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Havant Thicket Reservoir pipelines community liaison & engagement plan (Post planning approval)

Introduction

This document sets out the community liaison and engagement plan for Portsmouth Water's construction of two new pipelines to serve Havant Thicket Reservoir in Havant.

The plan's overall purpose is to raise awareness of the planned pipelines construction activities among local communities and stakeholders, as well as enable clear, open and transparent dialogue between Portsmouth Water (along with its contractors) and residents, businesses and community representatives while work is being carried out from 2025 to 2029.

This is aligned with Portsmouth Water's over-arching goal to deliver the new pipelines efficiently and effectively, while minimising any impacts on communities as far as possible.

Background information

As part of the Havant Thicket Reservoir scheme, two new pipelines need to be installed, running next to each other underground from Bedhampton Springs to the reservoir site, which is just north of Leigh Park, Havant. One pipe would be used to transport surplus spring water to the reservoir in winter, where it could be stored. The other pipeline would enable water to be drawn out for treatment and supply to customers, when needed during a drought or emergency situation.

The pipelines construction plan will involve less disruption to local communities and the environment, as much of the pipelines route will be tunnelled, as compared with traditional construction methods of digging trenches in roads and public areas.

Communications and engagement activities will be driven by / aligned with the overall construction programme for the pipelines.

It's also important to note that this community liaison and engagement plan takes into account the following conditions that form part of the overall planning approval for the pipelines granted by Havant Borough Council in 2025.

Community liaison during construction works condition

No development shall take place until a Community Liaison Plan (CLP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Community Liaison Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- *A designated community liaison officer to act as the primary contact for local residents and businesses throughout the construction period.*
- *A communication strategy, including details of how the local community will be informed about the construction schedule, significant works, and any expected disruptions (e.g., noise, vibration, traffic management).*
- *A regular consultation process with residents and businesses to address concerns, including a minimum of quarterly public meetings or newsletters throughout the duration of the works.*
- *A complaint handling procedure to ensure that any concerns raised by the community are logged, investigated and addressed in a timely manner. This shall include a mechanism for escalation to the Local Planning Authority if necessary.*
- *A system for providing advance notice to local residents and businesses of any major construction activities, such as night-time working or road closures, with appropriate lead time (e.g., a minimum of 7 days).*
- *A feedback mechanism to report back to the community about actions taken in response to concerns raised.*

The approved Community Liaison Plan shall be implemented in full throughout the construction period.

Roles and Responsibilities

The pipelines community liaison and engagement plan will be managed and delivered by the Portsmouth Water Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications team, working with colleagues from the pipelines construction contractor Ward & Burke and others.

The Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications and Engagement Officer will fulfil the role of 'designated community officer', as specified above, including responding to public queries.

Plan objectives & monitoring

The key objectives of this plan are set out below, along with a range of measures to monitor performance against these goals. Regular updates (e.g. quarterly) on these performance measures can be provided to the Local Planning Authority and the dedicated reservoir pipelines stakeholder subgroup that will be set up (see below for more).

Objectives

1. **Raise community awareness of reservoir pipelines construction activities in local area and any temporary impacts these may have** (e.g. temporary traffic management measures)
2. **Raise community awareness of mitigating actions to minimise impacts of the pipelines construction work on local area** (e.g. noise and dust management measures)
3. **Raise community awareness of how to access further information on the pipelines construction work** (e.g. via dedicated webpages and initial / ongoing public drop-in sessions)
4. **Raise community awareness of how to contact Portsmouth Water to ask questions, or raise issues or complaints** (e.g. contact points via website, email, phone, post and social media)
5. **Raise community awareness of how Portsmouth Water has responded to feedback from local residents / businesses on the pipelines construction work**
6. **Secure / Increase positive community view of how pipelines construction work is being carried out.**

Performance measures

- **Level of customer contact** (e.g. number of emails, phone calls, social media messages and letters related to the reservoir pipelines construction)
- **Customer contact 'themes'** (breakdown / analysis of topics / issues people are getting in touch about)
- **Number of customer complaints**
- **Customer complaint 'themes'** (breakdown / analysis of topics / issues people are getting in touch about)
- **Complaint / Queries resolution performance** (how quickly / successfully complaints / queries are being resolved)
- **Visits to Havant Thicket Reservoir pipelines webpages and associated resources** (e.g. online map of pipelines route)
- **Reach of / Engagement with Havant Thicket Reservoir pipelines social media posts** (e.g. via Portsmouth Water Facebook page and local Havant / Leigh Park Facebook groups)
- **Reach of pipelines construction advertising** (e.g. in local newspapers / other publications)
- **Bespoke customer research on pipelines construction work** (e.g. six-monthly research work to measure customer awareness / views on pipelines construction work).

Community liaison and engagement activities

A wide range of community liaison and engagement activities will be carried out to ensure that local communities:

- Are aware of and understand the pipelines construction work being carried out in their area, together with the measures being taken to minimise any disruption or inconvenience.
- Clearly understand how they can access further information on the works, and / or get in touch with Portsmouth Water to raise questions, issues or concerns.
- Have a positive view of how the pipelines construction works are being carried out.

The various activities are as follows:

Stakeholder engagement

- Briefing for local stakeholders (such as local councillors and other community representatives) held ahead of initial phase of public communications (see below) and start of pipelines construction work getting underway.
- Following this briefing, a dedicated Havant Thicket Reservoir pipelines stakeholder subgroup will be formally established, with an open invite for local community representatives to join this forum. The subgroup can meet with the reservoir pipelines team quarterly (or more frequently if required) to receive updates on construction work, monitor performance (particularly in terms of community liaison and engagement) and discuss / resolve any issues. Site visits can also be offered / arranged for the subgroup.
- The pipelines stakeholder subgroup will be primarily represented by the chairperson of that group attending the main reservoir project Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG), who will be invited to provide updates at quarterly SAG meetings.

Initial phase of public communications

- Dedicated pipelines construction webpages launched as part of Havant Thicket Reservoir website. These will set out an overview of the pipelines scheme and detail for each construction location. They will also include an online 'Google Earth' style map of the pipelines route, a set of Frequently Asked Questions covering key topics and a facility for people to post questions for response. Information on how to contact Portsmouth Water will also be clearly provided.
- Press release issued ahead of start of pipelines construction work getting underway to generate local media coverage and raise awareness / signpost further information and points of contact.
- Social media advertising (e.g. via Portsmouth Water Facebook page and existing Havant / Leigh Park Facebook groups) ahead of start of pipelines construction work getting underway to raise awareness / signpost further information and points of contact.
- Local newspaper / community newsletter advertising ahead of start of pipelines construction work getting underway to raise awareness / signpost further information and points of contact.
- Ground-breaking event involving key local stakeholders at first pipelines construction site along the pipelines route.

Ongoing public communications

- (In phases as pipelines construction gets underway along the approved route, proceeding south to north) - Initial letter / information leaflet sent to all properties within 100 metres of construction compound, pipelines route section (including tunnelled sections) and / or designated construction traffic route. The letters will be sent out around six weeks before construction activity (e.g. a construction compound being set up) starts at a given location, and will include clear signposts on how people can access further information or get in touch with Portsmouth Water.
- The above letters will include an invite to attend a public drop-in session at a local venue, with each session to be held around two weeks before a construction compound is set up at a given location.
- Each construction compound along the pipelines route will have prominent signage on the hoardings surrounding it. The signage will provide key information on the pipelines construction work, as well as signposts to further information and the options for getting in touch with

Portsmouth Water, including a QR code that can be scanned to take people to the pipelines construction webpages. Typically, the signage will be erected on each main publicly visible side of the compound hoarding.

- Once work gets underway, quarterly updates (via letter) will be sent to properties to update people on progress to date / next steps, as well as reiterate how to access further information or contact Portsmouth Water. The letters will also highlight how community feedback has been addressed and responded to.
- As needed, letters will be issued, supported by wider communications (such as social media updates and updates to local stakeholders) to let people know about particular work activities – for example, temporary road closures or diversions. At least seven days' notice will be provided for such activities.
- Additional drop-in sessions will also be held at six-monthly intervals for locations where construction activity is in progress, to enable people to meet the reservoir pipelines team face to face and discuss any topics / issues.

Schools engagement

- Engagement with schools along / around the approved pipelines route is a further key aspect of this community liaison plan
- Ahead of pipelines construction work getting underway, an initial update letter will go to all relevant local schools (see list below) to provide an overview of planned works in the school's local area (and associated measures to minimise local impacts), offer a face to face briefing and signpost opportunities for engagement with school pupils (e.g. assembly presentations on pipelines construction, incorporating safety messages and Science Technology Engineering & Maths topics, plus a competition (across all relevant schools) to name the two Micro-Tunnel Boring Machines that will be used to build the pipelines tunnels)
- Liaison with each school (to be agreed to suit individual schools) will then continue in the run up to / during local pipelines works getting underway. This will include the opportunity for appropriately managed site visits for staff and pupils.
- The list of relevant schools is as follows:
 - Bidbury Infant & Junior Schools
 - St Thomas More School
 - Trosnant Schools
 - Riders Lane Junior
 - Front Lawn Primary School
 - Warren Park Primary School
 - Park Community School.

Effectively managing customer queries and complaints

Customers will be signposted to different channels by which they can get in touch with Portsmouth Water directly. This will include options for contact via the pipelines construction webpages, email, phone and post. Social media monitoring will also be in place to identify any issues that need to be addressed.

During normal operating hours for Portsmouth Water customer service (8am to 5pm, Mon to Friday), all queries and complaints will be received in the first instance by Portsmouth Water and logged, tracked and managed by specifically allocated staff within the company. They will liaise with Ward & Burke's site team in dealing with / resolving questions or complaints as quickly as possible.

Outside of the above normal working hours, customers will be directed to call Portsmouth Water's main emergency telephone number, where their query or complaint can be logged and allocated for response, as appropriate. Priority issues (for example, 'live' issues relating to safety, security, dust, vibration and construction traffic movements) will be passed to Ward & Burke's designated Out of hours team to deal with within the agreed timeframe (see below). Complaints about noise will be treated as high priority and will also be passed to the Ward & Burke Out of hours team (see below for timeframe). Low priority issues (such as routine information queries) will be logged and dealt with during normal customer service working hours (see above).

As an over-arching standard, complaints will be responded to within 24 hours at all times (i.e. both during and outside normal working hours). This will be an initial response as a minimum, with the goal always being to fully address complaints as quickly as possible, something which may involve further steps, such as investigation work and / or a meeting with the customer. Complaints about noise will be responded to within an hour at all times (i.e. both during and outside normal working hours).

As a default timescale, queries and complaints will be addressed in line with Portsmouth Water's overall complaints handling procedure (initial target of 5 working days, with 10 working days for more detailed matters), as set out in Appendix 1 of this plan. The procedure is aligned with guidance from CC Water, the designated consumer advocate for the water sector. The CC Water guidance is included as Appendix 2 of this plan.

In terms of escalation, if a complaint is not resolved after the above Portsmouth Water processes have been completed, it can be reported to the Local Planning Authority (via the agreed point of contact) for further action.

All customer queries and complaints will be formally recorded and tracked through to resolution, with regular review and reporting of data on customer contact.