

## Eastern Area Committee Meeting 16 June 2022

### Tabled paper - Item 5

Cllr Denise Knights, Chair, requested that this update be tabled at the meeting.

Below is a response from Southern Water to emails sent by Mr Robin Bower and Cllr Denise Knights. They are in the order they were sent.

#### **Subject - Flooding and Inadequate Drain/Sewer Capacity ME13 8BD**

*Email from Robin Bowyer to Cllr Knights– 5 June 2022*

*Dear Cllr Knights.*

*At 11.35pm last night, 4th June 2022, during the heavy rain, local drains/sewers were again not coping with water rising rapidly on our side of the road ie Park Row ME13 8BD and up towards Westgate Road. The water was above the pavement (and exacerbated by the water thrown up by passing cars) so the flooding issue is still not resolved though water can be heard going down the beany drains SLOWLY so not coping effectively with the vast quantities of flood water. The rain was briefly heavy but not torrential. Again it seems to be a capacity issue - too much rain and not enough drain/sewer capacity to take it away quickly enough. A very stressful situation which we have had to endure for the past six years.*

*It appears, on this occasion, that rather than the water spreading from the other side of the road (the recreation ground side) and spreading to our side, it was coming down Whitstable Road, along outside our houses and thence across the road and joining the water coming from that side - the opposite to what has happened on previous occasions.*

*It is apparent that water is not taken away before it gets to our part of Whitstable Road so the area - as reported before - is still a major flooding concern.*

*Mercifully the rain stopped but it took over an hour for the flood water to eventually drain away. As you will appreciate, had it not stopped raining the result would have been catastrophic not only to residents but also to emergency and commercial vehicles not being able to get through the flood water and police having to close the road, as happened in August 2021.*

*Could this email be forwarded to your contacts at KCC and Southern Water so it is logged on their systems - trying to get through at the height of a potential emergency is always lengthy and difficult. As you will be aware, many of the previous incidents are not shown on their logs because of the long waits trying to get through when they are busy.... and we are focussing on trying to protect our homes.*

*With many thanks,*

*Robin Bowyer*

*Email from Cllr Knights to Sue Cobb, Southern Water, Earl Bourner KCC, Martyn Cassell SBC, Cllr Julian Saunders SBC and Helen Whately MP – 6 June 2022*

*Dear All*

*Please see below the email from Mr Bowyer a Whitstable Rd resident*

*Please can I add for noting :*

*Southern Water: Sue.*

*I know the lifting latches on the inspection hatch are still awaiting repair and that you intend to fit a CCTV camera in the inspection hub in Cypress Rd.*

*Please may I add that the capacity is insufficient and ask what SW are doing to resolve this please?*

*It would be very helpful if I could have a scheduled works plan, and also works completed from Whitstable Rd to Cooksditch to feed back to this resident please.*

*KCC: Earl - Firstly, thank you for unblocking the drain into Cooksditch because this stopped total flooding in this instance. It does appear that the drain outside the Tin Church and beanies are not taking water away quick enough though. Again a plan would be helpful to feed back to Mr Bowyer.*

*SBC : Martyn - Rec issues are in hand.*

*I was told that the roads were swept of debris at 6am after the flood, so again many thanks. A plan would also be helpful*

*Helen Whatley MP: for noting*

*Kind regards*

*Cllr Denise Knights Abbey Ward. Independent*

*Email from Sue Cobb, Southern Water – 8 June 2022*

*Morning Denise*

*I hope you're well.*

*Re the incident mentioned by Mr Bower on June 4, we have checked on our system and it appears that this was not reported to us so we were unaware of any issues.*

*On the two points raised below:*

***Please may I add that the capacity is insufficient and ask what SW are doing to resolve this please?***

*Southern Water has run modelling of the sewer network and found that there is sufficient capacity of up to a one-in-50 year storm event. This is above the requirements of OFWAT. Storm events above this level are beyond the control of*

*Southern Water. There are currently no plans to increase the capacity of the sewer network at this time.*

***It would be very helpful if I could have a scheduled works plan, and also works completed from Whitstable Rd to Cooksditch to feed back to this resident please.***

*In recent years, both the foul and surface water sewers in Cyprus Road and East Street have been surveyed and some cleaning has been carried out to remove some siltation and enable the surveys to be completed. There are Maintenance Scheduled Tasks in place for sewer cleaning at the CSOs and along the sewers in East Street, Cyprus Road and at Iron Wharf to ensure that all sewers are clean and free flowing.*

*I hope this helps.*

*Best wishes*

*Sue Cobb*

**Cllr Knights' comment to the Area Committee is that the response from Southern Water is not satisfactory and she would like to propose a letter is sent from Cllr Saunders as the Chair of the Environment Committee to press for further updates and to fit the CCTV to the chamber as promised. Helen Whately MP to be copied into the letter as she has assured residents of her assistance in this matter.**