



DRAINAGE &
WASTEWATER
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water Statement of Response (SoR)

Customer overview 2023



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



ATKINS
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group





Background

We have developed our first Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (The 'Plan'). The Plan provides a basis for long-term planning of drainage and wastewater services across our operational area and it tells us what we must achieve to deliver the best outcome for our customers and the environment we all share.

The Plan is customer driven and focused on tackling wastewater and rainfall escaping from the network, as well as managing the added pressures presented by population growth, urban creep, and climate change. We have considered how long it could take to reach the level of ambition that our customers and stakeholders expect, and then prepared the priority areas that need investment from 2025 to 2050.

We have consulted with you on what you think about the first version of the Plan. Your feedback is being used to shape the final DWMP and how we plan to achieve our end goals to benefit customers and the environment in an affordable way.

What is this document?

The Statement of Response provides information on our stakeholder consultation and the responses we received during that process. The findings from the consultation provided us with lots of valuable information on how we can make the Plan easier to understand, whilst also helping us shape and develop future iterations.

This document is a customer summary and overview of our consultation activities. If you'd like to find out more, you can review our full Statement of Response which is published online.

This document is part of a suite of information to assist you in finding out more about the Plan:

Introduction to the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan	The programme
Where we want to work with you	DWMP customer overview
Developing options	Statement of Response customer overview

You can find these documents and more information on our website.



Consultation approach and promotion

The stakeholder consultation ran for ten weeks from 27th July to 7th October 2022. We also ran a focused four-week customer research activity to support the wider consultation.

We aimed to ensure that stakeholders and the public had enough knowledge and time to provide their feedback and help shape the Plan.

The following methods were used to promote the consultation:



Email to stakeholders

Email sent to 467 stakeholders during July 2022 informing them of the launch. This email was sent in both English and Welsh.



Website

Updated DWMP webpage with links to the Plan, questionnaire, a 'virtual' consultation room, e-learning, and consultation document.





Consultation materials

A range of different materials were used for the consultation. These materials were available through the full consultation period in English and Welsh.



Customer brochure

Brochure explaining the need for the DWMP, areas covered, risks and investment priorities. The brochure included the customer questionnaire.



Online questionnaire

The online questionnaire is the same as the customer questionnaire, but in an online format.

Questions looked at key areas of the brochure such as plans for coping with more wastewater, and investment priorities.



Draft documents

Key DWMP documents were made available including the main Plan, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulation Assessment, and other summary documents.



E-learning

An e-learning tool was developed to help stakeholders and customers learn about the DWMP in a fun and interactive way.



Virtual room

An interactive virtual room was created to display the consultation materials and provide access to the questionnaire.

Visitors could browse key information as they would during an 'in-person' event.



Regulation

The consultation included questions relating to several areas where we are regulated, including habitats and the environment.

Documents relating to regulation were made available through the website and virtual room.





Responses

The online questionnaire was hosted on the Smart Survey platform. Paper-based responses were inputted manually and combined with online responses. This combined data, made up of both number and text responses, was then checked before analysis.

Feedback was made up of responses from the questionnaire, letters to the DWMP mailbox and responses from the customer research activity. The feedback received is summarised below:



The **15 responses** from the main questionnaire and consultation gave us more than **230 unique comments and valuable insight** to complement the customer research activity. The Welsh Government also provided their comments on the draft Plan.

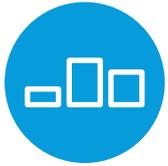
Key categories from responses

Collaboration and engagement	Legislation and national policy
Regulatory matters relating to environment and habitats	Strategic environmental and habitats regulation assessments
Customer queries and issues	Wording and language of DWMP
Nature-based solutions	Integration with other plans and programmes
Regulatory matters	

All responses to the consultation have been recorded, analysed, and summarised into categories and themes. These categories and themes are made up of input from customers, stakeholders, and regulators. We have set out how we have responded to each category in the main Statement of Response.

All feedback has been taken onboard and is being used to further develop the Plan, and as part of work for future consultation and engagement.

'You said, we did' responses are included in the main Statement of Response, together with recommendations for the second cycle of the DWMP.



Customer research

We ran independent customer research to make sure feedback included the views of our customers. This included:

- 1 Online community activity over two weeks and two online focus groups
- 2 An online questionnaire involving household and business customers

The aim of this research was to gather overall thoughts on the Plan. It included feedback from:



500 household customers



100 business customers



30 customers who had an in-depth review of the Plan

An independent company carried out and analysed this research on our behalf. **Feedback from online focus groups and the questionnaire was used to answer the following questions:**

- ? How do customers feel about the DWMP and consultation activity?
- ? What approach to planning would they like to see?
- ? Do customers agree with our planning methodology proposals, ambition and timescales?
- ? Are there particular areas that we should focus on more than others?
- ? How do customers want to be updated as the DWMP evolves over the next five years?



How have we taken feedback onboard?

Your comments have been used to make updates to the Plan. The key updates are summarised in the table below. Please note that this is not a full list but provides you with overview of the key areas.

Your comments

1. You supported our approach to prioritise the most beneficial and sustainable options, unless costs are prohibitive.

2. Responses indicated that stakeholders would like us to continue to implement our approach to rank best value schemes by environmental benefit.

3. All respondents agreed with the approach to continue to work with customers and stakeholders to explore how to create affordable incremental plans with agreed increments based on the DWMP24.

4. Based on the responses, stakeholders prefer us to implement our approach to gradually improving all areas, over time.

5. You supported our approach to continue to work closely with stakeholders to investigate areas for joint working for the benefit of local communities and to explore the best means of supporting them to manage community projects.

Our actions

We will continue to work with stakeholders to explore how to implement this approach transparently. We will also look at other companies' approaches and work with the industry to develop best practice in this area for the next plan to be published by 2029.

We will continue to develop the environmental benefit approach with our regulators. We will look at other water and sewerage companies approaches and work with the industry to develop best practice in this area for the next plan DWMP to be published by 2029.

We will continue to engage proactively and explore opportunities to provide more detailed examples using joint trials to provide real life examples to aid understanding and demonstrate incremental adaptive planning.

We will continue to work with stakeholders to explore this in DWMP 29. Customers told us they are willing to accept an approach of gradually making improvements to reach the destination more slowly, whilst ensuring more areas receive improvements. Our pace of change, and investment, is dictated by customer bills.

We will work with customers and stakeholders in target areas including local community groups, schools, businesses, and local authorities starting with working with community groups that are already in place.

Your comments

6. You asked us to provide more information on wastewater investment, not just investment developed via the DWMP framework.

Our actions

As part of our final Plan, we are providing information on our intended AMP8 (2025-30) Investment programme for our wastewater systems.

7. One stakeholder and our financial regulator commented on the plan asking us to be more clear about the investment included in the plan and the elements of a business plan that is not covered by a DWMP.

We have included aspects of business planning that were not ready to be included at the time of the draft publication, such as the NEP, and brought out in our documents that there is also investment in business plans that relate to maintenance of assets.

8. You have asked us to spend more time applying the stakeholder engagement strategy presented in the draft plan.

We will continue to work with our customers, stakeholders and regulators in the development and improvement of future plans. We can confirm that we will be carrying out engagement after every stage of the plan.

9. You said you are willing to pay more to reach the destination, but that bills should not rise excessively, or suddenly, but be incremental while we make service and environment improvements.

We will continue to work closely with our customers and have an open conversation about bills and any increases, particularly during the current cost of living crisis.

Regulatory recommendations and advice

All responses from stakeholders and customers are being addressed. Our Regulators will assess progress against the responses we have set out and make recommendations for further improvements.

Find out more

You can find a full summary of responses and the customer research in the main Statement of Response on our website.

**From the feedback received, respondents did not have any comments on carbon.*



We asked our customers what they know about drainage and wastewater services, their awareness of the future challenges and the impact it can have to service levels and the environment.

Q1 – Q2 2020

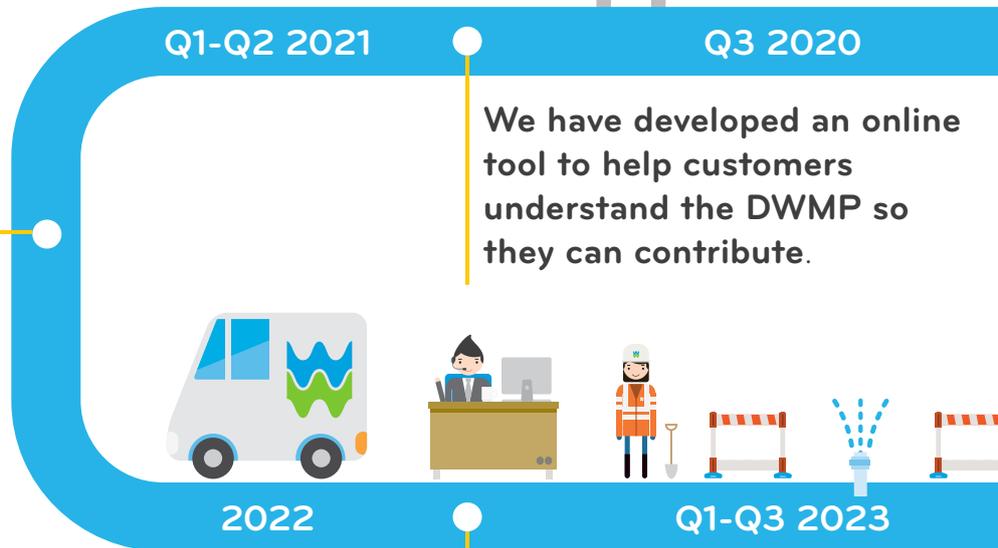


Q1-Q2 2021

Q3 2020

We have developed an online tool to help customers understand the DWMP so they can contribute.

We have looked at potential solutions to the challenges we face and ask for feedback to help develop options.



2022

Q1-Q3 2023

Public consultation on the draft Plan





What's next?

We will finalise the DWMP for 2024 and publish it on our website. We will then review progress against the milestones of the Plan every year and share this with you.



We then asked what they wanted from their drainage and waste water services for the next 25 years.



Welsh Gvt permission to publish first DWMP

We want to hear from you!

If you have any questions, or would like to request this document in a different format, please contact us at DWMP@dwrcymru.com

