

Sewage Task Group Report to Parish Council: 4th October 2021

Overall aim and intermediate targets

To seek a clear plan from UU to resolve the problem of discharges, with timescales and costs.

Realistically, inclusion in the 2025 – 2030 AMP (AMP 8: Asset Management Plan) is our target. This will involve actively engaging with UU once detailed criteria for this period are published, expected during 2023. Prior to this we can anticipate that pollution, environmental concerns and health and safety will be key issues and begin to prepare our case around these themes.

A further key aim is to seek documented assurance that Staveley WWTW is fit for purpose and both the Gowan and Kent are safe for recreational activities and the protection of endangered species.

To achieve this continued work will be necessary to collect and scrutinise evidence, together with improved monitoring and testing of water quality around the village and downstream of the WWTW.

To contribute to these aims we should seek clarity on infiltration and the passage of surface water into the combined system and beyond this across the flood plain

Such understanding may enable us to propose and agree system changes that would pass more 'storm' water directly into the rivers and so reduce pressure on the constricted pipe beneath the Kent.

Alongside these targets, the Group will consider the need for any emergency measures necessary in forthcoming years and seek action on mitigating potential risks.

Updated areas of focus (blue: recently added; red: issue for PC)

1. Inclusion in AMP 8

- Continue to analyse the latest EIR response and seek other information as appropriate (AC + CE with IA; CE to look at flow figures)
- Continue to press for a fully worked up and costed scheme to resolve the problem
- Press for the introduction of DNM (Dynamic Network Monitoring) or similar (flow, depth and rainfall monitoring) across the combined system to understand better what is happening within it and establish agreed targets as a result (from March 2022)
- Interrogate a detailed plan of the sewage network to establish vulnerabilities – both theoretical and in practice
- Seek a collaborative working relationship with UU, including agreed aims and urge positive acceptance of local community support but also ...
- Maintain pressure on UU (and others) to ensure Staveley's issues are fully considered, leading to an agreed resolution
- Be alert to the need to prepare a case for AMP 8

2. Monitoring and Testing

- Seek a system of testing the unpermitted sewage discharge as it enters the rivers in periods of heavy and persistent rain
- Press for regular water quality testing close to the WWTW
- Seek full descriptions of the categorization of unpermitted discharge incidents from EA (AC to follow up), including criteria applied and how it is interpreted
- Check how UU's self reporting of Staveley incidents is monitored by EA
- Monitor, photograph and report discharges from all vulnerable manholes within the village

3. WWTW Issues

- Set up local monitoring of WWTW activity and discharges, linking these with different river levels (Note: UU consider the WWTW is adequate in dry weather conditions)
- Clarify, as necessary, our understanding of WWTW statistics as recorded at <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/19f6064d-7356-466f-844e-d20ea10ae9fd/event-duration-monitoring-storm-overflows-2020> and reported to us by EA

4. Infiltration

- Press again for a plan of the network from CCC (LLFA) to consider infiltration and entry points for surface water. Follow up with a FOI request if not forthcoming. Seek a face to face meeting when appropriate.
- Monitor current flood plain manholes to assess what is happening
- In the light of this, confirm clearly action to be taken on these manholes (see proposed Connectivity and CCTV survey) and monitor outcomes from this
- Check CCC joint committee (Making Space for Water) minutes for evidence of Staveley discussion (CE to follow up)

5. Partners

- Maintain EA contact to track how Staveley's situation has been escalated, as promised
- Keep all partners regularly updated
- Maintain regular contact with SENS and agree any joint action
- Maintain contact with Tim Farron (he is now writing to Chief Exec. of UU, Cumbria Manager of EA and Chief Exec. of Ofwat regarding rurality issue of difficulties faced by smaller, rural communities receiving investment)
- Consider other political groups
- Raised issues and updated SLDC in terms of its responsibility for environmental health and likely changes in local government
- Maintain established contact with Natural England (Note: AC to check out designation of the Kent and Gowan as sites of 'Special Areas of Conservation' in addition to their SSSI status) and South Cumbria Rivers Trust
- Keep in mind the possibility of escalation within LDNP, consulting with Mark

6. Publicity

- Maintain up to date information on the parish website and other outlets
- Consider future opportunities for further publicity, noting the continued interest of Radio Cumbria
- Keep abreast of national publicity and information

7. Other

- Planning: Seek PC's agreement to ask formally about missing responses to Crookfield 3 consultation (CCC (LLFA & Highways) and EA)
- Possibly consider any interest in how residents are billed by UU for disposal of both surface and foul water services irrespective of particular circumstances