

Attendees

Rosemary Carroll – Ward Councillor
Jennifer Purcell – County Councillor
Mike Goulthorpe – Ward Councillor and County Councillor
David Whipp – Ward Councillor
Scott Whalley – Pendle Council
Gareth Aspey – Pendle Council
Dave Motley – Together Housing Neighbourhood Manager for Lancashire
Gavin Millar – Together Housing Repairs Coordinator

Notes

1. Discussions were had around the ground water problems being experienced by a large number of residents of Wentcliffe Drive. The complex geology and hydrology of the valley side was discussed and the fact that the necessary expertise should have been engaged prior to any ground source heat pump installation.
2. Together Housing had been wholly reliant on the advice of their Contractor, Kensa, who undertook the ground source heat pump installation works. At a previous meeting, Kensa had stated that they were confident that they had undertaken the installation with due diligence yet no pre-installation reports have ever been supplied to support this fact. Together Housing were requested to provide these documents **(Action for TH)**
3. The Environment Agency's Best Practice document advises that a Hydrogeologist should be employed to undertake an assessment prior to any installation. Due to the complex geology and hydrology at this location, there is no doubt that this should have been done. Together Housing to find out if a Hydrogeologist was engaged **(Action for TH)**
4. Councillors expressed a concern for Together Housing properties that were being affected by the groundwater. The groundwater is causing damp in the properties and outside areas especially paths are unsafe to use especially in icy conditions. Councillors requested that Together Housing provide a list of properties that they own on Wentcliffe Drive and that they carry out works to ensure that these properties are fit for habitation **(Action for TH)**
5. Together Housing were informed that the highway is being damaged (LCC asset) and that the New Road Play Area and allotments (Town Council assets) are also being affected. Areas of the play area and the allotments are so water logged that they are unfit for use.
6. Councillors made Together Housing aware that property values are being affected and that sales are almost impossible for some of the properties. This is causing stress and worry for property owners.
7. The group undertook a walkover to observe the problems being caused by the groundwater – water logged gardens, icy paths within property curtilages, water

gress on to footway and carriageway. The problems are becoming progressively more widespread.

8. As Earby Town Council and LCC assets are being affected, the group felt that LCC and the Town Council should be involved going forward.
9. The group discussed the fact that the majority of the groundwater problems have only occurred since the ground source heat pump installation took place. The wider group was tasked with supplying evidence to Together Housing to support this fact
(Action for all)
10. The group took on an overall commitment to pull together a package of information to enable Together Housing to go back to Kensa and challenge them as to whether indeed due diligence had been carried out prior to the ground source heat pump installation
(Action for all)
11. Gareth outlined the scheme proposed by the Engineering Team to resolve some of the issues being caused by the groundwater; namely to remove water from the worst affected footways which will hopefully negate hazardous icy conditions. LCC have approved the scheme and have been asked to contribute to the scheme as it is protecting their asset. The works have been tendered and a contractor has been appointed. It is hoped that the works will commence within the next few weeks
(Action for Engineering)
12. The group mentioned that anybody whose assets are being affected by the groundwater could in theory take action against Together Housing; namely private householders (or their insurers), Earby Town Council and LCC.
13. The group clarified that although Pendle Council do not have any assets that are being directly affected, Councillors are acting to help their constituents. Councillors are receiving many enquiries from constituents about these ongoing problems.
14. Discussions were held around possible solutions. A solution on a macro scale would be to try and intercept the groundwater higher up the valley side, form a storage area and allow it to dissipate at a controlled rate into the nearest watercourse. This is a possibility but would require private landowner agreement and would require significant further investigation and investment. On a micro scale individual property protection could be looked at but discharge of the groundwater is problematic as neither Yorkshire Water nor LCC would want to accept the groundwater into their respective drainage systems. There is funding allocated in the capital programme which would enable further investigation work to be carried out.
15. The group thought that it would be prudent to meet again in another 6-8 weeks to review all actions from this meeting and form a plan going forward. Representatives from LCC and Earby Town Council should be invited to the next meeting. All group members are committed to working together in an effort to try and solve these problems.
16. Together Housing offered to involve Councillors on site walkabouts to improve local areas around Together Housing owned properties.