers) and it was explained that, whilst these measures did not impact them directly, their opinions were still highly valued.*

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Summary of results

	Northumbrian	Essex	Suffolk	Young
1 st	Repeat sewer flooding	Repeat sewer flooding	Repeat sewer flooding	Repeat sewer flooding
2 nd	Sewer blockages	Visible leak repair time	Interruptions over 12 hours	Interruptions over 12 hours
3 rd	Visible leak repair time	Interruptions over 12 hours	Visible leak repair time	Sewer blockages
4 th	Interruptions over 12 hours	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	Sewer blockages	Visible leak repair time
5 th	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	Sewer blockages	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours



Overall, reasons underpinning **repeat sewer flooding** and **interruptions over 12 hours** related to panellists highlighting that these are the two measures which would have the **most impact on people's lives**, either in terms of health hazards, financial and emotional turmoil, or disruption.

Reasons for the somewhat middling importance ranking of **visible leak repair time** referred to a need to reduce the **wastage of water, environmental impact, and inconvenience**. However, this was considered less inconvenient to customers than sewer flooding and interruptions of 12 hours or over.



Sewer blockages were thought to **cause more problems down the line**, including sewer flooding and interruptions, however these were felt to be somewhat **beyond the control of the company**, as it depends on customers' behaviours of disposing waste correctly.

When considering reasons for ranking **interruptions between one and three hours** as having the lowest importance, panellists felt that this was **more of a minor inconvenience in comparison to the other measures** being presented, and preferred NWG's focus to be on other areas.

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Overview of this round

Background

This was the ninth round of the People Panels, conducted online via Zoom, which sought to explore five potential bespoke measures with the five panels, to understand the ranking preference of which measures should be bespoke, as well as the reasons underpinning those preferences. Sessions were conducted with each of the five People Panels on the following dates:

- **Monday 31st October: Employees**
- **Tuesday 1st November: Northumbrian**
- **Wednesday 2nd November: Essex**
- **Monday 7th November: Suffolk**
- **Friday 9th November: Young**

The session materials were developed by Explain, working closely alongside NWG throughout, and all workshops and focus groups were attended by a NWG representative. These NWG representatives included: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. This ensured they could provide information on behalf of the company and respond to any clarification questions from attendees.

Purpose of the session

The purpose of the session was to ask panel members to consider five potential bespoke measures for the next business planning period. Panellists were asked whether they thought the measures should remain as bespoke measures, how they ranked them in terms of importance, and the reasons underpinning their preferences were explored.

Approach taken

No pre-work was set in advance of the session. Each 90-minute session was facilitated by Explain. To begin with, the future common measures, as proposed by Ofwat, were shared with the panellists.

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Following this, five potential bespoke measures were introduced to the panellists:

- Repeat sewer flooding
- Sewer blockages
- Visible leak repair time
- Interruptions over 12 hours
- Interruptions between one and three hours

Within the session, the 'Employee', 'Suffolk', and 'Young' panels remained as one main group for the duration of the 90-minute discussion. The 'Northumbrian' and 'Essex' panels, however, were split between two breakout rooms for a total of approximately 50 minutes for their discussions, with approximately 10 minutes allocated for each of the five potential bespoke measures.

After discussing each bespoke measure, whether panellists would like to see each potential bespoke measure put in place, and whether they would like a reward or penalty attached to it, a final poll was conducted to rank the preferences on a scale of 1 'most preferred' to 5 'least preferred', in addition to a 'none of the above' options.

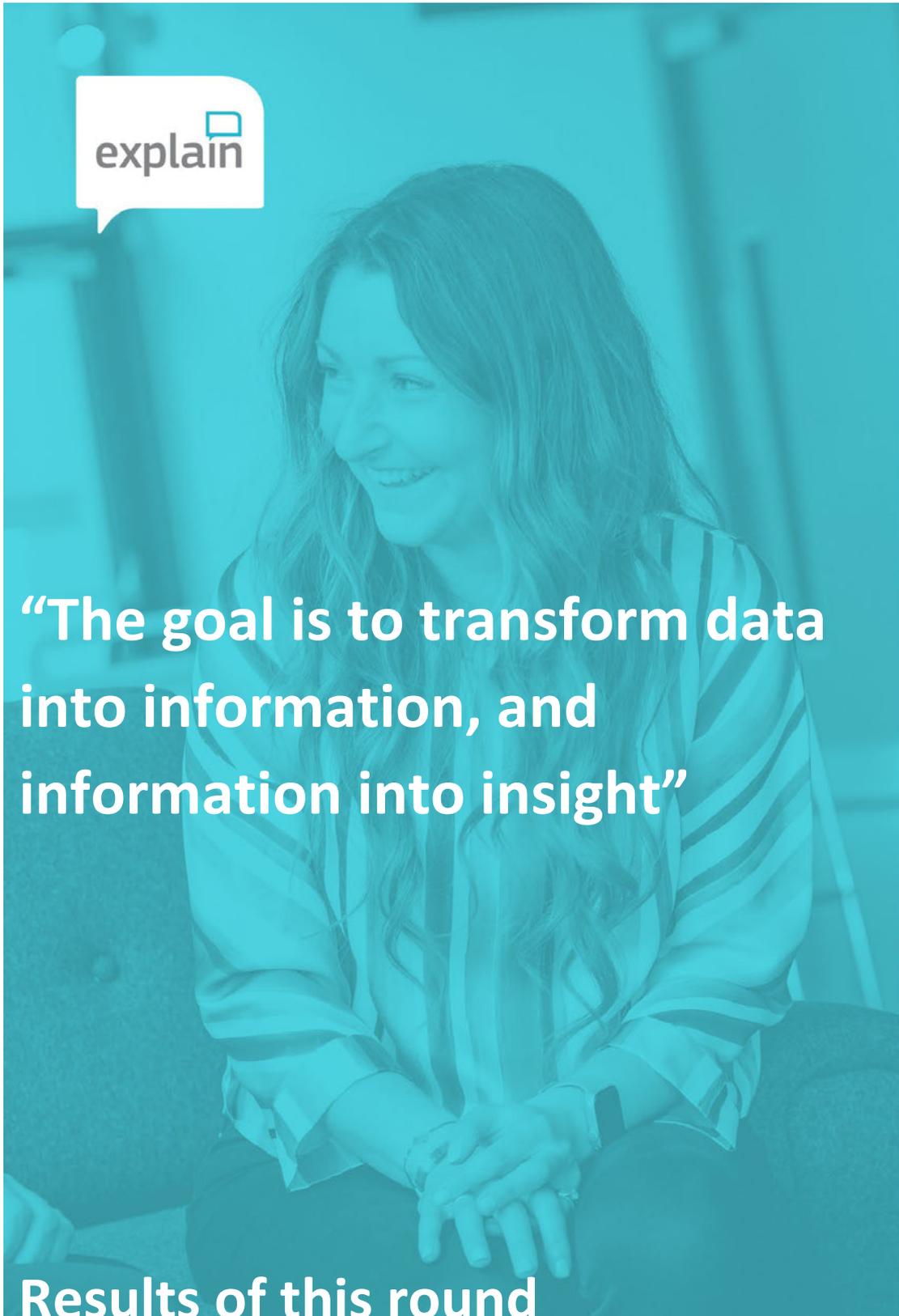
Attendee profile

Attendees in the session were all members of the established panels. The number of attendees per session were as follows, where 'Defining the Future' indicates the number of attendees who were previously part of NWG's Defining the Future research.

Panel group	Total no. of attendees	'Defining the Future'
Employee	3	n/a
Northumbrian	13	2
Essex	14	3
Suffolk	10	2
Young	9	1

Event feedback

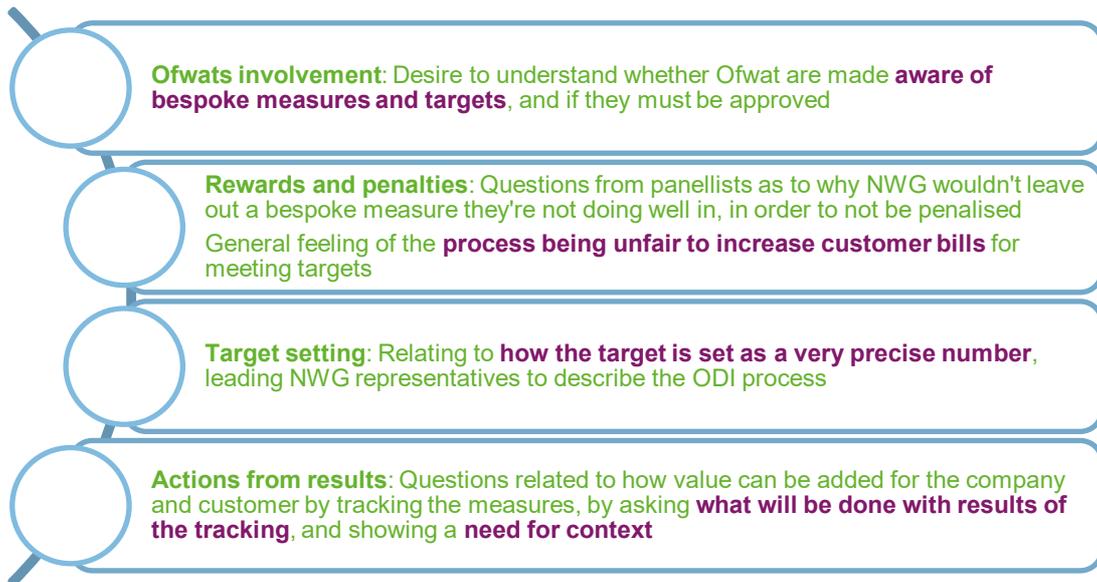
The event feedback gathered from the closing polls, completed by panellists themselves, is shared at the end of this report. Please note, closing polls were launched for the Essex and Young People Panels only.



Results of this round

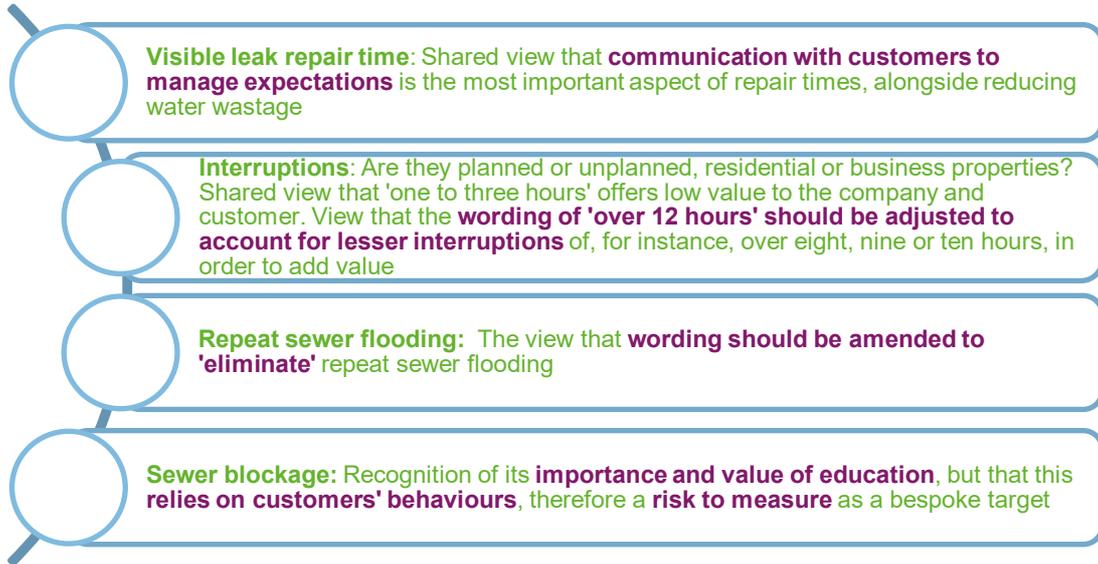
Across the five panels

All panellists were introduced to the proposed common measures before being presented with the five potential bespoke measures. The first graphic below details **common questions** raised across the panels.



BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

This second graphic below details **common, shared views across the panels**, in relation to the five potential bespoke measures which were presented



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Employee

In this session, employee panellists were not asked to rank their preference of the five potential bespoke measures. However, the table below provides an overview of the consensus amongst employee panellists regarding whether the measure should be bespoke, as well as their opinions on whether there should or shouldn't be a reward or penalty attached to it.

Except for 'interruptions between 1 and 3 hours', employee panellists viewed the remaining four measures as having enough importance to be included as a bespoke measure.

Employee (Base 3)	Bespoke?	Reward/penalty?
Repeat sewer flooding	Yes	Mixed
Visible leak repair time	Yes	n/a
Interruptions over 12 hours	Yes	n/a
Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	No	No
Sewer blockages	Yes	n/a
None of the above	n/a	n/a

Reasons underpinning the ranking preferences

Repeat sewer flooding

Some clarification was needed between the employee panellists, to understand what would be captured differently to the proposed common measure of repeat sewer flooding.

☐ *“So, if the repeat incident happens within the same reporting year, then they're all counted as part of the common measure. If the repeat incident has happened in any previous reporting year, it's not included... so, I would say yes, we should measure and report it” – Employee People Panel*

All three employee panellists considered repeat sewer flooding to be an **important issue but were unsure of what the added value was** of having it as a bespoke measure, due to not being able to compare against other water companies or then utilising the data tracked.

☐ *“But it comes down to what we're going to do with that information, because it's only worth anything if we are making a commitment to potentially put some or all of those issues right” – Employee People Panel*

☐ *“From a customer perspective, the only reason they're bothered is because they want it fixed. They want to know that it's not going to happen again. If we're going to record it and report it,*

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but we've got no intention of investing and therefore doing anything about it, that data becomes worthless to a degree" – Employee People Panel

- "I don't really see the benefit. And I think it would be difficult to use the data, like X's just said, especially if there's no one else you can compare against" – Employee People Panel*
- "I assume that just because something isn't a common or a bespoke measure, doesn't mean that we're not interested in it. There'll be lots of things in the business that happen that we record, we report on, and we do things with internally" – Employee People Panel*
- "To fully make an informed decision, we need to understand what the business' intention would be if this wasn't a bespoke measure. So, if this wasn't recorded and reported as a bespoke measure, would we behave differently as a business where we have properties that repeat flood?" – Employee People Panel*

Employees felt that having the measures focus purely on the outcome, 'the number of events of repeat flooding' **doesn't account for the context** in which the events happen. Therefore, this was thought to be an insufficient measure, as external factors of flooding or drought will influence the measure.

- "You need to understand why we're performing well... If we're performing well against it because we've mitigated that risk for some of those properties, then we're genuinely performing well... If [it's] because we haven't had any rain, and there hasn't been an opportunity for those properties to flood, it's almost like a false positive" – Employee People Panel*
- "I agree that it's a good measure and it's measuring that we are reactive, and we are fixing these things. But like X says, if it's just because we've had a drought and there's been no rain, well... it's a false positive" – Employee People Panel*
- "The measure has to have less customers flooded on a repeat basis than last year [which] isn't measuring us [or] driving anything necessarily, because part of that is determined by weather conditions. So, if the purpose of the measure is about actually driving our performance, so that our assets perform better, that's what you need to [have] measured, including that in the measuring somewhere" – Employee People Panel*

Measuring repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke measure was felt to pose **a risk to the business, due to the lack of control over weather** events, which could have an impact of receiving a penalty beyond the control of the company.

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- *“If all we're looking at is have properties flooded on a repeat basis, it's going to take one significant weather event, potentially, and it blows the measure out of the water, and we'll be in a penalty situation. So, what does that penalty look like? And are we willing to run the risk that if we're not targeting investment to reduce the risk of flooding, are we willing to accept that that might be the outcome?” – Employee People Panel*

Sewer blockages

Before deciding whether sewer blockages should be included as a bespoke measure, one employee panellist wanted **further information as to how this differs from the proposed common measures**, and what value it would add.

- *“Is there a common measure that is very similar as we had before with the repeat sewer flooding? Is this something that would be picked up?” – Employee People Panel*
- *“We only have internal flooding and external flooding, we have sewer collapses as well, but nothing to take on board how many blockages we get” – Employee People Panel*

Employee panellists all considered sewer blockages to be **important** and shared their **surprise that sewer blockages are not a proposed common measure**, thereby agreeing it has a place as a bespoke measure.

- *“It would probably change mine... it does come across as quite important to me, and do think it probably has value as a bespoke measure” – Employee People Panel*
- *“I think it's an important one as well. It's more about awareness though, isn't it? We have done big things in getting it out there, but I don't know if people understand... Maybe we should be a bit more visible... If it's not a common measure, then it should be a bespoke one, yeah” – Employee People Panel*
- *“I'm relatively surprised that there isn't a common measure ... certainly in terms of volumes of customer contact. I guess it's a bit like their risk, the likelihood and severity scenario. So, with your repeat flooders, you've got high severity, low likelihood. This is a low severity, arguably, but quite a high likelihood. I'm surprised given the numbers of customers across not only our organization, but across water and sewerage companies collectively that that would impact, that there isn't a common measure” – Employee People Panel*

The reasons highlighted by employee panellists, in favour of measuring sewer blockages as a bespoke measure, were that it's **actionable and it's easy to prevent**. The main prevention strategy discussed

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was in relation to **educating the public and raising awareness** of what causes sewer blockages and how these can be prevented.

□ *“It's something that's quite easily prevented... It's more the awareness piece. Sewer flooding is really, really difficult to control, especially due to the weather. But if we can stop people putting wipes down the drains, the chances are we're going to stop sewer flooding, or some of it at least... I think we need to ramp this one up, basically, because it'll have a massive knock-on effect to people's houses flooding” – Employee People Panel*

In addition, as sewer blockages has **previously been flagged as an area which needs to be improved**, one employee highlighted that this **can't then be taken off the table** after not gaining the desired outcome of reduced sewer blockages; referring to this being a measure which has not been met in 2020/21.

□ *“Whether the metric stays the same is another question, but we've committed to trying to reduce the risk of something happening. Just because we haven't necessarily got the outcome that we hoped for in the time that we originally set, I don't think it's the right thing to then just take that off the table, particularly given the numbers... nearly 12,000... which in the context of our entire customer base is still not a huge amount, but is far, far more customers impacted than by the flooding measure” – Employee People Panel*

Visible leak repair times

Employee panellists felt that visible leak repair times should be considered as a bespoke measure due to **its importance in gaining customer confidence** and ensuring customers are **able to see the company is acting** on visible leaks being reported.

□ *“It can be hard because what one customer sees is a leak, is often not really a leak. But it's very important for the company to be seen to be reacting to things... And often, we've got to remember the customers are our eyes and ears... we do respond quickly, but sometimes we could be a bit quicker. So, I definitely think it should be, it should remain as a bespoke measure if it's not a common measure” – Employee People Panel*

□ *“If there's a leak across the street and they [the customer] rang us three weeks ago and we still haven't turned up, [if] we're really not that bothered, it just looks bad. So... it's not necessarily the amount of water. It's how we look to our customers that we're not reacting, or we are reacting” – Employee People Panel*

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- *“It's almost more like a reputational type thing for the company... because it is quite a whole, high-profile topic, both in the industry and for us, personally. For me, on a very basic level, [it] warrants being returned as a bespoke measure” - Employee People Panel*
- *“It's something that we should definitely be doing. It's definitely a reputational thing” – Employee People Panel*

In addition to measuring visible leak repair times, employee panellists shared that an important element of gaining customer confidence in relation to leak reports is **improving communication with customers to manage their expectations**.

- *“The issue fundamentally with all of this is around communicating with customers and accurately managing those customers’ expectations... what that customer might not know is that just because the water happens to be coming out of the ground over the road from the house, that might not be where the actual leak is, that might be just where it's shown. And we might be doing a whole lot of work behind the scenes that they're not seeing, and they're not being told about to try and track that leak down. So, from a customer perception point of view, it's less about the how much we lost in terms of quantity of water, or how long it took us to fix it, and more about, being more transparent about what we're doing... we should be tracking response time, repair time and we should be trying to drive that down by working more effectively and being more efficient and managing resource better” - Employee People Panel*
- *“I completely agree... there are sometimes bursts that occur where we need a collar making and because we don't have them, we don't stock them and sometimes they can take three weeks. But I just think if you're Joe Public... You don't think they're having a collar specially made for specific main that hasn't been on Earth for 40 years” - Employee People Panel*

Interruptions over 12 hours

All employee panellists felt that interruptions over 12 hours should be considered as a bespoke measure due to the **inexcusable length of time and impact** the interruption would have on people's lives.

- *“I do think that over 12 hours, absolutely, we should be reporting it. Because something has gone catastrophically wrong if we have a customer that's been off supply for over 12 hours. And there should be a further investigation afterwards to see why” – Employee People Panel*

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- *“Operationally if there is an issue where customers are out of supply for that length of time, there must be something out of the ordinary. It's not a standard interruption to supply I wouldn't have thought” – Employee People Panel*

Discussion also included how this would affect a smaller quantity of customers than an interruption of approximately five hours, so **wanted further information on how the length of time '12 hours' was decided** upon.

- *“There's a whole raft of timescales that are more than three and less than 12... I completely get all of the things that X said around 12 [hours being] a really long time” – Employee People Panel*
- *“In terms of customer inconvenience, I certainly think anything over four or five hours becomes quite substantially inconvenient to a customer” – Employee People Panel*
- *“I would say anything over three hours, certainly over four or five hours becomes a definite inconvenience, so I'm not quite sure what the benefit is of... 12 hours” – Employee People Panel*

Whilst agreeing on its importance, employee panellists suggested **acting on tracked data** to support the 143 individuals who have had interruptions lasting more than 12 hours. Ultimately, employee panellists felt **value would need to be added** by ensuring data collected will **drive improvements** and mitigate risk in future.

- *“What you need to understand is, who were the 143? And do we see these people being impacted multiple times on more than one occasion and is that because of where they are? And then, what are we going to do to mitigate that? So, making sure that we have alternative supply plans in place so that if there is some kind of outage, we can mobilize quickly” – Employee People Panel*
- *“Fundamentally, the issue is we have probably small pockets of customers, that if there is an issue will always be without water for potentially a significant length of time. And that might be four... seven hours, anything more than three, essentially. Purely because of where they are” – Employee People Panel*
- *“Tracking them... For four, five hours, and six. So, at the end of it, you get the chance to have a bigger picture of what really happened. What could have been done, what should have been done? What was done and what wasn't? And be able to kind of... wrap it up, I suppose as lessons learned, what would you do differently? What can we do the next time that will stop it from happening” – Employee People Panel*

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□ *“What are we doing to make sure that next time the same thing happens, we don't have another 143 properties that are without water for 12 hours? I would like to think that if we're measuring the target over 12 hours, we're measuring four hours, five hours, six hours, seven hours, eight hours, nine hours, ten hours, 11 hours, as well. And keeping those figures to show that how many were getting back on during any one catastrophic event, so that we can show that we're getting the numbers down” – Employee People Panel*

Interruptions between one and three hours

Employee panellists generally felt that this measure is less important than other potential measures presented in this session, due to it being **less severe**, having less of an impact on customers, and having the **potential to negatively impact the proposed common measure ‘interruptions over 3 hours’**, due to the measure being a calculation of an average.

□ *“We do record every interruption, so... the data can be cut in any hours or whatever. The common ones ‘three hours’... we were good performing at the time [against] three hours, so we pushed to try and see if we could do a better measure, and this [interruption between] one to three [hours]’ came in. So yes, we get the data and we're able to use this information to try and improve our performance against the target. So, we can lower the amount of time properties are lost with water. So, it's for us to achieve that. I know there was perhaps extra teams brought in to attend interruptions quicker, so anything like that. We've got to look for operational activity to try and improve performance. There is a bit of a converse thing with this that the better we get the three-hour measure. Potentially, it could make the one to three hour worse. Because if you managed to push them below the three hours, then they might drop in at two hours 47. So that might make the average one to three go up. So, it's a bit of an awkward measure in that sense” – Employee People Panel*

Following one employee panellist's explanation of the potential negative impact on the proposed common measure ‘interruptions over 3 hours’, other employee panellists agreed that NWG would be best to focus on the proposed common measure as the **reward for bespoke measures would be smaller, comparatively**.

□ *“I'd perhaps be minded to play the numbers game, and not to have a bespoke measure. And to focus on... the common measure that we are actually targeted on from a reward or penalty perspective. And if we were to have the previous measure that we've just talked about, or something similar... it will have a big impact on the customers that it does affect” – Employee People Panel*

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- *“I feel like presumably any reward is relatively small in comparison to the effort that would be potentially required to ensure that we also meet the common measure” – Employee People Panel*
- *“To effectively succeed at that common measure, to get a reward, we effectively fail a measure that we're not actually required to have in the first place... unless you've got confidence that you can meet both, why make it more difficult for yourself?” – Employee People Panel*
- *“Then it's... setting yourself up to fail further almost, isn't it?” – Employee People Panel*

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Northumbrian

The table below provides an overview of the consensus amongst Northumbrian panellists regarding whether the measure should be bespoke, as well as their opinions on whether there should or shouldn't be a reward or penalty attached to it.

'Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours' was felt to not have enough importance to be included as a bespoke measure. The 'mixed' view of including 'sewer blockages' and 'interruptions over 12 hours' as bespoke measures arose from the panellists' views that these are influenced by external factors, such as customers' behaviours and extreme weather events, therefore shouldn't impact NWG in the form of a reward or penalty. Nevertheless, they were considered important measures.

	Northumbrian (Base 13)	Bespoke?	Rewards/penalty?
1 st	Repeat sewer flooding	Yes	Yes
2 nd	Sewer blockages	Mixed	No
3 rd	Visible leak repair time	Yes	n/a
4 th	Interruptions over 12 hours	Mixed	No
5 th	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	No	n/a
6 th	None of the above	n/a	n/a

Reasons underpinning the ranking preferences

Repeat sewer flooding

Northumbrian panellists unanimously agreed that repeat sewer flooding should be considered as a bespoke measure and were **surprised that this was not a proposed common measure** given by Ofwat. Panellists reasoned this was due to the **negative impact sewer flooding has on individuals and the property**, adding that happening once is more than enough.

- *"I struggle to understand why it's a bespoke measure... surely there's properties up and down the country that are affected by repeat sewerage events" – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *"I think [repeat sewer flooding] it's required, but it should be under the OFWAT" – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *"Definitely. I know my family home got affected by a flood and it took about 18 months for it to actually recover from everything. So, I can only imagine for that to happen again, a couple of years later would just, it would just be horrific" – Northumbrian People Panel*

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- *“I rate it very, very high. To have it happen a second time must be devastating, if you've had a sewage flood in the home, and then it happens again. Appalling” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Relating to the negative impact, panellists felt they would **be happy for NWG to be rewarded or penalised** as a result of meeting or not meeting their targets.

- *“I've got no problems with being rewarded if they stop people's houses being flooded” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“[moderator: so, it'd be a penalty if they don't hit the targets they set and reward if do get them? Is that do you think that's reasonable for this one?] “Yeah, the target should be tighter and the penalties if you missed that target” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Sewer blockages

There was a mixed view relating to whether sewer blockages should be considered as a bespoke measure.

Most Northumbrian panellists felt that, whilst sewer blockages are important, it is **not as important as other measures presented to them** in the session thus far, such as repeat sewer flooding. Instead, it was suggested that NWG should track and record this measure, but it **should not be considered** as a bespoke measure.

- *“It's not as important as flooding” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“I don't think it should be a measure, but I think the company needs to record it. Because ultimately, they need to know how time is spent on dealing with the issue” – Northumbrian People Panel*

However, some panellists felt sewer blockages should be considered as a bespoke measure, highlighting its **importance due to the subsequent impact** of repeat sewer flooding, in terms of time and resources, including costs.

- *“Nearly 12,000 incidents no doubt indicates a high percentage of call outs to unblock drains. That's people's time and resources that can be better spent. So, it's definitely an important measure. And then obviously... that links back to sewer flooding... I've never had it happen to me, but I can only imagine it's a disaster” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“Blockages must be consequences, one of the reasons for sewage flooding” – Northumbrian People Panel*

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- *“I think it's a good measure, just as we've discussed, because of the effects of it on flooding” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Overall, Northumbrian panellists recognised sewer blockages as **an important educational piece that should be used to heighten public awareness of what should and shouldn't be put down drains.**

- *“I like that they're targeting areas as well, so they know where to deliver their advertising campaigns around what not to put down drains” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“We want education basically... Educate people as much as you like, but some people are always just going to ignore that advice, for whatever reason, an accident can happen. And that's going to end up with a blockage and that's another figure on the target, isn't it?” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Despite recognising education as an important aspect of reducing sewer blockages, Northumbrian panellists felt that sewer blockages shouldn't be a bespoke measure due to the reward and penalty attached, as this would be unfair to NWG as a company, due to them having **no control over customers blocking drains.**

- *“They have no control about the people who put tea towels down the drain, the toilet. We saw months ago, the tea towels and bras and packets of wipes... they can continue the bin the wipe campaign but really, they're measuring themselves on people's choices of what they put down the toilet... unless people stop putting tea towels down the toilet, they're really going to struggle there” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“It's just the individual, you know? You're relying upon your target being achieved by people not putting stuff down the toilet... it's just almost impossible for them to achieve that because they're relying upon everybody else” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“I understand why the company would want to record it, because obviously they're losing money by people, by their blockages, but ... it's like they're penalizing themselves [for] other people's actions” – Northumbrian People Panel*

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Visible leak repair times

Northumbrian panellists generally felt that visible leak repair times should be considered as a bespoke measure, referring to the **high number of leaks in urban areas, water wastage and poor visual impact** on the area.

- *“I would say yes and my reason for that is, certainly if you live in an urban area, this is one of the standout things that you can see when it’s going wrong, because you see your street running like a stream, as we’ve had locally here last year. So, it’s certainly important, apart from the obvious issue of the water wastage in systems and the amount of it, it’s a very visual thing” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“Yeah, I think it needs to be a measure. As X said, you wander around urban areas and it’s surprising how many leaks you do see” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“Of the ones so far, this one’s the most that I think is worthwhile of measuring’... I walk to work, and I remember, there was a leak in an area and in the wintertime, if it freezes, it’s really hard for me to walk over” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Interruptions over 12 hours

When considering this measure, there was **some confusion around the necessity** of having a bespoke measure concerning interruptions over 12 hours **when Ofwat have stated there is a proposed common measure of interruptions over 3 hours.**

- *“If you’ve got a common measure of ‘three hours [interruptions]’, which you’ve got to do as part of OFWATs common demand... [I] can’t see the point of this 12 hour [interruptions] one... your target with them is three” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“If OFWAT had done the 12 hour one and then Northumbria Water had said now we can smash that we can do it within three, then you can see them doing it that way. But doing it reverse seems like they haven’t got much faith in them being able to hit the three hours” – Northumbrian People Panel*

After some discussion, which involved clarification of pinpointing times, and the view that 12-hours may be considered a major, rather than minor, inconvenience, Northumbrian panellists agreed that **12 hours was a long time which would negatively impact customers.**

- *“I think once those 12 hours hit, it gets a little bit dicey... you’ve probably gone through your supplies and your backups. I think it’s massively important that they are monitoring themselves*

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and keeping an eye on when they are potentially not fulfilling their side of the bargain; their supply” – Northumbrian People Panel

- *“12 [hours], as X was stressing is quite a long period of time. Supply is starting to get down, it’s a bit difficult... I think NWL having their own measure is useful... that might be a reflection of the geography” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“It’s good. Obviously, they are keeping an eye on where it could potentially [be] prolonging it and causing that much of a negative impact on people” – Northumbrian People Panel*

However, Northumbrian panellists felt that NWG would be **setting themselves up to fail** if they were to implement this as a bespoke measure, stating that if they fail to match the 12-hour bespoke measure target, they will also fail the 3-hour proposed common measure target.

- *“If you fail to match your 12-hour target, then you’re really going to fail to match their three-hour target” – Northumbrian People Panel*
- *“It just seems like you’re setting yourself up either for a double reward or a double fail” – Northumbrian People Panel*

Interruptions between one and three hours

Generally, Northumbrian panellists felt there was **little to no difference between the proposed common measure set by Ofwat**, ‘interruptions over 3 hours’, and this potential measure of interruptions between one and three hours. Therefore, it was felt to be of **lesser importance**.

- *“Not if you’ve got three hours’... Because there’s no difference, very little difference between two hours, 59 minutes or three hours’*

Instead, panellists highlighted that **communication regarding the interruptions is what is more important** to them.

- *“I think what’s more benefitting interruptions like that is getting information out to people that say there is an interruption. It’s that side of it that’s equally important to me” [moderator “The communication about it”] “Absolutely” – Northumbrian People Panel*

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Essex

The table below provides an overview of the consensus amongst Essex panellists regarding whether the measure should be bespoke, as well as their opinions on whether there should or shouldn't be a reward or penalty attached to it.

The 'mixed' view of having a reward or penalty attached to 'sewer blockages' as bespoke measures arose from the panellists' views that this relies on customers' behaviours, therefore shouldn't impact NWG in the form of a reward or penalty. Nevertheless, it was considered an important measure.

	Essex (Base 13)	Bespoke?	Reward/penalty?
1 st	Repeat sewer flooding	Yes	Yes
2 nd	Visible leak repair time	Yes	Yes
3 rd	Interruptions over 12 hours	Yes	Yes
4 th	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	Yes	Yes
5 th	Sewer blockages	Yes	Mixed
6 th	None of the above	n/a	n/a

Reasons underpinning the ranking preferences

Due to the remaining upcoming sessions taking place with panellists from the Essex and Suffolk regions, please note that the order of reporting was amended to reflect the first three potential bespoke measures discussed as those which affect the water supply of Essex & Suffolk Water: 'visible leak repair times', 'interruptions over 12 hours' and 'interruptions between one and three hours'.

The two potential bespoke measures which are related to wastewater, are discussed afterwards, as the fourth and fifth discussion points: 'repeat sewer flooding' and 'sewer blockages'.

Visible leak repair times

Visible leak repair times was considered as an **important** measure by Essex panellists, with an overall agreement that it should be considered as a bespoke measure due to it being an encouraging target and **in alignment with environmental targets of reducing water wastage**.

- *"[moderator] you all agree that it should be one of the bespoke measures, then?" "Yes' 'Yeah, yeah, yeah'" – Essex People Panel*
- *"You're trying to prevent waste... so, it's definitely a good one to help with. Don't waste water in the long run" – Essex People Panel*

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□ *“It’s encouraging. Isn’t it? That they’re thinking of what the customer wants, feels, thinks” – Essex People Panel*

□ *“If there’s a massive leak on the road, and you’ve reported it. You assume that it will be sorted out as soon as possible. I would say eight days or six days seems quite a long time, because obviously the water is going to keep pouring out in that time” – Essex People Panel*

Essex panellists added that visible leak repair time has an **impact on customer confidence**, however the communication between the company and customer also influences customer confidence, therefore this should also be considered an important aspect to focus on.

□ *“You need targets, and it also gives the customer confidence when they report a leak... They’ve got an idea of how long they can expect before it’s fixed” – Essex People Panel*

□ *“It’s probably quite important from what everyone said in terms of consumer confidence, because it’s about visible leaks, so, if you’ve seen a leak, you observed as a consumer. Knowing how long it takes, it’d be like, okay that’s going to be sorted quite quickly.... if we knew took X amount of hours... for that to be resolved. So, I think it’s a good consumer indication [and] gives us confidence” – Essex People Panel*

The urgency was also thought to depend on whether the visible leak is in an **urban or rural area**,

□ *“It’s the degree of urgency, isn’t it?... Say, Colchester High Street... or whether it’s in the suburbs where it’s not quite so urgent” – Essex People Panel*

Overall, Essex panellists felt that the rewards and penalties attached to the bespoke measure would be encouraging, **add to customer’s confidence in reporting leaks** due to feeling as though the company will act on the reports promptly.

□ *“Somebody reported it in leak, and it was still happening after a few days... I could feel that the person was frustrated that [they couldn’t] get that help soon enough... penalty, as well as rewards should be also for those measures” – Essex People Panel*

□ *“From the customer’s point of view, we have more confidence to report if there is a leak... the customer confidence will build up more” – Essex People Panel*

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Some concerns were raised by a few Essex panellists, wanting to **ensure NWG weren't penalised for taking more time to repair a complex leak**, as it's **most important to ensure visible leaks are repaired properly**.

- *"I worry about that a little bit, just because I'm just wondering whether in a bid to meet the targets, whether it will be done properly" – Essex People Panel*
- *"Should they really be penalised for taking more time to make sure that it's done properly? Especially, it depends on the complexity of the leak... do they need to take everything out and start again, will they need to build their infrastructure again?" – Essex People Panel*

Interruptions over 12 hours

The increase from an interruption of 3 hours to an interruption of 12 hours was felt to be a **significant difference**, which contributed to Essex panellists viewing it important to consider interruptions over 12 hours as a bespoke measure.

- *"To not have water for twelve hours is a long time, that's half the day, whereas three hours is the morning, afternoon, evening" – Essex People Panel*
- *"I think it needs to be a bespoke option because it's too long. So, they need to bring that down. So, by highlighting how many leaks they have over 12 hours, they can then work to bring that 12 hours down" – Essex People Panel*

Essex panellists generally felt **unsure as to why the length of time of '12 hours' had been decided** and felt that it would make more sense to adjust the wording of the potential measure to, **instead, measure interruptions of more than nine hours**, for instance.

- *"Everything that have been measured over three hours, and obviously anything over that, whether it's six, nine, 12 is going to also be measured. So, what is the point of the 12 hours? I didn't really get that" – Essex People Panel*
- *"From three hours to 12 hours is a big difference. So personally, depending on the urges of your need alluded to earlier, maybe nine hours might be a better bespoke target rather than 12" – Essex People Panel*
- *"I do definitely think it should be a common measure rather than a bespoke... 12 hours is a very long time for some people, three hours seems quite quick. I think [similar] to what X said something like nine. But again, you can see the subjective too" – Essex People Panel*

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- *“I just wondered why it was set at 12 hours... why didn't they consider having a lower threshold for example, five or six hours, because as X said, 12 hours is an awful long time, and you would expect them to [have] fixed it by then” – Essex People Panel*
- *“12 hours is just a long time. I think, reduce it. I know, like you say, three but I think maybe like five, six would probably be alright. But I just feel like 12 is just too long” – Essex People Panel*

One Essex panellist also questioned **whether NWG was adding extra pressure** by adding bespoke measures as a target to meet

- *“Are they shooting themselves in the foot a bit by doing these extra? ... by putting extra pressure on themselves?” – Essex People Panel*

Overall, Essex panellists felt that it was **fair for rewards and penalties to be attached** to this measure, due to recognising a 12-hour interruption as a **significant length of time** which would impact individuals.

- *“Yes. The rewards should be, and they should be delivering some water if it's going to be 12 hours” – Essex People Panel*
- *“Well, the reward should but if they're going to be monetarily paying for if the water goes off, that would be offset” – Essex People Panel*

Interruptions between one and three hours

When first considering whether interruptions between one and three hours should be considered as a bespoke measure, Essex panellists generally felt that it **could be helpful**.

- *“If that's what customers have asked for, and it's being measured already, I don't see why it would be junked [no longer measured]” – Essex People Panel*
- *“Yeah, keep it as a bespoke measure [with] regard to the minutes. I guess that could be helpful, because it could be two hours and one minute, rather than going over to two hours and be classed as three hours” – Essex People Panel*

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However, some Essex panellists felt that **other potential bespoke measures had greater importance**.

- *“I would say that there are much more important measures that we should look at, other than the ones that have been served to us to discuss on” – Essex People Panel*

Due to the **disruption**, one Essex panellist felt that it was **fair for NWG to be penalised** by having to reward the customer.

- *“Yeah, it’s a compensation thing, isn’t it? If it was a major disruption, there has to be some sort of compensation... there should be a reward and a penalty, I think. But the penalty in this instance, will be more important... If somebody’s really sort of desperately in need of water for whatever reason, and the company can’t solve it within that timescale they’ve allocated, there must be some sort of penalty” – Essex People Panel*

One Essex panellist instead shared that they felt **only rewards** should be attached to this measure for NWG, as it would act as **motivation for quick repairs**, and up to three hours interruption in the supply seemed **acceptable** to them.

- *“It will feel good if it’s only rewards. So, it’s motivational to repair it quickly, but I think up to three hours should be acceptable for interruptions in the supply” – Essex People Panel*

Repeat sewer flooding

There was a **unanimous agreement** amongst Essex panellists that repeat sewer flooding should be considered as a bespoke measure due to its **devastating impact on people’s lives and homes**, stating that once is more than enough.

- *“[I’d] be devastated if it happened more than once. Once would be enough” – Essex People Panel*
- *“That would be more than devastating. I couldn’t think of anything worse” – Essex People Panel*
- *“It’s hard to measure someone’s emotional trauma if it happened once, let alone repeated. You can’t put a figure on that” – Essex People Panel*
- *“It’s the company’s responsibility, isn’t it? To be on top of it” – Essex People Panel*
- *“A friend of mine has experienced it [serious flooding] when we lived up in Yorkshire, and it was just devastating... they had a country cottage, their dream home... and eventually, they, it was just demolished” – Essex People Panel*

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- *“It's huge. It never happened to us, so I don't know all the consequences that might come up. But even [to happen] once it's really a lot, but to be repeated, I think it's really, almost unacceptable. It might happen, but it shouldn't, that's why should be measured” – Essex People Panel*

Considered to have devastating consequences, there was similarly a unanimous agreement amongst Essex panellists that penalties should be given to NWG for repeat measures. However, panellists felt that there should be **no reward for NWG preventing repeat sewer flooding from happening**.

- *“Definitely penalties for this one because, yeah, it's huge” – Essex People Panel*
- *“This is the big issue, isn't it? Because we just think that if you live in a house, you've got a mortgage on it, and you think, well I'm going to move and sell. You won't be able to do that” – Essex People Panel*
- *“I don't personally think a reward should be instated for this particular measure. I think more of a penalty if it happens ... because it shouldn't. I know it does happen sometimes, but it shouldn't. It's more of a penalty if it does happen” – Essex People Panel*
- *“I don't think they should be rewarded for getting it right... I think definitely get penalized for repeat measures” – Essex People Panel*
- *“They're getting rewarded twice, really. Once from the customer, but [they] are given a better service. And they're saving money because they're not having to keep going fix the same problem... it encourages them to fix it properly the first time” – Essex People Panel*

Sewer blockages

There was a mixed view when considering whether sewer blockages should be considered as a bespoke measure.

Several Essex panellists agreed that sewer blockages are **important and relevant**, so should be considered as a bespoke measure. Several panellists highlighted that the **target has not been met in the past**, so it shouldn't be removed as a target.

- *“Yeah, I think it should continue... because it seems to be very relevant and important” – Essex People Panel*
- *“I think that is important because obviously it's not been met, the target, and I feel like keeping it can encourage to get it lower, quicker. I know it might be a slow process, but that's just what I think. If it's not achieving it now, then it's something to work towards” – Essex People Panel*

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- *“If it is still happening, that means it really does need to be sorted out. It needs to be a measure so that people can focus on getting it right or the company can put structures in place... to make sure it doesn't happen. Maybe educating people about things like wipes or how to dispose them better. Those kinds of things would reduce how much of it is there” – Essex People Panel*

However, some Essex panellists discussed how the measure **relies on customer behaviours**, which the company cannot control. Relating to this, one panellist shared the **importance of educating the public and raising awareness** of what should and shouldn't be put down drains.

- *“The problem is this is, this is customer related, isn't it? It's the customer that causes most of the blockages” – Essex People Panel*
- *“I've got grandchildren now and they are learning about the environment at school, and conserving water, and not putting naughty things to have the toilet. You know, they are learning at a younger age, so that, when they get into society, they'll already be conditioned to show more respect and be more aware. So, I think the education as X says if the water companies can get involved” – Essex People Panel*

Following discussion of the mixed views on whether sewer blockages should be considered as a bespoke measure, Essex panellists felt that it **wouldn't be fair on NWG to be penalised as it is the customer causing the sewer blockages**. However, one panellist suggested that rewards could be given by Ofwat to **fund education to customers**.

- *“Rather than rewards, if they could use the funds given by OFWAT or whatever, for more education to the consumers” – Essex People Panel*
- *“It's not fair to penalize the water companies when there's, it's the, it's the consumers that are causing that problem” – Essex People Panel*

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Suffolk

The table below provides an overview of the consensus amongst Suffolk panellists regarding whether the measure should be bespoke, as well as their opinions on whether there should or shouldn't be a reward or penalty attached to it.

'Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours' was felt to not have enough importance to be included as a bespoke measure. The 'mixed' view of including 'sewer blockages' arose from the panellists' views that this is largely based on customers' behaviours, therefore shouldn't impact NWG in the form of a reward or penalty, due to being beyond their control.

	Suffolk (Base 10)	Bespoke?	Reward/penalty?
1 st	Repeat sewer flooding	Yes	Yes
2 nd	Interruptions over 12 hours	Yes	Yes
3 rd	Visible leak repair time	Yes	Yes
4 th	Sewer blockages	Mixed	No
5 th	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	No	No
6 th	None of the above	n/a	n/a

Reasons underpinning the ranking preferences

Visible leak repair times

Suffolk panellists felt that visible leak repair times should be considered as a bespoke measure, particularly as the **data shows leak repair times have been improving**, though there were some questions raised regarding how the data is collected and measured.

- *"If the time [to repair visible leaks] still is improving, then I think it should continue... to continue doing it like that" – Suffolk People Panel*
- *"I think it should be in there, but it has got the word 'visible' in front of it... I wonder how that impacts on the total number of leakages" – Suffolk People Panel*
- *"[It] should be kept, but how often do they check that they're getting reliable data? It goes to X's point; you're going to have some long gaps between the leak being seen and being repaired, and another one might be done in two days" – Suffolk People Panel*

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Other concerns shared by Suffolk panellists related to the way in which visible leak repair times are measured, namely the use of ‘average’ and ‘visible’ in the measure. One panellist suggested that **there could be other more important root causes of the leak which require attention**, rather than ‘visible’ leaks.

- *“If people see it, they report it, they’re upset about it; it doesn’t mean to say that you don’t fix the leak, but it might put too much of an effort onto just the visible leaks, and take your eye off the rest of the problem” – Suffolk People Panel*
- *“The idea of an ‘average’ is another issue, because if somebody’s reported on a leak, and they’ve not heard anything for ten days or more, in an ‘average’ it could be lost” – Suffolk People Panel*

The **importance of communicating with customers to manage expectations** was highlighted in a comment by a Suffolk panellist who felt that there were no actions taken by the company for two weeks, based on them not being provided with information.

- *“We had a water leak here. It wasn’t really affecting our pressure, but it went on for about two weeks before anybody even looked at it, as far as we could tell... Give more information to the public at large” – Suffolk People Panel*

One Suffolk panellist stated they felt Essex & Suffolk Water **should be held responsible, as a company**, for actions or lack of actions they take which may result in damage, when considering whether rewards or penalties should be given to the company for this measure.

- *“What I’m more interested in is if Essex & Suffolk Water get it seriously wrong, cause damage or whatever, they should be held responsible” – Suffolk People Panel*

Interruptions over 12 hours

Having an interruption over 12 hours was felt to be **very disruptive** for people, therefore of high importance and should be considered as a bespoke measure.

- *“[It’s] extremely important to monitor the twelve hours. I think most people can manage for three hours without their water, but twelve hours could really impact quite dramatically on a household... we don’t have a water tank in our home, so you’d be in a position where you’d be relying on bottled water; you couldn’t cook your dinner, you couldn’t do your laundry” – Suffolk People Panel*

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- *“I feel that twelve hours without usage of water is just insanity, and very disruptive to a lot of people... I think people can cope for three hours, but not twelve” – Suffolk People Panel*
- *“It is important that they continue to monitor these as a bespoke measure, because as they’ve already said, with Storm Arwen for example, those figures could come out very different” – Suffolk People Panel*

Some Suffolk panellists recognised the importance of an interruption of over 12 hours but continued to suggest it would be of **greater value** for the company and customers to amend this bespoke measure to **measure interruptions of over six, eight or ten hours**, for instance.

- *“I know it is disruptive for the people involved, and I’m not minimising that, but... that’s a very small amount of properties... If you reduce the period without water to measuring, six, eight, or ten hours, that would hit a greater number of properties that have suffered that, and it would be a more valuable target” – Suffolk People Panel*
- *“Yes, I’m inclined to agree with X; I think shortening the time down to six or eight hours, which is still going to impact quite dramatically on people. I think I’d want to see a consistent pattern over a number of years” – Suffolk People Panel*

Overall, Suffolk panellists thought it was fair for NWG to be rewarded and penalised for their performance against this measure, citing that **penalties and rewards drive business performance**. The disruption to people’s lives is significant, and **penalties were thought to motivate prevention**.

- *“I’ve had it when I’ve had a disruption of three hours. You don’t realise how much you depend on your water until it’s been cut off. I think any disruption which is six, eight hours or more, has a significant impact, so there definitely should be penalties” – Suffolk People Panel*
- *“Financial penalties and rewards drive business performance, and even though it counts on the customers, I understand how this works. In the end, the impact on how well you perform should have a greater impact on our bills than the tiny amount that comes in as a reward” – Suffolk People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Interruptions between one and three hours

Interruptions between one and three hours were thought to be a minor inconvenience to Suffolk panellists, who suggested it shouldn't be considered as a bespoke measure and, instead, NWG should keep their focus elsewhere

- *"I think one or three hours... I wouldn't really put that as 'bespoke' really" – Suffolk People Panel*
- *"I think that this measure is one that doesn't need to be a 'bespoke' one, because they are performing well. Those periods without water are relatively short, and it's inevitable that they're going to happen. I think they ought to be focusing on the customers who are very badly affected by situations, as opposed to something which I think is a relatively minor inconvenience" – Suffolk People Panel*

As the length of time is a **minor inconvenience, and somewhat acceptable**, Suffolk panellists generally agreed that there would be **no need to attach a reward or penalty** to this measure.

- *"Probably not... it's a minor inconvenience... there's always going to be a circumstance where one to three hours is an urgent matter... but I wouldn't say it's as important as knowing about people who have been out for a longer period of time" – Suffolk People Panel*

Repeat sewer flooding

There was an overall agreement that repeat sewer flooding should be considered as a bespoke measure due to it being **extremely disruptive and horrendous** for people who must suffer with it.

- *"It's extremely disruptive to people; it's really one of the horrors, isn't it? I think it needs to be there" - Suffolk People Panel*
- *"It's horrendous for people that do suffer with it. To keep it down is good, and it's a failure if it happens" - Suffolk People Panel*

Relating to the **drastic consequence** of repeat sewer flooding, there was an overall agreement that **rewards and penalties are fair to attach** to this measure. Some panellists further suggested individual customers who are affected should receive support and compensation.

- *"Overall, yes, there should be. The better you do, the better it is for everybody out here. If you don't reach your targets, or show some improvements, then yes, I think you should be giving us a little bit back" - Suffolk People Panel*
- *"This is something that affects people in a fairly drastic way and can possibly lead to problems with the sewerage as well. So, yes" - Suffolk People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

- *“They ought to be looking at what they’re doing for those individual customers who are most adversely affected, more so than what happens to the company as a whole” - Suffolk People Panel*

Sewer blockages

Briefly discussed, Suffolk panellists recognised the importance of sewer blockages, but suggested tweaking the **wording of how it is measured to give more information** about the people that are affected by sewer blockages.

- *“Maybe not the number that you clear; the amount of time that people are affected by the blockages would give people more information” - Suffolk People Panel*

Despite recognising its importance, Suffolk panellists generally felt that there **shouldn’t be a reward or penalty** attached to this measure due to the **reliance on customers’ behaviours, and lack of control** NWG have over what customers put down drains.

- *“I don’t think there really should... because it could be the customers as well, as the lady said, it could be baby wipes being flushed down the toilet, so there has to be... If customers are not putting the right things down the toilet, and then it’s getting blocked, or the pipes are getting blocked, then I find it a little bit unfair to say that the water company should be given a penalty” - Suffolk People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Young

The table below provides an overview of the consensus amongst Young panellists regarding whether the measure should be bespoke, as well as their opinions on whether there should or shouldn't be a reward or penalty attached to it.

'Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours' was felt to not have enough importance to be included as a bespoke measure. Whilst 'visible leak repair time' was viewed as important enough to be included as a bespoke measure, the panellists had a 'mixed' view as to whether a reward or penalty should be attached, primarily due to feeling as though it would be beneficial to motivate quick fixes, yet would be unfair to reward NWG and, subsequently, negatively impact customers' bills.

	Young (Base 9)	Bespoke?	Reward/penalty?
1 st	Repeat sewer flooding	Yes	Yes
2 nd	Interruptions over 12 hours	Yes	Yes
3 rd	Sewer blockages	Yes	n/a
4 th	Visible leak repair time	Yes	Mixed
5 th	Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours	No	No
6 th	None of the above	n/a	n/a

Reasons underpinning the ranking preferences

Visible leak repair times

Amongst Young panellists, there was an overall agreement that visible leak repair times should be considered as a bespoke measure. Firstly, as the **target was considered to motivate NWG to continue to meet the target** and secondly, to **increase confidence for the customer** and company.

- *"I would say that, yes, they do maintain it just because if you look at the targets and look at the actual like figures they are achieving, they are achieving it but it's not like a massive difference between the two figures, so I think it's good that the target is there and keeping them in check that way" – Young People Panel*
- *"It's definitely an important measure, obviously trying to reduce that to increase confidence for the customer and the company. So definitely, yes, I think it's a good one" – Young People Panel*
- *"Yes, I agree with the others. It's good to continue to report it, yes" – Young People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Discussions around attaching a reward or penalty to this measure was met with a **mixed** response, as it was felt that it would **motivate the company to meet the target**, however Young panellists felt it was **unfair** that, by meeting the target, the customers would have their bills impacted.

- *“Having that financial reward or penalty, whichever one... it’s a bit of a drive to kind of do the right thing like by customers and within that the companies like values” – Young People Panel*
- *“For the actual company yes, but I don’t think it should then fall onto customers, no. But then obviously we pay for service. So, I don’t know...” – Young People Panel*
- *“I feel like if they do well then, we should get rewarded by like a bit of money off the bill because obviously we’ve paid, we’ve put our trust in them to provide that good service and obviously then they will have succeeded. But if they haven’t done as well then maybe we should pay the same... and then maybe it gets increased the next year or something” – Young People Panel*
- *“I think the penalties are good because they’re going to motivate them to put more work into ensuring that that target is met, but the fact that it’s going to increase prices for customers if it is met, I don’t think that is necessarily needed as a bespoke measure, if that’s going to be the case” – Young People Panel*
- *“For the incentive, I think it is a good sort of measure... that should be in place but maybe just not necessarily sort of then impacting the customers financially” – Young People Panel*
- *“I don’t think that the customer should be really penalised for the company to go and necessarily make sense from the customer’s point of view” – Young People Panel*
- *“You’re paying anyway so why would you have to pay extra just for them just doing what they’re supposed to do” – Young People Panel*

Interruptions over 12 hours

Young panellists agreed that interruptions over 12 hours is a **significant length of time** and would be a **major inconvenience** to people, therefore it should be considered as a bespoke measure.

- *“Yes, I do think that they should continue. Because I think that obviously although it is an infrequent sort of occurrence, I think when it does happen it’s a big inconvenience to people. So, I think that it should still definitely be a measure” – Young People Panel*
- *“That’s half a day of water interruption basically. So, I think even though these things happen infrequently they do and like what X said, like they do have a major impact when they do happen” – Young People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

- *“Even though it happens infrequently it would be a big event for people, so I think it is important to keep a track of it” – Young People Panel*
- *“Yes, I also agree because twelve hours is a long time. That’s obviously going to really affect the customer, it’s a major inconvenience so I think it’s better that it is monitored, and they do meet the standard of making sure that there’s not any interruptions that last over twelve hours” – Young People Panel*

Similar to the previous measure, Young panellists **recognised the importance** of this measure and felt it should be considered bespoke, however they generally felt it was **unfair to have a financial impact on the customers bills**.

- *“I’m not necessarily sure it should be incentivised or anything like that because I think completely unpredictable events... you don’t know when it’s going to happen... maybe sort of keep it a measure in the background but also not a major one” – Young People Panel*
- *“I don’t see why that should be something that affects customers because you don’t get a choice whether or not you’re with a really good company that always outperforms because, how I’m reading that, your bills are always going to be affected” – Young People Panel*
- *“Yes, but as long as it’s not going to impact the customer because at the end of the day in my opinion, I think the customer is the most important here. So, yes, but it can’t have the financial implications on the customer, basically” – Young People Panel*

Interruptions between one and three hours

Overall, Young panellists felt that interruptions between one and three hours are a **minor inconvenience** and felt that the measure should not be considered as bespoke, as NWG should put their **resources and focus elsewhere**.

- *“For it [the interruption] to be measured... doesn’t seem worthwhile and some of the other areas seem to be more worthwhile in measuring” – Young People Panel*
- *“I don’t see it being as a big inconvenience... the time and the effort could be put into other resources and other things, i.e., the twelve-hour thing. Yes, I just don’t think it would be worth it” – Young People Panel*
- *“That short amount of time seems very insignificant compared to twelve hours. So, I don’t think it’s something that should be measurable. Definitely important, but not bespoke” – Young People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

- *“As they’re really so short, I don’t see the point to them being a bespoke measure” – Young People Panel*
- *“It might be a little bit too tight a goal, especially when they’re meeting it quite well ... so, yes, I don’t think it’s worth the financial side in terms of how it comes to the consumer. In that sense, I think you’re right, they should be putting their money into the twelve or ten hour kind of targets, not targets this small” – Young People Panel*

Repeat sewer flooding

Repeat sewer flooding was considered to be one of the most important measures discussed in this session, at this point, by one Young panellist, with other Young panellists **echoing the importance** of repeat sewer flooding. Some Young panellists based in Essex or Suffolk regions shared they **weren’t personally affected** by this and felt that water supply interruption for over 12 hours would be more important.

- *“This is one of the most important ones that we’ve talked about so far” – Young People Panel*
- *““Yes, I agree that it’s really important. It’s a basic thing you expect. You don’t want things to get damaged by a water company” – Young People Panel*
- *“[It’s] quite a major issue, although... I’m in Essex & Suffolk Water so I’m not as affected by it, but I do think it’s an important issue for them to be focused on” – Young People Panel*
- *“It is still an issue that maybe should be focused on but perhaps not as much as something like the environmental issues, or like the loss of water for twelve hours” – Young People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Young panellists agreed that repeat sewer flooding shouldn't happen once, and more than once within five years shouldn't happen at all. Panellists felt that the responsibility lies with NWG, therefore they should be penalised if the target isn't met.

- *"If someone's house is being flooded more than once every five years then that should be something that the company is penalised for, because that can cause loads of damage to the houses, infrastructure and the person who's living in that house as well... I think it should be something that they do get penalised for if that does happen" – Young People Panel*
- *"For it to happen more than once in a five-year period when it, you know, shouldn't happen at all really. I think that, for me, it's the financial implication on the water company because I mean that for me would probably help prevent it because it's a motivation, and it's a driver... people having to be out of the house and it's impacting their whole lives and routines... it's a big incident how rare it might be" – Young People Panel*
- *"They could potentially still have it as a financial incentive to reduce the incidents of it even more, because obviously 23 is still quite a big number for incidents like that" – Young People Panel*
- *"I would agree, it needs to be incentivised" – Young People Panel*
- *"If there is sewer flooding in the house, that often has to be cleaned up and paid for by the individuals' home insurance companies. So, I think it is quite important that, even if they do have to pay a bit more if the company succeeds, it's fine overall because at the end of the day the consumer would have to pay that anyway from their own insurance... and that can affect their premiums as well. So, yes, I think it's definitely worth having" – Young People Panel*

Sewer blockages

Overall, Young panellists agreed that sewer blockages should be considered as a bespoke measure, since it's a **target not being met currently**, in addition to the **impact sewer blockages can have on other issues**, such as sewage and flooding.

- *"Because they're not meeting the target, I think it should be kept as a bespoke measure" – Young People Panel*
- *"It should just stay as a bespoke measure because if there's blockages there are going to be more issues, i.e., more like sewage and more flooding" – Young People Panel*
- *"Because they're not performing well, like X said, it should be kept to the bespoke measure because that's supposedly what the bespoke measures are for" – Young People Panel*

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

- *“I think if you’re not meeting the target then it definitely needs to be kept regardless, because I mean the target’s there for a reason, isn’t it?” – Young People Panel*
- *“Just because they’re not meeting the target, it’s quite important that we do work towards meeting it, especially because it’s quite an important topic as sewer blockages can lead onto other things. So, yes, I think there should be a focus on that” – Young People Panel*

Educating customers through campaigns was felt to be a way in which sewer blockages could be reduced.

- *“I think it’s to do with educating the customer as well. As you say, the whole ‘bin the wipes’ scheme and stuff like that. Maybe having even more advertising around what should go down the toilet and what shouldn’t” – Young People Panel*

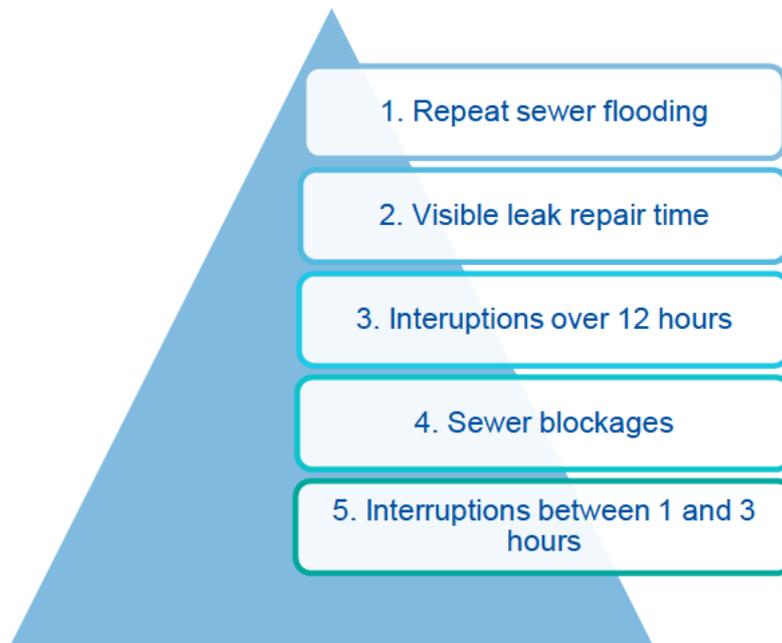


**“Research should
never be just for
knowledge – it**

Conclusions

Conclusions

The overall priority ranking for the potential bespoke measures are shown below.



Repeat sewer flooding (ranking 1st)

Across all panels there was a desire to see this remain as a bespoke measure, underpinning this was a recognition of the severity of the incident from a customer's perspective. For sewer flooding to happen once is awful, but for it to happen more than once in five year period was considered to be unimaginable.

Visible leak repair times (2nd)

It was considered important to keep this as a bespoke measure for two main reasons: (1) there was a concern that failure to address visible leaks in a timely manner would have a negative impact upon public perceptions of NWG; and (2) a recognition of water as vital, but limited, resource and a subsequent desire to minimise wastage.

Interruptions over 12 hours (3rd)

There were mixed views about whether interruptions over 12 hours should remain as a bespoke measure. Similarly to repeat sewer flooding, those in favour reflected the scale of the negative impact on customers to have their water supply interrupted for such a long period of time. Conversely, those not in favour discussed not understanding why this measure needed to be distinct when interruptions over 3 hours were already being proposed as a common measure.

Sewer blockages (4th)

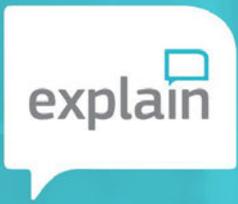
Views on this measure were largely that it should not be considered as a bespoke measure. Panellists felt that it was not fair to set financial penalties or rewards against a target that is solely based upon

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

customer behaviour. However, some felt that this measure could not be entirely disregarded as it had previously been a bespoke measure.

Interruptions between one and three hours (5th)

There was an overarching sense amongst panellists that this measure was of little consequence in light of the proposed common measure of interruptions lasting 3 hours or over. There was also a sense that, if this remained as a bespoke measure, NWG are putting themselves at risk of financial penalties for an issue that was considered to be of lesser importance.



**“Quality is not an act;
a habit”**

Appendices

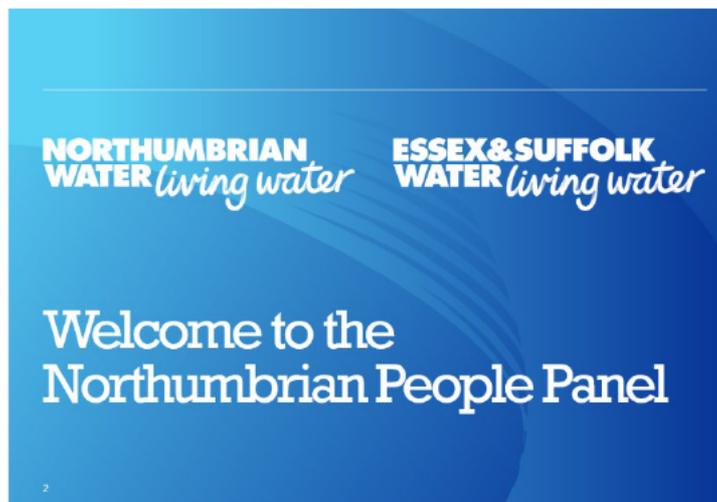
Appendix A: PowerPoint used

AGENDA

MODERATOR TIMINGS – 1.5 HOURS TOTAL 6.30 - 8PM

Bespoke Measures Session

- 6.30pm: Intro
- 6.35pm: What are performance measures
- 6.45pm: Common measures what are they
- 6.55pm: Bespoke measures what are they
- 7pm: The five potential bespoke measures (10 minutes max per breakout)
- 7.50pm: Poll
- 8pm: Close



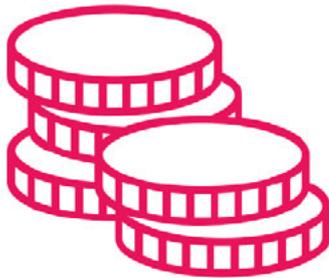
TODAY WE WILL...



1. Learn about the measures that Ofwat are introducing as performance indicators for the water industry
2. Understand the difference between common and bespoke measures
3. Understand the differences that Ofwat are proposing to these performance measures for the 2025-30 business planning period.
4. Understand whether you think Northumbrian Water should continue to report on their bespoke measures.

WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE MEASURES?

WHAT ARE THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN? BACKGROUND



- Within each business plan produced by water companies they include some performance measures.
- Against any of those performance measures companies have the potential opportunity to earn a reward for good performance. They also have the potential opportunity to earn a penalty for poor performance.
- These rewards and penalties will have an impact on customer bills.

WHAT ARE THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN? BACKGROUND

- There are **two** different types of performance measure:

**Common
measures**

**Bespoke
measures**

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

WHAT ARE THE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN?

WHAT ARE COMMON MEASURES?

- Ofwat has proposed that all water and wastewater companies **must include some common performance measures** in their business plan for 2025-30.
- Each water company will have to measure and report on their performance against each of the common performance measures.
- This will mean that companies' performance **can be compared** across the industry

Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5
1 Arsenal	12	10	1	1	30	11	19	31	●●●●●
2 Man City	12	9	2	1	37	11	26	25	●●●●●
3 Tottenham	13	5	2	3	26	16	10	25	●●●●●
4 Newcastle	12	5	5	1	24	10	14	24	●●●●●
5 Man United	12	7	2	3	17	16	1	23	●●●●●

7

WHAT ARE THE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN?

WHAT ARE BESPOKE MEASURES?

- Unlike common measures, bespoke measures are not required by Ofwat.
- Bespoke measures are **performance measures that customers want** companies to measure within their plans. Each company may have different bespoke measures.
- It is very important to Northumbrian Water that any bespoke performance measures included in the next business plan are **wanted**



WHAT ARE THE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN? THE CHANGES IN THE 2025-2030 BUSINESS PLANNING PERIOD

- Ofwat has proposed that for the next business planning period water companies will need to report on more common performance measures than in previous years.
- Because of this, some of the **bespoke** measures that Northumbrian Water currently uses will be made common across the industry for 2025 to 2030.

Northumbrian Water have **five** bespoke performance measures that are not being made common. We would like your views on whether we should retain those five bespoke performance measures for 2025-30.



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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS



COMMON MEASURES - WHAT ARE THEY ?

WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES?
1. CUSTOMER AND BUSINESS EXPERIENCE



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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES? 2. WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS



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WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES? 3. MEASURES OF WATER QUALITY



WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES? 4. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SEWER FLOODING

Banstead man's home flooded with sewage from broken pipe

10th March 2020



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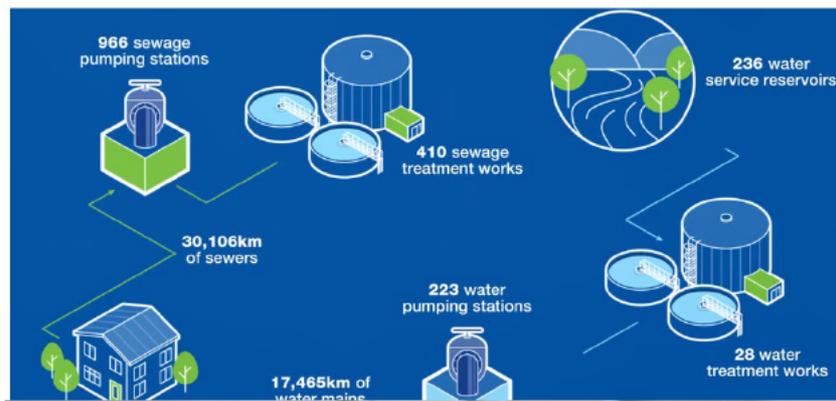
BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES? 5. ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES



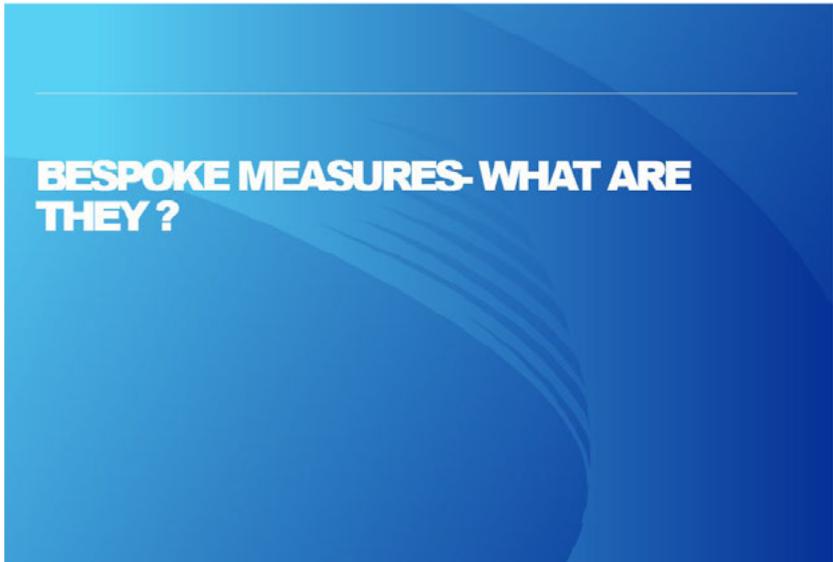
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WHAT ARE THE COMMON MEASURES? 6. ASSET HEALTH



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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS



WHAT ARE THE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN? WHAT ARE BESPOKE MEASURES?

- Unlike common measures, bespoke measures are not required by Ofwat.
- Bespoke measures are **performance measures that customers want** companies to measure within their plans. Each company may have different bespoke measures.
- It is very important to Northumbrian Water that any bespoke performance measures included in



WHAT ARE THE MEASURES IN THE BUSINESS PLAN? WHAT ARE BESPOKE MEASURES?

Ofwat have said that there are **two conditions** for a bespoke measure to be agreed

It concerns an issue of local importance
OR
A company is performing poorly on an issue which may not be a concern for other water companies.



TELL US...

- ✓ **What do you think about bespoke performance measures?**
- ✓ **Should Northumbrian Water include them in the next business plan?**

THE FIVE POTENTIAL BESPOKE MEASURES

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

1. REPEAT SEWER FLOODING

- This is when a customer's property floods **more than once** in a five year period



Ofwat has proposed that internal and external sewer flooding incidents be reported as common performance indicators.

- Northumbrian Water have **performed well** against this measure. In 2020-21 they reported 25 repeats (their target was 46). In 2021-22 this figure was 23 (target was 44).

25

DISCUSS...

- ✓ Do you think Northumbrian Water should continue to have repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke measure?
- ✓ Why?
- ✓ Does Northumbrian Water's performance against this measure change the way you think?
- ✓ Should Northumbrian Water have financial rewards and penalties placed against them for this measure?

THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

2. SEWER BLOCKAGES

- This is the **number of blockages** cleared each year due to debris in sewers.



Ofwat is not proposing to record any similar measures in their common measures

- Currently, Northumbrian Water are **not meeting** their targets for this measure. There were 11,991 blockages in 2021-22 (target 11,379).

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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

DISCUSS...

- ✓ Do you think Northumbrian Water should continue to have sewer blockages as a bespoke measure?
- ✓ Why?
- ✓ Does Northumbrian Water's performance against this measure change the way you think?
- ✓ Should Northumbrian Water have financial rewards and penalties placed against them for this measure?

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THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

3. VISIBLE LEAK REPAIR TIME

This is the average time it take to fix a leak reported by customers.



Ofwat include the amount of water lost through leaks and the number of pipes that burst causing a leak in their proposed common measures.

Northumbrian Water have performed well against their targets.

2020-21	2021-2022	2022-2023	2024-2025
10 days target	8 days target	6 days target	4 days target

DISCUSS...

- ✓ Do you think Northumbrian Water should continue to have visible leak repair time as a bespoke measure?
- ✓ Why?
- ✓ Does Northumbrian Water's performance against this measure change the way you think?
- ✓ Should Northumbrian Water have financial rewards and penalties placed against them for this measure?

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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

4. INTERRUPTIONS TO SUPPLY LASTING OVER 12 HOURS

This is the number of properties that have an interruption to their water supply that lasts **over 12 hours**.



Ofwat are proposing to include interruptions lasting three hours within the common measures

In 2020-21 Northumbrian water **performed well** against this target, with 143 properties impacted (target 500).

Storm Arwen has impacted figures for 2021 – 22 and these are currently being finalised with Ofwat.

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DISCUSS...

- ✓ Do you think Northumbrian Water should continue to have interruptions lasting over 12 hours as a bespoke measure?
- ✓ Why?
- ✓ Does Northumbrian Water's performance against this measure change the way you think?
- ✓ Should Northumbrian Water have financial rewards and penalties placed against them for this measure?

THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

5. INTERRUPTIONS TO SUPPLY LASTING BETWEEN 1 AND 3 HOURS

This is the average number of minutes a property is without water when the interruption lasts between **1 and 3 hours**.



Ofwat are proposing to include interruptions lasting three hours within the common measures

In 2020-21 Northumbrian water **performed well** against this target, achieving 7 minutes 39 seconds (target 8 minutes 4 seconds)

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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

DISCUSS...

- ✓ Do you think Northumbrian Water should continue to have interruptions lasting between 1 and 3 hours as a bespoke measure?
- ✓ Why?
- ✓ Does Northumbrian Water's performance against this measure change the way you think?
- ✓ Should Northumbrian Water have financial rewards and penalties placed against them for this measure?

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THE BESPOKE MEASURES THAT NORTHUMBRIAN WATER CURRENTLY REPORT ON

PREFERENCE OF BESPOKE MEASURES

Repeat sewer flooding

Sewer blockages

Visible leak repair time

Interruptions over 12 hours

Interruptions between 1 and 3 hours

VOTE AND DISCUSS...

- ✓ Please vote to tell us your preference for which bespoke measures Northumbrian Water should continue to measure in the next business planning period.
- ✓ Please remember you can vote for 'none at all'.
- ✓ Let's discuss....

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BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

WHAT'S NEXT? LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT SESSION

- In the next session, we will be looking at business planning options and which you find the most acceptable.
- We'll be in touch about the next session which will take place Monday 5th December.



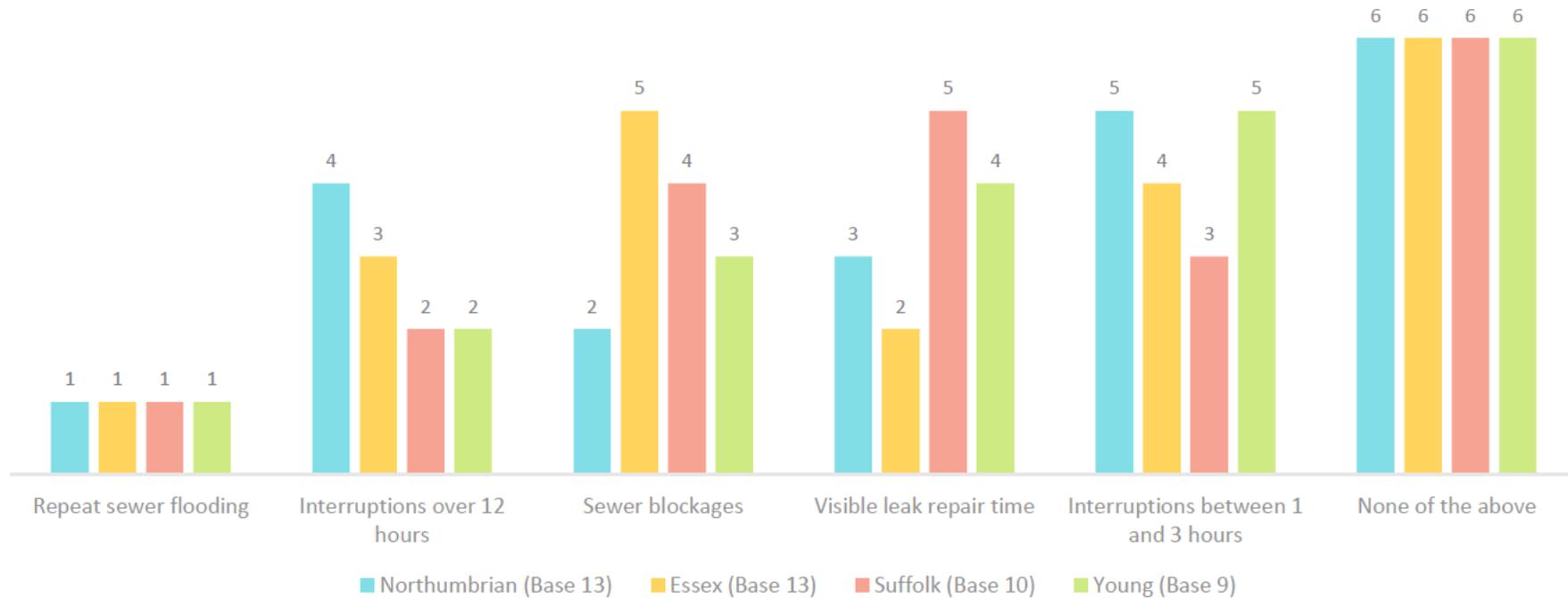
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THANK YOU

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Appendix B: Poll results

Please rank your preference of which bespoke measures you think Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water should continue to measure in the next business planning period, on a scale where 1 is your most preferred and 6 is your least preferred (Base 45)



BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

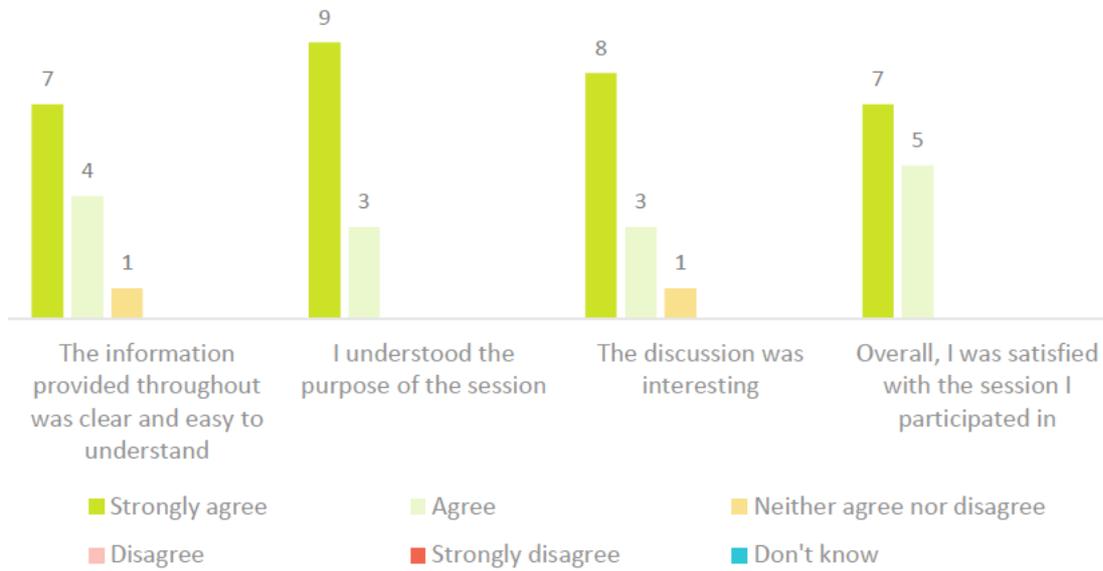
Most preferred



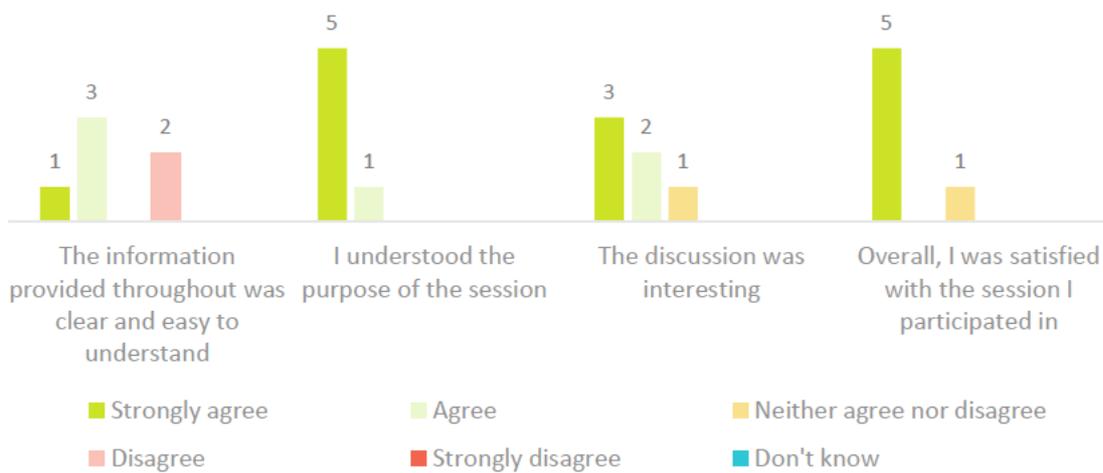
Least preferred

Appendix C: Event feedback

Closing poll results for Essex People Panel (Base 12)



Closing poll results for Young People Panel (Base 6)





Report Author: Ashley Tate

Report check: Kirsty Laing

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

APPENDIX 2: ONLINE SURVEY

1. Introduction

Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) is a company registered in England and Wales. In the north east of England, NWL trades as 'Northumbrian Water' in the supply of potable and raw water and the collection, treatment and disposal of sewage and sewage sludge (it provides only waste water services in Hartlepool). In the south east of England, NWL trades as 'Essex and Suffolk Water' in the supply of water services only.

Every five years, water and wastewater companies in England and Wales develop a 5-year business plan. The plan details what services will be provided to customers, how those services will be provided and what the company thinks it will cost, including the cost of any new investments.

Within their plans, companies include performance measures. Some of the performance measures apply to all companies (common performance measures) whilst others are bespoke performance measures for one or more companies. Against any of those performance measures companies have the potential opportunity to earn a reward for good performance, which would increase all customer's bills. They also have the potential opportunity to earn a penalty for poor performance, where all customers would see a reduction in their bill.

Companies submit their business plans to Ofwat, the economic regulator for the water industry. Ofwat review companies' plans and determine what services and investments companies should provide. They also determine the size of potential rewards or penalties, and how much companies can charge customers.

Northumbrian Water is developing its business plan for 2025-30. It is important to Northumbrian Water that the plan is built around what customers want and need. This survey asks your opinion on bespoke performance commitments that Northumbrian Water could include in the business plan for 2025-30.

2. Introduction to measures

Ofwat has said that all water and wastewater companies must include some common performance measures in their business plan for 2025-30. All companies will have to measure and report on their performance against each of the common performance measures. This will mean that companies compared across the industry. The proposed common performance measures include:

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE – how customers and business’ rate their experience of a company



WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS - the average length of time a property is without water



WATER QUALITY – the number of customer contacts about taste, smell and appearance of tap water



INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SEWER FLOODING – the number of incidents of flooding to properties from sewers



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES – this includes reducing greenhouse gas, improving the environment’s biodiversity, reducing the volume of water used by customers, water through leakage, pollutions, treatment works compliance, storm overflows, and river and bathing water quality



HEALTH OF OUR ASSETS - this includes the number of water mains that burst and sewers that collapse, and the levels of unplanned outages at water treatment works

As well as the common performance measures, companies could include some bespoke, or customised, performance measures. These would be performance measures that customers want companies to measure within their plans.

It is very important to Northumbrian Water that any bespoke performance measures included in our business plan 2025-30 are wanted and supported by our customers. This is why we are carrying out this research to understand your views and preferences.

Q1: Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include bespoke performance commitments in our 2025-30 review?

- Yes, Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include bespoke performance commitments
- No, Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should not include bespoke performance commitments
- Don't know

Q1a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

3. Measures and performance

Ofwat are proposing to make some of Northumbrian Waters current bespoke performance measures common across the industry for 20 Water have five bespoke performance measures that are not being made common. We would like your views on whether we should retain performance measures for 2025-30. The following section will take you through each bespoke performance measure and ask your opinion on whether Northumbrian Water should keep them.

4. Repeat sewer flooding

The number of internal sewer flooding incidents in properties which have flooded internally more than once in the last five years. Internal sewer flooding is where sewage from Northumbrian Water's sewers and drains escapes from the network and enters a customer's property.

Ofwat has proposed common performance measures for the number of internal and external sewer flooding incidents. External sewer flooding is where sewage from Northumbrian Water's sewers and drains escapes from the network and enters external areas of a customer's property, e.g. garden or yard.

This is a Northumbrian Water bespoke performance measure.

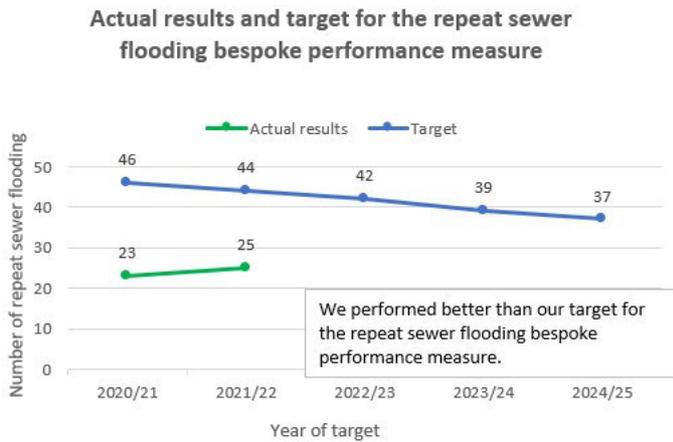
Q2: Do you think Northumbrian Water should include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30?

- Yes, include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q2a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Since 2020/21, Northumbrian Water has improved performance against this bespoke performance measure.

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS



Northumbrian Water is better than the industry average for the common performance measure for internal sewer flooding.

Q3: Based on performance, do you think Northumbrian Water should include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure

- Yes, include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include repeat sewer flooding as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q3a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Q4: Do you think Northumbrian Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in re repeat sewer flooding performance measure during 2025-30?

- Yes, potential for reward or penalty should be attached to the repeat sewer flooding bespoke performance measure
- No, potential for reward or penalty should not be attached to the repeat sewer flooding bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q4a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

5. Sewer blockages

This is the number of blockages Northumbrian Water remove due to debris in sewers, each year. Blockages can occur when items are flushed that shouldn't be, this can include wipes, fats, oils etc. Northumbrian Water's sewers are designed to only take wee, poo and toilet paper

Ofwat has not requested the industry to report on the number of sewer blockages from 2025.

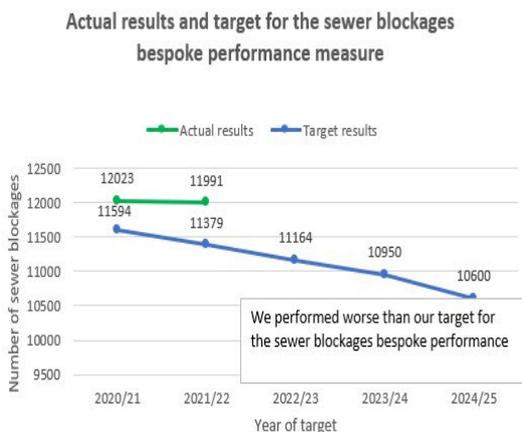
This is a Northumbrian Water bespoke performance measure.

Q5: Do you think Northumbrian Water should include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30?

- Yes, include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q5a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water's performance for the sewer blockages bespoke performance measure. Northumbrian performing worse than target for sewer blockages. The target for 2021-22 was 11,379 blockages and 11,991 were experienced.



Q6: Based on performance, do you think Northumbrian Water should include sewer blockages as a bespoke performance

- Yes, include sewer blockages as a bespoke
- No, do not include sewer blockages as a bespoke
- Don't

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Q6a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Q7 - Do you think Northumbrian Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty for poor performance in re blockages bespoke performance measure during 2025-30?

- Yes, potential for reward or penalty should be attached to the sewer blockages bespoke performance measure
- No, potential for reward or penalty should not be attached to the sewer blockages bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q7a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

6. Visible leak repair time

This is the average time it takes Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water to fix a leak once it has been reported by a customer.

Ofwat does not include a repair time in their common performance measures list.

Ofwat do include the amount of water lost through leaks and the number of pipes that burst and cause a leak as common performance m This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

Q8: Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure

- Yes, include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q8a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water have improved performance against this measure. The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's performance targets and actual results based on the bespoke performance measure visible leak repair time.



Q9: Based on performance, do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include visible leak repair time as a bespoke for 2025-30?

- Yes, include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include visible leak repair time as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q9a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Q10 - Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty in relation to the visible leak repair time bespoke performance measure during 2025-30?

- Yes, potential for reward or penalty should be attached to the visible leak repair time bespoke performance measure
- No, potential for reward or penalty should not be attached to the visible leak repair time bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q10a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

7. Interruptions to supply 1-3 hours

This is the average number of minutes a property is without water when an interruption to water supply lasts between 1-3 hours.

Ofwat expects companies to report on interruptions to supply over 3 hours.

This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

Q11: Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance 30?

- Yes, include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q11a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's targets and actual results based on the bespoke performance to supply 1-3 hours.

Actual results and target for the interruptions to supply 1-3 hours bespoke performance measure



BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Q12: Based on performance, do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours performance measure for 2025-30?

- Yes, include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include interruptions to supply 1-3 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q12a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Q13 - Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty in relation to the bespoke performance measure interruptions to supply 1-3 hours performance measure during 2025-30?

- Yes, potential for reward or penalty should be attached to the interruptions to supply 1-3 hours bespoke performance measure
- No, potential for reward or penalty should not be attached to the interruptions to supply 1-3 hours bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q13a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

8. Interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours

This is the number of properties that have an interruption to their water supply that lasts over 12 hours.

Ofwat plans to include interruptions to supply greater than 3 hours as the industry wide measure.

This is a joint Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water bespoke performance measure.

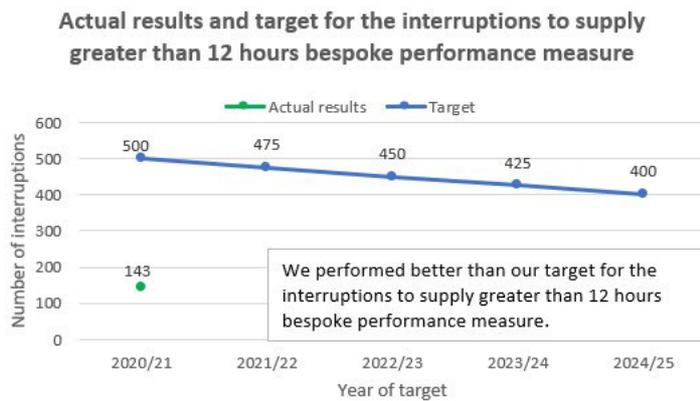
Q14: Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke for 2025-30?

- Yes, include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q14a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

The infographic below shows Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's targets and actual results for the bespoke performance measure interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours.



Storm Arwen on 26th – 27th November 2021 was an abnormally destructive storm, which was particularly damaging to the North-East of coast of Scotland. The impact Storm Arwen had on power supplies effected Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water's network. Due Water are still working out the actuals for 2021/22 and have not included this number in the results.

Q15: Based on performance, do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure for 2025-30?

- Yes, include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- No, do not include interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours as a bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q15a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

Q16 - Do you think Northumbrian Water / Essex & Suffolk Water should be able to earn a reward for good performance or pay a penalty f relation to the interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours bespoke performance measure during 2025-30?

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

- Yes, potential for reward or penalty should be attached to the interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours bespoke performance measure
- No, potential for reward or penalty should not be attached to the interruptions to supply greater than 12 hours bespoke performance measure
- Don't know

Q16a: Please can you tell us the reason for your answer

9. Any further comments

Q17: Do you have any further comments you would like to make?

10. Prize draw

To enter the prize draw to win £200 worth of Amazon vouchers, please fill in the boxes below and consent to our terms and conditions. W information if you are the prize draw winner and it will be stored separately from your survey responses to ensure your anonymity.

I can confirm that I am ages 18 years or over

- Yes
- No

Your Name:

BESPOKE PERFORMANCE COMMITMENTS ONLINE SURVEY - RESULTS

Please provide a phone number or email address. We will only use this information to contact you if you are the prize draw winner

I consent to NWL using my name and contact information to administer the prize draw. I understand that I can withdraw this consent at an haveyoursay@nwl.co.uk

Prize Draw Terms & Conditions: This prize draw is being held by Northumbrian Water Limited, whose registered office address is Northumbria House, Abbey Road, Pity Me, Durham, DH1 5FJ. The prize, Amazon vouchers equating to the value of £200, is non-transferable and there is no cash alternative.

Entry into the prize draw opens on 4 November 2022 and closes on 18 November 2022 at midnight. There will be one overall winner selected by Northumbrian Water Limited at random from the contact information provided. The winner will be notified by using the contact details they provide with their prize draw entry. Only one entry allowed per household. Entrants must be aged 18 years old or over. The prize draw is not open to employees of Northumbrian Water Limited. In entering the prize draw, you confirm that you are eligible to do so and eligible to claim the prize. Northumbrian Water Limited may require you to provide proof that you are eligible to enter the prize draw. The decision of Northumbrian Water Limited is final and no correspondence or discussion will be entered into. The prize winner's details will not be published anywhere but, provided that the prize draw winner provides their consent to us to do so, their name and county location will be available to members of the public for one month after the closing date of the prize draw by request to haveyoursay@nwl.co.uk. The prize will be sent by email to the winner by 2 December 2022. We retain the personal data of all entrants into this prize draw for no longer than 30 days, it will be securely deleted from our systems by 18 December 2022. By entering the prize draw you are consenting to these terms and conditions.

Northumbrian Water Limited will not accept any liability for any technical failure (software, hardware, network or other) which may delay or otherwise impede the submission of your entry into this prize draw. Any information that you provide when entering this prize draw will be used in line with our privacy policy. If you have any queries regarding the use of your personal data by Northumbrian Water Limited, please refer to our privacy policy <https://www.nwl.co.uk/your-home/privacy-policy.aspx>. Northumbrian Water Limited's contact address for this particular prize draw is Customer Strategy & Experience, Northumbria House, Abbey Road, Pity Me, Durham, DH1 5FJ.11.

11. Thank you

Thank you for taking part in our survey. If you have any further questions about this research, please contact haveyoursay@nwl.co.uk