

The role of SBWWI

The SBWWI is an active, not-for-profit, trade association representing the interests of UK manufacturers, contractors, consultants, distributors and others supplying the water and wastewater industry. We aim to develop an effective, consultative and innovative supply chain to the UK water industry.

We want to advance the common interests of all stakeholders in the UK water metering industry by:

- Innovating and developing appropriate products and services for the industry through seeking clarity on long term requirements.
- Supporting the industry in exploiting the benefits of smart water metering for utilities and customers.
- Implementing open product standards that enable interoperability and allow future innovation.
- Promoting and improving technical standards and practices, and business processes.

The role of others

Defra and the Welsh Government are responsible for setting the long-term policy and legislation for the water sector in England and Wales respectively.

Ofwat is the water industry's economic regulator. It ensures that water companies provide their customers with a good quality service and value for money. As part of this, it examines the cost-effectiveness of companies' proposed smart water metering solutions. Ofwat has a statutory duty to contribute to sustainable development.

Environment Agency's role is to secure the appropriate use of water resources in England and Wales. It sets out guidance for water companies to follow when producing statutory water resource management plans, and it advises Defra and the Welsh Government on the adequacy of these plans.

The Consumer Council for Water represents domestic and business customers' interests. In the area of water metering, it seeks to provide suitable protection for vulnerable consumers and to ensure that views of customers and the impacts on them are considered.

Water companies are responsible for managing public water supply and have a duty to supply domestic customers. As part of maintaining an appropriate future supply-demand balance, delivering excellent standards of customer service, improving the performance and resilience of networks, and improving operating efficiency, companies can consider smart water metering within their water resource management and business plans.

The SBWWi logo is displayed in a large, semi-transparent box. The letters 'SBWW' are in a dark blue, bold, sans-serif font, while the 'i' is in a lighter blue, also bold and sans-serif. A wavy blue line is positioned below the letters.

SBWWI Smart Metering Suppliers Forum – Position Paper

This paper sets out our views on smart water metering; it outlines the key issues and suggests how they could be addressed.



SBWWI
38 Hamilton Terrace
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire CV32 4LY

Tel: +44 (0) 1926 831 530
Fax: +44 (0) 1926 831 931
Email: hq@sbwwi.co.uk
www.sbwwi.co.uk

SBWWI represents the companies who are able to support the implementation of smart metering in the water sector. Over the last five years we have been pro-active in putting water smart metering on the national agenda; developing the evidence on costs and benefits of smart metering; initiating the dialogue with the energy sector; and developing solutions for water smart metering.

Better understanding of demand patterns

Smart metering can provide detailed consumption data improving resource planning and demand forecasting

Reducing wastage

Minimising wastage from plumbing losses, leaking appliances and cisterns, through providing early warning of potential problems.

Demand reduction

Preserving resources by providing improved information on water usage to customers

Reducing network leakage

More efficient leak detection and repair through improved information on water use in the network.

Our Position

We believe that smart water metering will bring significant benefits to the water industry and consumers. We need:

1. **Innovation and development** of appropriate products and services, through understanding of the industry's and customer's requirements.
2. **A strong, single voice** representing the interests of the water sector in the fast-developing energy smart metering agenda. We need to establish interoperability protocols for energy and water sectors and ensure that smart meter infrastructure that can service the needs of electricity, gas and water consumers;
3. **A stakeholder forum** where water companies, regulators, the supply chain, customers and other stakeholders can work together on a common agenda for the future.

Issues

- Domestic water metering in the UK progresses in a piece meal fashion, with each UK water company having different approaches, policies and metering coverage. Where meters are installed, they are usually "dumb"; largely because water companies struggle to make an economic case for smart meters to their regulator, Ofwat, and there is no clear policy and planning for the future of smart metering.
- The benefits of smart metering are well-documented. However, in sharp contrast to the energy sector, there is no mandate for smart metering for the water sector. Without this, and without a common focus, water companies have no shared vision of what smart metering solutions they would like to see in their future plans, and have not agreed a common specification for a smart metering system.

Reducing supply pipe leakage

More cost-effective detection, prioritisation and repair of supply pipe leaks by routine monitoring of night flows.

Improved resilience

Better planning for reliable and resilient water supplies in the future.

Carbon reduction

Lower carbon emissions thanks to reduced demand and lower leakage.

Improved customer service

Customer queries dealt with more effectively thanks to improved 'real-time' information on water use.

SBWWI Smart Metering Suppliers Forum – Position Paper

Issues

- With a clear mandate from the government, the energy smart metering agenda is fast progressing. There is a risk that without urgent representation of the water sector, the infrastructure networks being put in place for energy smart metering will not be able to cater for the future needs of the water sector. Separate provisions would be resource-inefficient and, in the long term, significantly more costly for customers.
- A European Standards group, TC 92, is developing a water smart metering standard specification. But at present, there is no coordinated UK industry presence on this group.

Solutions

A National Smart Metering Forum, led by the government or one of the water industry regulators, should be re-established. This should include Defra, water industry regulators (Ofwat and the Environment Agency), water companies, their supply chain and customers. A forum of this kind would provide a much needed platform to:

- discuss the policy and future direction for water smart metering, to allow the water industry to plan ahead;
- agree the common specification for smart meters, to allow the supply chain to innovate and develop the appropriate technology;
- discuss the research needs and improve the evidence on costs and benefits of smart metering to support the economic case;
- provide the much needed leadership for the industry, so that its interests are adequately represented on European and national forums.