

Dear Susan Davy – Group Chief Executive Officer

I am writing to you as Executive Member for Climate Change, Flood and Coastal Risk Management to ask for your urgent action to eradicate the practice of sewage discharges to rivers and coastal waters around Teignbridge.

All elected members of Teignbridge District Council resolved to declare an Ecological Emergency in 2020, and an Oceans and Coastal Recovery Declaration in Summer 2022. Our residents wish to see action from South West Water to combat threats to the quality of our water. Our declarations have recognised the role the ocean, rivers and coastal waters have in contributing to our work to address climate and ecological emergencies, as well as the wider objectives of a resilient and sustainable economy, the health and wellbeing of our residents and protection of our coastal environments.

We are extremely disappointed and concerned to learn that OFWAT has found it necessary to open an enforcement case against SWW as part of its ongoing investigation into how all wastewater management companies manage their sewerage infrastructure and the number and volumes of discharges into our coastal environments. On behalf of our residents we request details of your revised and urgent plans to, - address the practice of sewage discharges into our local waters together with a timescale for the ending of this practice. - improve your monitoring and performance against your environmental obligations - improve the operation of your sewerage infrastructure

A detailed response is requested within 28 days We would also like to invite you to meet with Council members to address their concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Jackie Hook

Executive Member for Climate Change, Coastal and Flood Risk Management



Dear Cllr Hook,

Thank you for your letter addressed to our CEO, Susan Davy.

Thank you also for sharing your concerns regarding South West Water's one-star rating for 2021. Please be assured that we do take our customer's concerns very seriously and will always welcome questions.

Protecting the environment is a key priority for South West Water and we are deeply disappointed to receive this assessment for 2021 as this is most definitely not where we want to be.

We want to reassure you that the investments and changes we are already making across our network are delivering real results, including a one-third reduction in pollution incidents

last year to the lowest number in 10 years. We understand that one pollution is one too many, and that's why we are committed to bringing this down further year on year by strengthening our round-the-clock response, increasing resourcing levels and investing £330 million over the next three years in our wastewater network.

We know there is significant progress still to make. Our regulator assessment is rightly becoming more stringent as are our customers' expectations increasing reflecting the need for us to go further and faster in protecting and enhancing our environment. We are committed to becoming a 4-star EPA-rated company by the end of 2024 and this remains a strategic priority for the Board.

More broadly on environmental performance, we continue to take action on our wider environmental performance including areas that are not included in the assessment from our regulator, such as storm overflows and coastal bathing water.

This year, we achieved 100% coastal bathing water quality for the first time across the South West's 860 miles of coastline. In April, we launched WaterFit, our new plan for healthy rivers and seas, which will see South West Water dramatically reduce its use of storm overflows, maintain our excellent bathing water quality standards all year round, and remove our impact on river water quality by 2030. WaterFit is the company's largest environmental investment programme in 15 years with more than £1.4 billion of improvements being made between 2020-25.

We would be happy to attend a meeting with the Council members. If you make contact with Vicky Garner, Partnerships and Community Manager, to arrange this. Vicky's email address is [vgarner@pennon-group.co.uk](mailto:vgarner@pennon-group.co.uk)

I do hope this information has been helpful and on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you for taking the time to share your views.

Yours sincerely

*A. Richardson*

**Abbie Richardson**

Executive Liaison Customer Manager



**South West  
Water**



**Bournemouth  
Water**

Peninsula House, Rydon Lane, Exeter, EX2 7HR

[www.southwestwater.co.uk](http://www.southwestwater.co.uk) / [www.bournemouthwater.co.uk](http://www.bournemouthwater.co.uk)