

UWLA Marketing & Advocacy Committee Meeting

Minutes/Notes

Tuesday 30 June 2026 – 11:30 hrs CET - Hybrid

Chair

- Fiona Felix – Hansgrohe – Marketing & Advocacy Committee Chair

Minutes/Notes

- Diane Cartlidge – UWLA Associate Administrator

Attendees in Person

- Armando Afonso - ANQIP
- Anne-Claire Bruant – FECS
- Lee Cartwright – UWLA Managing Director
- Markus Gantenbein – Geberit – UWLA President
- Carla Rodrigues – ANQIP
- Paul Skinner – UWLA Technical
- Jonathan Weigand - Globus

Attendees Online

- Pau Abello – Roca Limited
- Francesco Balducci – Manifattura Srl
- Theresa Bongard – Klundi Gmbh
- Martin Dunisch – Megabad Gmbh
- Fiona Felix – Hansgrohe AG
- Mike Fox – IKEA of Sweden AB
- Henk Giesken – Nineteen Group Ltd
- Maria Jose – Roca Limited
- Amy Kirk – Bathroom Association
- Sabrina Li – Kohler Mira Showers
- Maurizio Manfroi – Ceramica Adolomite
- John Richards – Lecico PLC
- Laura-Ashley Ni Shuilleabhain – Sonas Bathrooms
- Patrick Wittwer - Geberit
- Ina Zieger – Klundi Gmbh
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1 Meeting Opening

(a) Welcome and Apologies

Lee Cartwright and Markus Gantenbein extended a warm welcome to all participants.

(b) Competition Law Reminder

All participants were referred to the UWLA Competition Law Statement, available at www.uwla.eu. This statement outlines the boundaries for discussion and decision-making to ensure compliance with the Competition Act.

2 Previous Minutes

Minutes dated 25 November 2025 previously circulated were approved with no amendments or Action Points carried forward.

3 Advocacy Update

(a) European Commission – Directive (EU) 2024/825 (EmpCo)

Overview

- The Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (EmpCo) Directive introduces new requirements designed to improve transparency and prevent misleading environmental claims.
- Following an assessment of the legislation, UWLA considers that the Unified Water Label remains well aligned with the objectives of the Directive.

Initial Assessment Key Points

- Supports consumer transparency
- Prevents misleading environmental claims
- No immediate changes required to the Unified Water Label
- Ongoing monitoring as implementation guidance develops

The Unified Water Label Assessment

- Provides clear and measurable water and energy performance information
- Does not make generic environmental claims
- Uses transparent technical criteria
- Supported by independent product auditing
- Operates through an open stakeholder governance process

UWLA Existing Assurance

- Public technical criteria
- Annual 5% independent audit programme
- Transparent committee structure
- Published audit outcomes

Timeline

- 28 Feb 2024 – Directive adopted by the European Parliament and Council
- 26 Mar 2024 – Entered into force
- 27 Mar 2026 – Member States required to transpose into national legislation
- 27 Sept 2026 – Requirements become applicable to businesses across the EU

Manufacturer Responsibilities under EmpCo

Who is responsible for the product information?

The Unified Water Label is a voluntary labelling scheme that calculates a product's water and energy rating using data entered by the product registrant

Manufacturer Responsibilities

- Manufacturers and brands are responsible for the accuracy of the technical data submitted
- The information entered on to the UWLA database generates the published water and energy rating
- The UWLA does not create or modify product performance claims
- Manufacturers must ensure that all data used to support the rating is accurate, verifiable, and supported by appropriate technical evidence

- Members should retain appropriate documentation to substantiate the declared performance should it be requested by market surveillance authorities or other regulators

(b) EU Taxonomy – UWLA Response

UWLA Response to the Consultation

- UWLA welcomed the overall direction of the proposals while recommending improvements to strengthen consistency and implementation.

Our Key Recommendations

- Performance data should remain verifiable
- Compliance routes should be technically equivalent
- Clear technical definitions should underpin all recognised pathways
- Measurement methods should remain harmonised

Issues Raised

- Demonstrating Compliance
- Performance information should remain traceable and independently verifiable
- Flexible documentation is acceptable, provided evidence is robust

Consistent Measurement

- UWLA expressed concern over the proposed removal of Appendix E, which defines harmonised testing conditions
- Without common test conditions:
 - (a) Product comparisons become less reliable
 - (b) Different Member States could interpret requirements differently
 - (c) Consumer confidence may be reduced

Why is this important?

- The European Commission has consulted on revisions to the Climate and Environmental Delegated Acts under the EU Taxonomy
- The proposed changes affect how water-efficient products can demonstrate compliance within sustainable buildings

Positive Development

- The draft legislation includes the Unified Water Label as an example of demonstrating compliance with water and energy efficiency requirements

Why this matters?

- Recognition of the Unified Water Label at European level
- Supports greater consistency across the market
- Reinforces the credibility of the scheme
- Creates opportunities for wider adoption within sustainable construction

(c) Advocacy Update – UK – UK Mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (MWELS)

The UWLA has been actively engaging with the UK Government and the European Commission to ensure that the introduction of the UK Mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (MWELS) does not create unnecessary barriers to trade or unintended consequences for manufacturers.

UWLA Position

- Support improved water efficiency
- Support better consumer information
- Maintain our stance that regulation is unnecessary
- Seek alignment with existing UWLA criteria

MWELS Concerns Raised

Trade & Compliance

- Separate UK packaging requirements
- Additional testing and certification
- Increased administrative burden
- Higher costs, particularly for SMEs

Consumer Communication

- Risk of dual water and energy labels
- Potential consumer confusion
- Reduced clarity at the point of sale

Regulatory Certainty

- Interaction with existing EU legislation
- Implications for products sold across both UK and EU markets

UWLA Recommendations

- Alignment with recognised European standards
- Consistent testing methodologies
- Clear implementation guidance
- Realistic implementation timescales
- Early dialogue between UK and EU authorities

Product Phasing Plan (tbc)

Manufacturer responsibility, Retailer responsibility

* product is new to the market or rebranded, i.e. it has a new model identifier code

Product Categories	Regulations Active	Enforcement Starts +6 months	+ 12 months	+ 18 months	+ 24 months	+ 30 months
Plumbing (Non-electric) Non-electric showers Taps Toilets Urinals		New* products registered and have MWEL	All manufactured products registered and have MWEL		All products sold (stock) have MWEL	
		New* products sold require MWEL	Products sold online require MWEL. Products made from this date require MWEL at point of sale.			
Electric goods Dishwashers Electric showers Washing machines Washer-dryers			New* products registered and have MWEL	All manufactured products registered and have MWEL		All products (stock) have MWEL
			New* products sold require MWEL	Products sold online require MWEL. Products made from this date require MWEL at point of sale.		

(d) Advocacy Activity & Next Step

UWLA Activity

- Formal position paper submitted
- Ongoing dialogue with DEFRA and the Environment Agency
- Position shared with the European Commission
- Collaboration with other European trade associations
- Continued engagement through Technical and Advocacy Committees

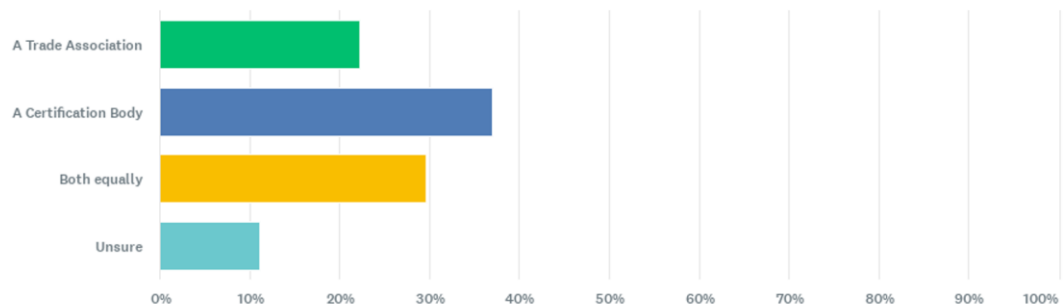
Next Steps

- Monitor the final UK regulations
- Continue representing members' interests
- Keep members informed of developments
- Support implementation where appropriate

4 Marketing Update

(a) Annual Survey Overview

Q7 Do you consider the UWLA to be primarily:



Analysis of the 2026 Member Survey responses largely consider the Association to be a certification body as opposed to a Trade Association. There was positive feedback on events e.g. Open Forum etc with a preference for online attendance. There was a lack of understanding on budget allocation and structure, however, members highly valued the technical function.

(b) Daisy Digital Activities

Social media support partner appointed Jan 2026

- Creation of [Facebook Page](#)
- Creation of [Instagram Account](#)
- Optimisation and setup of organics
- Creation of Business Portfolio/Manager
- Setup of Business Assets and connections in Business Portfolio/Manager
- Creation of [Ads Manager account](#)
- Creation of [Meta Business Suite](#) and connection of Pages/Accounts (FB & IG)

- Creation of [organic calendar and content](#) inclusive of updates as new assets come through (updated label, landing page, info etc) - WIP, awaiting landing page completion for final assets to be added to the calendar
- Creation of Ad creative - WIP, awaiting completion of landing page to be included in the ad creative.
- Creation/setup of traffic campaigns (driving traffic to the new landing page) – WIP
- Setup of Datasets/Meta Pixel - WIP

Daisy Digital Discussions

Feedback on current social media direction

- Content themes
- Posting frequency
- Member engagement opportunities

Meta Advertising

- Proposed campaign budget: £500 per month
- Initial target regions: 2 priority markets (to be agreed)

Discussion

- Suggestions to improve our social media strategy
- Additional content ideas and member contributions

Stay Connected

- Follow the Unified Water Label Association on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram
- Like, share and engage with our content to help extend the reach of the Unified Water Label

However, following discussions, participants all agreed that future focus should be on LinkedIn and to cease Instagram and Facebook activities. LinkedIn was considered to be the most suitable and effective platform for the Association – **ACTION – LC to discuss with Daisy Digital.**

It was also discussed and suggested that all Members could increase the Association's visibility/activities through channels they currently use.

Newsletter

Progress to Date

- Quarterly newsletter proposal approved
- Newsletter content is developed by the UWLA Secretariat
- Design and formatting are undertaken by Daisy Digital
- Proposed publication scheduled –March, June, September, December

Improvements Implemented

- The first newsletter was distributed using SurveyMonkey which proved unsuitable as a communication platform
- A dedicated Mailchimp account has now been established
- All future newsletters will be distributed through Mailchimp
- Newsletter open rates and engagement statistics will be monitored to help improve future communications

Member Contributions

- Members are encouraged to submit news, case studies, product launches, and company updates
- To meet publication deadlines, content should be submitted by the beginning of each publication month

(c) Bee Social Activities

- Digital lead generation activity launched in April 2026
- LinkedIn network has grown from 286 to 1,027 connections
- 741 new industry contacts added to the Association's network
- Current growth rate averaging around 20 new connections per day
- Activity focused on building relationships with relevant contacts across UWLA member companies
- Supporting increased visibility, engagement, and future membership opportunities

(d) Event Planning

ISH 2027 – Exhibition Stand Challenges

Historically the Association has relied on a static exhibition stand which produces high cost compared with the level of engagement achieved. Success depends on visitors visiting the stand which limits proactive networking opportunities. Additionally, with only two staff members it is difficult to adequately staff the stand whilst attending meetings and networking. The Association office is required to close for the duration of the exhibition reducing member support. Footfall can be unpredictable making a return on investment difficult to justify.

New Event Engagement Strategy proposed

- **No static exhibition stand** – a mobile, member-focused presence.
- **Pre-arranged meetings** with members and key stakeholders before the event
- **Ad hoc networking** to maximise opportunities throughout the exhibition.
- **Member stand visits** to engage directly with exhibitors and strengthen relationships.
- **Successfully trialled at the InstallerSHOW**, demonstrating a more effective approach. Engagement with 13 members over two days alongside meetings with prospective members with positive feedback received from members to this new engagement model.
- **More cost-effective** than maintaining a traditional exhibition stand
- **Significantly improved member engagement** and networking opportunities
- **Only one member of staff required**, allowing the Association office to remain operational

(e) New Label Working Group

A monthly Working Group was established to support development of the new label design. This comprised of marketing representatives from member brands. With the design phase nearing completion, meetings will be paused and reconvened as required. However, a further Working Group will be beneficial to develop an effective strategy for launch and member roll-out of the new label. New label was made visual to all participants.

Timeline for New Label Launch

June 2026 – ADCO approval received

July 2026 – Database development completed / Label guidelines finalised

Aug 2026 – Launch to members / Communications campaign goes live

Ongoing – Website, literature etc.

ACTION: LC to arrange a Label Launch Meeting with Key Board Members.

Date of next meeting – AGM Wednesday 25 November 2026

