

SOUTHERN WATER UPDATE - A25 ASKEW BRIDGE PLATT 31 May

The road closure of the A25 at Borough Green was very badly signposted what has been done about this?

We have additional signage on route to site this morning (Friday) and also additional manpower to man points along the closure.

The road closure has changed why?

We've moved the closure back because some drivers were attempting to get through the closed section. The closure moves the traffic closer to the diversion.

How will you be keeping locals informed?

Our incident van complete with volunteers is to sit at the Black Horse pub and answer questions. The volunteers are on site and are currently visiting businesses/schools in the immediate area. The van has been requested to stay all weekend as long as needed. There should have been multiple social media messages and radio messages put out. This was requested but I'm not sure if it was done. We're also updating our social media and on our website.

Why is the road closed?

Workers from BT found a void near our gravity sewer yesterday and investigation has shown that we have a partial collapse in the sewer outside Glebe House, Platt. This is separate to the rising main but within the same network. Flow is still getting by but at a reduced rate. Interestingly this could be a contributing factor to the issues with the rising main back in sandy ridge. It doesn't look to be a fresh collapse.

How big is the void?

It's about five metres square and half a metre deep.

What are the chances of reopening the road?

Based on our understanding of the void, it may be possible to open half of the road. We will need to be assured this is safe and get the approval of KCC Highways.

The length of road closure was lengthened on the advice of teams on the ground and customers to discourage drivers attempting push through the closure causing risk to themselves and workers.

What needs to be done?

Actions on now are to try and complete remedial work from the top. If we need to dig it will be a 4m dig onto the sewer where we will be able to clear the blockage restore full flow. We will also need to rectify the void in the road before the road is open. I hope you can understand at this point until the road surface is up I can't give an exact timeline but we are working as quickly as possible and will try and open up at least one lane if we can.

We haven't started on the repair over the Bank Holiday weekend as we are awaiting the arrival of specialist materials. We have been planning our repair – it is a challenging collapse and difficult ground but we believe we have a way forwards. We will work as quickly as possible and safe during the week.

How bad is the damage to the pipe?

Over the weekend we've learned more. We cleared both sides of the sewer with the remote control cutter. However further investigation found that even further down the line there are more collapses and the crown (top) of the pipe is in a very poor state showing rebar where you should see concrete.

What does this mean for the repair?

Unfortunately it means we will be here longer than anticipated. Simply digging a trench to make a repair is not practical as the pipe is 4m deep and we are looking at more than 100 metres of potentially damaged pipe. Expert engineers are considering the best way forward – we may insert an inflatable sleeve which will form a robust inner sleeve.

Will services for customers be interrupted?

We are currently setting up over-pumps to take the flow away without the use of tankers in the village, we know that was a huge disruption. Once this is in place we will start rehab work on a long section of the sewer.

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Sewage Pumps at Askew that will transfer past the repair site

