

Meeting with Residents of Brandon Gardens and St Nicholas Road 12th March 2019

Location: Prestwick Bowling Club, Midton Road, Prestwick

Attending from Scottish Water

- Mark McEwan – General Manager Customer service
- Dawn Lochhead – Flooding Manager
- Ruaridh Macgregor – Corporate Affairs Manager
- Kieran Downey – Flooding Manager

Introduction

- Meeting began with an introduction to the session outlining Scottish Water’s reason for being there; to discuss our proposals for tackling flooding at Brandon Gardens and St Nicholas Road
- Scottish Water representative’s introduced themselves
- Mark McEwan Apologised for anyone who did not receive a letter inviting them to the session. Agreed that Scottish Water would have supplementary meeting for any elderly residents or those who did not receive letters.
- Post-meeting note: Scottish Water confirmed 52 letters were issued to all properties in Brandon Gardens and St Nicholas Road inviting them to the meeting

Presentation

- The attached slides were presented at the meeting.

Actions

- Scottish Water to hold further community session before progressing towards planning on any of the proposals.
- Scottish Water will look at additional ideas provided including use of land behind No 19 Brandon Gardens next to the railway and land at Meadowbank Lane.
- Scottish Water will develop further the preferred option proposed for Brandon Gardens including visual representations.
- Scottish water will provide a summary of the discussion points raised at the meeting as well as a copy of the slides.
- Scottish Water to contact customers again, with notes of the meeting, and confirm that if customers weren’t able to attend and want to meet or discuss with Scottish Water then to contact them.

Questions Raised During Meeting

Why has it taken so long to deal with Flooding in Prestwick	
Response	MM – Explained the rational for SW spending across previous regulatory periods. At the start of each investment period, priorities are agreed with our customers and set by Scottish Ministers. During this period, as with previous investment periods, investment has been targeted towards properties that have experienced internal sewer

	<p>flooding and are at highest risk of repeat occurrence. However, during the development of our Business Plan for the period 2015-2021, our customers also told us that external sewer flooding is an important issue. Accordingly, for the first time we have received funding to investigate technical solutions for high priority external-only sewer flooding areas – this includes Prestwick.</p>
<p>Highlighted that flooding at Grangemuir Road has been an issue for 40 years.</p>	
<p>Response</p>	<p>MM: Recognised that the issues are long standing but Scottish water are now looking at both internal and external sewer flooding locations across Prestwick, including Grangemuir Road</p>
<p>Disruption in Ayr Road was mentioned as a constraint when looking to make changes to the sewer network. Question asked why other utility companies (such as Scottish Gas and fibre companies) were able to renew infrastructure in Ayr Road and not Scottish Water.</p>	
<p>Response</p>	<p>DL: Explained disruption is just one factor that is considered when making a decision on the investment to upgrade the sewer infrastructure and did not necessarily preclude work in Ayr Road.</p>
<p>Residents highlighted that buildings have been erected on top of or close to sewer where it runs alongside the railway.</p>	
<p>Response</p>	<p>DL: This is recognised by Scottish Water as an issue and makes it more difficult when Scottish Water factor in trying to upgrade or make changes to the sewer.</p>
<p>Why is permission still being granted for development and extensions which could make flooding situation worse? Several Developments mentioned (Heathfield Hospital site; Adamton Road; Link Road).</p>	
	<p>MM: Flooding in Brandon Gardens & St Nicholas Road is primarily caused by localised incapacity in the sewers that serve these properties. Any new developments require permission from Scottish Water to connect to the public sewer and this will only be granted if the developer demonstrates there will be no detriment to flooding.</p>
<p>Why does Scottish Water not object to developments at Planning Application stage?</p>	
	<p>MM: Scottish Water policy is not to object at Planning Application stage and will only decide yes or no at time when application is made to Scottish Water for a connection to our infrastructure.</p> <p>Post meeting note: All new developments are reviewed by Scottish Water Development team on a case by case basis to ensure there is no detriment to our existing customers. Scottish Water will not provide approval for connection into the wastewater system where it is overloaded unless there are mitigation measures e.g. removal of surface water flows or provision of additional capacity within the sewer network.</p>
<p>Why have Scottish Water not rejected Planning Applications in the past?</p>	
	<p>MM: Historically things were dealt with differently by predecessor organisations. Our current policy for planning application is no surface water flows to be connected to the combined sewer, and any foul connection must not have a detriment to the existing capacity.</p>
<p>Question about proposed McCarthy and Stone development on Links Road and where the surface water would go?</p>	
	<p>DL: From our understanding of the proposals submitted by the developer for the McCarthy Stone development, the approach would have resulted in a net reduction in flows to the combined sewer from the previous site by means of discharging all surface water from the site to soakaways, with only the foul connection being agreed to connect</p>
<p>Point raised that recent Planning Application by McCarthy and Stone for new development in</p>	

Links Road had ticked a box stating the application was not in a flooding area.	
	<p>MM: Scottish Water can only make comment on any application on the ability to service the water and drainage connections of the new development. In the case of the McCarthy and Stone proposals for Links Road, this was shown to have a net reduction in flow to the sewer network through removal of surface water.</p> <p>Post meeting note: In terms of the location of the development within an area known to be at flood risk from SEPA's flood maps for coastal, surface water or river flooding. That would be for SEPA as a statutory consultant under the Planning process to make comment on.</p>
Are there other areas where flooding similar to Brandon Gardens occurs?	
	<p>MM: Noted that there are other areas where sewer flooding occurs and if a developer wanted to progress any new developments they would be required to put in flood reduction measures.</p>
Point noted about clean-up standards following flooding. Some felt that there could be improvement in clean ups	
	<p>MM: This was noted</p>
What do Scottish Water mean by 'no detriment' and 'mitigation'?	
	<p>MM – explained that Scottish Water use the terminology as 'no detriment' and this refers to not making the sewer flooding situation worse. The term 'mitigation' refers to measures that developers can take, for example removing surface water connections, to allow a foul connection to ensure that 'no detriment' is caused to existing customers.</p>
Scottish Water has made previous commitments over years gone by in relation to other capital investment projects in Prestwick and still nothing has been constructed to fix the flooding.	
	<p>KD: explained that Scottish Water have variety of Commitments across capital investment programme including external flooding. In the current investment period the funding allowance had tripled since previous investment periods, with the majority of the funding being prioritised for properties at risk of internal funding.</p>
Residents questions about impact on houses prices	
	<p>MM: Explained that Scottish Water recognises the impact flooding has and are exploring options to reduce the impact of flooding on residents.</p>
When will Scottish Water be back to update? What are the timescales?	
	<p>DL: Explained it will be around 12 to 18 months from the January 2018 Stakeholder Meeting for the Prestwick Strategic Drainage Project to come up with the range of solutions for flooding across Prestwick. The timescale for construction of any actions will be dependent on available funding and resources from both Scottish Water and other agencies such as South Ayrshire Council.</p> <p>Scottish Water would be looking to progress any local measures at Brandon Gardens & St Nicholas Road to reduce the risk of sewer flooding early as possible, but this would require to follow due process of consultation with residents and the Planning Authorities.</p>
Do Scottish Water recognise that sewage flooding is a health hazard?	
	<p>MM: This is a known issue that Scottish Water recognises and are working towards developing solutions to resolve.</p>
It was noted that previous correspondence in April 2011 between Brian Donohoe MP and Waterwatch Scotland mentioned that a solution in excess of £6M could not be progressed due to lack of funding. How much longer would it take before funding would be available?	
	<p>MM: The Investment prioritisation did not allow for that spend at the time. Once the Prestwick Strategic Drainage Project completes, Investment prioritisation will take place</p>

	and allowance for a solution could be included in future investment periods.
	DL: £6M figure was based on a 2002 outline drainage study recommendation.
Should water rates be increased across the country to fund flooding projects?	
	MM: Explained the funding mechanism and charging is agreed with the Water Industry Commission for Scotland who direct Scottish Water on how they can raise funds and how funding is prioritised. Accepted that some customers are not receiving the appropriate service.
Questions raised over how Scottish water evidence how the internal flooding criteria is met	
	<p>KD: Explained internal flooding criteria is determined using evidence gathered during investigations undertaken by Scottish Water.</p> <p>Post meeting note: Scottish Water maintains an Internal Sewer Flooding At Risk Register (ARR). This is a register of properties that Scottish Water has identified to be at the highest risk of sewer flooding or have been exposed to repeat incidents of internal sewer flooding.</p> <p>Maintaining this Register is a regulatory requirement prescribed by the Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS) and is subject to audit by WICS annually.</p> <p>The evidence and sources of information reviewed for a decision for inclusion on the ARR in each specific case will vary according the circumstances. This can include, but not limited to: customer information (verbal or written), photographs/video evidence provided, operational staff accounts and records, physical and hydraulic modelling information, samples and analysis of flood water, as well as information from other parties, such as Local Authority or emergency services.</p>
Would Scottish Water declare the sewer flooding at Brandon Gardens and St Nicholas Road an emergency?	
	MM: No, Scottish Water would not declare the sewer flooding an emergency.
What would Scottish Water consider to be an emergency?	
	MM: Example given that drinking water that is not fit to drink would be considered an emergency. It was re-iterated that Scottish Water's prioritisation nationwide was agreed in conjunction with customers and signed off by Scottish Government Ministers.
Where else have Scottish Water bought properties?	
	DL: Scottish Water has bought properties in a small number of other areas where this was the most economical option. In one occasion, the land was used to allow a capital scheme to be built to resolve the flooding. In another not yet complete, the property will be demolished and grassed over, whilst a longer term study continues.
Why were installation of NRV's previously denied to customers?	
	DL: Decisions made based on the best intelligence Scottish Water had at the time. Scottish Water has an obligation not to transfer the flood risk of sewer flooding to other properties.
How much will it cost to purchase property?	
	MM: Scottish Water is in confidential negotiations and is not able to share this information.
What would Scottish Water's proposals be for the site and what would it look like?	
	<p>DL: upon completion of property purchase Scottish Water have some proposals for the site. These would be discussed with residents before proceeding.</p> <p>Scottish Water's preference is to demolish the property and create a flood storage area to reduce the impact of existing flooding (a representation of this was shown on screen). Other possible options would be to demolish the property and grass over the site and</p>

	maintain or possibly maintain the existing structure. These are just proposals at the moment and further design and consultation will be required.
What will the benefit be to external flooding customers from demolishing a property?	
	Creating a drainage area will not prevent the flooding from occurring, but will manage the risk differently by directing the majority of the flood waters away from other homes, gardens and driveways. Owning the land would also provide further options to Scottish Water when developing a longer term solution to resolve the flooding. Scottish Water will engage with customers before constructing anything.
Why has there been a lack of consultation on purchase of property and proposals?	
	MM: It was important Scottish Water respected the privacy of the purchasing process
	The owner of property in Brandon Gardens addressed the meeting. He explained the situation in terms of the flooding he has experienced. And explained the process of speaking with his neighbours and advice he received from Scottish Water's legal team not to discuss until the purchase process had been concluded. Point raised that his understanding was that the sale would allow options to be developed to benefit other customers in street experiencing sewer flooding
Technical question about how the proposal would improve situation about where sewage would go.	
	MM: Explanation that Scottish Water was still to confirm the exact details of the proposal. Essentially the grassed area would take the existing flooding from the street. There would still be a requirement for Scottish Water Operations team to carry out clean up following an event.
How long would the drainage area take to drain?	
	A: It would typically take around 2hours to drain depending on ongoing rainfall conditions after the event.
What is the drainage area?	
	A: It would be a depression in the ground that would be lined, with a drain to allow floodwater to get back into the sewer after a storm has subsided and there is capacity in the sewer network.
Water table is at a very high level.	
	A: Drainage area would be lined and drain back into the sewer and would not be dependent on ground water levels.
What will happen to the sewage in the drainage area and who will clean it?	
	A: The mix of stormwater and sewage would drain into the sewer via a drain after a storm when there is capacity in the sewer. If there are any remaining solids deposited then Scottish Water Operations staff will attend to wash and disinfect the area.
Are Scottish Water prepared to look at additional options including using land at railway?	
	MM: Scottish Water will look at other options to help improve the flooding situation.
Can Scottish Water not use the land alongside the railway for storage?	
	DL: An option was investigated to use this area for storage. It involved a 1300m ³ storage tank to remove the flooding. This would also require pumps which would be close to houses. Work alongside the railway can have difficulties due to restrictions from Network Rail. This land will continue to be considered for options.
Have Scottish Water tried this solution before?	
	MM: Not this exact solution but have used similar type of solutions where areas such as fields have been allowed to flood rather than houses.