

Southern Water

## WaterWise Teaching Resource



Down the drain

Group profile  
**Water Company**

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## Down the drain

# Water company

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### The Interest Groups

- Water company
- Local council
- Local residents
- Tourist board
- Environmental pressure group
- DEFRA

**You represent the Water Company**

### The new works

There are plans to build a new multimillion-pound wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre on a brownfield site outside Richardford. The new works will treat wastewater from Richardford and all the surrounding towns including Pountney, Filmore, Gull Sands, Saltmouth, Hartmouth and Darton. Treated wastewater will be pumped to Darton and discharged into the sea there, through the long sea outfall. 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.

### The Water Company's Position

*'The Water Company wants to build a new multimillion-pound works with up-to-date technology. The old wastewater treatment works date from Victorian times. It needs updating to meet the new European standards.'* **Managing Director, Water Company**

### Your responsibilities

- You provide water services to thousands of homes and businesses for the Southern Region of the UK.
- You must comply with the minimum standards of wastewater treatment laid down by European and UK law.
- You must meet the planning requirements of the Local Council for permission to build any new treatment works.
- You must think about the needs of the other Interest Groups. Do they have legitimate concerns which you should meet?

### What do you have to do?

1. You have to carry out some research to find out about the Water Company.
2. You have to prepare some information about the Water Company such as newspaper articles, leaflets or posters.
3. You have to prepare for an open meeting. At the meeting you will tell the others why the Water Company needs to build a new wastewater works and sludge recycling centre at Richardford. You have to convince them that these new works are needed and that Richardford is the best place to build them. You will have to reassure them that their lives will not be adversely affected permanently.
4. You have to prepare to answer questions about the Water Company's reasons in an open debate.



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### There are lots of resources to help you:

- This Profile Sheet
- The Fact Sheets will give you some background information and some facts and figures. This will help you understand how many people use the Water Services and what they use them for.
- The Subjective Literature is a collection of newspaper reports and ideas for promotional leaflets and posters. You can use these as they are. You can also write some of your own.
- Clip Art is available to help you illustrate your presentations.
- Web Links

### Getting started

Make sure everyone in the group has a job to do:

- Preparing speeches
- Writing newspaper items
- Designing posters
- Designing leaflets
- Finding out information.

Think carefully about what you want to say in your speech, newspaper or leaflet. You must be able to back up what you say with reasons or facts. You must be consistent - make sure your group members do not contradict each other.

### Getting your ideas together

For the open meeting you will need a spokesperson or a small group of people to make a speech or present your case. They can use some of the information you have prepared.

**You need to stress the advantages of having a new wastewater works at Richardford.**

During the second part of the debate any member of any group can ask questions. On behalf of the Water Company, you must be ready to answer any concerns raised.

### You must be aware of the problems others might face

Here are some ideas for getting started. Look at the list of points in the table.

What can you add to the list?



**There are plans for a new wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre just outside Richardford. What are the.....**

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Advantages?	Problems?
<p>The present works are old. They need updating and we have plans to do just that. New works will all the treatment on one site and use the latest technology.</p> <p>The multimillion-pound scheme is a major investment in the local area.</p> <p>We have employed a team of professional engineers, environmental scientists, landscape architects and town planners plus other specialists to develop the project.</p>	<p>The new works will be built on a brownfield site close to an existing industrial estate. It is about 250m to the nearest residential property.</p> <p>At the main site, new buildings will be constructed but low earthworks should hide them from the public view. A wide band of trees and shrubs will help to camouflage the area. Only the stack of the sludge dryer will be visible above the trees. It will be no higher and no more a dominant feature than the other buildings and installations on the industrial site. These are already visible to residents.</p> <p>New pipes to and from the treatment works and other areas will cross some agricultural land and countryside but they will be buried during construction. The countryside will be landscaped and returned to its natural state when the work is completed.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>We are contributing to European environmental quality standards. We have carried out an environmental assessment of the project.</p> <p>We have submitted an environmental statement to the Local Council that considers any problems and tries to offer solutions.</p>	
<p>We want to see cleaner bathing waters and make a positive contribution to the local tourist industry. The new wastewater treatment plant will make a significant improvement to coastal waters. There will be benefits to residents, businesses and visitors to the area.</p> <p>Darton is the location of a long sea outfall already; this and the existing outfalls at Saltdown and Gull Sands will only need minor work carrying out to convert them to one long sea outfall at Darton and two storm overflows at Gull Sands and Saltdown.</p> <p>Archaeologists and scientists who occasionally visit the nearby cliffs and areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will not have their work affected by our plans. None of the new pipelines are due to cross any designated areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p>	<p>The traffic to and from the construction site will go onto an already busy road during daytime working hours.</p> <p>Property prices may be permanently reduced. The site must be designed and placed so that residents' views are not spoiled and the value of their homes is not affected.</p>



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Advantages?	Problems?
<p>We will recycle the sewage sludge to make organic fertiliser for agriculture.</p> <p>Recycled sludge replaces lost nutrients and improves soil structure and stability.</p> <p>Sewage is bad for biodiversity and marine life so we are trying to do something positive about it before we pump any waste into the sea.</p>	
<p>Our new treatment works are environmentally friendly.</p> <p>Channels carrying water and treatment tanks will be covered to contain smells. Foul air will be drawn off and treated before being released into atmosphere.</p>	<p>There are two badger setts on the site of the new treatment works. It is possible to relocate the badgers to artificial setts next to the site. 90% of the badgers' territory will not be affected.</p>