



# Alton Drainage Strategy

**Stage 1 - Initialise/Prepare**



*At the heart of daily life*

# Introduction

## Why sewer flooding

Britain's first sewerage systems were constructed 150 years ago in the Victorian era, and have served us well for generations. The sewer network Thames Water operates today has been much improved and vastly extended over the years; yet it remains under increasing pressure.

Everyday our network manages the demands of one of the world's busiest and most densely populated capital cities, and its urbanised surrounding areas; together with the equally complex

challenges arising in our predominantly rural catchments in the Thames Valley, Surrey and Kent.

A number of factors including population growth, less frequent but heavier rainfall, the urbanisation of green spaces and changes in agricultural land practices, and utilised machinery, occasionally overwhelm our sewer network. The result can be unwanted sewer flooding for customers and our neighbouring natural environments.

### This document contains:

- an Introduction to the work we are undertaking to alleviate sewer flooding in our region
- a Feedback: Q&A section addressing key questions from customers and stakeholders
- the Alton Drainage Strategy technical document.

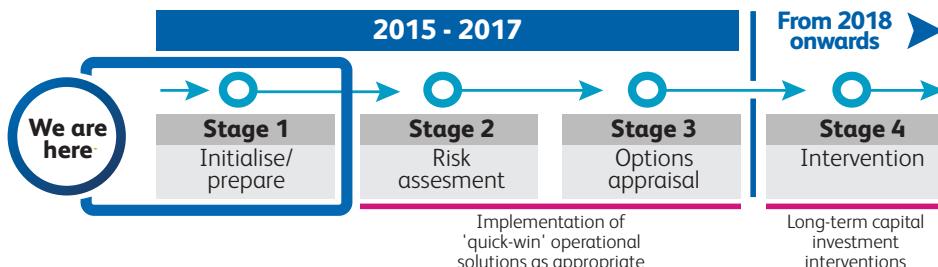
## What can be done and when?

Sewer flooding is unacceptable. We have undertaken extensive customer research and initiated a programme of work to improve drainage and alleviate sewer flooding issues across our region.

We are adopting the good practice Drainage Strategy framework\* developed by the Environment Agency and Ofwat, the water industry economic regulator,

to produce a drainage strategy for our affected catchments with a primary focus on our sewerage network. As outlined in Figure 1, the strategies will develop throughout the 4-stage framework to define how we intend to alleviate sewer flooding or to address growth related issues in each area sustainably, and economically, over the next few years.

**Figure 1 High-level Drainage Strategy framework\* and estimated delivery and intervention timeline\*\***



\* The detailed 4-stage Drainage Strategy framework can be found in the following Drainage Strategy document. \*\* The estimated delivery timeline is dependent on factors including weather conditions and is, therefore, open to change. The intervention timeline includes the implementation of 'quick-win' operational solutions throughout Stage 2 & 3, and long-term capital investment interventions in Stage 4.

## Who will resolve the sewer flooding?

There are a number of stakeholders who, like us, have important drainage responsibilities and therefore, play an essential role in resolving sewer flooding in our region. These stakeholders include customers, private land owners and the Environment Agency; to name but a few. We are seeking to work in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that together, we implement and maintain the most effective and sustainable drainage strategies.

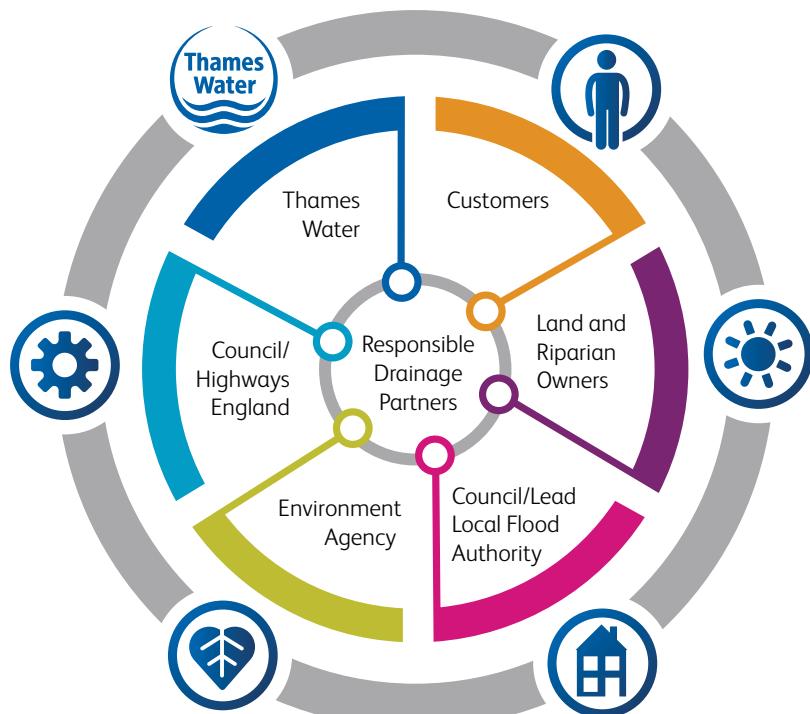
Just as our responsibilities to improve drainage and alleviate sewer flooding focus on removing and treating wastewater; other stakeholders' responsibilities include managing local flood risk on riverbanks, groundwater,

land and highways, utilising appropriate agricultural practices and maintaining private drains.

We take full responsibility for resolving all drainage and sewer flooding issues that fall within our remit. If the causes of sewer flooding sit outside of this, we will support the responsible stakeholder to resolve the issue and to reduce the impact on customers.

Figure 2 provides a high-level view of the stakeholders responsible for drainage in each catchment area, more detail regarding responsibilities can be found in Section 1 of the following Drainage Strategy document.

**Figure 2 Partners with Drainage Responsibilities**



## Next steps

Over the coming months we will undertake the following activities as this drainage strategy develops:

### 2015 - 2017



#### Customer Focus Actions

- Continue to consult with customers during this stage and every stage, through meetings, communications and surveys. We have gained important customer feedback during this first stage, which we are using to shape our activities
- Publish strategy documents for comment and contribution, throughout this framework process.



#### Partnership Actions

- Continue to establish partnership working with the regional drainage stakeholders, and agree ongoing consultation processes.



#### Other Key Actions

- Define catchment flooding uncertainties
- Prepare flooding risk data
- Undertake ongoing repair work to our sewer network, as the strategy develops and our investigations identify reparation work linked to drainage and flooding issues.

We will **regularly consult with customers and stakeholders, update and republish** this document throughout this 4-stage framework process.

# Feedback: Q&A

Your questions answered

We are committed to listening to, consulting and collaborating with customers and stakeholders on our sewerage network activities and plans. We have addressed key feedback and questions raised by stakeholders and customers in the Alton catchment, and customers affected by flooding throughout the region, in this Feedback Q&A section. As far as possible, and as is relevant to Stage 1 in the framework process, we have incorporated feedback from customers and stakeholders into our network strategy development. More detail can be found throughout the following Drainage Strategy document.

## Q1 Will undertaking this Drainage Strategy framework process defer essential work in our area?

### Answer

It is essential for us to complete this drainage strategy process, which has been developed and recommended by the water industry economic regulator Ofwat, and the Environment Agency. This will enable us to better understand the root cause of the sewer flooding issues affecting the catchment, before any major investment can be considered. However, we may carry out some repair works as this strategy develops, in the event that our investigations identify faults or problems with the sewerage network that are highly likely to have caused flooding, as outlined

in Section 7 of the Drainage Strategy document. Our previous investigations have identified some sources of inflow, such as the misconnection of surface water to foul sewers. However, as stated in the following strategy, we are not yet able to say how much this impacts on flooding and will update this as our plan develops through Stage 2 to Stage 3 – Option Appraisal. Therefore, this more detailed approach is required to ensure that the most effective and sustainable drainage strategies are implemented in the Alton catchment.

We are committed to  
**listening to, consulting and  
collaborating** with customers  
and stakeholders on our sewerage  
network activities and plans.

## Q2 What drainage actions are you undertaking in our area, and when will they be happening?

### Answer

As stated above, we are developing our plan for this area and will provide further details as our plan develops through Stage 2 to Stage 3 – Option Appraisal. The following drainage actions have already been undertaken or are underway, in the catchment:

Actions completed include: (For more information please see Table 2)

1. Short-term flow sewer surveys and monitoring
2. Maintenance and cleaning of wet wells at Newman Lane and Holybourne Pumping stations
3. Tankering to protect at-risk properties during 2013/14
4. Site reconnaissance
5. Flooding clean-up

6. Installation of permanent depth monitors and assessment
7. Installation of low-leak manhole covers
8. CCTV and manhole surveys
9. Installation of short-term flow monitors
10. Localised sewer repairs.

Actions underway or planned include:  
(For more information please see Table 4)

1. Stakeholder engagement activities
2. Permanent monitoring of sewer levels
3. Customer surveys
4. Sewer and manhole surveys
5. Connectivity surveys
6. Ongoing repair works to our catchment sewer network where identified
7. Innovative solution analysis
8. Hydraulic modelling.

### **Q3 Are you renovating the sewers in our area?**

#### **Answer**

We will renovate sewers which have been damaged, either as they have aged or through other streetworks activities.

to target and repair localised sewer defects identified through our investigations as contributing to, or causing, drainage and flooding issues in the catchment.

As per Question 2 above, as the Drainage Strategy work continues, we will continue

### **Q4 What are the improvement plans for Alton's sewage treatment works to manage capacity?**

#### **Answer**

The capacities of the Alton sewage treatment works have been assessed to be adequate under normal design flow conditions, to manage current demand and as per Section 5.3, to manage all of the development applications submitted and projected for the catchment, as outlined in the latest East Hampshire District Council Local Plan. Therefore, we do not plan to enhance the treatment

capacity of the sewage treatment works at this time.

As our investigations through this 4-stage framework progress, we will consult with customers and stakeholders on our proposals, and republish them within the later stages of this Drainage Strategy document.

### **Q5 How are you ensuring that our local pumping stations are operating effectively?**

#### **Answer**

The pumping stations within the Alton catchment are supported by 24-hour diagnostic monitoring so that we can tightly control their operation through a flow of real-time information. Based on this performance data we can respond quickly through site visits by our engineers, and both project and rectify potential issues before they occur.

As we move through this 4-stage framework process and further develop our Drainage Strategy for this catchment, we will review the operational control options of these stations, particularly during wet weather, carefully avoiding increasing the risk of sewer flooding in doing so.

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## **Q6 Are you working with the Highway Authority to resolve blocked gullies, and ditches, and with landowners to reduce field run-off, as both affect drainage and our sewers?**

### **Answer**

In Section 1 of the following Drainage Strategy document, we outline the other stakeholders who, like us, have important drainage responsibilities and therefore, play an essential role in resolving sewer flooding issues in this catchment area. As Highway maintenance activities and agricultural land maintenance practices sit outside of our remit, we will work with the responsible stakeholders, to highlight these issues where this is found to have a major influence and impact on our sewerage network.

We will continue to work closely with the Council and Highways England to understand the extent to which flood waters may be escaping from highway or land drainage systems; and impacting the foul sewer network. An update on this issue will be shared with customers and featured in the later stages of this Drainage Strategy document.

## **Q7 How are you planning for future development in the catchment?**

### **Answer**

As per Section 5.3 in the following Drainage Strategy document, we will continue to closely monitor development applications in the catchment and assess the impact that they may have on the capacity of our operations in the future. As per Q4 above, the existing sewage treatment works currently has the capacity to manage the ongoing and projected development for the catchment, as outlined in the latest East Hampshire District Council Local Plan.

However, as per Q4 and Section 5.3, through our ongoing catchment planning work undertaken Hydraulic Modelling exercises to gain an insight into how further potential new developments may impact upon sewerage network in the

Alton catchment. These exercises have revealed that new development may put significant pressure on the existing sewerage infrastructure, potentially resulting in an exacerbation of existing flooding problems.

We will continue to monitor future plans for the catchment through our stakeholder engagement work. A key element of our assessments will be to establish the extent to which developments may be significant in the context of the sewer flooding challenges currently experienced in the catchment. This assessment work will be undertaken and findings shared in an update to this Strategy document.

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## **Q8 Is an Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP), required for this catchment?**

### **Answer**

Ensuring that our drainage strategies fully meet the requirements of an Infiltration Reduction Plan, as set out in the Environment Agency's Regulatory Position Statement, is a fundamental consideration in their development. Therefore, to maintain our service to customers during future wet weather events, if we need to discharge to watercourses through temporary overflows, a dedicated section will be included in each affected strategy, providing details of their location and

intended use. This section will be included and /or revised when each strategy is updated.

In the event that temporary overflows are required, as stated above, we will describe their location and the circumstances under which we would use them. Together with plans to reduce infiltration, this drainage strategy would then fully meet the requirements of an Infiltration Reduction Plan.

## **Q9 Why are costs a consideration within your Wastewater outcomes?**

### **Answer**

The service we provide is the most fundamental of all – at the heart of daily life for the 15 million customers we serve. Getting it right is our focus every day, and we never forget it is paid for by customers.

As a regulated company we have to carefully balance service and cost in order to keep customer bills affordable, whilst delivering our outcomes and customer service commitments.

## **Q10 Are growth and urban creep minor factors in these rural catchments?**

### **Answer**

Relatively small population increases in these rural catchments can be influential on sewer flows, hence the need for us to closely monitor planning applications. Working closely with the Local Planning Authority, we are tracking ongoing and proposed developments for the Alton catchment, and assessing their potential impact on our assets and service. Similarly urban creep, and in particular misconnection of surface water and change of land use, can have a significant impact on sewer flooding; particularly when permeable areas such as grass

are replaced with hard-standings and driveways.

When compared against the rest of the Thames Water region, the urban creep rate in the Alton catchment is about average for the Thames Operational Area, but not as high as suburban areas around central London and major towns.

More growth and urban creep information can be found in Section 5.1 of the following Drainage Strategy document.

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## Q11 Are best practice techniques already used by other water companies being considered?

### Answer

We are constantly reviewing and improving our business to meet and exceed industry standards, to implement best practice and to drive innovation. We lead and participate in a large number of industry forums both in the UK and worldwide, to share and expand our learning; with the ultimate aim of improving services for customers.

We are deploying industry best practice techniques throughout our Drainage Strategy work, and also trialling new technology that is innovative within our industry, to achieve the best possible drainage outcomes for customers and their local environment.

## Q12 Why are you collecting climate change data rather than 'climate proofing' assets?

### Answer

We are committed to responding to climate change and to reducing our contribution to it by reducing emissions in accordance with government policy. Our voluntary target is to achieve a challenging 20 per cent reduction in emissions (compared to 1990 levels), for our Scope 1 and 2 emissions\*. We

continue to assess and collect climate change data and its impact on assets across our region, to ensure that we are fully informed and can prioritise our plans, targeted actions and investments. For more information please see the Climate Change section on the Homepage of our website.

\*Scope 1 emissions refer to greenhouse gas emissions associated with the operation of our assets. Scope 2 emissions are emissions associated with the use of grid electricity.

## Q13 What is the impact on local rivers of overflow points?

### Answer

During extreme weather conditions foul sewers may become overwhelmed through a combination of surface water or ground water, resulting in much diluted sewage. The impact on local rivers is dependent on the nature and size of the river, and on the overflow.

To reduce the environmental impact on local watercourses we will only use overflow points when groundwater

and river levels are high, and therefore sewage dilution rates are also high. Additionally, as per Table 4 we are also investigating deploying mobile biological filters to prevent litter and other matter from entering local rivers. If during the development of our Drainage Strategy we consider that temporary overflow points are necessary in the local network, we will update the Drainage Strategy document to reflect this position.



# Alton Drainage Strategy

Technical Document



*At the heart of daily life*

# Stage 1: Initialise / Prepare

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# About this document

## Based on customer research

Undertaking extensive customer research has been a fundamental step in our business plan preparation for 2015-20. Our research findings have informed our business planning activities, and contributed to the development of a set of long-term customer 'outcomes'.

The water industry economic regulator, Ofwat, defines 'outcomes' as "High-level objectives that company actions, activities and achievements are intended to help deliver [they] represent what customers and society value". As a company, we are committed to achieving our customer outcomes, a number of which are focussed

on alleviating sewer flooding issues within our region, through effective, economic and sustainable drainage. This document describes the strategy that we will follow in delivering our long-term customer outcomes for drainage, specifically in the Alton catchment, in a sustainable and economic manner.

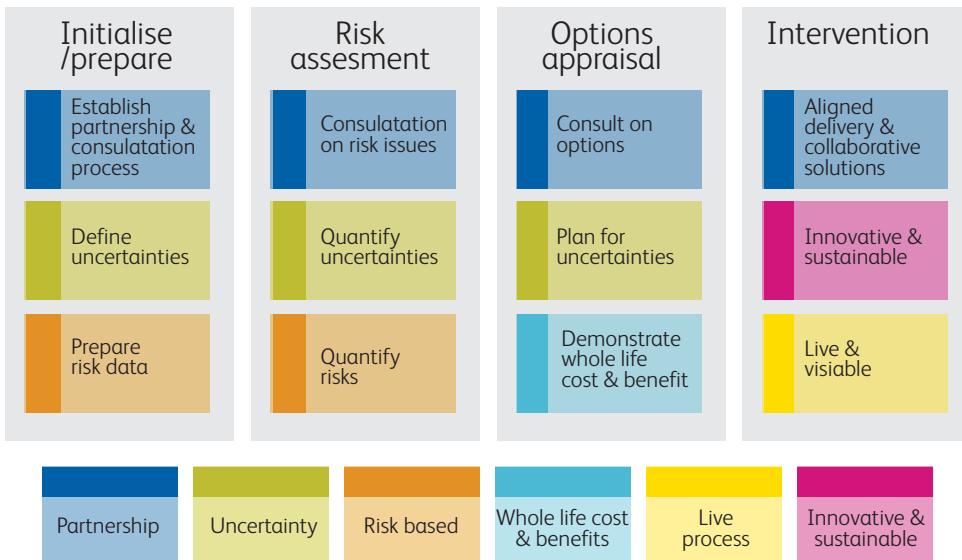
## Approved approach

We have adopted the Drainage Strategy Framework<sup>1</sup> outlined in Figure 1 below, developed by the Environment Agency and Ofwat. It identifies 4 key stages to producing a good-practice drainage strategy. Drainage strategies typically

focus on the sewerage network, and not the performance of sewage treatment works. The Alton drainage strategy is currently at the first stage of this framework - the Initialise/Prepare stage. In this document, we describe the activities

that we plan to undertake to address current issues and future challenges facing the catchment, and the data that we need to gather to complete the risk assessment and options appraisal stages.

**Figure 1 The Drainage Strategy Framework**



<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/future/sustainable/drainage/rpt\\_com201305drainagestrategy.pdf](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/future/sustainable/drainage/rpt_com201305drainagestrategy.pdf).

## Consultation and publication

We will update and republish this document to provide the results of our risk assessment, options appraisal and our selected strategy for intervention, once data from instrumentation and other

fieldwork has been collected and analysed.

Throughout this process we will attend local flood forums for ongoing communication and consultation with

customers and stakeholders. We will also make the Drainage Strategy documents available on the Drainage Strategies webpage of our website.

## Meeting the Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP)

To ensure that this Drainage Strategy meets the requirements of an Infiltration Reduction Plan, as set out in the Environment Agency's Regulatory Position Statement on discharges made from

groundwater surcharged sewers, we have included a section in this document which defines if, how and when we propose to operate temporary overflows. This is in addition to our plans to reduce infiltration

over time, where it has been identified as a root cause of sewer flooding. Please see Section 8 in the Drainage Strategy document below.

# Executive summary

In recent years the foul sewerage system in the Alton catchment has become overwhelmed in some locations for weeks, and even months at a time, following prolonged heavy rainfall and high ground water levels. This has resulted in some properties suffering from significant sewer flooding and restricted toilet use.

We believe that significant volumes of surface water run-off from the surrounding saturated fields entered the foul sewerage network during recent wet winters, causing the network to surcharge. Photographs taken by Thames Water during the extreme weather of early 2014 show that the Lower Farringdon area is particularly effected by surface water flooding, which has led to sewers and pumping stations becoming inundated by the excessive flows. Our site surveys to date also suggest that there is evidence of groundwater infiltration into the foul sewerage network when groundwater levels are high, and inundation from highways, public spaces and properties, surface water misconnections (i.e. downpipes from roofs), and river water overflowing from the River Wey.

The root causes of sewer surcharges are therefore numerous and the resolution of the issues complex, requiring all stakeholders responsible for drainage in the catchment to work together to resolve them. The Floods and Water Management Act 2010 places a responsibility on Lead

Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs), to manage flood risk from surface and groundwater, plus a duty on all Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), to cooperate regarding flood risk. In our role as a RMA, Thames Water will work with Hampshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, East Hampshire District Council as Planning Authority and the Environment Agency to ensure that a collaborative approach can be developed to address the problems.

In response, this Drainage Strategy follows the Environment Agency and Ofwat's 4-stage framework. The Alton strategy is currently at Stage 1 (Initialise/Prepare). We describe in this document the actions that we plan to carry out to complete the following risk assessment and options appraisal stages. We will update and republish this document once this work has been completed.

In preparing our company business plan for the five year period 2015 to 2020 we have listened very carefully to the views of customers. Beyond being able to maintain the current service that we provide, customers have told us that they would like to see a reduction in instances of sewer flooding and odour nuisance and an improvement in river water quality. Our research indicates that customers are willing to pay for these improvements to service; a summary of our related customer research can be found on our website via the hyperlink below.

We have therefore developed a set of company outcomes that we are committed to working towards over the next five years and beyond. The outcomes relevant to the Alton drainage strategy are:

- Asset health - a composite range of measures against which we will manage the health of our sewerage network
- Properties and public areas protected from sewer flooding
- River water quality meets customer's expectations and regulatory requirements.

This drainage strategy must also address future challenges to the Alton catchment. We assess these to be:

- Climate change – analysis of the latest data suggests that rainfall could become 15% more intensive by 2080 increasing the likelihood of flooding. Longer wetter winters may also mean groundwater levels are high more often; this could also exacerbate fluvial flooding from local watercourses
- Urban creep – paving over of front gardens and loss of green space results in more strain on the sewerage network when it rains heavily. Modelling we have undertaken suggests urban creep rates in Alton are about average for the Thames Water Operational Area.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.thameswater.co.uk/cr/Howwedobusiness/Engagingwithourstakeholders/Publicconsultationresearch/index.html>.

- Population growth – the population in the South East is set to grow rapidly. There are a number of possible developments ongoing and proposed for the Alton catchment. We will continue to track these and any other emerging applications for this catchment, arising in the future. Additionally, we have undertaken a number of studies to investigate the potential impacts on our sewerage network of population growth within the catchment.

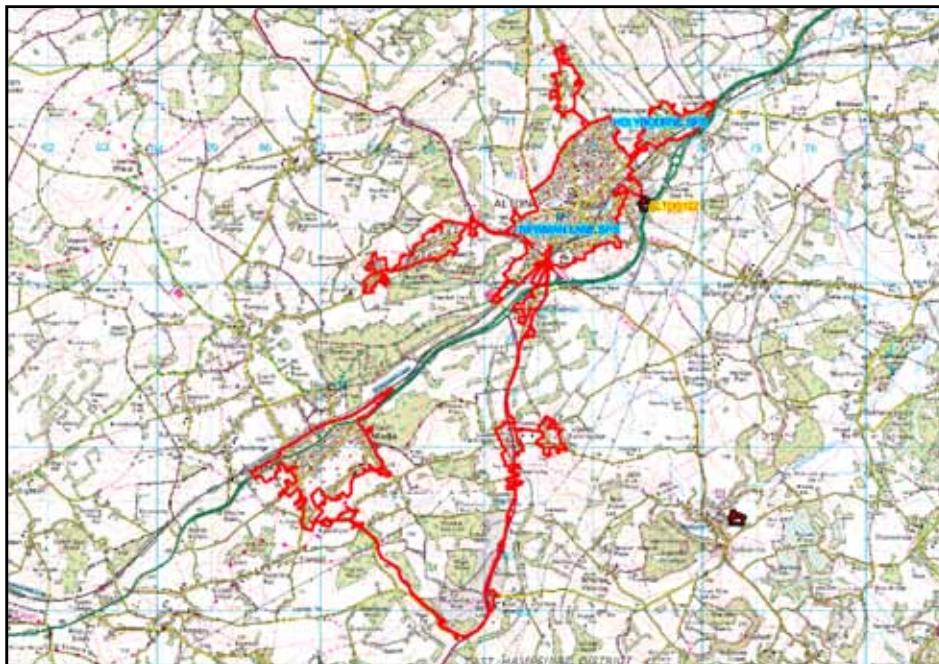
Our strategy is to understand the relative impact on this catchment of overland flow from saturated fields,

groundwater infiltration and surface water misconnections and how these flows impact upon the performance of our sewerage network in respect of flooding. We will then try to identify cost beneficial solutions to reduce the risk of sewer flooding using customer willingness to pay research. We may carry out sewer rehabilitation works as the strategy develops, in the event that our investigations identify faults or problems with the sewerage network that are highly likely to have contributed to flooding.

Our next steps are to continue to collect real-time flow information from the permanent depth monitors that we

installed in the catchment's sewerage following the event in 2014, and additionally, to collect sewer flooding information from customers. The data gathered from the depth monitors will enable us to further understand where, and how, surface and groundwater may be making its way into the wastewater sewerage network. The depth monitors will remain in place as we move through this 4-stage framework and develop our plans. Figure 2 below, presents the Alton catchment.

**Figure 2 Alton priority catchment**



The extent of the catchment is outlined in red.

# 1 Thames Water and drainage

## 1.1 Our statutory responsibilities

Thames Water is a regulated Water and Sewerage Company. We supply water to 9 million customers in London and the Thames Valley and provide wastewater services to 15 million customers across an area that stretches from Gloucestershire to Essex. We operate 108,000km of sewer through which an average of more than 4.4bn litres of wastewater is collected and treated every day at our 350 sewage treatment works.

The primary legislation that sets out our role and responsibilities is the Water Industry Act (1991), which describes the duties and services that we are responsible for and the powers that we have to connect, operate, maintain and extend the sewerage network. We are regulated by the Water Services Regulation Authority

(Ofwat). The original 1991 Act has been amended by further legislation in recent years, transferring some drains and sewers that were hitherto in private ownership to Thames Water's responsibility<sup>3</sup>.

Other recent pieces of legislation relevant to this Drainage Strategy are the Flood & Water Management Act (2010) and the Water Act (2014). These set out new responsibilities for Thames Water to manage flood risk in partnership with local councils and the Environment Agency, with more emphasis on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), such as swales and permeable paving to mimic natural drainage.

Thames Water also has a statutory obligation to comply with environmental

legislation, including European Directives. The Water Framework Directive establishes a strategic approach to managing the water environment, which the Environment Agency achieves through River Basin Management Plans and setting environmental objectives for groundwater and surface water. The environment is also protected from adverse effects of discharges of urban wastewater through the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, which requires us to improve and extend the sewerage system according to section 94 of the Water Industry Act (1991).

A comprehensive and detailed list of all legislation relevant to Thames Water can be found in the 'statement of obligations' published by Defra<sup>4</sup>.

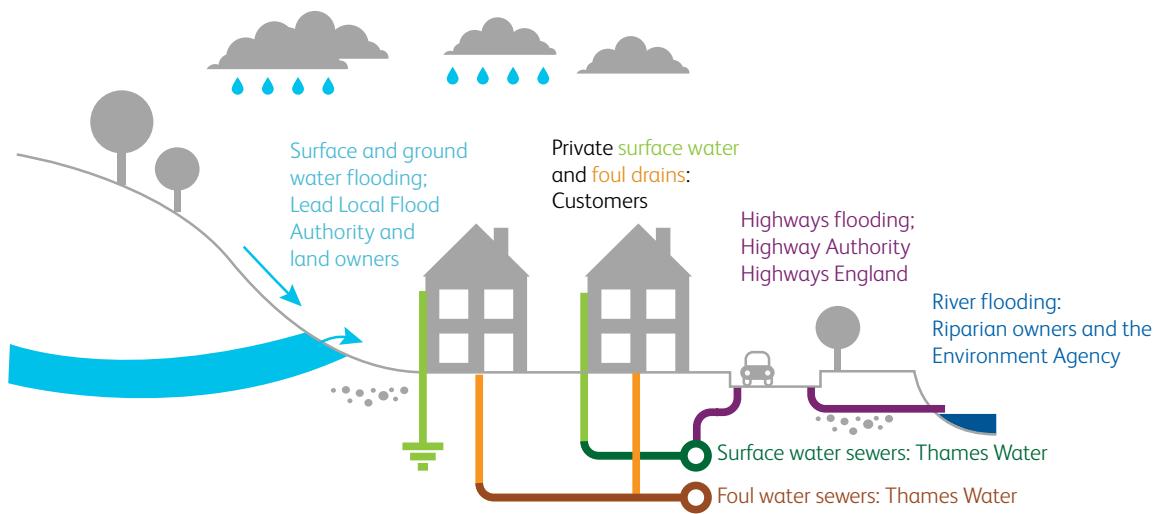
<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/8654.htm> for more information.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-of-obligations>.

## 1.2 Working in partnership with other stakeholders

Other stakeholders responsible for managing various forms of drainage need to work together with us to reduce the risk of flooding. Each has specific responsibilities as summarised in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3 Stakeholder responsibilities for drainage**



## Thames Water

We are responsible for removing and treating wastewater, which includes the foul and in some areas combined sewers that exist in the older urbanised areas such as London<sup>5</sup>. We also manage and maintain surface water sewers where they exist; these will typically discharge to a watercourse or river. In some cases, the cause of sewer flooding may not fall under our responsibility. In these circumstances, we will explain what we can do to help and continue supporting the relevant authorities or third parties to reduce the impact for our customers.

## Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is responsible for main rivers and part of its remit includes monitoring and informing the levels of ground and river water. The Environment Agency also investigates pollution incidents and monitors the quality of the water in rivers.

## Local Council - Lead Local Flood Authority and District Council

Hampshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and has the responsibility under the Flood & Water

Management Act for managing the local flood risk from groundwater and surface water runoff e.g. local watercourses and culverts<sup>6</sup>. Local Authorities work with landowners to maintain privately owned drains, ditches and watercourses, keeping them clear of blockages. They are also responsible for managing the risk of groundwater flooding, both inside and outside of properties. Water from local authority gullies and drains and privately owned ditches can also impact Thames Water's sewers, therefore, we work with all responsible stakeholders to resolve the excess flow. East Hampshire District Council is the Planning Authority responsible for approving new development, but equally may have responsibility for ensuring maintenance of watercourses; particularly on council-owned land.

## Highway Authority

Hampshire County Council is the Highway Authority and is responsible for highway maintenance and highway drainage and for clearing roadside gullies. Highways England is responsible for the drainage of motorways and certain trunk roads.

## Customers

Customers own, and are responsible for, the maintenance of private drains within the curtilage of their property, which did not transfer to Thames Water ownership in October 2011<sup>7</sup>.

## Riparian Owners

Riparian Owners are landowners who own land with watercourses or land adjacent to watercourse (ie road side ditches). The responsibility for the operation and maintenance of ditches, local watercourses and general land drainage lies mostly with riparian owners.

## Land Owners

Land owners include farmers and both residential and commercial customers, but includes trusts etc. They are responsible for ensuring the adequate drainage of their land, such that it is not a nuisance to others.

<sup>5</sup> Thames Water is responsible for the collection and treatment of commercial and domestic sewage. Typically this will be the foul sewerage. Domestic or commercial roof and paved drainage will often go to a soakaway or directly to a water course/river, which if so is not the responsibility of Thames Water.

<sup>6</sup> Some local watercourses and/or culverts are termed as 'Riparian' meaning that a land owner, possibly adjoining or owning the land containing the watercourse/culvert is responsible for the maintenance and free-flowing of the watercourse/culvert.

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/8654.htm> for more information.

# 2 Catchment description

## 2.1 Geology and topography

Alton is a market town located approximately 16km south-east of Basingstoke. It is served by a foul water gravity sewerage system which feeds Alton sewage treatment works via three terminal pumping stations, located at the eastern side of the town.

The catchment is generally made up of chalk bedrock and very permeable soils. It is situated in an area that is prone to significant seasonal fluctuations in groundwater levels, with the added likelihood of rainfall induced infiltration<sup>8</sup> owing to its permeable soils.

Appendix B includes maps showing the geology and fluvial, pluvial and groundwater flood risk areas in the catchment.

According to the Environment Agency (EA), the current ecological status of the River Wey around Alton is 'Moderate'<sup>9</sup>.

## 2.2 Sewage treatment works

The Alton sewage treatment works is located to the east of Alton, beside the A31. It serves the town of Alton and the villages of Holybourne, Farringdon and Four Marks supporting a combined population of circa 30,000. The treatment works has a full treatment flow capacity of 33,909m<sup>3</sup>/day, with average daily dry weather flows typically around 12,500m<sup>3</sup>/day. All flow is pumped to the sewage treatment works via three sewage pumping stations, which discharge to a raised inlet work. The flows are screened and pass through a distribution chamber to primary settlement tanks and then to secondary treatment. The treated effluent discharges via the Caker Stream to the River Wey. Alton's sewage treatment works does not include

storm tanks, instead, excess storm water is stored in an overflow lagoon at Newman Lane sewage pumping station, and is returned back to the sewerage system; or discharged via a storm overflow.

We have incorporated the prospect of new housing developments in this catchment into our strategy activities, as outlined in Section 5.3. The capacities of the sewage treatment works have been assessed to be adequate under normal design flow conditions, to manage current demand and the potential new developments outlined in the East Hampshire District Council Local Plan therefore, we do not plan to enhance the treatment capability of the sewage treatment works at this time. However, as

part of our ongoing catchment planning work, as previously stated, we have been tracking additional planning applications and have undertaken Hydraulic Modelling exercises to gain an insight into how potential new developments may impact upon sewerage in the Alton catchment.

We will continue to monitor future plans for the catchment through our stakeholder engagement work. A key element of our assessments will be to establish the extent to which developments may be significant in the context of the sewer flooding challenges currently experienced in the catchment. This assessment work will be undertaken and findings shared in an update to this Strategy document.

<sup>8</sup> Rainfall Induced Infiltration is the term given to sewer infiltration that occurs as a result of rainfall percolating into the ground impacting the sewer on route to recharging the groundwater table.

<sup>9</sup> Environment Agency website, interactive map, Basin Management Plans.

## 2.3 Foul sewers

The Alton sewer system is predominantly served by a separate system, with foul sewers intended to only receive foul sewage. The majority of the sewage flow is from the town of Alton, but to the south of the catchment the flows from the village of Four Marks gravitate via East Tisted to Farringdon, and then onto Alton, via Chawton. Most of these flows gravitate to a sewage pumping station in Newmans Lane that pumps direct to the sewage treatment works. Flows from Holybourne to the north, are pumped via Holybourne pumping station direct to the sewage treatment works, and flows from the Mill Lane industrial estate are pumped via Caker Stream pumping station. There are a number of other sewage pumping stations that pump flows within the Alton catchment.

Sewer design criteria ensures the appropriate sizing and laying of pipes at an appropriate gradient to maintain a satisfactory self-cleansing characteristic. Capacity of the sewer is typically set

to cater for six times Dry Weather Flow (DWF) and a 10% allowance is included for infiltration<sup>10</sup>. In terms of design capacity, a 225mm sewer laid at a gradient of 1 in 150 will have sufficient capacity to cater for the foul sewage for around 1,500 houses, which based on average occupancy rates equates to 4,500 people. Problems in sewers smaller than 300mm tend to be as a result of blockages in the pipes. In the Alton catchment, the foul sewers range from 150mm to 600mm in diameter and the capacity of the sewers is therefore more than adequate under normal dry weather conditions. However, occasionally surface water can be misconnected into the foul sewerage network – problems then arise when it rains heavily.

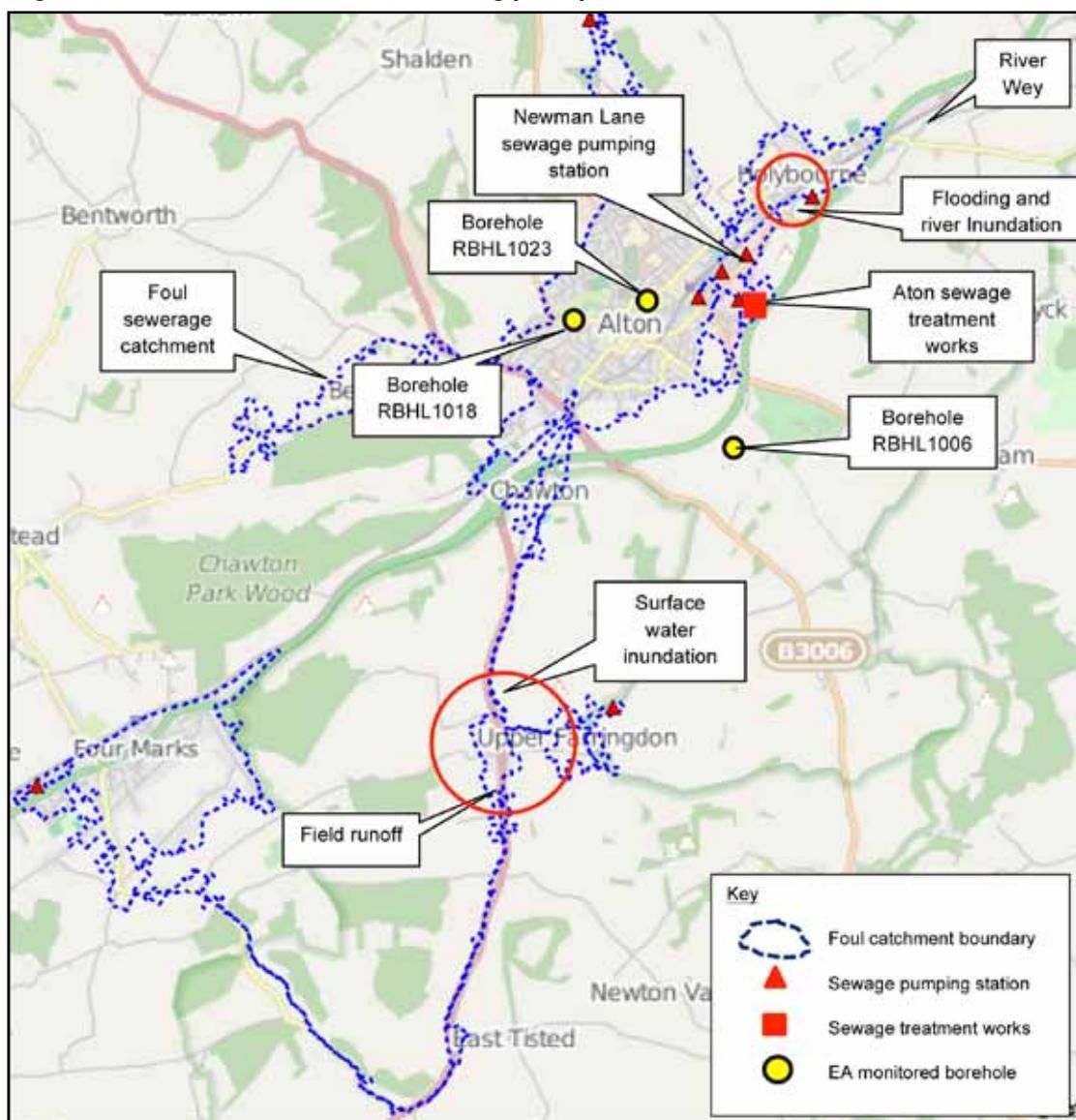
Much of the sewer network within Alton was originally laid between 1930 and 1960, with other minor additions to serve new developments in the town built in the 1960s and 1990s. Materials used in the construction of the sewerage system

are typical of the time, with clay pipework and brick and concrete manholes. The clay pipework can have a very long service life, but sometimes the joint seals deteriorate over time. The earlier pipes were typically laid on bedding material such as pea shingle, with the trenches likely to have been backfilled with 'as dug' excavated material. More recent drains and sewers, i.e. since the 1980s, are typically surrounded with pea shingle. This protects the pipe but can also act as a good conduit for groundwater.

The majority of the properties in the town will discharge via former private sewers to the public sewers. The layout of the villages suggests that most properties are likely to have their own foul drains that connect directly into the public sewer. As per Section 1.2, the private foul water drains within the property boundaries are the responsibility of the property owners.

<sup>10</sup> Dry Weather Flow is the term given to the average flow rate observed over a 24 hour period and based on Sewers for Adoption, the industry standard, includes an allowance for infiltration of 10% of the calculated flow rate.

**Figure 4 Alton Catchment Plan indicating principal assets**



The blue dashed lines indicate the extent of the foul water catchment, the red triangles indicate the sewage pumping stations, and the red circles indicate the extent of flooding in the area. Groundwater boreholes monitored by the Environment Agency are shown in yellow.

## 2.4 Surface water sewers

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There are a number of localised surface water sewers throughout the town of Alton. Outlying rural areas, such as Farringdon, do not have surface water systems and the surface water from the majority of properties here is likely to drain to nearby soakaways; or to the local watercourse and the River Wey.

Soakaways can only function satisfactorily when ground conditions allow soakage and may be completely ineffective at times of high groundwater levels. Whilst not specifically identified as a problem in Alton, we have seen elsewhere the understandable (if incorrect), response of householders to divert flows to the foul sewer should their soakaways not

operate. Such action exacerbates capacity problems for other customers connected further downstream in the sewerage network.

The more rural parts of the catchment incorporates a network of roadside ditches and minor watercourses that are intended to take the non-property related surface water in the area. As per Section 1.2 above, the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of these ditches, local watercourses and general land drainage is mostly with the riparian owners.

The extent of highway drainage in the catchment is not certain, but it is likely that highway run-off discharges direct to the

roadside ditches, some of which will act as soakaways. Hampshire County Council is responsible for the highway drainage and culverts crossing the highway.

Hampshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority has overall responsibility for managing groundwater in the catchment.

The Environment Agency has the duty and the authority to ensure that the River Wey is maintained appropriately. The responsibility for the maintenance of land drainage lies with the riparian owners.

# 3 Long-term outcomes

We have listened very carefully to the views of customers before developing our plan for the Asset Management Period 6 (AMP6), regulatory period. Between 2009 and 2013 we carried out over 50 separate customer research and engagement activities.

Beyond being able to maintain the current

service that we provide, customers have told us that they would like to see a reduction in instances of sewer flooding and odour nuisance and an improvement in river water quality. These are areas where some customers are prepared to see, and pay for, an improvement in the current level of service.

In response to this, we have developed 4 company outcomes and 11 service outcomes for our wastewater service that we are committed to working towards over the next 5 years and beyond, further details can be found in Table 1 below and on our website<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 1 Wastewater outcomes**

Company outcome	Wastewater service outcome	Why is this service outcome chosen
<b>We will provide a safe and reliable wastewater service that complies with all necessary standards and is available when our customers require it.</b>	Asset health: maintaining our assets to ensure we can provide a safe and reliable service in the long-term.  Properties and public areas protected from flooding.  Resilient sewage treatment service that minimises the impact of extreme events on river water quality.	We must ensure an appropriate balance between reducing costs today and not compromising our future service.  Flooding is one of the worst service failures for customers.  We need to be able to provide service against a variety of pressures such as climate change and population growth.
<b>Our customers and stakeholders can trust us, we are easy to do business with and we care.</b>	Do the basics excellently by getting things right first time.	This service outcome ensures our wholesale activity is completely aligned to our objective to improve our Service Incentive Mechanism (SIM) scoring.
<b>We will provide the level of customer service our customers require, in the most economic and efficient manner, to ensure that bills are no more than necessary.</b>	Reduced dependence on energy from the grid.	Reducing dependence on energy from the grid is one of a range of measures across our entire plan to keep costs down to an affordable level for customers.
<b>We will limit our impact on the environment and achieve a socially responsible, sustainable business for future generations, including reducing levels of leakage.</b>	Minimising our carbon footprint.	There is an expectation from society that we will play our part in reducing carbon emissions.

<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.thameswater.co.uk/tw/common/downloads/about%20us%20-%20corporate%20responsibility/AMP6\\_-\\_Outcomes\\_Report\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/tw/common/downloads/about%20us%20-%20corporate%20responsibility/AMP6_-_Outcomes_Report_Policy.pdf) for more information.

<b>Company outcome</b>	<b>Wastewater service outcome</b>	<b>Why is this service outcome chosen</b>
	River water quality meets customers' expectations and regulatory requirements.	We must meet environmental regulations, and river quality is a visible indicator to citizens of our environmental stewardship.
	Satisfactory sludge disposal.	Sludge is a resource that we should manage effectively to keep bills down.
	Corporate responsibility.	We will act as a responsible company, meeting expectations from wider society.
	Reduced odour from wastewater operations.	Odour is a problem for some of our customers.
	Compliance with new environmental regulations.	We must meet environmental regulations, and river quality is a visible indicator to citizens of our environmental stewardship.

Below we provide more information about our asset health, properties and public areas protected from flooding and river water quality service outcomes, as these are relevant to the Alton drainage strategy.

### 3.1 Asset health

Our Asset Health performance commitment encompasses a composite range of measures against which we will manage the health of our sewerage network. This commitment underpins our outcome of a safe and reliable wastewater

service. It includes sewer collapses, blockages, unconsented category 1 to 3 pollution incidents and properties internally flooded due to operational problems (such as blockages, collapses or equipment failures).

## 3.2 Properties and public areas protected from flooding

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There are two performance commitments that underpin the delivery of this service outcome:

1. We commit to protecting properties from flooding due to rainfall. We estimate that our plan for 2015-20 will result in over 2,100 properties being alleviated from internal flooding, external flooding and also from restricted toilet use (for example when groundwater levels are high following

prolonged periods of wet weather). Our customer research indicates that our sewer flooding programme will deliver £20m of benefit to customers every year by 2020.

2. We commit to reducing the risk of sewer flooding and pollution from combined sewers (i.e. those that convey both foul and surface water), by slowing down surface water run-off and re-routing the flow through sustainable

drainage measures such as water butts, permeable paving, rain gardens and green roofs. We aim to retrofit over 20 hectares of sustainable drainage measures by 2020. We may also apply this commitment to areas where the network was designed to take foul flow only, but investigation shows that a substantial amount of surface water is in the foul sewer.

## 3.3 River water quality meets customers' expectations and regulatory requirements

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We have a performance commitment to reduce the number of pollution incidents as a result of discharges from our sewerage network and treatment works. Pollution can occur as a result of blockages, collapses or failure of our

equipment and also following heavy rainfall when our sewers have insufficient capacity to cope with the flow. All pollution incidents are reported to the Environment Agency's National Incident Recording System (NIRS).

# 4 Current issues

## 4.1 Recent wet weather events

In recent years the foul sewerage system in the Alton catchment has become overwhelmed in some locations for weeks and even months at a time, following prolonged heavy rainfall and high ground water levels. This has resulted in some properties suffering from significant sewer flooding and restricted toilet use.

We believe that significant volumes of surface water run-off from the surrounding saturated fields entered the foul sewerage network during the recent wet winters, causing the network to surcharge. Photographs taken by Thames Water during the extreme weather of early 2014 indicate that the Lower Farringdon area is particularly effected by surface water flooding, which has led to sewers and pumping stations becoming inundated by the excessive flows. Our site reconnaissance and surveys also suggest that there is evidence of groundwater

infiltration into the foul sewerage network when groundwater levels are high, and inundation from highways, public spaces and properties, surface water misconnections (i.e. downpipes from roofs), and river water overflowing from the River Wey.

We are confident that this is a comprehensive list of factors that have caused flooding in the catchment.

During recent events, the following incidents have been observed with respect to the sewerage network:

- Surcharging sewers causing spills out of many public manholes
- External foul and surface water flooding to properties in Lower Farringdon, where surface runoff from adjacent fields has entered the sewer network.

During these events, other sources of flooding have also been observed:

- Highway drainage overwhelmed causing highway flooding
- Surface water ingress into the foul water network during heavy rainfall causing pollution to local water courses
- Land drainage issues with water running off fields to south of the village and onto the highway.

To reduce the risk of flooding, residents have had to pump floodwaters onto the highway or protect their properties with sandbags.

The pumps at Newman Lane pumping station, were in constant operation during the winter of 2012/13 an extra pumping was required during the winters of 2013/14 to cope with excess flows.

## 4.2 Our operational response

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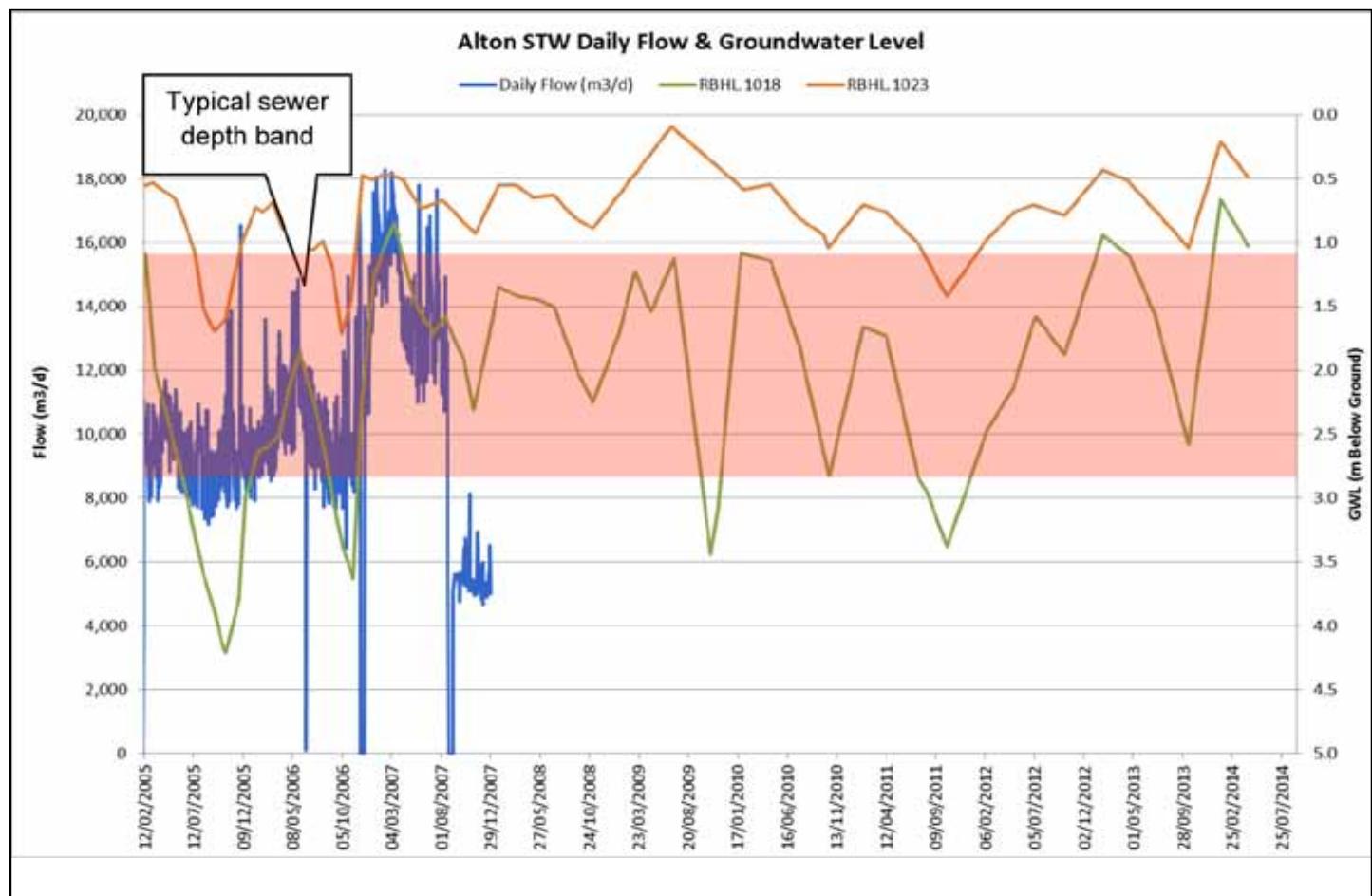
During extended wet periods, treated flows at the sewage treatment works can be in excess of 18,000m<sup>3</sup>/day, which is slightly greater than the expected maximum daily flow of 12,500m<sup>3</sup>/day. Figure 5 compares the treated flows at Alton sewage treatment works with groundwater levels recorded at Environment Agency borehole RBHL.1023 & RBHL.1018 which are located near Bentworth. The sewage treatment works flow data since August 2007 is incomplete, and has therefore not been included, however the Figure 5 graph suggests that between 2005 and 2007 there is a corresponding trend between flows reaching the Alton sewage treatment works, and changes in groundwater levels. The groundwater remained at levels of less than 1m below surface level for much

of this period and the sewers which are typically 1.2 to 3m deep, will have been within the ground water table for most of this period. Depth monitors installed in the sewers on Paper Mill Lane and Lower Turk Street have shown prolonged periods of high flow, further depth monitors have now been installed in the sewer network to better understand this relationship.

Investigations undertaken during the winter of 2013/14, including CCTV surveys and photographic records, have indicated that some parts of the Alton sewer network are prone to surcharge and inundation during significant wet periods, particularly in the winter months, which may contribute to the flooding and pollution problems.

To maintain service, tankers were used in the winter of 2012/13 and 2014 in at-risk areas to prevent external foul water flooding of properties. Cakestream Road and Eggar's school are two of several areas where tankering has been used to help rectify the effects of flooding incidents. Tankers were also used between February and March 2014 at Newman Lane pumping station to clean out the storage lagoon. Tankers have limited capacity and can only draw off water at a relatively low rate. They can also cause considerable noise and disruption to local communities.

**Figure 5 Alton sewage treatment works (STW) treated flows and groundwater levels**



## 4.3 Investigations and activities completed to date

Table 2 below, details the investigations and actions that we have completed in recent years within the Alton catchment. These form the extent of our current understanding of issues in the catchment.

**Table 2 Investigations and activities completed**

Activity	Purpose	Date complete	Outcome
Short-term flow survey	Flow survey undertaken, including 23 flow monitors.	2007	Verified hydraulic model developed.
Asset maintenance	Wet wells cleaned (removal of grit and debris), Newman Lane and Holybourne pumping stations.	February 2013	Maintain 'asset health'.
Maintenance of flows	Tankers used to remove excess flows and protect at-risk properties. Tankers have also been used in clean-up operations during extreme weather events.	2013/14	Reduce impact of surcharged sewers and to clean up after flooding and pollution incidents.
Site reconnaissance	Photographic evidence was collected during the winter of 2014.	March 2014	Sources of floodwater were documented and impacts on Thames Water assets were noted.
Flooding clean-up	Tankering and additional pumping was used between February and April 2014 following floods in winter 2013/14.	April 2014	Public health and safety.
Installation of permanent monitoring of sewer levels	Installation of permanent depth monitors into the foul water sewers at 10 strategic locations in the Alton catchment. Our plan is for the monitors to remain in situ for at least 5 years to capture wet weather events and groundwater trends. We will analyse the recorded depths and compare them with other catchment variables, such as rainfall events and changes in groundwater levels.	Spring / summer 2014	Use information to identify additional actions for inclusion in the drainage strategy for Alton. Share information with other agencies.
Installation of low-leak manhole covers	Where possible ingress points from the River Wey have been identified, we have installed low-leak covers to reduce the possibility of river ingress into the foul drainage network.	Summer 2014	Mitigates river ingress into the foul sewers which can overload the network, pump stations and sewage treatment works.

Activity	Purpose	Date complete	Outcome
CCTV and manhole surveys	Ascertain sewer and manhole condition and evidence of infiltration, approx. 1.5km of sewer was surveyed and cleaned.	November 2014	High surcharge levels in sewers beneath Paper Mill Lane. Indicate that this area may be a target for future works. Significant clear flows observed in some foul sewers. Identified infiltration through some cracks in the sewers and some manholes.
Short-term flow monitoring of sewers	Installation of temporary flow monitors into the foul sewers at strategic locations in Holybourne. Analysis of the recorded flows and comparison with other catchment variables, such as rainfall events and changes in groundwater levels.	April 2015	Use the information to identify additional actions for inclusion in the drainage strategy for Alton. Share information with other agencies.
Localised sewer repairs	Repairs undertaken following review of CCTV data to address ingress of ground water and to ensure service is maintained. 2km of sewer lined or patch repaired and 7 manholes sealed.	April 2015	Reduce infiltration into the public sewers.

In summary, following previous concerns that the sewerage network suffered excessive infiltration, action has been undertaken to better understand the sources of infiltration and inundation in the catchment, to assess the impact on our assets and to ensure that our sewers

are more resilient. On occasions where customers have brought flooding issues to our attention we have reacted to remove flood water through tankering and to clean-up any residual pollution. We have also aimed to maintain the health of our assets by performing maintenance and

clean-up work on our network to minimise potential problems. The monitors we have installed in the sewer network will provide us continuous data as our strategy develops. We will undertake this further investigative work and assessments as part of this 4-stage framework process.

## 4.4 Activities carried out by drainage partners

Table 3 below, details the activities carried out by other stakeholders with drainage responsibilities within the Alton catchment, to reduce the risk of flooding in the area. For more detail on the other organisations responsible for managing various forms of drainage within the catchment, please see Section 1 of this Drainage Strategy document.

**Table 3 Actions by other stakeholders to prevent flooding**

Activity	Purpose	Impact on sewerage
Routine maintenance of River Wey, watercourses and local ditches	Ensure free flow of river and ditches.	Less risk of surface water inundation into the foul sewers and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at the sewage treatment works.
Routine maintenance of private surface water drainage and soakaways	Ensure adequate surface water drainage from properties.	Less risk of surface water inundation into the foul sewers and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at the sewage treatment works.
Routine maintenance of highway drainage	Ensure adequate highway drainage.	Less risk of surface water inundation into the foul sewers and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at the sewage treatment works.
Routine maintenance of land drainage	Ensure effective land drainage.	Less risk of surface water inundation into the foul sewers and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at the sewage treatment works.
Strategy for infiltration through private drains*	Consider a strategy for reducing infiltration into the sewer network via private drains if investigations and permanent monitoring identifies this as a significant cause for concern.	Less risk of groundwater infiltration into private drains and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at the sewage treatment works.
Monitoring and control of construction standards for private drains	Local Authority Building Control to ensure private drainage is fit for purpose.	Less risk of groundwater infiltration into private drains and hence less risk of sewer flooding, pollution incidents and storm tank overflows at Newman Lane pumping station.

\*Thames Water does not have powers to compel customers to repair defective private drains at their cost. At this stage, we do not know how significant infiltration from private drains is within the Alton catchment, but we will develop an appropriate strategy as part of our Stage 2 risk assessment, when information becomes available and this document is updated. We note that local authorities are only able to instigate action under Section 59 of the Building Act where evidence is provided of a defective private drain.

# 5 Future challenges

In 2011, Ofwat commissioned Mott MacDonald to look at factors likely to affect sewerage networks in the future. The report ‘Future impacts on sewer systems in England and Wales’ (June 2011)<sup>12</sup> looked at the likely relative impact of climate change, population growth and impermeable areas up to around 2040. In preparing our plan for 2015-2020, we have also carried out research into these factors across the Thames Water region. We summarise our findings for the Alton catchment in this section.

## 5.1 Urban creep

Urban creep is defined as the transformation of a catchment by the paving over of previously permeable areas. Rather than surface water soaking into the ground when it rains heavily, more water runs off into the sewerage network and can cause the sewers to surcharge and flood. It is therefore important to understand the rate at which urban creep is occurring.

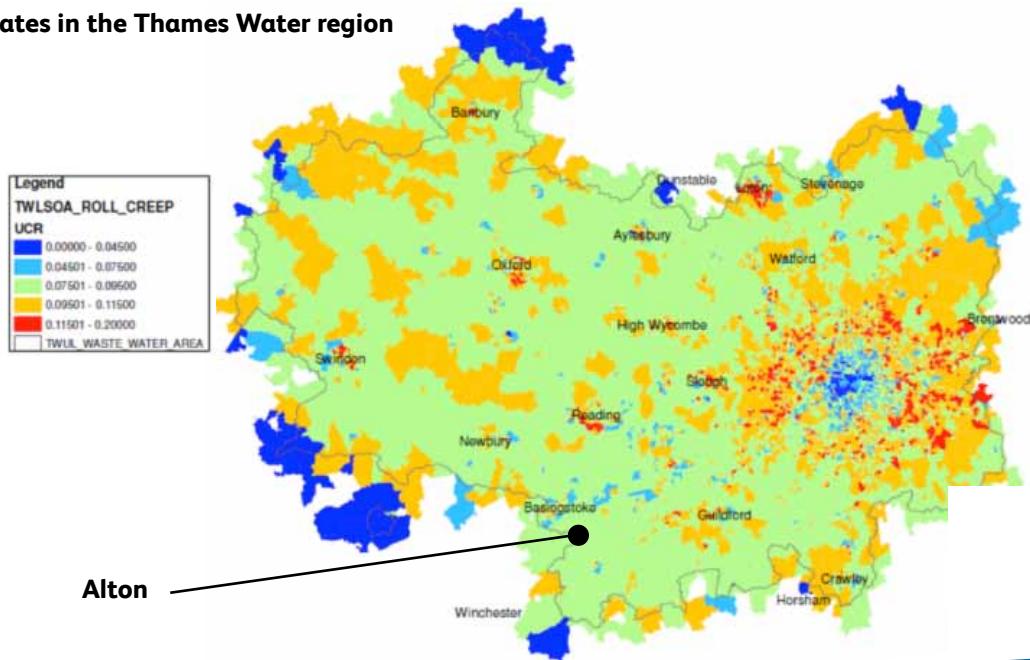
We have studied aerial photography and satellite imagery across 11 catchments across the Thames Water region using data from two periods in the late 1990s and mid-2000s to determine the rate at which urban creep is occurring. We then carried out a statistical analysis and built a model to predict the rate of urban creep

for the entire Thames Water region, taking account of factors such as property age, land use, demographics such as family sizes and financial income, need and available space. We found that affluent suburban areas with detached and semi-detached properties, where families have young children, are most likely to have high urban creep rates.

The results for the Thames Region are presented in Figure 6 below. The urban creep rate for Alton is 0.0848 %. In other words, this is the increase in impermeable area per year as a percentage of the total area connected to the sewerage network. When compared against the rest of the Thames Water region, Alton is about average for the Thames Water

Operational Area, but not as high as suburban areas around central London and major towns. Whilst the immediate issues in Alton appear to be strongly related to groundwater, we will continue to monitor change in impermeable area as the strategy continues to develop. If we observe an increase in urban creep, we will raise the issue with East Hampshire District Council who is responsible for managing surface water. We may then also look to work with other partners to retrofit sustainable drainage measures (such as permeable paving and water butts), in the area to counter the increased run-off following rainfall, to reduce the risk of flooding.

**Figure 6 Urban creep rates in the Thames Water region**



<sup>12</sup> Mott MacDonald, Future impacts on sewer systems in England and Wales, June 2011.

## 5.2 Climate change

We have analysed the 2009 UK Climate Projections (UKCP09), to determine the likely increase in rainfall intensity due to climate change in 15 catchments across our region<sup>13</sup>. More intensive rainfall in the future will increase the peak flow in sewerage networks and with it the likelihood of sewer flooding.

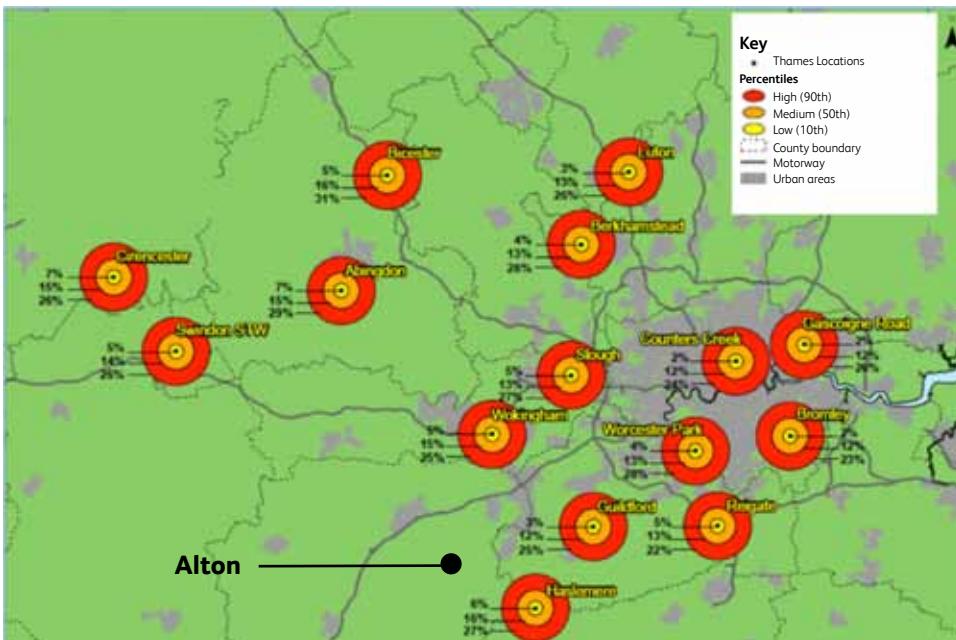
Fifteen catchments across our region were selected to give a representative sample

of inner London, outer London and more rural areas in the Thames Valley. A number of these catchments are also areas which experience sewerage related issues like pollution, flooding and urban creep.

We assessed different combinations of emission scenarios and climate change percentiles for each of the 15 catchments. The nearest catchment to Alton that was analysed for climate change was

Haselmere. The results show a central estimate of an increase of 16 % in rainfall by 2080, but in some scenarios this could be as high as 27 % or as low as 6 % as per Figure 7 below. We will ensure that our strategy takes account of these potential increased peak flows as it develops.

**Figure 7 Locations assessed for increased rainfall intensity by 2080**



Increased rainfall intensity may not be the only consequence of climate change. UKCP09 data also suggests that the UK is likely experience longer wetter winters in future. Further research is needed to understand whether high groundwater levels, such as those observed in the winters of 2012/13 and 2013/14 are

likely to become more frequent in future. As the recent experience of prolonged rainfall and high groundwater levels have been shown to be the principal factors, this research will be very significant in informing any risk assessment and appraisal of costs and benefits of solutions.

<sup>13</sup> Atkins, Thames UKCP09 Rainfall Intensity Assessment Revised Report, October 2012.

## 5.3 Population growth and new development

We use a combination of top-down and bottom-up information to ensure that our forecast of population and new development is as robust as possible to keep costs down, in order to minimise the bill impact of any investment that may be necessary.

Our forecast of the number of new households is taken directly from Experian data. We have used the ‘Plan-Based’ projection which uses information provided by local authorities about planned numbers of new dwellings in their respective areas. During the period 2015 to 2020 we expect to see an increase in new development across the Thames Water region and are forecasting a total of 263,000 new connections to the sewerage network during this time.

Our Development Tracker System (DTS), is used to track developer enquiries through the planning process to construction. When we are contacted by a developer, we typically carry out preliminary modelling to determine whether our network or treatment works has the

capacity to accommodate the increase in flow. Where it does not, we propose planning conditions for consideration by the Planning Authority, although we encourage developers to contact us as early as possible in the planning process to avoid this.

The independent review into the causes of the 2007 floods (The Pitt Review), concluded Sustainable Drainage Systems (commonly known as SuDS), are an effective way to reduce the risk of ‘flash-flooding’ which occurs when rainwater rapidly flows into the public sewerage and drainage systems, causing overloading and back-up of water. Typically, SuDS slow the rate of surface water run-off entry into the drainage system and improves the percolating feature, i.e. rainfall recharging the groundwater system, thus mimicking natural drainage processes. In April 2015, the Government made changes to the planning process effecting planning policies and decisions on planning applications of 10 dwellings or more (or equivalent non-residential or mixed development) to ensure that

sustainable drainage systems are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. This requires that when considering planning applications, local planning authorities should consult the relevant Lead Local Flood Authority (County Council or Unitary Authority), on the management of surface water, to satisfy themselves that the proposed standards of operation are appropriate and ensure through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations that there are clear arrangements in place for ongoing maintenance over the lifetime of the development.

In the case of Alton, whilst SuDS might help to reduce the risk of flooding following rainfall when groundwater levels are low (i.e. typically during summer months), they may not be as effective in reducing the flood risk when groundwater levels are high (typically during the winter months). We will therefore take account of the potential influence of groundwater when we come to assess any options as part of this drainage strategy framework process.

As part of our ongoing catchment planning work Thames Water has undertaken Hydraulic Modelling exercises to gain an insight into how projected population developments may impact upon sewerage in the Alton catchment. These exercises have revealed that development may put significant pressure on the existing sewerage infrastructure. This has the potential to exacerbate existing flooding problems.

We will continue to monitor future plans for the catchment through our stakeholder engagement work. A key element of our assessments will be to establish the extent to which developments may be significant in the

context of the sewer flooding challenges currently experienced in the catchment. This assessment work will be undertaken and findings shared in an update to this Strategy document.

Using sources that include the East Hampshire District Council Local Plan and third party planning enquiries, the key development sites that we are currently tracking in Alton include:

- Ongoing developments at Anstey Road and Anstey Lane
- 158 properties planned for Winchester Road may put pressure on Thames Water pumping stations at Chaffinch Road and Kingswood Rise

- Developments in the Four Marks area; hydraulic modelling studies have shown that additional sewerage capacity may be needed to accept flows from these developments.
- 125 properties at Lymington Farm, Four Marks, we have concerns regarding Wastewater Services in relation to this site.

Other applications exist but relate to developments in which detailed numbers have not been confirmed, or are single properties. We will continue to monitor future plans for the catchment through our stakeholder engagement work.

# 6 Strategy development

The Drainage Strategy for the Alton catchment is currently at Stage 1 (Initialise/prepare), of the 4-stage framework process. The following activities in Table 4, are planned and ongoing, in order to carry out the risk assessment and development of our strategy options.

**Table 4 Activities planned and ongoing to enable strategy development**

Activity	Purpose	Date planned	Outcome
Stakeholder engagement	This document will be circulated to the Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority and East Hampshire District Council before being published on our website. All third party data will contribute to drainage strategy development.	Ongoing	Stakeholders informed about progress and timing of works to reduce the risk of flooding. Work carried out by Thames Water is coordinated with activities of other partners involved with drainage.
Permanent monitoring of sewer levels	Continue to monitor the permanent depth monitors installed into the foul sewers at strategic locations in Alton. Our plan is for the monitors to remain in situ for at least 5 years to capture wet weather events and groundwater trends. We will analyse the recorded depths and compare them with other catchment variables, such as rainfall events and changes in groundwater levels.	Ongoing	Use information to identify additional actions for inclusion in the drainage strategy for Alton. Share information with other agencies.
Customer surveys	Validate the historical records of flooding and restricted toilet use in the catchment to enable a detailed benefits assessment of potential further intervention options that could be implemented by Thames Water.	From spring 2016	Use information to help test the cost benefit of options to improve drainage and reduce the risk of sewer flooding in Alton.
Sewer and manhole surveys	Ascertain sewer and manhole condition and evidence of infiltration via CCTV survey and manhole "lift and look" surveys when appropriate.	From spring 2016	Use information to identify additional actions for inclusion in the drainage strategy for Alton. Share information with other agencies.
Connectivity surveys	Carry out visual inspection of properties to determine the extent of roof drainage and other surface water drainage that discharges into the foul sewer network when appropriate.	From spring 2016	A better understanding of the contribution that misconnections make to sewer flooding in the area.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Date planned</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Pilot trials of mobile treatment plant	As part of our wider approach to managing high groundwater levels, we are trialling the use of biological filters within other catchments. Our findings will inform and may influence our strategy plans for the Alton catchment. If successful, these could be used to abstract dilute sewage from surcharged sewers and discharge it safely to a watercourse.	Ongoing	Service may be restored for customers without the need for tankering.
Sewer rehabilitation	Continue to rehabilitate the sewer network in this area as we progress through this 4-Stage framework process, based on our investigations identifying defects that are considered to be contributing to, or causing, drainage and flooding issues in the catchment.	Ongoing	Reduce ingress of groundwater into the sewer network.
Consider innovative solutions	Identify quicker / cheaper / collaborative options that improve the benefit to cost ratio in order to keep customers' bills down to prioritise investment to ensure greatest benefit to customers.	Ongoing	Enhanced toolkit available to reduce the risk of sewer flooding and then apply this once data becomes available.
Hydraulic Modelling	Hydraulic modelling used to determine the impact of potential new development.	Ongoing	Identification of key assets which may come under pressure from high flows in the sewer network.
Update drainage strategy	Improve the drainage strategy based on the initial results from the permanent monitoring, customer surveys, misconnection surveys and feedback from stakeholders.	2017	Risk assessment, options appraisal and preferred strategy to be developed, subject to capturing weather events through monitoring and surveys.

# 7 Preferred strategy and plan

We believe that the foul sewerage system in Alton has surcharged and flooded predominantly due to a combination of groundwater infiltration, surface water run-off from saturated fields, surface water inundation from highways, public spaces and properties, surface water misconnections and river water overflowing from the River Wey. Our network strategy is to understand the

relative impact that each of these factors has on the risk of sewer flooding, and then to develop a plan comprising cost beneficial solutions using customer willingness to pay research. In parallel, we will assess the extent to which new developments may be significant in the context of challenges currently experienced and where necessary we will develop solutions to accommodate the

proposed development in the catchment.

We may carry out some repair works as this strategy develops, in the event that our investigations identify faults or problems with the sewerage network that are highly likely to have contributed to flooding. Table 5 below, details the activities that we have identified to date.

**Table 5 Activities identified in preferred plan to date**

Activity	Purpose	Date planned	Outcome
Localised sewer rehabilitation	Undertake localised sewer rehabilitation to include lining, patch repairs, localised pipe replacement and manhole repairs identified through survey work and where considered cost effective in reducing ingress of ground water.	When identified	Reduce infiltration into the public sewers.
Manhole cover replacement	Replace manhole covers with leak tight covers where identified through survey work.	When identified	Stop ingress of surface water through manholes located in flood plain.

Our plan will be updated once the Risk Assessment and Options Appraisal sections have been completed in accordance with the Drainage Strategy framework.

# 8 Temporary overflows

To date, we have not installed any temporary overflows within the sewerage network during wet weather events in the Alton catchment, however we have undertaken over pumping from the network direct to one of our sewerage pumping stations which has a consented overflow. This prevented part of the network spilling from an uncontrolled source. We also undertook tankering within the catchments to prevent loss of service where possible.

As part of the Stage 2 risk assessment and Stage 3 options appraisal, we will be

investigating the circumstances under which emergency discharges would be required in future, such as the use of temporary overflows, to pump out from the sewerage network through biological filters to maintain service to customers and prevent homes from flooding. As this Drainage Strategy develops, in this section we will describe the location of any proposed temporary overflows and the circumstances under which we would use them, in order that this Drainage Strategy, together with our plans to reduce infiltration, fully meets the requirements

of an Infiltration Reduction Plan as set out in the Environment Agency's Regulatory Position Statement. We will continue to identify sewer rehabilitation and other permanent works to reduce groundwater infiltration alongside refining the use of temporary overflows.

# Appendix A

## Glossary of terms

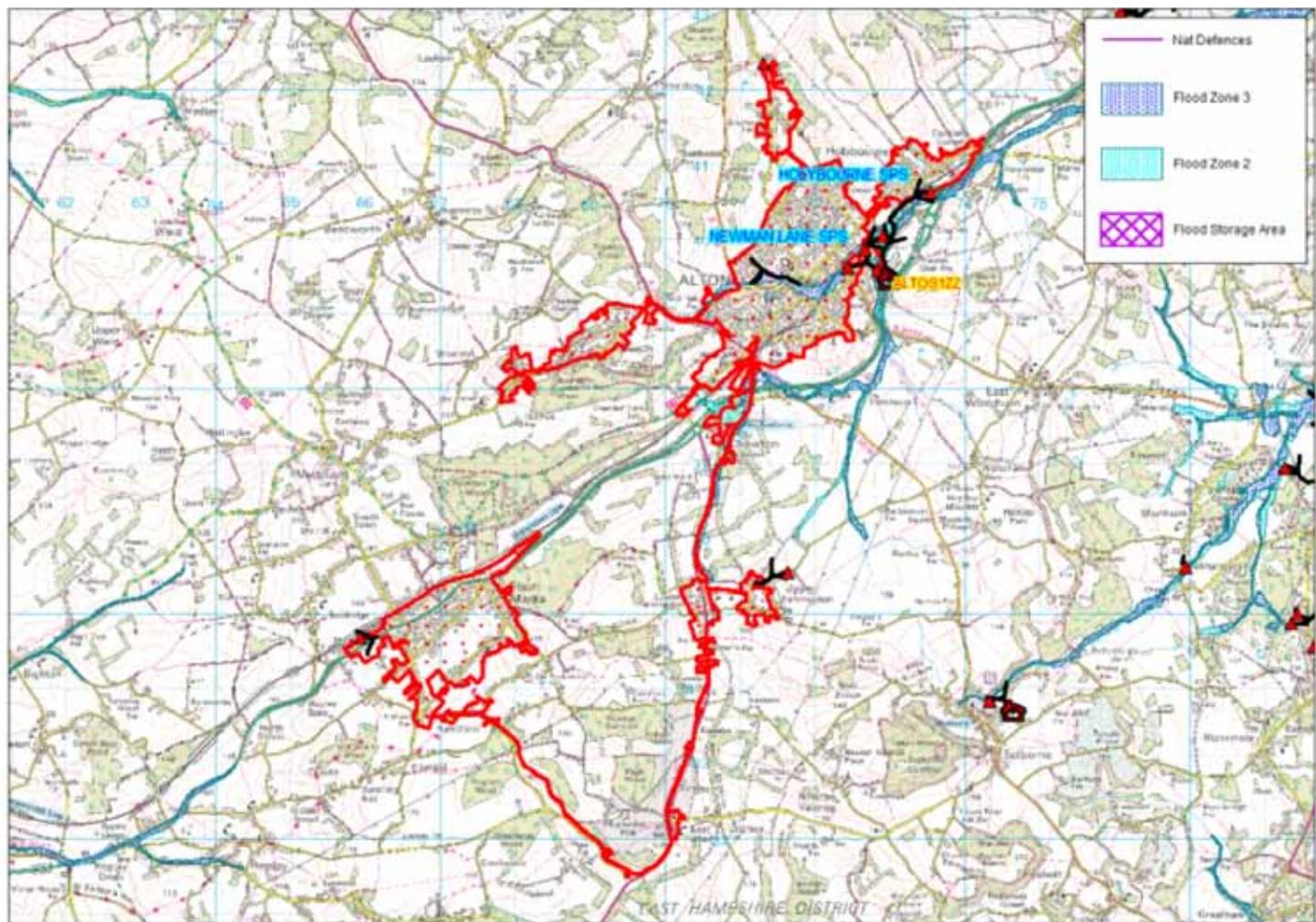
Term	Definition	Term	Definition
<b>Blockages</b>	Obstacles or the build-up of fat and grease, block or obstruct our sewerage pipes. This is normally caused by things which should not be flushed, or poured, into drains and sewers.	<b>Inundation</b>	the brickwork or defects in manhole structures. Accumulated surface water from rain and/or river floodwater that has resulted in localised flooding, finds its way into the sewerage system through manhole covers and drains. These may be public or private.
<b>Combined sewer</b>	A pipe conveying the combined rainwater and contaminated wastewater from two or more properties. A combined sewer is designed to carry wastewater to a sewage works for treatment but during periods of heavy rainfall or snowmelt, the volume in a combined sewer system can exceed the capacity of the sewer system or treatment plant. For this reason, combined sewer systems are designed to overflow occasionally and discharge excess wastewater directly to nearby streams, rivers, or other water courses.	<b>Lateral drain</b> <b>Misconnections (surface water to foul water)</b>	See definition for Foul drain. Property owners have connected rainwater and/or land drainage to our sewers (e.g. roof drainage, paved driveways drains, soakaway overflows), and can cause major issues for the performance of the sewerage system.
<b>Dry weather flow</b>	The average flow rate observed over a 24 hour period in dry weather and based on Sewers for Adoption, the industry standard, includes an allowance for infiltration of 10% of the calculated flow rate.	<b>Misconnections (foul water to surface water)</b> <b>Private sewers</b> <b>Rainfall induced infiltration</b>	A plumbing mistake resulting in wastewater appliances being misconnected to the surface water system. See definition for Foul sewer. Sewer infiltration that occurs as a result of rainfall percolating into the ground impacting the sewer on route to recharging the groundwater table.
<b>Foul drain</b>	A pipe conveying the contaminated wastewater from a single property. If the pipe extends beyond the property boundary, the portion of the pipe outside of the boundary is termed a lateral drain. The portion of the pipe inside the boundary is a private drain. On 1 October 2011 water and sewerage companies in England and Wales became responsible for lateral drains, which were previously the responsibility of property owners. Private drains remain the responsibility of property owners.	<b>Riparian owner</b>	If you own land adjoining, above or with a watercourse running through it, you have certain rights and responsibilities. In legal terms you are a 'riparian owner'. If you rent the land, you should agree with the owner who will manage these rights and responsibilities.
<b>Foul sewer</b>	A pipe conveying the sewage from two or more properties. On 1 October 2011, water and sewerage companies in England and Wales also became responsible for private sewers, which were previously the responsibility of property owners. A foul sewer is designed to carry contaminated wastewater to a sewage works for treatment. It disposes of wastewater from sources including toilets, baths, showers, kitchen sinks, washing machines and dishwashers.	<b>Soakaway</b>	Surface water from a roof and driveway of a property is piped to an underground pit, usually filled with gravel or similar material. Some soakaways are situated within the boundary of the property.
<b>Infiltration</b>	Groundwater finds its way into the sewerage system (including private drains), via defective pipes or pipe joints and through	<b>Surface water drain</b> <b>Surface water sewer</b>	A pipe conveying uncontaminated rainwater from a single property. A pipe containing uncontaminated rainwater from two or more properties. A surface water sewer is designed to dispose of rainwater from roofs, driveways, patios, roads, etc to a local watercourse.
		<b>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)</b>	Measures designed to attenuate and slow down surface water before it enters sewers to reduce the risk of flooding following heavy rainfall. Includes green infrastructure such as raingardens, green roofs as well as other measures, such as permeable paving and water butts.

# Appendix B

## Supporting figures and photographs

**Figure B1 Fluvial flood risk for Alton based on Environment Agency plans**

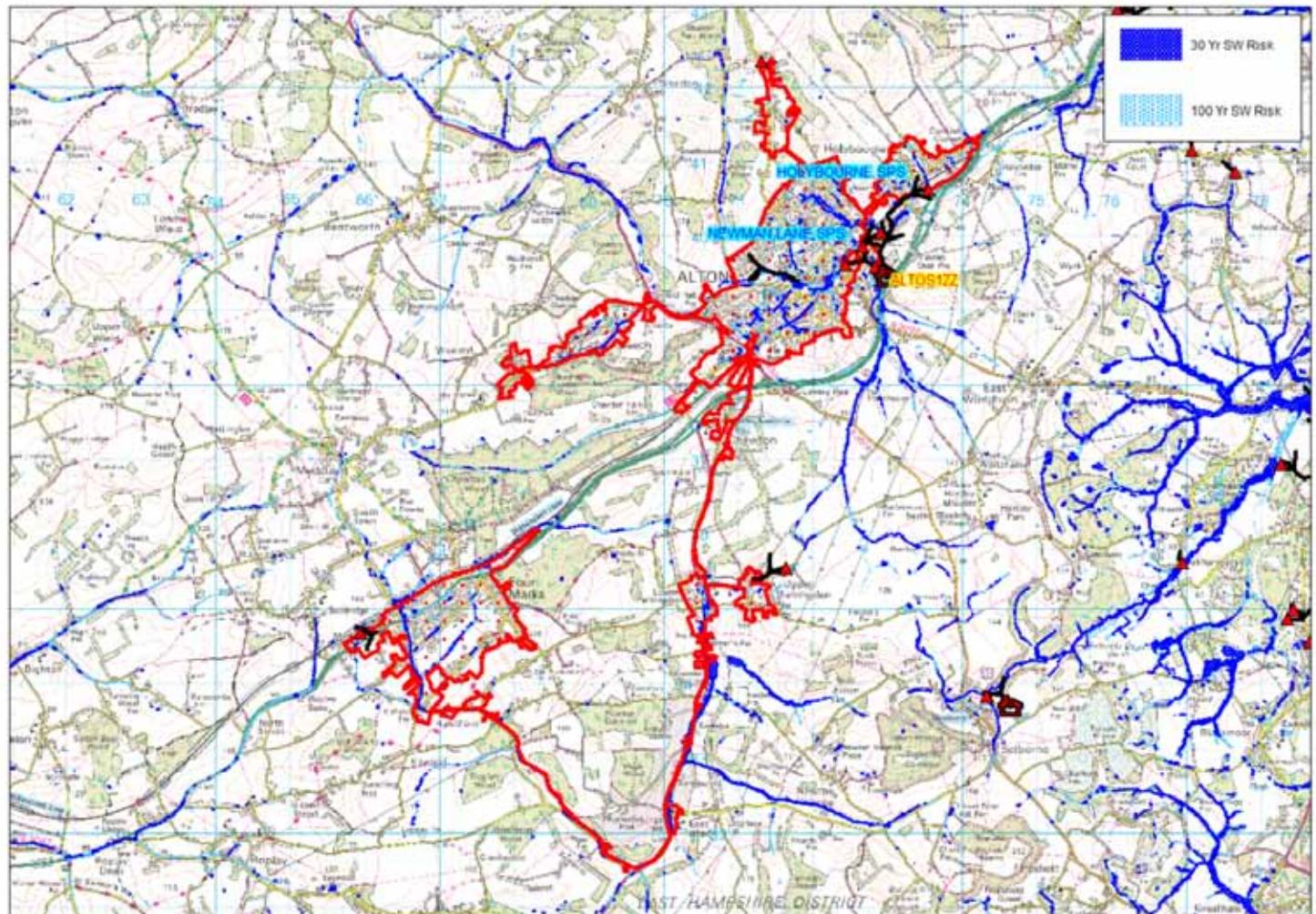
This flood risk map information has been sourced from the Environment Agency website. For more detailed flood map information for this catchment, please access the Environment Agency website.



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**Figure B2 Surface water flood risk for Alton from Environment Agency plans**

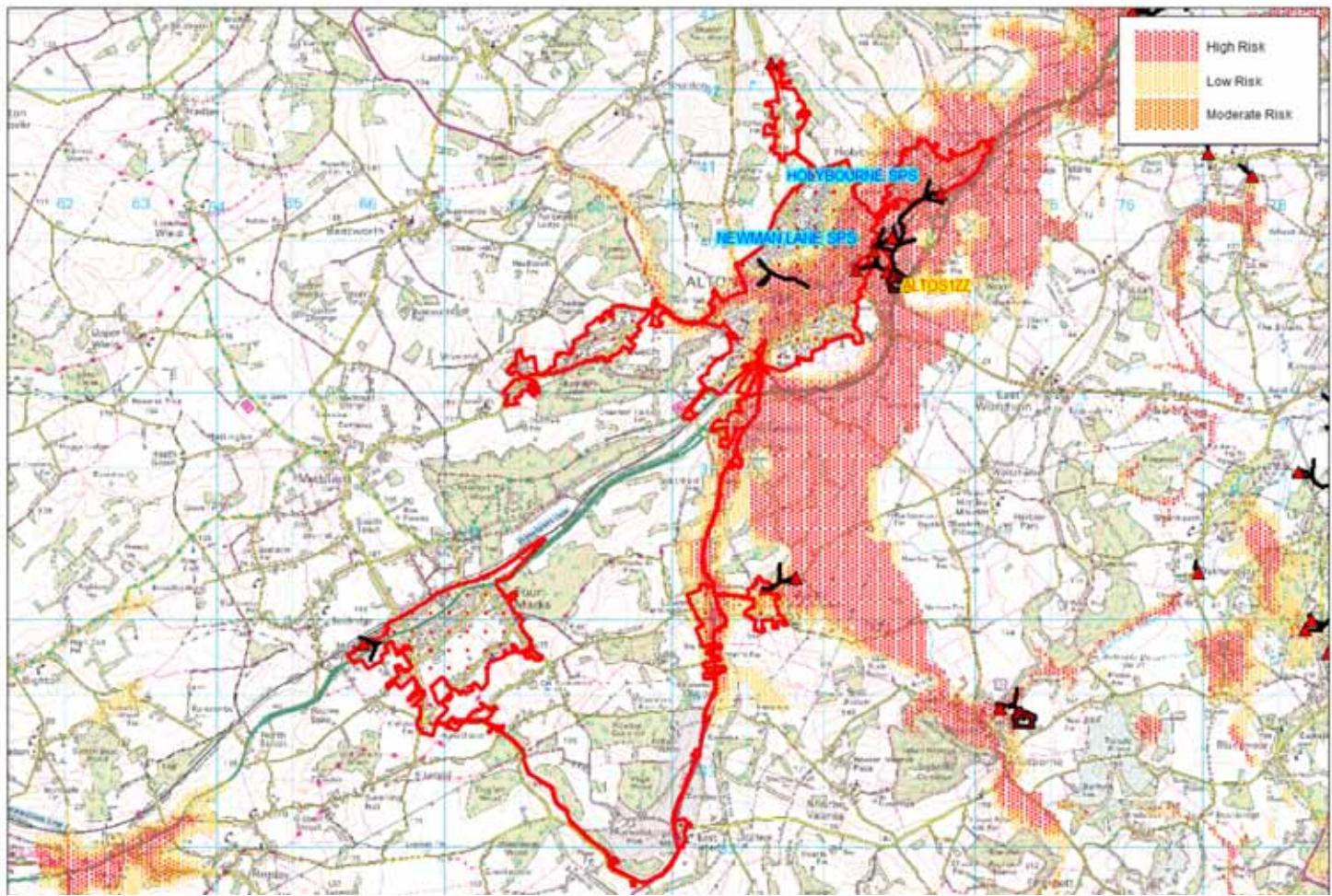
This flood risk map information has been sourced from the Environment Agency website. For more detailed flood map information for this catchment, please access the Environment Agency website.



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**Figure B3 Groundwater flood risk for Alton**

This groundwater flood risk map information has been sourced from ESI Ltd.

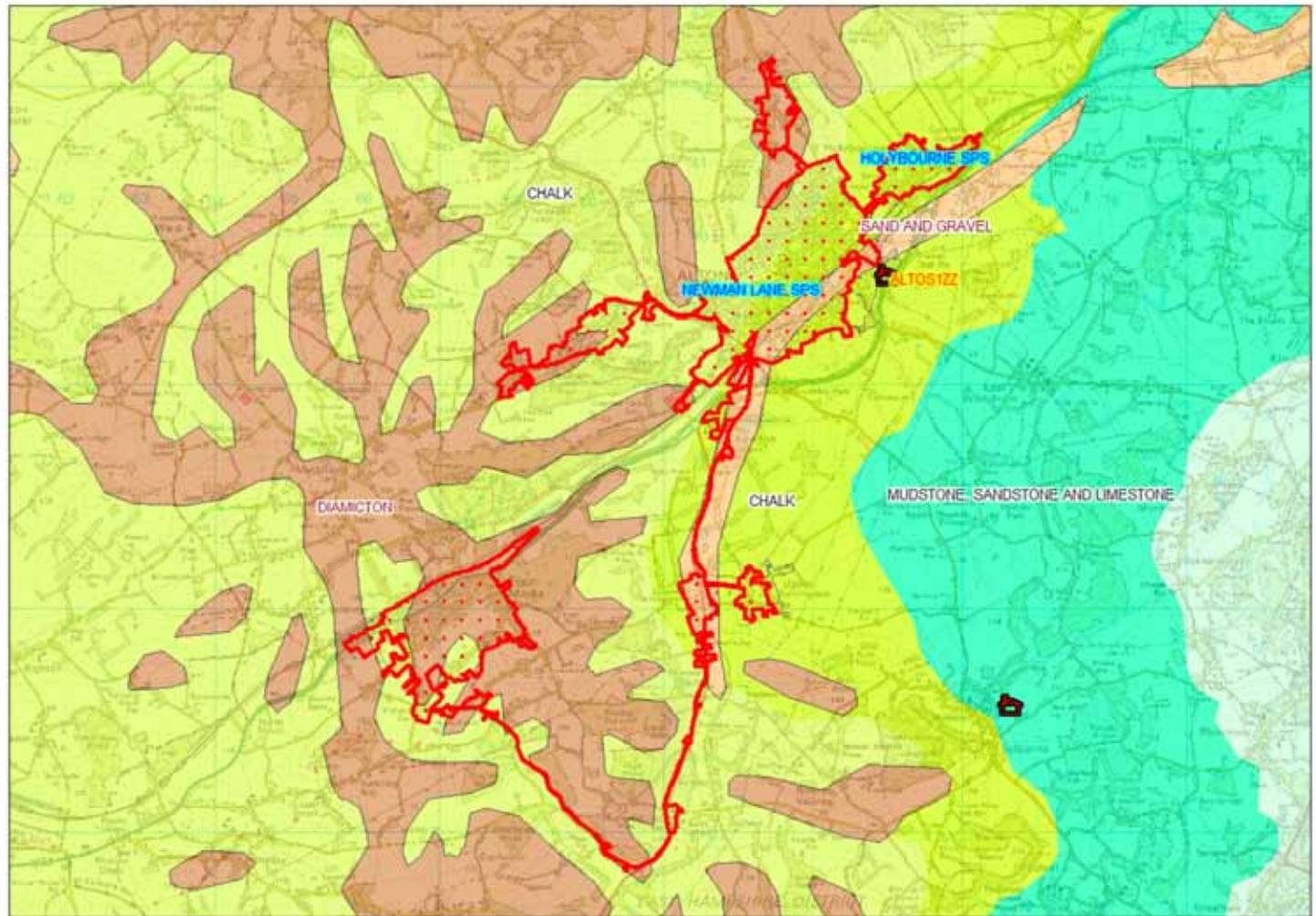


ESI Groundwater Flood Risk Map of England and Wales © www.esinternational.com

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**Figure B4 Alton bedrock and drift geology**

This geological map information has been sourced from the British Geological Survey website. For more detailed geological information for this catchment, please access the British Geological Survey website.



## Photographs taken during wet weather of 2013/14

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**Photo 1** – Gosport Road Closure due to flooding.



**Photo 2** – Flooded field off Kitcombe Lane.



**Photo 3** – Manhole spilling onto road; Dickers Lane.



**Photo 4** – Flooded field alongside A32.



**Photo 5** – Additional pumps used to cope with excess flows at Holybourne Pumping Station.



**Photo 6** – Sandbagged properties opposite Smithy, near The Forge.



**Photo 7** – Surface water ingress into manhole on A32.



**Photo 8** – Flooding on A32 with sandbagged properties.



**Photo 9** – Flooded field off Kitcombe Lane.



**Photo 10** – Flooding from fields onto highway.



**Photo 11** – Flooding on A32 with overpumping.



**Photo 12** – Sandbagged properties.



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