Wessex Water Young People's Panel 2025

Project proposal









Young People's Panel: an annual event in the customer engagement calendar

The Wessex Water Young People's Panel (YPP) has become established as an annual event to engage with future customers.

It has delivered real benefits in the form of service innovations which have subsequently been adopted.

Furthermore, it has generated useful PR and provided an opportunity to engage with many secondary schools and sixth form colleges across the region.

Objective: To bring the views of future customers into the heart of the business

- To understand mindset & expectations of future customers
- To provide a forum for future customers to deliberate on long term company plans
- To look for innovative solutions to a real business problem
- To engage with the community, enabling schools to participate in future decision-making



- High quality work experience: learning about a local business and a national industry, and meeting senior leaders in an activity-based programme
- Educational enrichment: having a real challenge to work on; an opportunity to pitch and present ideas to a senior team; meeting and working with new people



Building on the learning from previous years

Keeping the 2 in-person days scheduled close together (as we did in 2024) is good for engagement and doesn't impact the quality of the core task. School engagement improves each year: the process is working well with high numbers of applicants Their support also led to positive survey numbers.

YPP participants enjoy teamworking, collaborating and interactive, task-orientated sessions.

We propose two changes to the running of the day (following reflections on 2024).

The in-person days are scheduled 4 weeks apart – taking place before the half term break.

A level workload is still relatively light in September – while gaining work experience a high priority. We also avoid clashes with Uni/college open days.

We will prepare the full suite of materials for review and sign off ahead of day 1, alleviating pressure between the 2 in-person days.

The longevity of the YPP means that schools are increasingly familiar and supportive of the initiative.

This year we will work harder to include the maximum number of schools across the region (avoiding single schools being over-represented in the YPP).

Feedback in 2024 again shows how much the YPP value learning about careers at Wessex Water: the Early Years Panel is an important component.

Briefing the core task early and building immersion sessions around the task has worked well.

We will consider this in this year's design – with mainly interactive sessions, more moving around and mixing up the teams.

We will also use the YPP to encourage ongoing participation through the customer panel.

High levels of applications have enabled the YPP to grow, however running with 6 teams puts pressure on the pitch process and judging – and may be diluting the 'airtime' for team presentations. This year we will cap numbers to 24 (4 teams of 6).

With (some) feedback about long days – and participants travelling big distances – we propose a slightly later start.



Recruiting the Young People's Panel

Defining the business objectives for the 2025 YPP

We will engage c.50 schools in the region to convene a panel of 24 students

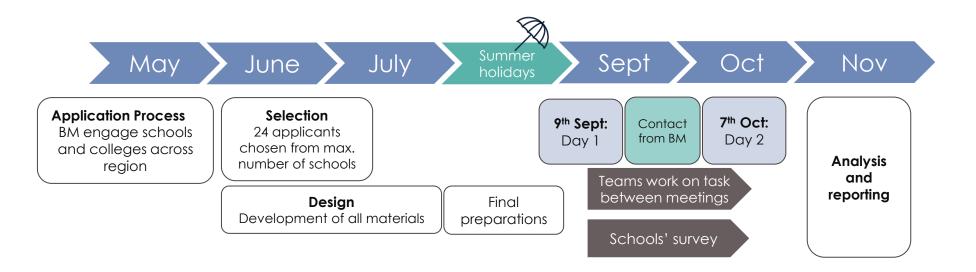
- Schools will promote the opportunity with years' 12 and 13
- We will use an online application form and provide schools with a summary of the YPP and a QR code for students to access
- We will choose applicants to reflect the widest number of schools with no more than 2 per school
- Our approach will be inclusive, offering additional support if needed

We have scheduled a meeting on 24th April to discuss the content

- Focus for the core task
- To include the objective to build on engaging future customers e.g. via the customer panel
- To consider other relevant topics relating to investment delivery, customer accountability, industry reputation, water resources (with WRMP in mind)
- Additional objectives for other 'slots' in the programme



We will follow the same face to face process as previous years: details of the running order for the day and the detailed briefing pack for the core task will be prepared in collaboration with Wessex Water. As previously, we will recruit from as many schools as possible, selecting pupils to work in teams with people from a range of other schools.





The following outlines a draft programme for each day. This is flexible and will be finalised with you.

We note (in bold) that there are c.5 opportunities for 'new insight' over and above the core task, giving scope to cover a range of objectives.

Day 1: immersion - 9th September

Time	Activity	
9.45 am	Panellists arrive, sign in, name badges, team allocation, GDPR consent	
10 – 10.30	Welcome & ice breaker	
10.30 – 11	New insight (e.g. group discussion)	
11 – 11.45	Set up core task (briefly) Speed immersion carousel Rotated with office & control centre tour	
12-12.45	New insight (e.g. interactive exercise relating to core task)	
12.45 – 1.30	NETWORKING LUNCH	
1.30 – 1.50	New insight Post lunch exercise	
1.50 - 3.30	Core task briefing Teams working on core task	
3.30 – 4.00	Team check-ins (BM) Parting instructions	

Day 2: pitches – 7th October

Time	Activity
9.45	Panellists arrive, sign in, name badges, GDPR consent Welcome back
10 – 11.00	Teams finalising core task
	Regroup
11.15 – 12.45	Team presentations
12.45 – 1.30	NETWORKING LUNCH
1.30 – 2.15	New insight (e.g. group discussion)
2.30 – 3.15	New insight (e.g. interactive exercise)
3.15 – 4.00	Core task feedback and winners awarded Final comments, thanks and goodbye



Project timetable

Date	Activity	Blue Marble action	Wessex Water action
April	Update application form	Update letter, application form, evaluation criteria	Update website and include application link
May Engage schools in YPP scheme; open applications		Using database of local schools/colleges contacts	Wider social media activity
End June	Applications close	Evaluation	
Early July (before end of term)	Select panellists	Despatch award emails	
April/May	Content meeting (24 th April)	Prepare full plan for Day 1 and 2	Enlist relevant colleagues, finalise timings/diaries. Sign off plan
July	Develop content	Develop all materials incl survey	Approve all materials
Early September	Finalise Board Meeting 1 preparations	Send out briefing pack to all panellists	All final arrangements: parking spaces, refreshments etc
September 9 th	Board Meeting 1	Facilitation	Participation at given points
September	Day 1 informal wash up meeting	Bring feedback scores & comments	Reflections
	Launch survey	Send link to all participating schools	
Early October	Pre meeting 2 catch up	Run through plan	Final arrangements (refreshments etc)
October 7th	Board Meeting 2	Facilitation	Participation at given points Judging panel
October/November	Analysis and report	Integrated report of key findings from both in-person days and school survey	Face-to-face meeting to share findings





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