

Box 5

We care for **THE ENVIRONMENT**



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

Why the Environment Agency?

The Environment Agency is one of the most powerful regulators in the world. Its purpose is to create a better environment for present and future generations.

It is made up of eight Regional Operations across England and Wales and a Head Office in Bristol.

The Environment Agency is a large organisation, employing more than 10,000 people across a huge range of specialist areas – all linked by a shared commitment to the environment.

Being with the Environment Agency means that every day brings the opportunity to make a difference. You will be working alongside the experts in their field in a positive and rewarding atmosphere.

Why Southern Region?

Southern Region has three area offices in Winchester, Worthing and Addington (near Maidstone) which cover the counties of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, East and West Sussex and Kent and a regional office in Worthing.

The weather is fairly mild and warm – well into the autumn months. From the New Forest in Hampshire, the 'Sunshine Isle' – the Isle of Wight, through the Sussex Downs to Kent's Garden of England there are beautiful walks to be had through stunning scenery with many opportunities to stop at 'cosy' country pubs!

The area is renowned for its rich archaeological heritage and has a wealth of designated areas of ecological importance including many historic attractions and nature reserves.

The coast is never very far away – watersports clubs offering windsurfing, canoeing, sailing and diving are easy to find. The coastline has many important ports and the Channel Tunnel takes you straight into the heart of Europe. There is an excellent road and rail network allowing easy access to London and the airports of Gatwick and Heathrow.

What's it like to work for the Environment Agency?

Only those with inside knowledge can tell you what it's really like. On the following pages five people from across the Region give you the low-down.

“Its purpose is to create a better environment for present and future generations.”



“Being with the Environment Agency means that every day brings the opportunity to make a difference.”

Andy Gilham

Role: Project Manager, Regional Capital Works Team, based in Worthing, West Sussex

Why did you join the Environment Agency?

I had started a degree in civil engineering at Kingston University and spent my sandwich year in 1992 with the Thames Region of what was then called the National Rivers Authority. At the end of the year they offered me a job and

I thought, "Why not?" So I stayed and finished my degree part-time.

What does your job involve?

Managing the design and construction of flood defence schemes, I'm there to drive the whole project forward whilst making sure it is being done in a way that is sympathetic to the environment.

In January 2000 I was promoted to Project Manager of the £5.5 million flood defence scheme for the area around Chichester. After weeks of heavy rain during the winter of 2000 it really looked as though Chichester would be spending Christmas under water for the second time in six years.

From early November up to Christmas we worked around the clock with the local authority, the fire brigade and other organisations to implement the first part of the main scheme – successfully preventing the city from flooding.

It's very rewarding to know that the work we are doing will make a real difference to so many people, saving their homes and livelihoods from the threat of disaster. However although we have a huge impact on peoples' lives, our work is often behind the scenes so sometimes people don't even realise that anything has been done at all!

Was it easy to find housing when you moved to the South?

It wasn't too bad. Not knowing the area was the hardest part. Fortunately someone suggested a list of letting agents for me to contact.

What are the best things about working for the Environment Agency?

The work is so varied and interesting. Responding during a flood event is exciting; you never know what is going to happen next. When the call comes through the adrenaline really starts to pump, this is working at the sharp end – protecting people.

What about the social side?

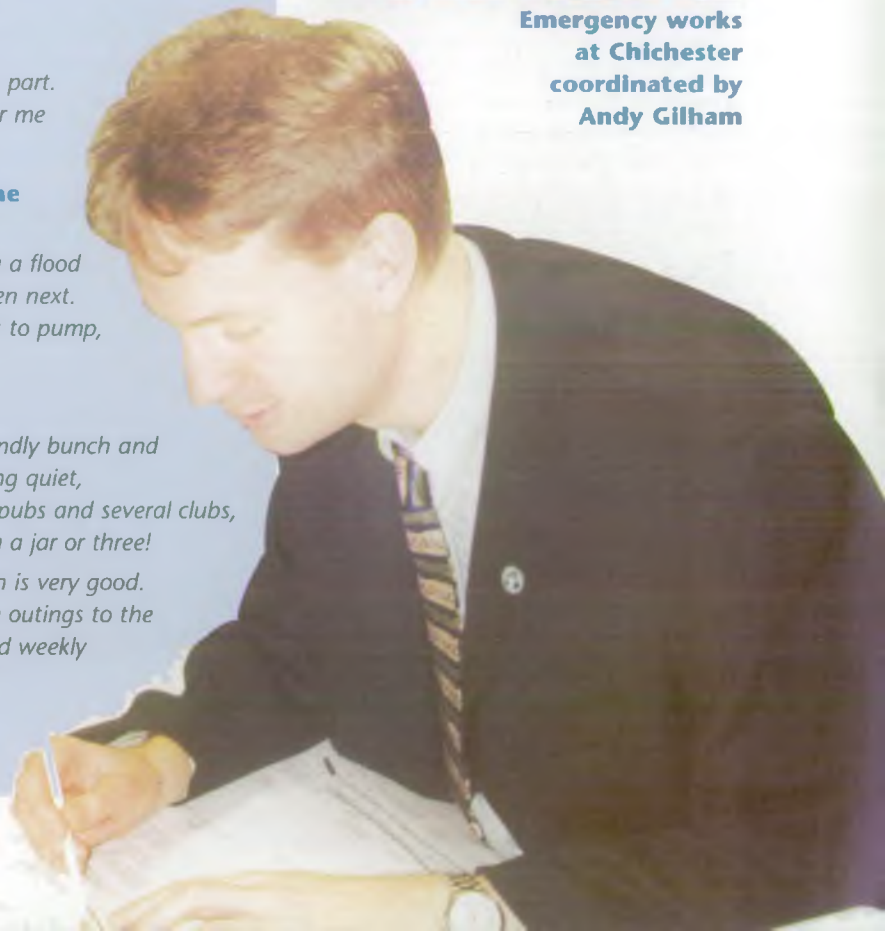
It's a nice place to work; the people here are a really friendly bunch and we all go out quite often. Worthing has an image of being quiet, but it's as lively as you want it to be. There are loads of pubs and several clubs, even one on the end of the pier, where we enjoy downing a jar or three!

The Agency has an active social club, the Hoppers, which is very good. There are lots of excellent and well organised events, like outings to the local cinemas and theatres, shopping trips to London and weekly badminton and football.

"It's very rewarding to know that the work we are doing will make a real difference to so many people, saving their homes and livelihoods from the threat of disaster."



Emergency works at Chichester coordinated by Andy Gilham



Helen Day



Role: Tactical Planning Officer, Sussex Area Office, Worthing

Why did you join the Environment Agency?

It just seemed the right place for me to be. It means I can use what I learnt at university and do something which helps the environment.

What does your job involve?

I've spent a year as a Tactical Planning Officer with the Environment Protection Team. My role involves – amongst other things – the processing of data from the monitoring of waste sites, dealing with waste returns from companies and waste minimisation projects.

It all sounds very desk based but I do get to go out on site visits and see how the Agency makes a difference on the ground.

I have also been involved with the Eco-Schools Scheme, which is a scheme the Agency supports to encourage children to take on projects which minimise the amount of waste their school produces or reduce the level of water used.

It is very rewarding – the children come up with some really original ideas and are dedicated to making them work.

I shall soon be moving into a new role as a Programme Co-ordination Officer in the Environment Protection Sampling Team. This will mean I get involved with the sampling runs and will co-ordinate the sampling programme, so I shall be out in rivers and at sewage works in my wellington boots fairly soon!

What are the best things about working for the Environment Agency?

The job is so varied, I work with so many different teams and it's really interesting. I really enjoy going out and about and meeting different people.

The people in the Agency are really friendly. There is a great social life here; the Southern Hoppers organise some really good outings and cheap cinema trips too. I've made so many friends whilst I have been here.

Carina Strutt

Helen Day

"The people in the Agency are really friendly. There is a great social life here."

Catherine McGee



Andrew Ogden

Role: Team Leader, Scientific Support, Addington, Kent

Why did you join the Environment Agency?

Having spent more than 23 years working in the water industry, in various different departments, I decided I needed a change of scenery. Working for the Environment Agency means that I can use a lifetime's experience in this field to do something valuable and worthwhile.

What does your job involve?

My team deals with the protection of groundwater supplies, contaminated land issues, landfill engineering, hazardous waste and waste exemptions. As the team leader of nine people, I take a more managerial role – looking after the administration of these areas and things like staff appraisals.

Role: Hydrogeologist for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, based in Winchester

How and why did you join the Environment Agency?

After finishing my MSc in Hydrogeology, I needed to find a hydrogeology job with flexible working conditions, because I have a young child.

The Agency operates a flexi-time scheme, which means I can work my hours around my home life – so if I need to come in later, I can.

What does your job involve?

I look after groundwater monitoring networks. I get to go out on site to 'dip' for levels, deal with applications for abstraction licences, arrange the drilling of observation boreholes and measure river flows.

It's a really interesting job and it's nice to be able to get out and about in the countryside on sunny days!

rine gauging flood levels

What are the best things about working for the Environment Agency?

There's a really good crowd in the office, they made me feel really welcome – my boss even sent me through local property newspapers before I arrived so that I could look for somewhere to live.

The Agency has been great about my childcare arrangements. My bosses are really supportive and understanding.

They are very keen on training too, and the training courses are good.

What about the social side?

I've made lots of friends within the office and we do go out from time to time even though most of the time I'm baby-sitting!

There's a lot to do in the local area – Southampton has some great shops! The New Forest is nearby for cycling and walking. It's only an hour and a half to London, so you can visit easily and not have to live there! There's the port at Portsmouth, so the Isle of Wight and France are easily accessible. Oh and there's the lovely Southern sunshine!



Two members of the Environment Protection team testing samples on the beach

"The Agency has been great about my childcare arrangements. My bosses are really supportive and understanding."

What are the best things about working for the Agency?

The chance to make an individual difference. The Agency is very much a 'Why not?' organisation rather than a 'No you can't', it's a very positive working atmosphere and this rubs off on the staff. Everyone is friendly and wants to help.

It's good to work somewhere where there is an air of professionalism and you know you are working with the people who are the experts in their field.

Flexible working is very helpful, the management are open to different ways of working to suit your needs – if you need to work from home or hot-desk it can usually be arranged. The Agency is family friendly and has family policies in place to help those with children, if they need it.

What about the social side?

Within the Agency the Southern Hoppers offer some good outings. Outside of work people meet up quite often, they are all so friendly and really get on well.

Kent is a lovely place to live, the weather is mild and we're not far from the beach. London is really close-by;



Andrew and his team

its only 45 minutes away and there are some big shopping centres in easy reach – Bluewater, Lakeside and Croydon to name just three. The road network is good; it's fairly straightforward to get across the country quite quickly.

Don't forget that we are really close to France too, it's just half an hour away through the tunnel and a short trip by ferry, so the Continent is really easy to get to.

"Flexible working is very helpful, the management are open to different ways of working to suit your needs."

Alastair Pitcher

Role:
Regional Project
Engineer, based in
Worthing, West Sussex

"It's a great opportunity to influence what's going on, to have a positive effect on the environment."

How and why did you join the Environment Agency?

I have always had an interest in environmental matters and joining the Agency gave me the opportunity to combine it with civil engineering.

I was offered a permanent post in Southern Region in 1995 as a Graduate Engineer, which meant I had a big move South. Fortunately there are some really excellent people working here and through them it was quite easy to find somewhere rented to live.

What does your job involve?

I manage the implementation of a variety of flood defence schemes for the Region. I've spent about a year and a half based on site, at Sandwich Bay in Kent where I was involved with a shingle recharge scheme and the SeaBee revetment scheme. I was seconded to Scott Wilson Consultants for seven months where I designed a quay wall in Cornwall and built flat vee weirs on the River Test for the Agency. I also get to go out and visit my schemes.

Another part of my job is that I'm one of the Regional Monitoring Duty Officers, a role that a team of us does in rotation. It means being on the end of a pager, liaising with the Met Office and being available 24 hours a day to keep the Area Offices up to date with the developing weather situation during a flood event. I enjoy doing it; it's what our business is all about.

What are the best things about working for the Environment Agency?

The people, it's a fantastic place to work. It's a great opportunity to influence what's going on, to have a positive effect on the environment.

I get a real feeling of achievement with the work I do here, it's so good to be able to say "That flood defence is mine, I did that." One scheme like that is a project we did to improve the defences at Aylesford Priory, a working 13th Century Priory on the River Medway. It involved placing a concrete base inside their Refectory Building, Pilgrim's Hall, which meant that a large area of medieval floor slabs had to be lifted and then put back in exactly the place they had been moved from – to the millimetre!

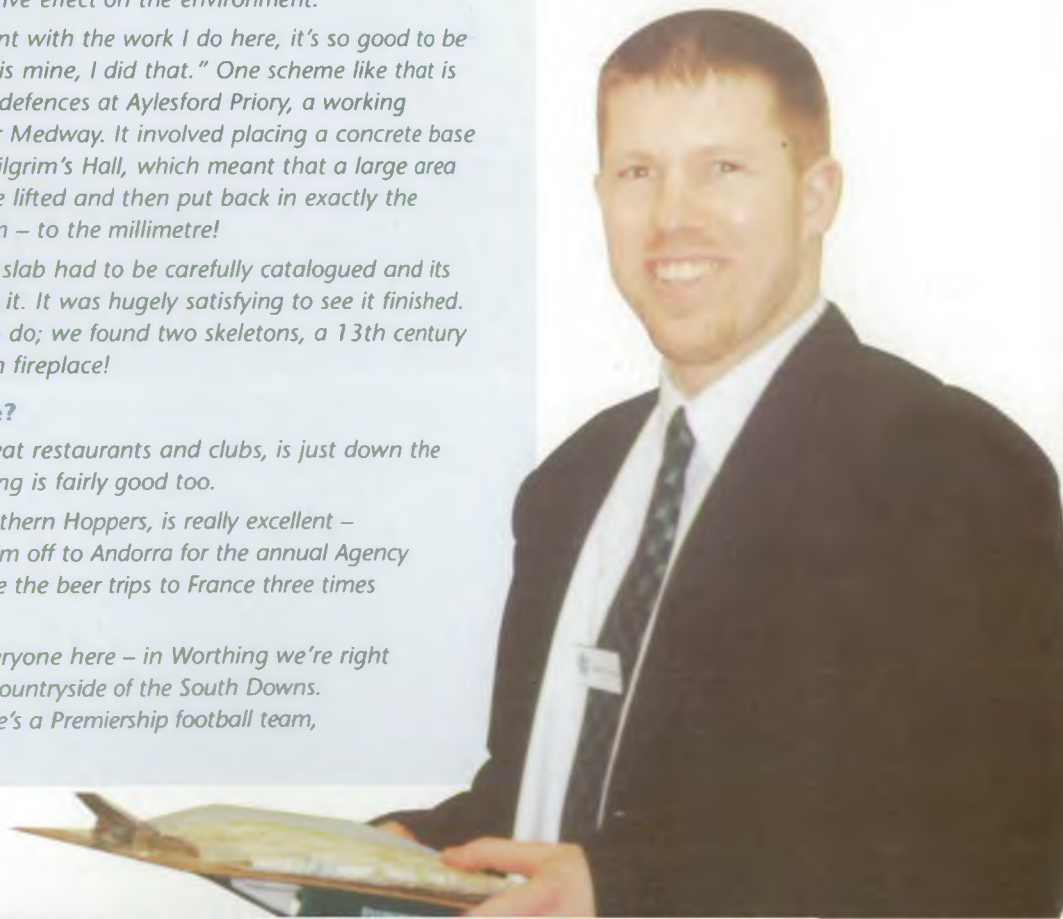
It was a painstaking task, every slab had to be carefully catalogued and its position recorded before moving it. It was hugely satisfying to see it finished. It was such an interesting job to do; we found two skeletons, a 13th century toilet system and an Elizabethan fireplace!

What about the social side?

Brighton, which has loads of great restaurants and clubs, is just down the road and the nightlife in Worthing is fairly good too.

The Agency's social club, the Southern Hoppers, is really excellent – they organise some great trips. I'm off to Andorra for the annual Agency skiing trip in March and there are the beer trips to France three times a year...need I say more!

There really is something for everyone here – in Worthing we're right next to the sea and near to the countryside of the South Downs. London is fairly close-by and there's a Premiership football team, the Saints, in Southampton.



What about training and benefits?

Career development

The Environment Agency wants people to fulfil their potential – to be the best they can be. You will be actively encouraged to manage your own career development, to seize opportunities to gain new skills and to widen your professional experience.

Everyone has a personal development plan, tailored to his or her needs and agreed with their Line Manager. To support the performance management process, the Agency runs its own career and management development programmes – investing significantly in training its employees to ensure that skills are kept up to date.

In addition to internal and external training opportunities, time is allocated for learning new skills and the Agency will financially support professional studies where appropriate.

Rewards and benefits

Salary – The Agency operates a competence and performance related pay system, which is reviewed each year. Your starting salary will be based on your relevant skills, competencies and experience.

Additional benefits

- Contributory pension scheme with life cover
- Generous annual leave entitlement starting with either 25 or 27 days and increasing with service
- Personal accident insurance
- Discounted private medical insurance
- Flexible working arrangements, for example flexitime, job share or part time hours
- Generous maternity and paternity schemes
- Relocation assistance where appropriate
- Free parking and subsidised restaurants at many offices
- Most regions have Sports and Social Clubs which organise a wide range of activities for members
- There are a number of national sporting events, which are sponsored by the Sports and Social Clubs, for which paid leave is granted by the Agency



"The Environment Agency wants people to fulfil their potential – to be the best they can be."

Who is the Agency looking for?

Individuals with a **strong customer focus**; achieving solutions that everyone agrees with is rarely simple. Can you balance conflicting interests and make even-handed, analytical judgements – having considered *all* the arguments?

The Agency needs **team players**. Whilst it is important to be able to work on your own initiative, you will also be expected to share information and be receptive to the contributions made by others. This sharing, collaborative approach is an important part of the way the Agency works.

Working with the Environment Agency you will be tackling some of the most important issues facing the planet. That's why we need people with **fresh ideas** and a passion for their work, whatever their background or skills.

Your challenge will be to help to make a lasting and positive impact on the environment. In return the Environment Agency will provide you with a stimulating and challenging career with rewards that recognise your experience and commitment.

For further information on the latest employment opportunities with the Environment Agency see www.environment-agency.gov.uk

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West Sussex BN11 1LD
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Wessex Business Park
Wessex Way
Colden Common
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Orchard House
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Addington
West Malling
Kent ME19 5SH
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Fax: 01732 875 057

SUSSEX AREA OFFICE

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Saxon House
Little High Street
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 1DH
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Fax: 01903 215 884

ISLE OF WIGHT

Tel: 01983 822 986
Fax: 01983 822 985



— Area Administrative Boundaries

- - - Regional Boundary

● Area Office

▲ Regional Headquarters



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NATIONAL LIBRARY &
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SOUTHERN REGION

Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road,
Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1LD

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

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0845 933 3111

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
FLOODLINE

0845 988 1188

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
EMERGENCY HOTLINE

0800 80 70 60



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