

17th January 2023

I wanted to provide the experience I have had with Southern Water since I moved into the Wimpey Estate back in August 2016. Just going through previous communications, Facebook posts and local news reports, there have been around 13 incidences that I can count of lost water to the residents on the Wimpey Estate within the last 4 years. I have also experienced numerous occasions of low water pressure which I have not documented. I would like this to be discussed at Overview and Scrutiny at Thanet District Council to try and find a solution.

I have listed them below as follows:

10 March 2019	no water supply
8 June 2019	water main leak on Rumfields Road - no water supply
28 August 2021	water main burst at Westwood Cross - no water supply
3 September 2021	no water supply
October 2021	raw sewage discarded into sea - beaches closed to public
19 June 2022	water leak on Northwood Road – no water supply
16 July 2022	no water supply
5 September 2022	no water supply
25 October 2022	mains water leak outside St Georges School - traffic diverting through the estate which causes stress to residents.
17 November 2022	no water supply
19 December 2022	burst pipe floods Asda carpark and neighbouring properties
11 January 2023	no water supply and closed school
16 January 2023	no water supply

It is not only the loss of water supply that we have suffered but also the knock effect of local traffic.

In October 2022 the mains burst outside St Georges School in Broadstairs. Southern Water arrived and blocked the road off causing traffic to divert through the Wimpey Estate. I contacted Kent Highways who's StreetWorks team came back to me and said that Southern Water hadn't even bothered to notify them of the road closure and that they didn't even have time to put any diversion signs in place. The traffic through the estate was just queuing and it made it very difficult for residents to get out or into the estate. I had taken a days A/L to have an eye appointment and had to cancel this as I was just sat in traffic.

The various bottled water stations were set up at Asda, Dane Court and St Georges causing traffic queues around the roads where I live causing further burden to residents on the estate getting caught in the traffic.

My parents were on the Priority Service list as my mother has advanced Alzheimer's. Their water didn't arrive until 10pm in the evening of the 19 December 2022. My father had to join the queue at Dane Court to get water. What is the point of the priority service if he has to go out to get water. I saw on various facebook posts that other residents had the same issue.

The big question I have as a resident is what their long-term plan is as clearly the water system is not coping. The ever-increasing population of Thanet and another target of 17,000 homes by 2031 due to be built, how is the water system going to cope with the additional housing. Then there is the knock effect of the road infrastructure. It only takes a burst water main to cause havoc as we have previously experienced.

I am aware that Southern Water provide communication updates on social media forums but it should be encouraged through local council that they hold a town hall to discuss the previous issues, how they are maintaining/upgrading the water system, what the impact of additional homes in Thanet would mean for the current system and an overall long term strategy for ensuring that a continuous water supply is also provided.

That summaries what the last 4 years has been like for myself living on the Wimpey Estate.

If needed I would be willing to attend an Overview and Scrutiny meeting to highlight the issues if it would help find a permanent solution to this problem.

Yours sincerely

Liz Wickenden

Resident of The Wimpey Estate, Broadstairs