

Experts baffled by the problem

South East Water's distribution manager Mark Rice said: "Unfortunately this leak has proved difficult to pinpoint, so it is taking longer to repair than we would like."

"Our experts have been using specialist equipment to find the section of the underground pipe which is damaged because we need to be very precise about the location before we start digging."

"The detection work has also proved difficult because the A28 is a very busy and fast road, so our team has had to work outside peak times."

"We now believe we know exactly where the problem is and are working with the council to determine the most suitable time to carry out the work and the traffic management needed to make sure the public and our workforce are kept safe while the repair is carried out."

He said that the section of pipe had developed a variety of problems in the past few months and had carried out repairs where a weakness had been found but that had failed to solve this issue.

Mr Rice thanked people for their patience and said: "It's not possible to say how much treated water has been lost as a result of the problem as this would depend on the pressure and flow in the pipe and this varies according to demand."

"However, it is frustrating to see our precious resource being lost, so we are taking urgent action to find a permanent solution as quickly as possible."

'Gallons of water wasted' in mystery leak in road

by Rachael Woods

rwoods@thekmgroup.co.uk

@rachaelwoodskm

Water has been springing from a leak in a mains pipe in St Michael's since March, with no sign of the problem being fixed.

Engineers from South East Water have been scratching their heads over the source of the leak and despite patching the pipe up it has continued to spout water.

Tenterden town councillor Sue Ferguson has contacted the water firm repeatedly about the steady trickle coming from the pipe, as she fears that gallons of clean water are going down the drain. She says enough is enough and that urgent action needs to be taken to stem the flow.

The leak is on the busy A28 near St Michael's Primary School and contractors dug up the road during the first two weeks of June, before patching it up ahead of Tenterden's first 5k and 10k race on June 11.

Cllr Ferguson said: "South East Water dug up the road and filled it in again with the water still leaking. The problem has been going on for months and so much water must have been lost over time. It could also be undermining and weakening the surface of the road."

Cllr Ken Mulholland who lives in St Michael's said he was concerned about the leak. He said: "Cllr Ferguson reported this leak months ago and everyone thought it had been fixed but it hasn't. As an environmentalist I am concerned about the water loss. Water is such a scarce



Councillors Ken Mulholland and Sue Ferguson outside St Michael's Primary School

resource and there have probably been many, many gallons of water wasted here."

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