

Energy Saving Trust's response to Waterwise's Round 1 consultation on their UK Water Efficiency Strategy

Submitted on 3 September 2021

Section 2: General questions

1. Do you think that water scarcity is a serious threat to the UK?

- a. Yes
- b. No

No response

2. Do you think that there needs to be greater consideration given to the impacts of water scarcity?

- a. Yes
- b. No

No response

2b. If yes, then by whom?

No response

3. Do you think that increased water efficiency is a legitimate response to the threat of water scarcity?

- a. Yes**
- b. No

3. Do you think we are doing enough at the moment to mitigate the threat of water scarcity?

- a. Yes
- b. No

No response

Section 3: Boundaries of the new Strategy 2.0

1. The current vision of the Strategy is for *"A UK in which all people, homes and businesses are water efficient"*. Do you think we should retain the vision for the new Strategy?

a. Yes –

b. No

1b. If not, what do you think we should amend it to?

We think that the vision should be expanded to acknowledge the importance of water efficiency in both the public sector estate and in community managed buildings.

2. We propose the new Strategy continues to be UK wide. Do you agree?

a. Yes

b. No

2b. If no, why?

Yes, we agree that the new Strategy continues to be UK wide. However, it will be important that it recognises the policy and other differences that exist in each separate country, for example, unlike households elsewhere in the UK Scottish household water use is not metered.

2. Broadly which elements of water demand should the new strategy address?

a. Household water use

b. Business / non-household water use

c. Leakage

d. Public water abstractors

4. What timescale should the Strategy cover?

a. 10 Years (2022–2032)

b. 5 Years (2022–2027)

c. 3 Years (2022–2025)

Section 4: Key Themes

1. Which themes or issues do you think the new Strategy 2.0 should include?

a. **New developments**

b. **Improving products**

c. **Raising awareness**

We think the new Strategy needs to go beyond the issue of simply “raising awareness”. Specifically, we believe it should also consider how water efficiency can be normalised, encouraged, supported and enabled across the UK. This is an area in which we have considerable expertise – gained primarily as a result of our work over the last four years with Scottish Water to help householders reduce their energy bills and carbon footprints by taking simple steps to save water. Further information about our work with Scottish Water can be found in section 5 below. If you would like any further information about this work please do not hesitate to get in touch.

d. **Business water efficiency** – We suggest this should also consider the role that employee engagement can play. In Scotland Energy Saving Trust is funded by the Scottish Government to provide expert trainers to deliver free, fun and interactive workshops to help employees cut down their energy use, save water and travel sustainably. Attendees can save money on their bills, become healthier through active travel, and help tackle the climate emergency. The workshops are tailored to suit the specific needs of each business. Further information can be found [here](#).

e. **Energy & net zero** – We recommend this should include household energy savings and carbon reduction through reducing hot water we use at home.

f. **Affordability** – we would encourage consideration of the role that water efficiency can play in reducing energy bills through saving hot water which is particularly relevant for non-metered households. In this context we would like to highlight a pilot project that we are currently undertaking with Scottish Water to explore how water efficiency devices and advice can help vulnerable customers to reduce their energy bills. We would be happy to provide more information about this pilot project if it would be useful.

g. **Policy & regulation**

h. **Natural environment**

2. Which other themes should be included in the Strategy 2.0?

Communities water efficiency – Through the water saving packs project that Energy Saving Trust is delivering in Scotland in partnership with Scottish Water, we have engaged with communities to deliver water efficiency advice and devices through a community

led campaign. We relied on community local partners to tailor our communications and make it local. We organised events and activities to engage with the community. Our recent evaluation of the project has shown that people we engaged through a community campaign were more likely to make changes to their behaviours in comparison to people we engaged on a one to one basis. (see case study below).

We also note that through water efficiency campaigns, there is potential to help communities on private supplies to mitigate and adapt to the effect of climate change on water supply quality and quantity.

Adaptation to climate change and the role that water efficiency can play in this. In this context we note that there could be merit in the new Strategy considering the potential to better integrate water efficiency awareness raising, advice and support for both climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

3. If you could see 3-5 actions implemented to help increase/improve water efficiency what would they be?

Water efficiency awareness campaigns- to raise awareness across the UK and provide tailored advice to customers. As well as campaigns aimed at the general public we believe that **community led campaigns also have a key role to play** to help engage with householders. Our recent evaluation of the project Home Energy Scotland run in partnership with Scottish Water has shown that people we engaged through a community campaign were more likely to make changes to their behaviours than people we engaged on a one to one basis. (see case study below).

Greater inclusion of water efficiency within energy efficiency and net zero awareness campaigns/programmes. Net zero targets will be considerably harder to achieve without improved water efficiency. Water efficiency measures and messages (hot water saving devices and advice) should be widely included in energy efficiency and net zero campaigns/programmes across the UK. The contribution that water efficiency can make to the delivery of net zero objectives should be made clear in nationwide communication campaigns and actions.

A mandatory water label for the UK, with associated minimum standards. The Collaborative Fund and Waterwise, with support from Defra, commissioned the Energy Saving Trust to assess and evaluate the impact that a water labelling scheme could have on domestic water consumption across the UK. From this (see: <https://www.waterwise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Water-Labeling-Summary-Report-Final.pdf>) we believe that a mandatory water label for the UK, with associated minimum standards for new-build properties, for major refurbishments, and for the sale

of new products generally, is not only the most effective way to drive efficiency improvements but also the most cost-effective way to do so.

3. How should we monitor progress against the themes within the Strategy 2.0?

No response

Section 5: Case studies and Next Steps

1. Do you have any relevant case studies or evidence that could inform the new Strategy or be highlighted in it as a case study? Please describe

As noted above Energy Saving Trust has worked with Scottish Water for a number of years to help people in Scotland to reduce their energy bills and carbon footprints by taking simple steps to save water. This work includes the provision of free tailored water and energy saving advice and water efficiency devices to householders through the Home Energy Scotland phone line, events and workshops to help householders save water energy and money. We have a number of relevant examples together with evidence from the most recent evaluation of this work that could either inform the new Strategy or be highlighted in it as a case study. These are detailed below. The evaluation was performed through phone interviews in October 2020 focusing on customers engaged in 2019-2020.

Estimated carbon and financial savings as a result water efficiency behaviour change

The evaluation of the Scottish Water / Home Energy Scotland partnership work estimates that in 2019-2020 water saving advice from Home Energy Scotland contributed to a lifetime saving **1,050 tonnes of CO2** and have helped achieve a lifetime saving of **£400,500** on household energy bills. This figure doesn't include savings made by installing the devices – which will result in additional carbon emissions reductions and money savings.

The value of a community based campaign to raise awareness of water and energy efficiency in Scotland and help householders save water, energy and money

Home Energy Scotland and Scottish Water work in partnership to raise awareness about water and energy efficiency in Scotland and help householders save water, energy and money. We organise community campaigns with local partners based on intensive communications using local figures/facts, face to face events (now webinars) where householders can request a water saving pack and activities such as workshops, activities with schools, social media competitions, etc. The evaluation we undertook this year showed that 71% of respondents felt that being a part of community focused campaigning had encouraged them to take action that they would not have taken on

their own. The evaluation showed that 71% of the respondents we engaged through the community campaign had adopted a new behaviour as a result of the advice received. The equivalent figure for customers we engaged with on a one-to-one basis was 66%. More than 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the water efficiency campaign made them feel that their community was a good place to live. The evaluation also showed that respondents were more likely to remember the advice and take action if they were engaged through a community led campaign as opposed to respondents who were engaged with no community communication.

Customer case studies

We have collected and published four customer case studies which are available on the Home Energy Scotland Website (see: www.homenergyscotland.org/how-the-water-saving-pack-has-helped-peter).

2. How do you want to be involved in shaping and delivering the Strategy 2.0?

- a. **Involved with a new task and finish group**
- b. No more than the consultation responses
- c. **Involved in progressing specific themes or actions**
- d. As part of a wider engaged stakeholder group via Waterwise newsletter
- e. Other

3. Do you have any other comments?

We have no additional comments.