

Severn Trent Water

Stakeholder workshop reports

Waste Water stakeholder workshop

19th June 2012



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## 4. Introduction

### 4.1. Date and location

The Waste Water stakeholder workshop was held on June 19<sup>th</sup> 2012 at the Severn Trent Centre, Coventry.

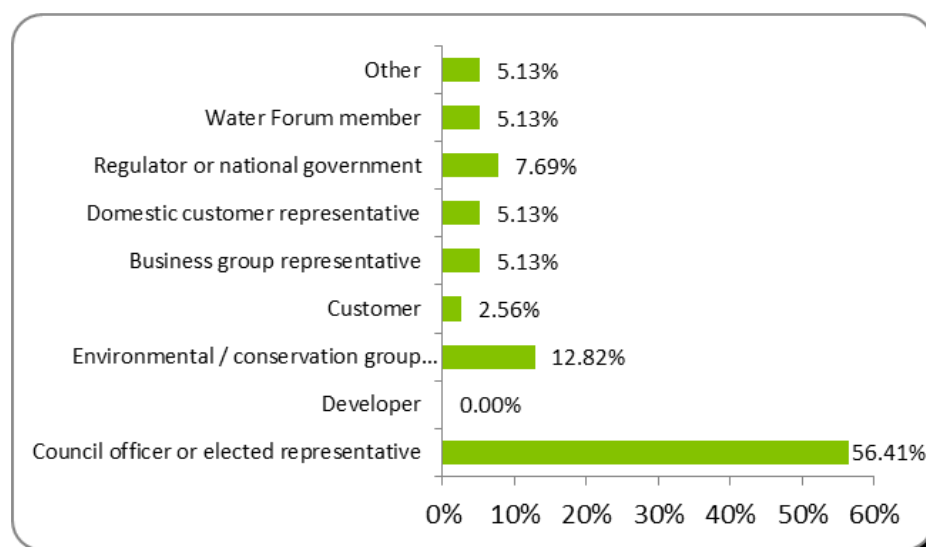
### 4.2. Attendees:

40 stakeholders attended the Waste Water workshop. Their details are shown below:

- Adam Lines - Regional Water Manager, Environment Agency
- Alan Roe - Environmental Planning Manager (Water Quality), Environment Agency
- Andrew Heath - Trent Rivers Trust project Officer, Trent Rivers Trust
- Andy Wallace - Flood Risk Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Chris Tandy - Vice Chairman, Ashby Civic Society
- Chris Parry - Principal Ecologist, Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust
- Christina Blackwell - Policy Manager, CC Water
- David Wurr - Committee Member, CC Water
- Dr Elise – Cartmell -, Cranfield Water Science Institute
- Fiona McIntosh - Water Management Officer, North Worcestershire Water Management
- Geoff Nickolds - Deputy Chair, Peak District National Park Authority
- Graham Hodgson - Group Engineer Civil Engineering, Dudley MBC
- Hannah O'Callaghan - Flood Risk Management Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Helen Sanderson - Emergency Planning Officer, NHS Coventry
- John Evens - Senior Engineer, Gedling Borough Council
- Jonathan McGuinness - Leicester City Council
- Graham Howard - SBWWI Chairman, Flex Seal/SBWWI
- Kerry Whitehouse - Drainage Engineer, Birmingham City Council
- Kevin Exley - Planning Policy Officer, South Derbyshire District Council

- Manoj Mistry - FRM/Drainage Project Manager, Coventry City Council
- Mark Holden-Brown - Team Leader, Derby City Council
- Martyn Hopkinson - Immediate Past Chairman, The Society of British Water & Wastewater Industries
- Martyn Wilson - Principal Planner, Worcestershire County Council (Strategic Planning)
- Mary Lucas - Environment Agency
- Matt Stomczyszyn - Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- Melanie Dinnis - Emergency Planning Officer, Birmingham City Council
- Neal Thomas - Project Manager, Solihull County Council
- Neil Oxby - Ashfield District Council
- Nick Tolley - Project Engineer, Derby City Council
- Nick Raycraft - Senior Drainage Engineer, Nottingham City Council
- Paul Mullord - UK Director, British Water
- Paul Tame - Regional Environment and Land Use Adviser, National Farmers Union
- Paul Price - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Paul Middleborough – Leader of Wychavon District Council
- Peter Dorans - Corporate Relations Manager, Wildlife Trusts
- Philip Thompson - Flood Risk Manager, Leicester City Council
- Philip Hulme - PR14 Manager, Environment Agency
- Steve Grebby - Policy Manager, CC Water
- Sumi Lai - Planning Officer, Bromsgrove District Council
- Suzanne Wykes - Directorate of Urban Environment, Stoke District Council

The split of stakeholders according to the type of organisation they were representing on the day is shown below:



### Severn Trent Water

- Simon Cocks - Director of Waste Water Services (host of the event)
- Neerja Upadhyay - Infrastructure Strategy Manager (presenter and expert on hand to answer questions)
- Kara Owens - Non-Infrastructure Strategy Manager (presenter and expert on hand to answer questions)
- Harriet Towler - Government and Stakeholder Engagement (organiser of the event)
- Bob Stear - General Manager of Planning & Performance Trent Water (expert on hand to answer questions)
- Malcolm Horne - Asset Creation General Manager for Sewerage (expert on hand to answer questions)
- Neil Corrigan - Regulatory and Business Strategy Manager (expert on hand to answer questions)
- Fay Bull - Modelling Specialist in Sewer Capacity (expert on hand to answer questions)
- Justin Bailey - Biosolids, Energy & Carbon Strategy Manager (expert on hand to answer questions)
- Tim Smith - Strategist for Flooding Defence (manning exhibition stands)
- Sarah Greenhalgh - Solution Manager (manning exhibition stands)
- Chris Griffey - Solution Engineer (manning exhibition stands)
- Dave Briffitt - Support Resource Manager (manning exhibition stands)

- Martin Singleton - Specialist for Contract Specifications (manning exhibition stands)
- Steve Wall - Compliance Manager (manning exhibition stands)
- Nigel Brailsford - Operational Area Manager (manning exhibition stands)
- Rob Wild - Process Design Team Leader (manning exhibition stands)
- Peter Sugden - Programme Manager (manning exhibition stands)
- Ian Hodgkiss - Solution Manager (manning exhibition stands)
- Leanne Chung - Strategy Technician for Infrastructure (manning exhibition stands)
- James Elmer - Compliance Technician (manning exhibition stands)
- Eleanor Reynolds - Programme Coordinator (manning exhibition stands)
- Paul Evans (manning exhibition stands)
- Chris Milner (manning exhibition stands)
- Vicky Levine (manning exhibition stands)
- Dean Smith (manning exhibition stands)
- Paul Hurcombe (manning exhibition stands)
- Mark Craig (manning exhibition stands)
- Andrea Wilson (manning exhibition stands)

### **Green Issues Communiqué**

- James Garland - Director (workshop facilitator)
- Sophia Goring – Account Director (workshop facilitator)
- Siobhan Lavelle - Senior Consultant (workshop facilitator)
- Victoria Cross - Director (workshop facilitator)
- Ben Johnson – Senior Account Manager (workshop facilitator)
- Laura Edwards - Account Executive (scribe)
- Farah Pasha - Account Executive (scribe)
- Fiona McAra - Executive (scribe)
- Andres Gassert – Account Executive (scribe)
- Debbie Fowler – Senior Account Executive (scribe)

## 5. Executive summary

The content of this report reflects discussions of a stakeholder workshop held on 19 June 2012. The comments made by stakeholders were in response to a facilitated discussion. They have been recorded by Green Issues Communiqué but are not verbatim, nor have they been directly attributed to participants. The comments made are not necessarily the views of Severn Trent Water.

The Executive Summary provides Green Issues Communiqué's overview of the discussions on the day and the outcome of the electronic voting.

### 5.1. Feedback from participants

- 30 of the 32 stakeholders who submitted their feedback stated that they had had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their views
- All stakeholders who attended the workshop and submitted their comments told us that they found the event to be 'useful' or 'very useful'
- None of the stakeholders who left comments said that they had found the event to be 'not useful'.
- 91% of stakeholders who submitted feedback after the event told us that we had covered the right topics on the day
- 32 of the 33 respondents who left their comments stated that we had provided enough information at the workshop
- 30 of the 32 stakeholders who responded to the question told us that they felt the manned exhibition stands added extra value to the event

### 5.2. Keeping our sewers working well (current priorities)

#### 5.2.1. Questions for discussion

- Q1. What are your views on our current approach?
- Q2. How can we work with other parties to help ensure our sewers work effectively?
- Q3. How should we manage previously private drains and sewers that have transferred into our ownership?

#### 5.2.2. Overview of comments made

- It was widely felt that sewer flooding is unacceptable. However, stakeholders generally believed that this issue would be impossible to eradicate completely
- Most stakeholders were of the view that a proactive approach ought to be adopted in order to minimise instances of sewer flooding. It was broadly felt that educating the

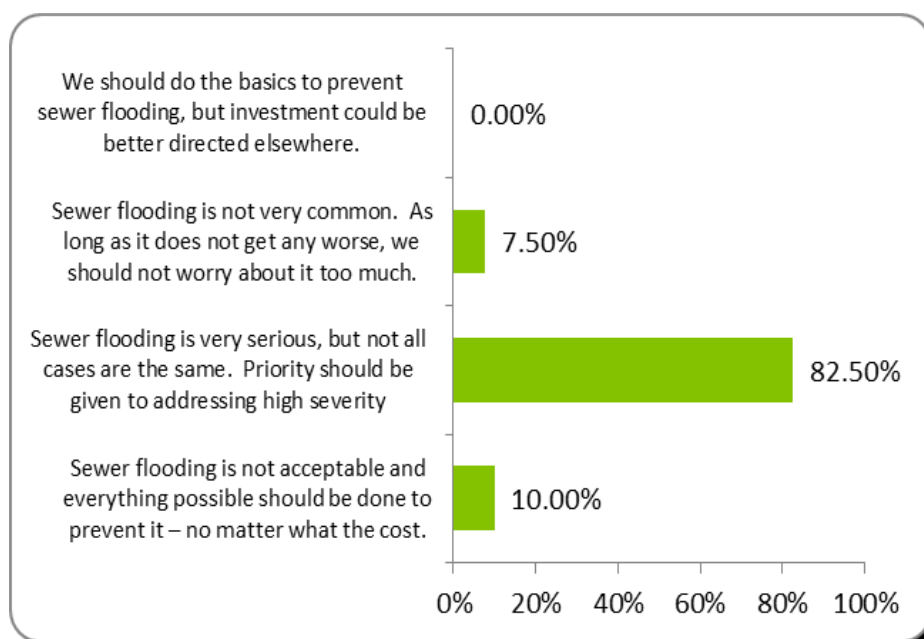


public was the best way to achieve this. Initiatives including advertising campaigns; reaching out to young people by visiting schools; and working with health visitors to engage with new mothers were suggested ways of helping to prevent the misuse of the sewerage system

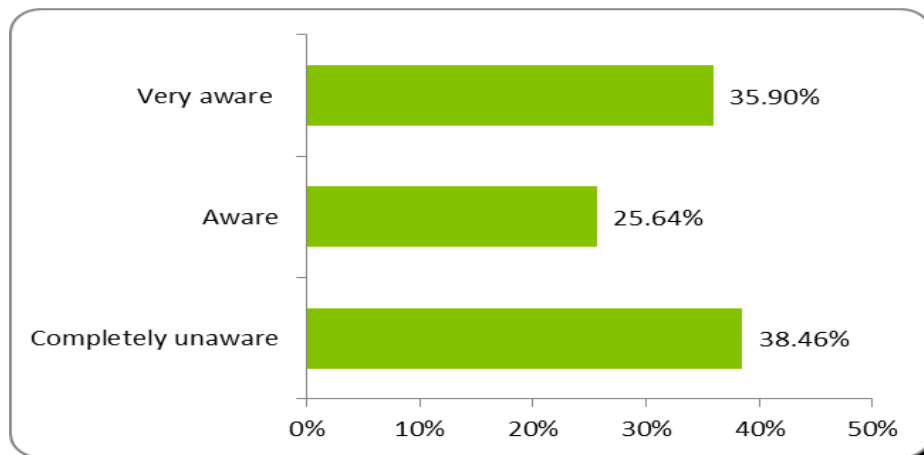
- It was felt that STW should work with local authorities to put pressure on businesses such as fast food outlets that are responsible for drain blockages, or at least to educate them on what is and what is not acceptable. Almost three quarters of stakeholders stated that they either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the view that the polluter should pay for sewer misuse
- Throughout the discussions stakeholders repeatedly commented they would like to see STW work better in partnership with local authorities, land owners, agencies and the business community. This was a common theme and was endorsed by the vast majority of stakeholders in attendance
- There was a certain amount of criticism of STW, particularly from local authority representatives, for how the company deals with incoming calls, especially those relating to flooding incidents. The point was made by a number of stakeholders that STW ought to focus on making it easier for councils to contact the company and it was suggested that giving each council a single point of contact would be a good starting point as a way of addressing this issue
- It was broadly felt by stakeholders in attendance that STW should strive to raise its profile. There were a number of instances where the good work being carried out by the company had not been effectively communicated to customers. Giving more information on customers' bills was put forward as one way the company could better engage with its customers

### 5.2.3. Outcome of electronic voting

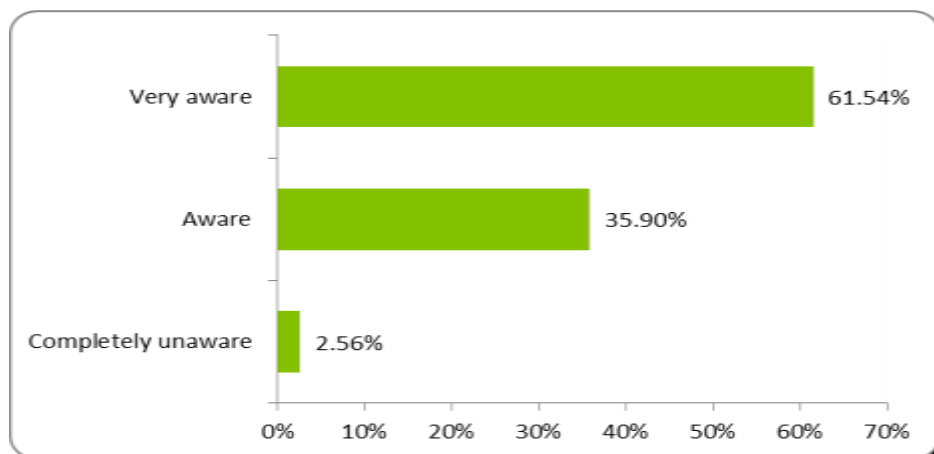
- Q4: Which of the following best describes your views on sewer flooding?



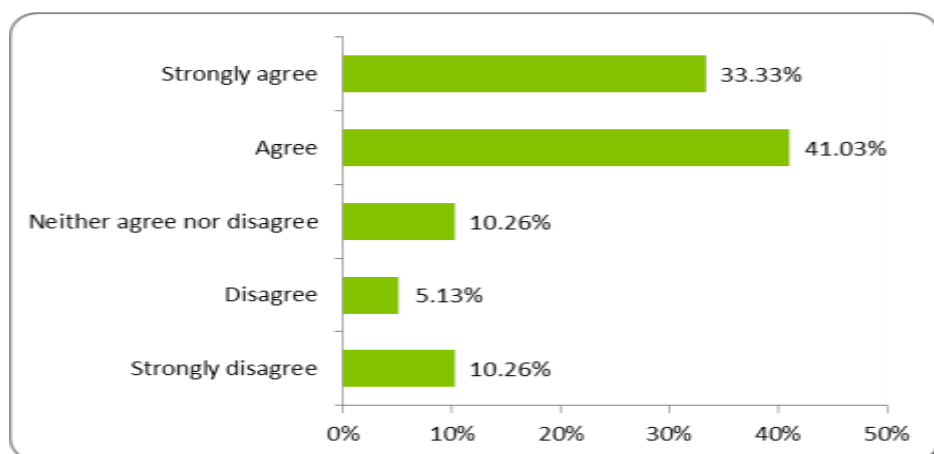
- Q5: Before this session how aware were you that the DG5 sewer flooding register was an historic incident register and not a 'at risk' register?



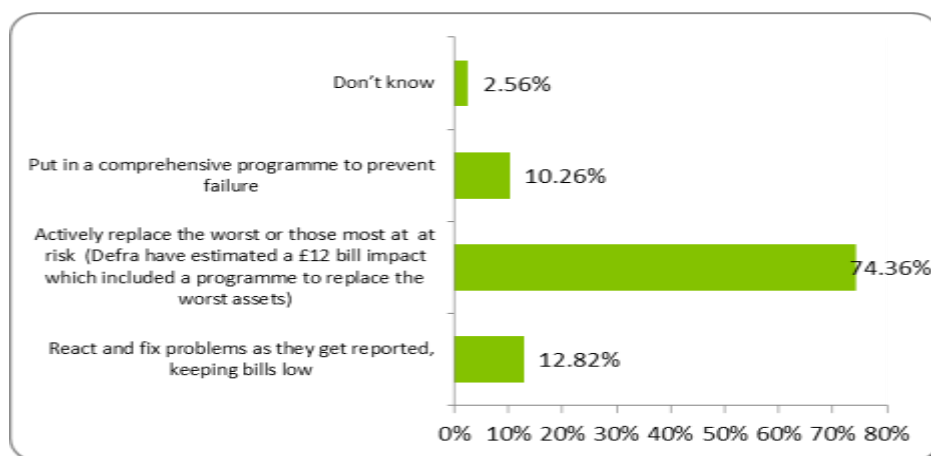
- Q6: Were you aware of the impact sewer misuse has on sewer flooding and pollutions?



- Q7: To what extent do you agree with this statement? *"The 'polluter pays' concept should apply to the establishments responsible for sewer misuse"*



- Q8: How should we bring our recently transferred sewers (37,000km) up to standard?



### 5.3. Keeping our sewers working well (future priorities)

#### 5.3.1. Questions for discussion

- Q9: Do you think moving towards a sewer flooding risk based approach (balancing incident frequency and consequence) is appropriate?
- Q10: How far and how fast should we go with reducing sewer flooding and pollutions?
- Q11: How quickly should we replace our sewer network
- Q12: How can we find the right balance between taking action ourselves to maintain and improve our sewerage network, and seeking to change the behaviour of others?

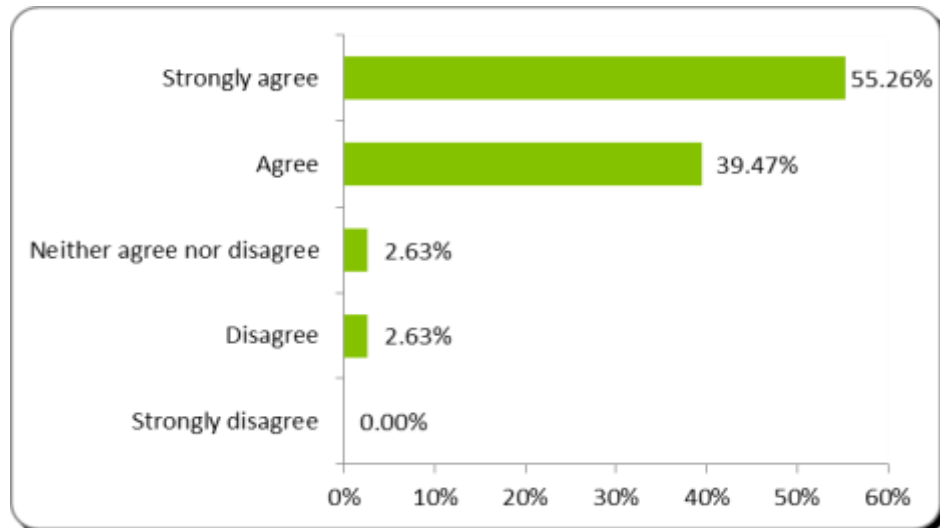
#### 5.3.2. Overview of comments made

- Although the majority of stakeholders were of the view that STW should move towards a risk based approach to sewer flooding (when asked to vote on this question around 95% of stakeholders 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with this approach), the point was made that more information needs to be given to how the company would identify those most at risk.
- It was felt by many that STW should seek to improve the quality of its data with regard to the condition of its assets as that this information would help the company make better informed decisions about asset replacement
- Most stakeholders present were of the view that STW should aim to resolve the most severe internal flooding in the short-term
- It was widely agreed that STW should accelerate the pace in which it aims to tackle sewer flooding and pollutions. Stakeholders considered that this could come at a cost and many supported incremental increases to bills rather than a sharp spike in the future
- Many stakeholders raised the issue of future pressure on the sewerage system that would result from new housing developments. While local authority representatives cited the pressure they are under to meet housing targets, a number of stakeholders felt that STW should be more active in opposing new developments in unsuitable

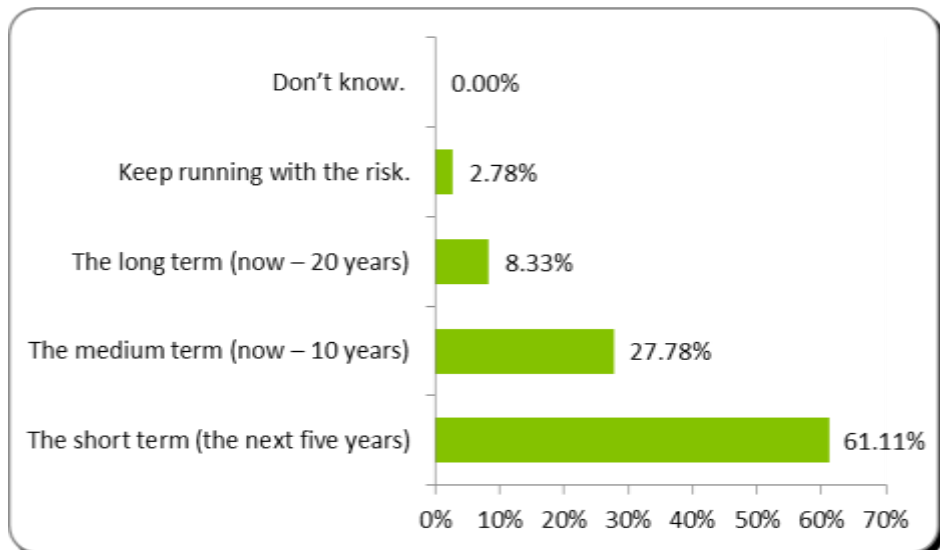
locations. It was also felt that STW should put influence developers to incorporate SUDS in new developments where possible

### 5.3.3. Outcome of electronic voting

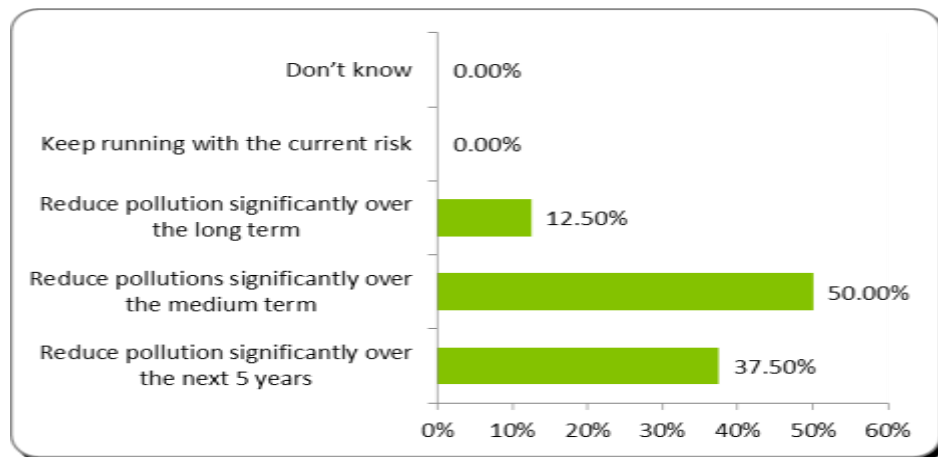
- Q13: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *"STW should adopt a risk based approach to sewer flooding"*



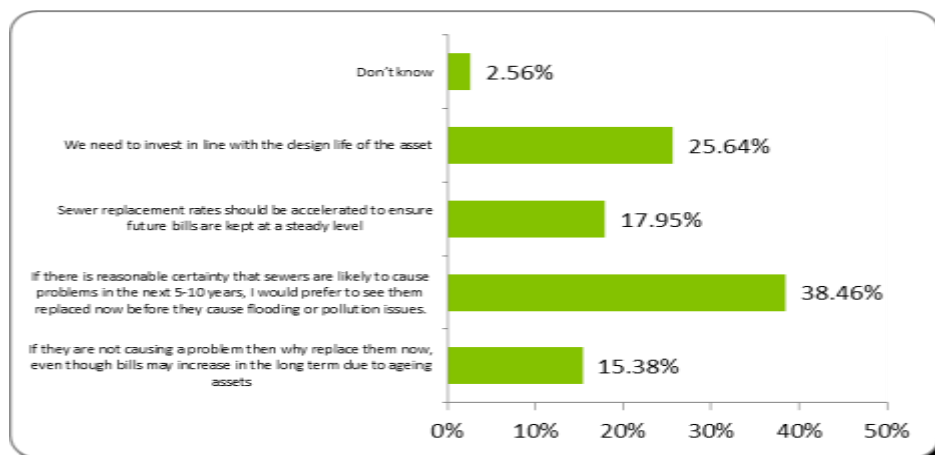
- Q14: How quickly should we aim to resolve the most severe internal flooding?



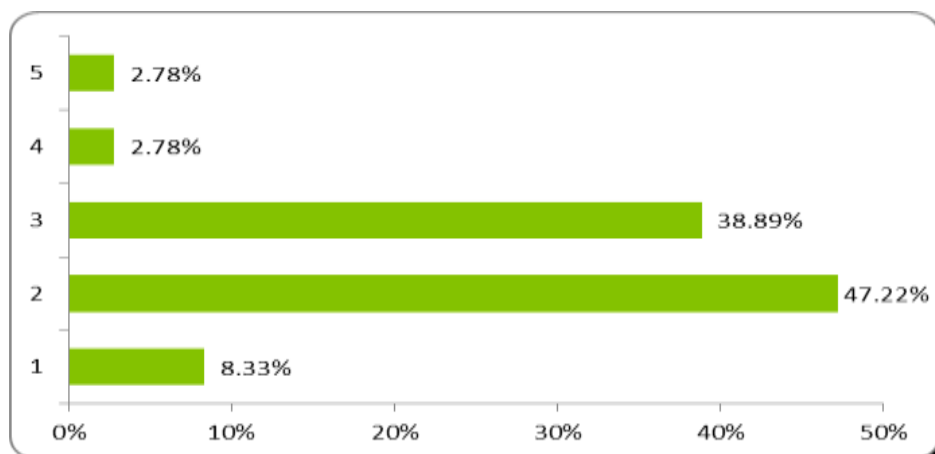
- Q15: How quickly should we aim to address the risk of pollutions?



- Q16: On the basis that over 70% of our sewers are older than 50 years, and will need replacing, which of the following statements best represents your views?



- Q17: What do you think the right balance is between Severn Trent investing in its assets and all stakeholders making changes to control issues at source?
- Nb: 1 = 'STW led action with high degree of certainty, but higher cost' and 4 = 'Third party behavioural change with lower certainty of outcome, but lower cost'. 5 = 'Don't know'



## 5.4. Ensuring healthy and sustainable rivers (current priorities)

### 5.4.1. Questions for discussion

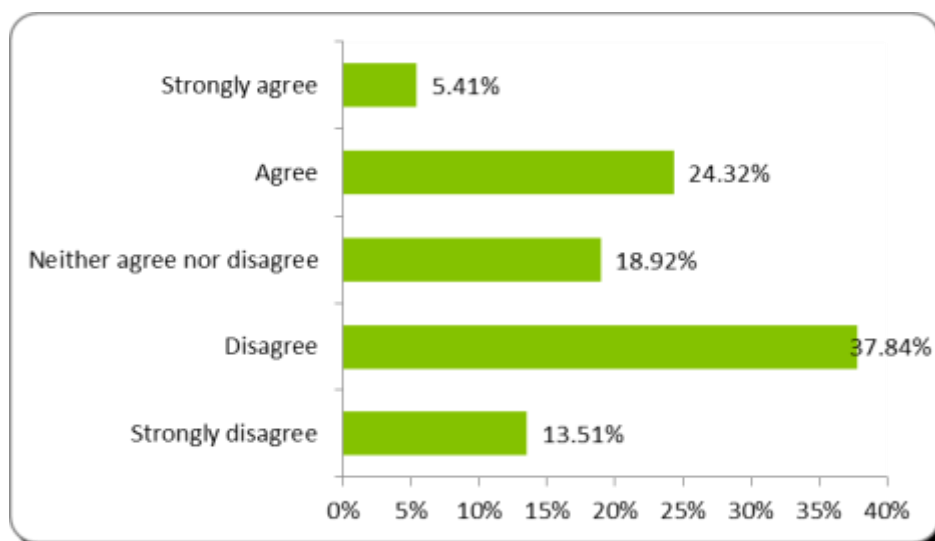
- Q18: Were you aware of the improvements we have been making?
- Q19: What do you think of our current strategy and approach to investment?
- Q20: Do you think our current investment approach is sustainable?
- Q21: Do you think our strategy currently focuses on the right areas?

### 5.4.2. Overview of comments made

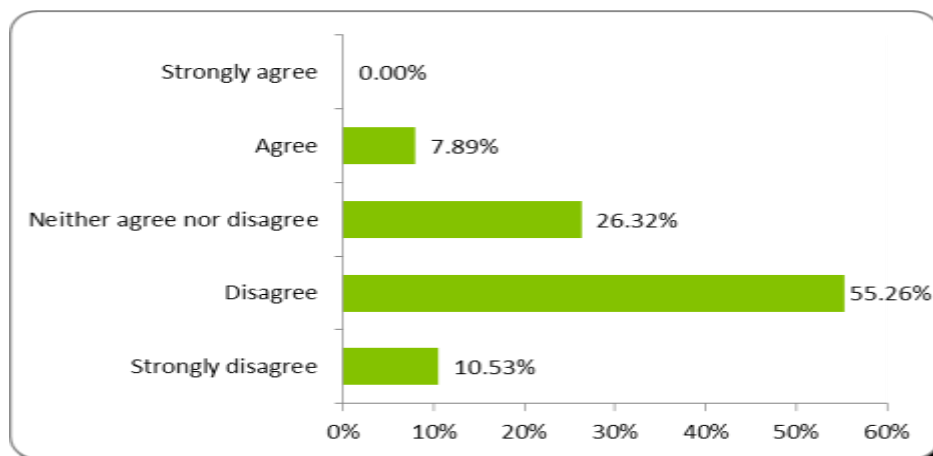
- There was a general lack of awareness about the work STW is currently doing to ensure healthy and sustainable rivers. It was commented that the company should work harder to publicise this good work
- There was a feeling that pollution incidents need to be tackled at source and that STW should work more closely with landowners to make this happen
- Most stakeholders felt that implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD) would present a huge challenge for STW and that this could only be achieved through effective partnership working with a range of organisations
- It was recognised that the WFD would have considerable implications for farmers and would necessitate them altering their practices considerably in some cases
- Opinion was split amongst the group on the issue of whether or not STW was currently investing enough money to improve river water quality. Half of those present were of the view that this was not the case

### 5.4.3. Outcome of electronic voting

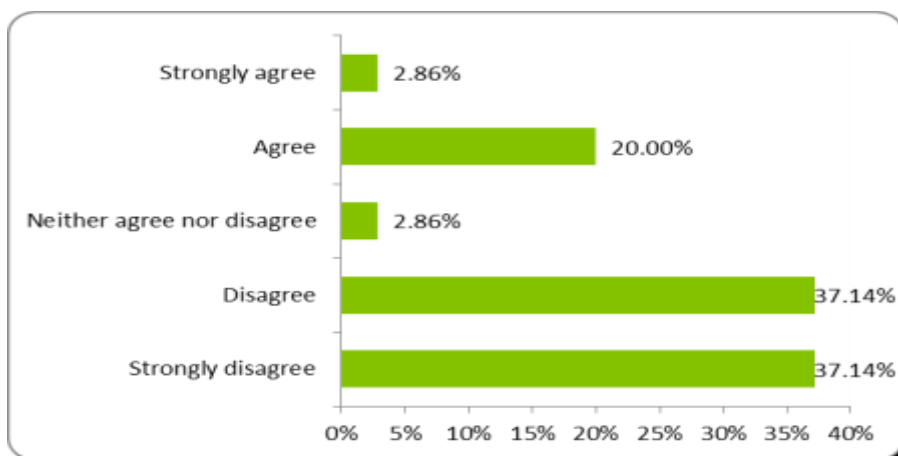
- Q22: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *"We are currently investing enough money to improve river water quality"*



- Q23: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "We currently have the right balance of investment between our different assets to improve river water quality"



- Q24: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "STW should focus on its own assets rather than catchment solutions"



## 5.5. Ensuring healthy and sustainable rivers (future priorities)

### 5.5.1. Questions for discussion

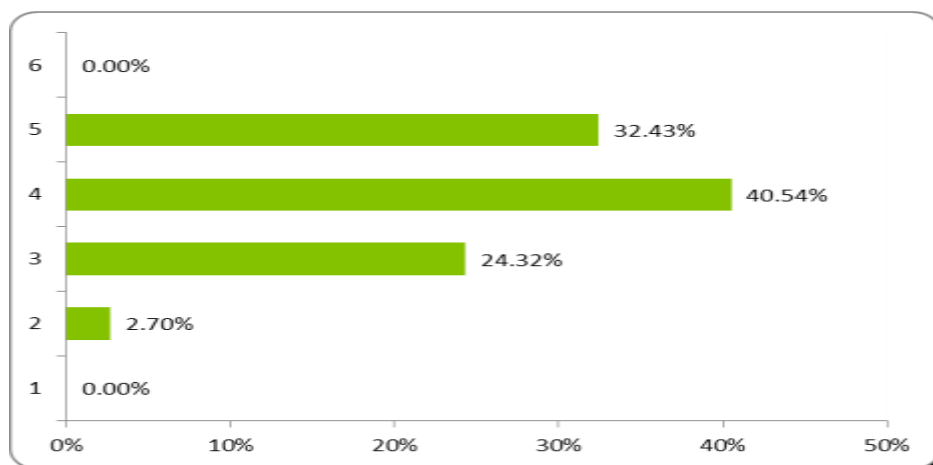
- Q25: What do you think of our approach to building our business plan in relation to how we are addressing the Water Framework Directive?
- Q26: What levels of improvement would you want to see between 2015-2020? And then 2020-2025?
- Q27: What do you think Severn Trent's role is? What is the balance between us and others? How should we measure our contribution?
- Q28: Where do you think we should we focus our efforts? E.g. by Geography, by multi benefit?

### 5.5.2. Overview of comments made

- Almost three quarters of stakeholders believed that STW should focus on catchment solutions rather than its own assets
- There was no consensus about what the balance between the contribution of STW and others should be, but many stakeholders felt STW should be taking a leadership role
- Most stakeholders were of the view that STW should seek to learn from the practices of other water companies and should also invest in research and development and the trialling of innovative technologies in order to meet future challenges such as the WFD
- In order to ensure healthy and sustainable rivers, stakeholders stated that they would like to see a long-term strategic approach but that STW should nevertheless aim to tackle 'quick and easy wins' first
- Although there was acceptance that bills may need to increase in the future to finance environmental improvements, the point was made that this would put pressure on low income families
- Most stakeholders shared the view that STW should aim to focus its future investment in areas where these measures would impact the highest number of customers
- Electronic voting suggested there was strong support for STW's plan to include a programme of environmental improvements based on best available assumptions.

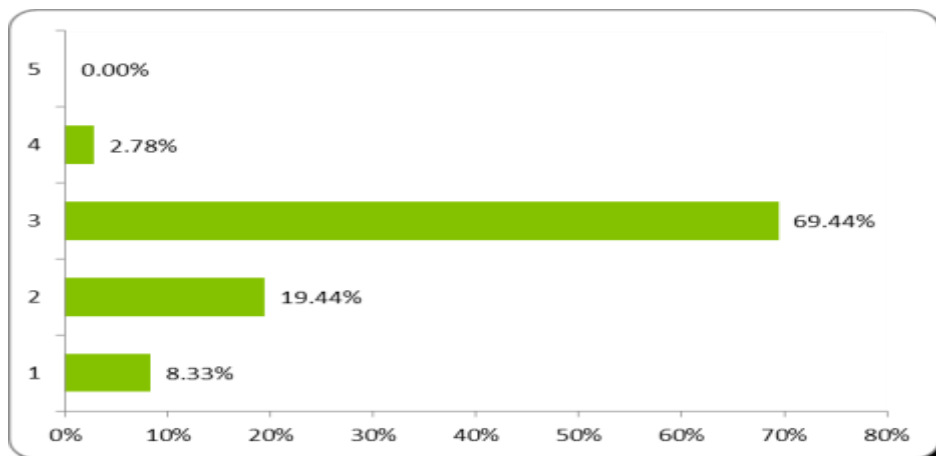
### 5.5.3. Outcome of electronic voting

- Q29: How much progress should Severn Trent make towards its share of achieving Good status between 2015 and 2020?
- *Where on the following scale would you be?*
- Nb. 1 = No progress and 5 = resolve as much as is technically feasible. 6 = Don't know

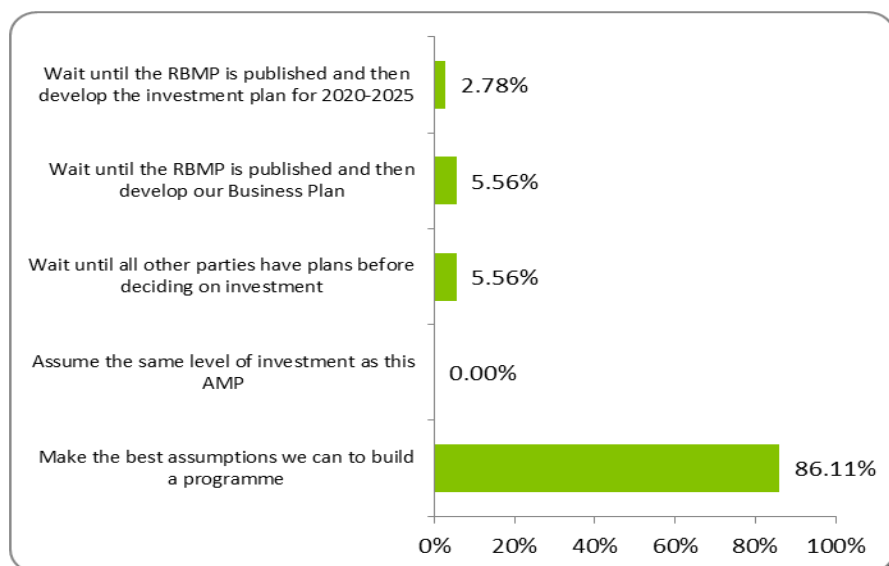




- Q30: The 2010-15 river quality improvement programme added £9 to bills. *What level of further addition to bills do you think is appropriate?*
  - 1 = Little or no change in river quality – less than a further £9 added to the bill
  - 2 = Similar improvement in river quality – around £9 added to bills
  - 3 = Significant improvement in river quality – around £18 added to bills
  - 4 = The impact on the bill doesn't matter as long as we meet the standards
  - 5 = Don't know



- Q31: Our environmental programme will not be agreed until 2015. We need to consult on our business plan from April 2013. Which of the following options would you recommend?



## 6. Keeping our sewers working well (Current priorities)

### 6.1. Q1. What are your views on our current approach?

**Table 1**

- A conservation group representative asked *'what is the size of a current bill?'*
- STW answered it is roughly £327
- A council officer felt the return period from STW is low as customers could have their homes flooded more than STW has predicted and figures are not always updated to reflect the current situation. S/he highlighted the point customers do not always report instances of flooding as they may choose to clean up the problem themselves
- STW explained flooding levels and expectations
- An environmental group representative stated *'STW fixing a problem when an asset fails is not the best way forward'*. S/he was of the opinion that *'prevention is better than cure'* and this should be the way forward as, in the long-term, money will be saved as a result
- An environmental group representative asked the question is STW just reactive even after flooding has occurred in an area?
- A council officer also made the point that *'not all STW customers report flooding due to a stigma and insurance implications'*. S/he felt STW needs to be more proactive and should do things such as door-knocking in potential flood areas and working with local communities to identify and deal with potential problems

**Table 2**

- A council officer was of the view that STW had made a good start and that *'operation is what matters'*
- An environmental group representative stated that the incidence of flooding was *'plateauing'* and STW should look at the reason for flooding problems. S/he considered that flooding problems were mostly due to blockages, so STW should look at pollution incidents trends and the causes of blockages. S/he questioned whether enough was being spent on sewer maintenance, adding that since 2008 there had been an increase in Category 3 incidents, which from his / her point of view was *'not good'* and asked *'is the current approach working?'*
- An environmental group representative commented that, as the last few years had been very dry, there must be another reason for the increase in blockage related

incidents and therefore the last couple of years were *'not reflective of what is going to happen in future'*

- A council officer recommended that STW improves progress in surface drains cleansing as surface water flooding was key cause of complaint from consumers to local councils. S/he considered that STW progress in this area was *'imperceptible'* and councils ultimately needed help from STW to reduce the impact on their staff and funding
- A business group representative commented that farmland does get flooded with sewage and farmers' crops suffer from overflow of sewer pipes. S/he asked STW if it's *'public education campaigns were effective?'*
- A council officer advised that in order to be effective, education campaigns had to be *'concentrated'* by specific area *'to notice any benefit'*
- A council officer asked STW what campaigns were being mounted to educate the community
- STW explained what its currently doing
- A council officer observed that flooding was *'impossible to eradicate'* and recommended that STW does an appraisal as it was a *'risk component'*. S/he added, however, that this was not solely STW's responsibility, but also that of other partnerships and authorities, who should look at *'different ways of dealing'* with the problem
- A council officer opined that *'collaborative working was good'* and that his / her council would like to see an agreement with STW covering things such as cleansing sewers, surface water problems on highways; s/he pointed out they could *'only do a certain amount of work'* using public funds, which was *'not helpful to the community'*, whereas more collaborative working with STW would *'better for the community, STW and us'*
- A council officer commented that that *'when things go wrong on a large scale it's very bad'* and this was particularly true about flooding issues. S/he advised that STW should determine *'what risk is acceptable to people'* and *'look at where the level is at with resilience measures'* as it was *'important to get the balance right'*
- A council officer pointed out that flooding might be due to river courses, in which case it would be the responsibility of the flood authorities and Environment Agency rather than STW
- A council officer observed that s/he had seen STW's investment in cleansing decreasing and *'moved to glory stuff so it was good to see it come back'* but expressed concern about some of STW's ways of managing surface water sewers where it was *'putting maintenance and management into the hands of the private developers'* and saying *'this is not my responsibility'*. S/he was of the view that this approach of *'categorisation rather than dealing with the problem'* was *'very worrying'*
- A customer representative reported that research into customer reactions showed that *'to be flooded was unacceptable'* and stated that this should be a key priority for STW. S/he added that each year around Christmas his / her organisation run a *'big campaign'*

*to educate customers about the hazards of putting fats down drains and we work with STW'*

- A council officer pointed out that *'we missed out over the last 10 years'* putting waste disposal into resilience measures, for example by providing customers with cheap disposal units; adding that *'consumers think it's acceptable to put fat in a waster or compost.'* S/he was of the view that it should be the joint responsibility of all the authorities to carry out a joint campaign and that STW could *'tie in to this'*
- A customer representative member made the point that customers were already used to putting other household waste into different areas
- A council officer commented on the subject of fat interception, stating that *'maybe STW should campaign to change building regulations regarding waste'*
- A council officer stated that STW should engage with their [the council's] development team as customers were not using fat traps and this was an *'enforcement issue'* for STW
- A council officer asked STW if this should be part of an education and awareness programme; commenting that the *'main steer for local authorities is currently development and anything else tends to be avoided due to funding issues'*

### Table 3

- A customer representative stated that STW is investing a low figure *'considering the turbulent future'*
- A council officer commented that s/he would like to see greater investment in assets in his / her city. The city council wants 1 in 100 year flooding, therefore investment needed in the sewer system to achieve this
- A customer representative said that STW should spend more on future assets. STW is currently spending money responding to problems so should invest now prevent them which will save money. In the long term s/he added STW should make them efficient as flooding is caused by combined sewers so this is a priority area
- An environmental group representative observed that STW must stop the water getting in homes from the beginning and should prevent the leakages. However, given the age of the assets it must be difficult
- A council officer remarked that STW should look at planning issues but commented that *'STW is limited to what they can insist on'*. S/he considered water recycling to be good and reduces the risk of flooding. However, water recycling is a problem during storms as it contributes to surface run off and therefore is not recognised by the Environment Agency as good form of drainage
- A council officer asked is the investment covering the pollution or the housing flooding? S/he asked whether STW was investing in sewers and preventing foul water entering homes

- A customer pondered whether with the continuing growth in population, spikes of rainfall and flooding due to monsoon type incidents STW needs to invest to maintain the level they currently work at. *'The current level is acceptable now but STW needs to invest to make sure it doesn't deteriorate'*
- A council officer agreed that greater investment was needed in sewers

#### Table 4

- Everyone agreed that sewage flooding is generally unacceptable
- A conservation group representative felt that it was unrealistic to expect STW to eradicate the problem altogether but equally that more can be done to further understand and alleviate the problem to minimise its impact. S/he said *'I don't think anyone would mind paying £1- 2 more towards their bill to help achieve this'*
- An environmental group representative stated that STW needs to move to a more *'risk based approach'*
- A domestic customer representative added that STW needs to draw a distinction between *'sewage incidents that any system will not be able to cope with against other incidents that can be realistically avoided'*
- An environmental group representative felt that drawing this distinction could help form part of a risk based approach
- A conservation group representative made the point that the rest of the group should also consider the balance of cost and certainty of outcome. S/he said *'STW is not going to have an infinite amount of money so the cost of all this has to be taken into consideration'*
- A council officer representative felt strongly that it would be unfair to charge customers most affected by sewage problems more than the rest and that additional costs should be shared rather than burdened on one set of people
- An environmental group representative said *'why should I pay more just because I happen to live in an area that happens to be more affected by sewage problems when it's STW job to manage its' assets'*
- A council officer stated that STW relies too heavily on the DG5. S/he felt that STW needs to base its approach on more comprehensive data. S/he said *'the problem you're trying to solve isn't supported by the data you're capturing'*
- The majority of the group agreed that looking retrospectively is the best way decide the areas where future capital should be invested
- A conservation group representative stated that generally, water companies tend to approach such issues in a reactive rather than proactive way and felt that *'that's where the regulator can constrain the industry'*
- A council officer commented that STW should consider their combined sewage overflows when considering planning applications for brownfield sites and should assess

the capacity of these more carefully. S/he explained that '*at a higher level, there is an understanding of what should be done but this hasn't translated to a more grassroots level and those that approve discharges don't seem to be fully aware of what they need to do*'

- An environmental group representative made the point that current investment is not enough and added that '*today's minor incidents are tomorrow's major incidents*'
- A conservation group representative agreed that all resources needed to tackle sewage issues need to be as effective as possible
- Another conservation group representative asked for an example of what STW would classify as an '*incident*'
- This question was answered by a Severn Trent representative
- A council officer asked how cross connections are managed as s/he felt that this was something of a '*no man's land*' and areas that suffer from neglect
- A Severn Trent representative responded to this query

**Table 5**

- A council officer stated that s/he doesn't know how to handle flooding. His / her council have not been prepared to deal with such situations and s/he feels that they need more information and training on it
- A council officer agreed that they don't know which organisation is responsible for flooding
- A council officer stated that s/he would like to be able to contact a STW specialist on this issue, not only to be better informed but to know someone who is a specialist who can deal with these issues
- Another council officer stated that s/he did not know who to contact at STW. All council officers agreed that this is a great flaw and that STW must be responsible in providing this service since the company's future is at stake in these situations as well
- Furthermore, all council officers pointed out that STW needs someone that is constantly reporting on issues relating to flooding
- A customer stated that people don't want to report many of the problems because they are afraid that construction work might need to be done in their homes. They are reluctant to report flooding for these reasons
- A council officer mentioned the problem with Victorian buildings in his area and s/he said understands the problems that this infrastructure is causing to STW
- A customer representative stated that STW needs to '*look at the demographics more carefully*'. STW needs to have a look at sociological and economic factors: diversity of people, cultural and social economic differences in Britain. After doing this, STW can direct its policies and projects according to this information. The income of the people

per capita can help STW in raising bills in those areas where people are earning more money. S/he stated that it is important to show the reason why STW needs to raise its prices

- An environmental group member disagreed with this. S/he stated that *'no one will like to pay more'*, regardless of where the money is going to or the reason for it
- All council officers agreed with the comment in relation to demographics and argued that demographics is a key aspect for Severn Trent

## 6.2. Q2. How can we work with other parties to help ensure our sewers work effectively?

**Table 1**

- A council officer commented on the grouped incident table produced by STW and pointed out that STW should *'break down the topic of incidents where assets and equipment fail'*. S/he acknowledged that STW is responsible for ensuring assets are well managed and do not collapse but recognised the company is not always to blame when an incident occurs due to customers misusing the system. S/he said educating customers is important but STW cannot always prevent blockages occurring
- An environmental group representative asked *'how are the assets maintained and kept in a good condition?'* S/he felt blockages can occur due to misuse by customers but also because the assets are not maintained well enough to cope with the problem of misuse
- A council officer commented it is *'extremely difficult'* to trace the person/household who has misused the sewer system
- An environmental group representative agreed with the view that individuals are misusing sewers but pointed out that *'STW shouldn't pass the blame to a third party'*. Instead, STW should work with partners and customers to educate them about the effects of sewer misuse
- A council officer agreed that education is key and educating children in schools is essential to ensure they know care of sewers is understood from a young age. *'STW needs to plant the seeds for the younger generation's'* he added
- All agreed STW needs to engage with schools, Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups on this issue
- A conservation group representative said STW could link up with more groups and sectors as there is a need for many different companies/organisations to *'unite as a team'* as the environment will benefit in the long term
- An environmental group representative commented that s/he would like to see the Murky Water Project working with STW and other environmental groups. S/he questioned whether STW can do more to work with organisations and asked *'is there a need for them to do so?'* S/he felt the answer was *'yes'*. S/he was also of the view that *'trends are going the wrong way'* and STW needs to be more involved across all sectors

of asset maintenance, future decisions and education. S/he added *'asset maintenance is everyone's problem'* not just a problem for STW and environmental groups

- A conservation group representative stated there is a need for the customers to be informed of initiatives being offered from STW on a regular basis. S/he commented on the *'Birmingham Nature Environmental project which is working to identify ways in which the local environment can be improved'*. S/he stated there are currently 12 schemes which have been set up and many organisations have signed up to them. S/he went on to say STW hasn't yet signed up to the scheme and should
- An environmental group representative pointed out those *'non domestic fast food outlets can join the fat oil and greases forum'*. S/he commented the *'stakeholder foot print is enormous and the impact this is having on the environment needs to be addressed and tackled through education'*
- A council officer commented on the Surface Water Management plan and felt STW has *'missed opportunities'* to work with local communities to tackle problems

**Table 2**

- An environmental group representative commented that SUDS were interesting as the key obstacle to them was who owns and maintains them. S/he went on to ask the table if SUDS were to be used as an alternative measure to upgrading pipes (which was a big capital scheme)
- A business group representative stated that it was a *'disaster waiting to happen if SUDS were not put in more developments'*, adding that *'somebody has to be made responsible'*
- A council officer was of the opinion that the October 2012 *'will be a milestone'* in the SUDS consultation report and that the DEFRA response *'will be to encourage developers to take more responsibility'*

**Table 3**

- A council officer stated that this question depends on the area and the party. Businesses have good access and a good relationship with STW whereas a customer might have a problem with interfacing. STW sometimes has trouble accepting responsibility and tends to pass on the blame
- An environmental group representative asked *'are nappies a major problem?'* S/he asked *'couldn't STW target some areas and educate the public or ask nappy makers to make them more biodegradable'*
- A council officer volunteered that STW has supplied fat traps before which is good. S/he commented *'blocked sewers are a problem throughout the country though and water companies should combine together and fund a television campaign to educate people'*
- An environmental group representative agreed that there is a lack of education as no one knows they're doing the wrong thing by putting products down the drain



- A customer representative asked if STW can *'trap the guilty'* so the company can hold people responsible for their own waste-causing blockages. She added *'it works for businesses but STW does not hold private properties accountable'*
- An environmental group representative countered that food waste is also blocking the sewers up, as some food isn't biodegradable, which is a problem

**Table 4**

- Everyone agreed that STW should be doing more to work with third party stakeholders
- A conservation group representative felt that water companies and local authorities were not doing enough to punish those that abuse the sewage system
- A council officer agreed that *'this has been a persistent problem and it doesn't seem to be getting any better'*
- An environmental group representative explained that s/he would like to see STW to lead by example on this matter
- A conservation group representative felt that the way in which the sewage system is abused is more of a *'broader cultural issue'*
- A council officer agreed that there is *'an educational and an accountability side'* to the problem
- A domestic customer representative commented that *'where there is clear evidence of abuse, those responsible must be prosecuted'*
- A council officer felt that a lot of sewage risks could derive from a myriad of similar sources and that STW might be able to prosecute on some occasions, but overall felt that a pedagogical approach would be more effective in tackling this issue
- Another council officer commented that *'the system should be hydraulically maintained by STW as a rule'*
- A conservation group representative felt that the responsibility of maintenance has to be clear in the formulation of new systems and that if this is not done this will create more problems

**Table 5**

- An environmental group representative stated that in some cases, STW will have to work with partners as it will not have a choice. However, STW needs to continue in taking a leading position in its current projects
- A council officer stated that STW needs to raise more awareness on the importance of water
- All council officers agreed with this and stated that there is an education problem

- All members agreed with this and said that the problem of education is so hard to tackle that it will be impossible for STW to *'actually do something about it'*
- A customer representative said that *'people do not abuse the sewage system on purpose; they do it because they are not aware of the problems'*. STW needs *'a constant campaign with a constant message'*
- A council officer stated *'we need to make people aware of the cause and effect of this situation'*

### 6.3. Q3. How should we manage previously private drains and sewers that have transferred into our ownership?

**Table 1**

- General consensus across the table was everyone was aware of the challenges STW now faces relating to the new ownership of sewers and drains
- A council officer was of the opinion that STW needs to start being *'proactive instead of reactive'*
- An environmental group representative agreed but felt STW needs to *'gather more information first before they can start being pro active'*. S/he felt all assets should be treated the same despite their age and cost
- A council officer agreed and said STW is *'facing a big challenge'*
- A council officer asked if *'having a headquarters in Coventry was a bad move for STW?'* S/he was of the opinion that when there were more regional offices, STW played a *'more active role in the community'*. S/he felt STW have become a *'faceless'* organisation and that the company needs to improve its call centres as it is very hard to speak to the relevant people
- A council officer agreed that STW have become *'faceless and are hard to contact'*
- A council officer commented s/he would like to see more links between the appropriate contact teams. S/he felt that, although his / her organisation does have a point of contact s/he would like to have another one for smaller less technical questions/enquiries
- A council officer stated it is difficult to report a leak as the call centres do not know the area and *'sometimes request the postcode which is not always known by the caller'*
- A business group representative was of the opinion that STW does not link well with health organisations. S/he would like STW to work with organisations such as the NHS. S/he made the point that *'STW could feed information to staff such as midwives and health workers on how patients in their own home should dispose of nappies and wound dressings'*. S/he added that some organisations have formed a partnership with the fire brigade to help educate smokers and other high risk individuals, so *'why can't the same be done with the NHS and STW on this issue?'*

- A council officer commented that s/he would like there to be a point of contact within STW which is *'specifically set up for councils'*. S/he also stated that STW needs to improve its call centre as constituents are ringing the council when they should ring STW as they fail to receive the help they need
- An environmental group representative felt that STW has the opportunity to work with other organisations and be proactive. S/he would like to see STW coming up with *'new and innovative ways to save money'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental group representative was of the opinion that private drains and sewers should be dealt with *'like the rest of the STW asset base'*, adding that STW's first objective should be to determine their state of repair before the company *'deals with them'* like their other assets
- A council officer commented that any records of these assets that exist *'should be supplemented with what exists on the current register'*
- A council officer stated that STW should *'treat customers fairly'* and *'take a pragmatic approach'* where it was intending to invest and growth was planned
- There was general consensus on this point
- A customer representative reported that s/he had *'carried out qualitative and quantitative research with local customers: 50% domestic customers wanted to see the sub standard sewers (and impact on bills) repaired as soon as possible, whereas 35% said the more costly repairs should be deferred for a of couple years; business customers were about 42 & 41% respectively'*
- There was a general consensus that this would be a good PR opportunity for STW and should be communicated better to customers
- A council officer made the point that PR was important as there was a group of people *'who won't find out until their sewer blocks'* and *'people don't always read STW literature'*; however s/he added that STW must be *'upfront with people'*
- A customer representative made the point that many of these drains were in customers' gardens and therefore *'could be very disruptive'*; s/he added that, although there might be a risk of a drains blockage, the impact could be quite small, therefore STW should *'consider risk and consequence'*
- An environmental representative supported this point
- A council officer raised the issue that surface water drains were still private householders' problem and his / her council was planning to have a link to STW's help site from the council site. S/he asked STW what the best way was to alert them of customers' problems when the drains flood
- The STW representative noted and clarified situation

**Table 3**

- A council officer mentioned about plotting sewers, asking '*where are they and where have they transferred from*'. STW needs to react to the problem
- A council officer commented that if STW has a poor and deteriorating asset then it needs replacing and must not be left
- A council officer remarked that STW is only talking about sewers and is not sure if the county council has any thoughts as they don't get dragged into that debate
- An environmental group representative encouraged proactivity, so STW should not just be reactive as that saves up problems
- A council officer offered the point that if STW does not know what the states of the pipes are then the asset will be hard to maintain
- An environmental group representative commented that STW should find risky pipes and fix them to prevent problems further down the network
- A council officer was of the opinion that '*the polluter should pay*'
- A council officer agreed that if companies are polluting, they should definitely pay as its '*their fault*'
- An environmental group representative volunteered that STW has to accept responsibility for their assets and must keep them maintained but also educate people to prevent these incidents
- A customer agreed with this point

**Table 4**

- A conservation group representative stated that previously private drains and sewers '*ultimately have to be treated the same as the rest of the network, at some stage water companies need to get handle on what needs to be done and the cost implications. More investigation and understanding is needed*'
- A council officer pointed out that there is a considerable amount of data already available from councils which STW could potentially draw upon as a starting point

**Table 5**

- All members stated that customers are not aware of these problems and that they don't understand them
- A customer said that environmental health officers needed to be more active in tackling these problems

- A council officer stated that local authorities can play *'a key role in this aspect, if only STW would provide us with a contact'*
- A business group representative agreed with this statement and said that STW needs to work more closely with these organisations
- All council officers agreed with this view. This was repeated many times during the meeting
- A customer representative said that *'STW must put more information on bills'*
- An environmental group representative stated that that face to face contact is of *'paramount importance'* in order to solve these problems
- A customer representative said that council houses must be targeted as well
- All council officers stated that they would like to present themselves as public figures to raise awareness on these issues

## 6.4. Any other comments?

**Table 1**

- A business group representative questioned if *'a cost benefit analysis is proactive rather than reactive'*
- STW answered this question
- A business group representative was of the opinions that the cost to fix the problem might be cheaper than carrying out an analysis of assets
- A council officer questioned if STW was happy to just be treating the symptom not the disease?

**Table 2**

- There were no further comments

**Table 3**

- No further comments

**Table 4**

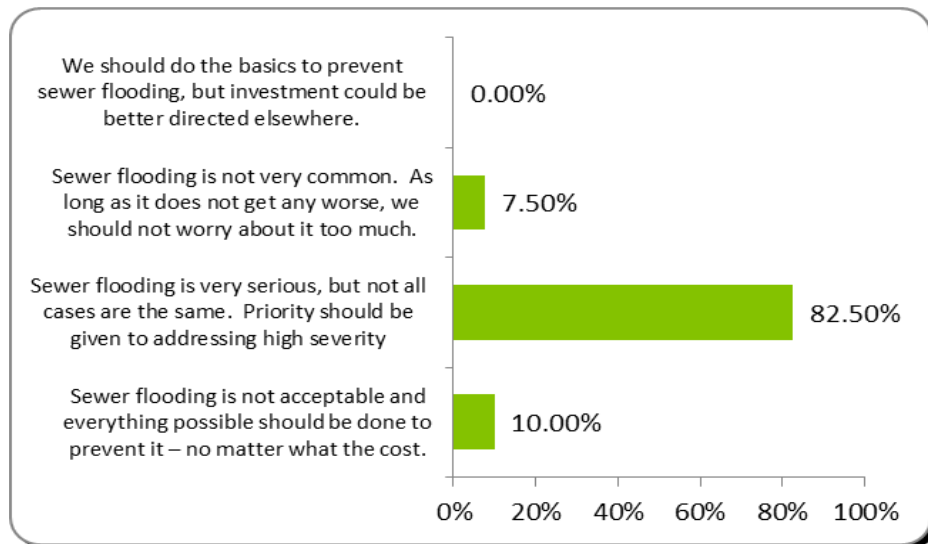
- No further comments

**Table 5**

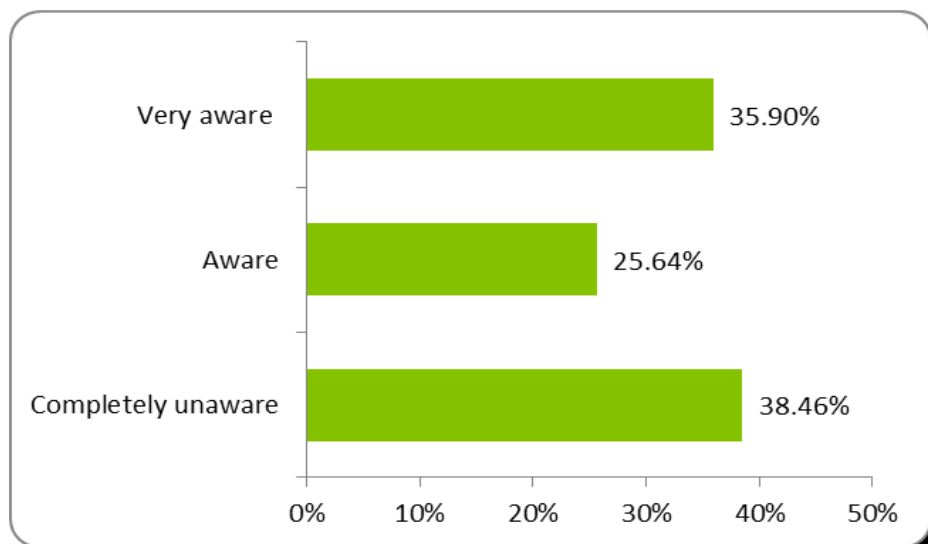
- No further comments

## 7. Keeping our sewers working well (Current priorities)

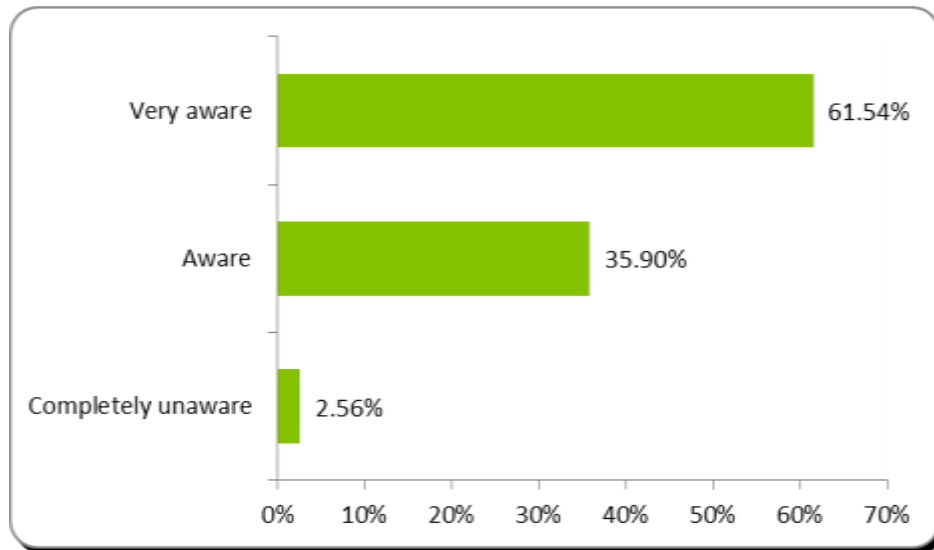
### 7.1. Q4: Which of the following best describes your views on sewer flooding?



### 7.2. Q5: Before this session how aware were you that the DG5 sewer flooding register was an historic incident register and not a 'at risk' register?

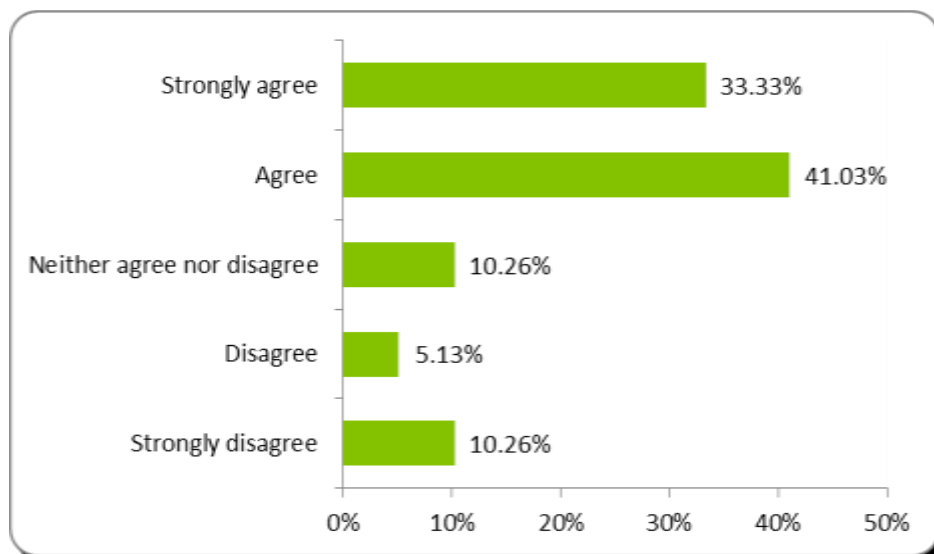


7.3. Q6: Were you aware of the impact sewer misuse has on sewer flooding and pollutions?

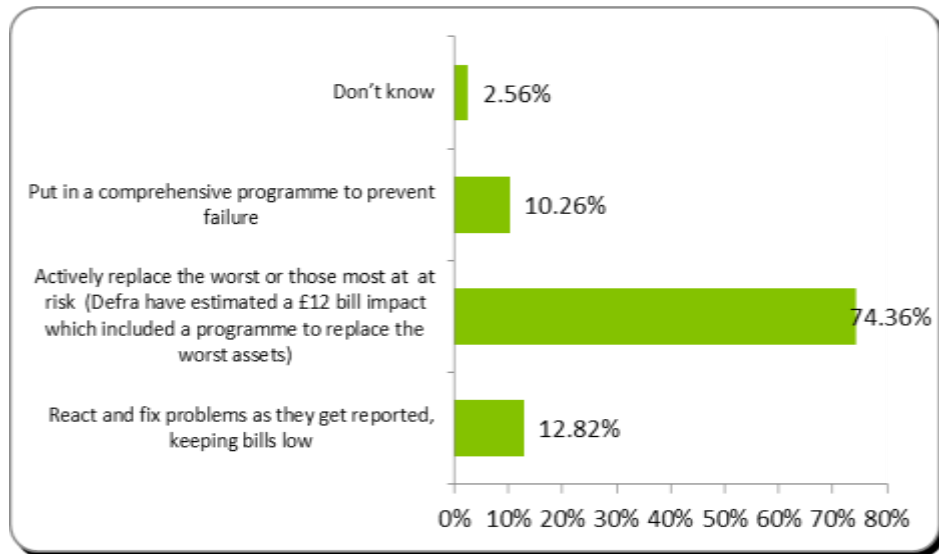


7.4. Q7: To what extent do you agree with this statement?

- 'The 'polluter pays' concept should apply to the establishments responsible for sewer misuse'



7.5. Q8: How should we bring our recently transferred sewers (37,000km) up to standard?





## 8. Keeping our sewers working well (Future priorities)

### 8.1. Q9: Do you think moving towards a sewer flooding risk based approach (balancing incident frequency and consequence) is appropriate?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative felt that, in order to look to the future, STW needs to *'look at the past'*. S/he commented that older assets needed to have more. S/he added that STW has had 20 years to invest and should have started this process sooner
- The point was made that *'STW having the cheapest bills comes with consequences'*
- A council officer pointed out the area STW covers has no coastline to dispose of waste unlike other water companies who have historically paid to dispose of waste in this way. S/he questioned if *'cheap bills are due to STW having no coastlines'*. S/he felt STW had missed an opportunity by not increasing bills the same way other water companies had as more investment in assets could have occurred
- A conservation group representative pointed out that the Water Framework Directive will be enforced soon
- A council officer said it is *'acceptable to increase customer bills but it will be a shock to the customer so the increase needs to be incremental'*
- A council officer asked *'why has STW waited until now to make the necessary investment?'*
- STW answered this question
- An environmental group representative asked *'how much of the risk base is sustainable?'* S/he stated there needs to be a *'balance between investment and return'*. S/he felt STW needs to look at every decision on an individual basis if investment is needed
- A council officer made the point that STW has it's *'hands tied'* as they have to follow guidelines or risk receiving a bad report from the regulator

**Table 2**

- While there was general consensus that this [moving towards a sewer flooding risk based approach] was the right approach. The group were of the view that it would be helpful to know more about STW's KPIs and to understand how they were *'performing'* and whether these were *'realistic and achievable'*

- An environmental group representative pointed out that STW should *'spend where most needed'*. S/he also commented that the *'previous flood register'* was *'key'* and that a sewer *'had to cause a problem before STW could deal with it'*.
- A council officer reported that his / her council had already identified its own *'hot spots'*, applying a risk based approach using STW's DG5 register. S/he added that *'collaboration with STW was already happening and is working'*
- A council officer recommended that STW should have *'realistic'* KPIs as it was an *'on-going piece of work'* as flooding could never completely be stopped, but that *'hopefully the problems could be solved'*
- A council officer stated that it was important to know the *'long term KPIs'* and well as the short and medium-term ones
- A council officer added that there was a *'lot of political pressure on companies and local authorities'*
- A council officer asked if there was a *'better way of communicating'* with STW when there was an occurrence of flooding, and explained how the current process worked: his / her council would *'always get the first call'*, and would *'check the assets and keep in touch with customers'* before contacting STW. S/he added that this meant that if there was a major incident, the council would have to *'log lots of separate calls with STW'*. S/he stated that STW needed an improved level of *'collaborative involvement and engagement'* and a *'better way of tracking it'* and asked STW if this incorporated in its KPIs as s/he was *'not convinced the system is working that well'* and that *'some investment is needed there'*
- A council officer went on to add that, when STW assessed the risks, it needed to determine the consequences, so that if there was a *'major issue versus a domestic problem'* it would have different *'minor vs major surcharges'*
- A council officer pointed out that with low risks STW could take a *'commercial approach at household level'*, for example and commented that it was a *'wonderful commercial opportunity'* for STW and the local authorities
- An environmental representative stated that the key question was *'how the risk is quantified'*. S/he added that in his / her experience, flooding was *'caused by hydraulic restrictions'* and that STW could *'model it to understand the risk'*. However, following STW's presentation, s/he now understood it to be *'more complex to understand'* and therefore *'there may not be processes in place to model this'*
- A council officer commented that *'hydraulic modelling was ok'* but if the risk was minimal it would be *'difficult to input'* so STW needed to make *'informed decisions'*
- A council officer asked if it was possible for STW to make some *'quick wins'* if it dealt with the low risk options at a lower cost alongside a *'prioritised, strategic approach'*
- The STW representative gave more detail about the low risk approach

- An environmental representative was of the view that *'it's probable that when addressing high risk problems, some low risks might also be addressed in that scheme'*
- A council officer asked if STW had a mechanism for addressing any issues with performance failure and if there were any *'penalties for STW'* similar to those for local authorities
- The STW responded to this question
- Another council officer countered this by enquiring what measures were in place to *'incentivise STW to do well'*. S/he also asked if there should be *'incentives for customers to improve what they're doing'*
- A customer representative considered that STW's incentives should come from *'customer satisfaction levels'*
- A council officer asked the group if *'free installation of fat traps'* would incentivise customers to use them
- An environmental representative suggested that the *'flood register cost comes into it'* and asked whether STW was *'picking up the most cost effective options'* and whether this meant that the register was *'filling up with high cost ones'*
- A council officer stated that s/he believed *'land flooding mitigation is the solution'*

**Table 3**

- A council officer believed a risk based approach is *'the way to go'*. S/he pointed out that properties at risk in Derby are in danger of sewage flooding and that *'maintenance is key to look at the condition of the pipes'*
- An environmental group representative agreed this was the *'right direction'* and the most efficient way to prevent future problems
- A council officer commented that STW should use information on flooding to decide where the major risks are as it will give the company a better idea of the situation
- A council officer stated that there is a *'high degree of correlation between flood outlines and surface water flood zones'*. S/he felt that working proactively together and using joint funding to get flood protection and a more reliable sewerage system would reduce the risk of pollutants flowing in
- A council officer identified that there should be a cut off point for mitigation, as some assets might be in a low risk area could be high risk assets
- A customer representative observed that STW is not in a position to advise as the company *'does not have the right to advise and that this is crazy as councils might be ill advisedly building houses in risky areas'*

**Table 4**

- The general consensus was that a risk-based approach is the best way forward but there were several questions around *'how to go about this'*
- A conservation group representative stated that a risk-based approach is effective *'to a point'* but equally felt that *'replacing the exact systems you have in place'* is not necessarily the best approach and that STW needs to focus on doing things a little differently and factor future-proofing in to its' approach
- A council officer suggested that more sustainable approaches would be a good starting point
- Another council officer agreed that STW needs to look to build and plan for future and develop smarter ways of doing things
- An environmental group representative stated *'in terms of sewer flooding, a risk based approach is adequate but tackling pollution is much trickier'*. S/he would like to see a much greater rate of reduction in pollution as *'todays minor incidents will be major incidents of future'*
- A local authority officer commented that s/he would like to see more *'granularity'* in terms of understanding what the customer experience is
- A council officer added *'we've looked into this but it gets very complicated; we're screaming out for a view on what is significant and what is severe. This needs to be thought out a little better and local authorities need more guidance on this matter'*
- A conservation group representative stated that STW's current approach *'doesn't take into account of high certainty of events going forward'*. S/he felt that infrastructure in the UK will be overwhelmed more often in the future and that utilities, especially, need to understand this
- A council officer agreed that current mitigation measures appear to be *'short-sighted'*

**Table 5**

- A council officer stated that the risk based approach is used throughout the industry. S/he also believed that STW should be *'influencing the regulator'*
- A council officer stated that *'honesty'* is important. When there is a problem and the local authorities meet with STW there needs to be full transparency in every approach that will be taken in the future
- A council officer stated that s/he is willing to work with STW to identify and do everything possible in order to prevent floods from occurring
- All council officers agreed that it is essential to have *'a good relationship with STW in order to prevent floods in the future'*
- A council officer stated that *'more training is necessary in order to deal with these issues'* adding that *'working with the local authorities effectively is key'*

## 8.2. Q10: How far and how fast should we go with reducing sewer flooding and pollutions?

**Table 1**

- A council officer pointed out that, as the sewage system gets older, more properties will flood and STW's list of high risk areas will increase
- An environmental group representative felt *'we are talking about investment to solve problems rather than looking at strategic investment which will help to provide future growth and address climate predictions'*
- A business group representative commented on the *'risk base register'* and asked *'how do you ensure the bigger picture is being looked at?'*
- A business group representative asked how is STW *'addressing short term issues and keeping long-term ones in mind?'*
- A business group representative asked whether STW is making decisions based on the *'effect it will have on the most people or the biggest effect on the environment such as pollution'*
- A conservation group representative pointed out STW now needs *'different types of data'* and information they have not needed before. S/he asked *'how will STW get this data?'*
- A conservation group representative was of the view that STW needs a *'risk based approach'* for getting data and can then decide how best to use this in deciding the next steps
- An environmental group representative asked if there is a role for STW to influence where the growth occurs using the new data
- A conservation group representative pointed out STW need to identify *'new opportunities and risks'*
- A council officer agreed with this but also pointed out STW need to improve communication with planning officers and developers
- STW explained how the company is involved in the planning process
- A council officer explained that their authority needs to use all available land in order to meet housing targets even if they know there will be problems with flooding. S/he explained that there is a lot of pressure for targets need to be delivered
- An environmental group representative pointed out the *'better use of grey water will help to relieve pressure in new developments'*
- All agreed that local authorities are under great pressure to meet targets and water is low on the list of priorities so problems occur as there is *'so much pressure from above'*

- A council officer stated that their authority is currently carrying out '*a consultation on SUDS*'
- A council officer highlighted the fact that STW has the capacity to work with others and can form partnerships to solve problems

**Table 2**

- A council officer was of the opinion that pollution flooding incidents should be '*dealt with more quickly*'
- An environmental representative stated this his / her organisation would prefer '*no pollution incidents*' and the '*key thing is a downward trend*'
- A business group representative was of the view that misconnections in rural areas were an issue and asked if it was the householder or STW's responsibility, adding that '*either way it should be sorted out*'
- A customer representative asked if there was an opportunity to do more '*upfront planning work before misconnections occur*' by using a risk-based approach for misconnections and pollutions
- A council officer suggested that the asset register could help with mitigation and that this was an '*an opportunity for STW*'
- There was further discussion around the area of greater collaboration between STW and other parties, including best practices when dealing with major incidents
- On this point, a business group representative reiterated the need for a STW contact at '*high level*' rather than having to go through the STW call centre
- A council officer asked if, with regard to '*business resilience*', STW had a 24 hour '*out of hours*' number and if this was the correct process for contacting STW in an emergency
- A council officer gave the opinion that '*there was good practice going on*', citing the example of the STW and local authorities annual '*relationships*' meeting
- A council officer reiterated the need for better communication from STW regarding capital works and asked for more '*collaborative working and sharing of construction programmes*', adding that greater transparency would help local authorities understand '*time-frames*' and improve communications. S/he added that a more '*open relationship*' would aid authorities who have a '*responsibility to partially govern STW in some areas*' and that '*setting up meetings would help this*'

**Table 3**

- A council officer stated that a faster approach might be a problem but '*if STW is wrong then the expenditure will be a big waste*'
- An environmental group representative was of the opinion that STW should look well into the future and have a stable approach

- Another environmental group representative answered that the assets should be *'fit for the period'*
- A customer representative responded that STW should invest money in schemes that have benefits to many areas so cost is spread more evenly; thus taking a strategic approach

**Table 4**

- A council officer asked how STW had established its risk priority
- Another council officer stated *'you need to make this more visible to the general public, because, if you don't publicise this, local authorities have to pick this up'*
- Everyone agreed that more transparency was needed in this area
- A domestic customer representative explained that, in terms of pace, STW's plans might not necessarily happen as OFWAT might take a different view. However, s/he felt that if this is put out into the public domain it makes *'our job easier when arguing the case with OFWAT'*
- An environmental group representative agreed that it is not *'realistic'* to resolve this issue in a 5 year period
- A conservation group representative stated that *'some of the biggest incidents have occurred in isolated places such as Carlisle. These sort of incidents will start to occur in a STW's area and DG5 won't have picked up on this'*
- A council officer felt strongly that the graph that was included in the presentation *'doesn't show reality'* and only illustrates data from the DG5 network. S/he was of the view that STW needs to work across different catchment areas to capture broader data to tackle flooding and pollution more effectively

**Table 5**

- A council officer stated that this question depends on the level of risk and on the specific situation. If STW sees that there needs to be something to be done immediately, then they should *'go ahead with it'*
- An environmental group member stated that STW needs to work more with local authorities to see where the key strategic areas are and which areas are problematic. *'Only with a proper model can we target the most vulnerable sewers.... We need to give feedback to STW and for that we need a contact'*. He continued *'some of the models are completely flawed and need to be changed, this cannot happen in an organisation as large and important as Severn Trent'*
- A council officer stated that local authorities have not got sufficient information on these problems because people are reluctant to contact their local authorities about sewer flooding
- A council officer stated that the local authorities also need to know who is working for STW in their areas and they need to be updated in the problems that they are facing



- A council officer said that s/he is keen on working closer with STW on this
- All council officers agreed on this point
- A customer representative stated that the way STW runs is based on profit and that the company will not always choose the best environmental solution because it is not profitable. *'The solution is hard to grasp but no pollutants should ever go into a river'*
- A council officer said that there are other solutions that need to be explored
- Another council officer stated that *'we are in technological limbo'* and that *'we all have to wait and see how technology will change in the next 5 years'*
- A council officer returned to the subject of demographics and repeated its importance for STW
- Another council officer said that there are *'many inner city deprived areas and these should be a priority for investment'*
- A council officer stated that it will be *'extremely hard to communicate the changes that STW needs to make to the people'*
- A council officer stated that because people pay the council tax and water bills they will not care about the tough decisions that STW needs to take
- All council officers were of the view that local authorities in general and STW need to join together in explaining that they cannot *'please everybody'*
- A council officer said that a communication programme needs to be implemented in order to raise awareness of the problems STW faces and future projects that are taking place across the region

### 8.3. Q11: How quickly should we replace our sewer network?

**Table 1**

- A council officer commented that, if sewers are replaced, and the *'price of water goes up does that mean dividends will go down?'* S/he pointed out shareholders may not be happy to pay more and receive reduced dividends which presents a problem
- A conservation group representative highlighted the fact that if targets are met, share prices could go up which will mean higher dividends for shareholders
- An environmental group representative felt that when deciding to replace an asset STW shouldn't just look at its age as it should be about performance, this will ensure investment is made in the correct areas

**Table 2**

- A council officer recommended that STW should check every sewer with cameras, every *'one to two years'* to help understand their condition, adding that repairs should be *'carried out on a planned basis'* and that *'no doubt'* STW has a programme for doing



this. S/he went on to add that this should be part of STW's asset management programme and would assist it in *'undertaking rehabilitation'*, and that *'structure failure should be looked at and a modelling programme employed'*

- A council officer commented that STW should *'balance design life versus cost'* but warned that *'carrying on'* at the current rate was unsustainable and that there would be some *'critical point'* when it was necessary to do major work
- There was overall concern regarding the potential for a future investment *'spike'* caused by ageing assets
- A customer representative stated that, using *'knowledge'*, the level of service should be the driver rather than the age of the sewer
- An environmental representative made the point that as s/he did not want to see deterioration in the level of service *'this obviously needs to be dealt with quickly'*. S/he added that *'rarely do we see an application for SUDS to be employed so maybe there's not a strong enough emphasis on SUDS'*
- A council officer added to this point that *'until standards on SUDS are agreed, they very difficult to apply'*

### Table 3

- A council officer explained that STW should use a more complex method of looking at the condition of its pipes, grade them and target the most necessary sewers to repair, adding *'this is a sensible approach'*.
- A customer representative stated that *things are moving in the right direction so the current approach is working'*
- A council officer thought that STW should use micro sewage plants help take the pressure off plants under pressure
- A customer representative agreed with principle of micro sewage plants but added that they must be under the control of STW as they are very complex
- An environmental group representative made the point that *'micro plants must be effective to have worth'*
- Another environmental group representative thought that STW could treat water as best it can and then send it on to the bigger plant to clean it properly, so a combination of micro and larger sewage plants might be the best approach

### Table 4

- Very little was said about this question and the discussion moved onto the next

**Table 5**

- A council officer stated that STW needs to work very quickly to replace its sewer network. S/he added that inner-city regeneration is great and the sewers cannot cope with these changes
- The same council officer stated that '*water harvesting*' is a key issue for STW and it is an important way of dealing with the excess of water on the cities
- A council officer stated that there are no resources for these kinds of projects
- A council officer said that industry developers need to be held accountable for their actions as '*they are the most important people in this situation*'
- A customer representative stated that developers have a completely different view of the problem and that '*they do not care about the future*'
- A council officer stated that this will change with the increased use of SUDS as they will have to be included in more new developments

#### 8.4. Q12: How can we find the right balance between taking action ourselves to maintain and improve our sewerage network, and seeking to change the behaviour of others?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative stated customers need to be educated about what will happen if sewers are misused but also felt STW is diverting attention away from issues such as performance and pollution. S/he felt STW needs to focus on investment and maintenance as poorly maintained sewers could be to blame rather than customer misuse
- An environmental group representative felt that STW needs to change in the near future as the '*current system desperately needs updating*'
- A council officer pointed out that to educate customers '*STW need to find the ones who need it the most*'. S/he linked this back to STW working with organisations such as the NHS
- A council officer commented on problems arising from food outlets in relation to sewers that should be addressed through their hygiene certificate qualification. S/he felt the disposal of fat and oil should be added to this certification. S/he was of the opinion that star ratings could be used as this would encourage businesses to dispose of waste correctly
- An environmental group representative commented that the '*carrot and stick approach should be used with incentives for good behaviour and naming and shaming for bad behaviour*'

- A customer representative pointed out there are many different representative bodies who issue *'kitchen guidelines'*. S/he would like to see partnerships being formed to provide one set of guidelines which covers everything for businesses
- A council officer said s/he would like to see STW talking to *'environmental engineers'* who together communicate with the worst offenders. S/he felt education is needed to solve capacity problems
- An environmental group representative agreed *a 'single voice approach'* with many organisations is needed but recognised STW may not have enough power to drive through new initiatives
- A council officer stated it is important for all organisations to unite to improve the environment
- All agreed education can be given through *'advertising campaigns'* including television advertising
- A council officer agreed but commented there is a need to try different methods of education to see if advertising on the television is the *'most effective way'*
- A council officer pointed out a *'cheaper option would be to go into schools and educate children from a young age'*
- A council officer suggested putting storylines in soap operas to raise awareness of sewer misuse would be extremely effective

**Table 2**

- A council officer stated that s/he considered that *'seeking to change the behaviour of others'* was the key factor and that fat traps, for example, *'surely relieve the pressure on asset management'*
- An environmental representative *'welcomed seeing all the options on the table'* and suggested that, based on the feasibility study, *'perhaps a mix of these'* might help solve certain pollution problems. S/he cautioned that any assessment needs to be made on a *'case by case basis'*
- A customer representative made the additional comment that s/he understood the ranking of the options on the table in slide 51, and that they were based on degree of *'impact'* and what *'STW can control'*, but agreed that *'all options should be looked at for each scheme as some have wider impacts and bills'*
- An environmental representative recommended that STW concentrates on *'specific solutions'* for flooding problems as there were *'benefits in terms of treatment costs'*
- A council officer made the point that in 2013 it will be *'mandatory to use SUDS'* but that the issue was *'where the water ends up'*
- A council officer added that there was *'customer confusion'* around SUDS so there was an opportunity to introduce and educate customers on the *'relevance'* of SUDS

- A council officer warned that there were policies regarding '*decluttering signage*' but that there other ways of '*raising awareness of SUDS*'; for example using websites
- A council officer recommended looking at what other local authorities were doing and cited the example in Bristol where the authority has '*engaged*' the Wildlife Trust to manage SUDS, rather than the authority itself, and customers pay a maintenance tariff
- A council officer recommended STW investigates ways of '*recycling fat*', for example by adding it to a digester, and that this could present an opportunity for STW to be '*more carbon neutral*'
- A business group representative agreed, adding that farmers were already '*running cars off recycled fat and grease*'
- There was general consensus that STW should investigate different ways of increasing the usage of grease traps by consumers by making these more readily available
- A number of suggestions were made, such as free fat traps with composters, or linking up with supermarkets
- A customer representative pointed out that key times, such as Christmas were '*fat heavy*' and there was an opportunity for STW to educate customers on where to dispose of the fats
- A council officer recommended joining '*lots of messages together*' and that collaboration between STW and other partners was important so that the '*outcomes are educational*' and suggested workshops and '*getting out on the ground*'

**Table 3**

- A customer representative commented that customer education should occur but STW must be clever in way it does it, for example mirroring recycling education
- An environmental group representative observed that all water companies need to do this to make it effective
- A council officer was not convinced that education works. S/he thought it does '*to a point but some people won't adhere*'
- A customer representative believed that STW had no chance of prosecuting individual councils but companies are more likely
- An environmental group representative suggested financial incentives to help encourage a changes in behaviour
- A customer thought that STW should give away bathroom waste bins whilst telling people what to put in it in the hope consumers might use it adding '*if they don't have a bin then it goes down the loo. STW should educate suppliers to make face wipes like loo roll, which is biodegradable*'
- A council officer recommended that STW could make containers available for oil waste, adding that this is a '*starting point*'

- A customer representative thought this was a *'good suggestion'*
- A customer representative pondered whether it is technically viable to accommodate waste going through the pipes as, with new low flush toilets saving water, solids don't travel as far and sewers are probably not working so effectively due to reduced water flow
- A council officer pointed out that reserve tanks are used to keep up flows when there is less water. If investment is done correctly it fulfils objectives and is therefore cost effective
- An environmental group representative observed that scale is important and STW can't be too ambitious
- A council officer was of the opinion that the whole of STW's investment is aimed more towards sewage compared to surface water flooding and the company should consider this option too
- A council officer replied that STW must deal with foul flooding as the surface water network is more the responsibility of the councils
- A council officer pondered *'how can STW shape its investment when it doesn't know the condition of the assets?'*
- An environmental group representative mentioned that STW should set up a programme to prevent misconnections and should scale it up

**Table 4**

- A council officer commented that STW needs to have a maintenance regime in place already to change the sewerage network before it fails
- There was general agreement with this point
- A conservation group representative stated *'STW needs a focused, planned maintenance programme – I think this is where they fall down'*
- An environmental group representative agreed that *'unless STW increases the rate of replacement, we will reach a cliff hanger'* and that *'extra costs involved are necessary evils'*
- A domestic customer representative asked what the alternative was to increasing the rate of replacement
- A council officer felt that the rate of replacement as well as design standards need to improve
- A conservation group representative said *'there has been reluctance historically to investment in investigation. In our industry there are lots of barriers to innovation'*. S/he felt that STW needs to consider how it can remove barriers to innovation and suggested that the company should consider getting involved with more *'joined up thinking with SME's'* to achieve this.

- A council officer agreed that innovation is about *'rethinking your questions'*. S/he felt that there was *'an element of conservatism built into the questions you've stated'*. S/he explained that *'replacement'* is not necessarily the answer and that water companies *'can't keep borrowing this amount of money to achieve this'*
- A domestic customer representative agreed with this point. S/he stated *'we mustn't just look to expensive engineering solutions to resolve issues'*
- A council officer said *'as a council we'd like to see more of STW working more closely with us; it's very beneficial although not always tangible'*
- A council officer added *'it's quite frightening that we've been approached by STW for information about certain assets that used to be controlled by the council. There is clearly some lost data and I think it was lost whilst the company was restructured'*
- A council officer suggested that STW should install CCTV in the high risk areas to demonstrate the impact local communities are currently having on the sewage system. S/he stated *'if people see it, they know where they're going wrong'*
- A domestic customer representative asked whether STW is looking into bio diversity/food waste collection to help solve the problem
- A council officer added that STW needs to talk to waste management departments within local authorities to achieve some joined up thinking around this area
- Another council officer felt that *'too many people are not thinking ahead on this matter'*. S/he added that if sewers of the future are to be designed to cope with solid food waste, this would create more problems
- A conservation group representative agreed that if sewers of the future be designed to cope with solid food waste *'this is merely designing to cope with bad behaviours and it would make things worse'*
- A local authority representative commented that good behaviour needs to be incentivised
- A council officer stated *'the first challenge should be to take out surface water from the system that is currently causing major problems for DG5s and then you can carry out necessary CCTV arrangements and maintenance to rectify this'*
- Another council officer felt that design standards needs to be innovative need to include measures such as rain water harvesting
- A local authority officer added that *'STW needs to change its thinking and take advantage of the opportunities in changing processes'*

## Table 5

- A council officer said that all stakeholders must *'sit down at one table and discuss these problems. Education is a problem that affects everyone'*

- An environmental group member said that the attitude of people is changing. S/he added '*TV ads should show people cleaning the pots and disposing the oil in the waste bin*'. Any other comments?

**Table 1**

- No further comments

**Table 2**

- A council officer asked if STW is '*fixed on charging*' and if there were any opportunities for '*regional charging*'
- The STW representative responded
- A council officer asked about the flood register and if, when an incident is registered, it was specifically attributed to a property, or if there was any type of rating used, such as business or domestic property
- The STW representative confirmed there was detail on the type of property, flooding and cause

**Table 3**

- No further comments

**Table 4**

- No further comments

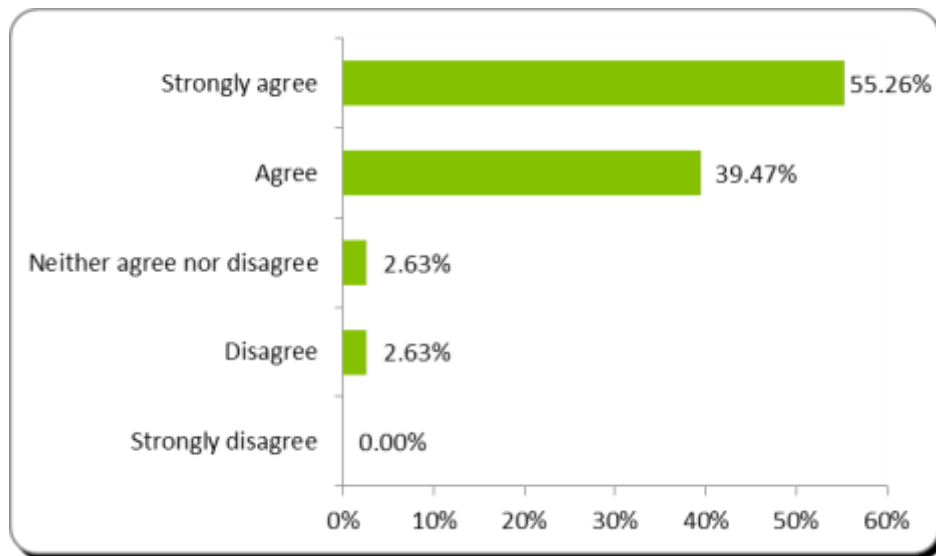
**Table 5**

- No further comments

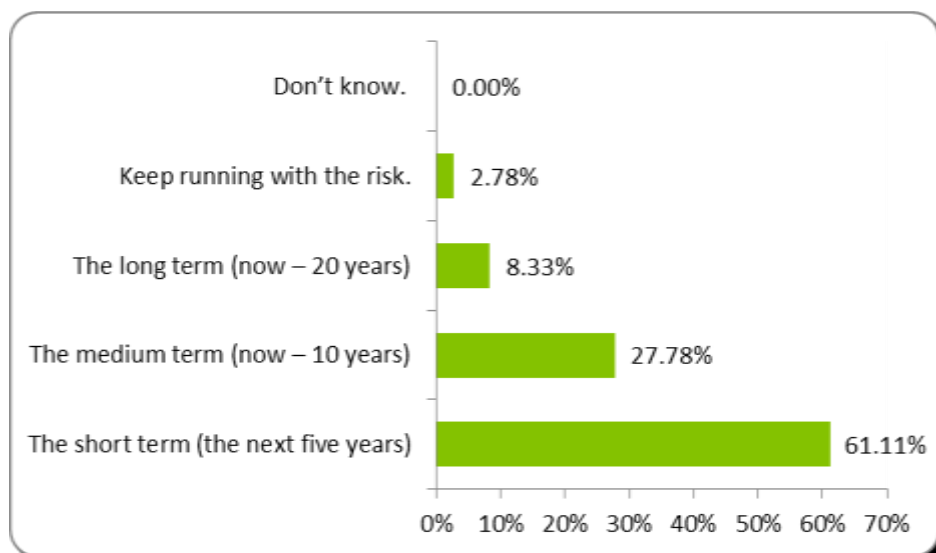
## 9. Keeping our sewers working well (Future priorities)

### 9.1. Q13: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

- "STW should adopt a risk based approach to sewer flooding"

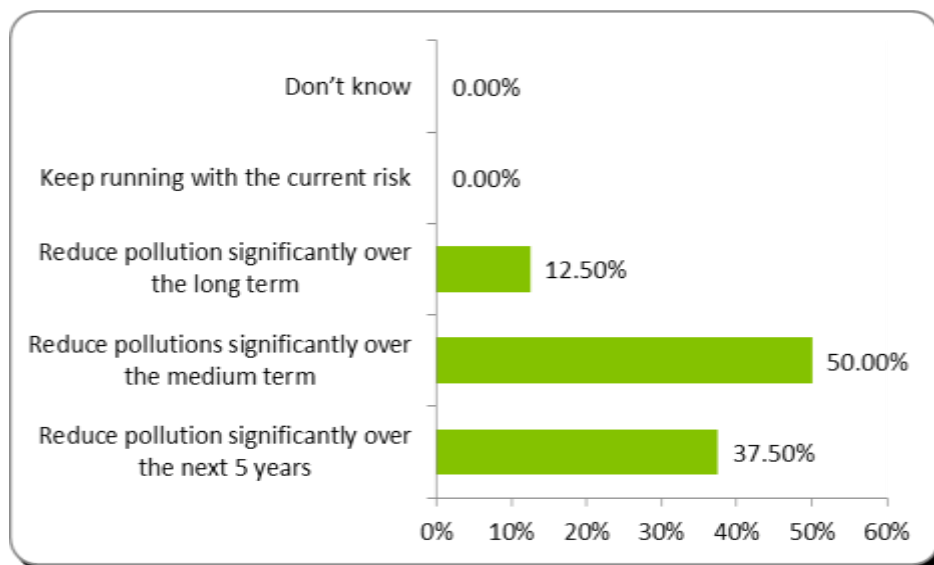


### 9.2. Q14: How quickly should we aim to resolve the most severe internal flooding?

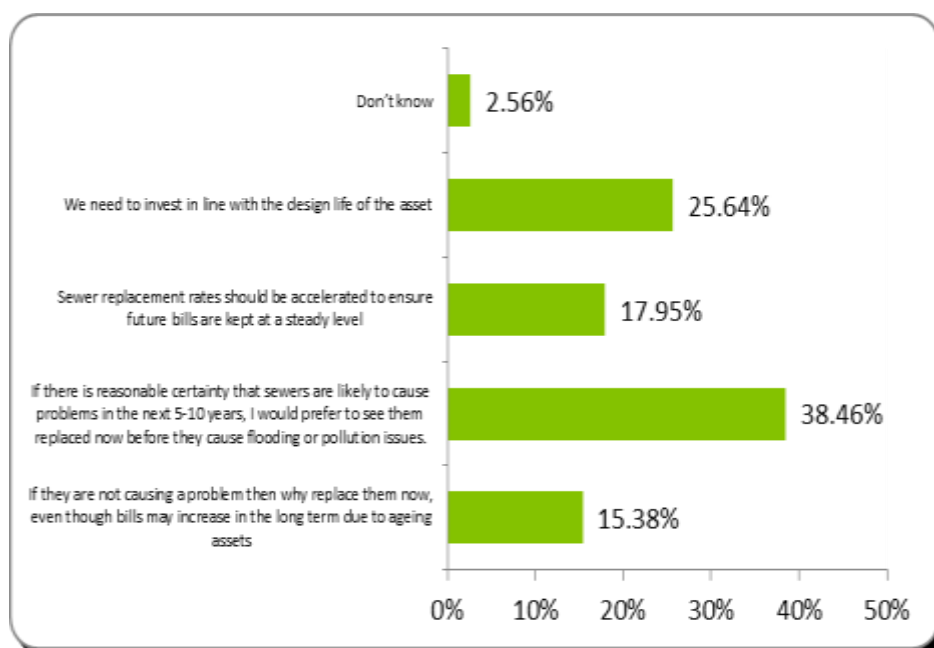




### 9.3. Q15: How quickly should we aim to address the risk of pollutions?

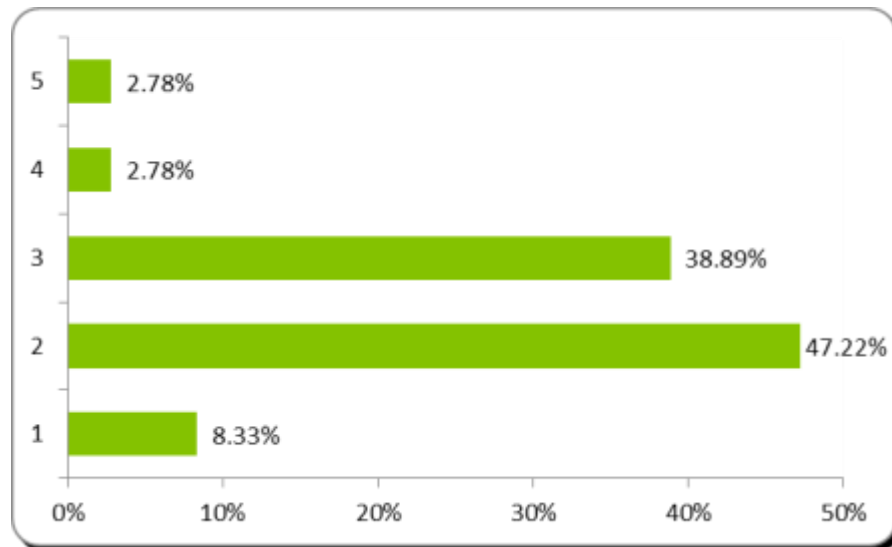


### 9.4. Q16: On the basis that over 70% of our sewers are older than 50 years, and will need replacing, which of the following statements best represents your views?



## 9.5. Q17: What do you think the right balance is between Severn Trent investing in its assets and all stakeholders making changes to control issues at source?

- Nb: 1 = 'STW led action with high degree of certainty, but higher cost' and 4 = 'Third party behavioural change with lower certainty of outcome, but lower cost'. 5 = 'Don't know'



## 10. Ensuring healthy and sustainable rivers (Current priorities)

### 10.1. Q18: Were you aware of the improvements we have been making?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative said they were aware of the '*day to day remit and its core purpose*'. S/he would like to work with STW to its improve current performance
- A council officer said s/he wasn't aware of the scope of the work STW has been doing
- An environmental group representative stated water quality levels have changed over the years by a considerable amount, which is very positive

**Table 2**

- There was a general lack of awareness of STW's improvements. The group was of the view that information should have been made more public and better communicated
- An environmental representative stated s/he was aware of the improvements and commented '*lots of work driven by Environment Agency directives*'
- A council officer warned STW that there was not enough communication about what investment STW is currently undertaking
- A customer representative was aware of this issue due to his / her organisation's involvement in the last price review
- An environmental representative referred to slide 65 and said that '*lots of schemes were deferred from the current AMP to the future AMP's*'

**Table 3**

- A council officer was not aware of the work STW is currently carrying out
- An environmental group representative made the point that water quality has been improving over the last 20 years due to '*statutory obligations*'
- A customer representative assumed it was part of STW's duty not to pollute
- An environmental group representative commented that STW obviously cares about what it puts in the water as it uses the water, so has a vested interest.
- An environmental group representative stated that the Water Framework Directive looks at how to prevent raw water quality deteriorating and STW is clearly trying to adhere to that

**Table 4**

- All of the local authority representatives stated that they did not know about the improvements that STW has been making
- A council officer commented that STW should *'at least let partners know how much money is spent and where; this definitely needs to be more transparent'*
- Another council officer stated *'STW works very closely with my local authority and I feels as though we're always kept well informed'*
- A local authority officer stated that STW needs to deliver improvements at a faster pace
- A domestic customer representative asked STW to be more specific in its definition of an *'incident'*
- An environmental group representative explained that this covers a wide spectrum
- Referring to gaps in STW's overall strategy, a council officer stated that *'it would be nice that if we were made aware of what the outcomes were from this investment'*
- A council officer agreed that STW needs better liaison with local authorities added that *'things are improving'*
- A domestic customer representative asked *'what is catchment management in relation to waste water, not drinking water. Do you have any specific examples'*
- An STW representative fielded this question
- A council officer stated *'I was speaking to an STW rep this morning and they mentioned some of the measures they were taking, including the use of SUDS and rain water harvesting,'*

**Table 5**

- All council officers said they were aware of this issue to some extent
- A customer representative said that the design of the treatment works needs to be flexible enough and adaptable to meet current and future standards
- A council officer agreed with this statement
- All members at the table agreed that STW needs to invest more in its reputation and in communicating its good work

## 10.2. Q19: What do you think of our current strategy and approach to investment?

**Table 1**

- A council officer commented on farming issues relating to pollution. S/he commented *'the problem needs to be tackled at the source'*

- An environmental group representative agreed and felt that each area/industry *'needs to do their bit'*
- An environmental group representative commented on STW's ability to comply with its targets over the past 5 years and felt STW does not portray itself in the best light if someone was to look at its statistics

**Table 2**

- A council officer reported that his / her authority was one of a group of authorities involved in the Total Environment Project [alongside DEFRA, Environment Agency, Natural England, and the Forestry Commission] in trying to influence land management, such as developing strategy for river plans and catchment projects. S/he added that this had been a *'a good way to get joint funding'* and suggested that STW could look at a similar collaboration. S/he also mentioned the Wildlife Trust's Bow Brook pilot scheme to engage with communities, land owners and farmers across the whole catchment area, to increase the Brook's potential as part of the county's Green Infrastructure
- A business group representative commented that, if work needed to be done on private land, STW should talk to private landowners as it was *'not going to get anything done under one banner'* and therefore it was important to *'keep up with the latest initiatives'*
- An environmental representative stated that protecting catchments was *'very important'* and that *'lessons should be learned from those approaches.'* S/he added that STW's role in meeting its WFD requirements was *'highly significant'*
- A business group representative raised the issue that if this is a domestic sewage pollution problem, then *'what's more important, cleaning up my house or making sure the water quality is good enough for the chaps in Europe'*, adding that it was *'important to get the balance right'*
- A council officer stated that s/he believed in the *'polluter pays'* principle and that a performance measure was *'the number of pollution incidents'* which *'pointed back'* to the importance of maintenance and cleansing

**Table 3**

- An environmental group representative highlighted that STW has started to work with other agencies but might need to pull different agencies together
- A council officer asked whether the Water Framework Directive has been raised with the Highways Agency
- A council officer wondered whether salt coming from the roads was a problem for water companies
- An environmental group representative replied that there are pollution incidents from salt and gave the example of Spaghetti Junction

- A customer remarked that *'as rules tighten, fixing problems becomes more expensive, so STW must eliminate the big costs first and look at cost and impact when considering their approach'*
- An environmental group representative proposed that *'the answer to catchment management is that it can't be done in isolation; people need to work together. Previous engagement has not been taken as seriously as it should have been. It is one thing engaging but there needs to be a review to make sure outcomes are made as a result. STW may feel that their engineers are right, which can be true in the main, but occasionally they're not - this is when STW needs to listen'*

**Table 4**

- A conservation group representative stated *'STW has a duty as part of its land ownership to manage its assets in a sustainable way'*
- A domestic customer representative commented that consumers have become more environmentally conscientious but felt the strategy must be cost-effective. S/he felt that STW couldn't afford to have a *'carte blanche'* approach to this issue

**Table 5**

- All council officers agreed that so far the approach *'makes sense'*

### 10.3. Q20: Do you think our current investment approach is sustainable?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative pointed out there are 2 separate issues that STW needs to address. *'The first is the need for investment in the current asset base and the second is to make sure there is enough investment made for future delivery'*. S/he pointed out STW figures speak for themselves and are not flattering as they show the company has not made enough investment in new and different treatments

**Table 2**

- A council officer stated that, in *'looking at the investment benefit'* it *'seems as though STW does not quite know what it's aiming for'*, so *although this will lead to improvements, STW needs to 'know its targets'*
- The STW representative responded to this
- A council officer made the point that foresight is *'difficult'* due to technological changes and questioned *'how far is that built into targets'* and what was the *'end result: what's going out to the river and what are other people putting in'*. S/he added that with farming changes, such as intensification of animal husbandry, there were *'some interesting thoughts on what this means for pollution nitrates'* and the *'impact on yield over the next 10 to 15 years'*
- A business group representative was of the view that the polluter pays principle was *'ok up to a point'* but that *'some farmers can't control their prices'*. S/he added that

although farmers were *'involved and must play their part'* allowance should be made for the *'differences of size of the organisation involved and who controls their prices'*

- A customer representative reported that *'we support the catchment management schemes with low cost solutions'*
- An environmental group representative commented that his / her agency had looked over the last few years at *'flexible ways of permitting'* but with new technology, standards and EU directives in place, such as change in allowed phosphate levels, s/he *'need to revisit the work'* as the ability to treat to tighter standards has *'moved forward'*
- A business group representative claimed that the limits were *'absurdly low'* and consumers *'have to be aware of how much they are paying'*
- A council officer suggested a low cost option for STW could be to leave buffers around water courses and to compensate farmers for loss of yield, adding that there needs to be a *'high level of stewardship'*. S/he went on to say that there was a role for STW to work in partnership with agencies and land owners
- An environmental group representative added to this point, stating that *'cost is the key element'*, and that in the WFD, plans go to consultation, undergo a cost assessment and if they are not cost effective, they *'won't get into the plan'*

### Table 3

- A customer representative was of the opinion that the demands of the WFD are so harsh it is financially crippling to meet them. S/he thought *'STW are shooting themselves in the foot by allowing phosphates in the water as the WFD is setting the bar so high that in the short-term it may be financially impossible for the company to meet targets'*
- An environmental group representative commented that the WFD is a long-term plan but there are tight standards
- A council officer suggested that maybe the initial standards need looking at to *'level out achievements or failings'*

### Table 4

- An environmental group representative stated that the water industry needs a longer planning horizon to avoid wasting capital
- A council officer felt that the current level of debt at STW is not sustainable and new approaches to investment need to be considered. S/he stated *'it's important to look at things differently and shift emphasis onto treatment solutions or flexible options rather than capital heavy investments'*
- An environmental group representative asked the STW representative for an example of alternatives of some cost-effective approaches Severn Trent has developed
- A STW representative responded to this question

- A council officer stated that STW *'can't rely solely on soft measures to hit targets'*. S/he asked the wider group *'are OFWAT more concerned with the WFD or are consumers?'*
- Another council officer asked for the reason why there were high levels of phosphates in the Severn Trent region
- A STW representative answered this question
- A domestic customer representative added *'we're dealing with issues that are way beyond Severn Trent's control'*. S/he felt that there were not yet adequate joined up catchment solutions to help resolve this issue

**Table 5**

- A council officer said that STW needs to play the role of *'big guy in town'*. STW is a major corporation and it should have greater lobbying power as a result
- An environmental group member agreed with this statement and said that it is of paramount importance for STW to decide which sustainable strategy the company will implement and how
- All members agreed with this statement
- An environmental group member stated that *'water companies have a corporate image and a corporate responsibility and reputation is the key'*
- A business developer stated that it is key that developers work closely with STW
- An environmental group member stated that STW relies on models that are fundamentally wrong and that STW has no opportunity to scrutinise that model from the inside

#### 10.4. Q21: Do you think our strategy currently focuses on the right areas?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative asked *'why have STW not met their targets?'* Is it due to climate change or other factors?
- An environmental representative highlighted the importance of STW making links which will enable them to invest in the right areas
- A council officer said future investment and development plans need to be looked at in detail by STW
- A council officer asked if STW can learn from *'competitors or past experiences?'*
- STW answered this question and explained its relationship with other water companies
- A council officer pointed out STW customers are unaware of STW's current performance and whether or not it is meeting its targets



- A council officer pointed out customers *'don't have a choice of which water supplier they use'*. S/he stated there is no competition and if there was, only then would a customer look at outcomes of their bills. S/he also felt customers *'don't worry about environmental issues as they have to use water and they pay for it'*
- An environmental group representative asked *'do customers consider what they pay and what they receive as being acceptable?'*
- A council officer pointed out that if organisations that are directly affected by the water industry aren't fully aware of what is going on *'how are customers expected to know?'*
- An environmental group representative agreed and suggested STW tell customers what it is doing by including information on bills

**Table 2**

- An environmental group representative commented that all elements of STW's strategy *'have a role'* and STW should *'seize the opportunity'* when, for example, they are right for the catchment type solutions. S/he added that the most costly measures could lead STW *'down a different path'*
- A council officer commented that *'inevitably'* STW should concentrate on its own assets but *'give due regard to other partnerships'*
- A council officer made the point that if STW does not have some plan of its own in place then *'nothing happens'*
- A council officer reported that within their authority there had been an up-skilling of people to improve the understanding of the WFD requirements, how it was aimed at authority officers and how they could contribute. S/he cited an initiative by Nottingham City, Worcestershire County Council, Wyre Forest Council
- An environmental group representative suggested that urban diffuse pollution was coming from STW sewers and was having an impact on the WFD. S/he urged STW to look at this urgently

**Table 3**

- An environmental group representative complained that businesses tag new proposals onto the directive every time the law changes which is not sustainable
- A council officer believed that STW's current approach is not sustainable and the company should look to make changes
- An environmental group representative commented that every business wants a certain model and are adverse to changing the model they have chosen
- A council officer highlighted that STW is *'trying to meet standards which are unobtainable and trying to fix problems it has no control over'*
- An environmental group representative suggested that STW should look at what similar companies are doing to get a wider picture of the landscape

- A customer representative stated that STW should invest in preventing problems and should *'so put up the money to eradicate pollution'*. S/he was aware that this is *'extremely hard'* but pointed out that this would save money in the long-term
- An environmental group representative was encouraged by catchment management work undertaken in this time period by STW. S/he added *'the tactic is to support a more holistic and realistic approach. Water companies can help get a positive outcome for stakeholders, so STW has to work to draw more organisations in.'*
- A customer representative pondered which was the best approach to take; *'do you take the smaller options first or go for the final solution at greater expense'*

**Table 4**

- Please refer to answer under Q19

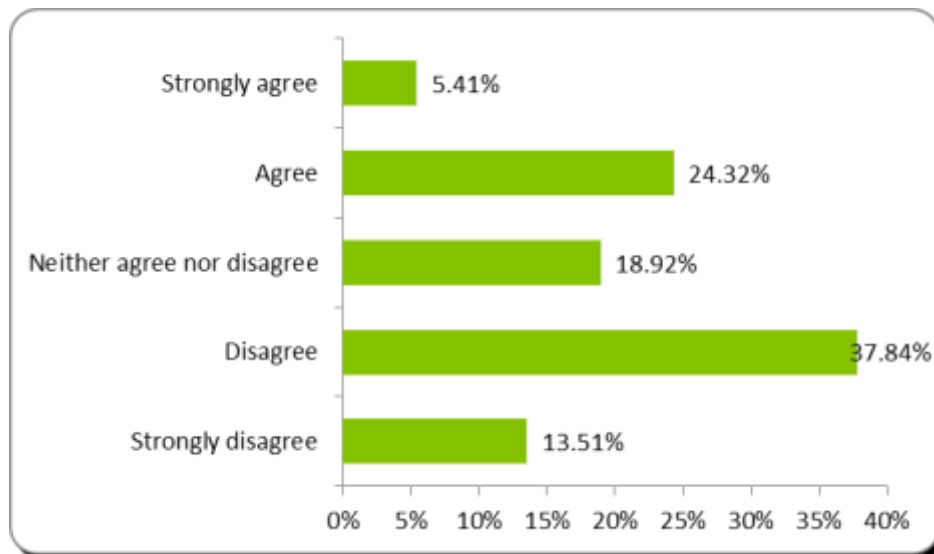
**Table 5**

- A council officer stated that s/he had not heard enough about what STW is doing
- It was felt that water flow will be affected by climate change and there needs to be more accurate models on them
- All participants agreed
- All council officers agreed that there needs to be more of a focus on the agriculture sector
- It was commented that the decisions the Government makes on agriculture are key to the future activities of STW; therefore STW needs to have a stronger lobbying presence

## 11. Ensuring healthy and sustainable rivers (Current priorities)

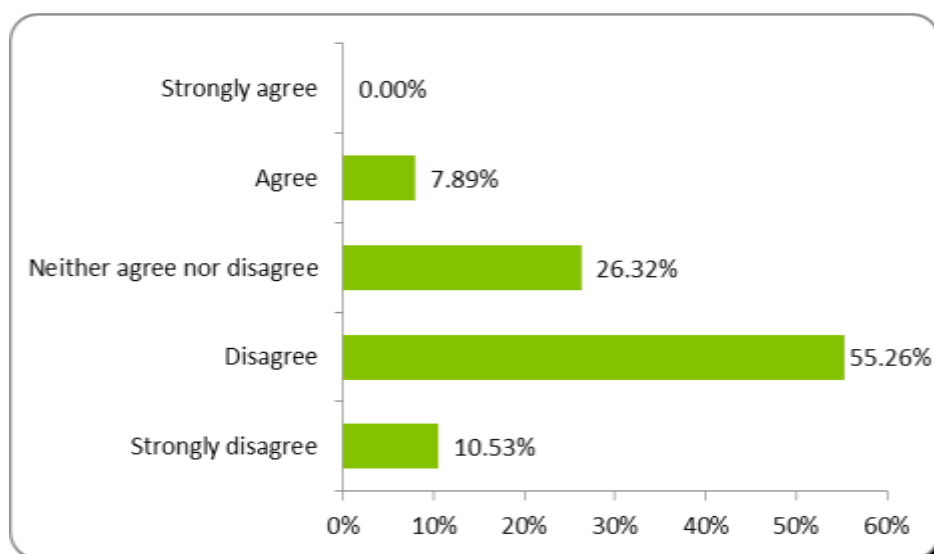
### 11.1. Q22: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

- *"We are currently investing enough money to improve river water quality"*

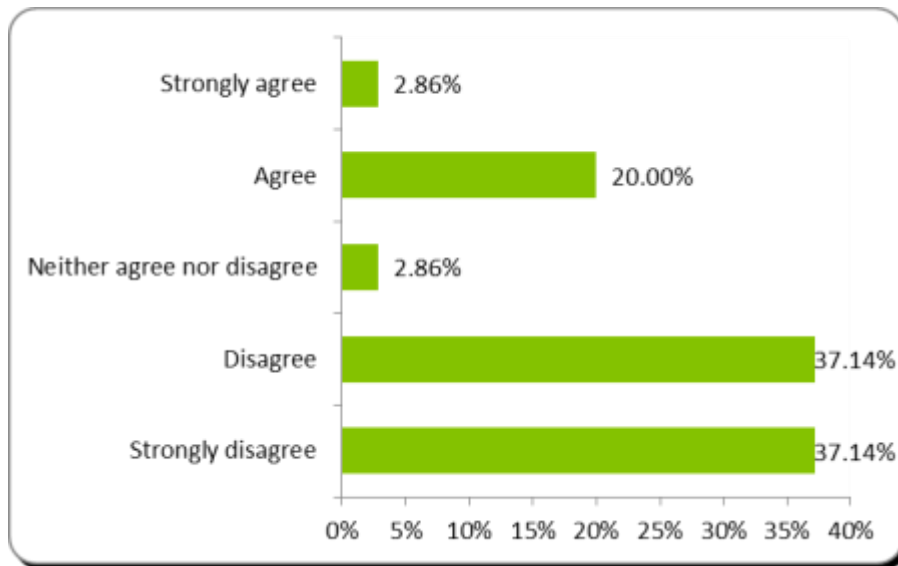


### 11.2. Q23: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

- *"We currently have the right balance of investment between our different assets to improve river water quality"*



- *Q24: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "STW should focus on its own assets rather than catchment solutions"*



## 12. Ensuring healthy and sustainable rivers (Future priorities)

### 12.1. Q25: What do you think of our approach to building our business plan in relation to how we are addressing the Water Framework Directive?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative commented on the '*river basin statutory consultation which will inform STW of what needs to be done and the best way to implement it*'. S/he said a mechanism is in place to add to and supplement the business plan. S/he pointed out STW faces a risk of jumping too early or waiting until its too late
- A conservation group representative highlighted the fact that the WFD is '*not starting from scratch*' as the river basin management plan is in place and the new the plan is just about '*everyone moving forwards together*'
- An environmental group representative was of the view it will be '*difficult to predict what the plan will state and contain*.' S/he was of the opinion that the river planning process would be best if phosphate is banned as it won't need to be taken out of source
- An environmental group representative stated it is not just STW's responsibility to ensure targets are met. S/he stated '*everyone's is a major player in ensuring targets are met*'. S/he felt land management practices may need to change to help ensure targets are met
- A conservation group representative agreed and commented '*agricultural industries need to help play a part*'
- An environmental group representative disagreed and felt there is a need for STW to look and ensure they play its fair share in meeting targets
- A council officer said they need to have '*some certainty*' if bills will be increased and agreed an incremental plan will need to be put in place
- A conservation group representative asked what is the time scale on the river basin plan

**Table 2**

- A council officer stated that, overall it was a '*good starting point*' but warned that, with possible new technologies, there may be alternative solutions but that warned that these may be '*in conflict*' with broader '*green policies*'. S/he added that further investment had a '*way to go*' and that it was important, early on in the investment period, to understand if '*you can achieve the standards*'

- An environmental group representative warned that, with lots of catchments, there could be a problem with meeting the WFD's requirements, for example with regard to phosphorous levels
- An environmental group representative made the point that if *'cleaner water was coming in'*, then the same technologies could continue to be used; whereas *'what comes out'* may need to be *'significantly cleaner'* to meet the tighter limits on level of things such as metaldehyde and aluminium in the water. S/he added that STW needed to *'understand the bigger picture'* in order to find the most cost effective and workable solution
- An environmental group representative commented that the *'very tight'* regulations created problems, particularly for farmers, in relation to the levels of metaldehyde, and that if it was banned, more potent chemicals may be used which would be much more dangerous to humans in the long-term
- A customer representative in commenting on slide 82 showing reasons for failure, raised the point that, while STW was responsible for a significant proportion, it was important the other sectors took a *'fair share'* of the responsibility
- A council officer reported that *'as a GI partnership, we take a multi-functional approach to the use of land and how the range of scale should be recognised i.e. a small development site or across the County/catchment area. Within that approach, in the future, we would welcome greater engagement with STW, particularly as in the medium-term we will move towards a GI strategy and implementation plan to accompany that'*
- A council officer went on to report that *'the Localism Act contained a clause that allows for the potential for the Government to pass on EU fines to local authorities that may be seen as contributing to failure.'*
- S/he added this clause had not been used previously and s/he was *'unclear whether it would happen in future but is a consideration for the local authorities; so it may be the same with the WFD which companies and councils will have a statutory obligation to deliver'*
- An environmental group representative commented that STW should *'fix what's broken'* to help achieve 'good status' and ensure *'no deterioration'*; adding that the WFD was the *'biggest enabler to ensure we do this.'* S/he also stated that there is lots of work that needs to be done within the water industry. S/he considered that the 21% where STW was the main source of failure, was a *'huge scale of issue'* and that judgement needed to be made on risk; balancing large scales of investment required for the next AMP against the risk that if STW did not get *'support through ministerial approval'* initiatives could be *'pulled and not much money spent'*
- An environmental group representative pointed out s/he would like to see STW identifying low risk schemes and easy wins, but warned that if *'no progress was made in the current AMP, there would be a huge amount to do in the next AMP'* which would result in significant increases in bills for customers

- An environmental group representative was of the view that with the catchment approach, it was possible to progress some of them *'early'* which might provide STW with some of the results it expected, plus the opportunity of learning from the experience
- A business group representative commented that many farmers were seeing increased levels of phosphates in rivers and these were often concentrated in local areas where there was a known problem. S/he advised STW to use knowledge and evidence from the Environment Agency, together with *'catchment walkovers'* to produce *'good evidence'*
- A council officer suggested that, as an alternative, STW might follow the Food Standards Agency's approach and *'get on board with large supermarkets, using reward schemes to reward farmers that meet standards'*
- An environmental group representative recommended that STW should select a range of the most appropriate approaches, either dealing with the 21% issue on its own, or in partnership with other sectors, such as the agricultural community. However, s/he warned that this sector *'might have enough to do on their own'*
- A customer representative reported that misconceptions were a key problem, adding that if STW addressed this issue, it might find *'other problems were addressed as well'*
- An environmental group representative commented that there was often confusion between urban diffuse pollution and misconnection

**Table 3**

- A customer stated that STW follows *'very conventional thinking'*, adding that a fresh approach is needed, which ought to be trialled. S/he suggested redirecting major pollutants to high flow rivers which will dilute pollutants naturally and save money
- A council officer answered, *'but STW can't achieve the standards despite the improvement works'*
- An environmental group representative talked about how far the achievable limits can be taken in that water could be diluted further but this is a more energy intensive process
- A council officer believed that STW should start processes now and increase bills soon, as delaying will *'cause a disproportionate hike later'*

**Table 4**

- An environmental group representative felt that STW is currently taking *'the right approach'* to addressing the Water Framework Directive
- A conservation group representative commented that *'it clearly makes sense to focus on the areas that STW is concentrating on already...the impossible measures imposed by some leading politicians are more worrying though'*
- An environmental group representative stated that *'cost benefit analysis is necessary'*

- A conservation group representative asked *'who is going to define what the cost benefits are?'*
- An environment group representative stated that *'with 15 years to go it could be an idea to make the most of the available time to trial alternative solutions'*
- A STW representative elaborated on this point

#### Table 5

- A council officer stated that STW should work more effectively with local authorities
- An environmental group member disagreed with this. He stated that STW is already doing this and that more is needed to change the situation
- A council officer stated that STW has to be educated as well on this issue
- An environmental group member stated again that STW needs to concentrate on building its reputation

### 12.2. Q26: What levels of improvement would you want to see between 2015-2020? And then 2020-2025?

#### Table 1

- A council officer said future bills will need to *'increase significantly.'* S/he would like to see the increase happening on a *'weekly/monthly basis.'* and was of the opinion that there is too much *'emphasis on bills from OFWAT.'* S/he feels OFWAT are being overly strict on prices
- A council officer stated that the increase of bills should be presented as *an 'accurate figure rather than an estimate.'* S/he would like to see more flexibility in the pricing system
- An environmental group representative agreed and said it is eminently sensible to have *'flexible prices'*

#### Table 2

- This question was cover under Q25

#### Table 3

- A customer remarked that STW will not get instant returns, it will build up
- A council officer commented that without being sure of where to invest, STW is in a difficult position as hindsight is not helpful
- A customer warned that STW's customers will want to see an *'instant return'* and won't want rising bills, so maybe STW should *'take more to begin, save that money and use it later so customers will complain less'*



**Table 4**

- A council officer felt that *'STW's interim plan is the way forward'* as an effective way to move forward to the next cycle
- Another council officer asked whether interim plans have the same level of certainty as long-term plans
- An STW representative explained the thinking behind this
- Another council officer asked why STW's business plan timing could not be brought into line with the WFD's timing
- A STW representative answered the question
- A council officer felt that an interim plan was too short-term and that STW should be thinking more strategically and should focus on the long-term
- An environmental group representative felt that an interim plan was *'a good opportunity to trial innovative technologies'*
- A domestic consumer representative asked about the cost implications of trialling innovative technologies. S/he went on to question whether the UK should be complying with an EU directive that is *'imposing'* additional costs on UK customers
- An environmental group representative was of the view that *'an increase in costs to secure outcomes that will result in improvements in our environment is a driver for us to bring out the improvements that we, as a nation, want to see'*
- A conservation group representative felt that it was important to communicate with consumers about what the benefits are for them
- An environmental group representative responded *'we should comply with a directive where it will be beneficial for customers and cost beneficial'*
- A council officer stated that a step change in investment is required in this area and that prices for water will have to go up
- A domestic customer representative responded *'I think that this will be unacceptable to customers'*
- Another council officer commented that even if not all of the trialling was successful STW *'can't give up'* on it

**Table 5**

- A council officer mentioned that the EA should have a leading role in coordinating environmental initiatives
- Another council officer said that there are areas where STW needs partners adding, *'sometimes it will be farmers; sometime it will be someone else'*

- A council officer and a business representative said that STW has '*the critical mass*' to make people listen to its message
- An environmental group member stated '*environmental stewardship schemes need to be monitored by STW. The way they currently work is a 'mess' and STW can help address this*'
- A council officer said that the targets imposed by the WFD are not realistic
- Another said that STW has not got the data at present for making projections about the future

### 12.3. Q27: What do you think Severn Trent's role is? What is the balance between us and others? How should we measure our contribution?

**Table 1**

- An environmental group representative was of the view that the EU is responsible for '*creating the plan*' but pointed out it is everybody's responsibility to ensure it is delivered
- A council officer said STW needs to show ambition and should take the lead by taking greater responsibility
- A council officer agreed and made the point that STW needs to be more '*upfront about their aims*'
- An environment group representative highlighted the fact that STW doesn't need to achieve a good status when meeting the WFD requirements if it is not realistically achievable. S/he pointed out, however, that STW will ultimately need to explain why targets haven't been met
- A council officer said councils don't know what is expected of them as there is '*no communication*' from the EA

**Table 2**

- This question was covered during discussions on Q25

**Table 3**

- An environmental group representative commented that standards may need to be '*tweaked*' to get a better overall solution.
- An environmental group representative highlighted that STW is in danger of '*working in isolation*' adding that '*everyone needs to do their fair share*'
- A council officer remarked that the message is not getting through to highways and highway drainage, so STW should strive to educate them

- A customer representative observed that the WFD seems to have been decided and not run past local government who don't feel like they have to comply to the directive

#### Table 4

- A conservation group representative said the answer to this questions *'depends on whether you put your consumer hat on or your commercial hat on'*. S/he felt that STW should look for the most cost effective way of tackling issues alongside more sustainable ways of doing things to save money in the long-run
- A conservation group representative highlighted that the EA also has a part to play in this
- A domestic customer representative stated that *'as identified in the morning session, STW needs to work much more closely with local authorities'*
- An environmental group representative felt that STW needs to carry out more investigation with regard to surface water issues to better understand this problem. S/he wondered whether STW has enough information about where surface water is coming from other than farming and whether this could be done remotely by enforcing a mapping programme to gain better intelligence of what is being discharged
- A council officer suggested that STW should work more closely with councils to capture data and keep stakeholders informed
- A local authority representative stated *'the only way you can measure your own targets is by measuring what goes in and out of your plants'*

#### Table 5

- All council officers said that STW is a key player and that the company should become better at working with its partners
- An environmental group member stated that STW has to deal with issues anyway because they will affect the company's reputation. It was agreed that STW needs to *'be a leader and assume the responsibilities because it is a key part of your business'*. S/he also went on to say that there is a case of priorities and people will not be able to afford an increase in their bills just because of the capitalist culture that we are living in
- A customer representative said that STW needs to take a lead role where there is partnership and that the company should assume the bulk of the costs that are incurred
- A council officer mentioned that people don't care about where water comes from and how it has been managed, only about the quality of their water at the end
- An environmental group member mentioned that *'the public is not interested in where the money goes and an increase in bills will anger them. In the short-term people will react negatively, but in the future they will rejoice for having acted on all these issues'*

## 12.4. Q28: Where do you think we should we focus our efforts? E.g. by Geography, by multi benefit?

**Table 1**

- A council officer stated they want STW to focus on the *'quick wins first'*
- A conservation group representative asked if *'STW has an ecology team?'*
- STW said yes but it was pointed out that this was a small team
- A council officer asked if there is *'any mileage'* in increasing the amount of resource devoted to ecology
- An environmental group representative commented they would like to see STW focusing on *'over performing assets'* by looking at ways to reduce usage. S/he wants to see STW taking a *'regulatory risk'* to make this happen
- A conservation group representative stated STW should form better partnerships which would enable them to take advantage of new opportunities. S/he was of the opinion that creating partnerships with local nature groups would be a good opportunity

**Table 2**

- A council officer commented that the *'Government wanted it every way'* and if the aim was to *'kick-start the economy to get capital investment going'*, and this was good for the community long term, *'why isn't the regulator saying get on with it and you can put charges up'*. S/he added that if it was acceptable for other utilities to increase charges so *'why not water.'* S/he was of the opinion that there was a strong political case for increasing water charges but that it was *'confusing'* as it seemed to be *'out of kilter'* with the other utilities
- A customer representative highlighted higher water charges as an important issue, as there were already *'groups of customers struggling to pay water bills'* which STW should *'bear in mind'*, and that it was essential for STW to explain to consumers how this would affect their bills
- A business group representative made the point that, although STW is working with *'eco system services'*, the only mechanism for additional funding was by increasing the water bill
- A council officer raised the issue of localism and pointed out that in some growth areas local authorities had *'pots of investments'*, for example the new homes bonus, and that they could possibly use these funds to provide *'better quality river water to help tourism'*, adding that *'it was in their hands to spend on whatever they choose'* but that *'some parishes may be interested in spending where it was more high profile'* and therefore had more of an impact
- A council officer asked STW about the community infrastructure levy and suggested a *'dual funding route from developers'* commenting that STW could perhaps look at it *'as an enabler for future investment'*

- A council officer responded that this was a complicated funding mechanism, adding that when developing a CIL, water treatment works were paid for by water bills rather than by the developer, so this approach would *'ramp the bills up.'* S/he added that his / her organisation's infrastructure delivery plans all had a green component. S/he was of the view that *'grey infrastructure'*, such as roads, should be on a *'par'* with green, as both delivered benefits but that *'grey wins every time'* while *'green issues end up at the bottom'*
- An environmental group representative was of the view that there were *'two objectives: to provide improvements and reduce deterioration'*, and of particular importance was *'connection to sewage treatment works using the current best available technology'*.
- A council officer additionally recommended that SWT should look at upstream measures, SUDS and the responsibility of others for their discharges

### Table 3

- An environmental group representative observed that the water quality model can give STW direction but wider questions need to be considered, for example, *'will the infrastructure hold up?'* and *'where can STW most efficiently put the extra treatment in?'*
- An environmental group representative remarked that s/he only expects STW to carry out capital works if there is a failing. S/he commented that *'increasing monitoring gives the environmental agencies a better idea of the efficiency of the assets'*.
- A council officer pondered what is being monitored. There are only certain water sources in the directive so could STW pollute a small brook not covered and still comply with the directive? S/he added that *'if the small sources are not monitored, then there will never be a true reading'*

### Table 4

- An environmental group representative stated that there is *'lots of merit in identifying certainties and near certainties'* and that, using this as a basis, STW should spread its priorities

### Table 5

- Most of the group was of the view that STW should focus its investment to areas where its measures impact the highest number of customers
- An environmental group member disagreed. S/he pointed out that areas where there is a good deal of tourism ought to be prioritised
- An environmental group member said that STW has to focus on areas that will bring more benefits to citizens and not just to the business
- All council officers said that STW must continue its good work

## 12.5. Any other comments?

**Table 1**

- No further comments

**Table 2**

- A customer representative stated that while the group's level of understanding was high, STW should *'bear in mind that customers will need more information'* so that it was *'key to break down issues to average consumers'* with particular emphasis on explaining the costs and *'implications to customers bills'*
- An environmental group representative commented that s/he hoped these workshops would help *'support STW's ambition to meet the WFD'*
- A business group representative added that his / her organisation was *'pleased to work with SWT on catchment areas where farming is identified to be a contributory factor'*
- A council officer stated that there should be *'more collaborative working'*
- A council officer said that it was *'encouraging that SWT is stepping outside its role'* to *'check'* on its progress with stakeholders

**Table 3**

- No further comments

**Table 4**

- No further comments

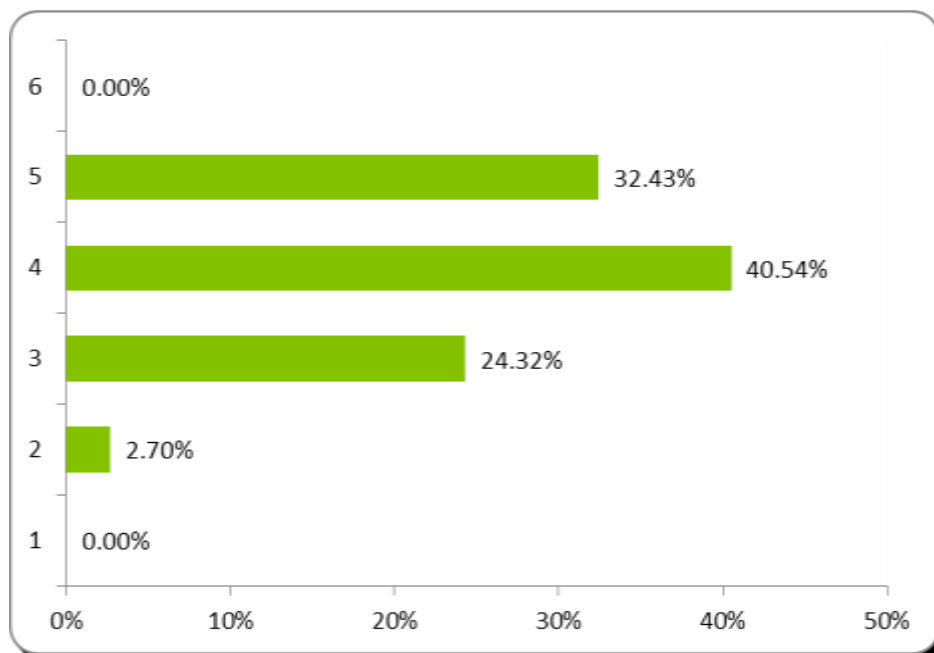
**Table 5**

- No further comments

## 13. Keeping our services reliable (Future priorities)

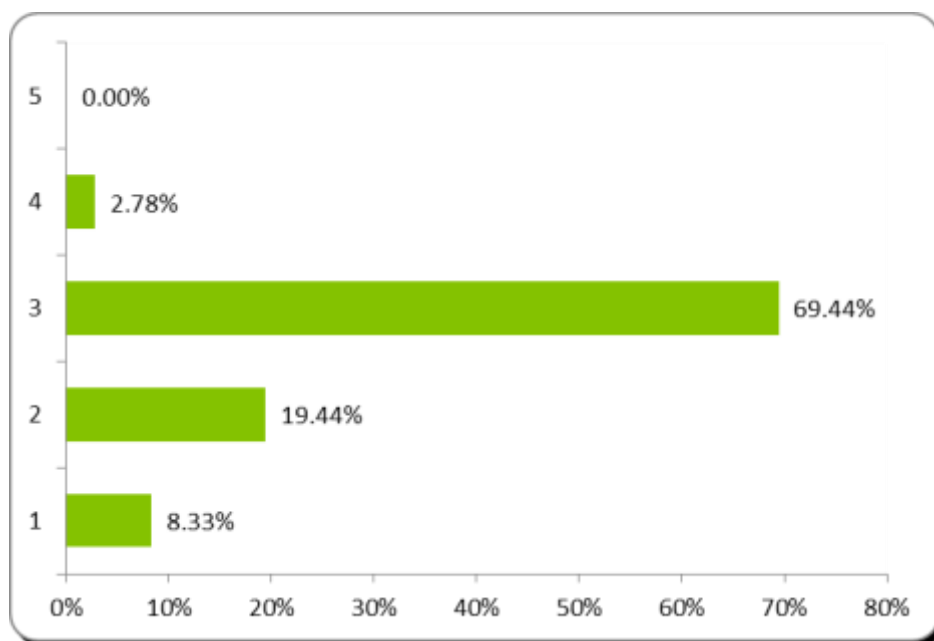
### 13.1. Q29: How much progress should Severn Trent make towards its share of achieving Good status between 2015 and 2020?

- *Where on the following scale would you be?*
- Nb. 1 = No progress and 5 = resolve as much as is technically feasible. 6 = Don't know



### 13.2. Q30: The 2010-15 river quality improvement programme added £9 to bills

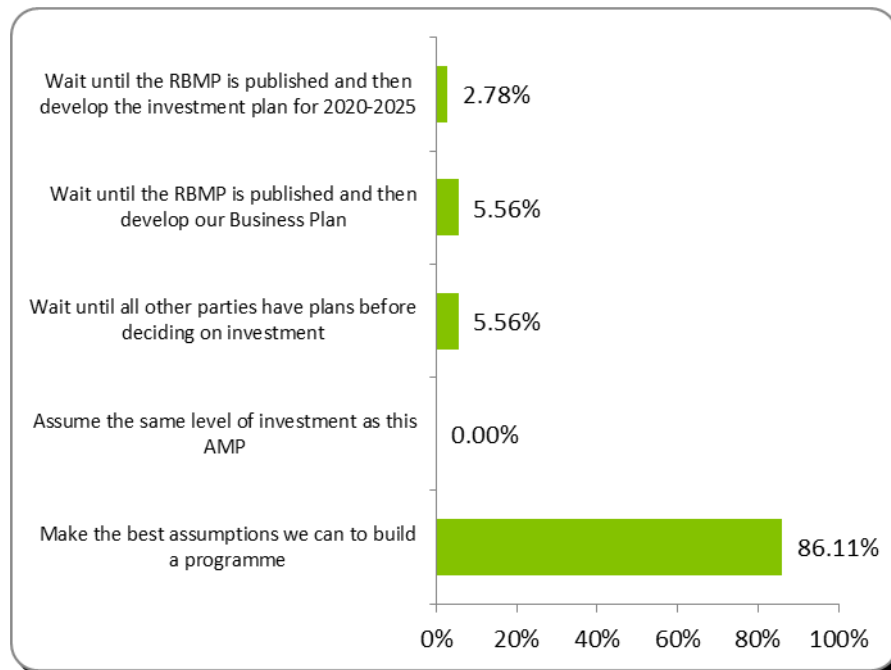
- *What level of further addition to bills do you think is appropriate?*
- 1 = Little or no change in river quality – less than a further £9 added to the bill
- 2 = Similar improvement in river quality – around £9 added to bills
- 3 = Significant improvement in river quality – around £18 added to bills
- 4 = The impact on the bill doesn't matter as long as we meet the standards
- 5 = Don't know





**13.3. Q31: Our environmental programme will not be agreed until 2015. We need to consult on our business plan from April 2013.**

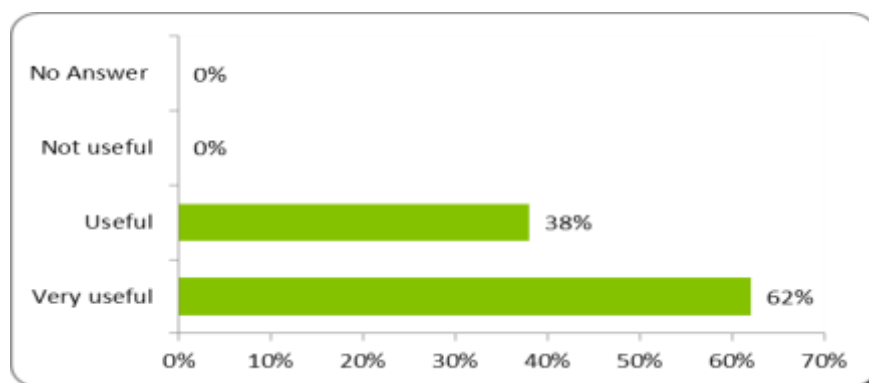
Which of the following options would you recommend?



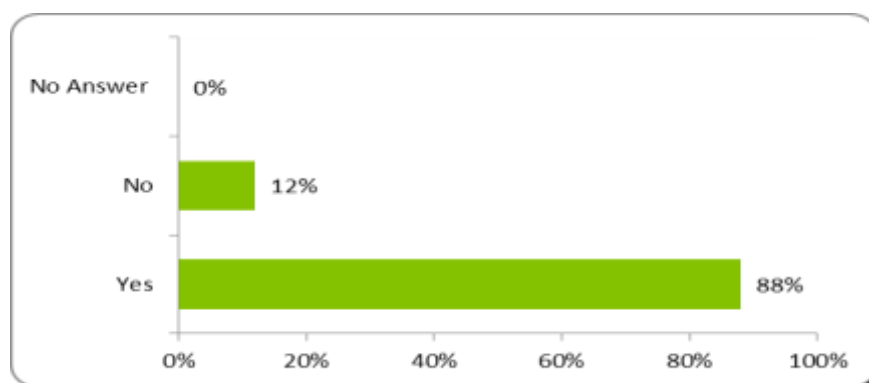
## 14. Appendix 1: Stakeholder feedback

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to leave their comments. These comments are shown below:

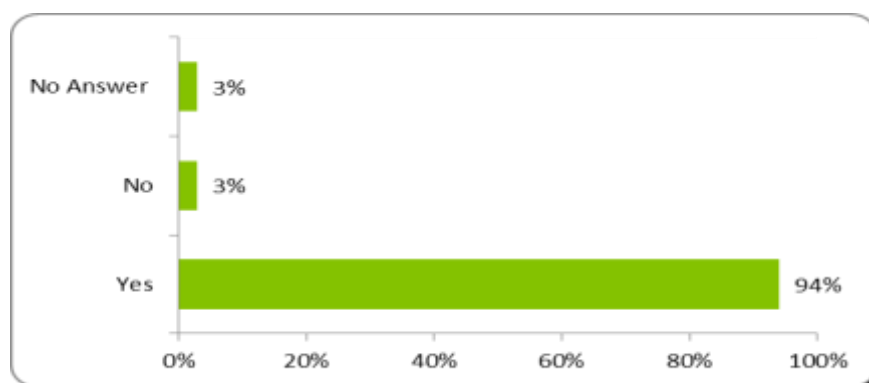
### 14.1. Did you find the workshop useful?



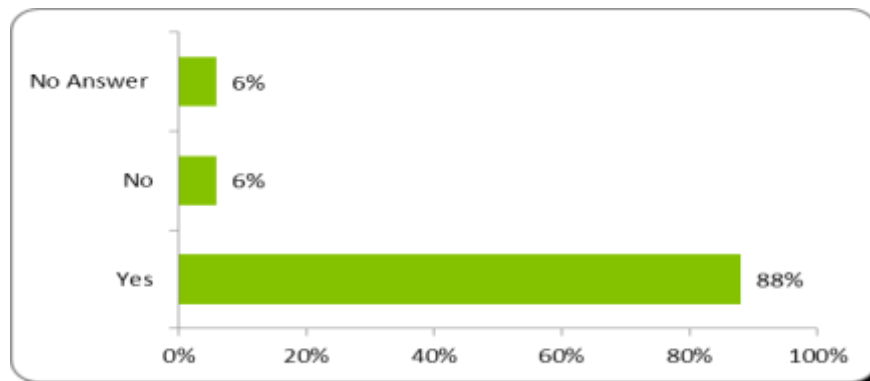
### 14.2. Was the venue conveniently located for you?



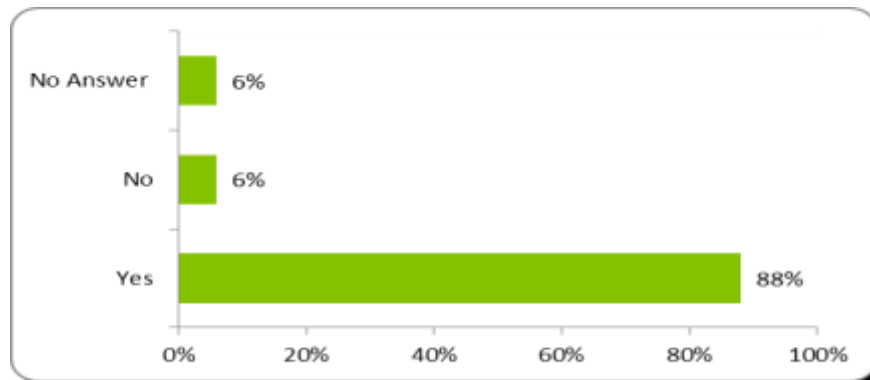
### 14.3. Did we provide enough information at the workshop



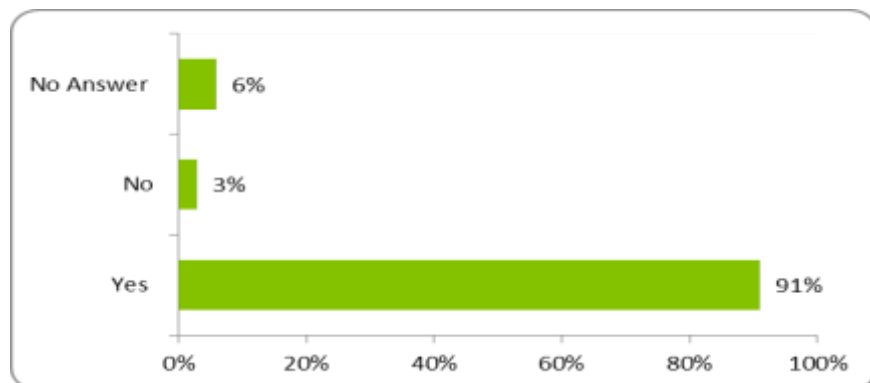
14.4. Did the information stands add value to informing you today?



14.5. Did you feel you had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss your views today?



14.6. Do you feel we covered the right topics?



## 14.7. Written feedback

A number of stakeholders left written comments on their feedback forms. A selection of these comments is shown below:

- *"Very interesting"*
- *"Well hosted and organised"*
- *"Great to have STW staff on hand to talk to about personal issues"*
- *"Very good. Genuine atmosphere of desiring open input, not just ticking the consultation box"*
- *"Gave great insight to STW thinking and the challenges they face"*
- *"Excellent facilitation, everyone had opportunity to speak"*
- *"Good to be amongst knowledgeable professionals"*
- *"Good format, well organised. Welcome the opportunity for discussion"*
- *"Good style. Very worthwhile"*
- *"I had little knowledge of the challenges of the WFD for STW"*
- *"Excellent venue"*
- *"Excellent program and wish other water companies would do the same"*
- *"Would have liked feedback sessions across the room"*
- *"Very well run workshop. It is clear that you are listening. You are being constrained to operate as a business. Water is more than a commodity"*
- *"Table well facilitated"*
- *"Ample opportunity to contribute to round table discussions"*
- *"Very well run workshop. It is clear that you are listening. You are being constrained to operate as a business. Water is more than a commodity. You impact on the wider environment and should receive more support from Central Government"*
- *"Good to be amongst knowledgeable professionals"*
- *"Please continue with your excellent work liaising with stakeholders across the midlands and assisting in the development of local flood management strategies"*