

**From:** [REDACTED]

**To:** Ofwat P and O

**Subject:** Comments on Southern Water's performance

**Date:** 20 October 2021 22:07

Dear OFWAT,

I am one many local people that formed the Hastings and St Leonards Clean Water Action Group to protest against malpractice of Southern Water.

I am also writing this letter of complaint against Southern Water as follows:

- The beach near where I swim in St Leonards suffered pollution from burst sewage pipes in July 2021. Swimmers and other water sports, tourists, marine life, local fishing industry and use of the beach huts were all impacted.
- In 2020 alone, Southern Water was responsible for over 20,000 separate storm overflow events, with a duration of over 201,000 hours in total.  
<https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/21e15f12-0df8-4bfc-b763-45226c16a8ac>
- Southern Water paid around £900 million to shareholders between 2009–2019.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jul/01/england-privatised-water-firms-dividends-shareholders> and  
<https://www.sas.org.uk/news/southern-water-slammed-with-record-fine-for-sewage-pollution/>
- Southern Water is permitted by the Environment Agency to spill wastewater only under extreme circumstances, and yet they have repeatedly released untreated sewage into the sea at St Leonards and Hastings, where I live and swim, over the last three months, apparently every time it rains. According to their own website, the number of spills in East Sussex increased every year between 2017–2020, more than trebling to over 5,000 spills annually.  
(<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-performance/flow-and-spill-reporting>)  
This activity continues seemingly without check.
- Southern Water CEO's £550,900 bonus in this context is offensive. I object to subsidising profit for shareholders and directors. Dividends should not be paid out while crumbling infrastructure goes neglected and there is ongoing environmental devastation, health risks and loss of business for our community.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]