

Dorney Parish Council AGM 19 March 2014

Our thanks to DPC for inviting us to attend their AGM and listen/question TW and AE. The meeting was also attended by Dominic Grieve MP and Attorney General. We were aware time would be limited but we had the opportunity to get an impression of current actions and put questions to their representatives.

I have asked for names of TW/EA attendees.

Firstly, it's important to note whilst there are no residents living directly next to the stream, Dorney residents and landowners are equally as angry with the agencies and are also seeking long term solution.

Jim Jenkins TW (engineer who issued trivialising letter) admitted, as residents had thought, TW had been storming raw sewage since early December.

TW plant is designed to cope with local population but the flow was three times normal levels. The dilute sewage is held in TW storm tanks for three hours but thereafter TW have no choice but to discharge into Roundmoor.

Storm tanks have now been emptied and are being cleaned of hazardous debris.

TW are working on an action plan in conjunction with EA to improve water courses following release, are looking at environmental impact and also considering fish habitat/replacement.

TW are issuing a further letter but cannot confirm date of issue at present.

EA advised they started to investigate from 19/1 and test/sample for dissolved oxygen/ammonia levels. EA are investigating size and reasons for discharge and so far their investigations point to a legitimate discharge – means future would also be legitimate. EA are working on mitigation and recovery with TW, advising TW on work they can do regarding habitat restoration and aeration. Recovery is beginning and latest results show DO is up to 70%.

Watercourse is important to EA as it is spawning ground.

EA confirmed decisions would be down to TW as watercourse is a TW asset.

TW advised the treatment plant is the world standard for capacity of local population and there are no plans to change facilities. At present future discharges would be made into Roundmoor as required.

The treatment plant treats 1,150 litres per second but this can double in high flow. Confirmed calculation 3 months x seconds x 1100 litres, equivalent to 20 olympic swimming pools per day so holding in tanks is out of the question.

TW were questioned regarding failure to advise all parties at time of discharge and the effect on wildlife, residents and pets. TW reported their failure in communication has been a resounding response to all aspects pertaining to recent floods.

TW were just too stretched to advise discharge. They are learning lessons from this matter!!!

TW confirmed they are working with EA on other possible sites for release but proposals will affect environmental permit and flood defences. The Jubilee River was mentioned but this would need AE agreement as they control.

TW questioned regarding ultimate aim being to discharge into River Thames. We requested an undertaking from TW in conjunction with EA to look at other options rather than discharging 3 miles through Dorney Common/Eton Wick. EA confirmed Jubilee River is a TW asset and TW should put forward a proposal to EA. EA could not go into greater detail at the meeting.

All parties were informed of TW comments during live interview on BBC Radio Berks yesterday morning. TW confirmed they would investigate other options but need to be cogniscent of effect on customers bills. Pointed out in 2012 TW profits were £549m, they had left villages surrounded by a health hazard without repair/compensation and any future changes would now be charged to customers!

TW were questioned on clean up. TW have attempted to tanker stagnant water but are unable to gain required access. TW submitting proposals to flush through with clean or final effluent water. They will then check remaining sludges and clean grit/sand.

It was confirmed livestock would be on Dorney Common this year but affected areas would now have to be fenced off by farmers

Arable fields including those already planted cannot be farmed this year.

These are notes taken from recorded conversation last evening for info. They raise a multitude of questions that now involve the two villages and TW are still to be held to account. No mention of formal apologies, repairs, compensation.

TW/EA were obviously still not organised regarding future plans, however the meeting has provided further background information in readiness for RBWM/ETC public meeting in Eton Wick. We confirmed Dorney representatives and residents would also be informed and welcomed to the public meeting.

Due to the level of information and interest this is generating we plan to publish a website this week so we can update a wider audience, speedily and effectively.