



Alan Mak MP

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Date: 5 February 2021

Contact: 01903 272603

Dear Alan,

First of all thank you for your letter and I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you again to talk about the great work we are already doing in relation to stormwater releases, our Beachbuoy service and combined sewer outfalls (CSOs).

As you're already aware, stormwater releases are necessary to protect homes, schools, hospitals and businesses from flooding during poor weather and are permitted by our regulator, the Environment Agency.

I am very pleased that we're having a national conversation about Stormwater releases and CSOs and I am grateful you are fully engaged with it. The combined sewerage system that predominates in the South East is a historic legacy and changing it wholesale would be both hugely expensive and practically impossible. In that regard Southern Water is just one operator in a complex system which can be managed in a more holistic way. We believe that ensuring that communities and regions have a sustainable drainage system that is resilient to climate change and population growth is critically dependent on partnerships. Partnerships between planning authorities, developers, land owners and Government to ensure that the right choices are made that reduce the amount of surface water and contaminants that enter the network and the environment.

We are committed to playing our part, we have spent £20 million on a surface water separation scheme in Portsmouth to reduce the burden on the network by a third. We invested a further £13 million to upgrade our pumping station at Fort Cumberland. Work to reduce misconconnections within our network continues as does our engagement with our customers and businesses to discourage putting unflushables down sinks and loos. We are well advanced in developing drainage water management plans with local authorities that will support the right choices we believe are critical.

It has been invaluable to participate in the Hayling Island Environment Forum and, as you know, we engage with a number of key stakeholders regionally in our Beachbuoy stakeholder group.

As we said in our response following the National Taskforce announcement (<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/the-news-room/the-media-centre/2021/january/our-response-to-the-storm-overflows-taskforce>), our Beachbuoy service notifying the public of

stormwater releases 365 days a year is well ahead of the Defra deadline of 2023. The relevant team is working hard to develop this service and extend coverage to all our designated bathing waters. It is, as with all forerunner systems, a work in progress but we are committed to leading the way.

The latest on Beachbuoy can be found here: <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/water-for-life/our-bathing-waters/beachbuoy>

I hope this answers everything and I look forward to discussing these matters with you on February 18 along with our Director of Environment and Corporate Affairs, Dr Toby Willison.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian McAulay', written in a cursive style.

Ian McAulay  
Chief Executive Officer