

ASKEW BRIDGE A25 MAIDSTONE RD SEWAGE WORKS UPDATE 3 July 2021

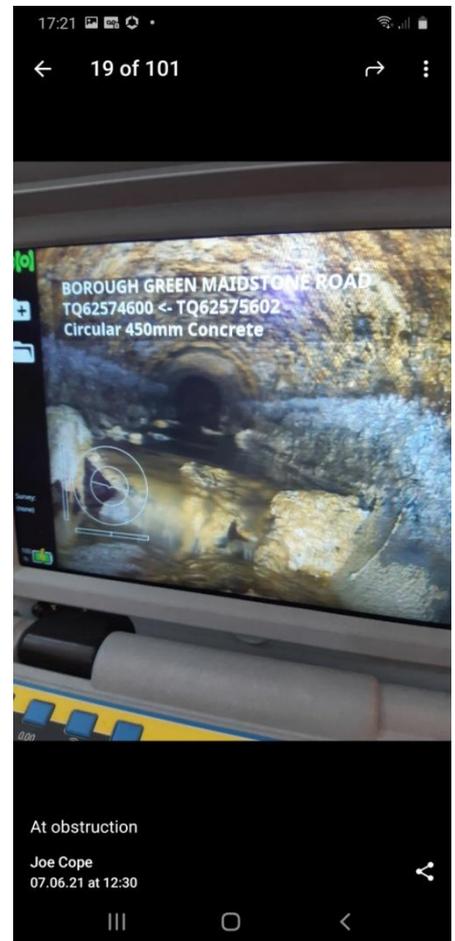
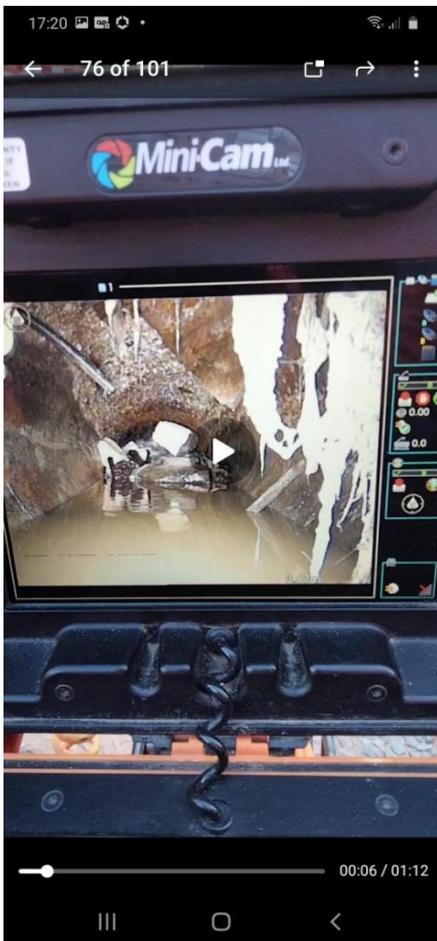
A full site visit was arranged 2 July for MP Tom Tugendhat. Tom has been supporting the Parish Council for many years seeking resolution to decades of sewage problems. Tom & KCC Harry Rayner were also out with Platt PC Chair Wendy Palmer trying to resolve the traffic problems caused by "rat-runners" on Windmill Hill and the other narrow lanes south of the village.



Tom talking to Andy SW and Stuart Cappagh Brown, to the right the industrial Air Freshener . The green sheeted object behind Tom is the suction point for the transfer pipes

The plan is to thoroughly clean the pipe, and then insert 300 metres of a plastic structural liner, which should be delivered in the next 10 days, followed by rebuilding manholes, testing and the like.

Below are CCTV images of the inside of the damaged pipe. Over the years Sulphur Dioxide gas from the sewage has rotted the 1929 concrete, allowing the ingress of soil and dirt. That build up has caught solids in the sewage such as wipes and plastic leading to virtually impenetrable blockages.



Southern Water have confirmed that the poor pump performance at Maidstone Rd was the probable cause of sewage breakouts in the West of the village. The recent pump upgrades should have resolved that, but the extra pressure then caused the blows at Sandy Ridge. That pressurisation was almost definitely caused by the blockage at Askew Bridge which only came to light when a BT duct fell into an unknown hole in the ground.

The pipe failure at Askew led to both the wash out void under the A25, and the blockage of the Main Sewage Line. The left picture below shows an access hole into the void, which is some 3.5 metres square, and 3 metres deep. The right hand picture is inside the void. The circular structure is the outside of a manhole. It has been deemed too dangerous to just pull the road surface tarmac off beside a 3m void, so next week a form of weak concrete will be used to fill the void so the road can be repaired safely. (It will then be the best bit of A25 in Platt/BG)



Below pictures show the suction point near Glebe Cottage, and also where the pipes re-enter the system near Nepicar Sandpit . Two massive pumps are carrying the sewage through surface pipes to that distant manhole, so the damaged pipe can be cleared and readied for the repair.



There is now a clear will amongst Southern Water, Cappagh Brown and MTS to ensure that this time it is done properly even if that means prolonging the traffic misery in the surrounding area. For too many years we have been fobbed off with excuses and PR Fluff, even that Askew Smell was dismissed as a poorly sealed vent, but we now know it was the smell of large quantities of sewage escaping from the pipe and into the surrounding ground. BT Openreach's local manholes and ducts were discovered to be full of sewage as well. They have also promised more CCTV surveys on the Western end of the line under Sevenoaks Rd. This is also 1929 spun concrete pipe, and is likely to have deteriorated as well.

Southern Water are already putting together restoration and compensation plans that will ensure no community or individual suffers in the aftermath of these major works.

Below are pictures of our upgraded Main Pumping Station at Maidstone Rd

The grey cabinets by the window are the Variable Speed Controllers that will ensure that the pumps will start slowly, and not with a "bang" that has caused problems in the past. To the right are the three upgraded pumps.



And whilst there are many people from many companies involved in this effort, four people deserve a special mention. Barry Woodhams who has been our Southern Water liaison for many years, Andy Morris, the ever smiling SW engineer who really got things moving towards resolution this time. And not forgetting Perry and Tony from MTS, veterans of many years of sewage works, who are the living reference book and involved in every aspect of the works.

The simple fact that since the two pumps have pumping sewage past the damaged section we have suffered no sewage breaches, despite recent heavy rain, seems to show our problems may be over once the lining is completed.

Andy Morris in the Maidstone Rd Pumping Station



Perry & Tony monitor the site 24 hours a day



ONCE AGAIN BOROUGH GREEN & PLATT SHOULD SMELL OF WILDFLOWERS AND NOT SEWAGE