



Update from the Pan  
Parish Forum Meeting  
7 Dec 23

On Thursday last week, Southern Water (SW) updated the Pan Parish Forum (PPF) on progress against the objectives agreed with those parishes astride the Pill Hill Brook. Nick Mills, SW's Head of the taskforce responsible for 'cleaner rivers and beaches' was supported by project management and technical experts, including our own 'Big Glenn' McGubbin.

**The bottom line:** SW have made good progress on preventing infiltration – still much to do; there has been no overpumping in this groundwater (GW) season; they have emerging longer-term plans to fully resolve storm overflows in our area; there has been little improvement in SW's direct communications.

## The detail ...

SW have deduced from the original six commitments there is a single aim '*to protect the environment and stop the disruption*'; this captures the essence of what we want. They have prioritised their works to stop infiltration, working progressively from Kimpton, down through Thruxton, East Cholderton, and Ampport to Monxton. Scanners, CCTV and boreholes have been used to understand how their network is affected by GW infiltration. They have completed works to: seal 1.3kms of public sewers (30%) and 26 manholes (13%) and 2.6kms of private drains (65%); and investigate and monitor the temperature and quality of the water, although getting meaningful data from SW is still a challenge. They have used new techniques to seal the network and learned important lessons about what does – and doesn't – work. This has reduced the number of tankers, for example at Mullens Pond from fourteen in 2021, to two in 2023. You will appreciate that the significant disruption this calendar year from tankers and road closures was necessitated by the high levels of rainfall, by their works and more recently by the major leak near Abbots Ann. Even one tanker at Mullens Pond creates huge disruption to those that live nearby as this photo shows.



This view (7 Dec 23) down Wiremead Lane to Mullens Pond shows that the disruption from tankering at night is hugely significant – and local residents have endured this impact for much of this year.

In early-2024, SW's attention returns to Fyfield, Kimpton and Thruxton, where their monitoring data shows more work is needed.

SW are considering their longer-term options. They could provide mobile treatment facilities and overpump; think '*MP with improved treatment*'. Initial results are promising. They are alternatively also considering creating two wetlands areas around Stanbury Road and Mullens Pond pumping stations, but the business case is far from proven and permitting and third-party agreements are not insubstantial hurdles. The PPF hasn't yet been asked for a definitive view and would expect SW to consult locally beforehand. It's too early to get excited about, frankly!

It is also clear that we must encourage SW to be more proactive with their communications. They need to understand what their customers want to know, about incidents and about their routine works, and we can certainly help them.