

Subject: 20 December 2016 response to Tracy Symons's (SWW) 25 November 2016 letter

From: Top Laner <toplaner@goongumpas.com>

Date: 21/12/2016 19:12

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CC: "Sarah Newton (MP)" <Sarah.Newton.MP@parliament.uk>, Theresa May <privateoffice@no10.x.gsi.gov.uk>, Andrea Leadsom <andrea.leadsom.mp@parliament.uk>, West Briton <jreines@c-dm.co.uk>, spotlight <spotlight@bbc.co.uk>, Kath Layte <kath@layte.com>, Gavin Bellward <gavrbellward@gmail.com>, JL <johnlayte@gmail.com>

Please find attached and below my 20 December 2016 partial response to Tracy Symons's 25 November 2016 letter (attached)

Winter Cottage, Goongumpas, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 5JL

Tracy Symons
South West Water

20 December 2016

Dear Tracy,

In our phone call on Wednesday 7 December I told you that I am in the process of writing a reply to your 25 November 2016 letter (copy attached) and guessed (wrongly!) that it would be about a week before it is ready for publication. I offered you a chance to discuss it at a meeting or over the phone before publicizing it but you declined.

As I said there is a great deal in your letter that I disagree with and I think I can prove most, if not all, of your arguments to be nonsense and there are a couple of parts of your letter that I take exception to.

Your main argument is that the pipe after the Tailings End stop tap / meter enters private land at Five Acres and continues across about five different private properties before arriving at ours about half a mile away which would mean it is a private pipe all the way from Tailings End to our properties. Although you state in your letter that "*We do not know the exact path of your private pipe*" you were adamant, in our phone call, that you did know it enters private land immediately after the Tailings End meter near the notice. You may of course be correct but please explain how you came to this conclusion? Have SWW dug up the lane to check? (it doesn't look like anybody has as of 19 December 2016 17:00) or is it just guesswork? We confirm we have not dug up the lane to check but believe the pipe continues down the lane towards Goon Farm and enters private land at Goon Farm and thus the pipe in the lane, which was laid before 1 September 1989, is a communication pipe and SWW's responsibility. We base this view on the following facts -

1. Kevin Bray (SWW) told us that the pipe continues down the lane towards Goon Farm when he installed the stop tap and meter in late 2013 (at our request) and a logging meter in February 2014 (again at our request). He re-installed a standard meter on 23 January 2015 (once more at our request) so that we could monitor the usage and try and find/repair the alleged leak that SWW had said they had "found" a year (and five million litres of water wasted) previously.
2. Mike Shannon (SWW) told Mr Bellward and I (at our 4 March 2016 meeting) that the pipe continues down the lane and is a communication pipe until it reaches the entrance to Harmony Cottage where it enters a different lane leading to Goon Farm and ceases to be a communication pipe at that point. As you know we disagree that it is a different lane and have provided proof.
3. The meter at the bottom of the chamber is aligned with the road and not at right angles to it.
4. According to a SWW officer Tailings End reported their outside tap was connected to the pipe beyond the meter and it seems very unlikely the connection would be across the lane on private land rather than in the lane.
5. The 1970 deeds of Winter Cottage include a map that shows the pipe to be in the lane from Tailings End until it enters Goon Farm land. For the part that crosses Goon Farm there is an easement in the deeds to repair or replace that part of the pipe. There is obviously not an easement to repair or replace the pipe in the lane as it is a communication pipe in a highway laid before 1 September 1989 and SWW's responsibility.

We sent a copy of this map and easement to various SWW employees and others several times. The first time as an attachment to our 4 March 2013 (11:55) email to Allister Symonds which was sent soon after we discovered these documents in the deeds. It is apparent from your letter that you have not seen this email since you state in your letter "*We do not know the exact path of your private pipe*" (the deeds map shows the exact path of the pipe and which parts are private and which parts are not) and later you say the "*first record SWW have of our complaint was 29 August 2013*" which is of course about 6 months after our 4 March 2013 email proving you have not seen it. A map of the area and the "*the exact path*" of the pipe is also shown on the web site www.goongumpas.com which I understand SWW has looked at many times (the last logged visit being on 19 December 2016 at 11:57 see attached log of the last 10 months for one of the SWW users). Incidentally I do not have a copy of the 29 August 2013 communication you mention which could be because it was lost in one of our many computer crashes experienced between late 2015 and June 2016 or it could be that you are mistaken. Please email me a copy.

I attach a copy of your document [Water service pipe responsibilities \(water industry Act 1991\)](#) which can also be viewed here https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/media/pdf/f/k/SPIv3_0914.pdf

- What you are saying is Fig 2 (alternative scenario) applies.
- What we are saying is Fig 2 (communication pipe in road) applies.
- What Mr Shannon is saying is Fig 3 (property fronting a street where there is no main) applies.
- What Mr Bray said was the pipe is in the road but it is a private pipe. Maybe he was not aware that this pipe was laid prior to 1st September 1989.

In your 25 November 2016 letter (attached) you say [it is not normal practice to install meters where SWW installed ours \(adjacent to our properties rather than near your main half a mile away\)](#). However you did the same on Goon Farm (despite your letter stating you know their supply comes from Tailings End). For Harmony Cottage you installed their first meter on Goon Farm's land (next to Goon Farm's own meter apparently) so it would appear that it is the normal practice in this area. We believe this practice is the primary cause of all the trouble and expense we, Carn View / Harmony Cottage and indeed SWW have had. SWW installed all these meters without first testing the quality of the water or the integrity of the pipe leading to them. The water could have come from anywhere! In our case SWW knew our water came from the Tailings End main (we didn't because we had not seen the Winter Cottage deeds at the time). If SWW had spent a couple of hours installing a stop tap and meter on "our" pipe at Tailings End before installing our meters then hundreds of thousands of pounds as well as millions of litres of water would have been saved because the leak and the other connected users (Goon Farm's troughs, Carn View, Harmony Cottage, Carn View's trough on Mr Lanyon's land, the stand pipe on the land Goon Farm had for sale (sold in 2014 and now known as The Cabin), Five Acres, Tailings End's outside tap and Iona Cottage's caravan yard. Would have been found and dealt with eight+ years ago and we, Carn View and Harmony Cottage would not have complained of low pressure because the connected cattle troughs and leak on Goon Farm would have been fixed and the pressure would no longer have been low (or zero for about an hour per day for eight years for us). Harmony Cottage and Carn View would probably not have needed to install new pipes to Tailings End and saved the considerable expense of doing this. I say probably because both Carn View and Harmony Cottage (as well as our own properties) were all sold by Goon Farm with a water supply connected to ours (I cannot see that their deeds would include another easement over the same pipe as our deeds do from the same vendor and Winter Cottage was the first property Goon Farm sold back in 1970). Further if SWW had

tested the quality of the water it is almost certain they would have found the water was polluted by backflow from the many non-compliant animal troughs on Goon Farm and elsewhere between Tailings End and our properties. As Mr Bellward says in his 10 December 2016 letter (copy attached) he blames these troughs for the diarrhoea he suffered for years before he stopped using your water in the summer of 2015. I agree with him and have not used your water for drinking since then. I have asked SWW several times to confirm all animal troughs in the area to be certified as compliant before we trust your mains supply for drinking purposes and as yet I have not had a reply and as you can see from the attached 6 December 2016 photos two of the troughs connected to our supply in January 2015 (which SWW were informed about at the time (see 30 January 2015 and 2 February 2015 emails to Tudor Cornish and Matt Nicks) are still non-compliant and connected to a live supply nearly two years after we informed SWW about them. I have not yet checked the dozens of others in the area. Your letter states *"Our Water Regulations team have undertaken a thorough check of the wider area to ensure there are no other potential sources of contamination. Some issues have been identified and the Regulations Officers are working with the property owners to rectify these. None of the non-compliances identified in the wider area would have any impact on the supply to your property"*. For your information these two animal troughs are still non-compliant because they have no backflow prevention, no visible double check valves, no frost protection and little float valve protection to prevent animal damage furthermore they are full of category 5 fluid consisting of mains water + rainwater, + algae, + animal saliva / urine + organic matter such as dead leaves + dead insects + goodness knows what else! To say that they don't pose a risk of contaminating your supply (and hence ours) is ridiculous and even if (note if) they are now no longer connected directly to our supply they had been for many years almost certainly polluting our drinking water because a prerequisite for water to backflow is for the supply pressure to drop to zero and lead to the water in the trough to syphon back into the supply pipe. Whereas zero pressure is very rare remember our supply dropped to zero for eight years for about an hour per day hence our main complaint. I think your regulations team have rather got their priorities wrong considering the dozens of letters, several inspections, SWW staff involved in getting me to permanently disconnect a (turned off anyway) very difficult to access mains connection to the covered rainwater distribution tank in the dark (less algae) roof at Goonhillend filled with 5 stage filtered rainwater. SWW's notice required me to disconnect this mains connection within 7 days yet do nothing for nearly 2 years about these far more dangerous troughs!

I believe SWW should amend their policies as to where meters are installed but if they are installed a long way from the main then the quality of the water as well as the integrity of the supply to the meter **MUST** be tested first to avoid a repeat of this very expensive for all involved (including SWW) incident.

Your 25 November 2016 letter states *"I can assure you that my review of your complaint has been extremely thorough and I have considered all the information you have presented"*. I am afraid I cannot agree with you as it is very apparent from your letter that you have not taken into account important documents pertinent to my complaint and this case. The (considered very important) 4 March 2013 email mentioned above you have obviously not considered for instance. This may be that you have ignored them or they have been deliberately withheld from you or "lost" by the recipients so before supplying you with the remainder of this letter will you please confirm you have had sight of the following documents by emailing me copies. Thank you in anticipation.

1. 23 July 2012 photo of a police car attending the land that Goon Farm had for sale at the time with a "private" water supply that we suspected was connected to ours (see last sentence of www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-42804449.html) As you know it turned out that it was connected to ours! We had asked Allister Symonds to check but he refused and said *"If Goon Farm is selling land with an illegal connection to yours then it is a matter for the Police"*. I contacted the Police who said that it was a civil matter but the legality of the water supply should be checked by the buyer's solicitor in the event of a sale however they did attend the site soon after my contact (see photo). In your letter you say the *"first record SWW have of our complaint was 29 August 2013"*. I suggest you contact Allister Symonds and ask him when the first verbal contact was but I think this photo proves that it must have been before 23 July 2012. For the record we first complained (verbally) about the low / zero water pressure in 2008/9 and Allister Symonds we think became involved in 2010/11 but definitely in 2012. Photo attached
2. 4 March 2013 (11:55) email to Allister Symonds. This email mentions that Goon Farm's owner has stated that Goon Farm is now on a metered supply and the stand pipe on the land they had for sale (see above) was legal and fed from behind Goon Farm's new meter. Goon Farm sold the land in 2014 and it became known as "The Cabin". The water supply sold with it was not legal and was connected to our supply as we suspected. The buyer's solicitor did not check whether the supply was legal and it was one of the water supplies we found to be connected to ours in January 2015 when we started our survey (see www.goongumpas.com). If only Allister Symonds had done as we asked and checked this supply and the troughs on Goon Farm then I would not be writing this now.
3. 6 February 2014 (15:07) email to Brendon Green (CCwater), Ofwat, Customer Contact (SWW), T.Ludkin (SWW). A copy of the 4 March 2014 (15:07) email to Allister Symonds was attached to this email.
4. 14 February 2014 (11:21) email from Kristian Barber (SWW) to john@layte.com Important.
5. 28 April 2014 Notice to repair a leak SWW stating (wrongly) that they have found. Posted to occupiers of Winter Cottage, Goonhillend and The Annexe Winter Cottage. Now considered "An incorrect Notice" according to your 25 November 2015 letter (attached). It is noted your letter states the £1,500 compensation offered was because of this "incorrect Notice" but if that were the case why was it (and is now in your letter) being offered to only one of the 3 recipients?
6. Goon Farm pipework schematic (2014) handed to Alan Brand on one of his visits. Important.
7. 30 Jan 2015 (15:32) email to Tudor Cornish and Matt Nicks. Very important.
8. 2 February 2015 (16:14) email to Tudor Cornish. Very important.
9. 8 February 2015 (18:48) email to Gwynne Parker Price (Carn View owner), Alister Symonds (SWW), Customer Contact (SWW), T.Ludkin (SWW), Ofwat, Sarah Newton (MP), J.Reins (West Briton), Jaqui Walls (DC Media). A copy of the Winter Cottage Deeds map showing water supply from Tailings End in the lane, across goon farm land to Winter Cottage (with a copy of the easement for the private part) was attached to this email at Gwynne Parker Price's request.
10. 16 April 2015 letter from Richard Harrison to Mr Layte. Lists "violations" regarding the rainwater harvesting system at Goonhillend only one of which had any merit but he should have been concentrating on real, dangerous to public health, violations from the non-compliant troughs on Goon Farm that we pointed out to him as well as others in the area. As mentioned above two of these troughs are still non-compliant (see photos) and there are probably many others in the area.
11. 24 April 2015 (16:24) email to Customer Leakage (SWW) Sarah Harvey (SWW), Ofwat, Sarah Newton (MP), J.Reines (West Briton), Devon and Cornwall Police. A copy of the 4 March 2014 (15:07) email to Allister Symonds was attached to this email.
12. Goon Farm pipework schematic (March 2015) handed to Mike Shannon on one of his visits. Important. This is a slightly updated version of the one handed to Alan Brand in 2014 in the light of new information.
13. 8 May 2015 email to Sarah Harvey (SWW), Customer Leakage (SWW), Ofwat, CCwater, Sarah Newton (MP), J Reines (West Briton). Important.
14. 9 June 2015 email to Sarah Harvey (SWW), Customer Relations (SWW), Customer Leakage (SWW), CCwater, Offwat, Sarah Newton (MP), J Reines (West Briton). Important.
15. 3 July 2015 (09:29) email from Sara Harvey (SWW) to toplanner@goongumpas.com (J.Layte, K Layte and Gavin Bellward). Important.
16. 8 July 2015 (1st) letter from Richard Harrison to Mr Layte. This letter suggests there is a category 3 risk of backflow from the downstairs shower tray and the upstairs bath taps because they are connected to the mains and gives 28 days to comply with the regulations!!!!!!!!!!!!!! But they are not connected to the mains - both hot and cold are gravity fed from the rainwater roof tank which admittedly was at the time was still connected to the mains with the turned off supply whilst a way of disconnecting it was being contemplated but even so water cannot defy gravity and get to the roof tank which I would have thought a 6 year old would know but Richard Harrison is a SWW Regulations officer! These "violations" are numbered 3 and 4 in his letter. I do not know what 1 and 2 are as that page is missing.
17. 8 July 2015 (2nd) letter from Richard Harrison to Mr Layte. This letter contained "violations" 2 and 3 but dated April 2015 not July. By July violation 2 (marking pipework) had been done and violation 3 requiring permanent removal of mains connection to the rainwater roof tank was being contemplated but was not completed until September due to its complexity because of access problems.
18. 17 July 2015 (16:48) email to Sarah Harvey (SWW), Customer Leakage (SWW), Ofwat, Sarah Newton (MP), J.Reines (West Briton), CCwater, Devon and Cornwall Police. Important.
19. 7 August 2015 letter from Robert Goulden to Mr Layte. This letter claims that SWW first became aware of the rainwater harvesting system at Goonhillend *"Following involvement in another matter at your premises and details were passed to the Water Regulations Department in April 2015"*. For the record my 30 January 2015 (15:32) email to Tudor Cornish (SWW) and Mark Nicks (SWW) gives details of the rainwater harvesting system both current and intended and it is not my fault that these details were not passed to the Water Regulations Department in January 2015.
20. 17 August 2015 letter from Robert Goulden (SWW) to Mr Layte. Important.
21. 25 August 2015 letter from E. Hough (for the Company Solicitor Pennon Group PLC) to Mr Layte. Important.
22. 3 September 2015 letter from Mark Baker to Mr Layte. Important.

23. 7 September 2015 (11:30) email to Robert Goulden (SWW), Customer Leakage (SWW), Sarah Newton (MP), Sarah Harvey (SWW), CCwater, Customer Relations (SWW), Allister Symonds (SWW), Devon and Cornwall Police. This email is one of several that attaches a diagram of a compliant animal trough and a request that SWW confirm that all animal troughs in the area comply. As can be seen from the attached 6 December 2016 photo at least two of them don't 15 months after this request. very important.
24. 14 September 2015 (16:51) email from Mike Shannon (SWW) to Toplaner@Goongumpas (J.L) containing the text 'As you have previously requested I am also copying Mrs Layte and Mr Bellward into this email' but as can be seen they were not. See 1 December 2015 email from Chris Broxton below. This email mentions our concerns about non-compliant animal troughs in the area and states "*there is no evidence currently available to confirm this*" Which of course is bunkum as Richard Harrison and two other SWW inspectors had been shown two such animal troughs at least six months previous to this and Richard Harrison had declared two of them non-compliant and pointed out a third (which we were not aware of) as also non-compliant. Important.
25. 22 September 2015 SWW's letter from Paul Mitchell to Mr Layte. (copy attached). There is hardly a sentence in this threatening letter that is the truth as Mr Mitchell has obviously been seriously misinformed by someone and he should learn not to write such letters before checking his information is fact not fiction. Very important indeed. (copy attached)
26. 11 October 2015 (23:17) email J.Layte's 9 October response to Paul Mitchell's 22 September 2015 letter copied to numerous recipients including David Cameron (PM). Sarah Newton (MP). Christopher Loughlin (SWW), Robert Goulden (SWW), Mark Baker (SWW), Alister Symonds (SWW), Customer Relations (SWW), customerleakage (SWW), Jeff Steere (SWW), Devon and Cornwall Police, mailbox@ofwat, Spotlight (BBC), J Reienes (West Briton), + a request to forward to Paul Mitchell as his letter has no email address. Very important.
27. 12 October 2015 (08:51) Due to reports that the above 11 October 2015 email had not arrived a second copy was sent on 12 October 2015 (08:51) to the same recipients. As above very important.
28. 19 October 2015 letter from Chris Broxon (SWW) to Mr Layte.
29. 1 December 2015 email from Chris Broxton to Mrs Layte and Mr Bellward finally supplying them with a copy of Mr Shannon's 14 September 2015 email that states they were copied into it but they were not.
30. 2 December 2015 letter from Chris Broxon to Mr Layte.
31. 15 February 2016 (12:06) email from Mike Shannon to J.Layte.
32. 23 February 2016 (10:23) email from Sarah Newton to Customer Relations (SWW) FAO SWW Chief Executive – Dr Stephen Bird. Important.
33. 3 March 2016 (09:45) email from Sarah Newton (MP) to J.Layte which includes a letter detailing the Government's view on backflow prevention regulations pertaining to central heating header/expansion tanks. A copy of this email was presented to Mike Shannon at our 4 March 2016 meeting as I thought it important as regards to your Regulations Officer Richard Harrison's failure to warn me of the risk of backflow from this tank at Goonhillend and Jeff Steere's statement at the 13 October 2015 meeting that my installing a backflow prevention to this tank was unnecessary as there were no Regulations requiring it. Mike Shannon did not read the Government's regulation as he said "*he had not brought his reading glasses with him*". His colleague started to read it to him but Mike Shannon interrupted before he reached the part of it regarding Central heating header tanks stating it was "*unimportant and nothing to do with the purpose of the meeting*". He ended the meeting at that point and was clearly annoyed that Mrs Layte had been unable to attend. He left without taking a copy of the file I had prepared for him (which included a copy of this email) meaning you will not have had a copy when considering my complaint regarding this so I have attached a copy to this email for your perusal.
34. 22 March 2016 letter from Dr Stephen Bird (SWW) to Sarah Harvey (MP) relating to this case (albeit a rather distant relation!). Ill-informed nonsense and I will be writing to him after Christmas pointing out his mistakes. Interestingly Dr Bird states "*We have already informed Mr Layte that the Waste Water notice* (28 April 2014 above) *was correctly issued*" whereas your 25 November 2016 letter (attached) states that it was "*incorrectly issued*".
35. 4 April 2016 (14:30) email from yourself to toplaner@goongumpas (me), Kath Layte and Gavin Bellward confirming a meeting is required with Mr Bellward, Kath Layte and myself attending to discuss compensation being paid to all three of us as you sent the 28 April 2014 Notice (now described as an "incorrect Notice" in your 25 November 2016 letter) to all three of us yet offered the £1,500 compensation only to me to conclude this matter. Note you refused my request for a meeting in our phone call of 7 December 2016.
36. 4 April 2016 (14:30) email from Chris Broxton (SWW) to toplaner@goongumpas (me), Kath Layte and Gavin Bellward confirming a meeting is required with Mr Bellward, Kath Layte and myself attending to discuss compensation being paid to all three of us as you sent the 28 April 2014 Notice (now described as an "incorrect Notice" in your 25 November 2016 letter) to all three of us yet offered the £1,500 compensation only to me to conclude this matter. Note you refused my request for a meeting in our phone call of 7 December 2016. This email appears identical and was sent at an identical time as the above one from yourself but was apparently sent by Chris Broxton. Did he send this or did you send it on his behalf?

The above may not be a complete list because of the many computer crashes I experienced during mid 2015 to about August 2016 in which some documents were lost. As I said above the 29 August 2013 communication from me is an example and if you have any other documents not mentioned above I would be grateful if you would email me copies for my records.

There is one document you will not have had sight of which relates to my 10 May 2016 complaint regarding your Regulations Team's failure to warn me about the very real backflow danger from the central heating header tank at Goonhillend.

Extract from my 10 May 2016 draft complaint
 SWW's regulations officer's failure to identify a serious backflow risk from the central heating header / expansion tank in the roof at Goonhillend and their statement that the newly installed backflow protection was "unnecessary and not required by the Government".

It is noted that your 25 November 2016 response to my 10 May 2016 complaint makes no reference to this part of it.

This tank had identical mains connections /overflow size to the rainwater distribution tank except that it was connected 24/7/365 to your mains as opposed to turned off unless in case of drought (somewhat rare in Cornwall) as was the case with the rainwater distribution tank. The fluid in this tank (40 year old stagnant water containing antifreeze and corrosion inhibitor additives with some kind of slime on the surface) was far more noxious than the 5 stage filtered rainwater in the rainwater distribution tank yet your regulations team ignored it.

When your Regulations team inspected on 13 October 2016 and asked what the small backflow prevention tank in the roof was for I explained that it was backflow prevention to the central heating header / expansion tank and although it was one of their suggestions for backflow prevention for the rainwater tank it was nothing to do with that tank and was not connected to it and they were here to confirm I had disconnected the mains connection from the rainwater tank (which I had), installed a pointless double check valve (which I had) and installed the utterly pointless recommendations to the "violations" to the downstairs shower and upstairs bath as per Richard Harrison's 8 July 2015 letter (which I hadn't as they were not violations). Your Regulations officer Jeff Steere stated that there was no need for me to have installed such a backflow prevention device as there was no regulation requiring this. I was surprised about this as common sense suggested there should be and asked my MP to check. I attach a copy of the response she received from The House of Commons Library, Policy Specialist (Environment), Science & Environment Section and have highlighted the relevant sentences. As you can see your regulations team and the Government disagree on this and I believe SWW must address this issue. When I showed Mike Shannon this letter at our 4 March 2016 meeting he didn't want to know, made the excuse that he could not read it as he had not brought his reading glasses with him and declined to take a copy away for later perusal which is why you will not have had a copy to refer to when considering my complaint. I have attached a copy. What are SWW going to do about the very real risk of backflow from central heating header tanks? Goonhillend is now protected but is any other property in your whole area that installed such tanks before the current regulations came into force? Shouldn't all your customers be warned of the risk? I realize this may be a can of worms but the lid has been lifted because your Regulations Team concentrated on one tank whilst ignoring the other central heating header tank that had identical mains connections and overflow but considerably higher risk of backflow (I will not explain why in this letter but your Regulations Team should know why). Now that this can of worms has been opened I think that SWW (and probably all other water authorities) must do something about it to safeguard their customers.

There are many more pages of this letter that I could email now but the Christmas period is coming up so I will not do so until January and in any case the rest of the letter is mainly details of my complaints against various SWW employees and not so important as the points raised in this part of the letter so it may be that I decide to send the rest of this letter as separate communications to be considered in conjunction with it. This will give SWW a chance to prove that the pipe after the Tailings End meter enters Five Acres private land (as you say it does) as opposed to our view that it goes down the lane towards Goon Farm and is thus a communication pipe and SWW's responsibility. It will also give you, Tracy, a chance to prove that your 25 November 2016 letter was written having regard to the evidence listed above but I have to

say I will consider your response to my complaint to be null and void if you cannot supply me with a copy of all the documents listed (except the ones marked as attached).

I think the only way SWW can prove the supply pipe enters Five Acres private land at Tailings End is to dig up the lane and see if it does and while you are about it investigate what appears to be a leak (see attached photo) further down the lane towards Goon Farm. If it is a leak then it is not on "our" pipe as we have recently tested it which reveals the weekly flow to be zero – quite an improvement on 97,190 ltrs I think you will agree J. It would be interesting if it proves to be a leak and if it were on, say, the pipe leading to Goon Farm and Goon Farm complain of low pressure. Would you install a meter at Tailings End on Goon Farm's pipe and send a Notice claiming to have "found a leak on the private pipe leading to Goon Farm" giving them 30 days to fix it (as you did with us)? Or would you concede it is a communication pipe and SWW's responsibility to repair? Obviously someone is going to have to dig up the lane to see if you are right (the pipe enters Five Acres land) or we, Mike Shannon, Kevin Bray and Winter Cottage deeds map is right (the pipe goes down the lane towards Goon Farm). I need hardly point out that if we are right then every single letter that claims that All the pipe from Tailings End to our properties is a private pipe will become invalid in an instant.

This whole fiasco has cost a vast amount of money both to SWW and ourselves and to a lesser extent Carn View and Harmony Cottage (for installing (probably) unnecessary new pipes from Tailings End) and the prime cause is your policy of installing meters far from your mains without testing the integrity and wholesomeness of the supply to the meter. However, the costs started mounting up hugely when Allister Symonds became involved when we, Harmony Cottage and Carn View complained of low /zero water pressure he should have spent a couple of hours investigating and another couple of hours installing a meter at Tailings End on our joint supply pipe which would have revealed the massive leak on Goon Farm and the non-compliant animal troughs polluting our water too. Instead he advised us that it was a private pipe from Tailings End (questionable I think) and we should all install new pipes to Tailings End (they did we didn't). A third chance came when Allan Brand became involved in 2013. He did install a meter (at our insistence) which revealed the leak but other than sending us a notice blaming our "private" pipe in the hope that we would do something about it another year and 5,000,000 ltrs of wasted water went by before we did do something about it. It took us about 3 days to find out the main cause - 90,000 ltr per week wastage due to a leak on Goon Farm that had been going on for years. At this point (February 2015) SWW should have taken over the investigation but Alan Brand did not. It took us another 7 months to get the remaining 7,000 ltrs per week stopped by the simple expedient of installing a rainwater harvesting system to tide us by whilst we turned off the supply at Tailings End to see if anyone complained to SWW that their supply had stopped. Only one did. All the others modified their pipework, disconnected from our supply and connected to another. In order to do this (other than install a rainwater harvesting system) we had to deal with several visits from SWW leakage officers and show them around the area (connected troughs etc), several visits from your regulations team concerning a very minor violation regarding our rainwater harvesting tank (very minor compared to other violations in the area that our investigations revealed and which are still extant two years later), walking nearly two hundred miles reading meters and investigating pipework in the wider area, installing a totally unnecessary double check valve at Goonhillend and so on. It is difficult to say how many hours it has taken us to achieve this result but even this letter has taken about three weeks to write and all the others took many hundreds of hours. The installation of the rainwater harvesting system took about 100 hours and the installation of the pointless double check valve two days. The new pipe to the roof at Goonhillend to feed the central heating header tank was needed as the old pipe to the roof had to be disconnected because of your regulation teams insistence took three weeks as it necessitated cutting a 1 metre sized hole in the stone gable end of the cottage and feeding it under the bath (very awkward!) then to the central heating header tank. Half a day spent with Mr Bellward's father attending a meeting with my (and his son's) MP Sarah Harvey concerning our distrust of our water supply and the legality of central heating header tanks. 3 weeks setting up a website (www.goongumpas.com) which we think was the best way to advertised the fact that the supply was being monitored and the results published for all to see. At least a further 3 weeks in total uploading the readings on a daily basis. In all I have probably spent more than 1400 hours which is time I should have spent working on Winter Cottage to get it up to standard to market. We have recently (nearly) finished it and put it on the market but this could have been done six to nine months ago if it were not for all the time spent dealing with your problem. Mr Bellward and Mrs Layte also spent quite a bit of time investigating, reading meters etc. Mr Bellward's father has spent about eighteen months bringing him drinking and cooking water three times a week because of SWW's failure to certify all animal troughs in the area as compliant. How much time have SWW spent? Well dozens of letters and emails. Four or five inspections from your regulations team (once with two private plumbers in tow) inspecting a rainwater harvesting system that would not have been installed if it were not for your insistence that the leak was our problem and not yours. Three meetings with Mike Shannon and his colleague. Looking at www.goongumpas.com many times (100?) and also looking at the [video](#) of the "non" inspection several times. You have said that your 25 November 2016 letter response to my 10 May 2016 complaint took you three to four weeks to investigate and so on. How much has it cost SWW to pay all your salaries? I dread to think but at least you and the rest of SWW staff involved are paid whereas we are not. All of this is due to the fact that SWW installed meters without testing the supply and Allister Symonds and Alan Brand failed to spend a couple of hours installing a meter at Tailings End to try and find out why our pressure was low and dropped to zero for about an hour a day. I note that your letter states (regarding the £1,500 compensation offered (to one of us)) "*I believe this to be an appropriate and reasonable offer*". Once again I do not agree and I suspect that Mr Bellward and Mrs Layte do not agree that the £0 offered to them is reasonable either considering all the time and continuing inconvenience they have had to put up with! Remember Mr Bellward, like myself and Mrs Layte, had to put up with zero water more or less daily for years. Mr Bellward started recording the dates and times the pressure dropped to zero in 2012 (His full list can be viewed [HERE](#)). A list of dates and times between 22 July 2012 and 20 February 2013 was provided to Allister Symonds attached to the 4 March 2013 email. The time taken to compile this list alone I am sure you will agree is worth more than £0. It should have been helpful to SWW in demonstrating the scale of the problem but was dismissed as a private matter as SWW's responsibility ended at Tailings End but does it?

Some of the documents and photos I have attached are only pertinent to the rest of this letter but I have attached them anyway and I am sure you will be able to recognize their significance.

In short will SWW please –

1. Confirm that all animal troughs in the area comply with the regulations.
2. Confirm that your policy of installing meters far from your main without first checking the wholesomeness and integrity of the supply ceases
3. Confirm that you will inform all your customers of the dangers to their health from backflow from unprotected central heating header / expansion tanks.
4. Confirm that in future your employees take reports of low/ zero pressure in an area with nearby animal troughs very seriously because of the danger of backflow pollution to the supply and not just say "*it is a private pipe and not our responsibility*".
5. Prove that Tracy Symon's statement that the pipe after the Tailings End stop tap / meter enters Five Acres private land and does not continue down the lane towards Goon Farm.
6. Instruct your Regulations officers that water cannot defy gravity.
7. Tell Mr Mitchell not to write letters such as his 22 September 2015 one (attached) unless he is sure his information is valid. For the record I did not deny your Regulations Officers access to the loft at Goonhillend, there is / was no new pipework in the roof space so as to restrict access to the rainwater distribution tank in any way whatsoever, the roof is not dangerous except in so much as crawling boards are required to lay across the ceiling joists as a prominent notice next to the loft hatch states (see attached photo). Richard Harrison did not bring his own crawling boards for the 17 September 2015 inspection despite knowing they were required from his earlier visits and as can be heard in the [video](#) I offered to lend him mine several times but he did not answer. There is / was no covered pipework in the roof. There is obviously the normal insulation above the ceiling joists and around the tanks.

If ONLY Allister Symonds and Alan Brand had spent a couple of hours installing a meter at Tailings End all those years ago

I am sure you are aware of the expression "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow" Tracy. I am sure you are also aware of the expression "in the benefit of hindsight" and thus I am sure SWW are aware that the two acorns here go by the names of Allister Symonds and Alan Brand.

My apologies this is such a long letter but actually it is only half of it. The other half will be published in January.

Merry Christmas and (hopefully) a leak free new year to you all at South West Water.

John Layte

Attached

25 November 2016 Letter from Tracy Symons (SWW)
22 October 2015 letter from Paul Mitchell (SWW)
10 December 2016 letter from Mr G Bellward to SWW
Service pipe responsibilities
Central heating tank backflow Government regulations
Goon Farm troughs 6 December 2016
Crawling board notice roof Goonhillend
Goon Farm Police inspection
Possible leak in lane
SWW visitor log goongumpas.com
Area pipes with no frost protection

— Area pipes with no frost protection.jpg







— Goon Farm troughs 6 December 2016.jpg



— Possible leak in lane.jpg



10 December 2016

Attachments:

10 December 2016 letter from Mr G Bellward.pdf	252 kB
22 October 2015 letter from Paul Mitchell.PDF	294 kB
25 November 2016 Letter from Tracy Symons.pdf	575 kB
Area pipes with no frost protection.jpg	126 kB
Central heating tank backflow Government regulations.pdf	81.5 kB
Crawling board notice roof Goonhillend.jpg	31.2 kB
Goon Farm Police inspection.jpg	83.8 kB
Goon Farm troughs 6 December 2016.jpg	65.6 kB
Possible leak in lane.jpg	49.4 kB
response to 25 November 2016 letter.pdf	698 kB
Service pipe responsibilities.pdf	66.5 kB
SWW visitor log goongumpas.com.pdf	166 kB