



South Willesborough and Newtown Community  
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6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Sir or Madam

We are writing to bring to your urgent attention the issues and impacts of the streams and rivers flooding the South Willesborough and Newtown Green areas of Ashford. This is still significantly impacting the daily lives of our residents each time there is heavy rainfall, despite some remedial actions taken last year to address this, including a retaining wall with drainage holes along the Asda underpass and stakes to retain the riverbanks from Swan Centre to the Asda Underpass which have now proven ineffective.

1. Over the past month the local playing fields, children's playground, footpaths through the open space field as part of the Ashford Green Corridor and nature reserve area, the paths between the local community centre and supermarket, the cycle paths around Frog Island nature reserve and the pedestrian pathways exiting Newtown have all been inaccessible due to flooding and in some cases complete submergence of paths and walkways.
2. Also the ongoing issue of the Asda Underpass regularly flooding is making access to the buses, essential shopping and the Ashford Designer Outlet very difficult for our residents. This Underpass is not always flooding only after heavy rainfall and due to this it has been reported to us some children have also regularly missed buses and had late marks in school because they have been unaware the underpass would be flooded when leaving home for school in the morning. Remedial drainage holes put into the supporting wall alongside the river and underpass have become blocked and are no longer assisting any of the drainage in this area. Although at times the flooding waters are over the height of the retaining wall and almost reach the height of tunnel under the railway bridge.
3. After the flooding subsides areas of the playing fields have to dry out before they can be used by local clubs for training and matches and residents for exercise. The Borough Council has recently invested in renewing the Football Clubhouse, changing rooms and facilities, and for residents to have the most benefit from this the playing fields need to be accessible. The Borough Council has also invested in new equipment for the children's playgrounds and are also inaccessible until they dry out and it is a safety concern.
4. Also The footpaths are then filthy from the sludge and debris left from the flooding become unsafe due to being slippery and sludgy. Which whilst we will continue to refer the dangerous footpaths to the Street Cleaning team, we it raise it for your attention because it is caused by the flooding. Stakes put in from the SWAN Centre up to the Asda underpass have been removed or damaged and the banks are no longer supported.

As a Community Council we have just completed a Resident Consultation Survey, to set our key priorities. Residents have overwhelming highlighted the flooding in the area as the primary issue they want to be addressed.

We have enclosed photos of the flooding taken by Residents and Councillors over recent weeks to evidence each of the issues I have highlighted to you. We must request urgent investigation and action is taken to address this constant flooding and its disruption to daily life and activity.

As a Community Council we are concerned at the continued issues and impacts of the flooding. This flooding needs serious investigation and remedial action.

Yours faithfully

Sue Mullan

Chair

South Willesborough Newtown Community Council (SWANCC)

Andy Rogers

Chair

Planning and Highways Committee SWAN CC

Encs:- Photos of flooding River through Open Space about to breach again and Path recovering from previous floods, MUGA underwater adjacent to Playing Fields and Community Centre, Childrens Play areas under flood water, Asda Underpass, Footpaths, Playing Fields

See overleaf.











