

Water UK and drainage

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Water UK



Water UK-who are we?

- A trade body representing all the Water and Sewerage Companies and the “inset” appointees
- Prime role as a policy body but some detailed operational work
- Long-standing involvement in many of the issues relevant to flooding including:
 - Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans
 - SuDS
 - Culverted watercourses
 - Minimising sewer blockages
- Recent focus by government and eNGOs on storm overflows



Current issues

- A Drainage**
- B Culverted Watercourses**
- C Sewer blockages**



A Drainage

i) Our work with sewer adoption

- Ofwat adoption code-implemented for one purpose but significant other advances made
- DCG – its benefits and limitations
- A dynamic system that can evolve over time

ii) Lobbying work on rights to connect/discharge and Schedule 3, FWMA 2010

- As it says on the tin!
- The background to these policy requests



A Drainage

iii) Storm Overflow Task Force

Led by Defra with participation from :

- Water companies
- EA
- eNGOs
- Ofwat
- CCW

Two main outputs:

- Stantec report on options to reduce or remove the harm caused by storm overflows
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1030980/storm-overflows-evidence-project.pdf>
- Legal sub-group report on legal options to help achieve the above objectives



A Drainage

Six areas covered by SOTF:

a) The “right to connect” surface water to foul sewer (section 106 Water Industry Act 1991)

- Seen as a key enabler
- Would change the balance of power
- May be acceptable to developers
- Would require development of conditions allowing connection
- This would be redundant if Schedule 3 were to be implemented

b) Discharging water from surface water drains to a watercourse

- Giving a right to connect without a discharge right may not help
- There are precedents for interfering with landowners’ rights
- Current compulsory purchase arrangements are too slow



Storm Overflow Task Force

c) Highway drainage

- Allow developers access to the highway drainage network
- Refuse sewer connections if better, highway alternatives exist
- Charging for use of systems

d) Sewerage undertakers' powers to alter drainage systems and implement local solutions on private property

e) Sewerage undertakers' powers to repair and charge for repair of drains on private property

f) Effect of extensions and paving over of private gardens ("urban creep")



iv) Defra review of Schedule 3, FWMA 2010

- Longstanding request from water sector to implement Schedule 3
- Failed attempt to introduce after implementation of the 2010 Act
- Implemented in Wales
- Recent criticism of Defra has led to this file being re-opened
- Very wide group just being formed to look at this. All relevant departments are involved including DLUHC and Treasury.
- Some key barriers seem to have been overcome but others remain
- Separate review seems to be underway on S106 and S42-mandatory adoption



B Culverted Watercourses

- Background
- Challenges linked to role of Water UK
- Aim of the protocol
- Plans for review



C Sewer blockages

- The problem
- The Fine to Flush scheme
- Relevance of Environment Act-a solution in sight?

