

Email to Ofwat 24 September 2025:

Urgent Complaint: Lack of Monitoring and Data Accuracy – Cranleigh Sewage Treatment Works (GU6 8NL)

I am writing in my capacity as a local Councillor to raise a formal complaint regarding the prolonged failure of the Event Duration Monitoring (EDM) equipment at Thames Water's Cranleigh Sewage Treatment Works, Elmbridge Road, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8NL, and the associated lack of transparency, monitoring, and accountability concerning sewage discharges into Cranleigh Waters.

The EDM monitor at this site was offline for approximately six months, during which time residents and local water rangers raised repeated concerns about ongoing sewage overflows and water pollution. After reporting via the Thames Water website, I then raised the issue directly with Thames Water by email on 21 July 2025, noting the lack of data availability and public concern regarding frequent and unmonitored discharges.

In response (Ref: 33553550), Thames Water initially stated that a 2.5-hour discharge was recorded on 1 August 2025, but subsequently corrected this, claiming the monitor had been giving false readings and was under repair. They also confirmed that the Environment Agency was being informed, though no evidence has been provided to confirm that meaningful action was taken to address the root causes or the prolonged outage.

I also contacted the Environment Agency, who replied on 12 August 2025 (Case: ENQ2025/23721). Their response confirmed that:

- While an EDM device is installed and was believed to be recording, Thames Water staff raised concerns about the accuracy of the data.
- A CCTV camera had recently been installed to verify the readings due to those concerns.
- The monitor only recently came back online, and the last recorded discharge was in March 2025.
- Critically, they confirmed that Ofwat is the regulator responsible for overseeing compliance with the real-time storm overflow publication duty introduced on 1 January 2025.

Furthermore, independent water testing by local rangers has found alarmingly high e-coli levels, as well as elevated nitrate and phosphate concentrations, well beyond safe thresholds. This reinforces the concern that either unmonitored discharges have occurred or there are ongoing failures to treat wastewater adequately.

Additionally, the phosphorus removal upgrade to reduce discharges to 0.4mg/l, due by December 2024, has not been delivered. Thames Water now forecasts completion in

2028, breaching their obligations under the Water Framework Directive and further delaying efforts to achieve 'Good' ecological status in Cranleigh Waters.

Given the extended period of EDM monitor failure, the conflicting information provided by Thames Water, and the ongoing water quality issues, I urge Ofwat to:

1. Investigate Thames Water's compliance with its statutory duty to provide accurate and accessible real-time EDM data.
2. Clarify whether the prolonged monitor outage and inaccurate reporting constitute a breach of regulatory requirements.
3. Confirm what enforcement actions, if any, Ofwat intends to take in relation to:
 - * The delay in delivering the phosphorus reduction scheme.
 - * The extended data outage and concerns about false reporting.

I would appreciate confirmation of the actions Ofwat is taking in response to this matter. The lack of oversight, transparency, and environmental protection around this treatment works is unacceptable, and residents are increasingly losing faith in the regulatory framework meant to safeguard our environment and communities.

Yours faithfully,

Cllr Liz Townsend BEM