

# Southern Water: Kent update

5 February 2025



from  
**Southern  
Water** 

# Agenda

- Welcome – George Eykyn
- Company update – John Penicud
- Wastewater Asset Strategy, Planning and Future Growth – Chris Braham, Aaron Plange, Catherine Adamson and Emma JN Pierre
- Wastewater – Groundwater Infiltration update – Michael Cook
- FOG and Unflushables – Working with our communities to prevent blockages – Matt Collins
- Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force – Angus Cramp
- Closing words



# Company update

John Penicud, Managing Director for Wastewater



from  
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# Our Business Plan – 2025 to 2030

- In December 2024, we received our Final Determination from Ofwat for our Business Plan for the period April 2025 – March 2030.
- Ofwat sets out how much water companies can invest in their networks over the next five years – and how they should set customer bills to support that activity.
- It's important that we take time to review all the detail carefully, so we can understand the level of support the regulator has shown for our most ambitious investment plan yet.
- More than **25,000 customers** spent over **8,000 hours** telling us what they think, as part of Business Plan engagement.



# Our Business Plan – 2025 to 2030

## INVESTMENT

- Since privatisation, £1.6bn of equity has been invested by Southern Water's shareholders. Over that period, £400m more has been injected into the business, than has been paid out as a return to investors.
- Our shareholders are proposing a further injection of £650 million in equity to support continued investment growth, with no planned dividends in 2025-30.
- We've not paid any external dividends for 8 years. In the last two financial years we made operating losses of £18m and £72m – the consequence of our decision to invest beyond what Ofwat stipulated.



# Proposed bill increases

- We're very conscious that a rise in bills isn't easy for our customers. But it is essential in delivering the improved performance and infrastructure that is required.
- We absolutely understand concerns about bill rises, especially during a cost-of-living crisis, but improvements are needed.
- We have been keeping bills low – the average water and wastewater bill for 2024 is £439. In 2014 it was £437.
- That's an increase of 0.5% in 10 years. At the same time inflation has gone up 33%, increasing the cost of everyday items.



# Supporting our customers



- We're offering more help for customers than ever before with a £235 million support package for those in the most vulnerable of circumstances.
- We're doubling the funding for our Social tariff, which includes a minimum of 45% off for those that who may struggle to pay their bills (over 120,000 households now and rising to 200,000 by 2030).
- We plan to increase our Hardship Fund to £1.25m and increase our Priority Services Register to 20% of our customer base (currently 8%).



# Providing resilient Wastewater Services in Kent

An overview of the planning process and plans for investment over the next 5 years in Kent



# Water Industry Regulatory Investment Cycles



- Ofwat’s 5 year cycle Price Review (PR) process sets allowances for water company investment for each Asset Management Plan (AMP) period
- Ofwat’s Final Determination was announced for AMP8 (2025-2030) in December 2024
- Includes the Environment Agency’s Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) – our investment to protect and enhance the environment (e.g. storm overflows)
- Drainage & Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) sets out our long-term investment needs – now statutory plan with 5 year cycle to inform Price Reviews



# Our Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) looks at the investment needs over the next 25 years to provide safe, resilient wastewater services to customers and protect the environment

## Future Challenges

Climate Change



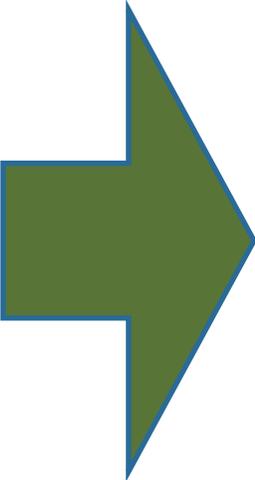
Population Growth



Environmental Capacity & Resilience



Affordability



## Delivering our services

Network flow management to reduce flooding and spills

Recycling wastewater and nutrient removal

Asset health and resilience

Bioresources



# Future Growth – Journey to sustainable development

1

- \* Planning Policy
- ✓ Local plan consultations
- ✓ Neighbourhood plan consultations
- ✓ LPA housing data

2

- \* Planning Team
- ✓ Planning application referrals
- ✓ Growth monitoring

3

- Asset Strategy & Planning
- ✓ Plan growth schemes
- ✓ Environmental obligations

4

- Capital Delivery
- ✓ Deliver growth capital schemes – small simple schemes to larger infrastructure growth schemes



Sustainable Development

# Growth: Assessing the need for investment in wastewater services to support and enable new development

Developer Services experience on average **470** local planning referrals per month

We have reviewed **70** wastewater catchments with specific growth needs resulting in reinforcement requirements across **19** of those catchments

Development planning and phasing

Network capacity assessment

Network modelling and flow surveys

Upgrade options, costs and programming

Scheme design

Delivery and handover

“Over 5000 planning referrals per annum”

**Prioritisation of catchments requiring network reinforcement include:**

- Development size and expected build out.
- Developments impact on existing issues
- Spread of growth and potential 'Hot Spots'
- Working with Councils and Developers to understand when large strategic developments will start

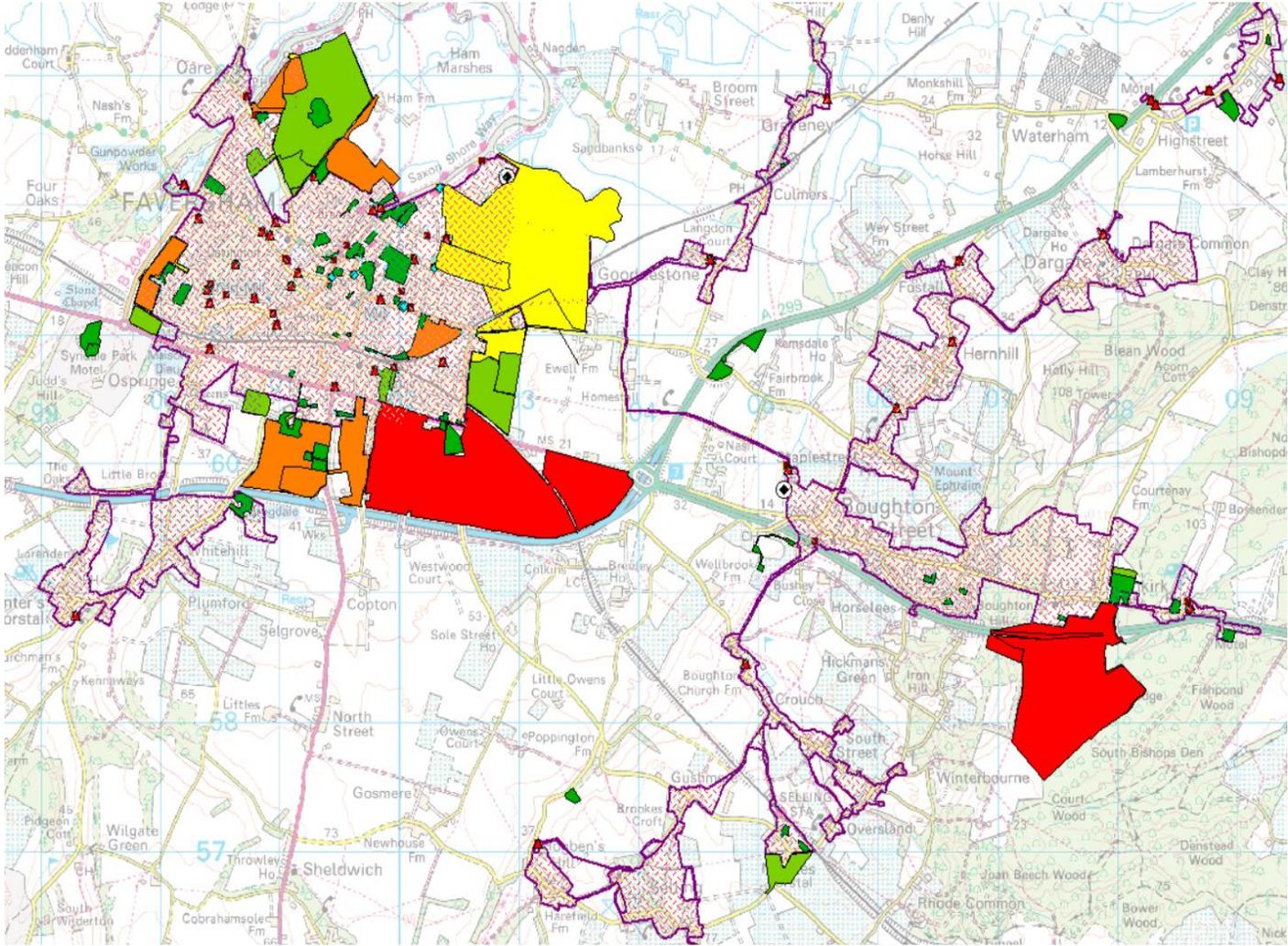
**Approach (based on growth clusters):**

- Surface water removal
- Increased storage in the system
- Upsizing sewers
- Removing surface water connections

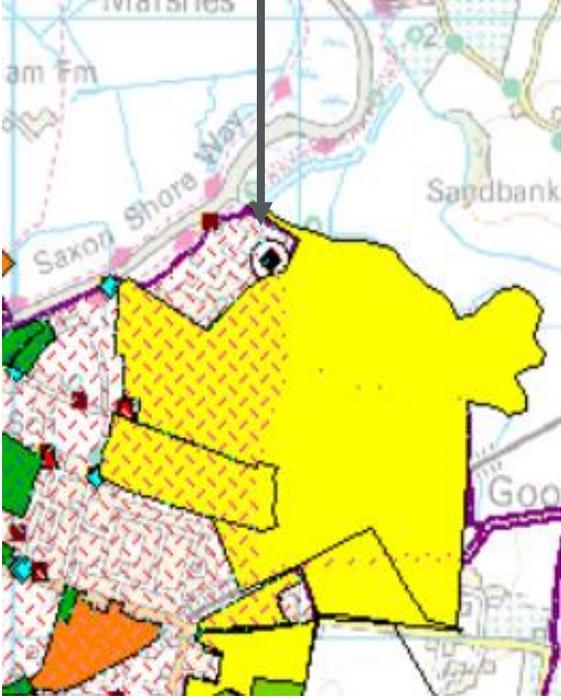


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# Planned growth in the Kent (Medway) catchment



Faversham WTW



Key

- ▲ Pumping Station
- ◆ Overflow
- WWTW

Growth by proposed housing units

	500 to 11,000	(150)
	250 to 500	(231)
	100 to 250	(721)
	50 to 100	(700)
	0 to 50	(4014)





# Wastewater – Groundwater Infiltration update



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# Kent Groundwater focus targeted investment



# Groundwater in Kent – status update

- We currently have no groundwater issues within our sewer network affecting customers in Kent.
- Currently the groundwater levels locally are not at the same levels compared to this time last year.
- This is being monitored 24/7 and we are ready to react if we notice any potential impact on our sewer network.





# Fat, Oil, Grease & Unflushables

Working with our communities to prevent blockages



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# Background

We were clearing over **23,000** blockages a year

**66%** of blockages are preventable

Over **6,000** tons of wet wipes and unflushables were removed over **8 months**

In the UK each year, more than **3,000** homes are flooded due to sewer misuse

# Our Activities

- Door knocking
- Manhole cover lift
- Presentations – High to Low level – Schools, WI Groups, Parish Councils
- Events
- Monthly Targeted Hotspot Campaigns (THC)
- Tour Guides for Peacehaven WTW

## Work Streams

Historical Postcodes – proactive approach

Reactive Jobs – reacting to a recent sewer issue



# The FOG and Unflushables team

2016–24



**190,000**

face-to-face  
conversations  
with customers



**25,700**

Manholes  
surveyed



**1149**

Full or partial  
blockages  
found



**650**

Blockages  
cleared  
ourselves



**131**

internal  
floodings  
prevented



**71**

external  
floodings  
prevented  
(2020-24)



**580**

Presentations  
delivered



**141**

Public events  
attended



Created two  
**customer  
education  
films**



Developed an  
educational  
**augmented  
reality game**



Co-organised the  
2021 and 2022  
**European FOG  
Summit**



Committed  
data led  
**behaviour  
change  
campaigns**



**2,900**  
food  
businesses  
supported



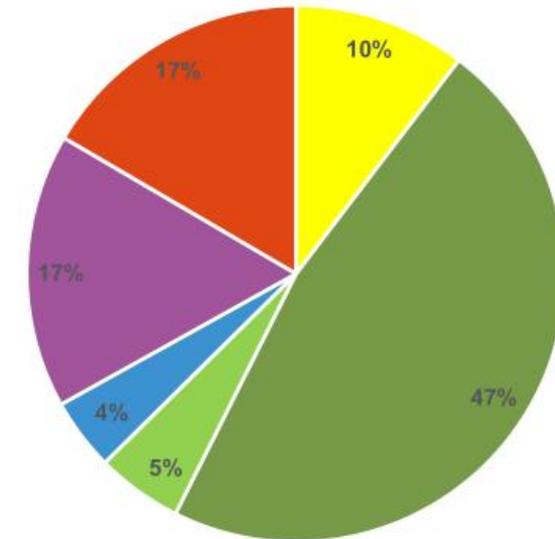
**40**  
national and  
international food  
chains engaged



**Influenced  
and led**  
the UK grease  
management  
industry

# FOG and Unflushable blockages – Kent 2024

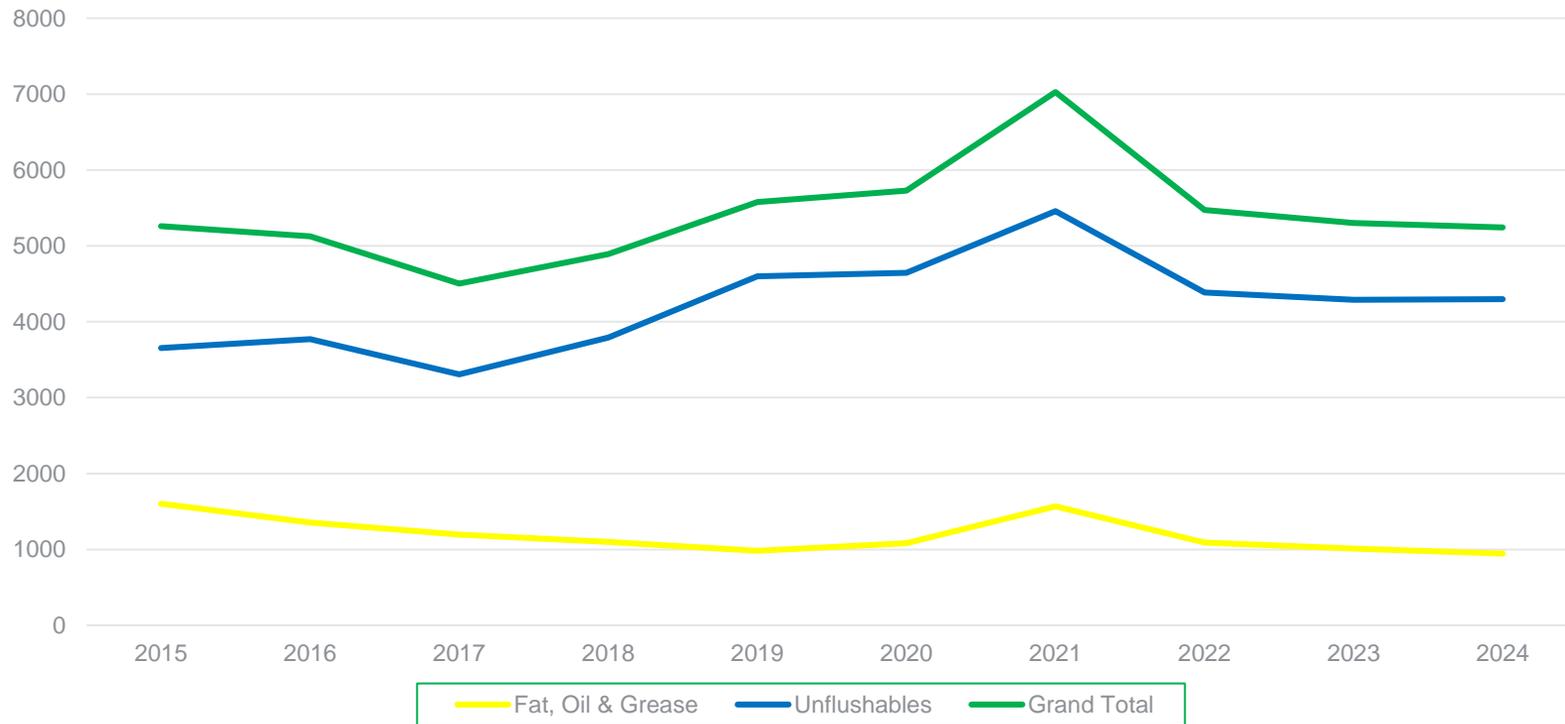
- 5244 **preventable blockages** in 2024
- 945 of these blockages caused by Fat, Oil and Grease
- 4299 of these blockages caused by wipes and sanitary products
- **Hotspot areas**
- Maidstone = 354
- Gillingham = 347
- Rochester = 282
- Sittingbourne = 258



■ FOG ■ Wipes & Sanitary Products ■ Silt ■ Roots ■ Other ■ Mixture of FOG & Unflushables



# FOG & Unflushables Blockage Data: Kent – 2015 to 2024



# FOG & Unflushable Team Activity in Kent

- 99 presentations to schools, uniformed groups & Adult talks
- 22 local community events attended
- If you would like us to attend one of your groups to deliver a presentation or attend an event you may, get in touch:  
[Fog&flushables@southernwater.co.uk](mailto:Fog&flushables@southernwater.co.uk)





## How can we all help?

- Pour excess fat into a container and dispose of it in the bin - not down the sink.
- Mop up excess FOG from pans and plates with kitchen roll.
- Use a sink strainer to prevent food being washed down the sink.
- Only flush the three Ps (pee, poo and paper)



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# Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force Kent update



# Our progress in Kent and 2025-2030 plans



# Working in partnership



**Rivers and Seas Watch full launched** – near-real time information for all storm overflow, including inland. Co-created with stakeholders and users



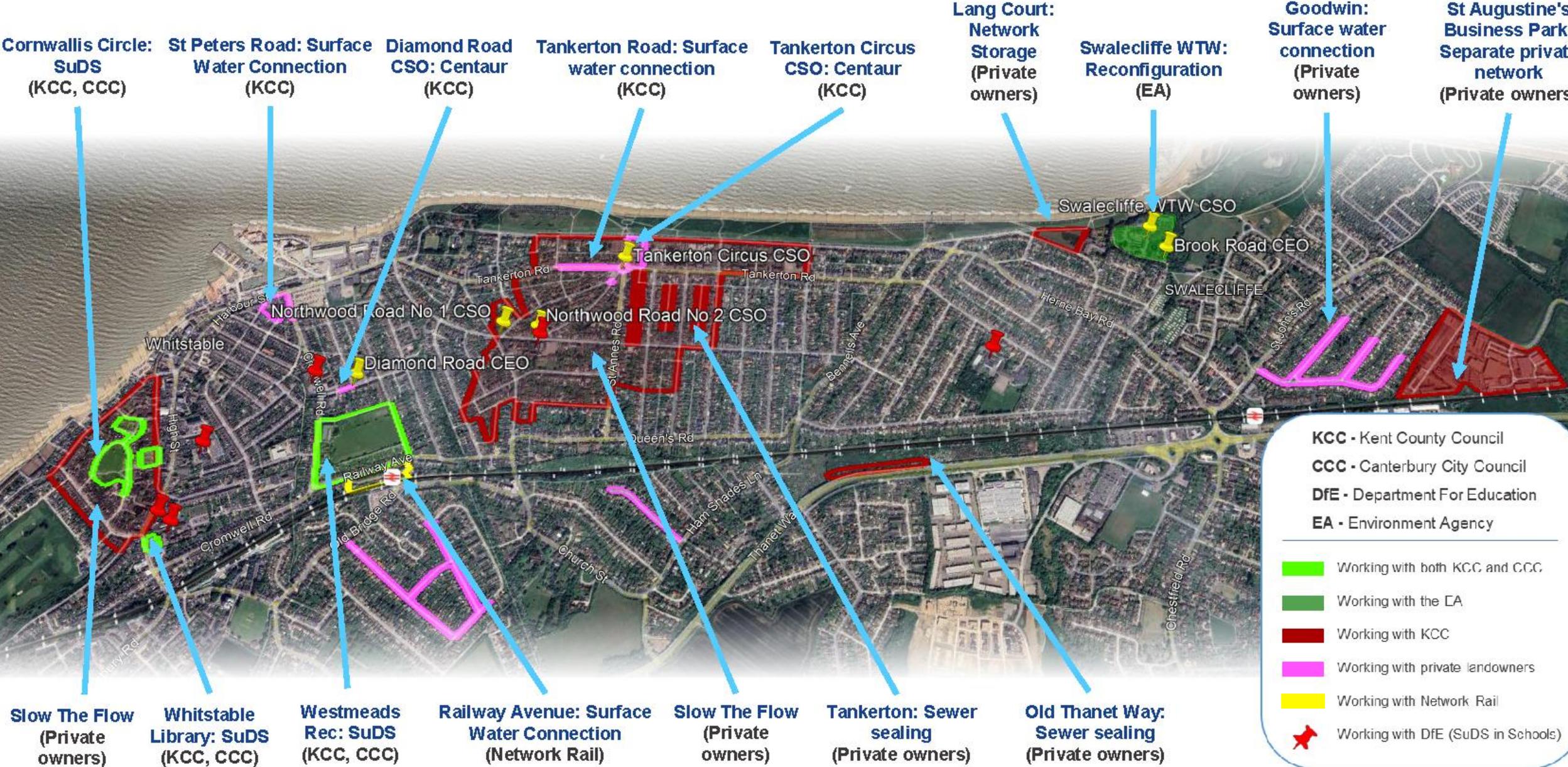
**Bathing water improvement is required in the Folkestone & Hythe and the Deal/Dover area.** Despite improvement in St Mary's Bay, we are dedicating teams to focus on wider area improvements



**Working with Kent County Council to explore potential large-scale highway SuDS scheme** – held multiple workshops and building a potential programme, managing surface water in communities



# Working in Partnership



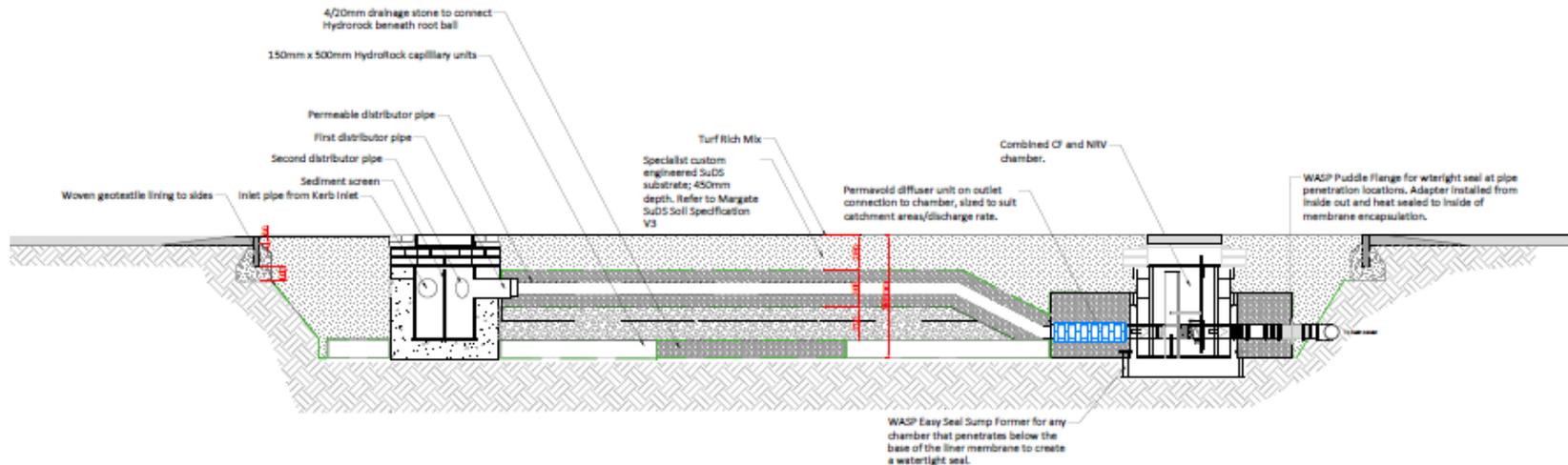
**KCC** - Kent County Council  
**CCC** - Canterbury City Council  
**DfE** - Department For Education  
**EA** - Environment Agency

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- Working with both KCC and CCC
- Working with the EA
- Working with KCC
- Working with private landowners
- Working with Network Rail
- ★ Working with DfE (SuDS in Schools)

# Margate

- Gloucester Avenue SuDS.
- Construction started 13 January 2025 and is scheduled to finish 8 March 2025.
- First Highways SuDS retrofit delivered by Southern Water and Kent County Council in partnership in Kent.
- Managing 0.55ha of impermeable area.



# Network Optimisation: Centaur



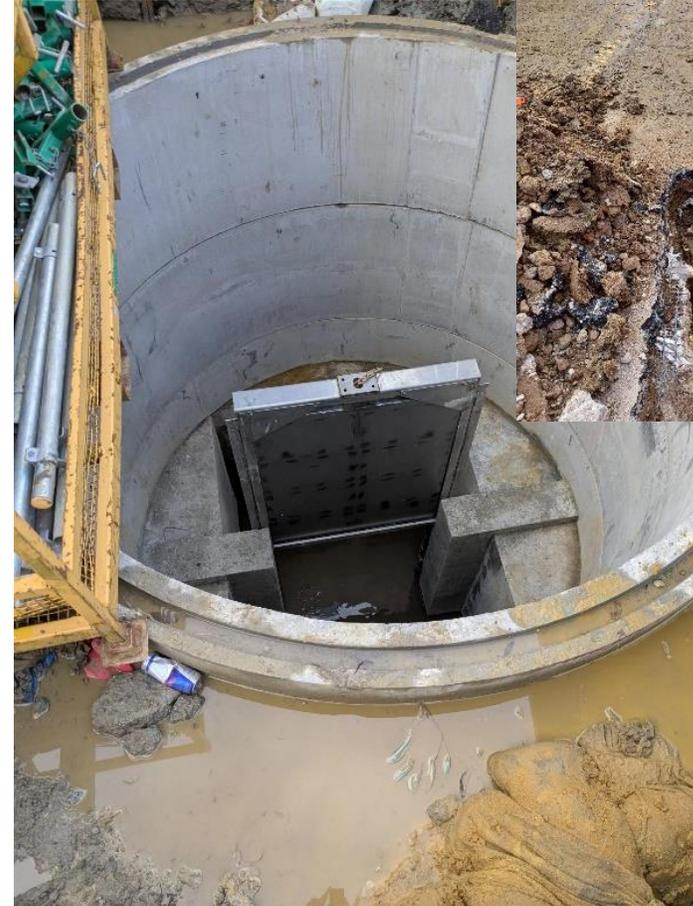
## Tankerton Circus (left):

- Completion expected April 25
- First of 3 manholes have been installed and some pipework laid
- Working in partnership with The Talk of Tankerton to deliver a betterment plan for the roundabout that reflects the community of Tankerton
- Estimated 20% spill saving



## Diamond Road (Right):

- The manhole has been installed and gate is in place.
- Teams are installing the electrical components of the Centaur System
- Estimated 30% spill saving



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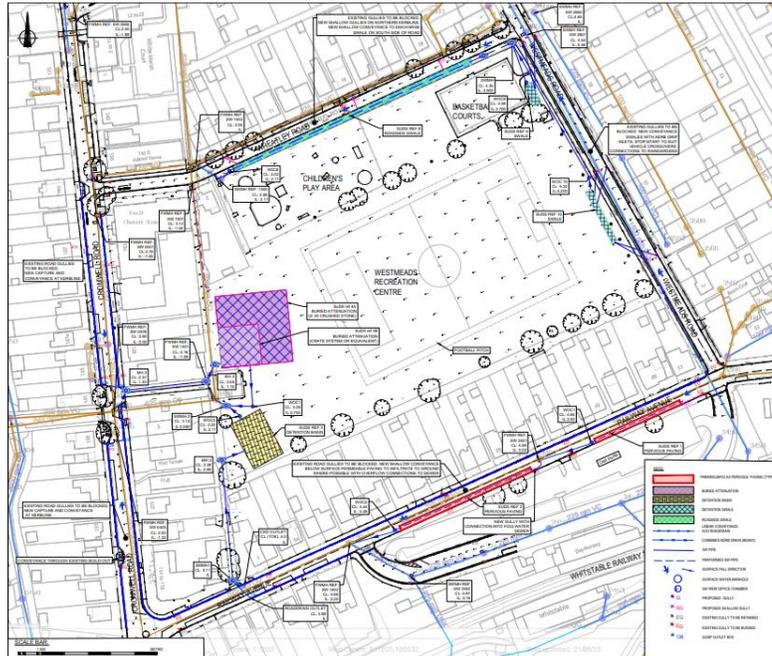


## Whitstable Library

- Manage the roof runoff of a large urban building while increasing biodiversity in an urbanised area.
- Construction planning underway for delivery Summer/Autumn 2025
- Working in partnership with KCC libraries and CCC to deliver sustainable urban drainage

## Cornwallis Circle

- Potential 1.2ha of impermeable area managed across two phases.
- Construction planning underway for delivery Summer/Autumn 2025.
- Working in partnership with KCC and CCC to deliver Sustainable highways drainage

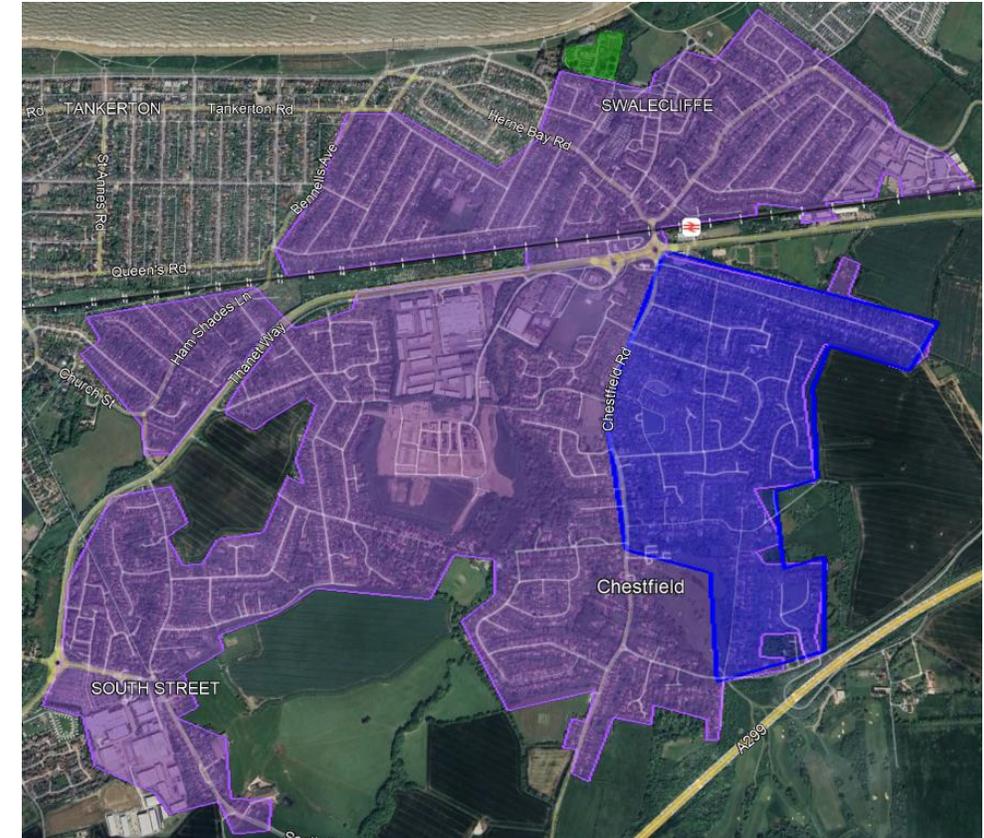


## Westmeads Recreation Ground

- Potential 1.3ha impermeable area removed from the combined network.
- Working in partnership with KCC, CCC and the EA to remove stormwater from our network, introduce sustainable highways drainage and bring back grassroots football to our community in Whitstable.

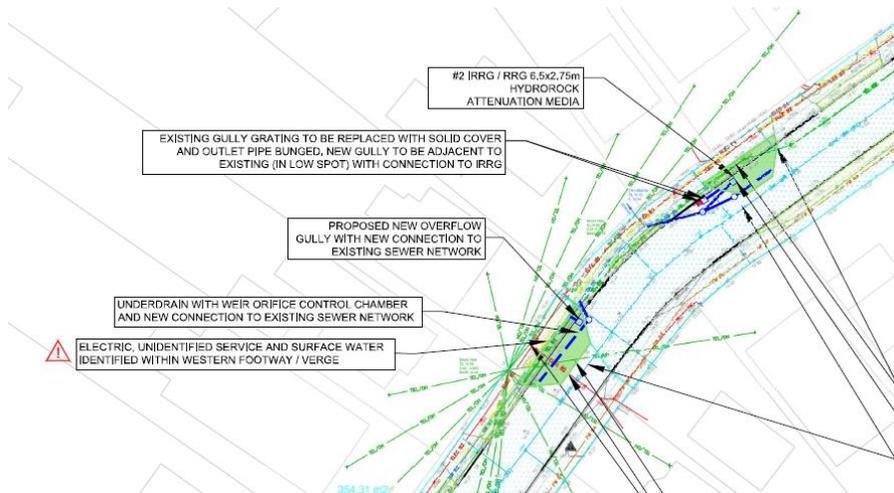
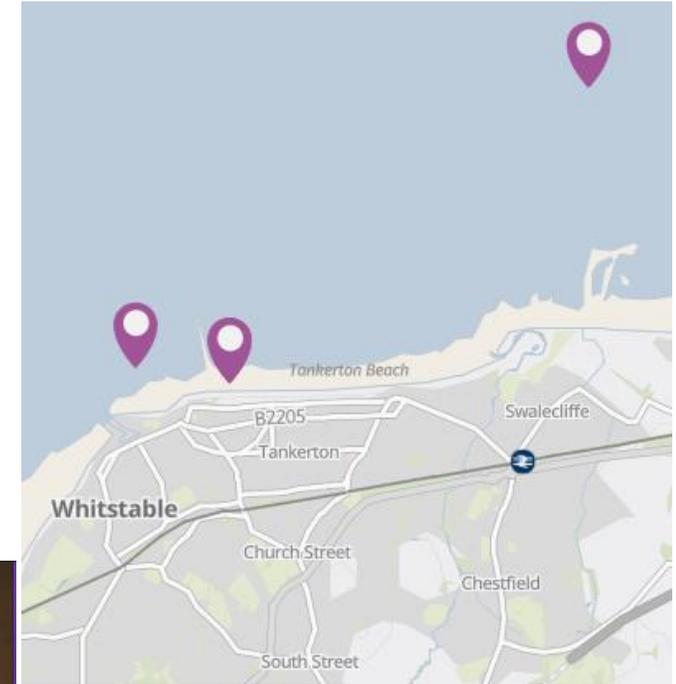
# Surface water separation: Private roofs

- Phase 1 of private roof connectivity surveys have been carried out in Chestfield.
- Of the properties surveyed, 32% are connected to our foul network.
- To fully understand the extent of homes connected to our foul network in the Brook Road catchment, we are expanding our surveys to encompass the Chestfield, Swalecliffe and South Street areas



# Over the next five years...

- Smart Water Butts: We will be delivering water butts with smart control to larger properties in Whitstable
- Sewer Sealing programme to lock out rainfall induced infiltration
- Disconnecting private surface water connections to our foul network
- More SuDS opportunities being developed.



Share your thoughts



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The Southern Water logo graphic consists of three stylized, wavy blue lines of varying lengths, positioned to the right of the text "Southern Water".

You can vote  
at [Slido.com](https://www.slido.com) with the code

#3605824



AOB



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# Appendix



# Community Centre Grants



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# Community Centre Grants – Kent

- As part of our programme to support making the community stronger, our Community Centre Grant is back for a third year.
- This year we provided over 30 grants of £1,000 each and 10 were awarded in Kent.
- These grants have directly alleviated the burden of rising energy and operational costs, ensuring that vital services continue to be accessible to the local community.



## Kent winners:

- Newington Community Association
- The Alexander Centre CIC
- Greenhithe Community Centre
- Hartlip Village Hall
- Sunflower House, Folkestone
- Thanet Community Development Trust
- PCC of St Augustine's, Gillingham
- All Saints Community Project, Chatham
- South Willesborough & Newtown Community Centre
- Dover Big Local CIC



# Providing Resilient Wastewater Services in Kent

Appendix



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# Future Growth working with Planning Authorities

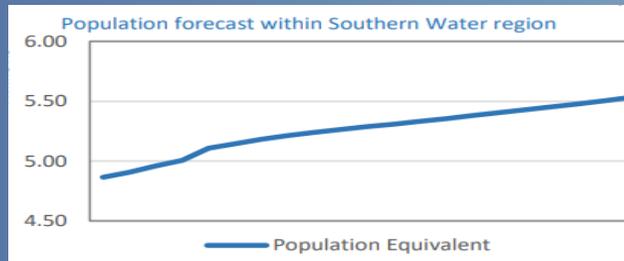
## Long term (beyond 10 years) Sustainable Development

- Drawing shared information into longer-term views of growth
- Reflecting on and developing our collaborative working to find more sustainable solutions approaches, less dependent on infrastructure and adding natural capital value
- Place Making and incentivising sustainable options



## Medium Term (5 to 10 years) Local Planning Policy

- Assessing the impact of Local Plan proposals
- Feeding constraints back to our planning colleagues
- Providing input to local plans
- Feeding LPA growth data into our 5-year investment cycles (eg DWMP the outcomes of which inform investment proposals in 5-year business plans)



## Short term (2 to 5 years) Planning Consultations

- Assessing the impact of planning applications on the Southern Water network
- Identifying where local reinforcement may be required
- Tracking developments and their build out rates, working with developers to closely align.



\*See Appendix 1 as required for 'Using the planning process to support upgrades to our infrastructure'

# Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force

## Kent update

Appendix



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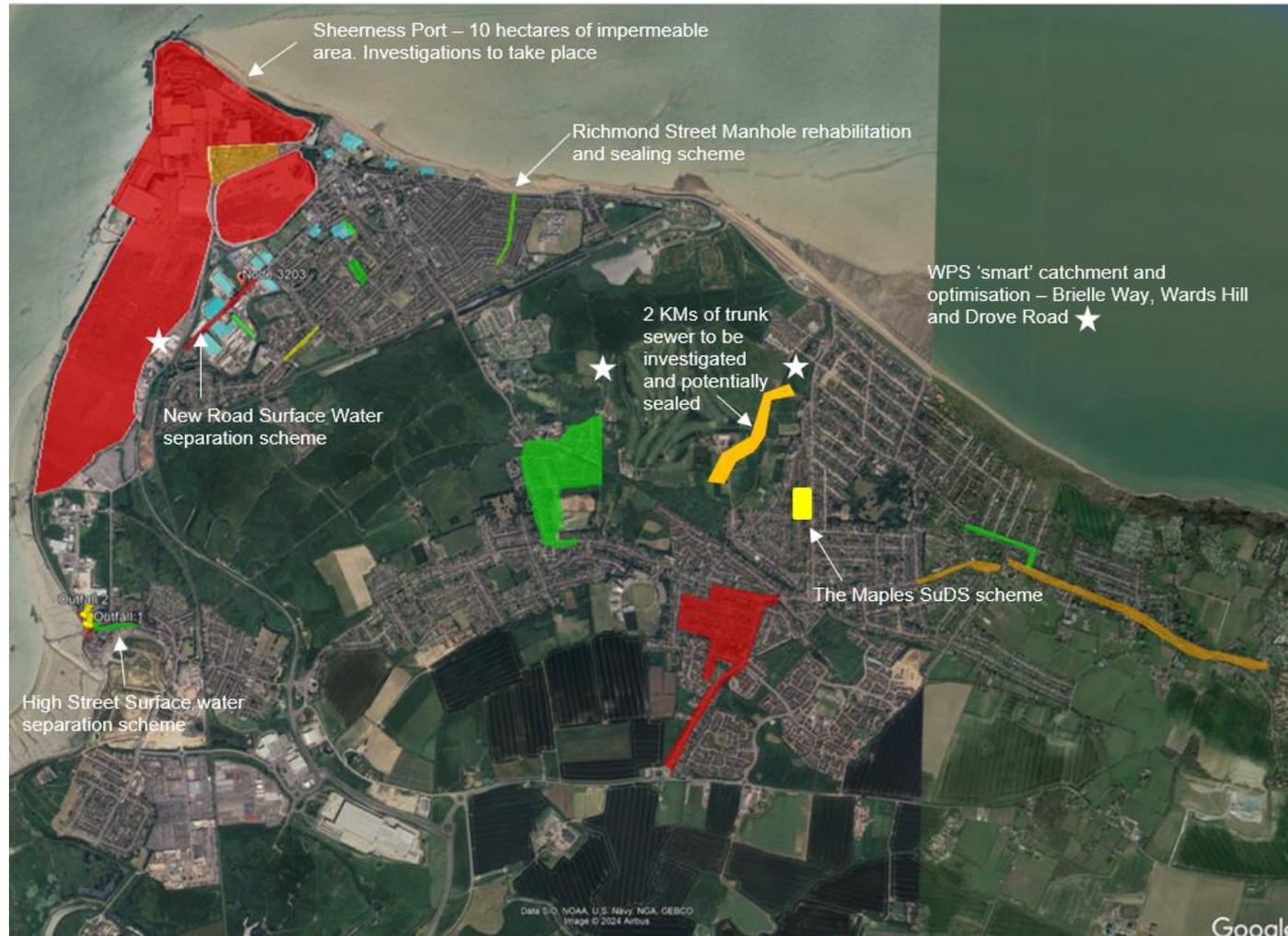
Sheerness Port investigations. Roof disconnection and sewer condition survey.



Richmond Street, Sheerness. Extensive survey of a complicated network has revealed collapses and fractures with large amounts of infiltration.



New Road Industrial Roof disconnections – surveys taking place



## Queenborough

**ORANGE:** Needs investigating for potential surface water separation or sewer survey.

**RED:** SDS phased surface water separation investigations.

**GREEN:** Investigation completed either by contractor or SW Pathfinder Engineers.

**BLUE:** Investigation completed either by contractor or SW Pathfinder Engineers and surface water / Ground Water in the area **IS** going to foul/combined network.

**YELLOW:** Potential SuDS Schemes.

**CYAN:** Red roofs.



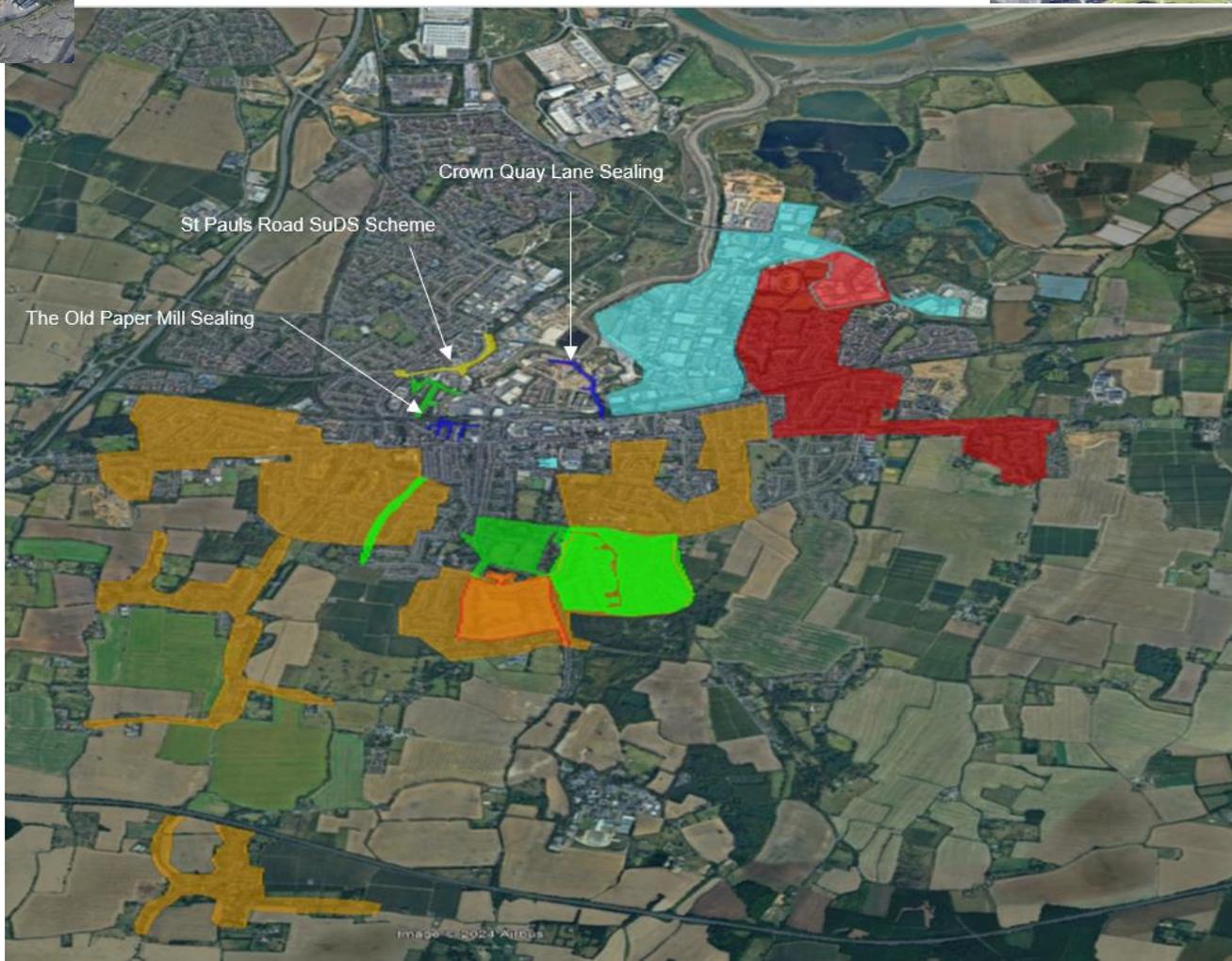
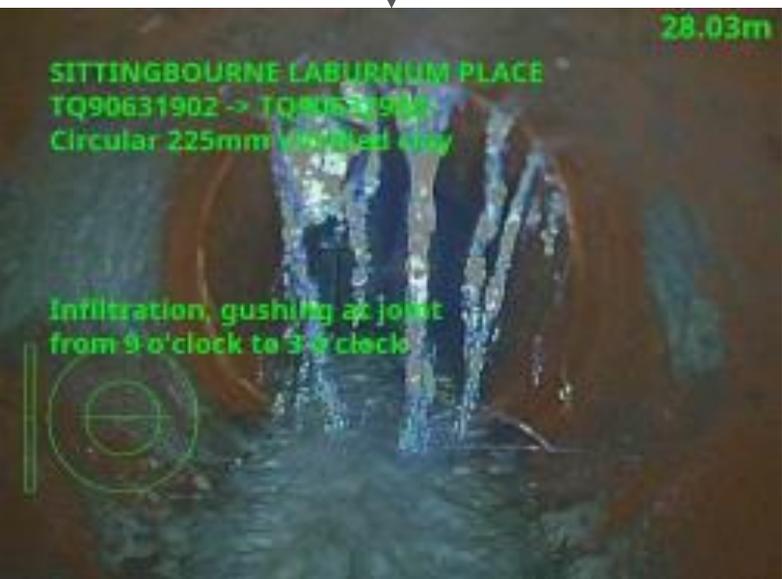


St Pauls – a combined sewer area in which the road suffers with flooding, which then drains into the sewer. Survey on going.

Crown Quay Lane and Industrial estate. Surveys ongoing to assess sewer condition and number of roofs connected to the network.



Sewer network around The Old Paper Mill is suffering with significant infiltration of ground water. Sewer to be sealed.



## Sittingbourne

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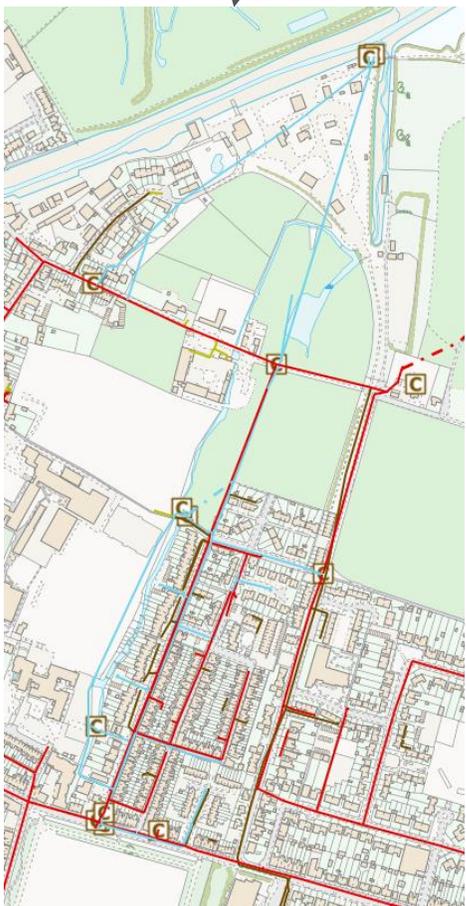
**CYAN:** Red roofs.



6 surface water lines confirmed as connected to the foul system. Intervention planning taking place to disconnect them.

# Faversham

Investigation and optimisation of the existing network.



**ORANGE:** Needs investigating for potential surface water separation or sewer survey.

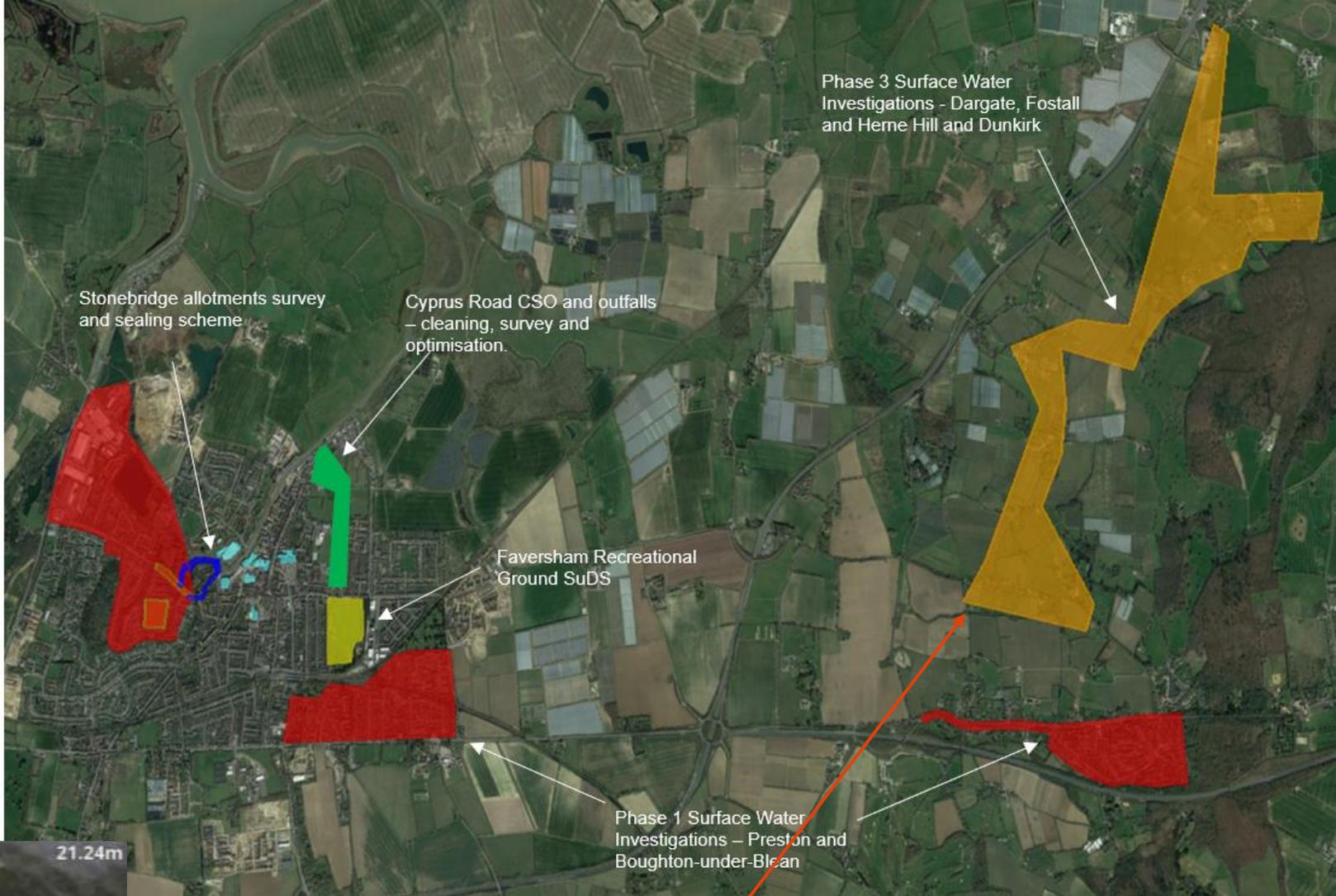
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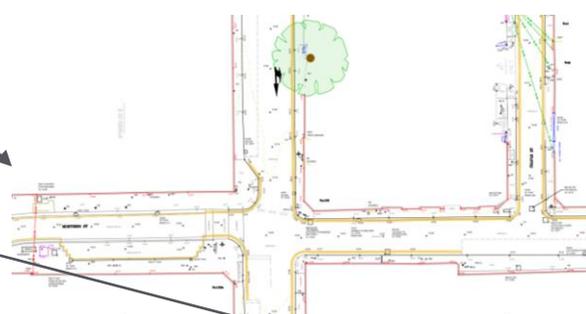


Stonebridge allotments survey completed. Numerous point of infiltration located. Sewer to be Sealed.

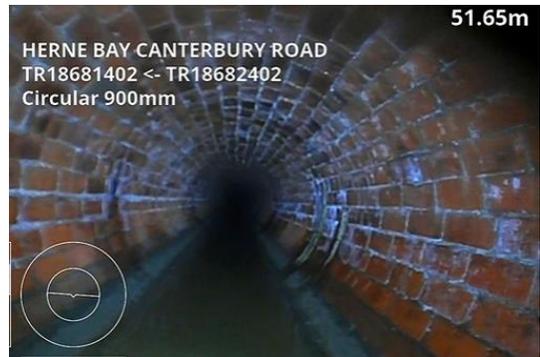
6 Temperature sensors being installed in Stockers Hill WPS catchment. Looking for Ground Water infiltration.



Mortimer Street Regreening. Currently in concept design. Topographical surveys complete.



Beacon Hill – 16ha area with all road gullies confirmed as connected to foul. Surface water line scheme being planned.



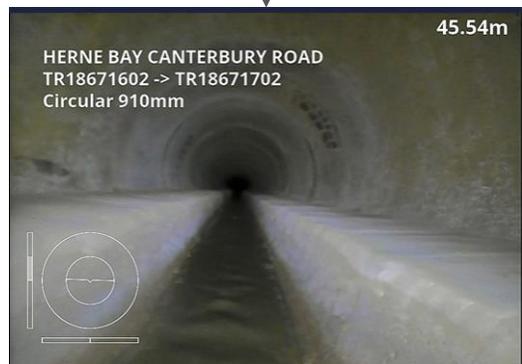
# Herne Bay

Mortimer Street – concept design SuDS

Beacon Hill and surrounds surface water separation



Herne Bay Storm Tunnels – exploring the installation of penstocks, creating a ‘smart catchment’ to control flows and utilise existing network storage.



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