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Telephone: 01925 237000

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Our ref: EIR-990
Date: September 2026
Email: EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your request for environmental information. We appreciate your interest, and we want to let you know that your request has been carefully considered in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).

Your request, and our response to your specific questions, are outlined below:

On 21 August 2026 your Wastewater Developer Services team confirmed that our enquiry about the vesting status of the 1902 sewer at Denshaw had been logged and passed to your engineering team, with a five-working-day service standard. More than two weeks have now passed without a substantive reply. We are chasing that response, and — because our investigations have moved on considerably — expanding the request. Since United Utilities is a public authority for the purposes of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, and everything below is environmental information (the state of water, land and underground installations), please treat this letter as a formal EIR request, answerable within 20 working days.

By way of context: we hold an official copy of the Deed of Grant dated 10 September 1902 by which Edmund Butterworth & Sons Ltd granted the Saddleworth Urban District Council a perpetual easement to lay, use, inspect, maintain, cleanse, repair and replace a sewer of 641 yards with 11 manholes through the Denshaw Vale valley. We are researching the history and present status of the drainage assets in this corridor, in which the culverted watercourse (Lumb Hole Brook) is substantially obstructed.

Please provide the following recorded information and confirmations:

1. VESTING OF THE 1902 SCHEME. Confirm whether the 1902 Junction Sewerage Scheme sewer (or any part of it) vested in the North West Water Authority on 1 April 1974 and is now vested in United Utilities; and provide the asset records for the live 225 mm combined sewers your published map shows in this corridor (which on alignment and material — 225 VC on your 2007 records — appear to be the 1902 main in service).

We are unable to officially confirm whether the sewer in question is the same sewer referred to in the 1902 deed. However, we can confirm that it is an adopted public sewer maintained by United Utilities.

Our asset records indicate a recorded ‘laying date’ between 1990 and 1999. However, this is most likely the timeframe which the asset information was transferred onto our systems, rather

than the original construction date.

As the sewer serves more than one property, it would have transferred into public ownership as part of the Government's mandatory private sewer transfer programme.

The Water Industry (Schemes for Adoption of Private Sewers) Regulations 2011

2. THE 939 mm SURFACE-WATER SEWER. Your public sewer map (extract supplied by Property Searches, 19 August 2026) shows a 939 mm public SURFACE WATER sewer along Buckley Drive. This asset does not appear on the CON29DW search you issued for 4 Buckley Drive in November 2007 (ref 399139), and your map annotates pipework in this corridor 'PV 1997'. Please state: what this 939 mm asset is; when and by what mechanism it became a public sewer (in particular whether it transferred on 1 October 2011 under the private sewer transfer regulations); and who maintains it. If your position is that it is not a sewer but a culverted watercourse, please say so in terms and explain why it appears on your map of public sewers — you will appreciate that it must be one or the other.

A 939 mm sewer is generally an indicative placeholder value that is used on our systems for an asset that is known to exist, but to date, has never been actively surveyed. We would only be able to fully confirm details on this asset once a survey has been completed, but unfortunately, we have no current need or requirement to undertake that activity. Should that position change in the future, we would be happy to provide you with the details. Therefore, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR, we cannot provide this information at this time, as it is not held.

2a. The large surface-water sewer shown along Buckley Drive appears on the new plan to route around the estate and discharge to the watercourse at a point downstream of the culvert outfall. Can you confirm if the discharge point is correctly shown?

We can confirm that the manhole layout shown on the map is consistent with what is known locally by our Operational team, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the discharge point exists as mapped.

However, we are unable to confirm this definitively, as when we overlay our sewer records against current aerial imagery, that location looks to now be situated beneath a decked structure, meaning verification through site inspection would prove very difficult (see image below). Likewise, all asset records and mapping have standard limitations and degrees of tolerance in terms of position, alignment, depth, and condition



Figure 1 – sewer overlay of aerial imagery

3. The two 225 mm RUNS AND THE CULVERT. Provide plan positions and invert levels for the two 225 mm combined runs either side of the culverted watercourse (the western run past Denshaw Vale Cottages and the eastern run beside Buckley Drive), including at their northern convergence near the culvert inlet — the location of the 2018 road collapse. Confirm whether either run crosses the line of the culverted watercourse, above or below it, and provide any condition data (CCTV or inspection records) you hold for those reaches.

We understand that you have already been in direct contact with our property searches team and a detailed plan was provided to you on 9 September 2026. This plan contained extract maps and details of both the public sewers and water mains.

We do not hold any inspection records or CCTV footage relating to the two 225 mm 'runs' and culvert. As such, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR, we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

3A. The plan shows Lumb Hole Brook ending at the culvert inlet, with the culverted length not depicted. I take this to mean the culvert is not a UU asset. Is that correct?

Culverted watercourses are not public sewers, and therefore not owned/operated by United Utilities. Responsibility for a culverted watercourse typically lies with the landowner where the culvert passes, this is commonly known as riparian ownership.

4. THE ABANDONED MAIN. Your map records an abandoned main sewer adjacent to 6 Buckley Drive. Please provide the abandonment record: what the asset was, when and why it was abandoned, and what replaced it.

The pipe in question is a private water supply pipe, as opposed to a sewer. Our records show a black Alkathene pipe that was abandoned at this location in August 2017 and replaced by a Medium density Polyethylene pipe, following a slightly different route across the property. As this asset is not owned or operated by United Utilities we are unable to comment on the rationale for this abandonment and replacement.

5. 1996–97 ESTATE AGREEMENTS. Provide any Section 104 adoption agreement(s) (Water Industry Act 1991) relating to the sewers serving the Buckley Drive / Denshaw Vale development constructed by Old Mill Developments Ltd (company no. 03074110) in 1996–97, and any Section 185 diversion records affecting the 1902 main.

As noted on the map you have previously been provided by Property Searches, the sewers around Buckley drive are primarily 'combined'. This indicates a construction period that pre-dates privatisation, and as such no section 104 adoption agreements/drawings are held on record. Therefore, under Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR, we cannot provide this information, as it is not held.

We hope that this response answers your request. However, if you're not satisfied with how we've handled it, you can request an internal review. To do this, please write to us at Environmental Information Office, Haweswater House, Lingley Mere, Warrington, WA5 3LP or email us at EIRRequests@uuplc.co.uk, addressing your request to [redacted], and explaining why you're unhappy with our response. We'll be very happy to review your request and ensure we've done everything we can to assist you.

Any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this response, and we will reply within 40 working days from receipt of the request for internal review.

Many thanks

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We'd love to hear your feedback on how we handled your request! If you have a moment, please complete our short survey here – your input helps us improve our service.