

# Incident Summary

Amlaird Milngavie Gorbals RSZ  
Burst Main  
19<sup>th</sup> August 2023

DWQR Inspector:  
Robert Brooks

Event No. 13702

## Event Category: Significant

Around 08:00 on 19 August 2023 Scottish Water were alerted to several 'no water' consumer contacts following a drop in pressure due to a network burst on a 6" cast iron main within the Townholm area of Kilmarnock. The burst main was located and isolated around 09:45 on 19 August 2023. The main was repaired and recharged by around 15:10 on 19 August 2023.

Scottish Water received 35 customer contacts for 'no water' or pressure issues and a total of 166 water quality complaints (164 for discoloured water and 2 for milky/cloudy water) from the affected areas between 19 August 2023 and 22 August 2023. Most of these contacts were received between 08:45 and 15:00 on 19 August 2023. Eight reactive samples were taken on 19 August 2023 and five on 20 August 2023. One sample failed for iron (287µgFe/l). A resample was taken, which was satisfactory for iron, however one coliform bacterium was detected. A third sample was taken which was satisfactory for all parameters.

It is clear from Scottish Water's event outcome report and timings of customer contacts reporting discoloured water, that this incident was caused by the remobilisation of sediment and biofilm build-up within the trunk main feeding downstream DMAs following a 35l/s burst and the recharge of the network following a mains repair leading to transient discolouration.

Scottish Water's Customer Engagement Centre (CEC) alerted a Standby NSO to a rise in 'no water' consumer contacts at 08:00 on 19 August 2023. By this point, 21 contacts had been received from the Fenwick South DMA, with the first at 06:45. At this point it was not clear what the cause of the complaints was until at 09:10, the CEC received a report of a



burst within the Townholm area of Kilmarnock. The Standby NSO promptly located and isolated the burst at 09:45 which restored supplies to consumers in the Fenwick area except for five industrial properties. A burst squad was arranged to attend and repair the main.

An influx of discoloured water complaints was received by Scottish Water from 08:45 on 19 August 2023, with the bulk of contacts received that morning and quickly dropping off following the repair. This suggests that the burst itself remobilised sediment and biofilm build-up within the trunk main and the downstream network, thereby exacerbating the impact of this burst on the quality of consumer supply. The influx of discolouration contacts and the 'no water' contacts received by the CEC was escalated to Scottish Water's Public Health Team (PHT) at 10:20 on 19 August 2023, by which point 23 discoloured water contacts had been received. An incident team was not set up for this event and bottled water delivery was not arranged, however, it was requested by the standby team leader; given that supplies were promptly restored to consumers following isolation of the burst, appropriate communications were placed on Scottish Water's website and social media platforms, and bottled water provision dealt with reactively based on requests received by the CEC, I am satisfied that these were not significant issues.

Once the PHT was informed, the sampling team arranged for 8 reactive samples to be taken across the affected DMAs on the 19 August 2023, followed by a further five samples on the 20 August 2023. These samples appear to adequately cover the affected area.

Having completed a cut-out and piece-in repair at 15:10, Scottish Water's burst squad recharged the main and flushed from a nearby fire hydrant for approximately 45 minutes until the water was running clear before returning the main to service. Although it is disappointing that a post-repair sample was not arranged as per the post mains repair process, the PHT had already arranged sampling to be taken that day and the first and closest sample to be taken was from a nearby domestic property at 17:06; this sample failed for iron (287ugFe/l) and, in a resample, coliform bacteria. A third sample was taken which was satisfactory for all parameters. All other samples taken in the network were satisfactory.

I welcome Scottish Water's identified need to carry out further rehabilitation work to replace cast iron mains in Townholm Kilmarnock alongwith Enhanced Cleanliness Index sampling and flushing within the Bonnyton and Campbeltown DMAs.



The event has been categorised as significant. Scottish Water has identified zero actions which DWQR accepts are appropriate and will monitor to ensure they are completed prior to signing off the incident. DWQR made one additional recommendation.

