

# Thames Water documentary shines honest light on the sector's issues: it should be a welcome wakeup call

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Thursday, 20 March 2025

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Specialist recruitment consultancy, Water by Murray, has praised Thames Water for its transparency in the BBC 'Thames Water: Inside the Crisis' documentary aired this week, but has warned that it could still be too little too late.

The two-part documentary shone a spotlight on several major challenges within the organisation and across the entire sector, with issues around public perception, sewage, financial strains and ageing infrastructure being highlighted in stark detail.

However, Water by Murray believes that Thames Water should be praised for allowing the public to see the true scale of the problems it faces, something that few external commentators outside of the water industry truly understand.

Adam Cave, founder and managing director of Water by Murray, commented:

"The documentary has led to some additional scrutiny, but this should be seen as a wholly positive move and one that shines a light on the sheer scale and reality of the problems facing the water industry. I do think that we should applaud Thames Water and its Communications Director for taking this action as there are problems that most outside of the Water sector won't be aware of.

"More organisations within water should be as transparent over the external pressures and scrutiny they're facing if there is to be any real progress in addressing them. With more openness and communication, we might begin to see greater industry collaboration and the development of effective partnership models, which would allow a collective approach to tackling challenges around infrastructure, hygiene, pollution and, notably, skills shortages.

"I have personally never seen an organisation that has faced so much scrutiny open its doors to everyone so extensively, or seen this level of challenges laid out in such stark detail for all to see. This is a step forward in terms of strategic communications and stakeholder engagement, two historic and prominent themes which this documentary goes some way to addressing. Although it is likely too little, too

late to resurrect public trust. It is unfortunate such measures weren't taken quite some time ago and we hope this is the beginning of a continuing trend in our sector.

"This change of communication strategy and the transparency offered will go some way to reassuring another important part of industry, the supply chain, which has already faced significant pressure in the past.

"There are however some small signs of positivity on the horizon for the industry, notably with Thames Water believing further discussions with Ofwat could unlock market-led solutions for the recapitalisation of the company, which could reduce the need for the Competitions and Market Authority uplift referral. Hopefully, this move, and the documentary, will act as a line in the sand for real, tangible change."

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