

Re-cap of the position of Thames Water re Flooding in Peaslake.

The Thames Water letter of 28th June is the last communication we have had with Thames Water. This and their earlier responses indicate very clearly that they believe their 'current assets' - sewers and pumping station with new pumps and upgraded telemetry device – are entirely fit for purpose. That is they are adequate for them to meet **their** service obligation.

In the absence of any further instances of sewage flooding since 2013, and their recent asset enhancements, there is nothing to contradict this contention.

They confirm that there will be both authorised and unauthorised surface water discharge into their assets (sewage pipes) but are unable to estimate the volumes involved or differentiate the flow from wastewater flows.

In their information, on their website, regarding what causes sewer flooding they state – *'during a heavy storm, the flow in the sewer is much greater and can reach maximum capacity. Our sewers are designed to cope with the vast majority of storms but occasionally rainfall can be so heavy that it overwhelms the system. When this happens, sewage can overflow from manholes, and gullies and flood land, rivers, gardens. In worst cases, sewage can even flood homes'.*

However they then also state – *'we may not be liable for damage caused by sewer flooding when it occurs for reasons beyond our control. We have no control over what is put into sewers or the amounts of rain that falls in our region, and the law recognises we should not be responsible for any flooding damage caused as a result. We are only responsible for damages if flooding is a result of our negligence.'*

Culverts and surface water sewers may also become overloaded in heavy rainfall. The cottages near the pumping station are particularly at risk in this situation as the Government Flood Risk database shows them to be in a high risk flood location. However Thames Water is very clear that it is the responsibility of Surrey County Council to maintain culverts and surface water sewers in good order.

I believe we have to conclude that Thames Water have reached a conclusion that they currently have no need or obligation to undertake any further changes or investment in the assets and system that serves Peaslake.