

## QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC



Please return your completed question form to Democratic Support, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ or email: [democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk)

Question to be submitted no later than 5 clear working days before the meeting.

<b>Question submitted by:</b> Nick Crawley
<b>To the Cabinet Member or Chair for:</b> Councillor John Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure)
<b>To be asked at the next Council meeting:</b> Council
<b>Date:</b> 15 September 2025
<b>Question (to be no longer than 50 words):</b> With frequent blocked drains causing flooding and disruption — most now choked with weeds — what immediate and long-term steps will you take to improve maintenance, hold contractors accountable, and invest in drainage infrastructure to prevent repeated failures as Plymouth faces increasingly extreme weather?
<b>Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question?</b> No
<b>Response:</b> ( for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)  We need to start by explaining that the drainage and sewerage system in Plymouth, a huge amount of which being South West Water's (SWW) responsibility, was not designed to be able to cope with the volume of water we have seen in recent heavy rain events. For example, the rainfall on 29 August was very significant, we saw more than 50 per cent expected rainfall in just 60 minutes and 70 per cent in four hours. It was the second wettest August day on record in Plymouth.  Across the city the Council are leading on a series of schemes to help reduce flooding incidents through more effective surface water management, these include:  <b>Trefusis Park Flood Relief Scheme-</b> This SUDS project, designed to store surface water during heavy rainfall, is currently on site and on programme to complete in April 2026. This project together with SWW's upstream improvements will reduce the risk of flooding in Lipson Vale.  <b>Weston Mill Village Property Flood Protection project-</b> this project will provide flood doors and flood gates to 4 properties in Weston Mill village- property surveys have been completed and the protective works are on track to be installed in October this year.  <b>St. Levan Flood relief project-</b> Ward Cllrs have been briefed on outline design options, including rain garden kerb buildouts, for this SUDS project, designed to store water during heavy rainfall and a Public Consultation is programmed to take place in Oct/Nov this year, ahead of a Business case being submitted to the EA for project funding in 26/27.

**Stonehouse Tidal Flood Study-** this study aims to assess the increased risk from tidal flooding and climate change impacts and will complete this November, providing evidence for future works and funding.

**Arnolds Point Tidal Flood Alleviation scheme Phase 2-** this project to provide a new tidal flood defence wall along the Embankment is currently preparing to submit to Planning , with construction programmed to start in Spring 26.

Additionally, the Council carry out regular inspections at vulnerable locations (pre-storm events) to ensure drainage is cleared. We also carry out extensive road sweeping in leaf-fall areas to manage the amount of leaves on the roads and footways. Weeds are managed through a twice annual treatment by a third party contractor.

A yearly programme of works are delivered to reduce flood risks in targeted areas. This includes gully upgrades, culvert clearance, soak aways, storage crates (16 schemes delivered in 2025/26). Regular CCTV surveys are carried out to ensure damage to existing water drainage systems by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties are identified for corrective action(s)