

# COMMUNITY PLAN

## Staveley Sewage Story

### Background

Following the 2015 deluge, it became clear to the Parish Council that the problem of unpermitted discharge of sewage from manholes on or around the public highway during periods of heavy and persistent rain needed to be addressed. Discussions with United Utilities (UU) were opened and monitoring and recording of incidents began in earnest. After a period in which little progress was made a Sewage Task Group was set up in 2021 and resolution of the problem was given high priority in the Community Plan

### The Problem

- Since 2015 there have been 67 separate incidents reported of sewage discharge on to or close to the highway
- Similar incidents have occurred on private property
- All discharges are a danger to public health and the environment
- Between 2018 and 2020 untreated or only partially treated sewage has been dumped in the River Kent at the WWTW over 1300 times
- This still continues and on average amounts to more than once per day.



# COMMUNITY PLAN

## The Cause

**UU has identified the problem as a waste pipe that is too narrow underneath the River Kent. This is unable to take the full flow of waste water in storm conditions.**

Consequently the sewage backs up and escapes through nearby manholes, most evident on Kendal Road and Gowan Terrace.

At such times, sewage is swept into the nearby rivers that are designated sites (SSSI and SAC) because of the vulnerable species they contain.

The size of the pipe may have been adequate when originally built, although evidence suggests long standing problems, but as the village has developed and storms have become more severe due to climate change it is no longer fit for purpose.

Like many communities, the sewerage system is a combined system taking both waste material and surface and ground water with numerous infiltration points. While some surface water flows directly into the village rivers, much of it finds its way into the waste system, especially in storm conditions.



# COMMUNITY PLAN

## The Solution

United Utilities (UU) agree that the solution is to replace the inadequate pipe and lay a larger one underneath the river. They accept this as the only way to solve the problem fully.

They also wish to reduce water infiltrating into the system but acknowledge that this would be very complicated as it would mean major alterations throughout the network.

## The Cost

The cost of a replacement pipe under the Kent has been estimated as £2 million. **UU do not consider this to be 'cost effective'. In other words, Staveley is not that important to them. They have no plans to undertake this work.**

## Our Response

The Parish Council do not accept this and is working hard to seek a solution. In doing so, we are:

- Working closely with all the agencies responsible and using all reasonable means within our powers to rectify the situation
- Working in partnership with SENS to improve river quality locally



# COMMUNITY PLAN

- Publicising the situation through local and national media.
- Regularly monitoring, reporting and recording all village spillages and bring these to UU's attention
- Regularly monitoring what is happening at the WWTW through a team of volunteers
- Continuing to hold UU to account who have now agreed to install digital monitors in the system to track what is happening
- Using our moratorium when considering planning applications that threaten to worsen the problem
- Seeking re-allocation of the field opposite Danes Road for development (sewage was cited for the first time as a reason for the recent planning refusal).

## Your help

- Complete the short survey to indicate your personal response to this situation
- Volunteer to join the WWTW monitoring team
- When called on, speak out or write to support our campaign for action.
- Help to reduce water run-off from your own property by good conservation practice
- Offer any suggestions, contacts or expertise that we might draw on.

