

## Waterwise Response to Welsh Assembly Government consultation on

### Building Resilience to Climate Change

March 2011

#### Overview

Waterwise very much welcomes the strategic approach to adaptation, and the comprehensive guidance set out for reporting authorities.

We also welcome the identification of increased demand for and reduced supply of water as one of the key impacts of climate change in Wales, alongside flood risk management.

The consultation identifies productivity gains from more efficient use of water as potential benefit, and Waterwise wholeheartedly supports this - public sector organisations such as schools and hospitals can make significant savings on both their water and energy bills through wasting less in “domestic” processes such as taps, toilets, urinals and showers, as well as in cleaning processes. Waterwise’s recent [report](#) on Large-scale Water Efficiency in Schools illustrates this clearly.

Waterwise supports the focus on evidence in the guidance. Our own Evidence Base for Large-scale Water Efficiency, which is co-funded by governments and regulators in the UK, is a key source of information on the costs and benefits of particular approaches to water efficiency - to date it has focussed on homes and schools, but in the coming year it will also cover data from SMEs and rainwater and greywater harvesting. All the principles of good adaptation listed in 3.2.4 can be supported by water efficiency: sustainability; flexibility; effectiveness, efficiency and equity; consultation; an ongoing process; and cost-benefit analysis. A water efficiency retrofit or rainwater harvesting programme in a public building or in a local authority’s social housing stock, for example will ensure flexibility in a changing climate, and costs (and risk) can be shared by working with other partners such as water companies.

Waterwise would like to see an explicit steer from the Welsh Assembly Government that water efficiency measures should be included in adaptation reporting and strategies, alongside flood risk management. We have observed a widespread tendency across the public and private sectors in the UK to omit the need for the former in favour of the latter: this will considerably lessen the cumulative impact of adaptation which the powers under the Climate Change Act 2008 were specifically intended to address.

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***Waterwise is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation focused on decreasing water consumption in the UK and building the evidence base for large-scale water efficiency. We are the leading authority on water efficiency in the UK. Our aim is to reverse the upward trend in how much water we all use at home and at work. For more information please visit [www.waterwise.org.uk](http://www.waterwise.org.uk)***