



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ian McAulay
Chief Executive, Southern Water
Southern House
Yeoman Road
Worthing
West Sussex, BN13 3NX

Sent by email only

Reference No. HW40856

9 August 2021

Dear Ian

I'm writing to highlight the need for urgent investment in the water treatment works in Faversham.

There have long been concerns about water quality locally, particularly in Faversham Creek. These concerns increased following the recent fine awarded to Southern Water for almost 7,000 incidents of unpermitted sewage discharges across Kent, Hampshire and Sussex.

This is something I have raised repeatedly with Southern Water, the Environment Agency, and colleagues in Government.

Local beaches have been closed to swimmers several times over the summer already on account of sewage discharge, including again this week. This has caused a huge amount of concern and frustration, particularly with more people choosing to holiday at home this year.

As you know, the Government has said that it will be tightening the law around permitted sewage discharges as part of our Environment Bill. The changes will include the need for water companies and the Environment Agency to publish data on storm overflow operations annually.

I welcome the commitment from Southern Water to invest more than £2 billion over the next four years – including fixing pipes, pumping stations and sewers across the network. This investment is badly needed.

I would be grateful for an update on how this work will benefit my constituents in Faversham and Mid Kent. I'm particularly keen to know how much of this investment has been earmarked for the wastewater treatment works in Faversham and a timescale for when upgrade works can be expected.

This work has become all the more urgent on account of Swale Borough Council's plans to locate significant numbers of new homes to the east of Faversham, which will put even more pressure on our sewage network.

I am also keen to meet to directly hear your plans for improving the water treatment systems in Faversham and Mid Kent, and to discuss anything I can do to help.

I hope you will use this moment to fix problems with the sewage network in Faversham once and for all.

Best wishes,
Helen

Helen Whately MP
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

I write a regular newsletter to keep people up-to-date with what I'm doing for Faversham and Mid Kent. If you're interested in my campaigns on local and national issues, please sign up at: <https://www.helenwhately.org.uk/newsletters>