

SAGLUV Update May 2026

First a bit of domestic news:

Due to other pressing commitments, sadly, Sue Tulloch is resigning from SAGLUV, although we know she will continue to keep a close eye on us from the sidelines!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Sue for her valuable contribution, and particularly in helping get the group established in the early days.

However, we are very fortunate in having an excellent replacement in Hamish Riddoch. An EG resident, and EG Parish Councillor, Hamish is an Environmental Scientist who has very relevant experience in working on water quality issues, including sewage pollution, and with water companies. He is passionate about the River and the environment in general. Hamish is a great asset to our team.

On flood issues, Martyn Wright is standing down as Flood Warden for East Garston, and Hamish has kindly agreed to take over that role as well. Martyn will still remain in his role as Chair of SAGLUV.

Spring Progress Review.

Recently, the SAGLUV Team met with Simon Brittain, Thames Water's Head of Thames Valley Waste Operations, for a Spring Progress Review.

As we mentioned in the last SAGLUV report, there was some disappointment that the extensive sewer lining and repair work that was carried out in 2025, did not seem to have had the major impact that had been hoped for. The sewer flooded in East Garston and Eastbury, the EG ATAC filter unit had to be switched on, and Weston suffered continuous tanker runs to ease the pressure on the system. And a further negative, the East Shefford Sewage Treatment Works (ESSTW) discharged untreated sewage into the river at Weston for more than 500 hours. TW are confident that improvements have been achieved, but the full extent cannot be assessed until groundwater levels drop sufficiently to let full-scale camera investigations be carried out. It is evident that the heavy rainfall, with its subsequent surface run-off, put extreme pressure on the sewer network. More of that further in this report.

Simon gave us a positive update on TW's plans to further address the groundwater infiltration and sewage issues that covered three key areas.

1. There are 22 kilometres of TW sewer in our catchment, of which 10km have been relined over the last 20 years. As part of TW's storm overflows work, their Major Projects and Programme Team are now planning to reline all of the remaining 12km, and CCTV the previously relined sections to ensure that they are still in good order. This pro-active move will be a significant step forward towards resolving the sewer flooding problems, compared to the previous approach of repeatedly waiting for a problem to show before checking and patching.
Lateral and private drains are not included in these figures as they are either the responsibility of the property owner or at least on their land. TW will be following up on those properties where it is identified that faulty drains are causing infiltration problems.
2. A feasibility study of the Eastbury to EG rising main is underway to decide whether it should be lined, replaced or re-routed. Whichever solution is chosen will further improve the network.
3. TW have applied to EA for a Reed Bed/Wetlands filter solution to treat storm overflows from ESSTW. This is something that our Weston representative, Dan Rampton, has been campaigning for over the last few years, so hopefully it will be agreed and finally go ahead.

Firm dates for all of this cannot be confirmed at this stage, but we are confident that major progress will be achieved in the next year or two. Simon has committed to share the information with us as soon as the programmes are firmed up.

As mentioned above, it is clear that much of the above sewer flooding was the result of the excessive surface water flowing into an already groundwater-charged network. We in SAGLUV concentrate a lot on groundwater, and we tend to forget that heavy rainfall contributes to sewer flooding as well. As reported before, the total rainfall in the four months from November to February was 161% above average. The sewer could have probably managed the level of groundwater infiltration, and the excessive rainfall - but not both together! TW have provided us with some interesting charted data showing the increased levels in the balance tank of the ESSTW during periods of heavy rainfall. See appendix 1 attached.

A major factor in surface water flooding is run-off from house roofs, driveways etc, that drain into the sewer network. More recent building regs do not allow this but obviously many are already in place, and undoubtably, there are some mis-connections. In storm conditions, this run-off can have a dramatic effect on the sewers. This can be seen in a typical example set out in Appendix 2.

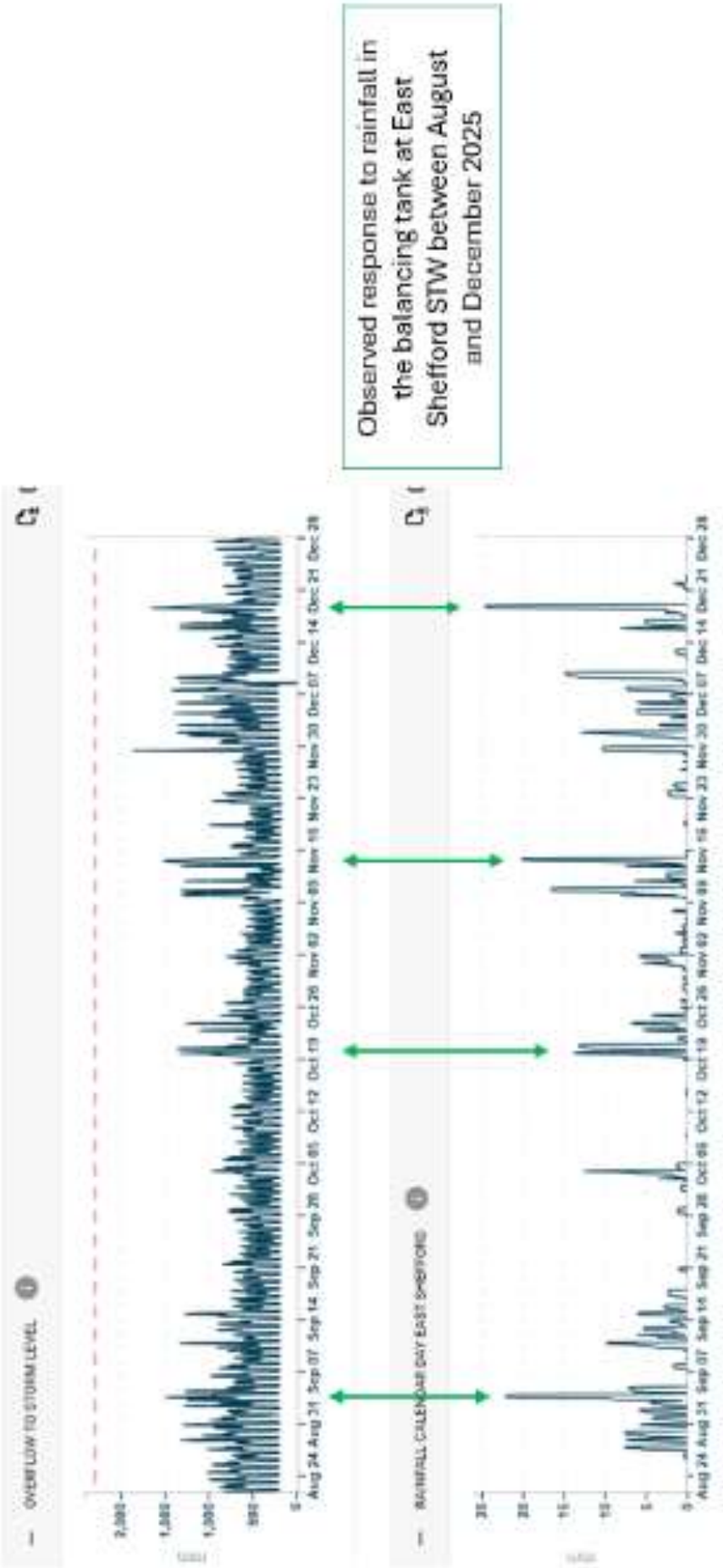
It would help hugely if owners of such properties could be persuaded to divert their run-off into soakaways or rainwater harvesting systems. And an added incentive is a TW discount and rebate scheme for those customers whose properties do not have their run-off rainwater connected to the sewer system. Details of the scheme and how to apply for the discount, which can be backdated for six years, can be found here:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help/account-and-billing/understand-your-bill/reduce-your-wastewater-bill>

As ever, we will keep you updated on progress whenever we can.

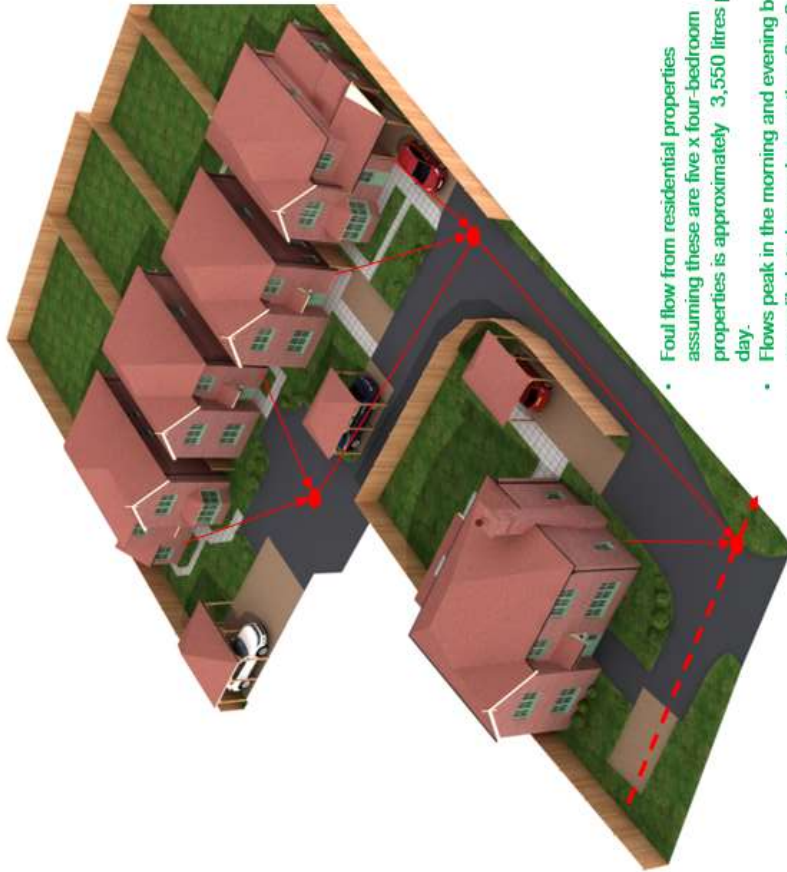
SAGLUV Team

May 2026



Typical Issues

How foul drainage systems should work



- Foul flow from residential properties assuming these are five x four-bedroom properties is approximately 3,550 litres per day.
- Flows peak in the morning and evening but are unlikely to be much more than 2 or 3 litres per second for a short period as a bath is emptied or a toilet flushed. Flows are not continuous as you would see with surface water or infiltration.

Approx 3,550 litres per day

Issues where Surface Water is Connected to Foul Drainage



- Roof and Car Port mis-connected to Foul Drainage 1 l/s
- Pump to drain water from garden mis-connected to Foul Drainage 0.25 l/s
- Roof of Extension mis connected to Foul Drainage 0.5 l/s
- Driveway drainage channel mis-connected to Foul Drainage 0.25 l/s
- Road Gully mis-connected to Foul Drainage 9 l/s
- Car Port and Driveway mis-connected to Foul Drainage 0.5 l/s
- Additional Flow from mis-connected highway drainage 9 litres per second.
- Additional Flow from mis-connected residential drainage 2.5 litres per second.
- Total 11.5 litres per second
- Total around – 41,400 litres per hour
- Storms vary in intensity, so these figures are at the storms peak.

Up to 41,400 litres per hour