



**Easy
Read**

Building a new reservoir

Tell us what you think



**An Easy Read version of:
South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO)
Statutory Consultation Brochure**

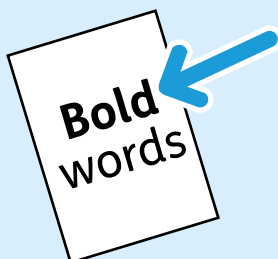
Easy Read



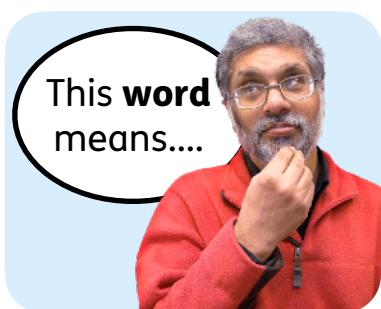
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

About this booklet.....	4
Why we need a new reservoir	5
Our vision	6
What the project would do	7
What we have done and what comes next	9
Designing the new reservoir.....	11
Building the reservoir	17
The environment.....	19
People who own land.....	26
What will happen next	28
Have your say	29



You can fill in a quick survey to say what you think about this Easy Read booklet:
<https://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey>

About this booklet



We are Thames Water. We provide water for most people in London and the South East of England.



We are working on projects to get more water for London and the South East.



This booklet is about one of these projects, a new reservoir in Abingdon in Oxfordshire.

A **reservoir** is a big area where water is collected and stored.



We want to know what you think about our plans for this project.



Please read this booklet to find out more about our plans.

Why we need a new reservoir



Summers are getting hotter and drier, with less rain.



More and more people live in the South East, and they all need water.



Plants and animals need water too, and we need to make sure they get enough.



If we don't make plans now to have more water, there might not be enough in the future

Our vision



A **vision** is how we want things to be in the future.

Our vision is that the reservoir would be:



- A place for people to enjoy that fits well with the local area.

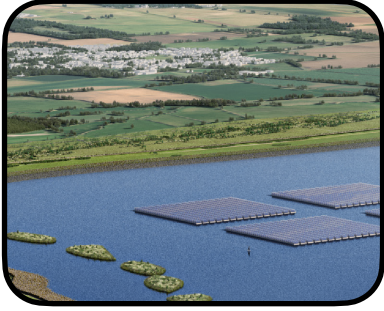


- A space for nature, with new areas for plants and animals.



- A place for people, with places to relax, walk or do sports.

What the project would do



We would build a new reservoir between the A34, the Great Western Main Line railway that goes from London to Bristol, the A338 and the River Ock.



The new reservoir would make sure there is enough water for up to 15 million people in the future.



We would take water from the River Thames when water levels are high.



We would send it through a tunnel to the new reservoir.



When the weather gets dry, we would send water back to the River Thames.



Businesses and homes would be able to use the water.



There would be new areas for plants and nature.



There would also be places for people to explore and do sports.



The new reservoir would make new jobs for people and bring more money into the area.



We would look for a new company to be set up to build and look after the reservoir

What we have done and what comes next



We have worked with organisations and people in the local area to think about how we can make sure there is enough water for the future, and look after the land.



Our plans have changed because of what they said.



We also have to get our plans checked by the organisations that look after water in the UK.



Because of what we have learnt from other projects like this, we think it would cost between £5.5 billion and £7.5 billion to build the new reservoir.



The new company we set up would manage the money for the project.



Customers of Thames Water, Southern Water and Affinity Water would pay the money back over a long time, as part of their water bills.



If our plans are agreed by the government, we will start building in 2029.



The new reservoir would start working in 2040.

Designing the new reservoir



This section of the booklet will tell you about how we have designed different parts of the project.

The reservoir and everything that makes it work



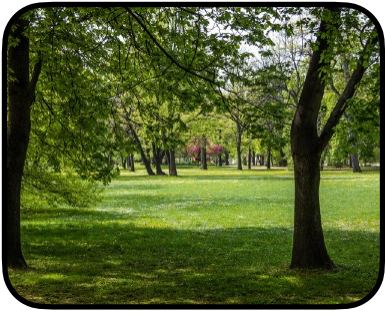
The reservoir is the most important part of the plan.



It would hold a huge amount of water.



There will be banks and slopes around the reservoir made of clay to hold the water in.



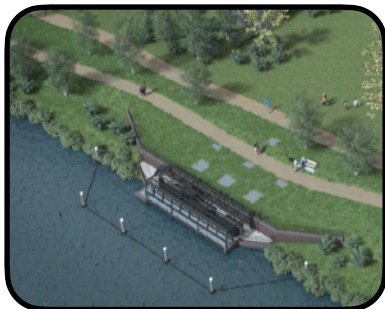
There would be grass and trees on the outside of the slopes, with paths for people to walk and cycle.



We would make sure the reservoir and the buildings around it were safe.



We would put fences around important buildings.



There would be tunnels and other buildings to control the water going in and out of the reservoir.



There would be a building that cleans the water for people to use.



We would get electricity to run the buildings from nature, like the sun and wind.

Environment



When the project is finished, there would be more places for plants and animals to live and grow.



We would plant trees and hedges to help wildlife and to make the reservoir part of the area.



We would make ditches to make new places for animals and plants that like to live in wet areas.



The ditches would also help stop the area from flooding.



There would be some parts of the area where people would not be able to go, to protect the animals and plants that live there.



We would build a new channel instead of part of the canal that would be lost.

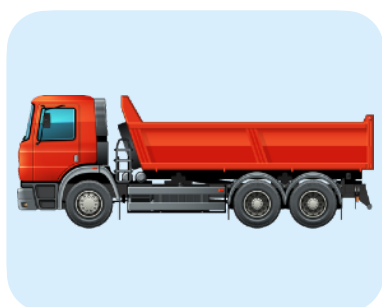
How people and traffic would move



We would build new roads and car parks to make sure people could move around the reservoir safely.



We would also make sure that emergency services like the police and ambulances could get around the area.



Some of the new roads would help lorries and other vehicles get to the area to build the reservoir.



We also want to make it easy for people to walk, cycle, use wheelchairs or ride horses around the area.

Places to relax



There would be 3 main places for people to relax and enjoy:

1. 2 lakes and a visitor centre.



One lake would be for fishing, and the other for swimming and sailing.



The visitor centre would have cafes, places to learn and places to play.



2. A water sports centre, for swimming, sailing and other activities on the reservoir.



There would be places to keep boats and to get them onto the reservoir.



There would also be boats there to help keep the reservoir safe.



3. A nature education centre, where people can learn more about the plants and animals in the area.



There would also be a cafe there.



We plan to call the reservoir the White Horse Reservoir.

Building the reservoir



We would make sure that the work to build the reservoir was done safely.



We would also try to have as little effect on the people and environment as possible.



We would try to use trains to deliver the building materials we use.



We would have to build new buildings for the people who work on the reservoir.



We would start building in 2029, and the reservoir would open in 2040.



We would build most of the main buildings from 2032 to 2043.

The environment



The **environment** is the plants, trees, water, air and wildlife that live in the area.



We want to make sure that our work does not have a bad effect on the environment.



We would check and try to stop the bad effects of what we want to do.



We would work hard to make sure that our work does not affect the water in the river or make floods more likely.



We would try to get as much of the material we need to build the reservoir from the local area as we can.



We would try to recycle as much rubbish as possible, but we know that some rubbish from the project would have to be buried in the ground.

We do not think that our work would have a bad effect on:



- Important places with a lot of history near the river.



- The health of people who live in the area.



- The chances of big accidents in the area.



- **Climate change.**

Climate change is all about big changes in the weather, like summers getting hotter and storms getting worse.

We think that while we are building the project, there may be an effect on:



- The insects, plants or fish that live in the river.



- Plants and animals that live on the land.



- How some parts of the local area look.



- Some of the soil and land around the reservoir.



- Traffic.

There may also be an effect on:



- Footpaths and green spaces in the local area.



- The air around the project.



- Noise in the local area.



We think these effects would stop once we have finished building the reservoir.

After 2 years:



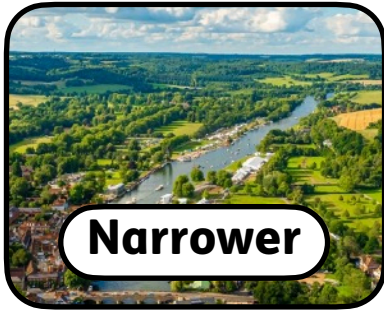
- The water would be cleaner and there would be new places for plants and animals to live and grow.



- The soil might be better because of the new plants and animals in the area.



- We would make sure that the plants and animals have safe places to live and grow.



We know that the project would make parts of the River Thames narrower, because of the ways the water would go in and out of it.



But we would try to make it have as small an effect as possible.



The project could have an effect on how some parts of the local area look.



So we are working on a plan to help make the project fit in with the local area.



We have also thought about the effects of other projects in the area, and would work together to deal with them.

People who own land



If you own land near the project, we may need to use some of your land.



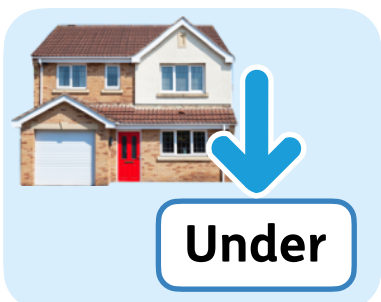
We would need to keep some land forever to make our intake, outfall, tunnels and pipes.



We will be sending letters to people who might be affected by this.



If we send you a letter, it does not mean we need to buy your home.



It might mean we need to buy some of the land deep under your home.



We will try to agree on buying the land with you.



We do not think our project would have any big effects on house prices.



If you are worried about this, you can talk to a member of our Land and Property team.

What will happen next



We will read what everyone says, and think about if we need to change our plans.



We will write a report to tell you about what we decide.

Have your say



We want to know what you think about this project.

There are a lot of ways for you to get involved:



- Fill in the online form on our website: www.thames-sro.co.uk/sesro



- Email us at: SESRO@ipsos.com



- Fill in a paper form and post it to us.

The address to send it to is:
FREEPOST SESRO CONSULTATION.

You do not need to put a stamp on the envelope.



You need to send us your feedback by midnight on Tuesday, 13 January 2026.



You can look at all of the information on our website: www.thames-sro.co.uk/sesro



If you want copies on paper, or in another language, contact us by:

- Email: info.SERSO@thameswater.co.uk
- Phone: 0800 033 6677

Events



We are having some events where you can:

- Learn more about the project.
- Ask questions.

The events are on these days:



- Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7HN, on Monday 10 November 2025, from 2pm to 8pm.



- Abingdon Guildhall, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JD, on Wednesday 12 November 2025, from 2pm to 8pm.

There are also events on these days:



- Sutton Courtenay Village Hall, Hobbyhorse Lane, Abingdon, OX14 4BB, on Saturday 15 November 2025, from 10am to 4pm.



- Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, Marcham, Abingdon, OX13 6TY, on Thursday 20 November, from 2pm to 8pm.



- Hanney War Memorial Hall, Brookside, East Hanney, Wantage, OX12 0JL, on Friday 21 November 2025, from 2pm to 8pm.



- The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BX, on Wednesday 26 November 2025, from 2pm to 8pm.



- Milton Hill House Hotel, Steventon, Milton Hill, Abingdon, OX13 6A, on Thursday 27 November 2025, from 2pm to 8pm.



There will also be online events.



You can tell us that you want to come to these online events by going to this website: www.thames-sro.co.uk/events



Event 1 will be on Tuesday 18 November, at 1pm to 2pm.



Event 2 will be on Monday 24 November, at 7pm to 8pm.

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