

Groundwater problems at Wentcliffe Drive, Earby

At the Council's Policy and Resources Committee on 16th March 2023 Members discussed the likely issues that had caused ongoing groundwater problems at Wentcliffe Drive. Following that meeting, attempts were made to encourage parties whose assets had been affected to pursue action against Together Housing. However, no further progress was made.

At West Craven Committee on 8th October 2024 Members asked for the Engineering Manager to arrange a meeting with Together Housing (TH) and that Earby Town Council (ETC) be invited. Also, that ETC, on behalf of residents, be asked to consider taking legal action against the contractors used by TH who undertook the works in the area.

Response from Earby Town Council

ETC discussed these requests at their meeting on 27th January 2025. Members were of the view that the impact of groundwater on their assets (Rushton Ave playground and allotments) was minor and did not warrant seeking redress through taking action against other parties. Particularly given the likely legal costs of such action, and the uncertainty of a definitive causal link to the ground source pumps installation, and given other factors such as climate change, the highest ever rainfall on record between Oct 22 and Mar 24, and the discontinuance of use of the Yorkshire Water reservoirs.

Whilst members expressed empathy with the residents affected, it was not considered an issue that was within the remit or the powers of ETC to be engaged in.

For these reasons, ETC resolved not to send a representative to any meeting to discuss taking action against TH and their contractor.

Response from LCC

The Engineering Manager has also asked LCC if they would be willing to consider taking any action. Having reviewed their incoming customer enquiries regarding Wentcliffe Drive they have no current reports (in the previous 12 months) regarding flooding or highlighting an issue with their surface water drainage infrastructure. Whilst they have repaired 2-3 defects on this road during this period, they say this fails to suggest significant evidence that their asset is compromised or needs intervention.

If they considered a need to undertake legal action this would need to be directed at the adjacent property owner rather than looking at the root cause suggested with Together Housing and the installation of ground source pumps.