

United Utilities 7306
Water Quality Research
Focus Group Discussion Guide (1.5 hours)

Stimulus required:

- 2 kettles
- 3 plastic see through cups per person
- 6 basins, 2 soaps (check they are non-allergenic)
- 3 mugs per person, 3 tea bags per person, milk
- Video and audio recorders
- Audio and video consent forms (+ incentives, and incentive receipt forms)
- Paper and pens

Background Information for Moderator	N/A
Research objectives	<p>The purpose of this study will be to explore customer reactions to the proposition that, from time to time, the water quality (hardness) that they experience may deviate from their usual blend.</p> <p>The main objective:</p> <p>“To provide insight on customers’ attitudes to changes in drinking water quality relating to changes made to balance water resources more widely.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impacts are acceptable to customers, and where are any thresholds where acceptability tails off • Are there any key differences across the region in what is or isn’t acceptable • Does the reason for the use of water make any difference to customers perceptions/attitudes/acceptability of change • How should UU communicate with customers about any planned changes to water quality to help mitigate any concerns and what language would work best in communicating with customers and with the public at large about such issues.

(I) Introduction		5 mins
Brief explanation of the purpose of the research	<p><i>Moderator to explain the nature of the research;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello everyone! Thanks for agreeing to take part in tonight’s discussion. • Tonight we are carrying out research on behalf of United Utilities, the company that supplies water and wastewater services to your home. • We would like to get your views on what you think of the water that is supplied to your home. As well as us asking you some questions, we also have some tasks for you to take part in. <p><i>Moderator to reassure respondents about confidentiality</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will feedback the findings to United Utilities in a report format. • Brief explanation about audio/video recordings and potential use of audio/video snippets 	
Introductions	<p><i>Moderator to invite respondent(s) to introduce themselves;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, let’s do some introductions! I’m (MODERATOR NAME) from DJS Research and I’ll be leading tonight’s discussion. • Introduce any client observers • Please could you now introduce yourselves, giving your name, who you live with, are you on a water meter and what you currently pay for your water and sewerage services? (an approximate guess is fine!) 	

(II) Group Discussion: OPINIONS OF CURRENT TAP WATER	10 mins
Perceptions of current water supply	<p>To begin with, I would first like to get your thoughts on the water currently supplied to your home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, when thinking of the tap water supplied to your home, what words or phrases would you use to describe it? • How satisfied would you say you are with the quality of your water? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> • What does the phrase 'quality water' mean to you? Is it just one thing or is a collection of things? • Have any of you ever had an issue with the quality of your water? • How important would you say it is that you know where your water is sourced from? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> • And where do you think your water is sourced from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Crewe: The water supplied to Crewe predominantly comes from the Oswestry Water Treatment Works in Shropshire. This water originates from Lake Vyrnwy in Wales. ○ Widnes: TBC ○ Wythenshawe: TBC ○ Hard water location: TBC • Does anything stand out or surprise you about that?

(III) Group discussion: First Task	20 mins
Tasting the samples	<p>So let's move on to the first task. I am now going to ask you to taste a number of water samples and ask you your opinions of each. They are all completely safe to drink, so don't worry about that!</p> <p>In front of you there are three glasses, [MODERATOR SELECT DEPENDING ON TWORT LEVEL TESTING: glass A, glass B and glass C, glass D].</p> <p>In a moment I am going to ask you to take a big sip from glass [A, B, C D], and when you do I want you to think about the taste, smell, appearance and anything else you notice when drinking it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good, how would rate the following aspects this water. Please make a note of this on the sheet in front of you under the relevant water sample letter (i.e. A, B, C, D). [MODERTOR HAND OUT SELF COMPLETION SHEETS] ○ Taste ○ Smell/Oder ○ Appearance/Colour ○ Overall quality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you say that for each? • How would you rate this water overall compared to the water that is supplied to your home, in terms of its taste, odour and appearance? Is it better, worse or about the same? • Would you find it acceptable if this sample was supplied to your home as daily drinking water? <p>GO AROUND AND PROBE ON RESPONSES</p> <p>REPEAT WITH OTHER SAMPLES</p>
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(II) Group discussion: Second Task	20 mins
Boiling and making tea	<p>For the next activity I would like you to do now for each sample of water is to boil the kettle using 800ml of water and to make a hot drink using the tea bags and milk provided. You don't have to drink the cup of tea you make if you do not wish to.</p> <p>When doing so, I'd like you to pay particular attention to the sound of the kettle as the water is boiling.</p> <p>SPLIT GROUP INTO 2X GROUPS OF 3 AND ASK TO BOIL KETTLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you notice anything different about the sound of the kettle as it was boiling? If so, what? <p>Please now make a cup of tea using the tea bag and milk provided. Please ensure you fill the mug close to the top, allowing room for a splash of milk. Don't worry if you don't drink tea, you don't have to try it if you don't wish to!</p> <p>Allow 1 minute for tea bag to brew. Once tea has been made, ask the following question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please now take a look at the cup of tea and describe to me how the drink looks. You might want to think about how it compares to a drink you would make at home, but please don't focus on factors that are in your control, for example how strong/weak the tea is. Also we appreciate this might not be the milk or tea bags you would use at home so don't worry about that. • How would you rate this water overall compared to the water that is supplied to your home, in terms of how it appears and tastes? Let's start with appearance. Is it better, worse or about the same? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> • And taste for those who have tasted it? Is it better, worse or about the same? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> • Would you find it acceptable if this sample was supplied to your home to use as washing, cooking, bathing etc? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> <p>GO AROUND AND PROBE ON RESPONSES</p> <p>REPEAT WITH OTHER SAMPLES</p>

(III) Group discussion: Third Task	20 mins
Washing up task	<p>The final task I would like you to do is wash your hands using soap in each sample and again I'll ask you a number of questions following each sample.</p> <p>In a moment I am going to ask you to pump a small amount of the soap provided into your hands and wash your hands as you normally would do.</p> <p>Whilst you're doing it think about any differences from what you'd normally expect (e.g. Does the water react differently with the soap than it does at home, and if so, how). Please be aware that normally you'd be using a tap that would pour water over your hands so the experience might differ. The temperature is also likely different to what your used to.</p> <p>Please write down your scores and then we will ask some follow up questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good, how would rate the following aspects this water. Please make a note of this on the sheet in front of you under the relevant water sample letter (i.e. A, B, C, D). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Touch on the skin ○ Lather (foaming of the soap) ○ How your skin feels afterwards ○ Overall quality <p>How would you rate this water overall compared to the water that is supplied to your home? Is it better, worse or about the same? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i></p> <p>Would you find it acceptable if this sample was supplied to your home to use as washing, cooking, bathing etc? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i></p> <p>GO AROUND AND PROBE ON RESPONSES</p> <p>REPEAT WITH OTHER SAMPLES</p>

(IV) Group discussion: Changing Sources and Water Trading	20 mins
Water Trading	<p>Thanks all, so that's the end of the tasks! Next, I want to ask you some questions about something called water trading.</p> <p>In some cases, in order to ensure there is sufficient supply to meet demand in our region, there may be a need to change the water source that people in an area receive their water from.</p> <p>The duration of that change may vary depending on factors such as how much water is required to meet demand in other areas. It would not be a permanent change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, has anyone ever heard of this happening before or even experienced it to their knowledge? • How concerned would you be if United Utilities changed the source of the water in your area? • Would the duration of your water being sourced from somewhere new be an issue for

	<p>you or not really ? In other words, would you be as concerned if your water source was different for 1 day vs 3 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [IF CONCERNED] Why would you be concerned? • In the scenario that United Utilities were to change the source of the water (For example, from a reservoir source to a ground source for a short period of time) that supplies your home, would you want to be notified about this change? • What would you want to know? [PROBE ON: old source, new source / reasons why / benefits and drawbacks / what to expect or do (any differences in how to use or clean appliances etc) / cost savings etc] • How would you prefer to be notified? Would you want to be notified every time it happened? • The change in a water source can happen for a lot of reasons, before I reveal these to you, what would you deem to be an acceptable reason? <p>How acceptable would you find it due to following circumstances?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transferring water to other areas outside of the North West that are suffering from water shortages - Burst water main - Flooding - Breakdown of infrastructure - Vandalism - Pollution
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(IV) Group discussion: Comms		5 mins
Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the scenario that United Utilities were to change the source of the water (For example, from a reservoir source to a ground source for a short period of time) that supplies your home, would you want to be notified about this change? • What would you want to know? [PROBE ON: old source, new source / reasons why / benefits and drawbacks / what to expect or do (any differences in how to use or clean appliances etc) / cost savings etc] • How would you prefer to be notified? Would you want to be notified every time it happened? 	

(VI) Round up		2 mins
Final comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And finally, thinking about the three samples you have tested today, overall which sample have you found the best in terms of its combined taste, appearance, and smell? <i>PROBE ON WHY</i> • If you were to start receiving the water we've been testing today through your taps, how likely do you think you would be to notice? • How likely would you be to contact United Utilities if you started receiving this water, but you'd not heard anything about a change? 	

Thank & Close