



Office of Sarah Bentley
Chief Executive Officer
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12 July 2022

Independent Review

Good morning,

One year ago, London was hit with two extreme rainstorms in a fortnight which caused devastating flooding to many of our customers and I am so sorry for the impact this had on their homes and businesses.

We immediately commissioned an independent review to understand what happened and offer long-term solutions. The final report of this review has today been published.

With severe weather events set to become increasingly common, the recommendations in this report will play an integral part to help us improve our service, deliver for customers, protect the environment, and give back to the communities we serve.

There are many recommendations in the report for us and others, all of which we will consider in the coming weeks, but there are several which stand out for me immediately.

First, is the need for London to increase its flooding resilience in the face of climate change through a range of interventions including re-greening the capital, building more storage, and increasing property-level flood protection. Increasing sewer capacity in a tactical way is essential, although the report is clear that digging ever bigger and deeper tunnels will not prevent flooding during the most extreme weather.

Secondly, I am pleased to see the review highlight the need for a London-wide surface management plan. At Thames Water we firmly believe this is a critical step to improve flood management and we would strongly support the creation of a multi-agency group to lead this work.

We know this could take some time to establish, so in the short-term we are taking steps to boost protection for residents, including rolling out a £10 million sewer resilience programme, providing more than £3 million over two years for SuDS and co-funding community flood action plans. On top of this, in the coming weeks more than 250 homes will have increased resilience to sewer flooding due to work we are doing on our network.

As the report says, we will not be able to prevent every flood caused by extreme weather so alongside the need for greater flood protection it is clear we need to work better together when responding to major events and I am pleased some of this is already taking place. We know our response last summer was not good enough and we have already made big changes, which includes closer working with other agencies.

I want to thank Mike Woolgar, Lykke Leonardsen and Roger Falconer as well as everyone who has helped produce this independent review which I hope will be the spark for us all to really drive forward with making London more resilient to climate change.

This report provides a starting point and we look forward to working with you to help all our customers and your residents.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Bentley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Bentley
CEO, Thames Water