Young People's Panel 2023

Final Report: November 2023

Overarching objectives: 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

2023 objectives

Understanding future customers' worlds
- To understand future customer perspectives on environmental issues
- To explore the impact of the cost of living on this cohort

Water sector communications
- To test water saving and waste messages
- To consider an 'urban' or layman lexicon of water industry terminology and jargon

Behaviour change
- To explore behaviours through diary keeping and trialling in-home devices.

Perceptions of Wessex Water
- NPS and considered perceptions
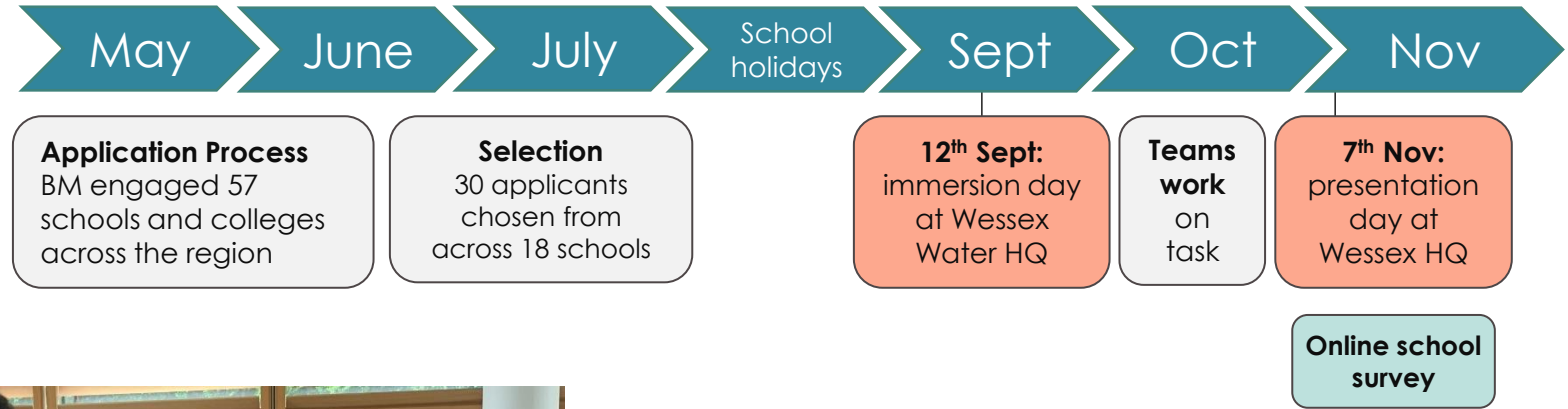- To explore fit with influencers and other collaborations

Core task: to build reputation and trust
- To create a manifesto for change in their role as 'the Department for the Future'

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Young People's panel

- Attended by 27 x 6th formers from schools and colleges across Wessex Water region (20 on second day)
- 5 teams to compete with their 'core task' pitch presentation

May → **June** → **July** → **School holidays** → **Sept** → **Oct** → **Nov**

Application Process
BM engaged 57 schools and colleges across the region

Selection
30 applicants chosen from across 18 schools

12th Sept: immersion day at Wessex Water HQ

Teams work on task

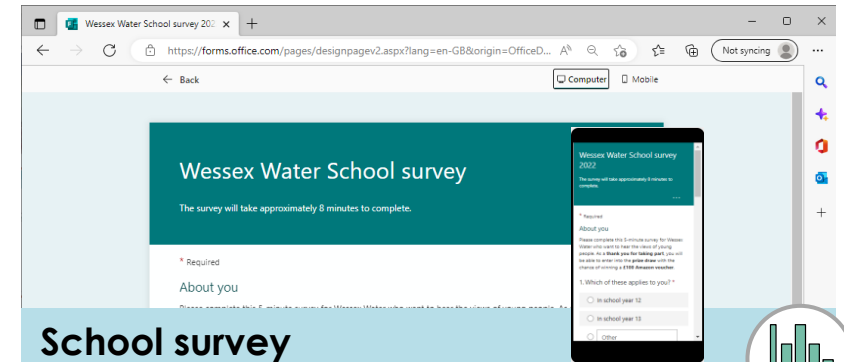**7th Nov:** presentation day at Wessex HQ

Online school survey

Day 1:
- Water sector immersion
- Future customer 'temperature check'
- Industry language exercise
- Brief behaviour change task
- Core task briefing

Day 2:
- Team presentations and feedback
- Influencers and collaborators task
- Review behaviour change task
- Introduce early careers at Wessex Water

School survey

- **688 students** from years 12 and 13 across 13 different schools and colleges took part
- Survey design complementing YPP topics and included trend questions from previous years
- Fieldwork dates 3rd – 13th November

CCW The voice for water consumers Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Collaboration with CCW who provided some communication materials, supported student briefings and acted as judges

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Contents

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Future customer perspectives

- Students are **stressed from juggling** A-levels, university applications, jobs and extra-curricular activities like EPQ and Duke of Edinburgh's award.

- Some feel frustrated that so much **weight rides on exams** rather than coursework – there is extra pressure to get it right on the day.

- Students feel **pressure and expectation** from schools and wider social context to go on to university.

- However, almost all are concerned by recent **changes to student loan repayments**. As a result, some are considering alternative options for post sixth-form, such as degree apprenticeships, or choosing a university further north (where the cost of living is perceived to be cheaper).
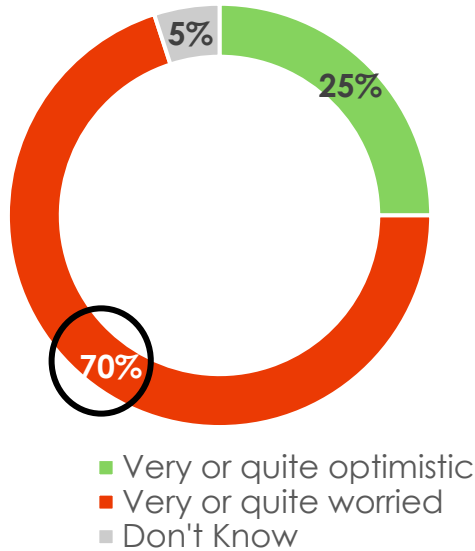
- Despite the stresses, many are enjoying the **greater freedom and responsibility of 6ᵗʰ form**
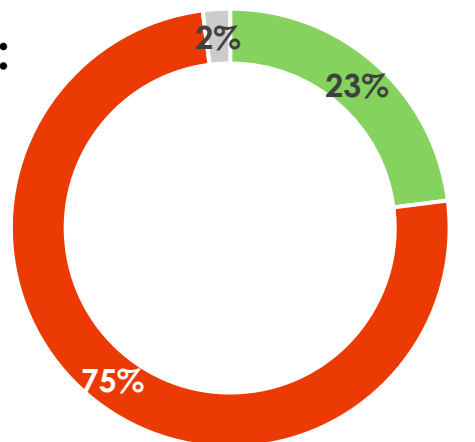 - Choosing their own subjects
  - Having more say over their time.

"There's so much stuff that we have to do for our personal statement, you feel like you have to be interesting."

"Daunting - how quickly you have to choose your next step is scary."

"They just want you to finish your A levels, go to university and get a job."

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**Considering how climate change might affect people in the UK, how do you feel about the future?**

Thinking about what you buy, how you travel and how you live your day-to-day life, which of these best describes you?

2023:

25%

5%

70%

- Very or quite optimistic
- Very or quite worried
- Don't Know

2021:

2%

23%

75%

- I don't tend to think about my impact on the environment
- It's a bonus if what I'm doing is environmentally friendly
- I think about my impact on the environment, and try to make a difference without spending too much time or money
- I'm very concerned about my impact on the environment and I spend considerable time or money to reduce it

2023	8%	37%	50%	5%
2022	5%	41%	49%	6%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
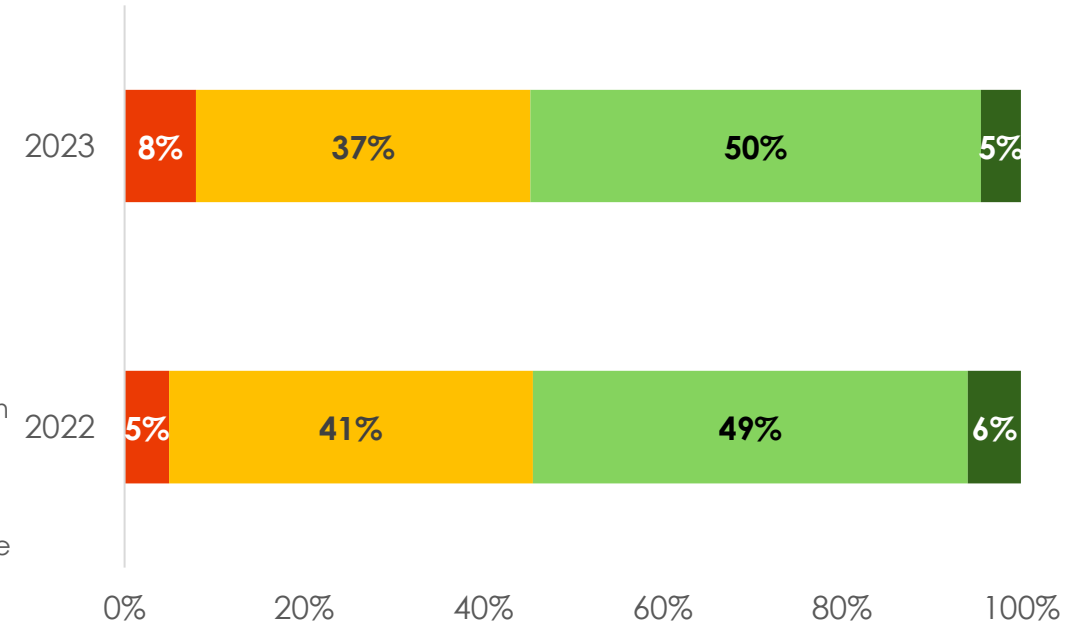
- There has been a small decrease since 2021 in levels of worry about the future regarding the effects of climate change.
- But relatively little change in how much future customers try to limit their environmental impact in their day-to-day-lives.

Thinking about what you buy, how you travel and how you live your day-to-day life, which of these best describes you? Base: 2022 (532) / 2023 (688)
Considering how climate change might affect people in the UK, how do you feel about the future? Base: 2021 (532) / 2023 (326)

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Flooding, river pollution and drought are growing concerns for future customers - but air pollution is their major environmental issue

- Compared to 2021, future customers are significantly more likely to rank **flooding, pollution of rivers and seas**, and **droughts** among the top three environmental issues that concern them most.

- An increase in **extreme weather** over recent years has perhaps influenced increased concern about the frequency and severity of flooding and droughts.

- The increase in concern over pollution of rivers is likely due to **increased media attention** around combined sewer overflows and accusations of illegal dumping of sewage in waterways.

- This has replaced previously high levels of media attention on plastics following prominent campaigns e.g. Blue Planet in 2019 – the effects of which were still felt in 2021. **Concern about micro plastics in the environment has nearly halved since 2021.**

Top three most concerning environmental issues affecting the UK (% who ranked issue within top three)

	2021	2023
Air pollution from household smoke and road vehicles	61%	64%
More frequent and severe flooding from rivers and the sea	36%	48%
Pollution of rivers and sea by sewage	28%	44%
Micro plastics in the environment	61%	36%
The need for more trees to be planted	33%	35%
Reduced biodiversity	36%	26%
More frequent and severe droughts	16%	25%
Erosion of soil and reduced soil fertility	15%	11%
River pollution from agriculture	13%	7%
Invasive species on land and water	3%	5%

Below is a list of environmental issues affecting the UK, please pick the top three most concerning to you and rank them in order. ('1' = most concern) Base: 2023 (688)
Below is a list of environmental issues affecting the UK, please pick the **top THREE most concerning to you** Base: 2021(326)

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Neither Google trends nor a brief online search provides any clear explanation for why microplastics has dropped relative to river pollution and flooding as areas for concern.

Survey – Nov '23

Microplastics vs River pollution

16 Aug 2020   1 May 2022
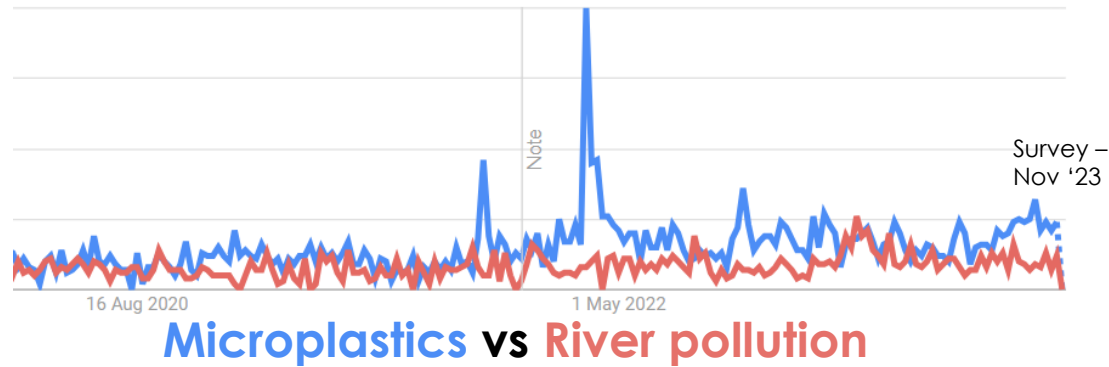
Microplastics peaked 20-26 March 2022, *river pollution* peaked 5-11 March 2023.

River pollution has a much lower peak relative to *microplastics,* and it looks like microplastics is currently trending higher than river pollution
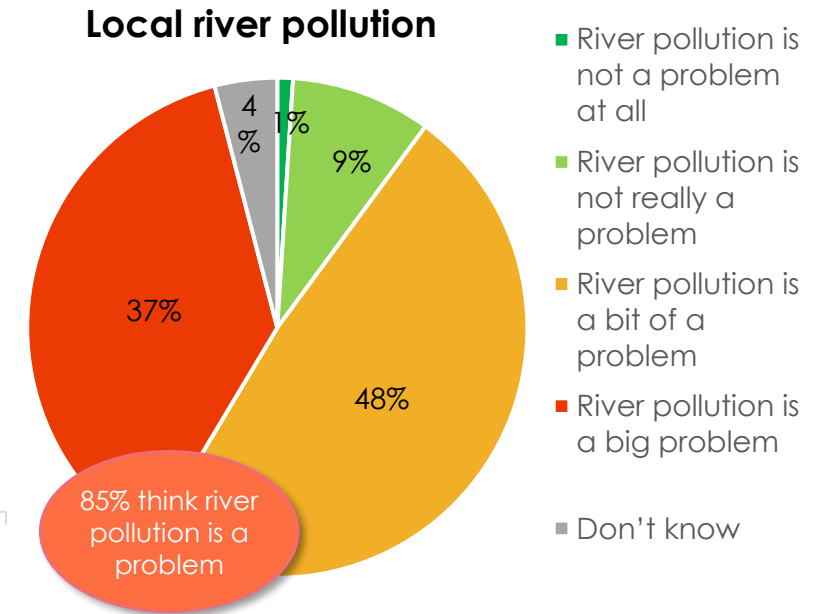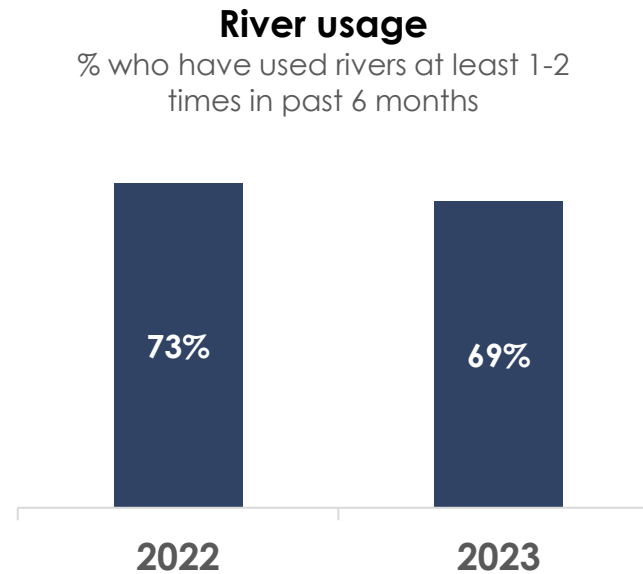

Survey – Nov '23

Microplastics vs Sewage Pollution

16 Aug 2020   1 May 2022

Sewage pollution peaked 14-20 August 2022, while *microplastics* peaked earlier (20-26 March 2022). *Microplastics* has been an established search trend for much longer than *sewage pollution.* Levels appear very similar now (from 26th November…).

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Which activities have you used a local river for?	2022	2023
Sitting / relaxing by a river	48%	52%
Swimming or paddling in the river	35%	41%
Exercising by a river	34%	31%
Recreation on a river (Boating, canoeing, rafting)	26%	31%
Fishing	7%	8%
Other	4%	4%
None	15%	16%

Expect local river water to be safe enough for…	2022	2023
Letting a dog swim in it	**75%**	**67%**
Dipping your toes in it	68%	63%
Using a paddleboard or canoe in it	67%	67%
Going fishing	53%	46%
Going swimming in it	44%	38%
Letting children play in it	**43%**	**32%**
Submerging your head under water	**25%**	**19%**
Drinking from it	3%	3%
None of these	**4%**	**8%**

River usage
% who have used rivers at least 1-2 times in past 6 months

2022: 73%
2023: 69%

Local river pollution

- River pollution is not a problem at all
- River pollution is not really a problem — 9%
- River pollution is a bit of a problem — 48%
- River pollution is a big problem — 37%
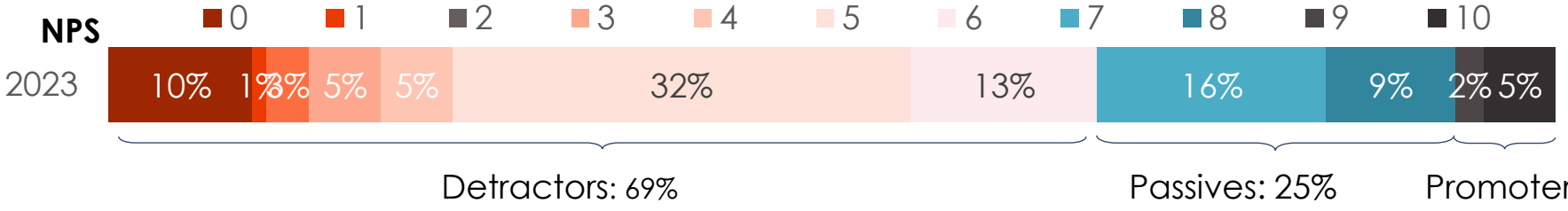- Don't know — 4%
- 1%

85% think river pollution is a problem

- • **Concern about river pollution has risen significantly since last year** (85% think it's a problem this year vs. 56% in 2022). The proportion of those who think river pollution is a big problem has more than doubled in the same time frame (from 16% to 37%).
- • Since last year, **scores for the perceived safety of local river water have declined** across all activities measured, and there has also been a slight decrease in river use for recreation.
- • These findings are consistent with sewage pollution being the third most important environmental issue for students, likely driven by **media coverage of CSOs and sewage spills**.

Which activities would you expect the water quality of your local river safe enough for? Which of the following describes your view on levels of pollution in your local rivers? How often have you visited rivers in your region for recreational purposes? Which activities over the last year, if any, have you visited or used a local river for? Base: 2023 (688) / 2022 (532)
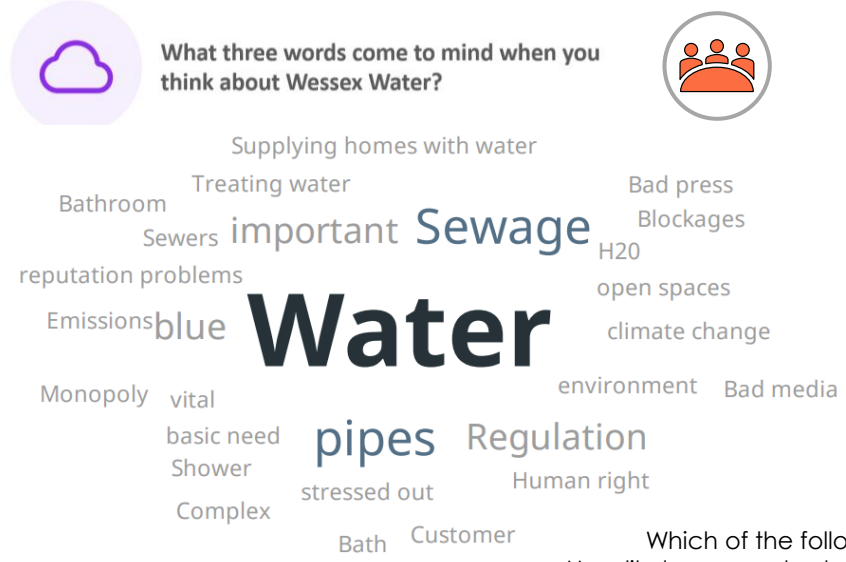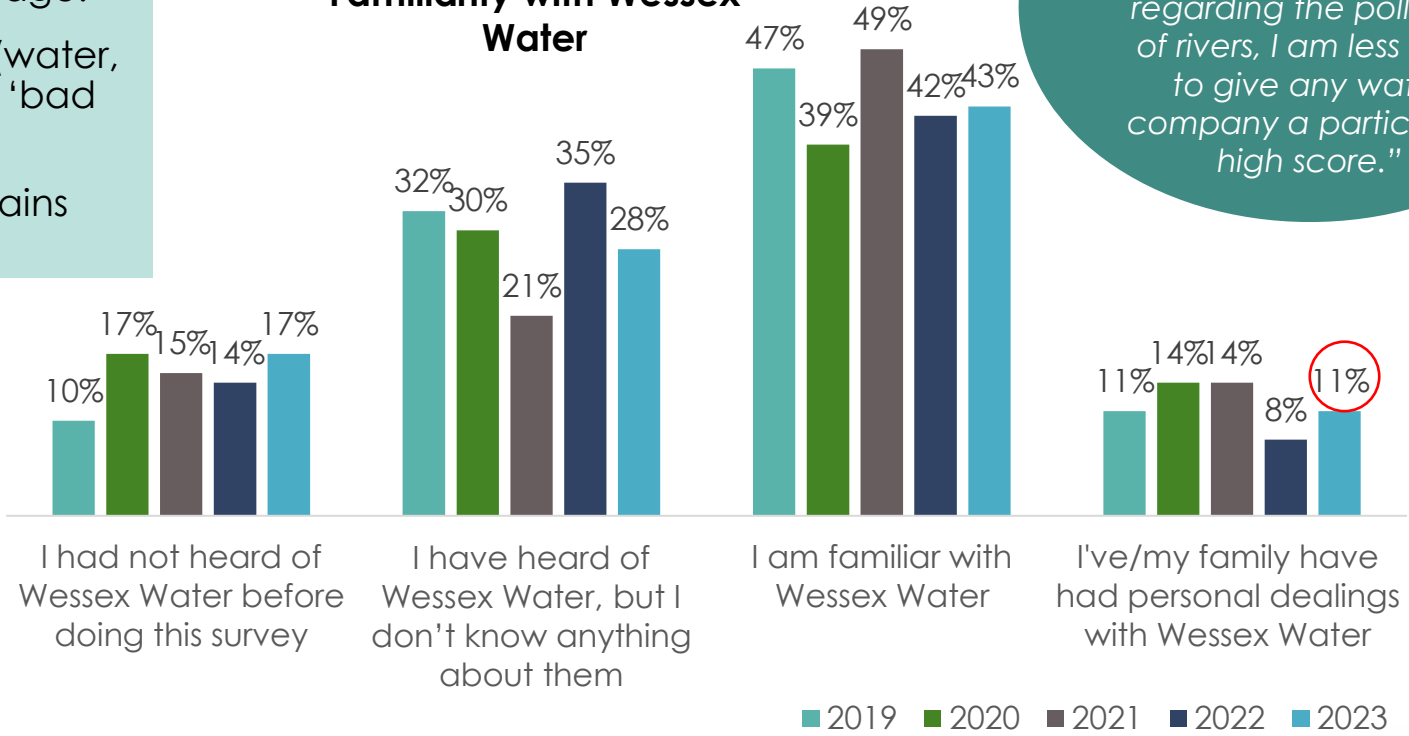
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NPS

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

2023

10% | 1% 3% 5% | 5% | 32% | 13% | 16% | 9% | 2% 5%

NPS -62

vs-47 (2022)
-44 (2021)

Detractors: 69%   Passives: 25%   Promoters: 7%

"I accept that Wessex Water is a good company, however given recent events regarding the pollution of rivers, I am less likely to give any water company a particularly high score."

- **NPS significantly lower vs 2022**. Comments suggest this is influenced by negative opinions of industry more generally, driven by media attention around sewage.

- Amongst 'top of mind' associations with Wessex (water, pipes etc) there are mentions of 'bad press' and 'bad media'.

- Familiarity with Wessex Water as a company remains broadly similar year on year.

Familiarity with Wessex Water

I had not heard of Wessex Water before doing this survey: 10%, 17%, 15%, 14%, 17%

I have heard of Wessex Water, but I don't know anything about them: 32%, 30%, 21%, 35%, 28%

I am familiar with Wessex Water: 47%, 39%, 49%, 42%, 43%

I've/my family have had personal dealings with Wessex Water: 11%, 14%, 14%, 8%, 11%

■2019 ■2020 ■2021 ■2022 ■2023

What three words come to mind when you think about Wessex Water?

Supplying homes with water
Treating water
Bathroom
Sewers   important   Sewage
reputation problems   Bad press   Blockages   H20
Emissions blue   open spaces   climate change
Monopoly   vital   environment   Bad media
basic need   Water   pipes   Regulation
Shower   stressed out   Human right
Complex   Bath   Customer

Which of the following reflect your awareness of Wessex Water? Base: All 2019 (703) / 2020 (555) / 2021 (326) / 2022 (532) / 2023 (2023)
How likely are you to describe Wessex Water as a good company to someone you know? And why did you give that score? Base: 688 (2023)

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Wessex Water is seen as reserved and sensible; not very fun, but responsible and reliable.

- Wessex Water is pictured as a **mature** party guest
  - Dressed smartly, perhaps in a suit
  - Intelligent
  - Still in their "work mindset"

- Wessex Water **isn't considered to be fun**
  - *"Uptight" "No rhythm"*
  - Not someone you would want to be "messy" in front of
  - Limited interaction with other party guests

- But, Wessex Water is seen as a **responsible** person
  - Potentially the party host
  - Handing out water to the dancers
  - Caring for the other guests

- **ASOS** is seen as a young and fun
- **NHS** is seen as caring and motherly but old and sad
- **EE** is seen as an ambitious and serious man

"ASOS would be having the time of their life."

"[EE's] definitely a man."

"I feel like the NHS would be quite a sad person."

"I'd have a drink or two with Wessex Water…but after I've had a few drinks, I'll start to hang out with ASOS."

"A guy dressed kind of poshly, a bit more reserved I think."

"I think they would be like an old man with a walking stick."
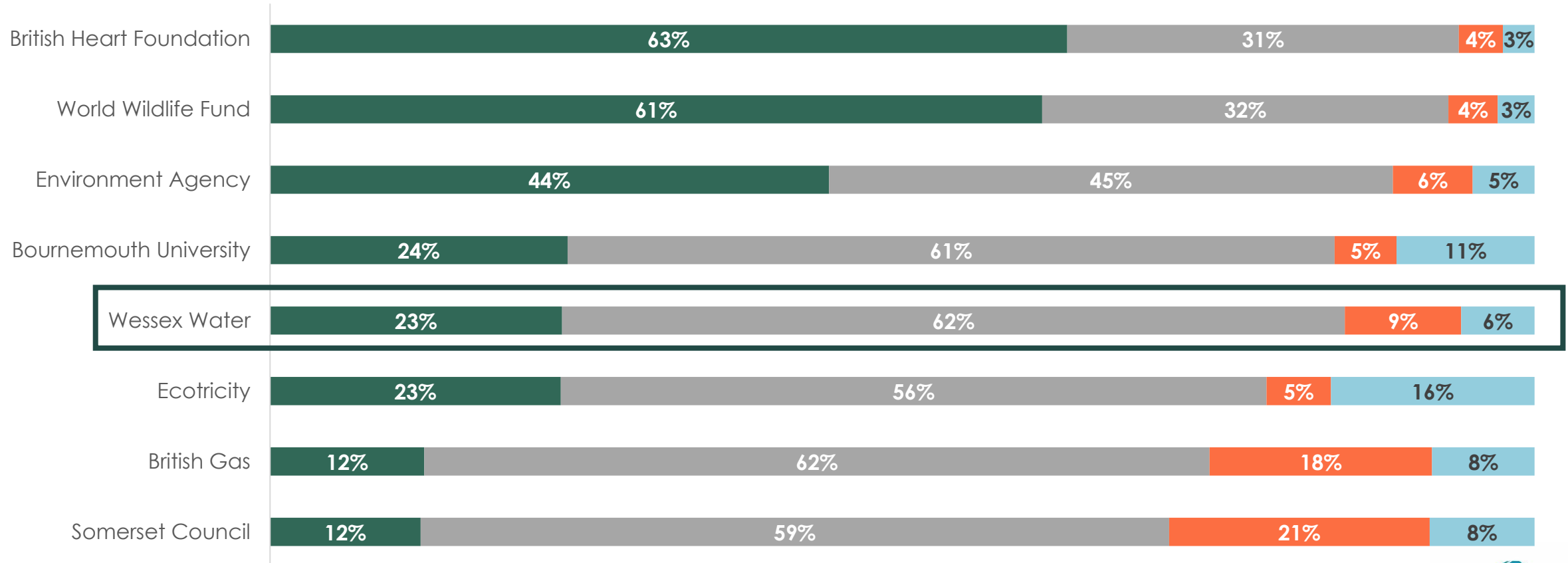
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Students say they'd feel most proud to work for charities. Sentiment about Wessex Water is comparable to Bournemouth University and Ecotricity.

Thinking ahead to when you are working, would you feel proud, neutral or embarrassed about working for the following…
*This is a new question in the Schools Survey this year.*

Legend: Proud ■ Neutral ■ Embarrassed ■ Don't Know

Organisation	Proud	Neutral	Embarrassed	Don't Know
British Heart Foundation	63%	31%	4%	3%
World Wildlife Fund	61%	32%	4%	3%
Environment Agency	44%	45%	6%	5%
Bournemouth University	24%	61%	5%	11%
Wessex Water	23%	62%	9%	6%
Ecotricity	23%	56%	5%	16%
British Gas	12%	62%	18%	8%
Somerset Council	12%	59%	21%	8%

Thinking ahead to when you are working, would you feel proud, neutral or embarrassed about working for the following? Base: (688)

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Changing water behaviours

In 2022, we determined the barriers which prevent future customers from changing their habitual behaviours. Students identify similar barriers this year.

Barriers preventing change (2022)
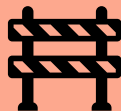
- **Easier** / more comfortable sticking to **status quo**
- **Convenient** e.g. takeaway food saves time
- A-level pressures affect **priorities** e.g. sleeping in preferred over going for early run
- **Peer pressure** to stick to norms
- **No visible impact or reward** for behaviour change
- **Lack of clear information** to define actions
- **Seems pointless** saving money when savings minimal

Barriers preventing change (2023)

- **Laziness** and enjoyment of old habits was again identified as the topmost barrier, highlighting the difficulty of leaving the 'comfort zone'
- **Fixed Mindset** – lack of motivation to change
- **Procrastination**
- **Addiction / addictive habits** e.g. spending too long on social media
- Seemingly **unachievable goals & lack of clear actions**
- **Insufficient time** in the day
- **Consistent & regular efforts** needed

- To build on our understanding of the barriers to behaviour change and how to overcome these, we set a task to be completed between the two days of the YPP.

- We asked students to adopt the following behaviours:
  - Cut a minute off showers
  - Don't flush every time
  - Wear clothes for longer
  - Start using gunk pots
  - Use reusable cleansing pads

- Students were given products to support the changes; digital timers, egg timers, gunk pots and reusable face pads.

- Worksheets to track progress ensured we captured private reflections that may not be shared in a group setting.

Behaviour Change: My Progress
(5 stars = always doing the behaviour... 1 star = no progress this week)

Tick your chosen behaviours to change:	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
□ Cut a minute off shower (using digital timers)	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
□ Don't flush every time	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
□ Wear clothes for longer	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
□ Start using gunk pots	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
□ Use reusable cleansing pads	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆

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Cut a minute off showers

- Behaviour generally seen as **achievable** - many said it is the **easiest behaviour to adopt long term.**

- **Boys find this easier than** girls, who may take longer showers on certain days e.g. when washing hair, exfoliating etc

- Many report being more **mindful** of shower water use since Day 1. This has led them to adopt water saving behaviours even without aiming to cut a minute off their showers in particular:
  - Some take shorter showers naturally, without a timer
  - Some now turn shower off when shampooing hair

- Future customers are **not motivated by talk of money saving** as they don't pay the bills. Instead, they stress the importance of education around the topic for driving behaviour change amongst their demographic.

Barriers to behaviour change	Suggestions

• Digital timer unpopular
  – Doesn't stick well to wall.
  – Gets waterlogged quickly.
  – Broke.
  – Requires manual clicking up to level 100 before would reset to 0.
• Egg timer slightly more popular (easier to use) but disliked lack of functionality (can't see exact time left)
• Behaviour harder to achieve on days where:
  – Cold weather
  – Done sport/gym
  – Washed hair
	• Provide stopwatches instead of countdown timers – less disruptive than having alarm go off, and more flexible as still counts up after time-limit exceeded, so can revise goal and continue to monitor progress
	• Promote app for tracking shower length progress, to make it easier to visualise benefits and motivate continuation of behaviour
	• Educate on environmental impact of water saving rather than financial benefits – more motivating for non bill-payers

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Don't flush every time

- Almost all future customers **very resistant** to attempting this behaviour change – viewing it as **unhygienic and embarrassing.**

- **Social norms** are a strong influence – most have been brought up to flush every time and view it as anti-social not to.
  — There are worries around how **others in the house** would feel, and what to do when **guests** came round.

- During the group discussions, **only one** future customer reported carrying out this behaviour, as it is already practiced in their family.
  — However, worksheets show that some participants have implemented this behaviour change, even if they say that they are opposed to the behaviour or remained quiet in the group discussion.
  — This emphasises the strong impact that social dynamics have on this behaviour, indicating that there is some scope for young people to implement this behaviour in private, even if they don't admit it in public.

- Apparent **gender divide**, with girls tending to be more opposed to this behaviour than boys.

Barriers to behaviour change

- Social norms
- Particular concerns included:
  – Smell
  – Staining toilet bowl
  – Hard to keep track of whether toilet was flushed and who would go in next, particularly if have guests

Suggestions

- Communications geared towards influencing social norms – perhaps education around the fact that this is an acceptable behaviour with environmental benefits
- Some say toilet blocks might help address concerns (but still felt these wouldn't go far enough)
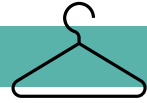
Wear clothes for longer

- Very few had tried to change this behaviour – **resistant** to the idea that clothes should be worn again once they are 'dirty'
- Common perception there is **no room for improvement:** they are not needlessly washing clothes
- This appears to driven by a **perception of social norms**; there is a lack of knowledge around what is considered a 'normal' amount to wash items and some **hesitation to share laundry habits**, presumably for fear of being considered dirty.
- Opinions on how often clothes should be washed differ depending on:
  — The **type of clothes**, e.g. school shirts and gym clothes get dirtier quicker than pyjamas and jeans, so need washing more frequently.
  — The **season**, as it is seen as easier to wash clothes less frequently in the winter when sweating less.
- Comparisons are made between wearing clothes for longer and **buying clothes second hand**; this is seen as a more achievable way to have the same kind of environmental impact.

Barriers to behaviour change

- Lack of knowledge around how often others wash their clothes leads to wariness of being considered dirty by others if washing less frequently
- Most do not have a desire to change behaviour; there's a perception that not washing all items of clothing after each wear is already doing enough

Suggestions

- Publicise 'normal' laundry timelines with real people explaining their routine, to promote 'acceptable' amounts of times to wear clothes
- Encourage system for keeping clothes worn only once or twice available to encourage re-wearing (a basket or the bedroom chair…)

Start using gunk pots

- Most future customers **do not cook at home**, so instead gave them to parents
- Some who did this reported that they quickly became a **norm in the household**, used by the whole family
  — Gunk pots solve an existing problem, as process of fat disposal **easier and less hassle**
  — Rewarding to see a tangible result, with fat visibly going in the bin rather than down the drain
- The **design and concept** of gunk pots are **popular;** whilst in general they are not yet considered a norm or a habit, there is not much resistance to the idea of them becoming more frequently used

Barriers to behaviour change

- Young people often aren't cooking for themselves; if they are, may perceive there isn't enough oil to make using a gunk pot worthwhile
- Infrequent use makes it harder to remember to create habit
- Some think that pots must be put in the fridge which takes up space and isn't something pleasant to have next to food

Suggestions

- Educate around impact of even small quantities of fats, oils and greases going down the sink
- Bring into school food tech lessons to educate on use and build foundations for habit to be developed later
- Encourage young people to share with family if not useful personally; exposure through youth will help reinforce habit when cooking later in life
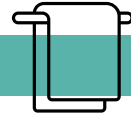
Use reusable cleansing pads

- **Very popular amongst girls.** Some boys used them e.g. to wash their face, but very few – **seen as less relevant to boys.**

- Those who used them did so pretty much **every day and** think they will keep up this behaviour long term.

- Some girls are **already aware** of this product from friends, and some had already been planning to start using them.

- Work just as well as disposable pads, and fewer are needed (one reusable pad does job of 2 or 3 disposables), although they soak up more product, which means using more product, and are also felt to be rougher than disposable pads.

- Washing can be a hassle, though this is not a major barrier to use

2023 Schools Survey: 43% use make up wipes and 49% think that some wipes can be flushed down the toilet

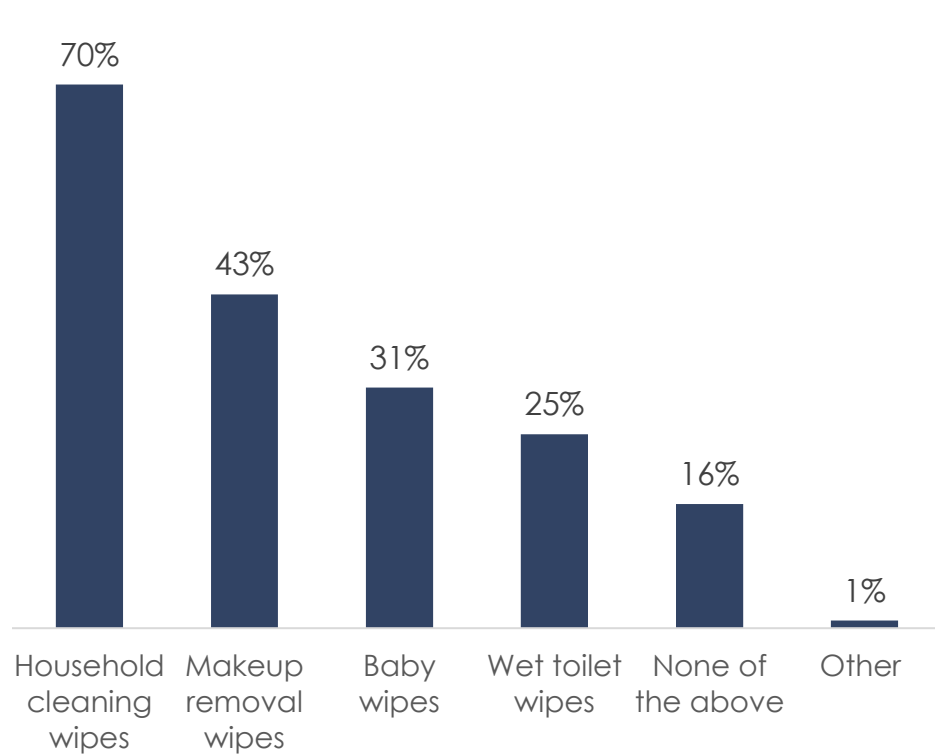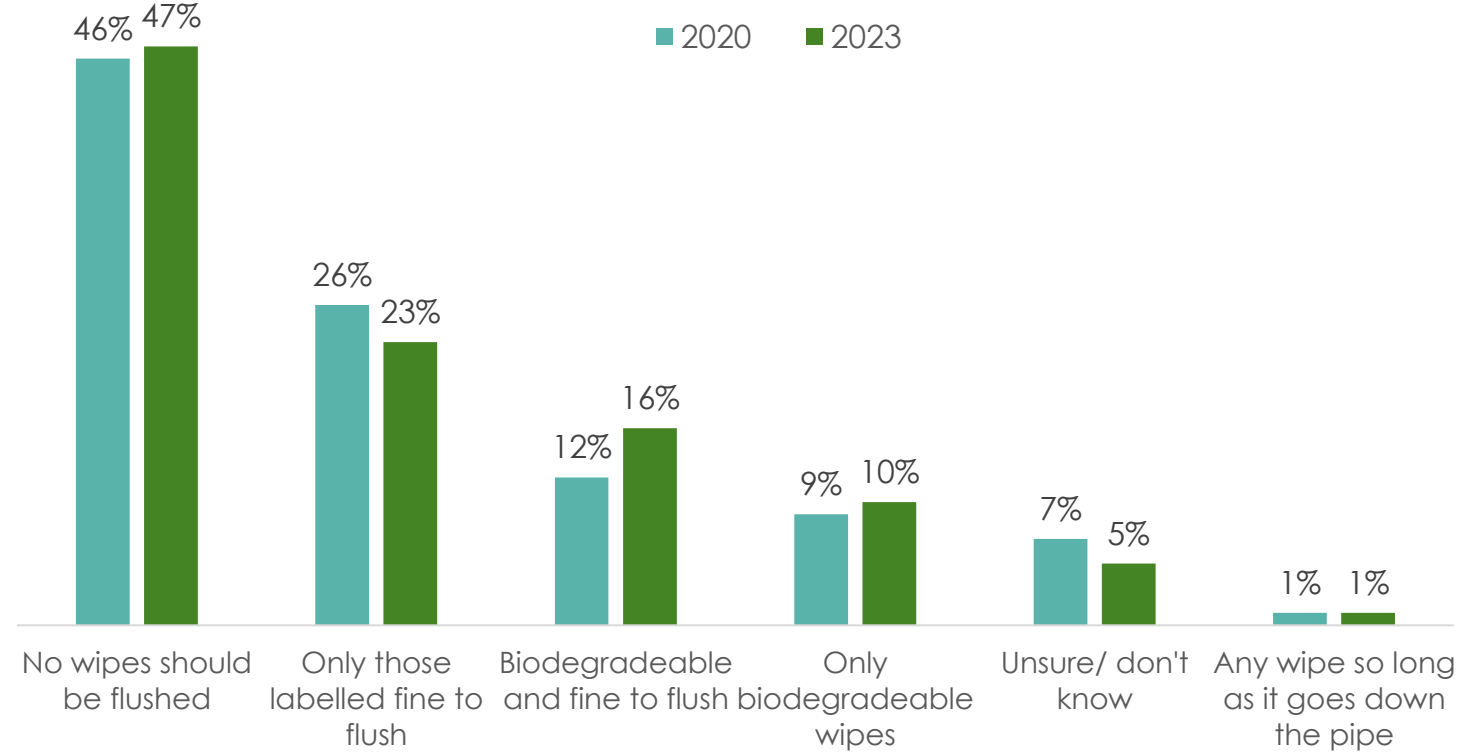| Barriers to behaviour change	Suggestions
• Washing takes effort, and usually there are no extra pads to use whilst they are being washed • Worries around using the same wipes for different products e.g. nail varnish remover and acne cream • Feel rougher than regular wipes, but this wasn't as a major barrier to use	• Hand out more pads (14 was a suggested amount) • Make pads different colours, so use can be colour coded (e.g. red for nail varnish remover, yellow for acne cream) (future customer suggestion)

Which of the following kinds of wipes do you usually have in your house? Base: (688)
Regardless of wipe use, which if any, of the following types can be flushed down the toilet? Base: 2023 (688)

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Which of the following kinds of wipes do you usually have in your house?

- Household cleaning wipes: 70%
- Makeup removal wipes: 43%
- Baby wipes: 31%
- Wet toilet wipes: 25%
- None of the above: 16%
- Other: 1%

Regardless of wipe use, which if any, of the following types can be flushed down the toilet?

■ 2020 ■ 2023

- No wipes should be flushed: 46% / 47%
- Only those labelled fine to flush: 26% / 23%
- Biodegradeable and fine to flush: 12% / 16%
- Only biodegradeable wipes: 9% / 10%
- Unsure/ don't know: 7% / 5%
- Any wipe so long as it goes down the pipe: 1% / 1%

- 84% of future customers usually have disposable wipes of some kind in their house. Over two thirds have household cleaning wipes in their house and almost half have makeup removal wipes.

- Almost half think that some wipes can be flushed down the toilet, with little change in this figure since 2020.

Which of the following kinds of wipes do you usually have in your house? Base: (688)
Regardless of wipe use, which if any, of the following types can be flushed down the toilet? Base: 2023 (688) / 2020 (555)

BLUE MARBLE

This exercise was designed to understand young customers' messaging preferences and to identify the most compelling messages for promoting behaviour change

- The panel examined four pairs of messages about water saving (reducing shower time, summer drought and conserving water) and wastewater.

- We set up 4 stations, each showing students two versions of the message that the water industry could use to encourage people to change their behaviours.

- Each team of students circulated around the stations to evaluate (and vote for) their preferred message and to suggest potential improvements.

- We collected the votes for each option as well as the strengths, weaknesses and questions panellists raised.

CCW collaboration

The water saving messages were drawn from CCW's Citizen Forum research (Wave 1 Drought messaging - July 2023 and Wave 2 Consistent messaging - August 2023)

Messages were tested in this research with a sample of 20 English and Welsh adults across the full range of age and sociodemographic groups.
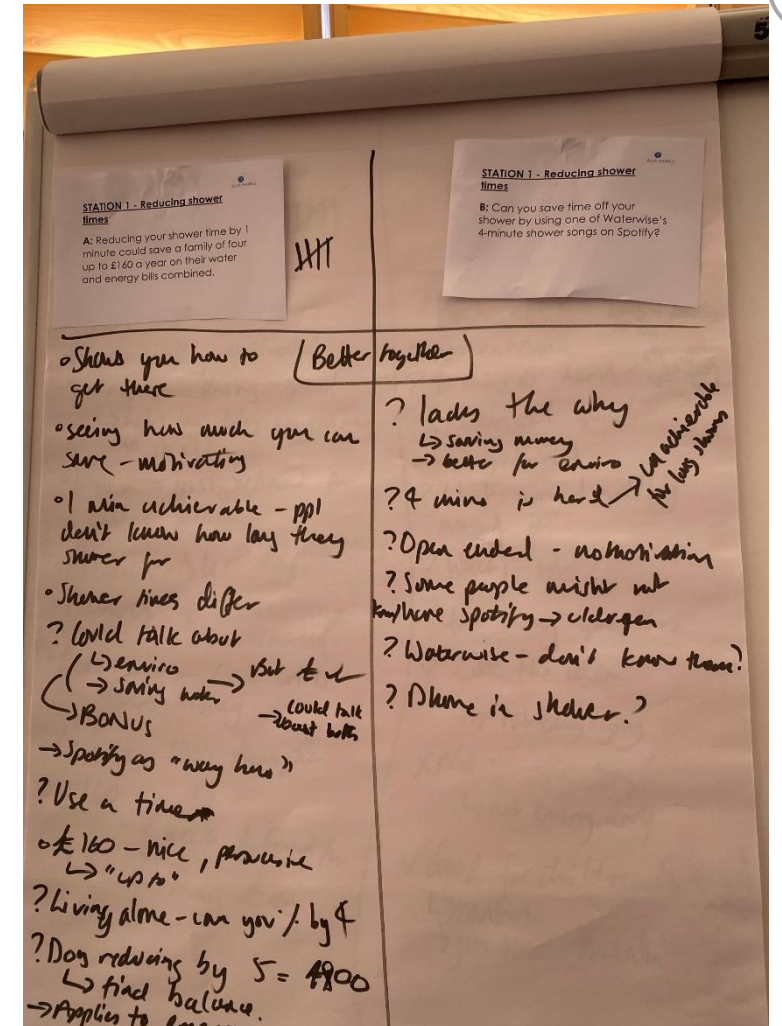
Votes

A: *Reducing your shower time by 1 minute could save a family of four up to £160 a year on their water and energy bills combined.*

19

1

B: *Can you save time off your shower by using one of Waterwise's 4-minute shower songs on Spotify?*

PROS AND CONS

✓ Financial element significant motivator

✓ Action and end benefit are clear

✓ 1 min feels easy to do and framing as '1 minute less' rather than a fixed time limit is translatable to all

✗ Link between reducing shower time and saving energy less obvious (whereas water savings more intuitive)

✗ 'Up to & £160' provokes minor scepticism; full savings amount could be less

✗ Could be more ambitious – 2 mins means greater benefits

? Some like reference to family of four - but calculation less relevant to others

PROS AND CONS

✓ Could be good for children as part of the shower routine who might find it more as a 'fun challenge' to do and foster good habits

✗ Does not show outcome or personal benefit – lacking the 'why'

✗ Most have no knowledge of Waterwise

✗ 4 minutes seen as unachievable – very short for long shower days when hair wash, exfoliation etc. is needed

✗ Too much effort for young people / adults to put on Spotify, find a song, and bring the phone to shower

✗ Older generations might not know what Spotify is

Adults also found option A motivating with the potential saving seen as impressive.

Message A clear winner overall: content is seen as more compelling, relevant and achievable than B and wording does not need any improvement for use in behaviour change communications.

BLUE MARBLE

Votes

A: We're one hot, dry spell away from a drought!
Last year your area experienced a scorcher. Plenty of picnics, sunbathing, barbecues. But regional water supplies have been drained. Drought is threatening. *Find out more about how your region can save water and avoid **a LONG hosepipe ban** today.*

10 🏆 **10**

B: The ripple effects of <u>drought.</u>
In 2022, some parts of the country experienced their driest conditions in 90 years. So far 2023 has seen meagre rainfall. Turn off taps this summer. Help your local region. *Do your part to conserve water levels.*

PROS AND CONS

✓ Some think A feels more balanced & personal as it 'weighs up both sides' of the impacts of a heatwave; fun leisure activities vs. reduced water supplies

Mixed opinions on perception of tone:

✓ Serious tone from phrases such as 'drought is threatening' and the mention of a long hosepipe ban more motivating for some

? Exclamation mark, mention of BBQs/picnics, and word 'scorcher' negative for some (minimise seriousness of the topic) but positive for others (more 'friendly' and relatable)

PROS AND CONS

✓ Tone more serious and less light-hearted compared to A – therefore more motivating

Debate over usefulness of the phrase 'turn off taps':

✓ Informative: tells people what to do

✓ A good solution to give to people, achieves sense of involvement of contributing to something bigger.

✗ Phrase is confusing as no context given on when to do this – people can't just stop using taps

Most adults preferred option A: direct approach, emphasises consequences, puts hosepipe at front of people's minds.

Students are divided over the most effective message for eliciting behaviour change, with both requiring improvement; the ideal message would avoid an overly frivolous tone and include clear directions for what actions consumers should take.

Votes

A: Most of the water you drink in the UK comes from our environment. Population growth is increasing customer demand for water just as drier summers reduce the amount available. This combination puts a strain on our water resources and the natural environment they support.

3

17

B: We expect England and Wales's population to further increase by around 3 million people by 2045, this will put an extra strain on our natural water resources. This means we all need to make a little extra effort to reduce our water use so there is enough water for people and the environment. Small changes like reducing our shower time by a minute, can add up to a big water saving. If everyone in the UK spent one minute less in the shower this would save 56,000 million litres of water every year.

PROS AND CONS

- ✓ Succinct: less text but still conveys key message that water resources are stretched
- ✗ Presents problems but no solutions: major issue with the message as limits behaviour change and feels pessimistic
- ✗ Less trustworthy without concrete stats
- ✗ First sentence confusing/incorrect – doesn't all water come from the environment?

PROS AND CONS

- ✓ Use of stats makes message credible, impactful and tangible
- ✓ Provides clear direction for actions to take
- ✓ Presenting a solution makes message feel optimistic so consumers more likely to engage – situation doesn't feel hopeless
- ✓ 'Small changes' feel manageable and realistic to achieve
- ✗ 'We all need to make a little extra effort' sounds patronising
- ✗ Could be shorter – need to edit wording and focus on key information

Strong preference from adults for option B: Hard-hitting, drives home the seriousness of the situation, empowers to act

Message B clear winner overall: the inclusion of stats and clear action points for consumers are highly motivating, but would benefit from being shortened.

CCW
The voice for water consumers
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

BLUE MARBLE

Votes

A: It's Unblocktober!
Take a look at some of these gross blockages we've encountered recently. Making small changes like only flushing paper, pee and poo can help make a difference.
Find out more about how to avoid blockages here:
www.wessexwater.co.uk/your-wastewater/how-to-avoid-blockages

11

9

B: We deal with around 13,000 blockages on our network every year at a cost of around £5m, with around 75% of them involving disposable items. The most common causes of blockages are:
- wet wipes, including those labelled flushable
- sanitary items, such as towels and tampons
- fats, oils and grease (FOGs) and food leftovers.

Only flush the 3ps keep blockages from damaging the environment.
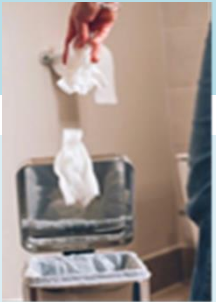
PROS AND CONS

✓ Concise, simple and engaging message

✓ Use of URL (even if they think they wouldn't use it)

✓ Explains the 3ps

• Image divisive – some find it too graphic and off-putting but others feel this would ensure a stronger impact on behaviour change

✕ 'Unblocktober' sounds too corporate – some think it's good to be catchy but consensus is that it's too try-hard – fun names don't seem to fit with Wessex Water

PROS AND CONS

✓ More details are a positive – specifies different types of blockages and shows stats

✕ 13,000 and £5m can be difficult to comprehend and judge whether it is a lot for the scale of the area

✕ Financial information less relevant to younger customers who are non-bill payers

✕ Mentions 3ps but doesn't explain what they are

✕ Image is a bit vague and not impactful – won't drive behaviour change

Panellists are divided over the most effective message; the ideal communication would retain the simplicity of A but include in additional detail from B around the causes of blockages and the 3Ps. Including a graphic picture would likely generate more attention and engagement.

BLUE MARBLE

Driving customer engagement

How should Wessex Water interact with customers?

- Digital channels seen to be most effective channel for communicating with young people
  - Most don't read physical newspapers
  - Radio listened to e.g. on school commute but much less time than spent online
  - Live TV is only watched for certain programmes where want to see developments as soon as possible e.g. Love Island, Made in Chelsea. Most TV viewing on-demand, often through ad-free platforms e.g. Netflix
- However specific targeting within social media is essential e.g. Facebook not widely used by this age group
- Limited appetite amongst future customers for engaging with companies through chatbots - most prefer to call, finding the responses of AI chatbots to be too structured to be helpful

What digital channel would be most effective?

- TikTok is one of the most popular apps
- Used mainly for entertainment: videos are short, ad-free, a fun way to pass the time
- However, also a key source of news and information for this audience
- TikTok is often a passive activity; scrolling and seeing what comes up rather than actively looking
- Future customers feel that Wessex Water would be able to communicate effectively with them through short videos which counter misconceptions portrayed in the media
  - Important to get the tone right: future customers put off companies seen to be *'trying too hard'*

"Our generation would only see it on social media, and we don't hear from anything else."

"It's got to be TikTok, everyone is on that, everyone uses it the most. It used to be maybe Instagram, but it's slowly transitioned over."

"When companies try to be trendy, it always feel really disingenuous and makes me less likely to want anything from them...any company that makes bad social media videos."

"Behind every blockage free home…"

**Future customers were shown three of Wessex Water's TikToks and asked for their feedback.**

- The most positively received video is enjoyed because it is short, informative, and has a clean 'aesthetic' (however, some perceive the music outdated, as it trended a few years ago).

- Often heavy users of TikTok, this audience can be critical:
  - Perceive videos not very 'current'
  - Some video formats seem unfamiliar, potentially misapplied, or outdated for this audience.
  - Some don't feel the humour is relatable to their age group.

- Trend relevant but seen as potentially misapplied – music and format usually used for mental health content

- Hashtags seen as inappropriate
  - Young people unlikely to be searching for e.g. #grossvideo
  - Risk of grouping the video with inappropriate content for Wessex Water

  #Blockage #BlockageTok #Gross #GrossVideo #EducationalVideo #EduTok #LearnOnTikTok

- Future customer suggestion: Use #Bristol or #Bath. This will get videos to the right audience and will make it more relatable, e.g. adverts for refillable taps in Bath - "How I feel when I fill up my water bottle…"
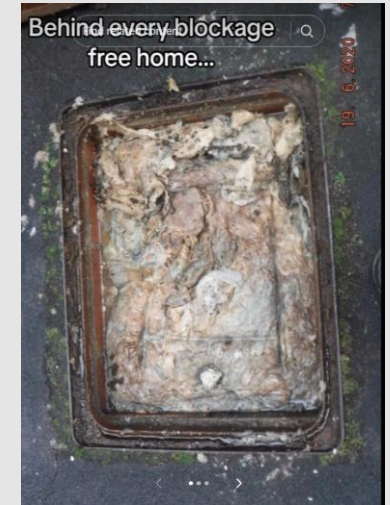
N.B. Target audience for featured TikTok activity is people aged 25+. The above feedback is from participants aged 16-18 and does not represent the views of the target audience.
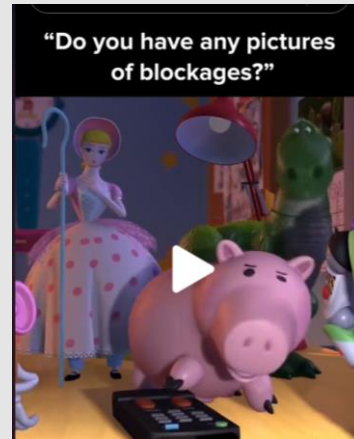
"Who is going to search up #grossvideos?"

"They didn't really get the actual trend…a bit out of touch.."

BLUE MARBLE

"Do you have any pictures of blockages?"

- Trend not familiar to this audience

- Humour perceived as something that wouldn't resonate with young people

- Unclear meaning – just pictures without a message

"Do you have any pictures of blockages?"

"It feels like something that people think teenagers will find funny."

"That song is so 2020."

"I thought it was good in terms of that's the type of videos that people would see… I've seen videos like that before and thought 'that's quite useful.'"

N.B. Target audience for featured TikTok activity is people aged 25+. The above feedback is from participants aged 16-18 and does not represent the views of the target audience.

"Reusable alternatives"

- Favourite of the three examples

- Short, snappy and informative

- Format is familiar; videos like this have been noticed before

- Good camera quality and a clean plain background make the video more watchable; it feels professional with good aesthetic

- However, music seen as dated

Reusable makeup pads
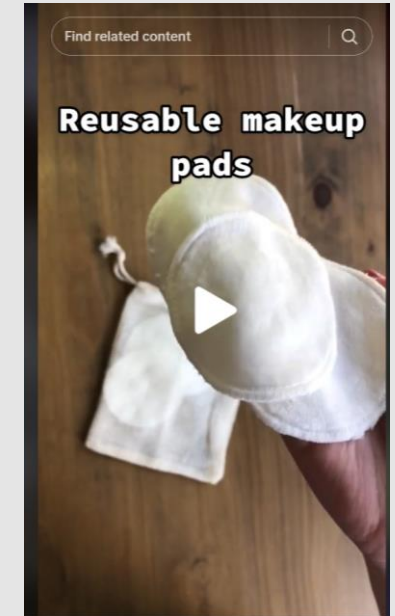
What works – Ryanair is given as an example of a company that has a successful presence on TikTok.
- The humour - making fun of their customers for flying cheaply –resonates with future customers.
- However, they could not see how Wessex Water could take a similar approach.

BLUE MARBLE

Through a group exercise, we explored what types of people Wessex Water should consider partnering with to engage customers and deliver information, both about its own work and water issues more broadly.

What type of person would make an ideal partner for Wessex Water?

Credibility
- Sense that future customers more sceptical about trustworthiness of information, so credibility is essential for building engagement
- Key role to debunk media myths around water and/or Wessex Water, publicising misconceptions and truths

Track record of influence/activism around important issues
- A good fit with whatever Wessex Water wants to highlight
- Water or environment-focused, or an activist for other issues (e.g. civil rights, feminism) who could turn their focus to water
- Includes people who are experts in other fields who may apply that knowledge to water (e.g. money-saving specialists)

Sufficient reach
- Big platform with high engagement, e.g. through Instagram, documentary series, and whose views are regularly picked up by media
- Potential for specific engagement with future customers through schools

Local?
- A local person or brand more relevant, but future customers recognise they may not have sufficient reach to have significant impact, particularly around broader water issues rather than those specific to Wessex Water

What type of person should be avoided?

- **Controversial personalities**
  – Avoid risk of tainting brand and message with divisive behaviour e.g. Piers Morgan, Katie Hopkins, Joe Rogan

- **Those with wrong tone**
  – Entertainment-only sources lack credibility
  – Personal influence sometimes not seen to be something to be proud of e.g. Molly Mae

- **Those with an unrelated focus (unless deemed particularly credible)**
  – Need to avoid feeling like a 'force-fit' e.g. Elf Makeup, Mr Beast

BLUE MARBLE

Focus on influencing around important issues/water

Effort required
Only an option if credibility can be increased; issue may be minor e.g. due to current lack of reach, or more significant e.g. reputational)

Priority
Highly relevant choice to partner with on an ongoing basis; content would be a natural fit with existing activity and the source is trusted

Surfers Against Sewage

David Attenborough

Malala Yousafzai

Martin Lewis

Rishi Sunak

Leonardo DiCaprio

Emma Watson

Steven Bartlett

'Jubillee' Youtube videos

Parents, family, friends, workmates

Teachers (as part of programme)

Questionable source of info

Credible source of info

Avoid
Unsuitable; not worth effort to address credibility issues when content not a natural fit. Those with reputational issues could damage brand

Potential
Core focus is not obvious fit; may be suitable for transactional relationship (e.g. paid advertising) or 'one-off' activity (e.g. article on fast fashion)

Other national news outlets:
Daily Mail, Daily Star

Beth RIgby

Mr Beast

China uncensored

Zoe Sugg

Jordan Peterson

Jonny Harris

Joe Rogan

@positivenews (Instagram)

Piers Morgan

Leah's Fieldnotes   Elf makeup

Katy Hopkins

Molly Mae   James Corden

Fabrizio Romano

Local newspapers:
Daily Echo, Bath live etc

Respected national news outlets:
BBC news, The Guardian, The Times, El Mundo

Local radio (Heart)

Oprah

New Scientist

Econplusdal

Vogue

No focus on influencing around important issues/water

BLUE MARBLE

If money were no object, who would be a good choice…?

David Attenborough: National hero and vocal campaigner for environmental issues

"David Attenborough is known and respected nationally so would have a big impact."

"Martin Lewis has a strong impact on people's spending."

"[Surfers Against Sewage] are trustworthy and campaign about safer seas and water."

Leonardo Di Caprio: Both famous and an outspoken advocate for environmental issues

Emma Watson: Actor with considerable following and a prominent activist for women's rights and gender equality

Martin Lewis: Highly influential financial journalist whose 'Money Saving Expert' website has a cult following

Surfers Against Sewage: Well-known for activism around sewage, which is a key issue for water companies

Teachers: Well-trusted figures with direct contact with future customers – would need to act as part of a scheme/programme given individual reach limited.

BLUE MARBLE

Leaky Loo

A toilet with a leaking cistern. Water leaks down the inside of the toilet, into the pan.

Foul water

Sewage or water that is from a toilet, sink or has been used for food preparation or washing.

Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDS)

Alternative ways of managing drainage in urban areas to reduce the amount which enters sewers and has to be treated. SuDs efficiently and sustainably drain surface water, whilst boosting biodiversity and minimizing flooding and pollution. Methods include ponds, vegetation-filled basins, and permeable paving.
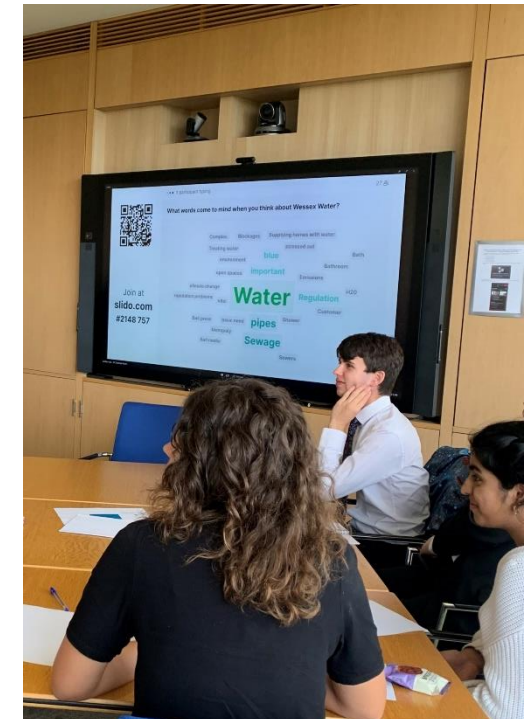
Surface water

Rainwater collected from roofs or drains. It doesn't need to be treated but often ends up in combined sewers and is treated at waste recycling centres.

Sewer flooding

When sewage or foul water leaks from the sewerage system (through pipes, drains or manholes) or floods up through toilets, sinks or showers inside a building.

Nature-based solutions

Nature-based solutions is an umbrella term for interventions that are designed with nature in mind to restore ecosystems, reverse biodiversity loss, manage water and tackle the negative effects of climate change on infrastructure and society. They include wetlands, reedbeds and green roofs.

Complex terms sometimes used in the water industry can often be difficult to say or interpret, making them less practical to use.

- We conducted an interactive session aimed at involving young customers in rephrasing these terms to make them more user-friendly.
- On Slido, students are asked to examine 6 terms & definitions and come up with more customer-friendly alternative phrase to form a bigger word-cloud.
- The strengths & weaknesses of the suggestions were discussed and evaluated among groups.
- Students voted for their favourite phrases, with the aim of reaching a consensus to identify the best 2-3 phrases.

Group discussion – Day 1

BLUE MARBLE

Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDS)

Leaky Loo

Natural drainage
Natural water collector
Sustainable water
City sustainable drainage
Good drainage
Flow control Non-pipe system

Sustainable drainage

Eco friendly puddle
Natural water sucker
Rain collector
Different drains Saver drainage system
Future drainage system

Leaky toilet
Wasteful waterfall
Hidden puddle
Leaky cistern
Pan leak

Pan puddle

Leaky lid
Inner leaky loo
Puddle problem
Toilet bowl trouble

Leaky lid

- 'Sustainable drainage' is felt to be an adequate way of describing the types of systems included (ponds, paving etc.) and seems less complicated than the existing descriptor.
- Once the specific types of drainage are described, some feel that 'Natural Drainage' would also be a good option

Potential options for further testing
- Sustainable Drainage; Natural Drainage, Natural Water/Rain Collector
- NB 'Sponge cities' and 'sponge roads' are known terms – potentiallytest 'sponge' in some form?

- Once explained, some feel that 'Leaky loo' is already working as a term (even if they don't initially understand what it means).
- However, many pick up on 'pan' as this is not a commonly used term – and have misunderstood that there is no puddle.

Potential options for further testing
- Leaky Cistern and Inner Leaky Loo

*Nb, size and colour of phrases denotes frequency of mention – darker and larger = mentioned more frequently*

BLUE MARBLE

Foul water

Surface water

Dirty water
Recycled water
Food foul water
Infested water   Recyclable water
Waste infused water

Used water
Leftover water   Flushed food
Unfiltered water
Refurbished water
Unsanitary water

External water
Clean run off
Rain water
Rain run off   Roof run off   House water
Drain water   Puddle   Weather water
Surface run off   Rainwaste
Pure run off
Natural flow water   Rainy sewage   Drained water
Roof rain   Outside water
Rainwater on ground   Drain run off
Roof water

- Terms like 'Used' felt to avoid the negative connotations of 'Foul'.
- Some are struck that water used for food preparation is also included in 'Foul' water.
- Some suggested 'Recycled' and 'Refurbished' - however these are potentially confusing as relate to other aspects of water management.

Potential options for further testing
- Dirty Water and Used Water are probably the main contenders for further exploration.
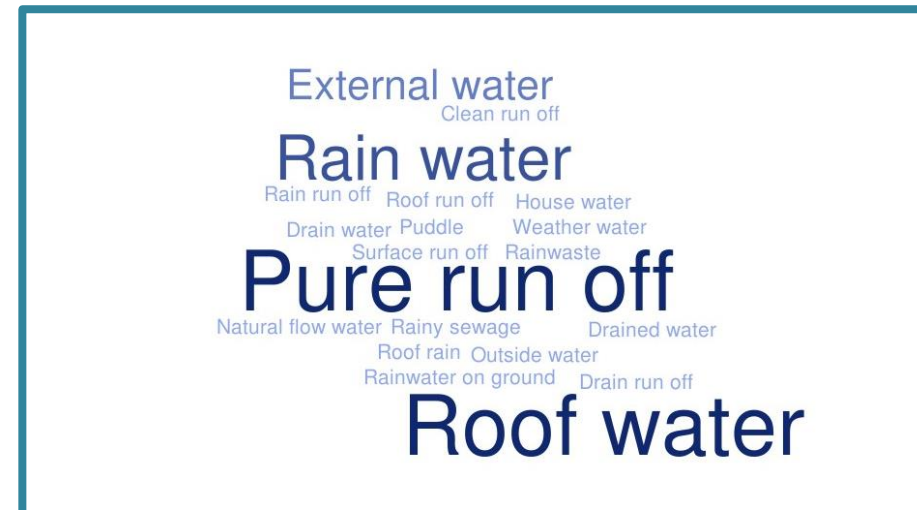
- 'Surface' isn't intuitive – seen to relate to rivers and lakes
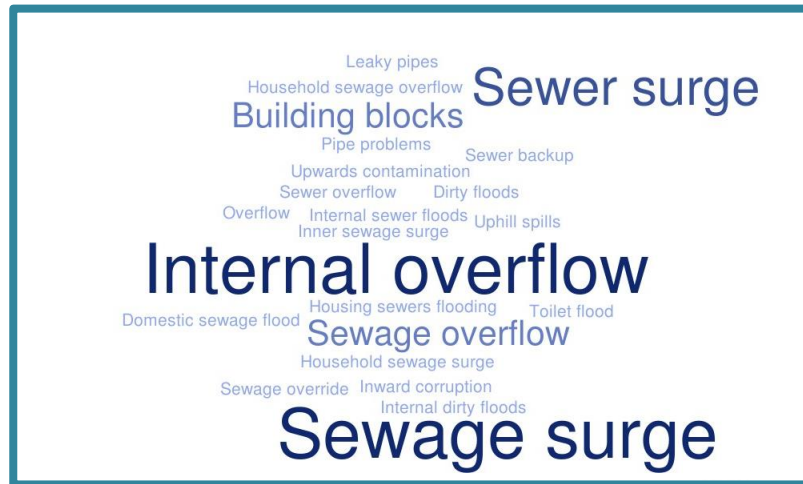- 'Run-off' is popular – some find it familiar from their Geography studies

Potential options for further testing
- Surface Run-off, Drain Run-off, Weather Water and Roof Water might be the ones to test further

Nb, size and colour of phrases denotes frequency of mention – darker and larger = mentioned more frequently

BLUE MARBLE

Sewer flooding

Leaky pipes
Household sewage overflow
Sewer surge
Building blocks
Pipe problems
Sewer backup
Upwards contamination
Sewer overflow   Dirty floods
Overflow   Internal sewer floods   Uphill spills
Inner sewage surge

Internal overflow
Domestic sewage flood
Housing sewers flooding   Toilet flood
Sewage overflow
Household sewage surge
Sewage override   Inward corruption
Internal dirty floods

Sewage surge

Nature-based solutions

Natural fixes
Natural solutions
Clean fixes   Eco fixes   Ecological interventions
Natural interventions
Nature first solutions   Ecofriendly equipment
Nature friendly solutions
Natural action   Natural prevention

Green fixes
Ecological solutions
Biodiverse designs
Biodiversity boost   Environment solutions
Sustainable solutions
Eco solutions
Environmental interception

- 'Surge' and 'overflow' are popular terms, but the addition of 'internal' is often perceived as helpful to emphasise the idea that this flooding can happen inside.

Potential options for further testing
- Sewer Surge, Sewage Surge, Domestic Sewage Flood and Inner Sewage Flood all potential for testing. Sewage Override is interesting too - it conveys the 'emergency valve' of CSOs

- Some feel that 'Environmental' is a better term than 'Natural' - less vague and more commonly used.
- However, all of these broad terms (including ecological, sustainable, environmental) are seen as overlapping and interchangeable
- 'Green Fixes' is also liked, some feel it emphasises the intent behind the interventions.

Potential options for further testing
- Natural Fixes and Green Fixes plus Natural/Ecological solutions for further testing?

Nb, size and colour of phrases denotes frequency of mention – darker and larger = mentioned more frequently

Manifesto for change team task

- As an introduction to the water industry and to prepare them for their 'Manifesto for Change' task, future customers were given presentations on eight topics relating to the water industry by industry experts.

- Future customers were prompted to think about each of the topics in relation to the water industry's trust and reputation.

Future customers were then tasked with creating a 'Manifesto for Change' on behalf of Wessex Water; using the knowledge they had gained to develop and defend policies advancing the company ethos, with a view to building trust and reputation in the water industry.

TOPICS   23

Affordability | Net Zero | Water Resources | Sewerage & Storm overflows

Our People | Environment & Biodiversity | Customer behaviour | External influences
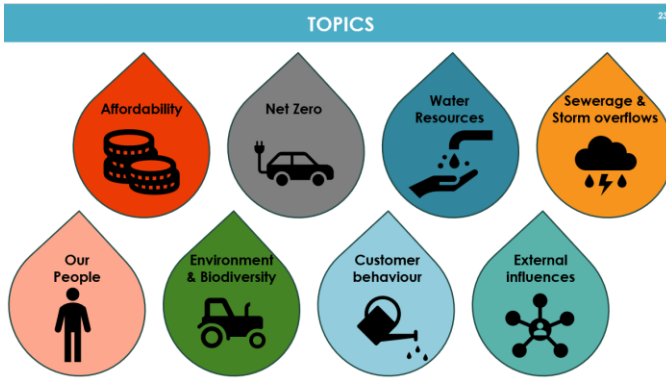
- Which issues should matter most to us as future customers? (And do they?)

- What future initiatives will likely would have the biggest impact on trust and reputation/ addressing the challenges?

- What ideas would you – the expert – most like to implement but which aren't being planned or haven't already been adopted by the business?

- What are the most controversial things Wessex Water could implement?

Question prompts

THE BRIEF: Create a Manifesto For Change   51

Your task is to adopt the role of Wessex Water's Future Strategy Department and create a Manifesto For Change which outlines the beliefs, aims, and policies Wessex should adopt with a view to building reputation and trust

- You have learnt about Wessex Water's operations and the key challenges which it is facing in 8 core areas:

Affordability | Net Zero | Water Resources | Sewerage & Storm overflows

Our People | Environment & Biodiversity | Customer behaviour | External influences

- Your team needs to decide which of the above areas you will feature in your manifesto thinking about which will have the biggest impact on Wessex Water's Trust and Reputat...
- You do not need to include all of them but should aim to create a well-rounded plan covering several areas and emphasising the elements which you feel take highest prior...

Company ethos: examples of beliefs, aims and policies   54

Belief | Aim | Policy e.g. | Strapline

M&S — "We believe our customers and society care about the future but feel that the issues facing our planet are too big, too distant and too difficult for them to influence personally. They expect big business, government, NGOs and other organisations to tackle these issues on their behalf." | "To become the world's most sustainable major retailer." | "We have set a goal to be a net zero business … by 2040." | "Plan A. Because there is no Plan B."

NHS — "We believe in providing high-quality healthcare services that are accessible to everyone and free at the point of use." | "To provide a comprehensive range of healthcare services, from general medical care to specialized treatments, that promote well-being and address health needs." | "We will provide convenient, easy access to services within the waiting times set out in the Handbook to the NHS Constitution." | "Putting Patients First."

BLUE MARBLE

The manifesto task reveals what is most important to the next generation. The main themes are 1) Environment, 2) Affordability, 3) Business Culture and 4) Engagement and Education

Theme	Example aims, policies and solutions
1) Protecting the environment by reducing pollution and improving river quality and biodiversity	• "Zero disposal of raw sewage into waterways by 2040" • "Green Hearts, Blue Waters, Brighter Futures" • Storm Overflows: solutions like increasing greenery in urban areas, more education on waste disposal, government intervention and funding to replace old sewerage systems, and innovative use of beavers to create natural dams to reduce flooding • Environment and biodiversity: Green Infrastructure Solutions, Sustainable Urban Planning, decentralised water systems & educational campaigns to make better use of the environment; biodiversity offset programmes & wildlife corridors to help protect nature & wildlife • Water resources: initiatives include new water retention techniques, repairing leaky pipes, and installing rainwater catchment systems.
2) Affordable water for all – with support to help those in most need	• Conduct workshops in local schools to equip the next generation with knowledge and resources that will be beneficial in the future [in terms of financial capability] • Reduce company costs, use WhatsApp to distribute information, and introduce a 'Battling the Bills' charity initiative.

BLUE MARBLE

The manifesto task reveals what is most important to the next generation. The main themes are 1) Environment, 2) Affordability, 3) Business Culture and 4) Engagement and Education

Theme	Example aims, policies and solutions
3) A strong corporate culture: diverse and inclusive; economically sustainable; charitable	• "Be the most trusted water company in the UK" • Transfer Wessex Water to a customer owned business. Company would hold annual meetings that customers can attend and vote on motions that the company plans on making such as where investments are made and environmental projects to support. Elected members council of people to represent different geographical areas. • Wessex Workforce Progression: knowledge transfer mentorship program • Donation of a % of profits to clean water initiatives in the developing world – see initiatives by BCorp companies (businesses meeting high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability)
4) Using education and collaboration: knowledge and understanding builds trust	• Customer engagement: community outreach programmes with dedicated point of contact; workshops on water conservation and environment • Partnerships with non-profit organisations; • Expand staff forests to 'customer forests'; • 'EcoMentor Programme' to connect experts with customers • App: features include water saving tracker, Environmental Impact Meter, and community challenges and a reward system, shower timer and 'hub' feature to link members in the same household • Customer Behaviour: educate the younger generation about the water system from drainage to tap to foster a sense of responsibility and encourage reflections on their own habits

BLUE MARBLE

"Sustaining to protect our future."

Highlights and key insights:

- 2 short videos interviewing people's attitudes towards Wessex Water

- School-wide survey with responses from c.250 pupils

- Detailed communication analysis breakdown by age group and channels with suggestions to improve Wessex Water's Instagram account and posters

- *"To be long-term sustainable for customers, colleagues, and the community"*

Manifesto: Sustain 2040

- Sustain 2040 ethos covers a breadth of areas with sustainability at the heart

- Aim: "To be the most trusted water company in the UK"
- Focus on 6 Core policies outlined in the manifesto
  1. Affordability - to eradicate water poverty by 2040
  2. Environmental & Biodiversity - zero disposal of raw sewage into waterways by 2040
  3. Shareholders - deliver sustainable economic performance, enabling shareholder returns and future investment by 2040.
  4. Water for All - donate x% of profits to support access to clean water in the developing world by 2040.
  5. Reputation - deliver market leading net promoter score by 2040.
  6. Our People - by 2040, have a workforce that represents the diversity of our customer base in terms of gender, race and neurodiversity.
- Strategies and actions for implementation include employee diversity programs, customer engagement donation schemes, and transferring Wessex Water to a customer owned business.

Net Zero

Customer behaviour

Environment & Biodiversity

Our People

Our Manifesto For
CHANGE

The Sewage Squad

WaterWise: Water-Saving App Scheme for Wessex Water

Objective: To encourage water conservation and provide a tangible way for users to track their water-saving efforts, save on utility costs, contribute to environmental protection and have a bridge to communicate with Wessex Water.
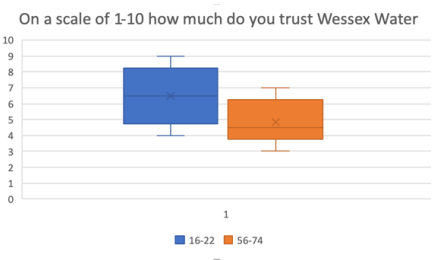
Key Features:

1 Water-Saving Scheme:
Initially targeting vulnerable groups, the app can offer a scheme to provide water-saving items such as efficient showerheads, timers, and faucet aerators. Users can request and receive these items through the app, making it easy for them to adopt water-saving measures.

2 Water Savings Tracker & Environmental Impact Meter:
The app allows users to track the amount of water saved in litres or gallons, as well as the equivalent cost savings in pounds (£) or other local currency.
It provides real-time updates on water consumption and financial savings.
Users can also view the environmental impact of their water savings in terms of carbon footprint reduction, water source conservation, and other relevant metrics. This feature educates users on the broader implications of water conservation.

3 Rewards and Incentives:
Users earn rewards and incentives for reaching water-saving goals, which can include notifications, badges, and discounts. Much like Duolingo, notifications can be personalized and encouraging, reminding users to conserve water and meet their goals.

4 Community Challenges & EcoConnect:
Users can participate in community water-saving challenges, promoting friendly competition and a sense of collective responsibility. Achievements can be shared on social media for added engagement, increasing Wessex Water's presence on apps like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Another feature related to the environmental side of our manifesto is sustainable living challenges that encourage customers to adopt environmentally friendly practices, such as planting native gardens.

5 Customer Support & News Channel:
The app includes a direct contact option for users to reach Wessex Water's customer support with questions or concerns related to their water service. There is also a dedicated news channel, where customers can easily keep up to date with Wessex Water's activities and news, as well as keeping up to date with plans for affordability.

BOX AND WHISKERS GRAPH:

Graph to show how participants feel about Wessex water before any information.
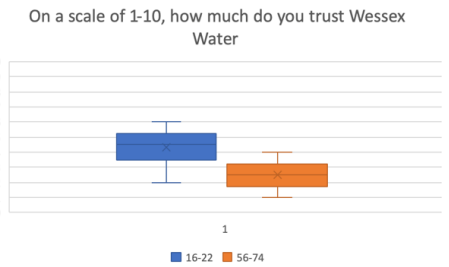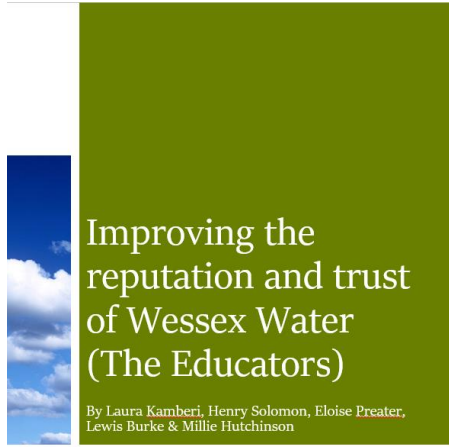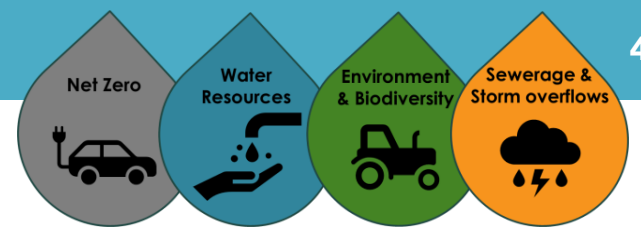
Graph to show how participants feel about Wessex water after being provided with information collected from day 1.

On a scale of 1-10, how much do you trust Wessex Water

On a scale of 1-10 how much do you trust Wessex Water

■ 16-22 ■ 56-74

■ 16-22 ■ 56-74

Highlights and key insights:

- Structured questionnaires given to 6 participants from 16-22 and 54-84

- Trust in Wessex Water improves 40% after participants are provided with a briefing pack on key topics: evidence of impact information and communication can have on shaping customer perspectives.

- "Service Excellence: Your Satisfaction, Our Commitment"

- "Green Hearts, Blue Waters, Brighter Futures"

- A thriving and diverse workforce is a cornerstone for success.

Manifesto: Focus on change and improvement in three key areas:

- *Customer engagement:* community outreach programmes with dedicated point of contact; workshops on water conservation and environment

- *Environment, Biodiversity, and Net Zero:* partner with non-profit organizations; expand staff forests to 'customer forests'; 'EcoMentor Programme' to connect experts with customers

- *Wessex Workforce Progression:* knowledge transfer mentorship program, 'Lunch & Learn' sessions, and online knowledge banks

- *WaterWise:* Water-Saving App - features include water saving tracker, Environmental Impact Meter, and community challenges.

"WORKING WITH PEOPLE, FOR PEOPLE"

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Improving the reputation and trust of Wessex Water (The Educators)

By Laura Kamberi, Henry Solomon, Eloise Preater, Lewis Burke & Millie Hutchinson

when you find out any "sewage spills" aren't harmful

Survey Results

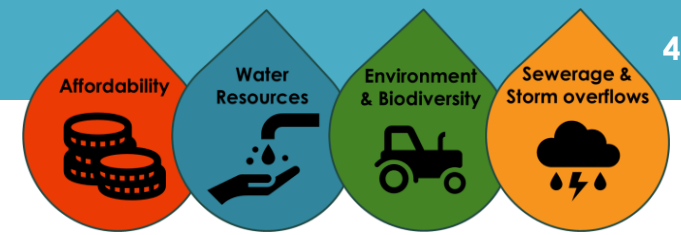## Highlights and key insights:

- The best way for Wessex Water to improve trust and reputation is through education and communication with customers

- Tested different methods of education on 4 key topics via survey, social media, leaflet, and face to face talks

- Many Wessex Water customers lack awareness of the 'real news' - Wessex Water could focus on informing customers of their steps towards becoming net zero and reducing environmental impacts

Manifesto

- *Environment & Biodiversity:* Listening to podcasts helps build a positive reputation – 9 out 10 people scored higher after listening

- *Sewage storms:* Improving reputation amongst younger generations should be via social media - TikTok is the best platform for younger audiences
  - 5/5 teenagers responded positively to a TikTok video while 4/5 adults had questions – suggests TikTok does not have the same effect on different age groups

- *Water Resources:* Delivered 25 leaflets to households around Bromham and requested feedback, resulting in a 16% return rate – indicating that leaflets may not be the preferred channel, and that content should be evidence-based rather than a list of company actions

- *Sustainability:* 8 people attended a small talk about Wessex Waters' sustainability initiatives. Survey results suggest although trust improved by 20% after the talk, 5/8 people think Wessex Water could be doing more

BLUE MARBLE
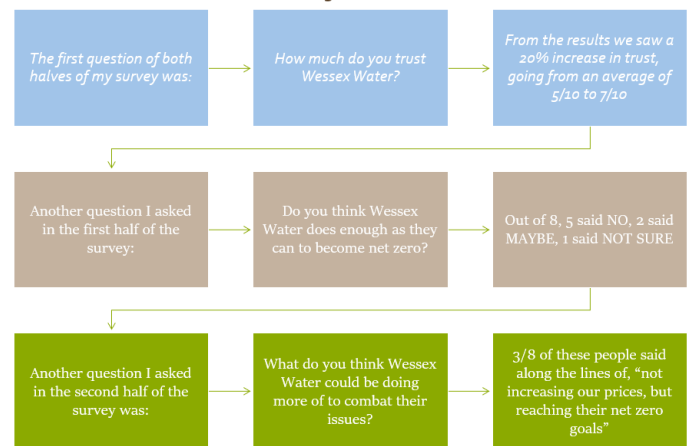
Highlights and key insights:

- Topics chosen based on perceived concerns of different age groups: affordability (middle-aged and older), environment and biodiversity (younger), sewerage & storm overflows (middle-aged)

- Questionnaire from 25 respondents aged between 17-49 - data suggests high levels of concern about water sources, and strong interest in learning more about what they could personally do

- *'Providing transparent water - Clear with water, Clear with customers'*

Manifesto:

- *Storm Overflow:* Suggests solutions like increasing greenery in urban areas, more education on waste disposal, government intervention and funding to replace old sewerage systems, and innovative use of beavers to create natural dams to reduce flooding

- *Environment and biodiversity:* Green Infrastructure Solutions, Sustainable Urban Planning, decentralised water systems & educational campaigns to make better use of the environment; biodiversity offset programmes & wildlife corridors to help protect nature & wildlife

- *Water resources:* initiatives include new water retention techniques, repairing leaky pipes, and installing rainwater catchment systems. An app could be introduced with features like water usage tracking and reward system

- *Affordability:* Reducing company costs, using WhatsApp to distribute information, and introduce a 'Battling the Bills' charity initiative. Include shower timer in the app and 'hub' feature to link members in the same household

Customer behaviour | Affordability | Sewerage & Storm overflows | Net Zero | Environment & Biodiversity
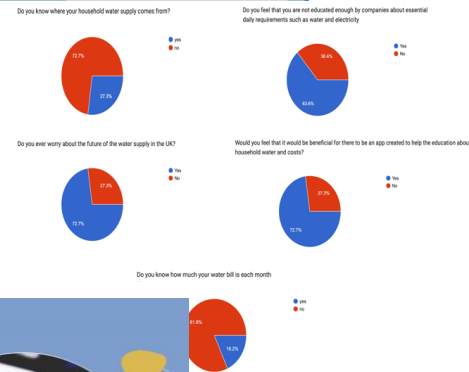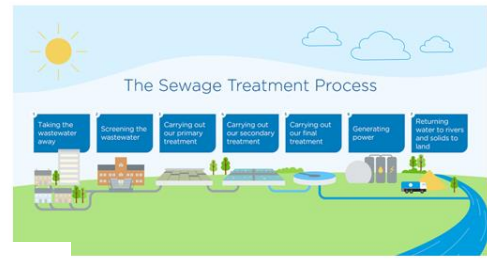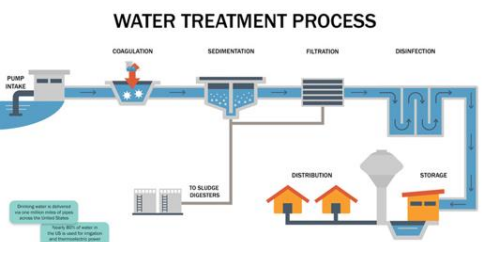
Water Warriors

BY PHOEBE, DONIYA, ALISHA, JASPER, MOLLY, YANAL

Using posters such as the ones shown helps to clearly and simply demonstrate the sewage system and therefore would be appropriate for younger children.

WATER TREATMENT PROCESS

The Sewage Treatment Process

How confident do you feel about how your water usage works and the costs associated with this

- Very condfident
- Confident
- Unsure
- Unconfident
- Very unconfident

Net Zero

Belief – while understanding the need for cost effective energy for our consumers it is important to keep our carbon footprint down

Aim - Sustainability has become a big problem across the world and many agreements have been made including the Paris agreement made by all UNFCCC Parties at COP 21 in 2015. Educating consumers about the strategies used to achieve net zero will boost the consumer trust in Wessex Water.

Net zero means cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions re-absorbed from the atmosphere

How -

- Measuring the release of toxic gases including Methane and Carbon dioxide to work out where most of the emissions are being released.
- Switching to renewable energy to ensure no greenhouse gases are released and to reduce air pollution.
- Reduce use of energy when not necessary.
- Planting trees in the premises.
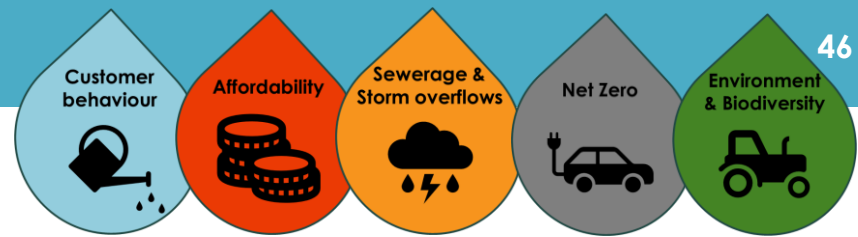
Highlights and key insights:

- Education is the most effective way to gain consumer trust by keeping the business transparent

- Earlier education could be a solid foundation to foster a long-term positive customer relationship

- A survey of 20 young people indicates low confidence and understanding of water usage and costs – suggest engaging young people in schools can positively impact customer relations and boost reputation as children could feedback to parents

Manifesto:

- *Customer Behaviour:* educate the younger generation about the water system from drainage to tap to foster a sense of responsibility and encourage reflections on their own habits

- *Environmental Impacts:* involve local communities in environmental initiatives like litter picking; and fund environmental days in schools to introduce water systems and environmental practices

- *Affordability:* conduct workshops in local schools to equip the next generation with knowledge and resources that will be beneficial in the future

- *Sewage and Storm Overflows:* could be integrated into school curriculums through the department of education

- *Net Zero:* measure gas emissions, switching to renewable energy, and planting trees to reduce carbon footprints

- **Water warriors:**

A well-integrated approach to bring many themes into the presentation. Members showed strong mutual support and everyone actively took on a role. Confident delivery & easy for judges to follow.

- **Water for all:**

Great focus on the future (Sustain 2040); strongly evidence-based with highlights including well-conducted survey of 250 participants, testimonial analysis, mind mapping, and great use of video in presentation. Massive coverage of topics to meet the brief – but could be stretching too thinly.

- **Team JEM:**

A very practical approach to answer the brief; despite a small sample size, research still generated clear and compelling evidence. Presented a lot of material well and had very good ideas.

- **Sewage Squad (winner):** 🏆

Clear objectives and practical ideas that directly connected with people. Solutions were logically set out, testing of concepts was well-executed. An excellent presentation all around.

- **The Educators:**

A brave and mature approach that involved experimenting and not being afraid to show where things didn't work. Would be great to include the 'So What' element to suggest what could be done differently. Nonetheless, the presentation was highly informative with interesting stats.

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Conclusions

The cost-of-living context is framing the views of future customers: many are reconsidering university choices. This year we see a small drop in concern about climate change - potentially also because the economic climate is front of mind.

Water related issues, most notably river pollution, have increased significantly as pressing environmental issues. There is evidence that this age cohort have seen negative industry media - also explaining the continued downward trend of the NPS.

Future customers (16-18s) are happier to engage in some behaviour change activities than others. Taking shorter showers (more so for boys) and using cleansing wipes (for girls) are motivating and achievable actions. Gunk pots also go down well in family kitchens. However, there are bigger social barriers to having less frequent laundry routines and intermittent loo flushing.

Future customers, who have been informed through the YPP process, become advocates for more education for their peer group. However, they are a hard audience to please showing high levels of cynicism towards corporate campaigns in their social media space (TikTok).

The manifesto task reveals what is most important to the next generation – and their expectations of Wessex Water. The prevalent themes are:
- Protecting the environment by reducing pollution and improving river quality and biodiversity
- Affordable water for all – with support to help those in most need
- A strong corporate culture: diverse and inclusive; economically sustainable; charitable
- Using education and collaboration: knowledge and understanding builds trust.

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Score	Day 1	Day 2
10	2	1
9	4	4
8	9	7
7	7	-
6	3	2
5	2	1
4	-	-
3	-	-
2	-	-
1	-	-
0	-	-

Excellent

Terrible

Ave 7.9 — DAY 2

Ave 7.6 — DAY 1

- Average score for YPP 2023 is slightly lower than previous years
- Similar themes to previous years, panellists enjoyed learning about water and careers within the business, group collaboration, and creative activities
  - Interactive elements help contribute to a greater sense of engagement
- Negative comments related to task which was seen as challenging:
  - Task briefed after expert sessions (could have used these better)
  - Wanted more time & support with task: to ask questions and work together, as well as having existing examples of manifestos

✓ **Engaging experts**

✓ **Interesting to see business activities**

✓ **Fresh knowledge on new topics**

✓ **Well organised, fun & engaging**

✗ **Content heavy**

✓ **Enjoyable team presentations**

✗ **Task too late in the day**

✗ **Some elements too repetitive**

"I really enjoyed having proper conversations with the Blue Marble team and my peers. I enjoyed the activity where we had to chose which text we preferred"

"Felt like task should have been earlier in the day when we had more energy. Was nice to speak to professionals and they had really interesting opinions."

"I [would suggest] being told the main task before having to speak to the experts as I wasn't really sure what to look for."

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