

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

(i) Deputation: Warmdene Road Flooding

The residents of Warmdene Road have endured many years of flooding to their road and properties. The flooding is frequent, has caused extensive damage and further damage is prevented only due to the numerous flood protection measures put in place by the residents themselves at their own expense. Residents have records of calling Southern Water (SW) to report flooding 38 times in the past 20 years and one resident spent two months in temporary accommodation when a flood left her home uninhabitable.

The flooding is not just a surface water issue. Each time the road floods during heavy rain the surface water enters the foul water system in the Patcham area causing the foul sewers to back-up and overflow. This results in excrement and sanitary products on the road every time it floods. Sewage also rises up into the residents' drains contaminating their driveways and gardens. Children walk through the sewage on their way to the adjacent school and have been seen splashing each other. Despite multiple requests by residents, SW has not sanitised the road following a flood since 2000. Following a request by Councillor Lee Wares, the council undertook a limited amount of cleaning however wet wipes can still be seen today.

The floodwaters that collect in Warmdene Road feed from higher ground into Carden Avenue. The foul sewer South of Sainsbury's local in Carden Avenue and the sewer at the beginning of Warmdene Road both burst, discharging sewage every time it floods. This water then gushes like a river down Carden Avenue and turns into Warmdene Road where it collects at the low point.

In the Brighton & Hove County Council Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) 2014, it was confirmed that Warmdene Road has no surface water sewers and that the road relies upon soakaways. The soakaways cannot accommodate water volume and are not well maintained with water visible today.

Prior to 2006 floodwater was pumped and removed from the road. A new larger 9-inch pipe was then installed to take the water to the soakaways located on the school playing fields adjacent to Warmdene Road. This results in the floodwaters now clearing within one hour of the rain stopping.

Over the years SW and the Council have discussed the flooding problems at Warmdene Road numerous times. In 2006 SW wrote that investigations suggesting a substantial tunnel sewer would be required and that funding would not be available until 2011. But nothing was heard from SW in 2011 or at all until the SWMP was published in 2014 with action plan points in relation to Warmdene Road. Two mitigation options were put forward with a benefit – cost ratio of 16.8 (schemes are considered viable with a ratio

greater than 1). Firstly, a syphon sewer into the school playing fields and secondly the replacement or renovation of the old soakaways. Neither option has been implemented.

Questions we would like the council to answer:

- Why is there no monitoring or regular maintenance for the soakaways and requests to clear them are ignored?
- Why is no one accountable to clean up the sewage left after flooding? Councillor Wares has proposed a multi-agency response to the clean up of sewage. When will this be implemented?
- SW appears to have corporate amnesia with regards to reported flooding and therefore underrepresent the issue. For example, the floods this year have been reported by multiple residents, by Councillor Lee Wares and council employee Maggie Moran but SW have since claimed they have no record of a flood this year. Can the council operate a flood register and reconcile this with SW records?
- Why have the council and SW not implemented the mitigation options put forward in the B&HCC SWMP?
- Could the council please confirm whether the school playing fields are considered an acceptable and safe final location for the Warmdene Road floodwaters? If the playing fields are deemed unsafe, this implies that the existing drainage solution is a current health and safety issue. It also implies that the drainage solution proposed within the school sports complex planning application approved last year is also unacceptable. Could the council please ensure that the residents are consulted and an acceptable solution is enacted as a condition of the school complex redevelopment?

We are very grateful to both Councillor Lee Wares and council employee Maggie Morgan for listening to our concerns and helping us fight for a solution. We are here today to ask the Council to take a more forceful stand with Southern Water to acknowledge our problems and finally implement a working solution to their defective and dangerous sewer system in Warmdene Road and the surrounding area.

Supported by

Alistair Dunlop (Spokesperson)
Linda Perry
Angela Palmer
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Matthew Cosham
Marnie Filby
James Burland
Chloe Snuggs
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Supporting Information

This year the road has so far flooded three times (25th June, 19th July, 12th August). Photos from these floods are shown below:



Fire Engines and ambulance attending flood





Overflowing foul sewer in the road

Foul water flows to the school playing fields



Emergency services are required to clear some flooded areas



Sewage backs up into the drains on properties (left is drain pictured)



Flooded driveway and overflowing drain (flooding top left is drain pictured)



Flooded gardens



Parking lines paid for by residents are washed away by the floods

