



Specification of Requirement

Adequate Support System for People reliant on Private Water Supplies

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Consumer Futures Unit puts consumers at the heart of policy and regulation in the energy, post and water sectors in Scotland. Part of Citizens Advice Scotland, we research and gather evidence, which we use to improve outcomes for consumers.

Background to the Research

1.2 The CFU is a member of the Scottish Government's Rural Provision Working Group. Stakeholders include the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR)¹, Scottish Government, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Water Industry Commission for Scotland, Scottish Water, and Citizens Advice Scotland. The Working Group has been established to "assess [...] options available to improve compliance"² of private water supplies (PWS) with the relevant statutory Regulations.

1.3 Through previous research and engagement with stakeholders, the Working Group has recognised the need for an effective support strategy for people reliant on PWS to take account of the diversity of PWS and PWS communities, as well as the range of issues and needs arising therefrom.

1.4 The Rural Provision Working Group has commissioned research to inform the development of an effective support strategy for PWS. In 2016, the Centre of Expertise for Waters (CREW) completed a study on communities' attitudes, acceptance and issues regarding PWS³. Key findings included the need for locally specific solutions to support "co-producing" solutions between communities and agencies involved.

1.5 The CFU commissioned a desk-based study on the availability of information on rights and responsibilities for users and managers of PWS in 2016. The research showed that comprehensive and accessible information is available, but that access to this information could be significantly improved through signposting from local authority websites. Additionally, research highlighted good examples of international information provision.

1.6 Further research is required to inform the development of an effective framework of support for PWS users, owners and communities. Research will be commissioned jointly by the Scottish Government and the CFU. The CFU will manage the research project.

¹ The Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR) ensures that drinking water in Scotland is safe. It supports local authorities in their duty to regulate PWS.

²Rural Provision Working Group, Terms of Reference May 2014. Not publicly available.

³ Teedon, P., Currie, M., Helwig, K., and Creaney, R. (2017). Engaging communities around private water supplies. CRW2014_12. Available online at www.crew.ac.uk/publications

1.7 Research (set out in this Specification of Requirement) will complement the findings of both the CREW and CFU studies.

Purpose of the Research

The **purpose of the research** is to provide the Scottish Government's Rural Provision Working Group with evidence on support systems needed by people and communities reliant on PWS.

The **objective of the research** is to inform the work of the Scottish Government's Rural Provision Working Group to consider developing an effective support strategy for the sustainable improvement of PWS, by investigating which systems of support are needed by individuals and communities dependent on PWS.

2. Research Question

The CFU seeks to ensure that the development of a support model for people reliant on private water supplies by the Working Group has consumer interests at its centre. By taking into consideration consumer needs, it can be developed into a viable tool to support users, owners and communities to meet the minimum legal requirements in terms of water quality, and improve the sustainability of their water source.

However, further evidence is required on the type of support needed by private water users, while taking into account the range of issues across different communities and sources.

The research question for the research project is as follows:

- What range of support would meet the needs of private water users, owners and communities to meet the minimum requirements in terms of drinking water quality in a sustainable manner, and improve the reliability of their water supply?

For example, this could include information, multichannel communication, and access to training and funding.

In order to answer this question the research will need to consider how a model of support could meet the needs of potentially diverse community profiles across a range of differing water quality issues and circumstances.

3. Why Research is Necessary

Approximately 182,000 people in Scotland rely on PWS (i.e. are not served by Scottish Water), most of whom are situated in rural areas⁴. In addition to people relying on PWS in their homes, many visitors to rural Scotland consume water from PWS every year.

Minimum water quality standards are set out in the Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006, and are enforced by local authorities. The Regulations determine that local authorities will test the water quality of Type A supplies (serving a business or public building, or 50 or more people, or supplying 10m³ of water or more per day) at least annually. Type B supplies (catering to less than 50 people and supplying less than 10m³ of water a day), however, are not subject to any mandatory quality checks. Local authorities offer different levels of support to PWS users and owners (e.g., with regards to information), and also apply different levels of rigour when enforcing the Regulations.

The cost to supply water to a private water community is the responsibility of those that own the supply. Numerous PWS do not meet the minimum water quality standards, resulting in a risk to the health of those consuming the water. Insufficient reliability of supplies may result in a shortage of water for PWS communities. Those responsible for ensuring their water is compliant with current regulations are expected to implement and maintain water treatment infrastructure, which can be expensive. Local authorities offer one-off grants, however these may not cover all (recurrent) costs associated with achieving acceptable water quality.

The CFU and the Scottish Government seek to combine the CFU's understanding of consumer issues and community engagement with the DWQR's knowledge and experience of PWS and working with local authorities. Research will produce evidence which reflects the needs of people reliant on a PWS, and will inform effective and viable solutions.

4. Research Objectives

The Consumer Futures Unit and the DWQR seek to achieve the following objectives:

- To better understand what would support different private water users and communities in terms of ensuring they achieve safe drinking water quality
- To better understand which support mechanisms would support private water users and communities to achieve a sustainable supply of safe drinking water.

⁴ Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (2016) Drinking Water Quality in Scotland 2015: Private Water Supplies. Retrieved from <http://dwqr.scot/media/31458/dwqr-pws-annual-report-2015-final-15916.pdf>.

- To provide the Scottish Government’s Rural Provision Working Group with evidence that will inform the development of further support to improve drinking water quality within private water communities.

The research is intended primarily for the Rural Provision Working Group and the stakeholders involved in the group, however may offer insight and benefit to other organisations.

5. Anticipated Approach

It is anticipated that the research question will be best addressed using a qualitative methodology based on focus groups, possibly with additional qualitative interviews to capture the views of larger businesses or other hard to reach groups. However the CFU would also be interested to see proposals based on alternative qualitative methods, and we recognise that the challenges associated with recruiting focus group participants in rural areas may mean that qualitative interviews make up a greater part of the methodology.

Participants should be consumers dependent on PWS in Scotland or those responsible for the management of PWS. “Consumers” includes small organisations, defined as those with 250 employees or fewer. It may be that qualitative interviews would be a more practical and appropriate way to capture the views of those within small organisations that have a responsibility for managing its own PWS.

We have identified 13 dimensions of interest, and anticipate that these will be addressed in the research through both the composition of focus groups and through the topic guide. For example, geographic variation may be captured through running focus groups in different local authority areas and comparing responses, while the differing needs of people on different sizes of supply would be captured through the focus group topic guide. Proposals should set out how these dimensions will be covered by the proposed approach. The dimensions are:

- Level of support provided by Local Authority
- Level of deprivation (using SIMD)
- Remoteness (using Scottish Government urban/rural classification)
- Water source type
- Size of supply (i.e. how many households are supplied by PWS)
- Nature and complexity of management of supply
- Age of participants
- Length of time participants have been resident in community
- User type: Domestic / small non-domestic / large non-domestic etc.
- User / Manager / Owner of supply

- Technical capacity of responsible party(ies)
- Proximity of PWS to public supply mains
- Degree of cooperation within community regarding maintenance

We recognise that one of the main challenges in delivering this research will be recruiting participants from rural areas. Proposals therefore need to clearly demonstrate how this has been considered, with a clear plan for achieving the necessary participation and if possible evidence of having carried out similar research in the past.

The budget available for this research is in the region of £35,000.

6. Deliverables

Deliverables from the research should include:

- Draft copies of all key documents, such as discussion guides, and draft and final reports. These should be submitted in sufficient time for comments to be incorporated and for our approval to be given before producing final versions.
- Transcripts of the qualitative data collected.
- Initially, weekly telephone updates with CFU staff to report on progress.
- Top line findings (upon completion of the fieldwork) or an interim report as requested by CAS.
- A full written high quality report (with any specific subheadings and recommendations agreed with CAS), written in accessible language, in Microsoft Word setting out the findings with an executive summary and any relevant appendices.
- A presentation of results at CAS offices in Edinburgh with accompanying PowerPoint slides. A brief on the type of evidence collected and how the findings have been used.

7. Nature of the Report

The research report will be used by a wide range of people within and outside of the Consumer Futures Unit, the DWQR and the Scottish Government, not just the team involved in commissioning the work.

Along with all of our research reports, this research is intended to contribute to the wider knowledge of issues and not just to the immediate research problem. As such, it must be capable of being used as a secondary source for a reasonable period of time after the research is completed. For these reasons it is essential that the report:

- Uses language accessible to readers with varying experience of research and consumer behaviour.

- Contains a comprehensive description of the research method, so that the reader understands what was done and the robustness and/or limitations of the data.
- Organises and, where appropriate, reduces the data so as to lead the reader either to clear conclusions or to a discussion of the implications of the findings.
- Avoids over-summarising or over-simplifying the findings.
- Contains clearly labelled charts, diagrams and tables (if appropriate) summarising and illustrating the results, with a narrative description of what the chart, diagram or table shows – do not leave it to the reader to interpret these.
- Contains a stand-alone Executive Summary, containing a brief description of the background, objectives, method, main findings and conclusions along with, if necessary a separate briefing-style paper.

8. Performance and Quality Requirements

The Consumer Futures Unit is leading this work, and will require regular updates, including a project initiation meeting, to be held between the supplier and ourselves to ensure progress is on track and any difficulties are resolved promptly. Any anticipated shortfall in quality or similar failing shall be brought to the attention of the Consumer Futures Unit immediately. We advise suppliers to show how they adhere to a relevant Social Research Code of Conduct or, where appropriate, any other professional code of conduct, or quality systems that they have in place.

Final sign off on all research will be undertaken by the Consumer Futures Unit; ownership of all research outcomes, including the final report and all data produced as a result of the research also lies with the Consumer Futures Unit. The project will be managed by David Moyes and Jana Eyssel, on behalf of the Consumer Futures Unit.

Suppliers should not discuss study findings in public without prior, written agreement from the Consumer Futures Unit. Suppliers must also obtain the Consumer Futures Unit's prior, written approval to use data or findings from this study for any proposed presentation or publication.

9. Form of Proposal

We require proposals to be submitted electronically, in PDF format. All clarification questions must be made in writing and sent by email to Jana Eyssel (jana.eyssel@cas.org.uk) no later than 12 p.m. on Sunday, 2 July 2017. A response to all clarification questions of a substantive nature shall be issued to all bidders by noon on 5 July 2017.

Tenders must be sent to the project leads (Jana Eyssel and David Moyes) no later than by noon on Wednesday 12 July 2017.

Bidders should complete tenders in the format indicated below. All questions must be answered in full.

Company overview and previous experience, please provide:

- a brief overview of your organisation. This must include a brief history, and detail of your capability and capacity.
- details of your quality assurance procedures, including a project risk assessment.
- two case studies that evidence your ability to deliver the services required. This must include details of the brief, how you delivered the project and the objectives that were achieved.
- the names, addresses and contact details of two referees that could be contracted to provide a reference of your ability to deliver the services.
- declaration of any conflict of interest in carrying out this work.

Key personnel, please provide:

- a copy of the organisation chart.
- details of the personnel who shall be responsible for the delivery of the services. This must include a CV for these individuals that highlight their relevant skills and experience.

Methodology and delivery of the services, please provide:

- detail of your understanding of the requirement, and evidence your skills and experience for carrying out the services.
- a detailed methodology of how you propose to deliver the services and objectives detailed in the Specification of Requirements.
- a detailed project plan for the delivery of the proposed methodology. This must clearly define who shall carry out the tasks in the plan and the number of days for completion.
- an outline of any ethical or data protection considerations you believe are relevant to the services
- an indication of how you adhere to any professional code of conduct, such as the Market Research or Social Research Codes.

Commercial offer:

- Prices shall be quoted in pounds sterling and presented alongside discrete tasks and/or individual personnel (e.g. in a similar format to the project plan requested above) in a separate document to the rest of the tender and summarised in the accompanying pricing schedule. VAT, when applicable, should be shown separately as a strictly net

extra charge. Please detail all costs associated with the provision of the services as any costs not detailed will be deemed to have been waived.

- Please note that it is CAS policy to pay the full amount on completion of the work, although some flexibility is possible in exceptional circumstances.

10. Evaluation Criteria

The Consumer Futures Unit will make its selection on the basis of that proposal which represents the best value for money. The following criteria will apply:

Evaluation criterion	Description	Weighting
Methodology / Approach	Details and suitability of suggested approach, sampling strategy and data collection method Plans for dealing with any risks and contingencies Statement of ethical considerations and data handling/storage procedures where relevant	15%
Technical experience	Evidence of providing similar services to other organisations and particular skills/experience relevant to the problem Also include your performance on any previous projects for CAS	20%
Implementation plan	Details of your implementation plan to meet the timescales, including staffing and resources (including costs) assigned to each	10%
Understanding our business needs	Indication of a clear understanding of the problem and the research objectives	15%
Quality	Details of how you ensure that a high quality service is maintained throughout the contract period	10%
Added value	Details of what your company can bring to the research	5%
Price	A full breakdown of all costs should be given	25%

Total	100%
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Tenders are evaluated by scoring against each of the above criteria using a 'zero to ten' scale, where zero equates to 'Clearly fails to meet the requirement' and ten equates to 'Excellent standard with no reservation at all about acceptability'. The supplier with the highest overall score will be awarded the contract.

Please note that on completion of all contracts, suppliers are evaluated against these same criteria based on their performance. This post-project evaluation will be considered in future tendering processes.

11. Procurement Timetable

The Consumer Futures Unit will be working towards the following procurement timetable:

Activity	Date
Issue Invitation to Tender	23 June 2017
Closing date for clarifications questions	2 July 2017
Date for responses to clarification questions	5 July 2017
Tenders received by	12 July 2017
Evaluation of tenders/quotes	12 – 13 July 2017
Contract awarded	14 July 2017
Contract commences	w/c 17 July 2017
Data collection/Cleaning	12 weeks
Final report due	13 October 2017

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Term</i>	<i>Description</i>
Draft Report	The 'draft report' should not be a rough version of the report, but the full report (proof-read, spell-checked and sense-checked) for review by the client project team
Final Report	The final report is intended to have resolved all queries and comments