



c/o Glendra, Brickyard Lane  
Reed, Royston, Herts  
SG8 8BE

Affinity Water  
Tamblin Way,  
Hatfield,  
Hertfordshire  
AL10 9EZ.

15 May 2021

Dear Sirs

### **Water pressure issues in Reed, North Hertfordshire**

I write as Chair of Reed Parish Council on behalf of Reed parishioners who have endured recurrent water pressure issues over an unacceptably long period of time. Affinity Water is responsible for the water supply to the village.

We have evidence of water pressure issues causing significant problems as long ago as 2015, and parishioners have reported problems periodically since; however, over the last year in particular the problems encountered have become more frequent to the extent of becoming intolerable. I need hardly remind you that inadequate supplies to pressurised water systems – commonplace in modern houses – can have the effect that even basic necessities, such as using showers and washing machines or filling toilet cisterns, become impossible. Although premises using pressurised systems have suffered the most severe effects, residents of all kinds of village houses have been inconvenienced by low pressure.

Consumers have made individual enquiries and complaints to Affinity and have been told that the problems had been caused by anything from power supply issues at the pumping station at Chipping, to burst pipes, or to sheer demand.

Our concern is that, rather than being an unavoidable occasional issue, the regularity with which these problems have been occurring suggests a systemic or structural defect.

Our evidence suggests that the problem has worsened during 2021. By way of example, residents of 1 The Kilns – part of a new-build development in the north of the village –

report episodes of low pressure on a monthly basis since they moved in during 2020, and a severe shortage of some 20 hours duration on 21st April this year. Likewise, problems were reported by the occupants of 12 The Kilns on 3rd and 12th of April as well as the severe problems of 21st April.

The issues are not confined to the new developments. Residents of Church Lane, Jackson's Lane, High Street, Nichols Yard and elsewhere have all encountered the issue from time to time.

Mr Robertson, the groundsman of Reed Cricket Club, reports particular difficulties with water for grounds maintenance throughout April 2021. He has also confirmed that this was unrelated to the Club's own equipment: when he checked he discovered low water pressure in his own house on Jackson's Lane, Reed, at the same times.

I stress these are just examples: we see frequent complaints of inadequate water pressure across the whole of the village on our village WhatsApp group. During 2021, incidents were reported on 7 January, 30 January, 3 February, 24 March, 3 April, 8 April, 12 April, and 21-22 April.

Parishioners have not been satisfied that Affinity Water has been treating these repeated issues with sufficient priority. They therefore brought the matter to the attention of their Parish, District and County Councillors at Reed's Annual Village meeting held on 5th May.

Some residents have suggested to us that water pressure issues have become worse following the occupation of sizeable new residential developments – including The Kilns – around the village. We would particularly welcome your comments on this point, since if the infrastructure is struggling to cope with such new developments it would have implications for the approach that should be taken by the planning authority when looking at future development in the village.

We are aware that some residents received discounts of £25 on their water bills last year because of pressure problems. Whilst that is naturally a welcome acknowledgement of the issues, it goes without saying that it would have been better if the problems had been avoided.

We should be grateful for:

- An acknowledgement of this complaint and confirmation that its seriousness has been understood
- An assurance, in terms we can feed back to Reed parishioners, that appropriate steps will be taken without delay to address the issues set out in this letter, so as to provide confidence that adequate water pressure to the village can be maintained
- An indication as to when we can expect the steps outlined above to be in place

- Your comments on the point raised above concerning whether the infrastructure can support new developments in Reed Village.

Yours faithfully,

**Ken Langley**

Chair, Reed Parish Council

cc/

District Councillor Gerald Morris

County Councillor Fiona Hill