

Southern Water

WaterWise Teaching Resource



Down the drain

Overhead transparencies

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Down the
drain

OHT 1: Introductory Session

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Wastewater - Whose problem is it?

Dealing with wastewater is not my problem. It's someone else's responsibility.

I never think about wastewater unless I see a sewage works or until there is a problem. The only time it might affect me is if there is a broken sewer and I can't flush the loo.

But now they tell me they are planning to build a new works to treat wastewater near me!

Now it's my responsibility to find out what it's all about.



What is wastewater?

What do we mean by wastewater?

Who deals with wastewater?

How do they deal with it? Where does it all go?

Wastewater can't be just dumped in the sea or rivers, can it?

Who makes the decisions about wastewater and what happens to it?

Down the drain - can we have our say about where it's treated and where it goes?



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New wastewater treatment works



Map of local area

You live in or near Richardford. We are going to imagine that there are plans to build a new multi-million pound wastewater treatment works near you next to the local industrial estate.

The treatment works will deal with wastewater from all the surrounding towns - Pountney, Filmore, Hartmouth, Gull Sands, Saltdown, Darton and Richardford. Treated water will be pumped to Darton and into the sea through a long sea outfall. The outfalls at Gull Sands and Saltdown will be converted to storm overflows. The treatment works at Darton, Filmore and Hartmouth will be converted to pumping stations.

Richardford is a small, pleasant town on the River Hart, surrounded by agricultural land and countryside. Most of the local farmers operate a mixed farming approach - rearing cattle and sheep and growing crops.



New wastewater treatment works

Here are comments from the groups who have some interest in the plans.

- **The Water Company's Position:**

'The old wastewater treatment works near the proposed new site dates from Victorian times and needs updating to meet with current standards.'

Managing Director, Water Company

- **Local Residents' Position:**

'Although there may be more jobs, we are worried about the effect on our children's health and about losing money on our houses.'

Joe Moore, local resident

- **Environmental Group's Position:**

'We want cleaner seas and a clean, safe environment for everyone. We need to safeguard the sea, the air and the land.'

Susan Brookes, local environmental pressure group

- **The Tourist Board's Position:**

'Visitors to the area expect to have safe bathing waters and clean sands for their children to play on and to have relaxed, trouble free excursions to places of local interest. They enjoy the many cliff and rural walks and love to explore local towns and countryside to discover their delights. It is an area that is popular with residents and visitors alike. We want to keep it that way.'

Philip Mann, Tourist Officer, Darton

- **DEFRA's Position:**

'European and UK law lays down minimum standards of treatment for wastewater and these are reviewed periodically. The proposed improvements will meet these standards and improve the quality of wastewater entering the sea. We must balance this against the environmental, economic and social costs of any new developments required.'

Sam Chapman, DEFRA Spokesperson

- **Local Council's Position:**

'We will treat any planning application made to us as fairly as possible. It is our duty to encourage local businesses, take advice from Government bodies and listen to residents' views.'

Councillor Barbara Mullins



What do you have to do? - Group Tasks

You all belong to one of the Interest Groups.

1. You have to carry out some research to find out about your Group.
2. You have to prepare some information about your group such as newspaper items, leaflets or posters.
3. You have to prepare to attend a meeting. At the meeting you will tell the others about your Group's attitudes and feelings towards the building of the new wastewater works at Richardford and about the need for other modifications and alterations to the wastewater system in the area.
4. You have to prepare to answer questions about your Group's position in an open debate.
5. There are lots of resources to help you - but you should start with your Group's profile sheet.

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Chairperson's Script

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to this meeting. We are here today to discuss the construction of a new wastewater treatment works at Richardford and the need for an updated wastewater system throughout the area.

The old wastewater treatment works at Hartmouth, Darton and Filmore cannot cope much longer with the work they have to do. They need to be updated and modernised. The proposed site of the new works is close to the industrial estate at Richardford.

I know that you all feel very strongly about this issue. It will affect all of your lives. So, this meeting has been called to allow you to express your views.

There are a number of Interest Groups represented here today and a spokesperson/or persons will speak on behalf of each group. Then we will take a short break.

After the break, there will be some time for you to ask questions and discuss the points that have been raised.