

Our ref: 768356

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Highways England  
Bridge House  
Walnut Tree Close  
Guildford  
GU1 4LZ

[www.highwaysengland.co.uk](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk)

7 February 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information about pipework attached to the M20 Great Stour River Bridge underpass, dated 10 January.

I am dealing with your request under the terms of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. This is because the information requested concerns measures and activities affecting or likely to affect elements of the environment or affect factors such as noise, pollution discharges and other releases into the environment.

Please see below your questions and our answers:

**1. Who is responsible for the pipework structure? Please advise me of their contact details**

The pipework in question belonged to a third party who installed it without our knowledge, therefore we do not hold their contact details and unable to provide you this information.

**2. This structure fell from its fixing some months ago (believed to be around August 2018).**

We have no record of the pipework falling from this structure in August 2018.

**3. Was the company responsible for the pipework advised of the collapse in August 2018?**

I am unable to answer this question for the reasons stated in questions 1 and 2.

**4. What was the date that the company responsible for the pipework structure was advised of the collapse?**

I am unable to answer this question for the reason stated in question 1.

**5. Did the company responsible for the pipework respond to the collapse in August 2018?**

I am unable to answer this question for the reasons stated in questions 1 and 2.

**6. Did the company responsible for the pipework undertake the repair?**

As we do not know who is responsible for the pipework and we have no record of a collapse in August 2018, I am unable to comment.

I can confirm that in December 2018 when our Service Provider, Aone+ were alerted to a pipework collapse at this location by Ashford Borough Council, they visited the site and made it safe. They later removed the pipework on 4 January, after it was assessed by the electrical team.

**7. Was this collapse reported to by Highways England at that time?**

In August 2018 we were not aware of collapsed pipework at this location. In December 2018, Ashford Borough Council reported collapse pipework at this location, to us.

**8. Did Highways England respond to the collapse (August 2018)?**

In August 2018 we did not respond to a report of collapsed pipework as we were not aware of it.

**9. Did Highways England investigate if the pipework was redundant in August 2018?**

We did not investigate if the pipework was redundant in August 2018 for the reason stated in our response to question 2.

**10. Did Highways England consider removing the pipework structure in August 2018?**

We did not consider removing the pipework structure in August 2018 for the reason stated in our response to question 2.

**11. Did Highways England undertake the repair to re-secure the pipework?**

In August 2018 we were not aware of an issue and a repair to re-secure the pipework was not required. However, in December 2018 we realised the strap

holding the pipe in place, had been cut. Our Service Provider, Aone+ made the pipework safe and removed it on 4 January 2019 after the electrical team had assessed the pipework.

**12. Was an investigation into the August 2018 collapse undertaken by Highways Agency and if so was a report produced?**

We did not undertake an investigation into the August 2018 collapse for the reason stated in question 2.

**13. As part of the investigation were all the risks to prevent another collapse identified and considered?**

We did not undertake an investigation for the pipework collapse in August 2018 as we were not aware of this. However, since the reported pipework collapse in December 2018, it was removed to prevent another collapse.

**14. What date was the last statutory bridge inspection carried out?**

A General Inspection (GI) was carried out in September 2018. This is a visual inspection which takes place every 2 years and is carried out on foot.

**15. Was this inspection undertaken on time with the schedule?**

The General Inspection was undertaken within the timeframe of the contract, including the 6-month tolerance. The previous inspection took place in September 2016 and latest in September 2018.

**16. If the pipework structure is not the responsibility of the Highways England, why did it investigate if it was a 'live' service or not?**

As we were unaware of who was responsible for the pipework and it was a safety issue, Our Service Provider, Aone+ attended and referred to their electrical team to ensure the area was safe for the general public.

**17. If the pipework structure is not the responsibility of the Highways Agency, why did it undertake to remove it?**

The pipework was removed for the same reason as stated above, the safety of the general public and we were unaware as to who was responsible for it. The pipework was not part of the bridge structure and did not contain a live cable. This allowed us to remove it safely.

**18. What are the Highways England procedures for managing third parties attaching items to their bridge structures?**

A formal submission must be made, and it must receive approval from the Technical Approval Authority due to the risks of attachment and detachment. In this case the pipework was installed without us knowing.

**19. What are the Highways England procedures for managing attached equipment/structures that become redundant?**

There are no formal procedures for managing attached equipment/structures that become redundant. This is the responsibility of the third party to maintain and remove when redundant.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review within 2 months of the date of this response for Freedom of Information requests and within 40 days for Environmental Information Regulations requests. Our internal review process is available at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk). You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 768356 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

Team Executive - OD SE Business Management Team  
[OPSSECorrespondenceTeam@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:OPSSECorrespondenceTeam@highwaysengland.co.uk)