

Objectives

To review the approach for our draft DWMP with customers to test the direction and focus of our plans through to 2050.

Format	Focus groups
Households (number)	4 (n28)
Non households (number)	
Vulnerable customers	✓
Future customers	
Retailers	
Stakeholders	
South West Water	✓
Bournemouth Water	
Bristol Water	

Impact on our plan and ways of working

Outputs from the groups enabled us to understand the right pace and scale for investments, confirm the ambition for partnership working, and gain assurance from customers that our plans focus on the right things.

Date	June 2022
Supplier	ICS

Key messages – what matters most

What we did

- Four qualitative focus groups with South West Water customers to collect feedback on the draft DWMP
- This included testing the priority and acceptability of storm overflow targets, opinions on responsibility and collaboration and customers' appetite for trialling new approaches.

What matters most

- Climate change and the environment are the most significant pressures we face, requiring transformational change, along with population and housing growth
- Storm overflows that impact bathing waters are the priority for investments with the need to protect public health greater than river environments
- Customers recognise coastal and river waters as a priority for the South West due to their impact on wellbeing, tourism and their enjoyment of the local area
- Base maintenance scenarios are not acceptable and there needs to be a step change in investment to meet the future pressures
- Customers recognise we cannot achieve this alone, and partnership working is a must
- Customers see there is a need especially to get developers on board as new housing developments are seen to be a problem across the region affecting all infrastructure and essential services
- With the current cost of living crisis, large bill increases that reduce affordability would be an issue at this time – and plans need to be mindful that they start when we will likely just be exiting a difficult economic period
- Nature-based solutions were popular with attendees, but they also recognised that they would not be quick.

Are there differing views?

No differences noted.

Next steps

We followed up the plans with a 12-week online consultation, supported by stakeholder events to test acceptability of our detailed plans and explore opportunities for collaborative working.