

Sewage Task Group Report to Parish Council: 5th January, 2022

The Areas of Focus below are based on those identified in the October report and are available on the website.

As a reminder, the purpose of this Group is to resolve the discharge of raw sewage on to the streets and into our two rivers, which occurs in heavy and persistent rain and much more frequently from the WWTW.

To ensure we don't lose focus, three specific priorities have been identified:

- Resolution of the constriction as the waste pipe leaves the village and passes beneath the Kent. This is situated by the playground.
- Ensuring as far as possible that major infiltration into the combined waste system from surface and ground water is reduced
- Seeking a resolution to any inadequacies at the WWTW which impact the sewerage system upstream in Staveley and downstream as a result of river pollution

1. Inclusion in AMP 8

Inclusion in this next investment period (2025 – 2030) for water companies, including United Utilities, remains the priority. It may seem ages away but preparations are needed in order to build Staveley's case. The parameters for investment will be set by the government through Ofwat in due course but given the national concerns, it can be confidently assumed that reducing pollution in rivers and coastal water will be a high priority.

2. Monitoring and Testing

- **This is essential if we are to build a strong case. We plan to tighten our monitoring and reporting processes of leaking village manholes and set up regular monitoring of the discharges from the WWTW. More volunteers will be needed for the latter. Please let one of us know if you can help. Volunteers will be encouraged to take occasional walks down the south-west side of the Kent along the Dales Way to photograph and record what is discharging into the river from two overflow pipes.**
- Over the next nine months under an arrangement set up with the University of Cumbria, SENs is also monitoring and sampling water quality in both rivers in Staveley and downstream. Pilot sampling will begin in Feb 2022 with a project period of monitoring and sampling from May to September 2022. While this does not include the times of highest rainfall, together with DNM monitoring (see below) it will contribute to a better understanding of pollution levels under what is considered to be the safest period of the year.
- The discharge that occurred from a broken pipe on the grass bank opposite RR Stone has been repaired.

3. WWTW Issues

- UU has been asked for details of the two projects planned in the current investment period (AMP 7) at the WWTWs but has so far dodged the question. The EA and the LLFA (CCC) has now been asked to seek clarification.
- As part of its response to pollution concerns, Ofwat is undertaking a national review of sewage treatment practice in relation to statutory limits from WWTW. Staveley is included in this. Additionally, the EA has initiated a review of dry weather overspill discharges from Staveley's WWTW, promised early in the New Year.
- EA is also reviewing the Staveley sewage discharge problems following our initial report – feedback is promised in the New Year

4. Infiltration

- Following mixed messages about Staveley's inclusion, post March 2022, in UU's project to install Dynamic Network Management (DNM: cameras and monitoring devices installed at key points in the waste system to measure more precisely what is happening) we have been informed that no decision has yet been taken pending funding confirmation.
- UU has previously stated publicly that they are '*considering including Staveley in a pilot scheme trialling the use of sensors to manage sewer flows more proactively*' (Response to The Times, 3rd Aug, 2021)
- We consider this to be a vital step towards in resolving the problem of infiltration, which is believed to be extensive and are continuing to press strongly our case for inclusion.
- Along with Stan Collins (County Councillor) we have now held a positive meeting with the LLFA (CCC) to discuss Staveley's circumstances and particularly infiltration problems. Notes of the meeting are still awaited but key outcomes include
 - Opportunity to share UU's detailed maps of the system
 - Support for joint working on infiltration problems around the village using the maps (above), including incoming culverts from surrounding higher ground and those resulting from the A591 and the railway
 - **The need for DNM to be installed at an early date. It would be helpful for the Parish Council to write formally to UU to request this.**
 - The need to specifically monitor the flow under the River Kent at the constriction point
 - Confirmation that the Station Road/Beck Nook culvert goes into the Gowan but no resolution to the overflow occurring at the junction
 - Recognition by the LLFA that new build proposals are 'getting to the point of challenge' due to their negative impact on sewage discharge
 - The need for a clear understanding (and plan) of what the identified £2million investment to upgrade the system would include
 - Agreement that there is a direct link between what happens at the constriction and overflows at the WWTW
 - Clarification of what action has been taken on the flood plain manholes
 - A follow up meeting in early February

Note: Our knowledge of culverts/minor watercourses flowing into Staveley is extensive but probably incomplete. If anyone knows of these, particularly from Reston Scar or Lily Fell, please let one of us know

- We have now been informed that the inspection of the flood plain manholes is complete but are unsure what exactly has been done or even whether all manholes have been found. A feedback visit has been promised in the New Year.

5. Partners

- **The Task Group is minded to seek Tim Farron's support in calling and leading a joint meeting of all organisations with responsibility for sewage and public and environmental well-being in Staveley. Its aim would be to agree an Integrated Action Plan, with clearly costed targets and timescales. Agreement from the Parish Council for this is sought so that it can be initiated once the timing is considered appropriate.**
- SENs has launched a campaign to 'Clean up the River Kent' and is working closely with other groups, both locally and elsewhere to coordinate its approach.

6. Publicity

- Up to date information is available on a sewage page on the website
- Contact has been maintained with SENs and regular reviews are now scheduled with good sharing of information

- A helpful meeting focusing on upper valley natural land management (NLM) plans was held by SENs with representation from LDNPA and EA. Those involved urged greater engagement with the local community. Further meetings are planned starting in March 2022.
- **As part of this discussion, and on behalf of the Parish Council, assistance in the regular publication of EA's proposals and on-going work was promised via our website and other local outlets**
- Staveley's sewage discharges was featured by the Mirror and Mail on-line following the late October flooding

7. Other

- No response is available following the Parish Council's request for further information on the lack of some consultation responses to the Crookfield 3 planning application.

AC: 2.1.22

(Task Group Members: Arthur Capstick, Chris Edge, Pete Harrison, Miriam Powell)