



BRAMLEY SPECIAL UPDATE no 3

Bramley Fuel Leak Remediation

Residents meeting with Asda 16th July

Report from Jeremy Hunt

Thank you to everyone who attended the Bramley fuel leak public meeting last night, the room was absolutely packed and because Chairman of Asda Stuart Rose and others were here, we were able to make real progress. Summary below but key for me we got Asda for the first time to openly offer compensation which is much needed right now for struggling businesses.

Firstly, an update on the clean-up. Asda's environmental consultants EPS described the location of the fuel plume south of the petrol station and outlined their plan to deal with respective sections of the High Street and immediate surrounds of the petrol station.

By the end of this week 50 boreholes to have been dug in the village centre in order to identify and monitor the amount of fuel latent in the ground and extract it.

Although to date up to 500,000 of litres of water have been treated by the on-site 'pump and treat' system, EPS could not confirm just how much petrol is in the ground or how much has been recovered (we know a minimum leak of 2,000 litres has previously been discussed).

It sounds like the programme of work is progressing at pace but, as Stuart Rose pointed out, if the team can be expediting this work every effort should be made to do so.

Colin Chiverton of the Environment Agency made clear the clean-up is anticipated to take a year at least as the fuel must be pulled slowly out from the ground to avoid further issues. Inhibiting factors including ongoing high groundwater and have not been helped by biblical rain we have seen this week!

Generally Bramley is seeing less evidence of fuel contamination, but the challenges will return as the groundwater rises once again in Autumn.

Openreach described some of the complexities they face including significant variability of levels of fuel vapour in their ducts, ensuring workers in their ducts are safe, and how they are unable to test connections because of concerns over explosivity risk. It's clear the Openreach issue is impacting many people including the vulnerable over a wide radius and alternative ways to deliver telecommunications do need to be explored.

Thames Water having completed the main (and most disruptive) piece of pipe replacement work will be returning to complete localised pipe replacement in areas where they are unable to fully flush their system. This includes 4 roads - Clockhouse Lane, Mill Lane, old Rectory Close and Park Drive; further detail to be shared very soon.

Overall there is a great deal of work ahead and so importantly I secured a commitment from Stuart Rose to return in September to update us on the following 4 key actions identified:

1. Commitment from the many key stakeholders to improve communications, increase community involvement and to have representation from local people on the respective recovery groups.
2. Stuart Rose took away an urgent action to discuss with Asda's Board (today) a system to agree how to support struggling local businesses via a quick compensation payment.
3. Openreach to help investigate how they can compress their work programme and look at alternative ways to restore the telecommunications network to those impacted.
4. We ran out of time to discuss fully at the meeting, but it's really important Bramley residents now receive fuller advice about risk of long term exposure at low levels to benzene and other hydrocarbons from the UKHSA / relevant organisations.

Finally a huge thank you to Bramley residents who have mobilised and were simply fantastic last night. Local people working together, all donating their time and expertise to ensure Bramley is well represented and concerns are addressed. This is the work of many people including Councillor Jane Austin, Helen Melia, Bramley Parish Council and Bramley Residents Action Group.

Best wishes

Bramley Parish Council
www.bramleyparish.co.uk

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