

Peter Simpson
Chief Executive
Anglian Water

15/02/23

Dear Mr Simpson

Water Supply Eydon Northamptonshire

I am writing to you following our public meeting in which Pete Holland and Grant Toffs represented Anglian Water and outlined the plans for the water supply to Eydon, I have extended my thanks to them for coming along and facing our residents. I will outline the actions we have asked Pete to consider and to report back to us at the conclusion to this letter.

Pete Holland explained at the meeting that the plan now was **only** for the replacement of the existing feed into the Village from the next Village Culworth - to join at the recently installed tanker point.

One of our residents, Mr Andrew Partridge has been corresponding with Pete Holland, Trevor Cox and others on this issue, in essence on behalf of the Parish Council. He is a recently retired construction engineer and as such has valuable knowledge of managing projects such as this and the major project budget planning systems involved.

In July 2022 after Eydon had suffered a particularly bad period of four interruptions to our supply in the Summer, including on the hottest day ever recorded in the UK - our Village again had no water supply.

I am sure, like me. you saw the TV pictures of spontaneous fires in villages around London, I suddenly realised we are rural, we are surrounded by farmland - dusty and dry, brown grass verges in effect ripe for fires, and if we had no water supply again, what would happen to our Village? The consequences were and are terrifying - could there be loss of life? I don't know, but I do know as a community we had to act.

So, we again put pressure on your Company to reassess our supply. It had previously been considered in 2020 and dismissed and the only result was a tanker input point. The Parish Council then took the view that we had to use all avenues to pursue resolution, and we consequently reached out, as did individual residents.

I'm sure you remember emails to yourself at the time. This resulted in you sending emails to residents and our Unitary council Councilor Alison Eastwood on the 15th August 2022 that stated:

"I'm pleased to share an investment case has been made and approved to reinstate the supply and for a second supply pipe to feed Eydon. The scheme needs engineering work to be fully costed and designing and planning approval etc. so we need some time to do this."

This was also communicated to me in an email from Rose Shisler on 15th August. (We subsequently learned that a resident also received email confirmation from Pete Holland on the 22nd August - also specifically stating that investment had been approved and specifically stating the provision of the second supply was included as part of the approval.)

So, three confirmations of the second supply - one coming from yourself the Chief Executive. This was reported back to our residents and despite recognising we did not have timescales, it was taken as a significant step forward to some sort of water security for our village.

On our behalf Andrew Partridge continued to pursue the matter and specifically pushed for the timescales. We understand now that on-site work will be spring 2024 which is an improvement on the original proposed dates, although it does still mean a considerable risk to villagers in the meantime.

During this process, Pete Holland confirmed in an email to Mr Partridge on December 8th that the only scheme progressing was the replacement main. This was a great disappointment to the Village.

“ in terms of a second main to feed the Village, we have apologised but confirmed that this was not correct to say, at this stage the scheme progressing for Eyden (his spelling) is a mains replacement for the existing main, there is no main being concurrently planned.”

When I pressed him on this point at the public meeting he reinforced this by saying the mention of a second main feed was a mistake, and shouldn't have happened!! (it was at this moment our resident produced the letter issued by Pete Holland stating the original main replacement **and** second feed investment case had been approved).

I too was unaware of this letter at this point. Pete said **he did not know how the issue of the letter in his name had happened**, which in itself was quite extraordinary.

So issues arise from this - there has been no ownership of this significant change from Anglian - either the case had been approved for both improvements or it hadn't.

It was the proposed secondary supply that gave us all confidence that our water supply would be more secure. I understand the company has a target to reduce the proportion of communities with single supply to 14% - surely this is an opportunity to include us in the 86%?

Unfortunately, the credibility of the Company's plans are now being questioned because of this significant change. I certainly would not expect this change to be announced as 'a mistake' without any background information. What has changed?

Mr Simpson - you made the statement of the dual approach, but no one has formally announced the change which has caused great consternation and dismay in our community. We took you and your managers at your word and in good faith. I personally am bitterly disappointed in you and your Company and have been charged by the Community to express this to you.

This was the number one item we asked Pete Holland to take away from the public meeting.

During the meeting the issue of tanker supply during water outage was discussed and the meeting felt that once the tankers connected, many parts of the village still do not receive water. The meetings view was that the pressure was not enough to reach all parts. Perhaps this could be tested? Also, that the supply ended once the tanker either emptied or the drivers hours ceased. It was felt that the tanker connection was only operated to avoid your Company's obligation under the compensation payment scheme being triggered. Pete mentioned that there was a limited number of tankers in any case. We asked that the Company review this in the light of your leakage rate and whether the number of tankers was sufficient. (We think not, based on our experiences during long outages)

The issue of compensation was also discussed during the meeting. My records show there have been at least 14 outages since 2016 and not a penny of compensation has been paid to our residents. Again, Andrew Partridge has been pursuing this as he believes the Company's promise is not fit for purpose and we understand Pete Holland is seeking approval of a changed wording that *would* be fit for purpose and give a better offer for communities in the same situation as ours. He agreed to let us know when this was approved and issued.

The proposed replacement pipe, as we understand it from Pete, was to stretch from our neighbouring village of Culworth to the new tanker-point. There is at least 300 metres of the old 5 inch main remaining after this juncture (indeed this was one of the latest bursts). Pete was asked to make sure all of the old 5 inch main was included in the replacement. The meeting also asked what happens to the feeds in the village *after* replacement, as surely the problem is pushed into the village? Again, if you consult the breakage list supplied to me by Rose Shisler, you will see a number are further into the village. It was also pointed out that replacing this section pushes the problem outwards particularly to Culworth as the supply is carried by the same old mains infrastructure and we are rightly concerned.

At some recent point during the discussions around our supply, the Company made an offer of a gesture for a donation for a community project within the Village at the level of £3250. I pointed out that there were around 200 properties in the Village and that one compensation payment was therefore around £6000, Pete was respectfully asked to reconsider this offer.

So to summarise we would like responses to :

- The removal of the secondary feed and ownership of the decision after executives and the Chief Executive had put in writing, the proposed resolution of both replacement and a secondary feed.
- Tanker Issue - pressure, continuation of supply and provision of tankers.
- Compensation scheme - rewritten scheme
- Replacement of all the old main and resulting remainder of infrastructure issue.
- Revisit the goodwill gesture.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Keith Simmons
Chairman of Eydon Parish Council

Eydon Village 