

CHOLDERTON AND DISTRICT WATER COMPANY

When H C Stephens purchased the Estate in the 1880s he acquired the two villages, Cholderton and Shipton Bellinger. The latter had a rudimentary mains water system in place with water being moved by a wind pump from a well on the outskirts of the village to a small reservoir on a nearby hill. At that time Cholderton and its outlying houses relied entirely on domestic wells with hand pumps.

Stephens, who had a particular interest in the supply of safe drinking water, was determined to improve the system and in 1904 he successfully steered an Act through parliament which set up the company. The Act gave it powers to lay mains and construct reservoirs, and the monopoly rights to supply and sell water in the parishes of Cholderton and Bulford in Wiltshire and Shipton Bellinger, Thruxton, Amport and Quarley in Hampshire.

In order to provide employment in Cholderton a soft water plant was constructed to treat the very highly calcified water and supply the Estate laundry via a bespoke reservoir and water main. Although this operation no longer exists the open reservoir is still there and is a haven for a wide variety of aquatic life.

The company was incorporated as a private limited company in 1936 and has retained this status throughout all the major reorganisations of the water industry. Today the company is the smallest of all the statutory water undertakings supplying water over an area of 22 km² to around 2,000 people.

To learn more about the company click on the link to the website.