

Securing the resources for future prosperity: A leadership charter for water

This charter has been developed by the Water Taskforce, convened by Business in the Community (BITC) and chaired by United Utilities, to record a collective commitment by member companies to encourage businesses to become more resilient to water issues. It is the first collaborative project focused on securing the resources for future prosperity – water, energy, food and connectivity – in the short, medium and long term.

The Taskforce brings together water companies, interested businesses and key stakeholders, providing a forum to address important economic, social and environmental issues from a water perspective. In response to BITC's call for a new contract between business and society, Taskforce members have agreed that their organisations will:

- take on the challenge of helping their supply chains, customers and communities understand the importance of building water resilience and take practical action to build that resilience.
- work with other leaders to identify ways business can help innovate and create more sustainable livelihoods and prosperous communities through managing water.
- promote effective stewardship of a precious natural resource.
- use their networks to foster collaboration and build new partnerships to realise the positive impact that comes from businesses uniting to address particular issues.
- share their expertise and experience to influence the national debate on water-related issues affecting businesses.
- develop the case for action and demonstrate how a responsible approach to water stewardship creates value.
- encourage the right behaviours in relation to water, whether that is becoming water efficient, dealing with too much water or too little or improving water quality.

The Taskforce expects these leadership commitments will be realised through a series of collaborative actions that members will participate in. These include, but are by no means limited to:

- behavioural and technical projects focused on what is flushed into sewers that contribute to flooding;
- a demonstration project on resilient cities, bringing together key stakeholders from local government transport, community groups, health, retailers and utilities to explore how we ensure the places where we live and work are water resilient;
- a collaboration to support food retailers and manufacturers engage their supply chains with water stewardship, with a particular focus on agricultural supply chains;
- catalysing innovation by suggesting how research activity can be better targeted to help businesses be more water resilient.