

SOUTHERN WATER/PAN PARISH FORUM

Notes from Quarterly Meeting held 25th April 2023

Present:

Southern Water	Local Parish Councils
Nick Mills - Head of Storm Overflow Taskforce Keith Herbert - Pathfinder Lead Floyd Cooper - Operational Manager Hants Glenn McCubbin - Local Lead (MTS)	Chris Harris - Amport (Chair) Klaus Tamke - Kimpton Richard Munday - Thruxton Sally Leech - Quarley Mike Cleugh - Monxton John Heather - Abbots Ann Peter Heslop – Upper Clatford Alan Willens - Goodworth Clatford David Drew - TVBC Cllr Harewood Ward Maureen Flood - TVBC Cllr Anna Ward Chris Donnelly - HCC Cllr Andover West Janet Wright - Secretary to PPF

Apologies received from:

Phil Boyes - Fyfield
Peter Christie - Thruxton
Joanna Ferguson - Quarley
Keith Broomfield (EA - Solent & South Downs Area)

1. Welcome & Introduction:

Chris Harris (CH), Chair of Amport Parish Council, and co-chair of this body, opened the meeting with the following statement:

Welcome to everyone on this quarterly meeting of the PanParish Forum, the PPF. I am Chris Harris, Chair of Amport Parish Council, and I act as co-chair of this body. Welcome to Alan Willens from Goodworth Clatford PC, which is considering if it should become a full member of the PPF, John Heather of Abbots Ann PC and Sally Leech of Quarley PC who is taking over from Joanna Fergusson.

We have apologies from Keith Broomfield of the EA (which has provided information to us on water quality to discuss later).

The PPF has been continuing the regular calls in recent months involving Janet Wright (our secretary), Mike Cleugh, John Heather and others from the PPF, and Keith Herbert, Glenn McCubbin and others from SW. Janet reports regularly to each PPF member after those calls. We as PPF members in turn need to take back positive messages to our communities on the work being done and the good management of SW's plans. Managing expectations in our villages remains crucial.

The PPF wishes to thank Simon Parker, SW's director of asset management, for making the time to present SW's future plans & challenges to us on 30th March. The promised report on the discussions will hopefully be circulated shortly. Janet and I would welcome

further thoughts from the PPF on how best to hold SW accountable for the commitments made.

Recent weather conditions have been such that we have had high levels of groundwater in the catchment, but not to the degree that we have had very many tankers on the roads as in previous years, or any overpumping. SW can provide their report on their experiences of these events, and a summary of the works that have not been possible this year. The PPF are keen to assist SW in their relining programme & wait with great interest to see what difference the total relining (public & private) network north of Amport has on infiltration issues suffered for so long by parishioners.

A point of concern to us remains Mullens Pond. Whilst we understand the difficulties that have been faced here, the PPF does not wish the current situation to be repeated next year. Hampshire Highways and SW need to commit to resolving the problems.

As to the challenges moving forward, we came close over the New Year to an overpumping situation with the spill at Waterloo Bridge. The situation on the road closure was resolved. However, the PPF remains concerned that should conditions repeat themselves next season, we run the risk of another prolonged road closure of Wiremead Lane by Amport Fisheries. We are aware that SW's relining programme and other steps should further reduce this risk, but should SW not be getting a S278 application "approved" such that any changes to the road layout/speed limit could be implemented swiftly should the need arise?

When relining works recommence (f/c for May I believe) the focus will be on Thruxton High Street which will cause major disruption. Good resident communication will be key to success.

The PPF remains very supportive of SW's idea of using a wetland to control the sewage flow, and we would welcome any news on that.

The PPF wants to see a sustained commitment to water quality improvement in the Pillhill Brook. We understand that information on the measurement and testing of the water in the Pillhill Brook is emerging – including from the EA.

The PPF still wishes to see a disaster recovery programme scheduled at some point in the coming months.

With that, over to SW. Please do ask if points arise during their reports.

With no comments on this statement from the Parishes **CH** handed over to **Nick Mills (NM)**, SW Head of Storm Overflow Taskforce, who took the opportunity to restate SW's commitment to resolving the groundwater infiltration issues faced by the PPF. The Pathfinder Project is important to SW and £50M of SW's £1.9B Storm Overflow budget for the period 2025-30 has been brought forward and channelled into groundwater infiltration issues [Accelerated infrastructure delivery project: draft decisions - Ofwat](#). Pathfinder progress is regularly reported directly to SW's CEO Lawrence Godsen & recruitment is underway to strengthen the Keith's Pathfinder team. **Mike Cleugh (MC)** said that there had been no tankers in Monxton this season and wanted to thank SW for that.

Keith Herbert (KH) presented the agenda:

1. Intro from Chris and Nick
2. Groundwater (FC)
3. Flow restoration (FC)
4. Water Quality (FC)
5. Emergency exercise (FC)
6. Monitoring (KH)
7. Programme update (KH)
8. Wetland Learnings (NM)
9. Q&A

and then handed over to **Floyd Cooper (FC)**

2. Groundwater (FC)

Groundwater (GW) levels were high but not as high as in previous years. A clear correlation between GW level and pump runs can be seen (slide 3). **FC** stated that there had been an unusual pattern in GW behaviour this season. Usually when the trees come into leaf it marks the end of GW season but there had been an unexpected second peak in GW levels this season. With the recent spills in Kimpton (see 3. Flow Restoration below) water monitoring sondes were being reinstated at Mullens Pond.

A discussion then ensued on the risk of overpumping and its potential impact on water quality. **Klaus Tamke (KT)** asked about the ammonia level tested at the spills. **FC** replied that levels were within permissible limits - < 0.5 ppm. **Cllr David Drew (DD)** asked if this was ammonia as NH_4 , causing the most risk to health. **NM** confirmed that it was.

DD then asked what was causing the fluctuations in pump runs. **FC** explained that under normal conditions pumps only switch on to assist normal sewage flow but in GW season pump runs were dictated by the speed in which the pump well fills. **Peter Heslop (PH)** asked when the pump is beaten does that indicate that the pump is coping or not? **FC** replied that if the pump was switching off this might indicate it was coping but it was difficult to tell.

What happened in drought conditions? **Cllr Chris Donnelly (CD)** asked if raw sewage was more difficult to pump. **FC** replied that under normal conditions it was not but that wet wipes & other undesirable 'rag' could cause problems.

Richard Munday (RM) raised a concern about abstraction from Thruxton Down Farm. Could this impact upon water levels in the Pillhill Brook? **FC** said that SW were not aware of this and would investigate.

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.1: Investigate water abstraction operation at Thruxton Down Farm - FC TBA

3. Flow Restoration (FC)

The power upgrade (installation of an electric pump) at Stanbury Road WPS is on hold whilst SSE obtain a EA works permit - required when working in close proximity to a watercourse.

FC stated that in response to the recent spills in Kimpton a tanker had been deployed initially to Stanbury Road WPS and now adjacent to Kimpton Manor with the permission of the landowner.

Unfortunately it had not been possible to do a closed test of the new mobile UV filtration unit because at the time there had been insufficient flow in the pump well. It has since been removed as SW still feel the risk of overpumping to be low. **KT** circulated a photo of

the equipment (see below).



Mobile UV Filtration Test Bed on Kimpton Green

4. Water Quality (FC)

FC repeated that water monitoring sondes (slide 5) were being reinstated at Mullens Pond as the recent spills in Kimpton may indicate that the risk of overpumping is not yet over. A baseline test is being carried on 26/4/23 along with bacterial testing.

Alan Willens (AW) stated that the impact of overpumping was an issue for Goodworth Clatford. What measures were SW taking to ensure residents, who use the watercourse for recreation, would be notified? **FC** stated that public access points had been identified and that signage had been reworded.

RM mentioned that Thruxton has recently launched a biodiversity initiative. **NM** said that SW may be able to assist with funding.

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.2: Investigate SW funding of Thruxton biodiversity initiative - NM TBA

FC explained that SW were also looking at installing an additional MITA cloth filter (slide 6) at Mullens Pond WPS. This filter would be added prior to UV filtering and would only be used if overpumping was necessary. There were several questions on operation and size.

FC wasn't sure on size but said the equipment was low on power and maintenance. Subject to a successful closed test on site SW would permanently install this equipment at Mullens Pond and possibly Stanbury Road WPS too.

DD and others expressed an interest in seeing this filter in operation.

5. Emergency Exercise (FC)

There had been several attempts at scheduling this exercise which had had to be put on hold due to real emergencies during GW season. SW were now keen to hold this event - two dates had been suggested for a scoping meeting. **FC** suggested that the event could be combined with a visit to SW's Operations Centre in Worthing. The purpose of the event was to test SW's Incident Management communications with both SW staff, PPF members and their respective parishioners (slide 7).

JW said that SSE would like to participate in the event as mains powered WPSs were on their Priority Register.

FC then handed the meeting back to **KH**.

6. Monitoring (KH)

A weekly dashboard was now being produced and shared with the PPF with the notes and actions from the fortnightly Update Meetings held with JW, MC and now JH. **KH** said he wanted to take this opportunity to explain the dashboard in more detail.

Historically SW have used the GW level at Clanville Gate to flag the start of GW season (levels > 84 m AOD or ~above sea level). **KH** stated that a greater degree of accuracy can now be achieved with the local boreholes in the north of the catchment at Stanbury Road, Mullens Pond and Monxton WPSs (slide 8). However more data is required to make a graphical representation or a detailed analysis meaningful.

Temperature sensor are all installed and working. A sensor in Quarley (not shown on slide 9) is being used as the control as the sewer there does not suffer from GW infiltration. Temperatures here are between 15 - 16 °C. **KH** said that he had visited the catchment to investigate the drop in temperature seen along Deacon Road in Kimpton. By lifting manhole covers he had been able to observe a southward increase in GW levels until the sewer was completely inundated (slide 10). In this way the temperature sensors indicate where the water table is and hence they will provide invaluable information to SW on the start and end of GW seasons.

KT asked about the impact that the Tubogel relining works had had. **KH** replied that it was too early to say.

KH then explained the more detailed data that each sensor provides. Normally you will see a clear diurnal pattern but in this example (slide 11) the temperature is a constant ~ 9 °C - indicating that the sewer is completely inundated with cold GW at this location.

A brief discussion ensued on how GW infiltration travels and is dissipated through the sewer network. Sewer pipe diameters increase toward the south of the catchment and so infiltration is more severe in the north.

Glenn McCubbin (GM) raised a concern that several properties may be pumping 'spring water' into the sewer. He said that he would investigate and confirm if this was the case.

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.3: Investigate if properties in Kimpton are pumping 'spring water' into the sewer - GM TBA

Pump runs for Little Ann Bridge are now being included in the monitoring pack (slide 12). This graph gives more detail view of pump runs and clearly shows that Mullens Pond is beaten and that the pump at Stanbury Road, having fallen, is rising again in response to the high rainfall at the end of March. The truncated plots are due to vibration caused by tankers. Further down the catchment, at Monxton and Little Ann Bridge pumps runs are not a concern.

Next **KH** explained the output from a sewer level monitor (SLM). The brown line shows sewer levels at that location (slide 15). The grey dotted lines either side of the sewer level is the monitor's predicted upper and lower limits in response to indicative rainfall (blue line on graph). Monitors will alarm if levels exceed predicted min or max limits - providing valuable information to SW on sewer level behaviour.

In response to a question from **JW** on SW's roll out of temperature sensors and SLMs **KH**

stated that whilst SLMs had been installed across SW's entire network, temperature sensors is bespoke to the PPF as we are a GW driven catchment.

PH asked about the impact of storm overflow connectivity. **KH** responded by saying that recent surveys had confirmed that sewer levels were all GW driven.

7. Programme Update (KH)

KH stated that it was SW's intention to seal everything north of Amport, both public and private, by the end of 2023 (within purple circle on slide 13). This was subject to GW receding and contractor availability. Public sewer defects have been identified by CCTV survey in Amport and Monxton (blue circle) and these are also planned to be sealed this year. New CCTV surveys will be carried out in Weyhill, Abbots Ann and Little Ann (green circle) to identify defects here. **John Heather (JH)** asked what kind of defects were we talking about. **NM** replied that these were mainly misaligned pipework and cracks. **PH** observed that the green circle did not extend to Anna Valley or Upper Clatford, was this correct? **KH** said that is was, restating that the sewer network in the south of the catchment had a greater capacity and hence the focus, at this stage, was further north.

KH concluded by quantifying progress to date on both private lateral connectivity and Tubogel applications (slide 14) and for the public sewer relining & 15)

KH then handed over to **NM** for progress on the Wetlands project.

8. Wetland Learnings (NM)

The desk-based study that has been carried out on a potential wetland site in the PPF catchment has not raised any issues. The next step was to carry out a more in-depth, on the ground survey, covering ground and topographic conditions. Once this was done SW would approach the EA re permitting. **NM** stated that a wetland solution would completely eliminate the need for tankering.

NM then spoke about a recent visit to Langford Lakes, Wiltshire (slides 15 & 16). This wetland is run by Wessex Water and on Wildlife Trust land. It is the first permitted wetland (in the UK?) and experiences very similar conditions to the PPF catchment.

PH asked as to whether the wetland ever dries out. **NM** stated that in times of low flow a rewetting process was required. The PPF expressed an interest in visiting the site. **NM** suggested that our next quarterly meeting could be held at Langford Lakes and combined with a site tour - it is only 45 minutes away.

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.4: Arrange a combined Quarterly SW/PPF Meeting/wetland tour toward the end of July - NM/KH TBA

9. Q&A

PH asked what happens if overpumping becomes necessary. **FC** replied that SW had a communications document showing key locations where signage would be placed. The wording on this signage had been changed in consultation with the PPF. SW had prepared for overpumping but was not planning to do so. **KH** added that SW had been in dialogue with the EA in February but had not spoken to them yet about the unexpected second peak in GW levels. **FC** said that the EA had reached out to SW but that he had responded that the current plan was for tankering only.

Outstanding Action QSW/PPF 17.5.8: What else can be done to alleviate the "ragging" of valves at Mill Lane, Abbots Ann? - FC to advise

MC asked **FC** for an update on the engineering visit by ETS. **FC** stated there was nothing more to report at this stage. **Cllr Maureen Flood (MF)** asked whether this would help the

situation at Mill Lane. **FC** replied that the infiltration issues at Mullens Pond had not been observed at Manor Farm or Mill Lane this GW season.

JH asked about changes in building regulations and whether this was causing any issues. **FC** replied that Water companies are not statutory consultees in the planning process. Furthermore they have an obligation to provide a connection. Thus we cannot refuse new connections. [Barratt Homes Limited \(Respondents\) v Dwr Cymru Cyfyngedig \(Welsh Water\) \(Appellants\) - The Supreme Court.](#)

Cllr Drew (DD) asked for a political update on the pressures SW are under. **NM** replied that the environment has changed on how frequently water companies can use storm overflows. The PPF is 1 of 6 pathfinders and SW plan to expand this number. Legislation is coming into force in 2030 to reduce the use of storm overflows by 75% and this is why SW are exploring the use of wetland projects and this is driving investment in catchments like the PPF. Historically there was no treatment works and that is why the original focus was on water treatment. This then moved to leakage and now has moved to storm overflows. The Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP) is a 5 year plan but SW want to beat their permits by doing things differently. **DD** felt that the regulators should also be held financially accountable. **NM** stated that UK water bills were lower than most and that these would inevitably have to rise. There followed a brief discussion on the challenges of encouraging the right consumer behaviour when water is 'cheap'. **KH** stated that permission was needed to access/work on parts of the network not owned by SW. In the case of the PPF catchment 42% of the network was made up of private laterals. As mentioned in the Introduction £50 M had been released early to drive the pathfinder projects that KH was leading. SW's Storm Overflow plan was due to be submitted to Ofwat in October and to the EA after Christmas 2023.

JH asked when we would get a copy of the slides Simon Parker used in his recent presentation on future plans & challenges for delivery of mains water & sewage treatment. **KH** replied that these were on their way.

AW thanked KH for agreeing to join the Goodworth Clatford Annual Parish Meeting by Zoom to provide a Pathfinder project update and answer questions.

JW reminded the meeting that in his opening remarks CH had raised the issue of the disruption caused by the extended closure of Wiremead Lane. This was due to a foul water spill at Waterloo Bridge caused by a combination of high GW and rainfall. The PPF would like SW to apply for but not implement a S278 licence to reduce the speed limit and widen the road opposite Amport Fisheries. Should a similar closure of Wiremead Lane be necessary next GW season then SW would have an reapproved solution to reopen the road. **FC** agreed to this proposal.

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.5: Seel a S278 licence for reducing the speed limit and widening the road opposite Amport Fisheries - FC TBA

Outstanding QSW/PPF 24.1.1: SW to get the right ecology expert to attend next SW/PPF Update Meeting to explain water quality data sets - NM by next Quarterly meeting

JW said that she had received water quality test results from both SW and the EA. It was proving difficult to compare these results as different terminology and numerical units were being used. The PPF really do need some expert help in understanding these results in order to define what factors and thresholds are important when assessing the ecological health of the Pillhill Brook. **NM** agreed to find an appropriate expert.

Finally the meeting discussed how parishioner communication could be strengthened. Minutes of these (and those of the regular fortnightly update) meetings are not currently posted on Parish websites. **JW** suggested that some background information would be required to put minutes in context. **NM** said that SW had some promotional content that could be used for this purpose. [Subsequent to the meeting KH has provided a summary report which JW will circulate under separate cover.]

Action QSW/PPF 25.4.6: Provide background information to contextualise SW/PPF minutes so that they can be posted on Parish websites - NM/JW end May

Actions from previous meeting

All actions are reviewed and progressed through the regular fortnightly SW/PPF Update Meetings (separate meeting notes circulated to PPF).

No.	Action	Who	By When	Status
QSW/PPF 17.5.4	SW to hold Baseline Ecology Meeting in autumn with the EA. The EA's Pillhill Brook Water Body 2019 gives us a Good ecological status. Lack of flow in the brook prevented this mtg from being held & now needs to be replanned.	FC	TBA	Open
QSW/PPF 17.5.8	What else can be done to alleviate the "ragging" of valves at Mill Lane, Abbots Ann? Solution will require a power supply which is some distance away. Issue currently going thru SW risk process. FC approached by ETS re valve automation	FC	Update as & when	Open
QSW/PPF 17.5.10	SW have provided their 30 minute Pollution Plan. "Pollution Event Exercise" to be held but initial ideas revisited due to operational concerns from FC. Exercise to be held at SW HQ, Worthing & combined with visit to SW Operations Centre with catchment based presence to test communication continuity within the parishes. Meeting to be scheduled to scope out exercise.	FC/JW	12/5/23	Reopened
QSW/PPF 17.5.11	SW to share Phase 4 public sewer relining programme with PPF. This has two parts: a) continuation of full relining north of the catchment; b) relining selected sections south of the catchment, highlighted by the electroscanning survey. CBUL has delivered a programme plan for relining in Thruxton, start delayed till beginning of May. Peter Christie will join Update calls for duration of this work. Additional contractor secured to assist in carrying out remainder of Phase 4 relining works.	KH/LM	May	Open
USW/PPF 27.6.1	Provide tanker lay-by status for Kimpton, Mullens Pond & Furzedown Ln. Furzedown Ln verge reinstatement completed 10 August, Mullens Pond fencing completed 30/09/22, still some reinstatement of signage TBC. Kimpton still in discussion with landowner.	KH/GM	TBA	Open
USW/PPF 11.7.3	Advise what local group(s) might benefit from a FOG presentation. On hold as linked to QSW/PPF 17.5.10 above	JW/FC	TBA	On hold

USW/PPF 6.1.1	SW Stakeholder Team to provide dedicated resource to handle SW/PPF communications during GW season.	FC	Update 12/5/23	Open
Completed Actions (will be removed in next issue but kept on file)				

The meeting closed at 20:00.

Janet Wright
Secretary to the PPF