

# United Utilities Disengaged Customers Research

## Follow-up Interview Discussion Guide | Final | 16.09.22

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### Objectives:

- To check in with participants on any changes in their financial situation, particularly in the context of the cost of living crisis
- To explore responses to the post-task in more detail, understanding:
  - Which propositions feel are most useful to them and why
  - How participants see themselves engaging with or using these services
  - Drivers / barriers to participants engaging with or using these services
- To obtain vox pop footage from those consenting to being included in the video

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide to inform the flow of the discussions, rather than a definitive list of questions to cover. As these are qualitative sessions, the moderator will use the guide flexibly and be guided by what comes out of the discussions, and what has come out of the previous discussions and post-task.

Moderator instructions are *italicised*

Questions in **bold** should always be asked (whilst others should be optional to help guide the conversation)

Section and aim	Discussion points and probes	Time
<p><b>Introductions and warm-up</b></p>	<p>Hello again and thank you for all your really helpful contributions so far.</p> <p>As a reminder, my name is [XXX] and I'm a researcher from an independent research agency called BritainThinks. BritainThinks is conducting this research on behalf of United Utilities who have asked us to conduct a number of interviews with their customers who might have struggled with their water bills in the past or who might struggle with bills in the future. United Utilities want to understand how its customers interact with them, and what United Utilities can do to help particularly around paying bills.</p> <p>We'll be talking for 20-25 minutes finishing up by [insert time]. I have a lot of questions to get through so, in order to finish on time, I may need to interrupt you or move the conversation on.</p> <p><b>[If consented to video footage being used for the vox pop video]</b> As you know, we will be recording this session. You have consented to us using your video footage as part of a short summary film that will be shared by us with United Utilities, but not outside the company or in the public domain.</p> <p><i>Moderator to briefly remind participants about terms of the interview, provide an opportunity for questions and obtain permission to record the session.</i></p> <p><b>We will be talking again today about finances and bills. We understand this can be a difficult or awkward topic to discuss, but remember that we aren't here to judge, we're just here to understand more about your views and experiences.</b></p> <p><b>Firstly, how have things been since we last spoke in relation to your finances?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has anything changed?</li> </ul>	<p><b>3 mins (3 mins)</b></p>
<p><b>Section 1: Propositions</b></p> <p><i>Aim: To begin the conversation by exploring relationships</i></p>	<p><b>We're now going to remind you of some of the ways that United Utilities could engage with its customers in the future.</b></p> <p><i>Moderator to share slide with overview of three 'themes' of propositions with examples. [3 mins]</i></p> <p><b>You ranked [proposition] as <u>most</u> useful to someone like you in the post-task. Why was that?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How, if at all, could you imagine engaging with / using this yourself?</li> </ul>	<p><b>17 mins (20 mins)</b></p>

<p><i>with and impacts of money / finances.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How easy or difficult does this feel? Why?</li> <li>● In what situations, if any, would this feel most useful?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there any situations in which this would feel less useful?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>You ranked [proposition] as <u>least</u> useful to someone like you in the post-task. Why was that?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How, if at all, could you imagine engaging with / using this yourself?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How easy or difficult does this feel? Why?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What kind of person, if any, would you imagine this being useful for?</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator to go through each grouping of propositions and read each out, ensuring that one on each slide is covered in detail, which is cycled between interviews. [4 mins on each slide]</i></p> <p><b><i>We're now going to discuss each of these groupings of propositions in a bit more detail.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>For each group of propositions:</i></b></p> <p><b>Which, if any, of these stands out to you most? Why?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is there anything unclear here? Or any information missing?</li> </ul> <p><b>Which, if any, can you most imagine yourself using or engaging with? Why?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you imagine yourself using or engaging with this?</li> </ul> <p><i>[For proposition to be covered in detail]</i> <b>How, if at all, can you imagine yourself using or engaging with this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What kind of person, if any, can you imagine using or engaging with this most? Why?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In what situations and for what reason?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What, if anything, would make you more likely to use or engage with this?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What, if anything, would stop you using or engaging with this?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator to go back to slide with overview of three 'themes' of propositions with examples. [2 mins]</i></p>	
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	<p><b>Looking at all the ideas again now, take a moment to choose the top two that would be the most useful to you.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why have you chosen these two?</li> <li>• How, if at all, could you imagine engaging with / using these yourself?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How easy or difficult does this feel? Why?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>One other way United Utilities engages / could engage with customers is through third parties that can guide customers towards United Utilities support options if they ever speak to these third parties.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you feel about this overall? Is this something you have / would find useful?</li> <li>• Which, if any, third parties would you trust most to direct you towards speaking to United Utilities for help with paying your bill with them?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Moderator to briefly probe to understand whether “official” advice organisations would be more effective than something less official, e.g. friends and family</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Finally, is there anything not mentioned that you think could help United Utilities to better engage with or support the needs of customers like you?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking about your other utility suppliers (e.g. gas, electricity), what, if anything, have they done well when engaging with you? What could United Utilities learn from other suppliers?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Wrap up</b>  <i>[For those who have <u>not</u> consented to video footage being used]</i></p>	<p><i>Moderator to thank participants for their time, ask if they have any final thoughts and questions and then wrap up.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">- (20)</p>
<p><b>Section 3: Video footage</b>  <i>[For those who have consented to video footage being used]</i></p>	<p><b>We are coming to the end of the interview – thank you for your really helpful contributions.</b></p> <p><b>In the last five minutes, we just want to make sure that we have some really clear footage for the video, so this may feel repetitive as I will be asking you similar questions to those I have asked before.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5 mins (25)</p>

**Remember to give lots of detail in your answers and please mention the question in your answer when you can e.g. ‘The three words I would use to describe how I feel about the future are X, X and X, because...’**

*Moderator to be led by the most interesting responses from the specific participant as well as emerging findings in the research more broadly, but to loosely cover key topics such as:*

- How would you describe your current relationship with your finances?
- What impact has the cost of living crisis had on your finances?
- What impact has money / your financial situation had on your life?
- What is your current approach to managing your finances and paying bills?
- How able do you feel to cover your bills each month?
- How do you make decisions about paying bills?
- Where would you be most likely to go for advice or help when it comes to paying your bills?
- What have your communications with United Utilities looked like so far? How helpful have they been?
- What would encourage you / stop you from communicating more with United Utilities?
- To what extent are you aware of support options that United Utilities offers to help pay bills?
- What more could United Utilities be doing to support people like you?
- [ENGAGED] How useful have you found the support scheme you are on in helping pay your bills?  
Thinking about the new methods we discussed today, how useful do you think they will be in helping customers with paying their bills?
- [DISENGAGED & AT RISK] How relevant, if at all, do United Utilities’ current support options feel to you, and why? Thinking about the new methods we discussed today, how useful do you think they will be in helping customers with paying their bills?
- [DISENGAGED & AT RISK] What would you expect would have to happen for you to seek support from United Utilities? Thinking about the new methods we discussed today, how useful do you think they will be in helping customers with paying their bills?

*Moderator to thank participants for their time, ask if they have any final thoughts and questions and then wrap up.*