

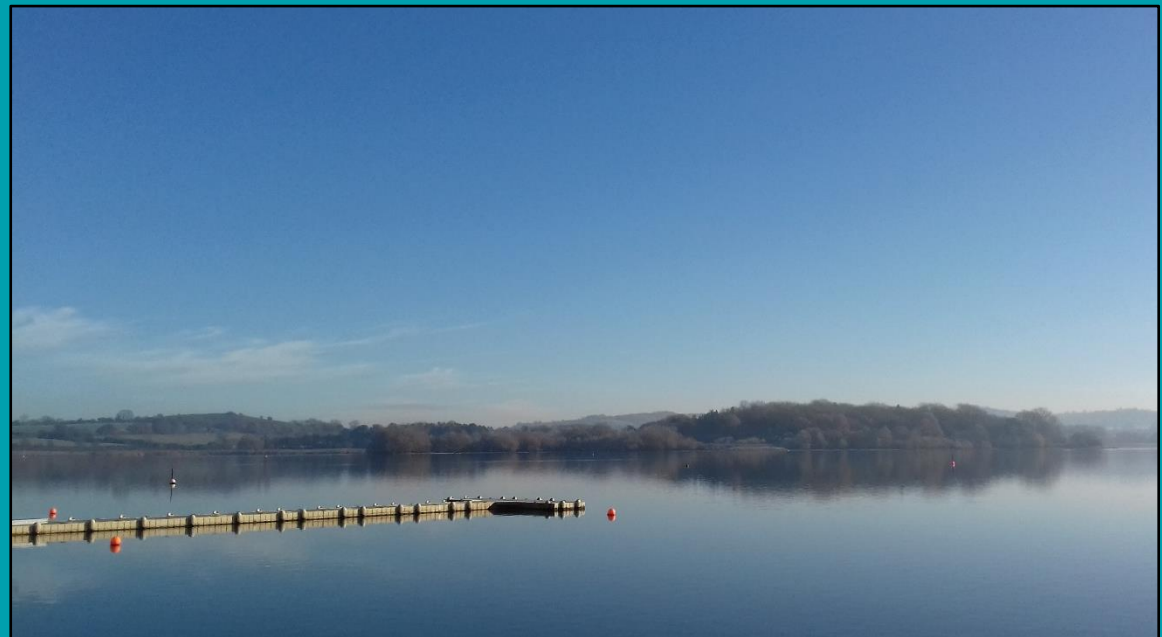


BRISTOL
WATER

Social Contract 2023/24

Benefit & Transparency Report

December 2023



bristolwater.co.uk



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

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Overview of our social contract approach



Delivering public value

Our programmes of initiatives deliver a range of benefits to our communities and the environment.



Reporting transparently on impact

We report on progress, learnings and impact in our annual benefit and transparency report.



Working in partnership

Working with others enables us to amplify our positive impact on communities. The learning we get from working together helps us to plan better for the future.



Being held to account

Our social contract framework and voluntary sharing mechanism provide governance and accountability for the delivery of wider benefits to society.



A local approach

Our social contract approach builds on the close connection we have with our local communities. It is an approach which is unique to the water industry.





Our Social contract in action

Our social purpose is to have a positive impact on our customers, our communities, our colleagues and the environment

1 Conservation & Community Engagement

Working collaboratively with community groups to address issues that impact wellbeing.

Highlight: A number of employee volunteer led projects to improve the environment and enhance biodiversity around our lakes.

2 Community Engagement

Supporting and engaging with our communities with initiatives such as our water fountains and water bar.

Highlight: The reappearance of the water bar at several festivals and other events plus the restoration of the water fountains.

3 Resource West

Working with local partners to deliver a joined up approach to resource efficiency across different sectors.

Highlight: Our pilot project to demonstrate the economic environmental benefits of helping participants reduce energy and water consumption.

4 Health & Wellbeing

Facilitating the enjoyment of recreational activities such as fishing, sailing, walking, cycling and birdwatching.

Highlight: The opening of the Chew Valley Trail.

7 Education – citizens for the future

Building a shared connection between our people, the organisations we work with and young people. Bringing mindfulness to water consumption.

Highlight: Continuing to build 'Bristol Water the Foundation' including our 'decorate your butt' competition.

6 Education – employees for the future

Inspiring the next generation to work in the water sector, building skills, improving social mobility and becoming a diverse organisation.

Highlight: Getting our expanding programmes restarted once it was safe to return to schools.

5 Vulnerability

Using technology and data to respond to the specific needs of individuals – building a shared connection with the communities we serve together.

Highlight: Finding new ways to reach our vulnerable customers in response to the pandemic.

8 Local and regional strategies

Supporting local and regional plans to progress towards an equitable, biodiverse and carbon-neutral region.

Highlight: Publishing our carbon net zero strategy in response to the One City Climate Strategy.

9 Academic Partnerships

Working with our academic partners to find innovative ways to respond to social challenges, tackling key issues such as resource efficiency.

Highlight: Working with eight students from UWE on a range of different projects.



Introduction

In 2019, Bristol Water was the first water company to develop a **social contract**. This is a **framework** which helps us to assess what the **key community wellbeing challenges** are and then set up specific projects in response.

The priority of our social contract is to **build trust**. We do this by improving the wellbeing of the communities we serve by bringing together a range of organisations to deliver high-impact projects and services. Local water companies are well placed to contribute to these challenges because of their unique and often overlooked role in people's lives.

To maintain the trust of our customers and stakeholders, **our actions must match our words**. **Our voluntary sharing mechanism** means that we face financial consequences if we fail to meet the expectations of our customers and stakeholders. This creates a direct link between delivering our social purpose in our communities and any profit we make as a water company.

Bristol Water is one of the regions that is part of South West Water, part of the Pennon group. Our merger offers the opportunity to combine our ideas and approach with the best from across the regions served by South West Water, so that we can all benefit and strengthen our social purpose commitments.

Pennon places a great deal of emphasis on its environmental and social responsibilities and backs this up financially. A feature of its commitment to this and serving its customers is its WaterShare+ scheme which was launched in 2020. It is an innovative scheme to share the business's success with its customers in an open and timely way.

It was designed in response to customer feedback. Customers said they want more of a say and that investors should not be the only ones to be rewarded from our success.

If we outperform our business plan, there are financial benefits which we can then share with customers and give them a bigger say in how we run our business. If, on the other hand, we underperform customers are still protected.

Bristol Water customers are now eligible to participate in the scheme subject to some eligibility criteria and receive the WaterShare+ rebate.


Taking part means that Bristol Water customers have a choice to take the WaterShare+ rebate as either a share in Pennon, our parent company, or as credit on the water bill account. An independent WaterShare+ panel reviews Bristol Water's performance against our business plan. Taking shares in Pennon Group plc makes the customer a shareholder. Shareholders can attend Annual General Meetings (AGM) to get updates and discuss business performance.



Bristol Water's social purpose

Our social purpose is to have a positive impact on the lives of our customers, our communities, our colleagues, and on the environment beyond the delivery of pure and reliable water.

The seven aims of our social contract

- 
- 1 Delivery of wider societal benefits in a way which contributes to resolving the key issues that society faces
 - 2 A framework for engaging with our local communities to understand their evolving needs beyond water, to assess how and where we can add social and economic value
 - 3 A transparent mechanism by which our customers, stakeholders, and employees, influence the decisions we make which affect our local communities
 - 4 A process which ensures that Board level decisions focus on wider and societal impacts, and benefits of our activities
 - 5 Fair and transparent policies, communications, and ways of working which help develop customer trust
 - 6 An approach which promotes innovation in response to societal challenges, and complements both markets, and regulation.
 - 7 A means of holding us to account to deliver the benefits of a local company, with financial consequences related to the cost to customers if we fail to perform on our social contract.



Voluntary sharing mechanism

Our voluntary sharing mechanism will be triggered if we are not fulfilling the role in our communities which our customers and stakeholders expect of us. We are currently meeting both of the targets we have committed to in measuring customer and stakeholder satisfaction as part of our social contract.

The first of the two triggers for this mechanism is customer satisfaction. This is measured by whether we are one of the top three water companies (that Ofwat regulates) in the national UK Customer Satisfaction Index, measured through a separate business benchmarking survey. If we fail to meet this level of performance, half of the available sharing pot will be re-invested in activities which contribute to our social purpose.

Based on the most recent business benchmarking survey we have for UKCSI in July 2023, Bristol Water came first among water companies. This is up from 3rd place in the January 2023 survey and 4th in July 2022. Notwithstanding this success, our satisfaction rating had actually declined slightly to 77.6. This reduction was much less than other water companies (overall change of 3.5 down to 72.6) and the wider utility sector. Our final position is likely to be based on the next business benchmarking survey we carry out to replace the January 2023 version.

The January 2023 survey identified that we compared well with utilities in many areas but there is room for improvement with complaint handling. Nevertheless, there is never room for complacency with customer perception of individual service elements to sustain our strong performance as a local community water company.

The second trigger for further social contract investment is stakeholder satisfaction. If stakeholder satisfaction in our performance against the initiatives we have agreed to deliver falls below 75%, then half of the available sharing pot will be re-invested in activities which contribute to our social purpose.

We have consistently achieved very high stakeholder satisfaction levels which are a measure of our broader impact on the local community. The 2022/23 local community stakeholder satisfaction survey was 92%, very consistent with the previous year.

The survey found that a large majority of our stakeholders (88%) either strongly agreed or agreed that our social contract programme delivers our social purpose and best targets our resources and expertise to meet the needs of our local communities. The same percentage of stakeholders strongly agreed or agreed that we had prioritised the right balance of activities within our programmes.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Community wellbeing challenge

Our social contract response

The 10% most deprived areas, Black / Black British groups and the Disabled have statistically worse quality of life metrics. 17.9% of Bristol children are in low-income families.



Our mentoring and education initiatives, our vulnerability aim to support teenagers into education or training and promoting diversity wherever possible

86% of citizens are worried about climate change, but only 66% have reduced their household waste and 51% energy usage. 46% of Bristol residents volunteer at least 3 times per year, but only 36% in the most deprived areas.



Our Conservation, Citizens of the Future and Regional Strategies all aim to address various issues that contribute to climate change.

5% of households have experienced moderate to severe “food insecurity” in the last 12 months, but this rises to 12% in the most deprived areas.



We have promoted our vulnerability support services through food banks as part of getting the message across about the support we provide when people need us most.

In the Bath & North East Somerset area, nearly a third of people prioritised more wild and natural spaces. 60% of Bristol residents visit a park or open space each week (up 7% on 2019).



Our Lakeside Leisure and Conservation improve green spaces and provide volunteering opportunities. The updated Chew Valley Play area and Lakeside Cycle route are examples.

The Youth Board perceptions of Bristol Water are broadly positive, but there is less understanding of the importance to us of technology and our link to the environment and sustainability.



Our Citizens of the future mentoring programme, Resource West and regional strategies combine to help address these topics.

The Youth Board recognised the stress that had been caused by Covid disruption to education. It was important to them that trusted companies seized the equality, inclusivity and diversity agenda and took action on the environment that went wider than their sector or product.



Our Citizens of the future and education programmes look to build both awareness of the importance of these topics to the water sector and provides opportunities to build these skills. The water butt schools design competition is one example of an idea taken forward from the Youth Board.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Engaging our customers in our social contract

We continue to seek the views of our customers on our priorities for our social contract. In 2022 we held a virtual Customer Forum to discuss three aspects of our social contract: the key challenges facing us as a water company to which we should respond, themes and priorities on which should focus and how to work collaboratively. This built on the Customer Forum held in February 2021. Many of the same customers attended both forums in sharing our social contract journey.

The feedback included many ideas for how to encourage customers to reduce water consumption recognising that different people are motivated by different messages with different emphases.

Key challenges



Responding to the climate emergency

- Mitigation by reducing the net carbon from our operations to zero
- Adapting to the increased water scarcity and extreme weather events



Ramping up environmental protection

- Reducing abstraction from rivers and aquifers
- Increasing biodiversity at our sites
- Protecting the quality of our water sources



Delighting our customers

- Keeping pace with customer expectations
- Supporting vulnerable customers with extra care services
- Helping those customers who struggle to pay



Balancing investment and affordability

- Meeting future challenges could require a step change in investment at a time customers face high financial pressures
- However, deferring investment could store up high bills for future generations



Supplying new customers

- The population in our supply area is forecast to increase by around 20% in the next 20 years to 1.5 million

Opportunities



Environmentally motivated younger generations

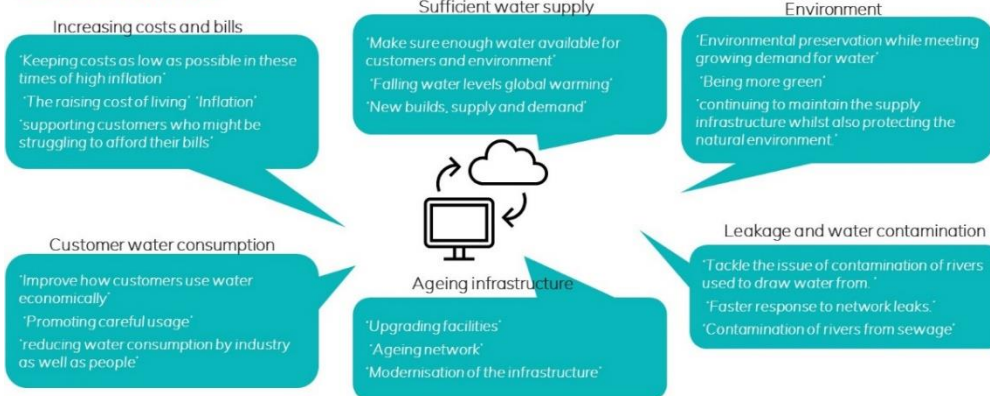


New partnerships, working together to find local solutions to national challenges



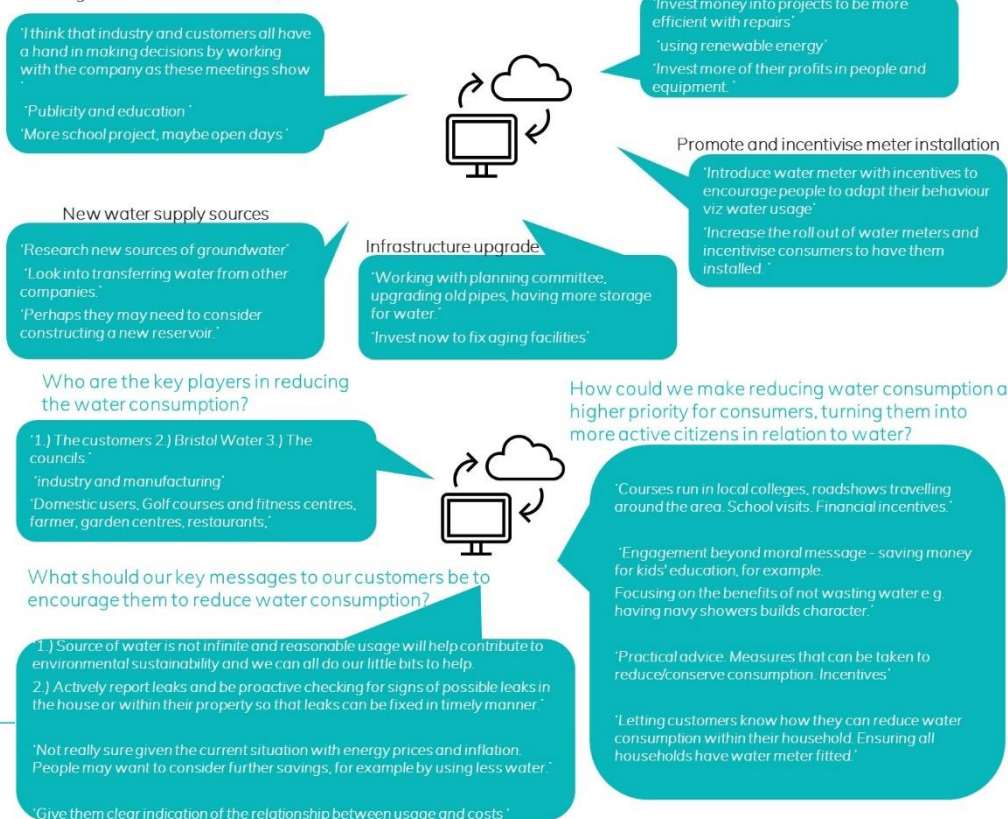
Innovation in the way that we work

What do you think are the most important challenges for Bristol Water both now and in the future?



What do you think are the greatest opportunities for Bristol Water to help respond to these challenges?

Work together with the customers, educate





The role of the Bristol Water Challenge Panel

The independent Bristol Water Challenge Panel (the Challenge Panel) acts on behalf of Bristol Water's customers to independently review and challenge Bristol Water's customer-related policies, activities, and performance. This includes the development and delivery of the company's Social Contract programme to ensure customers' views are sought, considered, and fairly represented.

The Challenge Panel is chaired by Peaches Golding OBE CStJ, the Lord-Lieutenant of the County and City of Bristol. Its members include the Deputy Chair (Tony Denham), an independent Report Writer (Jeremy Hawkins), and representatives from the Consumer Council for Water (CCW), the Environment Agency, Natural England, local councillors, and individuals drawn from several backgrounds in social issues including health, debt, and other vulnerabilities.



Peaches Golding OBE CStJ,
Chair of the BWCP

Bristol Water continues to implement its Social Contract programme and keeps the Challenge Panel informed on this to enable appropriate challenge to be made. Quarterly meetings are held to discuss the progress and results of the Social Contract and a detailed log is kept of the challenges which the Challenge Panel considers Bristol Water needs to respond to. Bristol Water is not obliged to act on the findings or recommendations from the Challenge Panel concerning its Social Contract activities. However, the Challenge Panel expects Bristol Water to consider its findings seriously and provide adequate justification for its responses to them.

The Challenge Panel is particularly interested in the clarity and transparency of Bristol Water's reporting and the evidence to support the activities undertaken and the customer benefits accruing from them. The Challenge Panel considered the information reporting by Bristol Water to be sufficient for it to improve the clarity of Bristol Water's Social Contract Benefits and understand the relative size of each programme and the benefits that should accrue from each.

The Challenge Panel has adopted a process with Bristol Water to enable it to assure itself that there is appropriate evidence to support Bristol Water's Social Contract activities and benefits. The Challenge Panel has discussed and agreed a methodology to review in more detail the programmes and initiatives on a sample basis, known as 'deep dives'. The Panel members were asked to vote on their priorities for review over the next three years and this has resulted in a review programme being developed.



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The 'deep dives' covered and reported on to date have included the Social Contract Biodiversity initiative, the company's involvement with Resource West (a partnership of local utility companies, including Bristol Water, whose aims are to encourage the public through simple messaging to save money and protect the environment by reducing the consumption of energy and water while maintaining a healthy home environment) and its Social Contract-related work on customer vulnerability. The reviews by the Challenge Panel and its findings and opinions are detailed in its Annual Reports for 2022 and 2023.

In its latest Annual Report (for 2023) the Challenge Panel was pleased to report that the Social Contract work continues broadly along the lines set out at its inception. It welcomed that much of the Social Contract work was on track and that progress had improved over the previous year. It was appreciative of the fine tuning that has happened and the many opportunities that have been addressed.

The Challenge Panel also welcomed that the impact of the South West Water (SWW) merger with Bristol Water on the Social Contract had been minimal. The Social Contract 'deep dive' for 2023/24 includes the Education for the Employee initiative. The Challenge Panel will report its findings on this in its Annual Report 2024.

Bristol Water is undertaking a review of the effectiveness of its Social Contract work to date and the opportunities for it in future, particularly now the company is part of the Pennon Group including South West Water and Bournemouth Water. The review is scheduled to be completed in early 2024. The Challenge Panel is contributing to the review as it is very keen to see that the company's Social Contract work continues to benefit customers, communities and the environment.

The Bristol Water Challenge Panel reviews the Social Contract as a sub-committee of the South West Water Watershare+ Customer Advisory Panel.



Our 2023-24 Social Contract Programme

To deliver wider benefits to societal and environmental wellbeing in a structured and transparent way, we have developed a range of initiatives. Each initiative delivers a benefit to communities in partnership with stakeholders. As in previous years, these initiatives have been grouped into eight programmes, reflecting the key partnerships involved.



Academic Partnerships

Sharing our history and heritage through public access to our resources plus joint research programmes.



Community Engagement Programme

Providing free public access to drinking water and helping to reduce the use of single use plastics.



Conservation Programme

Conserving and enhancing our natural environment with a focus on enhancing biodiversity.



Education Programme

Educating future generations about the efficient use of resources to minimise environmental harm and to meet the needs of future generations. Providing mentoring and skills to the workforce of the future. Supporting social mobility and diversity in the workplace.



Lakeside Leisure Programme

Providing recreation facilities to share enjoyment of our lakes to support physical and mental health and wellbeing.



Regional Strategies Programme

Contributing to local and regional strategies for long term environmental and social wellbeing with a focus on a net zero future.



Resource West Programme

Building a partnership of local stakeholders to promote shifts in consumer behaviour to reduce household consumption and waste and in doing so provide further collaborative support for customers. Widening the partnership to address more complex issues and spread best practice



Vulnerability Programme

Addressing water poverty and vulnerability, reaching those customers who are not aware of the help we offer.



2023-24 Programme Update

An overview

To deliver wider benefits to societal and environmental wellbeing in a structured and transparent way, we have developed a range of initiatives. Each initiative delivers a benefit to communities in partnership with stakeholders. These initiatives have been grouped into eight programmes, reflecting the key partnerships involved.

We have split our education and skills programme into two parts – ‘employees for the future’ and ‘citizens for the future’. These parts reflect the two distinct objectives of the education programme – supporting social mobility and diversity in the workplace and contributing to cultural change for future citizens to help achieve local sustainability goals.

Since 2020-21 we have continued to adopt new ways of working, expediting some initiatives and we are now able to restart others which unfortunately could not be delivered in compliance with covid safety guidelines. This process continues and additional opportunities are now arising from the takeover by Pennon/South West Water.

Although the pandemic may have changed the way we do things, such as embracing virtual knowledge sharing with our local partnerships, it has not changed who we are. Our purpose continues to be to have a positive impact on the lives of our customers, our communities, our colleagues, and on the environment beyond the delivery of pure and reliable water.

Where necessary we have also adapted our approach to some projects involving partnerships to agree clearer compatible objectives. A good example of this is the Resource West programme which is clearly focused on the current challenges facing the community, ie energy and water supply resilience and cost coupled with environmental protection. The partnership continues to evolve and is coordinating efforts in combination with our Vulnerability programme to assist with cost of living pressures.

This addresses some of the challenges presented in the customer forum feedback described elsewhere and is an example of the social contract programme and Bristol Water’s approach evolving to address societal concerns.

The education programmes have also continued to expand and diversify and have been accelerated in no small measure by integration with South West’s programmes to achieve the goals set by Pennon for 2030.

The Lakeside Leisure programme has benefitted greatly from employee volunteer participation, cooperation with angling groups and continuing development following the completion of the Chew Valley Lake trail in May 2022.



Academic Partnerships Programme

Linking academic research to help us with social challenges, tackling the key issues such as resource efficiency. Innovating through learning and providing opportunities for student projects.

The aim of this programme is to link academic research to business challenges and experience to tackle key issues such as resource efficiency and raw water quality. It also provides opportunities for learning through PhD and MSc projects and other partnerships. By doing so, we will be providing learning opportunities and workplace experience for students, as well as contribute to ongoing research and innovation related to water use and societal wellbeing.

UWE Bristol highly values BRL's support for its students through the provision of projects, guest lectures and placements through which a new generation of young professionals is learning about opportunities and challenges in the water sector. BRL staff have generously delivered informative lectures about different aspects of a modern water company's operations and supervised undergraduate and postgraduate student projects and internships on subjects such as water quality engineering, pH control in water treatment and domestic water demand management.

Initiated and led by BRL the Resource West consortium, which includes UWE staff, MSc and PhD students, is conducting ground-breaking research on combined water, electricity and gas conservation in the worst cost of living crisis in living memory.

Case study - The experience of one student

"As a PhD student at UWE Bristol, I am grateful for the opportunity presented by the Resource West initiative's pilot project, which focused on understanding household water and energy usage during the current cost of living crisis.

This collaboration allowed me to directly witness the practical application of both academic and industry knowledge, reinforcing my belief in the potency of academia-industry partnerships. It also highlighted the immense value such collaborations bring to both sides with interesting discussions to help consumers conserve resources more efficiently.

Perhaps the most significant contribution they have made to my journey has been to connect me with potential participants in my ongoing "Homelabs" project, given me access to a diverse group of participants willing to share their experiences on domestic water and energy use behaviour.

I am excited to continue my research journey, confident that the knowledge gained will contribute to significant advances in our field".

Fiorella La Matta Romero
PG Researcher (PhD Student)
Department of Geography and Environmental Management
University of the West of England, Bristol.

Case study – a further update on the Didcot Project

Bristol Water, in partnership with Castle Water, Binnies, RWE and The University West of England were awarded innovation funding through Ofwat's Water Breakthrough Challenge.

The pilot is testing the commercial viability of using multi-use abstraction licences and package water treatment plans to supply business customers and solve water resource needs in a low carbon way. The pilot will unlock a number of commercial, technical and regulatory blockers associated with market access for small, local water supplies by exploring the potential to take water under abstraction licence from RWE's Didcot site, treat to Drinking Water Standard, and distribute to customers via the local treated water distribution network.

At a time when the water supply system is already strained, and that pressure will only rise over the coming decades, the project seeks to demonstrate how better use can be made of existing licenced abstractions during times of drought, including switching from non-essential use to use for potable water supply.

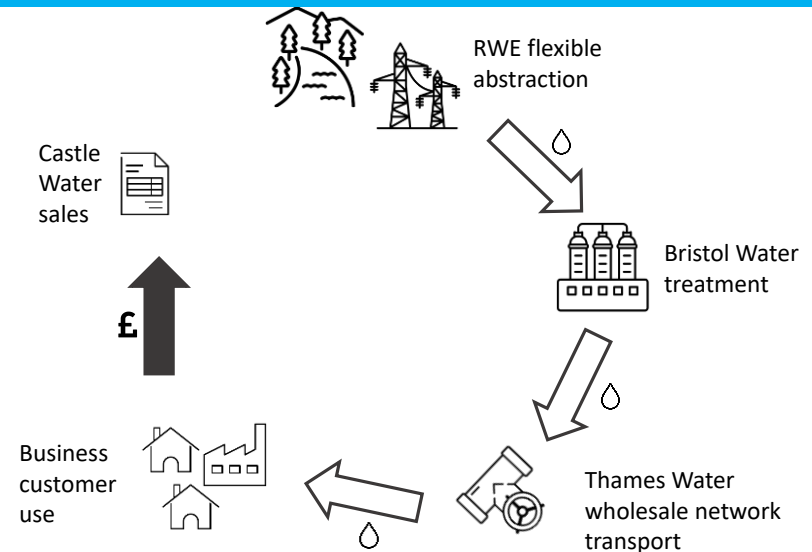
There are several workstreams:

The team at Binnies initially focussed on developing the technical aspects including process, civil, mechanical, electrical and instrumentation design. The process selected was a modular design of prefabricated process units to maximise off-site manufacture and allow flexibility to scale up or down for other similar applications. This design work is complete.

In parallel, an access pricing review investigated a number of case studies from cross sector, regulated markets worldwide. This is also complete.

Dissemination is being achieved by the use of industry workshops to communicate the pilot's initial findings and approach to industry peers and regulators. Engagement with regulators and stakeholders is ongoing, as the pilot team progress wholesale supply licence and network access requests, to inform the final commercial model.

A visualisation tool will be developed to highlight potential market opportunities for similar projects elsewhere in the country. MSc students' part of this project is identifying similar sites for scale-up.





SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholders	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Student Research	Providing research and learning opportunities for university students	Stakeholders: UWE and University of Bristol	Providing research and learning opportunities for university students.	Students will be engaged in a number of different areas of the business	Placements provided for three students – one with Resource West and three in relation to in other departments Range of potential future placement options shared and we are in discussion with UWE on these	2 post-graduate students have worked on Resource West one from a both water efficiency viewpoint and the other from a marketing perspective. 2 others have started extended work experience projects across various departments.
Didcot competitive water supply innovation	Delivery of successful Ofwat innovation fund 'Flexible local supply schemes' project with UWE as our strategic academic partner.	UWE, RWE, Binnies, Castle Water	The first project of its kind which could be a game changer for the water industry by opening the water resource market to third party supplies which are flexible and lower carbon than regional alternatives.	Didcot competitive water supply innovation	Delivery of successful Ofwat innovation fund 'Flexible local supply schemes' project with UWE as our strategic academic partner.	UWE, RWE, Binnies, Castle Water



Education & Skills Programme – Citizens for the future

Building a shared connection between our people, the organisations we work with and our future citizens. Harnessing the concerns of the next generation to change the culture of the current.

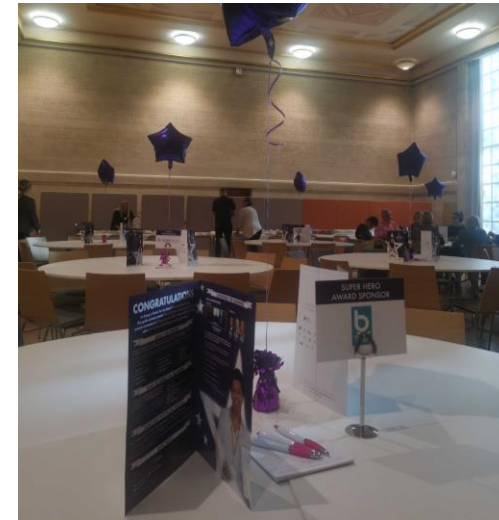
There are three main areas of this programme – the Bristol Water Foundation, education with local groups and the support for the Bristol Beacon redevelopment.

The aim of this programme is to inspire a sense of collective responsibility through education on the value of water (and other resources) to develop citizens for the future. By doing so, we will inspire the next generation on the value of water to foster a sense of responsibility and a willingness to act.

This will also contribute to harnessing ‘pester power’ to influence current customers to be resource efficient. Inspiring the next generation to raise their aspirations to want to work in the water sector, improving social mobility by providing opportunities that build the skills we need as a diverse employer to deliver our social purpose.

The foundation offers 50 free learning resources, together with information on mentoring opportunities and community learning partnerships. On our website we say “The Foundation taps into key environmental issues and water related education.

Above all, we stand for developing our future folk right here in the West Country – whether that be offering a role with us, or even just a bit more understanding on STEM careers or putting together a CV.”



Here's [a link](#) to all this great stuff...go on take a look!

Community educational activities in which Bristol Water staff have been involved include:

- Talks to community groups such as the Women's Institute
- Support for the Festival of Nature in summer 2023 and delivering talks at the event

A review will start shortly in how to increase the benefits further from this initiative.

Case study – The transformation of Bristol Beacon

In 2019 Bristol Water committed to support the refurbishment and relaunch of Bristol Beacon as one of the founding corporate partners. This support came to fruition in November 2023 with the reopening of the hall. The refurbishment was a major project as can be seen on the right, this photograph being from October 2022.

In addition to a comprehensive and exciting programme of musical and cultural events starting at the end of 2023, the supporting charity has a number of diverse community programmes aimed at helping various groups of underprivileged young people develop skills and maybe careers in music and provide wider educational and career development opportunities.

Examples of the programmes

- Music education and career development using industry leaders
- Providing introductory career experience for young people with mental health support if necessary
- Activities for disabled young people to provide the means for self-expression

“Thanks to tremendous support from our corporate partners like Bristol Water, we have transformed Bristol Beacon into one of the best and most accessible performance and music education venues in Europe. With their help, our brand-new spaces will inspire music lovers and artists to come together and share the joy of live music”

Rosa Corbishley, Development Director at Bristol Beacon





SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholders	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Resources for schools, clubs and other community groups		Stakeholders: Schools	To provide schools and colleges with basic online recourses to educate and support the citizens for the future in water knowledge, hydration and usage. We also have engaged with schools through digital campaigns and are now able to restart hosted visits to our facilities. We also provide water butts to local schools to help them save water and promote the value of water to children.	The Bristol Water Foundation provides lots of great resources on anything water related, whether that is the water cycle or birds you can find at our lakeside. It is mostly aimed at primary school children and is mapped to the national curriculum.	A number of new resources added to our website Engagement with schools	Education and learning
Hosting school visits		Lakeside visits for schools have restarted	Hosting visits at our lakes, inspired by our local's love of the lakes and how we want to get more people interested.	Autumn restart	Hosted visit to our facilities for schools	Education and appreciation of the natural world
Bristol Music Trust events at Bristol Beacon		Stakeholders: Bristol Music Trust	To inspire children on the value of water and the environment at the Bristol Beacon Education Centre. We are supporting the development of the centre which is due to open in autumn 2023	The Bristol Beacon reopened at the end of November 2023	Discussions with Bristol Beacon to shape our involvement and how the education space will be used	Will lead to education and learning benefits when the education centre is opened



Education & Skills Programme – Employees for the future

Inspiring the next generation to raise their aspirations to want to work in the water sector and improving social mobility by providing opportunities that build the skills we need as a diverse employer to deliver our social purpose are the motivations for this programme.



The aim of the various projects within this programme is to help both younger and older people, particularly those facing social disadvantage, to reach their potential by developing the knowledge and skills they need to make the transition into the jobs and society of the future. The feedback from the students indicates the major benefits they perceive from spending time at our head office and at some of our other sites.

In 2022 we were able to resume face to face programmes following the pandemic. Most projects are being expanded this year and include a range of activities from mentoring programmes for smaller groups of children to providing school career days for much larger groups.

We have also started work on providing career routes through work experience, apprenticeships and graduate programme. Integration with South West Water is allowing us to accelerate the development of all these programmes to help reach Pennon's targets by 2030. Pennon's five-year plan aims to recruit 100 graduates, 2000 apprentices as well as offering 5000 work experience placements to school children from as early as year 10. This is on top of the internship positions that we currently offer.

Innovations started in 2022 and continuing this year include support and work experience programmes for women wishing to return to the world of work (Women's Work Lab) and for people who have had serious problems with the law and want to get their lives and careers back on track (Key for Life).

These initiatives are run in conjunction with local charities with pilot projects successfully providing valuable work experience to lead to greater employment opportunities. The project will be expanded.

Finally, another innovation this year is working with the Business for Social Mobility programme. This is a cooperative partnership between several businesses and sports organisations. The aim of the one-week programmes in the very different environments is to encourage young people from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds to learn about career opportunities and become interested in how they might benefit.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Group mentoring projects		Stakeholders: Ablaze, South, Bristol Youth	Focus on existing relationship with Ablaze Bristol to deliver mentoring over a six-week period with 15 students from one school as well as working with South West Skills with nine schools within Bristol (10-12 students from each school) who will each attend a day session with Bristol Water. Build relationships with Empire Fighting Chance on two-way mentoring with employees which would then lead to apprentice opportunities within the organisation.	Feedback from students on how they benefited from the programme.	One cycle complete so far this year (10 year 9 students from Norton Hill School). Further projects are planned / St Bernadette's school mentoring and work experience project to be delivered 27 – 29 September. TOR sent over to the school	Skills and increased confidence for participants
Internships focussed on improving diversity		Stakeholders: Schools in our supply area	Providing summer internship opportunities, with a specific focus on improving workforce diversity.	More opportunities for student participation	Underway – two students working with HR	Contributes towards a more diverse and inclusive workforce
Work experience		Stakeholders: Inner city Schools	Invite applications from inner city schools. Offer five places on a week or two weeks work experience. The students will work a day in the life in each department to give them a good overview of all areas. To also include one day session on the 'working world' and to provide CV advice.	The Bristol Water Foundation, The Foundation , provides a summary of all the opportunities at Bristol Water and shares some great ways to get ahead in your career, write a CV and much more. This content is aimed at those in year 10 up to university age.	Bulk of work is scheduled for Q3 and Q4. Project started on this to build for next year, delivering on site work experience and will be contacting local schools this month to ask about take up	Opportunities for school children to experience the world of work. Increase in skills and confidence.
Youth Board		Stakeholders: Schools in our supply area	To bring the views of young adults into our decision making as well as providing development opportunities and business experience for those involved.	More opportunities for student participation	Planning well underway for our next youth board in Q3/early Q4	Opportunities for school children to experience the world of work. Increase in skills and confidence.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Visits to schools		Stakeholders: Schools in our supply area	Working with schools across the Bristol Water area to offer career days within the schools. These will focus on what Bristol water does, its environmental impacts, and the world of work. This could be offered to both Junior and senior schools with each programme being pitched at the right level	Bristol Water staff at your local school	Start delayed due to covid restrictions / First visits planned 27-29 September	Children inspired to follow STEM career
Apprentice scheme		Stakeholders: Colleges in our supply area	Aim to offer three levels of schemes (intermediate, advanced and higher). Opportunities would be offered to experience all areas of the business to develop a 'talent pipeline'. First year plans will be linked to establishing the scheme and creating access via the Foundation website	Our scheme taking shape, ready to roll out in 2022 with additions in the form of graduate apprenticeships starting in 2022 too!	Bulk of work is scheduled for Q3 and Q4	Job opportunities for school and university leavers
Women's Work lab		Charities and stakeholder in our supply area	Aim is to provide work experience opportunities for people interested in returning to work following a period away of the workplace	Pilot phase completed	Further expansion planned to increase the number of opportunities available	Job opportunities for people benefitting from the work experience
Key for Life		Charities and stakeholder in our supply area	Aim is to provide work experience opportunities for people trying to get requalified via work experience interested in returning to work following a period away of the workplace	Pilot phase completed	Further expansion planned to increase the number of opportunities available	Permanent job opportunities
Graduate placements		Stakeholders: Bristol University, UWE	Aim to create partnerships with local universities to offer a graduate programme for two areas of the business initially. Long-term plan is to create a company-wide graduate placement.	Our scheme taking shape, ready to roll out in 2022!	Bulk of work is scheduled for Q3 and Q4	Job opportunities for graduates



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Community Engagement Programme

The aim of this wide-ranging programme is to address issues that impact the wellbeing of the community via collaboration with local groups. We provide access to free drinking water and encourage reduction in the consumption of single use plastic while educating people on the value of water and the importance of water efficiency.

There are various sponsorship schemes in operation. Together for Good is a monthly lottery which provides grants for local good causes. We work with Quartet, a grant giving body, to select worthwhile groups' projects which would benefit from our financial support. The GLOW light festival, SPARKs sustainability department, Unicornfest, Bristol Young Heroes and various environmental initiatives have all benefitted.



The City Nature Challenge event in April was a citizen science/engagement initiative with the Bristol Natural History Consortium. They ran guided talks and bug hunts and encouraged attendees to record their sightings on the iNaturalist app.

The water bar has been busy in 2023 visiting many shows and events, not just major festivals such as Glastonbury. The images below were of the North Somerset show (7,000 litres consumed) one of several other country shows and sporting events too – a total of 13.



The water bar and refill stations kept children and their friends and families including canines refreshed. These initiatives are only possible thanks to the effort of many staff of whom 40 have helped in in 2023.

At the Festival of Bath for which Bristol Water was a co-sponsor, Kirsty Dunford gave a talk on eels in Blagdon Lake.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Other activities supported by Bristol Water included the Sparks project in Bristol city centre. Among the many stands and displays were our water saving and conservation messages which proved interesting and popular with the public.



Along with several other corporate sponsors, Bristol Water provided a grant to the Weston super Mare Glow Festival. This was aimed at promoting Weston as a cultural destination and supporting local creative talent. The light show below had a QR link to Bristol Water's Every Drip Every Drop campaign. 20,000 people visited the displays.





Case study – Active Being

Feedback on the grant from Bristol Water

What did the grant fund?

- Active Talk 1:1 walk and talk provision for 5 women in N Bristol
- Weekly CreativeBeing art group for 10 sessions in St Werburghs
- 6 multi-sport sessions for women at Lockleaze

How many people benefitted?

- 67

What difference did the grant make to the lives of the project's beneficiaries?

- Women who have been involved in the multi-sport activities are now meeting weekly to do a walk or their own group activity
- Women who have been isolated have joined other group surf activity to help build confidence
- Women have engaged with nature and can see the value for themselves and their families in being outdoors
- CreativeBeing art space has allowed a safe space for women to be creative and offload

ActiveTalk participants' comments

"I felt being out in the fresh air and also getting exercise without realising it was very good for my mental health. Having someone to talk to outside of my family circle, who was impartial and didn't judge me"

"The sessions have been a great support to me over what has been a very challenging time in my life. Some days they have been the reason to get up, get out of the house and even talk with another person. This could not have been provided by just any person. Charlie is so open, supportive, genuine and non-judgemental, which really has been a lifeline to me."

"Made me realise how important exercise is for my mental health. And that has a massive impact on my children"

"My sessions are very beneficial, I can open up about any issues I am having regarding anything from relationship problems, child issues and my day to day problems. At the end of the sessions I feel more relaxed and able to go home and challenge things I have been putting off."



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Progress so far	Benefits
Water bar		Local festival and event organisers, eg Glastonbury	To provide free drinking water refills at community events to keep local residents hydrated and to reduce plastic bottle use.	Festival and events attendance	10 water bar and 3 water tower events major covering different types of outdoor event	We are reviewing the programme for 2024
Community volunteering		Local schools and corporate partners	Establish key community partners to deliver community benefit via our employees' two paid days volunteering days per year.	Expanded range of schemes including conservation projects and support for local schools	Wide range of projects with regular volunteer days for some projects	Our employees supporting community wellbeing through key stakeholder partnerships
Water fountains		Local authorities depending on location of new installations	To fill our supply area with water points for everyone to use for free. We will continue to provide maintenance for them.	Operation of installations following repairs and installations of new design of fountains where necessary	Local authorities depending on location of new installations	Completing the repair and replacement of fountains damaged during the pandemic and planning the Installation of new fountains to add to those within Bristol city centre and elsewhere.
Together for Good		Local charities and schools	To continue funding a monthly competition – a different charity or community scheme wins £500 towards a project that will benefit the community that links to our social purpose.	Regular monthly awards	Local charities and schools	This monthly prize draw provides winning community projects with £500 to spend on projects which benefit our customers.
Employee vegetable patch and partnerships		BGCP and others as partnerships develop	Establish employee vegetable patch and cooperate with other businesses	New projects being developed	BGCP and other companies as partnerships develop	Shared learning on growing food at work

Conservation Programme

As a water company, we rely heavily on the environment to provide us with plentiful and good quality tap water. We also own and manage some unique habitats at our operational sites. We recognise that we face an ecological emergency at a global scale. In response, we are developing an ambitious environment programme with our regulators which will protect and improve our local environment.

Our social contract initiatives build on these plans by sharing our approach with others so that it can be amplified beyond our sites. It also includes the work of our employee conservation volunteer group.

Protecting natural resources by improving biodiversity

As part of this programme, we have committed to developing a company-wide biodiversity action plan. This underpins the delivery of habitat improvements to conservation value of our land and plan projects to restore and enhance the natural environment such as:

- Improving hedge management
- Woodland replanting partly to address ash die back tree loss
- Installing bird boxes targeting rarer species
- Management of reeds
- Improving grassland management
- Tree maintenance and scrub removal to create clearings
- Improving ponds

Kirsty Dunford coordinates many of these activities with community groups, lake user groups, charities and leads regular volunteer sessions tackle these projects.

Bristol Water staff are encouraged to use their designated volunteer days to visit the lakes and get stuck into some conservation delivery.



A message from Patric Bulmer, Head of Water Resources and Environment

“Our founders had a strong social purpose that these days we would describe as sustainable development – recognising that the long-term quality of the environment required a focus on the pressures that society and public health were placing on it.

“Today, we recognise that we face an ecological and climate emergency at a global scale. The 2022 drought reinforced the importance of a resilient supply of water. Our regional planning approach in partnership with South West Water and Wessex Water enables us to look in detail into other sectors in the West Country such as agriculture and mining. In developing our plans and learning about the needs of other sectors, we will deliver increasing benefits through enhancement of our own assets and the wider environment.”



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Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Biodiversity Index		Bristol Green Capital Partnership Mendip Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Sharing our innovative biodiversity index approach with businesses to expand its impact. It is a Natural Capital tool that has provided stakeholders with a practical method for assessing the value of their land.	Others adopting our approach and improving biodiversity at other sites in the Greater Bristol area	Our Biodiversity Index approach has been shared further on regional partnership forums (WCWR) and is made available to any interested neighbours	Other users able to measure improvements to biodiversity; An updated version of this natural capital tool will be used by all water companies in future planning
Wild Ones		Chew Valley Lake Angling Community	A group of Bristol Water staff who volunteer their knowledge and time to help local environmental projects.	Maintaining species, rich grassland, planting hedgerows and coppice in woodlands	Litter picks and providing care and coppicing to woodlands and reedbed habitat	Maintain the biological and recreational value of Bristol Water sites
Cheddar 'Bioblitz'		Rescheduled and enhanced	Supporting local community groups to come and explore the niche habitats and species around Cheddar Reservoir.	Transferring our knowledge and skills to others	Conversations and positive engagement with stakeholders; Covid restrictions prevented the May 2021 event. It is deferred until 2024 and may take the form of supporting the Euro Bioblitz project.	Planning and positive stakeholder engagement setting up the opportunity to deliver this in 2024
Ecological Emergency Action Plan		Bristol Green Capital Partnership	To support Bristol Green Capital Partnership develop an Ecological Emergency Action Plan.	A joint action plan to be published for a route map for the 2020 strategy	Action Plan published and promoted; Bristol Water are engaged in the delivery of this plan	Working with multiple stakeholders to deliver action which addresses the Ecological Emergency
Tree planting		Forest of Avon Trust	Local community engagement where trees are planted with local groups. Health and wellbeing benefit of all who engage.	Lots of lovely new trees at our sites.	Suitable sites are being scoped out for further tree planting this winter (2023/24)	Improving the biological and recreational value of a site plus improving carbon sequestration of BW estate.
Conservation partnership		Avon Wildlife Trust	Delivering conservation and nature recovery on our sites with education and school's engagement on water wildlife and water efficiency.	Getting local school children and communities engaged in conservation.	Meetings held with AWT to discuss opportunities of how we can work together	Utilising technical expertise of the Trust to improve local knowledge and the condition of local nature reserves.



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SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Lakeside Leisure Programme

Facilitating the enjoyment of recreational activities such as fishing, sailing, walking, cycling and birdwatching.

The aim of this programme is to promote and facilitate the enjoyment of our sites through recreational activities such as fishing, sailing, walking, cycling and birdwatching. This supports healthier and happier communities through the use of our sites' recreation facilities.

The Chew Valley Lake Recreational Trail was opened on May 18th 2022 by the West of England Metro Mayor Dan Norris, with local children from Chew Stoke primary school, who came along with their bikes to test out the new trail. This project has been a partnership across Bath and North East Somerset, West of England Rural Network, West of England Combined Authority (WECA), the Rural Payments Agency, Sustrans, Natural England and Bristol Water.



As described in the Conservation section, a lot of effort including that of employee volunteers goes into environmental improvement work particularly at the Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Outdoor spaces have been more crucial than ever in the wellbeing of our communities, and we have seen an influx of visitors in after the lockdowns much of which has continued since. There appears to have been a shift in visitor demographic. This is welcome in that new people are connecting with the environment.

Building on the success of the Chew Valley Lake trail, much work has gone into improving facilities, upgrading of the public conveniences and better signage for locations to spot wildlife or improved access. This work continues with activities such as replanting being undertaken in the autumn or winter as appropriate. In addition, various events have been organised such as the Easter Egg trail.





SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Improving lakeside community facilities	Green	Stakeholders: Salt n Malt, The Woodford, BRFFA (angling), Cheddar Watersports, Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club, Chew bird ringing station, bird wardens	To continuously improve our lakeside facilities for the public to enjoy, supporting health and wellbeing	We are currently refining our plans and will report on progress in future years	We have replaced the playground at Chew Valley Lake as part of our 175 th birthday celebrations	Recreation facilities for families at Chew Valley Lake
Chew Valley Lake recreational trail	Green	Stakeholders: Local Authority (B&NES), Parish Councils, Salt n Malt, The Woodford, Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club	Extend existing walking & cycle trail from Woodford to Hollow Brook	Improved walking and cycling routes around Chew Valley Lake	Work completed with formal opening in May 2022 – includes new footpaths and replacement of a bridge at Hollowbrook.	Enhanced recreation and education opportunities for walkers, cyclists and bird spotters
Blagdon Engine House Museum regeneration project	Red	Stakeholders: Parish councils, Heritage Open Days, Local Schools	Improve site and building facilities at Blagdon engine house and museum and improve safety	Visitor open days returning to Blagdon museum	Currently on hold whilst we explore alternative operating arrangements	On hold
Equality and access	Green	Stakeholders: Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club, Salt n Malt, The Woodford	Evaluate and prioritise potential improvements to allow access for all	New access gate at Chew Valley Lake	Discussions with sailing club regarding a new access gate to allow for disabled access	Will provide enhanced access to sailing at Chew Valley Lake



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Regional Strategies Programme

Supporting local and regional plans to address the challenges of society and progress towards a sustainability and carbon neutrality.

The aim of this programme is to support the development of regional strategies through working with local government – for example, the West of England Combined Authority, or the Bristol One City Plan. Bristol Water staff are participating in and contributing to project teams working on Net Zero and other projects.

Earlier in 2023, Bristol City Council became the only city in the UK to be a full member of the Horizon funded EU net Zero Cities group of 100+ locations across the EU and its neighbours.

This programme augments and facilitates the Bristol One City initiative and its *One City Plan* to become carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. Bristol Water's Social Contract programme and the Resource West project in particular provide helpful points to how to mobilise cooperative business resources across the city to achieve change which it is otherwise difficult to tackle with cross organisational cooperation.

Bristol Water is supporting this initiative through participation in the transition team aimed at working out ways to harness cooperation in the quest for Net Zero by 2030.

This experience is also being taken up by the West of England Combined Authority's programme for Regional Agreement for the Environment where, again, Bristol Water staff are playing a very active role in designing and developing cooperative programmes.

Both initiatives are at early stages but will accelerate quickly over the next year.



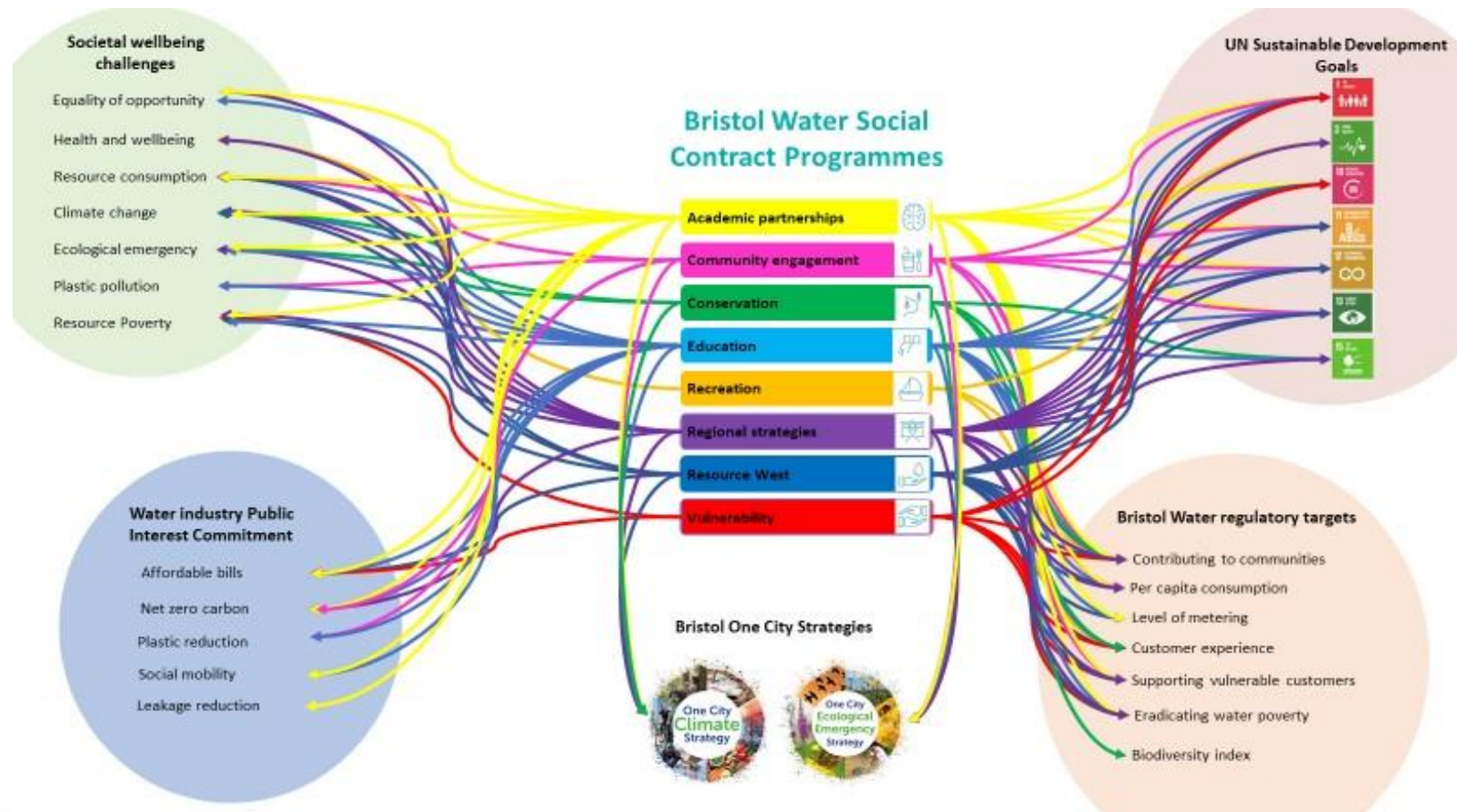


SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

The diagram below illustrates the multiple links between our social contract programmes and societal challenges, Public Interest Commitments and UN Sustainable Development Goals.

It also illustrates the link between our social contract and the delivery of business regulatory targets.

Our regional strategies approach is built around the Bristol One City Plan. This includes a series of targets to help achieve a fair and sustainable Bristol by 2030.





SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

In July 2021 we published our route map to net zero carbon by 2030.¹ Our emissions to the atmosphere are our “gross” emissions. Once we take account of any GHGs we have helped remove from the atmosphere these are “net” emissions. This is our target area for net zero.



Almost half of our carbon footprint comes from the electricity used to treat water and pump it around our network. We are reducing our import from the grid by installing gas generators at Purton Treatment Works, our biggest energy consumer. This will marginally increase our carbon footprint and we will seek to mitigate this by seeking opportunities to investigate the use of biogas or other low carbon fuel sources for the generation system as part of our innovative partnership Resource West, working with other utility and resource management organisations in the West of England area.

The gas generator at our largest water treatment works also contributes a significant amount to our footprint. To produce zero emissions in some areas of our operation may not be directly achievable, but in these cases, we can look to remove GHG from the atmosphere by other means (e.g. tree planting). We will continue our efficiency and renewable energy programmes and build on our plans between now and 2030.

Bristol Water is supporting Bristol's One City ambition and plan. Our Director of Strategy & Regulation, is a member of the Bristol One City Plan Environment Board, linking climate change, ecological and green growth and economic recovery plans together for businesses, communities and organisations across Bristol. We are also supporting the wider West of England Combined Authority programme which has been launched in 2023.

To develop this further we recently worked with Resilience Brokers to help develop next steps to ensure that Infrastructure Interdependencies are understood for future city planning.

The report makes a number of recommendations which we will be progressing further as part of our future resilience and investment plans, alongside local authorities and other partners. We hope these steps will help develop a new standard for cross-utility and public authority resilience planning at scale for climate and ecological emergencies.

¹ [Our route map to Net Zero Carbon by 2030](#)



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Progress so far	Benefits
Contributing to local strategies and plans		<p>Stakeholders:</p> <p>Bristol City Council, Bristol Green Capital Partnership Other local Councils</p>	<p>To support the delivery of Bristol City Council's One City Plan, through our partnership with local stakeholders, our support for Bristol Green Capital Partnership and our role in the Bristol City Environmental Sustainability Board.</p> <p>Linking specifically to the development of our carbon and ecological strategies BGCP, plus other city stakeholders. We will explore plans to broaden out these strategies to other areas</p> <p>Active participation in the transition team for the EU Horizon supported Net Zero Cities initiative</p>	<p>Continuing to establish and strengthen links on our plans to respond to the climate and ecological emergencies by working with local cross-sectoral stakeholders to design implementation plans.</p> <p>We will be focusing on future plans with councils throughout our area during 2023/24</p>	<p>Work continues to support the One City Plan, including attendance at the Environmental Sustainability Board and associated working groups following the publishing of our net zero strategy in July 2021.</p>	<p>Supporting wellbeing and environmental improvements – including carbon reduction.</p>
Our WECA strategy		<p>Stakeholders:</p> <p>WECA plus Regional Engagement programme participants</p>	<p>To actively contribute to the West of England Combined Authority's regional strategy and the delivery of regional plans, ensuring water sustainability is embedded into the region's future.</p>	<p>Working to ensure regional plans reflect our objectives.</p>	<p>Ongoing engagement with WECA and support for the Regional Engagement Plan</p>	<p>Supporting regional strategies – will ultimately support our work in the region</p>



Resource West Programme

Working with local partners to deliver a joined-up approach to resource efficiency across different sectors.

The aim of this programme is to work to deliver a joined-up approach to reducing consumption – combining resources to amplify messages to customers. Bristol Water’s partners are:



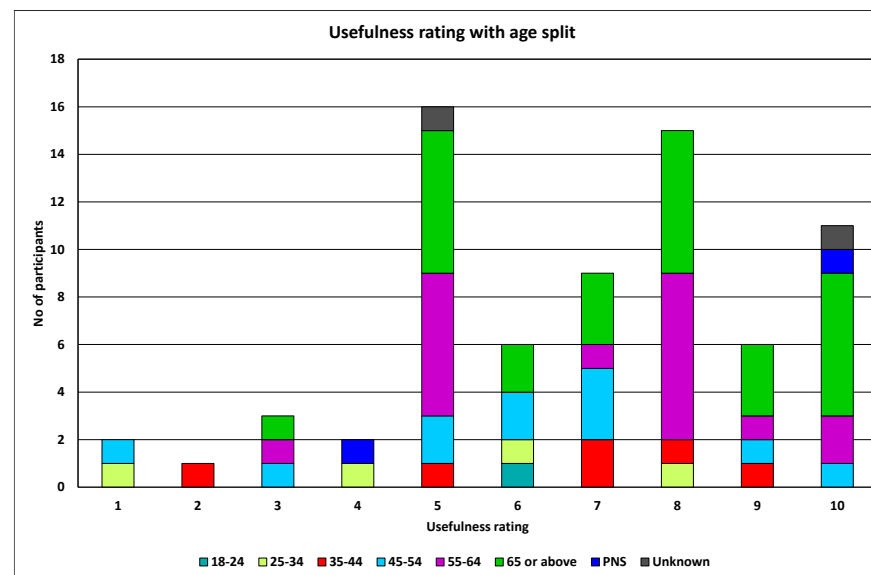
The partnership worked extremely well and we are now exploring further areas which can benefit customers from more collaboration.

For the participants providing us with sufficient readings,

- Gas usage reduction was 4.4% - average kWh/day/household from 33.09 to 31.65
- Electricity reduction was 14.6% - average kWh/day household from 7.65 to 6.53
- Water usage per capita consumption (PCC) was down by 7.6% with litres/person/day from 105 to 97
- The average financial saving per participant was £88 per household over the period of the trial or £146 over a full year.

The predominant change implemented, as recorded by over half the respondents, was from using appliances more efficiently.

The overall perceived value was 6.9 on the scale of 1 to 10. This can be considered a success and suggests the advice provided was valuable, relevant and useful.



A comment from Professor Chad Staddon, Associate Head of Department, Research and Scholarship, Department of Geography and Environmental Management

“UWE Bristol is very grateful for the collaborative opportunities created by the Resource West initiative. Through Resource West, UWE staff and students have an opportunity to contribute to the important work of addressing domestic energy and water conservation during the current cost of living crisis. Resource West is a model for collaborative practice that we seek to apply to other areas of activity”.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
Resource West Partnership		Wales and West Utilities University of the West of England (UWE) National Grid (formerly Western Power Distribution)	Taking lead to build a partnership of local stakeholders to facilitate transformational shifts in consumer behaviour to reduce energy and water consumption for financial, environmental and resilience reasons	Joint messaging over reducing consumption and feedback on consumer motivation and success	Pilot project completed with over 70 participants to test out the concept and which has proved the idea works in practice; Initial expansion is with more partners to consider how to support more vulnerable households	PCC and carbon reduction benefits as well as supporting vulnerable customers plus addressing the sharp rise in energy cost



Vulnerability Programme

Technology and data will help us to work with local stakeholders to deliver the specific needs of individuals – building a shared connection with the communities we serve together.

The aim of this programme is to work with local stakeholders to help provide extra support to those customers who need it, building on our existing programme of extra care services, social tariffs and debt advice. Our social contract helps our work with stakeholders in ensuring our services are accessible to those most in need.

Many customers find themselves in vulnerable circumstances at some point in their life. Previous estimates suggest that one in nine customers struggle to pay their bill. At any point in time over 20% of people have some form of vulnerability, however transient. The energy and inflation cost increases will have made these problems much worse. We are currently working with stakeholders to understand what changes are needed to our processes to provide appropriate financial help to customers.

A message from one of our partner organisations, Housing Matters

"We're so pleased that we managed to help over 2,000 people from 945 households over the 2022/23 financial year – that's nearly a third more households compared to the previous year. And we're so grateful to you all at Bristol Water for enabling this to happen."

Kat Shatford, Communications and Fundraising Assistant

A message from Sue Clarke, Head of Customer Strategy & Research

"We have continued to see more customers register for our Priority Services, 60% more than were registered in August 2022. This is valuable to us, as it enables us to efficiently understand which of our customers need extra support and how we need to tailor the service to meet their needs.

Since April 2023, we have had a two-way data share in place with National Grid. This means our customers only need to inform either us or their energy supplier that they need to be on the priority services register, reducing customer effort. We have targeted our promotions of the help we offer to ensure we connect with the right customers and formed partnerships with organisations that those most in need.

We know that the cost-of-living crisis has impacted our customers. We have continued to fund the debt advice sector to support customers with their finances and we have data shares up and running with two local authorities which help us identify those who most need our help. Our aim is to expand these data shares to include all local authorities in our supply area over the next year. This is in addition to making the customer journey easier for those who need additional support."



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Case study 1

Dementia Safeguarding scheme - Avon and Somerset Police

Bristol Water have a long-standing relationship with Crimestoppers and support their work via our vulnerability strategy and social contact. We support several of their annual campaigns including bogus callers, highlighting the need to be vigilant when people need to visit your home, ensuring they are who they say they are.

One notable stakeholder event we held in February 2023 was on domestic and economic abuse. This saw 30 stakeholders from various organisations across our supply area, including Police and NHS representatives, attend a session highlighting how we support those customers experiencing economic and financial abuse.

Pictured Steph Martin BW, Karen McDonald Crimestoppers, Julia Penn NSC



Case study 2

Kidney Care UK

Bristol Water and Wessex Water joined up to form a partnership with Kidney Care UK in 2023. There are 4,604 people in our combined supply areas who have had a kidney transplant or are on dialysis either in a hospital or at home. Bristol Water is pleased to be in partnership with Kidney Care UK. We are always looking for new ways to reach people who could benefit from knowing more about what we do and how we can offer support with paying water bills and also being on our priority services register.

As part of our partnership with Kidney Care UK, we visited Southmead Hospital, met dialysis patients and discussed affordability and our Priority Services Register with them. The amazing patients and staff made us feel very welcome on the ward and in the Richard Bright Satellite Unit. This worthwhile and enlightening visit showed what dialysis patients go through every day and why our support is vital.





SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Initiative	RAG	Stakeholder update	Objective	Highlights to look out for	Features of progress	Benefits
'Hard to reach' projects		Stakeholders: debt advice partners	Working with funded partners and new charities to promote PSR and lower tariffs to customers whom it is reach with messages.	Increasing the number of customers on our social tariffs	Two projects have been supported this year – Housing Matters and South Gloucestershire Citizens Advice Bureau. All these projects aim to assist people in financial hardship	Supporting vulnerable customers – we will work to quantify the benefits
Partnership work with debt charities		Stakeholders: debt advice partners	To ensure that customers receive full debt advice before receiving Assist, rather than just help on their water bill.	Increasing the number of customers on our social tariffs	We continue to fund local debt charities and are working on increasing our data sharing with local authorities and establish new funding partners.	Supporting vulnerable customers – we will work to quantify the benefits
PSR 'outreach' community events		Stakeholders: local charities	Registering vulnerable customers on PSR and awareness of lower tariffs for those not asking for help	Increasing the number of customers on our Priority Services Register	We continue to distribute our helping hand cards to relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of our support. We supported Avon and Somerset police with their dementia awareness and helped with funding of GPS devices and wristbands for residents in our supply area who would most benefit. Partnerships with Kidney Care UK and the Royal Association for the Deaf aim to reach those in our most hard to reach cohorts.	Increased awareness of support offered to vulnerable customers leading to more customers benefitting
Local data share		Stakeholders: National Grid, Wessex Water	To make it easier for vulnerable customers to be registered for help with energy and water companies by one contact.	Increasing the number of customers on our Priority Services Register	The local data share with National Grid is now two way. We continue to work to widen data sharing where possible	More customers benefitting from vulnerable customer support
Partnership with Crimestoppers to drive awareness of our PSR		Stakeholders: Avon and Somerset Police, Crimestoppers	Raising awareness of PSR, specially preventing fraud to vulnerable customers	Increasing the number of customers on our Priority Services Register	We continue to support Crimestoppers with engagement including by promoting and hosting events to consider how to minimise economic abuse.	Social benefits – prevention of crime and increased awareness of PSR register so that more customers benefit



Measuring the Benefits of our Social Contract

It is important to reflect in some way the benefits to the wider community of the Social Contract concept and its programmes. It is also important that the methods of measurement are as impartial as possible. Several approaches have been used therefore to measure this community benefit which are discussed below.

We measure the benefits of the social contract through our benefits valuation framework. The benefits framework provides a means to assess whether we really are helping to address local issues, such as those highlighted by the Quartet Report and Bristol City Council's State of Bristol report.

On a comparative basis, the benefits framework evaluates to the community of the initiatives in our social contract programme. The framework also considers the outcomes alongside their relative importance to us and our stakeholders. It is also important to us because, not only is it helping us check whether we are addressing the issues faced by our local, very diverse community, but also assists with prioritising based on the value they are delivering to the community.

We have used a range of different recognised approaches. Each approach acts as a different lens to inform prioritisation and assess the type of benefits we are delivering. The table overleaf summarises and compares the approaches we have considered.

Progress over the past 12 months

- We have broadened our “capitals” approach, by moving from the four capitals framework to the six capitals framework. Now, we aim to capture our contribution through our social contract initiatives to each of the six capitals: financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and natural and better understand how our actions provide benefits to the wider community of Bristol.
- We continue to improve our estimates of benefits by collecting a more detailed and wider breadth of data.
- We have continued to report our progress against the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These help to guide our decision making and reporting processes on an international level.

Using these approaches, we have estimated the benefits against different valuation approaches across all our programmes. This has allowed us to test our priorities across each approach and compare between programmes. We summarise the outputs in the diagrams on pages 42 and 43.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT









































































Summary of valuation framework approaches

Measure of progress	How does it work?	Where are we?	What have we learnt?	What is next?
Six Capitals	Captures the quantitative and qualitative benefits of all our activities and categorises within the six capitals.	The framework has been set out and we have captured the benefits across the programmes.	Need to balance the outputs alongside company, stakeholder, and local priorities.	Calculate the value of each initiative and utilise framework to help prioritise future programmes.
Social Return on Investment	Calculates a ratio of input to output of societal benefits in monetary terms. Tailored to the social contract programme.	We have expanded the number of initiatives which we have estimated a SROI value for.	The ratio can be impactful for reporting but requires simplifying assumptions to be effective.	Continue to build our database of evidence to refine our SROI estimates.
Sustainable Development Goals	Measures international progress against a set of 17 goals, with sub-targets and measures for each goal.	We have mapped our social contract programmes to the sub-goals to test what we are currently doing against what we can do. As well as the social contract, our performance commitment outcomes to customers are also mapped to the SDGs.	The priorities at the international level are different to those identified by our stakeholders and employees.	Continue to engage with the SDGs locally through the Bristol One City Plan
One City Plan	Set of annual goals which aim to make Bristol a fair, healthy and sustainable city	We have mapped our social contract to the key milestones in the plan. We have aligned our net zero strategy to the One City Climate Strategy.	Our programmes align well with local priorities. Continue dedicated resources required to maintain collaborative working.	Continuing to support through the Environmental Sustainability Board. Expanding our approach to include other local plans.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Summary of benefits for social contract programmes

	Capitals	SDG	One City Plan	Company Targets
Academic Partnerships	  	      		
Education & Skills – Citizens for future	 	     		
Education & Skills – Employees for the future	  	     		
Community Engagement	  	    		
Conservation	 	     		
Lakeside Leisure	 	  		
Regional Strategies		      		
Resource West	 	       		
Vulnerability	 	   		

Symbol

Key



Social Capital



Human Capital



Natural Capital

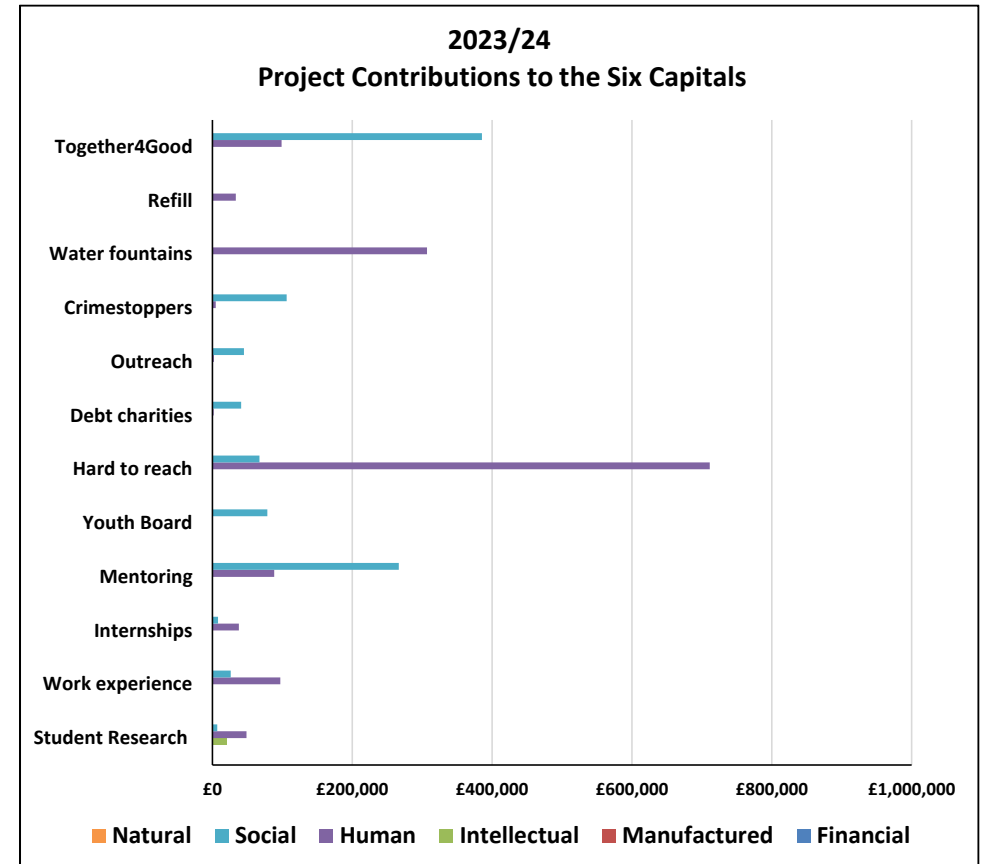


Six Capitals

The chart on the right-hand side summarises our estimated contributions towards each of the six capitals, the purpose of which is to assign a financial value to benefits which do not automatically translate to a financial return. Our social contract primarily focuses on human, social and natural, but in the long run may include the other capitals directly. As a reminder, the six capitals consist of:

1. **Financial:** The pool of funds used in business activities which may be obtained through financing or generated from activities or investments
2. **Manufactured:** Physical objects that include infrastructure and buildings
3. **Intellectual:** Organisational, knowledge-based intangibles including intellectual property, patents or rights
4. **Human:** Peoples competencies, education and experience
5. **Social:** The institutions and relationships within and between organisations and communities
6. **Natural:** All renewable and non-renewable environmental resources and processes including land, minerals, water and biodiversity

The source information and assumptions behind all the calculations in this and the next sections comes from acknowledged authoritative public sources such as the Treasury Green Book.



It can be seen from the graph that human and social capitals dominate the community benefits from the Social Contract programmes where measurement is possible.



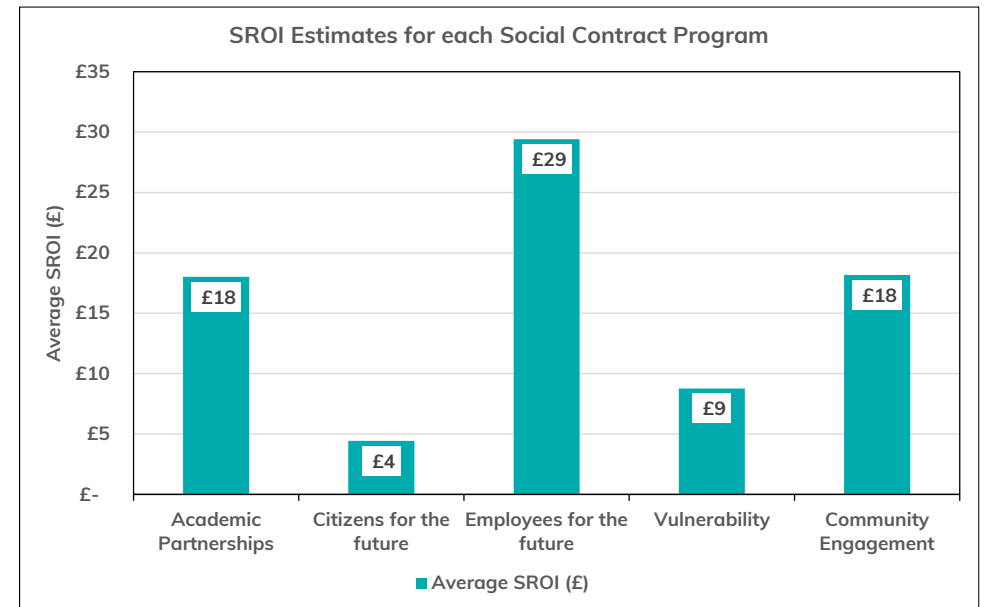
Social Return on Investment

SROI ratios measure the level of benefit relative to the level of cost. For example, a programme with a 5:1 SROI ratio would have social benefits which exceed the costs by five times.

In our 2019-20 Benefits and Transparency report we calculated the projected SROI for some of our initiatives to demonstrate their value in the longer run. In this section, we have revisited these valuations and re-estimated their SROI on the delivery and the expected outcomes for this year. Some of our initiatives have increased their social value, such as our Hard to Reach and debt support projects - much needed during the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent increased costs of energy.

As well as calculating the projected return for some of the initiatives, we have estimated the SROI for the entire social contract programme for this year. The figures we present are based on the average benefit for across the projects in each programme.

The chart displays the average SROI for each of the programmes. Further detail is provided in **Annex 1**. For some programmes (conservation, lakeside leisure, regional strategies and Resource West) we have not estimated values for SROI. They require further data as the future direction of these programmes becomes clearer.

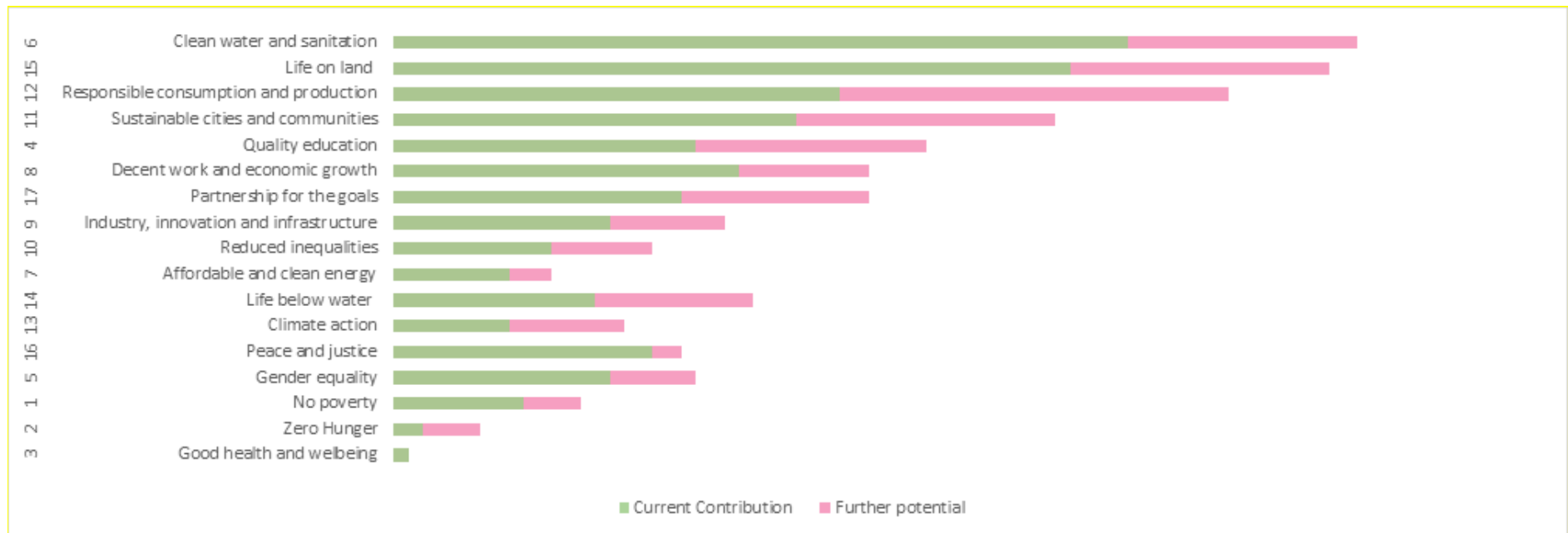




Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". They cover the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, accelerate climate change, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The goals were set in 2015 with a target date of 2030 and form an important international measure of sustainable development.

Each goal has several sub goals which we have used to quantify the relative contribution of our social contract activities towards each of the goals.





Next steps

We continue to develop our benefits valuation framework to incorporate more advanced techniques of economic evaluation, using principles set out in government guidance, such as the HM Treasury Green Book and the relevant supplementary guidance, as well as using insight from other pieces of advice such as the Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity. This further work planned for the coming months means our contributions to society through our Social Contract will be better captured and more accurate.

We are now working to develop two further stages to our benefits framework.

- Stage two will incorporate the benefits framework into our wider investment planning.
- Stage three will develop a fully integrated benefits framework to capture, measure and make decisions around investment planning for future business plans.





Public Interest Commitment

The water industry Public Interest Commitment (PIC) was published on 25 April 2019, setting out challenging goals and commitments for the sector in England as a whole, with companies contributing appropriately according to their specific circumstances.

The PIC provides a national framework for collaboration to deliver five key objectives by 2030. Our social contract initiatives directly complement these objectives. Examples of the ways we are contributing to the delivery of the PIC are given overleaf.



SOCIAL CONTRACT BENEFIT & TRANSPARENCY REPORT

Examples of how we are contributing to the Water Industry Public Interest Commitment

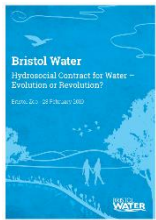
Triple the rate of sector-wide leakage reduction by 2030	Make bills affordable for all households by 2030	Achieve net zero carbon emissions for the sector by 2030	Prevent the equivalent of 4 billion plastic bottles ending up as waste by 2030	Be the first sector to achieve 100% commitment to the Social Mobility Pledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Our education activities within our social contract help customers to manage leakage on their own pipes•In 2020/21 we achieved our lowest level of leakage ever reported.•We are pleased that compared to other companies in the industry, we already deliver industry leading levels of service on leakage reduction.•The reduction in leakage in 2020/21 by 4% to 35.5ML/d compared to 2019/20 and 19% since 2017/18 will make a big and early contribution towards the total industry target of a 50% reduction by 2045.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Our 'hard to reach' projects initiative is aimed at increasing household sign ups to our social tariffs.•Our 'partnerships with debt charities' initiative is also the main contribution to the sign up of our social tariffs.•We also use our detailed neighbourhood information tool to target our social tariffs and support to those areas that need support the most.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•In July 2021 we published our net zero strategy. We have identified a range of ways that we can meet the challenge of hitting Net Zero carbon by 2030.•Our preferred routemap considers a mix of pathways, including immediate action on water and energy efficiency, switching to renewable sources of energy and using carbon offsets, all in a managed way to provide a trajectory to 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•We estimate that the water fountains we have installed in Bristol City Centre will save Bristolians half a million pounds and prevent 50 miles of plastic bottle waste every year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•We signed the Social Mobility Pledge in 2019. It is a campaign to improve social mobility in the UK, to which Bristol Water is a proud supporter.



How to find out more and get involved in our social contract

We'd love to hear what you think about our social contract!

By using #hydrosocialcontract on Twitter and Instagram



By emailing us at
StrategyAndRegulation@bristolwater.co.uk

Separately, we have also produced an interactive performance graphic available for our progress to date.

Transparency of reporting

In September 2018 we published our [PR19 business plan](#), which included our plans to voluntarily develop a social contract, with financial incentives proposed from April 2020.

In January 2019 we launched our [Social Contract](#), the first of its kind published by a water company. The social contract sets out how we are accountable for the social promises we make as we deliver our purpose. It is a process. We continue to evolve our approach.

February 2019 marked our [social contract launch event](#), where we debated our approach with local and national stakeholders and industry experts.

In December 2022 we published our third [benefits and transparency report](#) on the progress we had made. This document is the fourth.

In April 2023 we published our third social contract [forward programme](#). It provided an overview of our social contract approach and detail of the programme of activity planned for 2023/24. This report is an update on the progress we have made on those plans to date.

In July 2023 we published our Annual Performance Report, where we provided updates on how our social contract initiatives were helping us to achieve our some of our regulatory commitments.

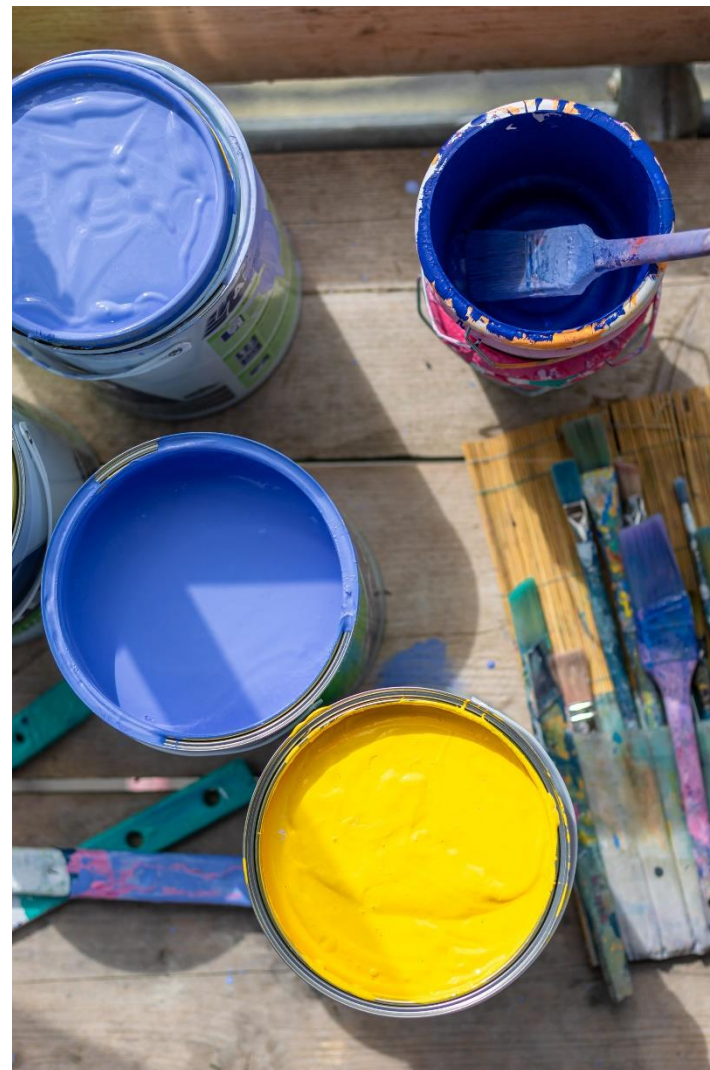
We have also published a [guide to our social purpose](#), which sets out our approach and how it delivers our 2020-25 business outcomes.

Annex 1: Social Return on Investment (SROI)

In this appendix we provide further information on our SROI calculations at an initiative level, updating the calculations since our 2019-20 Benefits and Transparency Report and providing further detail.

Some of our initiatives have been impacted by COVID-19, but as the projections show, we still envision a positive benefit in the long-run and some chart timescales have been extended to illustrate the longer-term gains from the initiatives following the restarts.

Within the charts, blue bars represent actual data, and the green bars represent forecast data. Year zero was the pilot year in 2019-20.

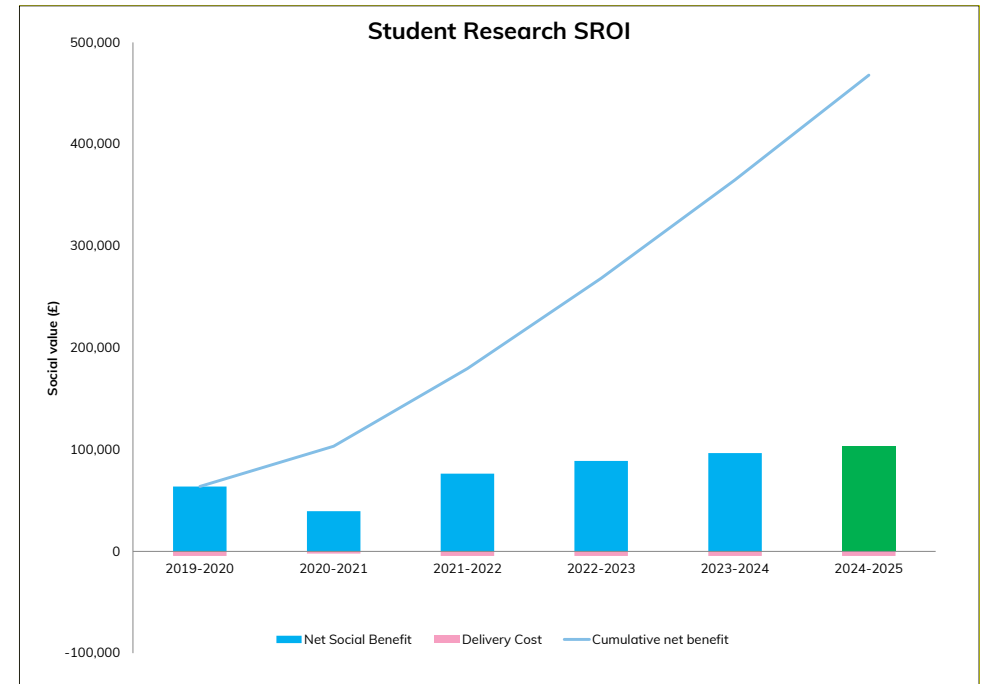




Academic partnerships – Student research

This project aims to support research projects which enhance our understanding of water use. We have projected that for the five-year cycle of this project, it will have a total SROI of £18.02.

The cooperation continues to develop and grow as expected with projects being continued and new ones developed in different departments.





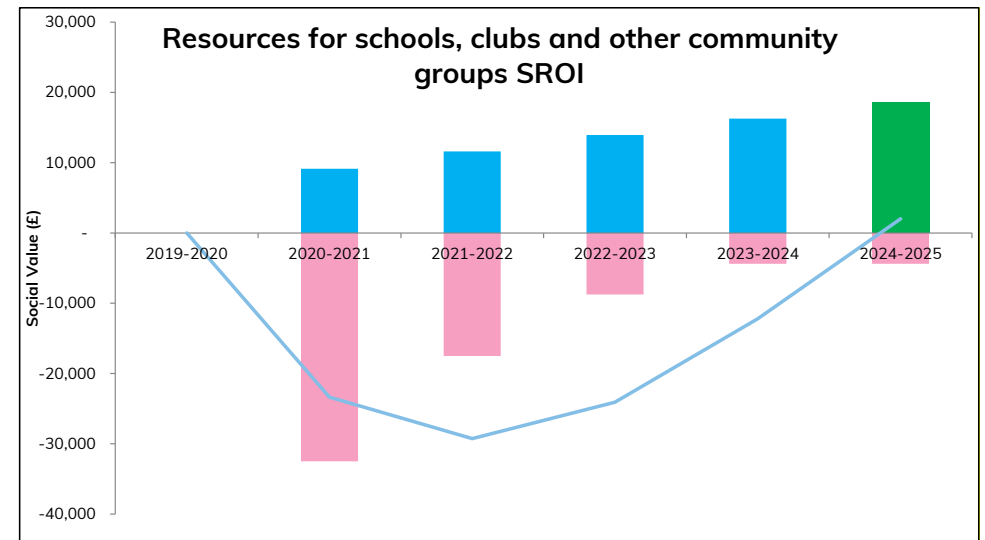
Citizens for the Future – Education Resources

We have created a range of educational resources to be used by school-age children. The resources encourage children to think about ways they can save water and educate them on the value of natural resources to society and environment.

We have projected the SROI for this initiative using the same methodology as last year, but with updated cost data. The graph below demonstrates the value of the educational resources over time.

The initial outlay of cost is incurred in the current year, Year 1. The ongoing costs are staff time involved in promoting the resources within schools and community groups. Over time, the benefits accumulate and generate a positive return over time but in the next 5 years the SROI value of £0.26.

The benefits bar is still shown as a forecast for 2023-24. This was one of the projects being restarted this after the pandemic but future plans from the reopening of the Bristol Beacon can be expected to accelerate the benefits.



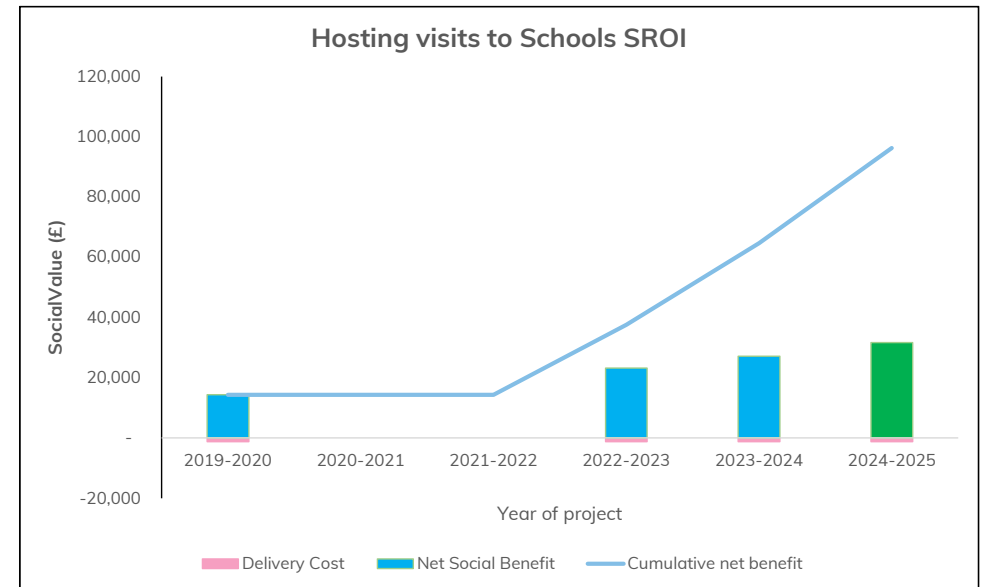


Citizens for the future – Hosting School Visits

This project is where we host visits at our lakes, inspired by our locals' love of the lakes and how we want to get more people interested. Due to the time in nature involved in this project, we believe through participation, students that take part experience wellbeing benefits, as well as an improvement in the awareness of the value of water, contributing towards a reduction in our PCC performance commitment.

As this project has a low cost to run, we estimate it delivers an estimated £8.63 SROI. The benefits bar is still shown as a forecast for 2023-24 since this is one of the projects being restarted this after the pandemic and is still building to its potential. It is also being accelerated from now on as a result of Pennon's educational initiatives and the SROI is likely to rise in future when the scale of the changes becomes quantifiable.

The recent innovation of joining the Business for Social Mobility partnership will enhance this programme and when the scale of involvement has been established, it should be possible to predict a higher return.





Employees for the future – Work Experience

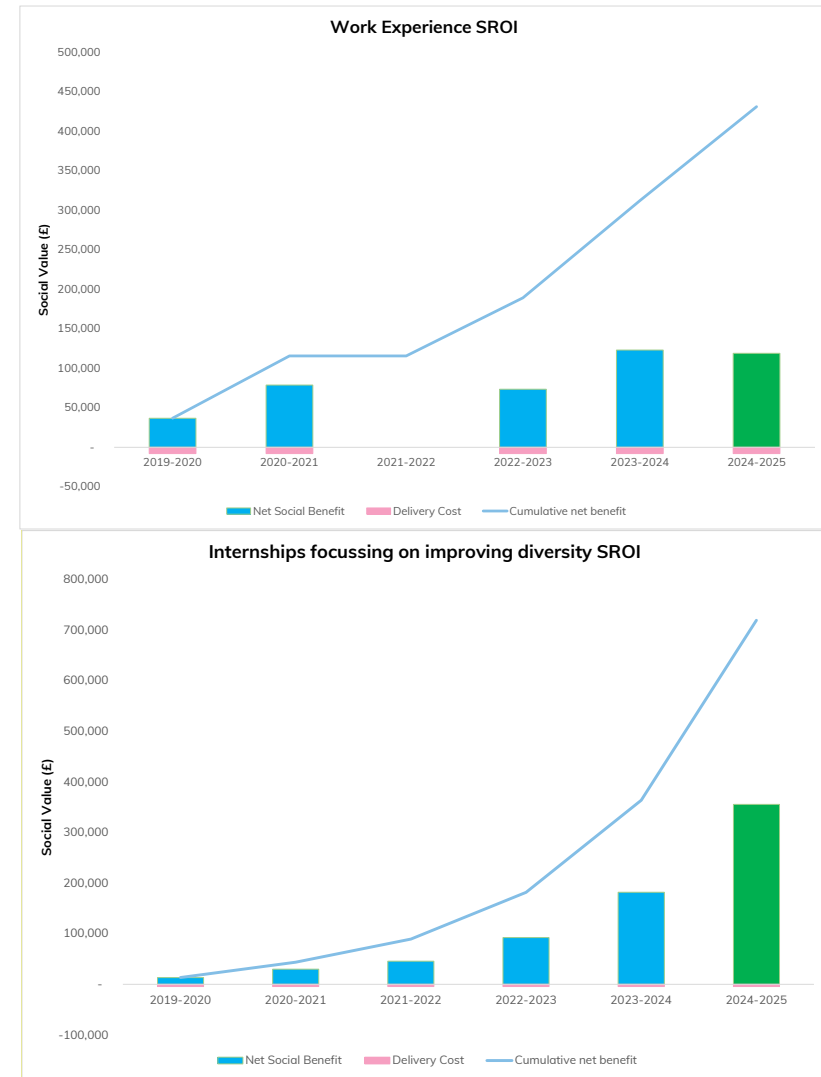
For our work experience project we estimate the main benefits will be an increase in future employment, wages and productivity for the students participating. We use research conducted by the DWP to estimate the monetary values to these benefits. We also understand work experience projects improve self-esteem and confidence, as well as a reduction in anti-social behaviour.

In conclusion, we provide an SROI of £4.67 to this social contract initiative. As with other educational initiatives, this project is enhanced by Pennon's 2030 targets but it is too soon to be able to quantify the additional benefit.

Employees for the future – Internships

This project is a collaboration with UWE to provide internships to students. These are run over the summer with a specific focus on improving workforce diversity.

This project realises similar benefits to the work experience project, where students should see an improved level of wellbeing, due to an improvement in employability, an increased level of self-esteem and confidence, as well as increased employability from the provision of experience in the workplace. We estimate an SROI for this project of £12.40 and this will also increase in due course with the Pennon plans.





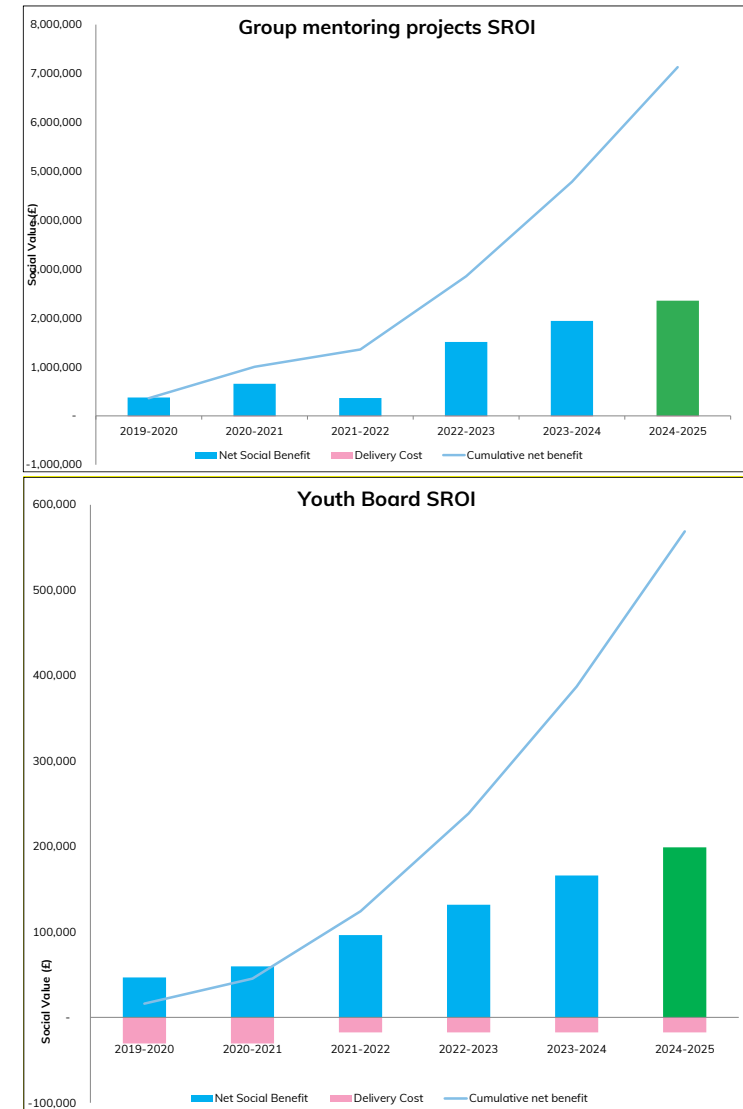
Employees for the Future - Mentoring

We have projected the SROI for this initiative using the same methodology as last year, but with updated cost data. The SROI is 95.24. This programme has continued this year but is being integrated with similar Pennon initiatives which will result in future accelerations and activity growth and an even higher SROI.

Employees for the future – Youth Board

Our Youth Board aims to bring the views of young adults (sixth formers) into our decision making as well as providing development opportunities and business experience for those involved. This project should provide benefits to the local community through increased confidence, a feeling of being part of the community, as well as direct support with CV guidance and improved employability.

This programme has been adopted and its application widened to all the supply areas of the Pennon group. This means that the local impact is reduced but the overall impact increased. When the scale of the future programmes is set it will be appropriate to update the statistics. We estimate the SROI is £3.41.





Community Engagement – Water Bar

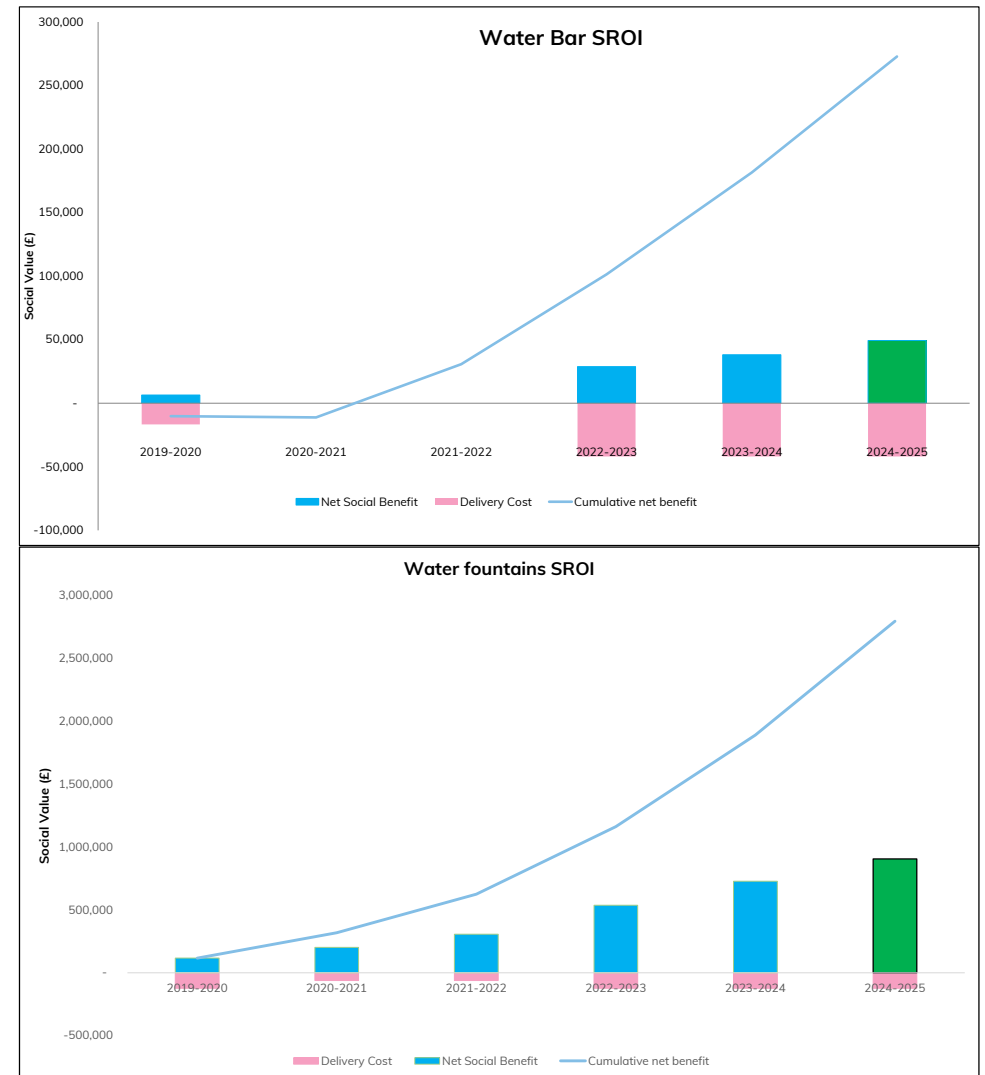
For 2021/22 we were unable to take our Water Bar on the road but were able to restart at several events in 2022. The use of the water bar has increased very significantly in 2023 to be back in line with the original plan. This is reflected in the increased return

This expanded activity has increased the gains in later years. Costs however have also increased substantially since the water bar requires a greater degree of repair and maintenance than expected. The SROI is now doing much better than break even at £1.81. Its popularity continues to increase at the events at which it is present.

Community Engagement – Water Fountains

Our social contract this year has helped us deliver an extra seven water fountains to the city of Bristol. The programme has been delayed by the need to repair and replace the installed water fountains which will be augmented later this year. The water fountains provide clean drinking water for free, help reduce plastic waste and promote healthy living.

However this is another area where maintenance has proved more costly and difficult to organise than expected. This has hampered growth of provision. We estimate the SROI of this project has been further reduced to £3.11.

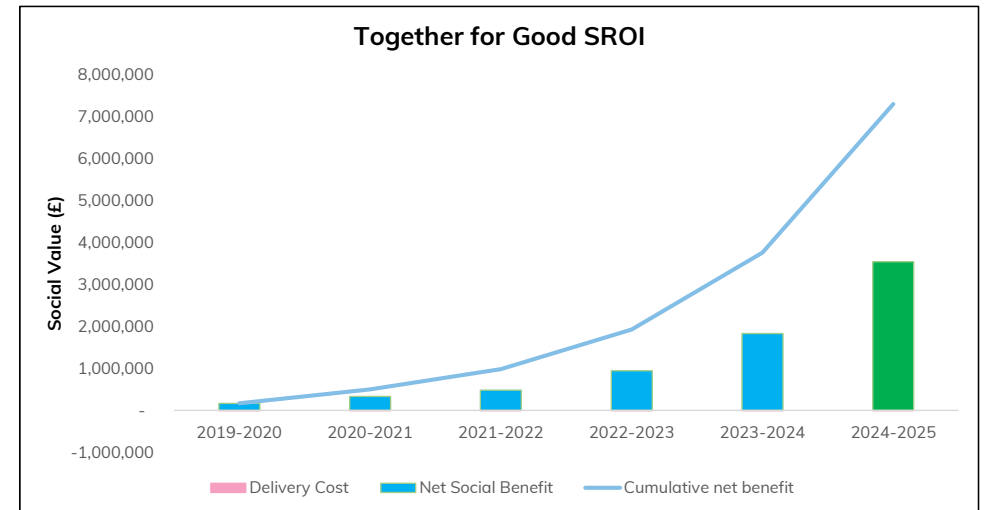




Community Engagement – Together 4 Good

Research shows that volunteering in the community can have profound effects, such as an increase in trust within the community, a boost in the feeling of safety and the wellbeing effects of giving back to your community. These positive effects, combined with the low cost of running this project, demonstrates why the SROI is relatively high to other projects. The project has also benefited from adding a new category of grant given to the winner of an occasional competition for the best proposal.

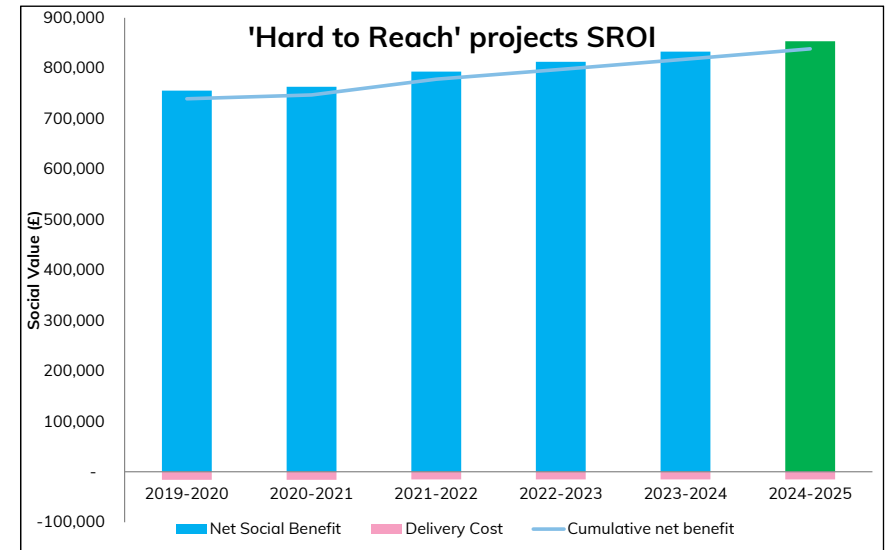
As such, we estimate this project provides an SROI of £49.60





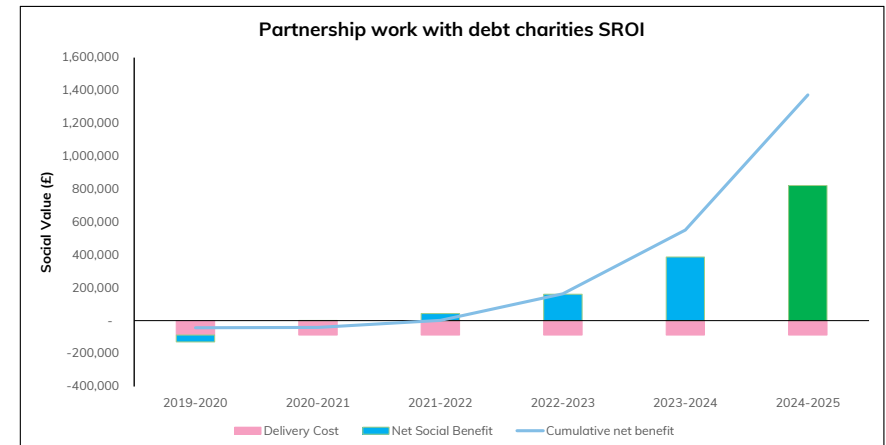
Vulnerability – Hard to Reach

Our Hard to Reach project is crucial for those that need our help the most. We work local charities, current funded partners and new charities to promote our lower tariffs and PSR to customers who we find harder to get the messages to. This project provides an SROI of £13.41.



Vulnerability – Debt Charities

This project aims to increase partnership work with debt charities, ensuring that customers receive full debt advice before receiving Assist, rather than just help on their water bill. We believe the benefits involved with this initiative includes a reduction in the risk of homelessness, an increased ability to pay water bills and a feeling of support for those vulnerable customers. We estimate the SROI for this project at £6.11.





Vulnerability – Outreach

Our outreach community events aim to reach out to customers in need of help with their bills and PSR. The benefits experienced with this project are similar to those experienced with our debt charities project. We estimate the SROI for Outreach to be £6.65.

Vulnerability – Crimestoppers

Our partnership with Crimestoppers aims to drive awareness of PSR. This helps promote the risk for fraud, across all channels and it is especially targeted at our more vulnerable customers. We estimate the SROI of this project to be £8.91.

