

Southern Water responses to questions raised by Guestling Parish Council following a site meeting held

18th February 2020.

- What is the minimum volume of waste water flow for the treatment works to operate effectively and efficiently - to guarantee a continuity of bacterial treatment?

25- 30 properties.

- How many properties have connected to date?

79 applications have been received to date, of which 66 have been commissioned and are fully connected.

- The Planning permission RR/741/CM - RR/2014/2177/CM was for a water treatment plant. There was and still isn't any mention of a temporary storage facility with tankers running through the village. Is this not a planning violation?

In order for the treatment works to operate we needed a minimum level of flows to support the treatment process. Therefore a decision was made to delay the building of the treatment works until such time as sufficient connections had been made. In the interim, along with all other water companies in the UK, we have had a challenging determination by our regulator as to what we are able to spend on building and maintaining our assets over the next 5 years. This has resulted in a review of all proposed spending, and as a part of this review a possible alternative has been identified for Three Oaks involving building a pumping station on the site of the proposed treatment works and transferring flows via the existing sewer network to the existing treatment works in Hastings. We are currently looking at both options to assess the best solution, and are seeking to implement the final solution as soon as possible.

It was always recognised that tankers would visit the treatment works site, though it is acknowledged that the number of visits envisaged would be a lot less than those currently being experienced. We apologise for this temporary disturbance and are looking at ways to mitigate the impact until a final solution is built.

- The horrendous smell of sewage that is outside my house (Salehurst Butchers Lane near S/W entrance) and invades into the inside of my house so all we can smell is sewage. I would say this happens about 2 to 3 days of the week. Usually Saturday, Sundays and Mondays but sometimes other days. It is not blocked drains as these have been checked by Southern Water when I last complained. It is not coming from the sewage works it seems to be coming from the manhole in the road just by my drive.

We will investigate the concern raised and report back in due course.

- Would you please pass onto the Southern Water representative our unhappiness of the state of Maxfield Lane at the very top which was used to gain access to their site they had in Charles Field. There were 8 wheeler lorries entering the field weighing approx 32 ton loaded with various aggregates and other materials. We know how badly 8 wheel lorries screw the ground up when turning into a tight access. Also diggers and dumpers using the same entrance, this was in use for more than a year. The then management which changed often, some very helpful and polite, whilst others down right rude told the residents of Maxfield Lane that on completion and vacation of the site that the access at the very top would be made good and Tarmac laid to below the gated access. This has never happened and has been left with just a stone covering and is now full of large holes. The promised job has never been completed.

Though the first part of Maxfield Lane was tarmacked, we note that there is a short section of road up to the field gate that wasn't. We will look into whether this section can be finished with tarmac.

- We wish to bring to their attention that since Southern Water reinstated the field and vacated that area we have noticed a constant flow of water running off the field and down Maxfield Lane. This did not occur prior to Southern Waters works and use of that area as a temporary storage yard. Needless to say the erosion of Maxfield Lane is worse than ever. The residents have to maintain this Lane themselves and we are not happy and neither impressed. Right from the very start of the Mains drainage project Maxfield Lane residents were not given any thought or consideration. In fact due to the drainage not coming down the lane management were totally unaware of our existence. It was only when they made to start and we introduced ourselves did they know we were here.

As part of the reinstatement the sub-soil was cultivated to depth to break up any compaction caused by the works before the topsoil was put back. The ground is clay and so is not naturally free draining and it should be noted that the rainfall this year has been exceptional, resulting in excessive run-off from land throughout the region.

We will however review this with the landowner.

- Where the pipe runs across the field at the rear of the houses in Butchers Lane, there is significant flooding and water pooling where the works have scared the land. There was never a problem prior to the works. While the contractor (Ewald) admitted it was an issue, it seems to have been forgotten about.

See above

- There is a "Sewage" smell is believed to be coming from the chamber in the corner of the field at the back of the pub.

We will investigate the concern raised and report back in due course.

- Please explain why soil was removed from the site and taken elsewhere. When "new" soil was brought in, some of it contained Japanese Knotweed.

Southern Water adheres to strict guidelines when importing or exporting materials and always from controlled and certificated sources. We believe there is one garden where we have agreed to undertake a regime of Knotweed eradication for which there is a management plan in place.

- During our first two years at Oakwood during the sewer works the roadside frontage condition had deteriorated significantly. Although this is not entirely due to Southern Water and the ongoing works during that period, the following were certainly contributing factors:
 1. Vehicles, plant and equipment, most significantly dumpers and the road sweeper regularly turned in the driveway and this has destabilized the already poor concrete surface
 2. Residents obliged to park on the road outside Oakwood during the works by the pub have eroded the verge to the extent that the water stopcock cover is now quite close to the road edge
 3. The frequent water main bursts resulted in running water eroding the road edge and the granite setts causing them to displace.

During the next few months we will be remodelling the property frontage, drive way, installing new crossover and a new kerb to the length of the property. In my view it would be appropriate for Southern Water to make a contribution to the cost of the kerb.

During 2019, I had spoken repeatedly to John Awdry and Barry Woodhams about this and in spite of initial favourable responses nothing came of it. I would appreciate if this could be added to the list.

Our contractors reviewed the situation at the time and advised that in their opinion the deterioration of the frontage was not as a direct result of the works, which is acknowledged by the resident.

- The contractor removed agricultural soil from the working area and took this off site. They also replaced this with soil from off site. This was witnessed by Cllr Peter Munro and others. Ewald Smit also agreed that this had taken place. This is totally illegal unless movement licences and detailed soil analysis is obtained. In spite of various requests Southern Water have failed to provide written authenticated documentation. This is viewed very seriously by Environmental Agency DEFA and the NFU. It could have ramifications for years to come.

We are in the process of arranging a meeting with this gentleman to discuss all of his concerns.