

**Notes of the Operational Flood Working Group North Virtual meeting held on
17th March 2022**

Nic Puntis	Portfolio holder for flooding and chair
Anthony Clements	Cricklade
James Whittleton	Corsham
Paul Leonarts	Keevil
Tom Mason	CLA
Steve Malpass	Environment Agency
Howard Geoff	Dauntsey
Mike Roberts	Bradford on Avon
Barbara Johnson	Southwick
Cllr Graham Hill	Trowbridge
Mark Howells	Network Rail
Matt Perrot	Wiltshire Council
Paul Leonarts	Keevil
Chris Dole	Lacock
Rebecca Chivers	Wiltshire Council
Nicola Arthurs	Cricklade
Richard Williams	Wiltshire Council
Danny Everett	Wiltshire Council
Charlotte Fry	Wessex Water
Celia Beckett	Hilperton
Kevin Law	Purton
Renate Malton	Wiltshire Council

Statutory undertakers update

- Network Rail – Quiet at the moment, statutory inspections and maintenance currently being undertaken, looking at trees and structures.
- Environment Agency – PFR (Property flood resilience) continues across the Wessex Area which includes some communities in Wiltshire. Hoping to add Malmesbury into the scheme.
- Wiltshire Council – still dealing with the fallout from the storm damage, some 900 calls out to trees and reports coming in particularly around trees in or across rivers. EA dealing with this.
- On site finished off investigative work following the October storms and the section 19 investigations are still ongoing, although there have been difficulties in establishing landownership in some areas.
- Wessex Water - Nothing significant to report, ground water levels dropping. Reminder to report any sewer issues directly to them.

Town & Parish update

Bradford on Avon

- Test holes have been dug and a temporary connection made into the Wessex Wate pipes until the scheme is underway.
- Steve is trying to find resources for the Bradford on Avon flood protection scheme, need a project manager to open it up and review. Currently EA consultants at capacity and there are no internal staff available, consultancy's pay more.

Dauntsey

- M4 culvert overpass technical review currently with the EA. The motorway ditches need cleaning. Main culvert is being maintained.
- National Highways appear to think this will solve the flooding, would like someone to come and have a look, everytime a difficult question is asked there are issues. Advised to put their questions to Chris.
- Thatched cottages need to take riparian responsibility for their ditches, still denying any responsibility for them. Ditch letters being sent.

Minety

- EA has nearly signed off the paperwork to enable Atkins to continue the rest of the modelling. Should start beginning of new financial year.

Potterne

- Examples of flood and emergency plans have been sent to the parish. Danny still hasn't received the AO plans.

Southwick

- Looking for a response from Chris. Wessex Water will start to line the sewers at the end of the month at possible areas of infiltration.
- Concerns re a planning application. The EA has an issue with the modelling which is being looked at through due process.

Cricklade

- Concerns raised about a steel cover being fitted to drain, the area is in a conservation area, need to go to planning to report.
- Erosion of causeway edge is causing concerns. The River Churn can get quite deep at that point and the footings for the fence are just hanging and they have lost around 300mil of footpath, concern has been raised around people falling in. Danny to liaise with Highways and Richard will take a look. Something needs to be done even if it just putting a fence up.
- The gully outside the council offices have been replaced, but is rattling again, suspect it was not put in properly or not up to the job, this is also an issue outside the Red Lion Pub. Need to report this via the Wiltshire App.

Purton

- Good meeting with Richard who was able to clearly explain the landowner responsibilities. Speaking to Martin re deploying the vector at Manor Hill. The issue being the road is lower than the fields and there are no ditches.

Hilperton & Staverton

- Continuing looking at plans for the 500 to 2,000 properties proposed. Looked at the site consultation but would like some assistance with interpreting them.
- Has written to Georgina Clampett Dix re the inappropriateness of building in this area.
- Working on a flood plan, concerned about level of ditches which are completely full, with technical reports for April and May.
- Hilperton Marsh flooded historically 3 x in 2014, 4 houses were internally flooded along with sewage. Concerns this development could impact on Bradford on Avon with run off
- Advised that planning applications can manage and improve drainage in an area, this is part of the process. Drainage & the EA cannot stop a developer from building so a very careful examination of the proposals needs to be made. The parish need to collate evidence demonstrating the areas vulnerability to flooding and residents need to object. Any historical evidence of flooding is also helpful, pictures, anecdotal evidence should all be collated, this can also be an appendix to the flood plan the parishes are producing. If we have a history of flood risk in that area, we can object as it will put new properties at risk.
- Any new development will have to discharge water which offers an opportunity for improving the area. The more input the community can give towards supporting the evidence the better, you must prove your concerns to the planning officer.
- Re the technical reports may suggest it is unsuitable for infiltration suds, if they are already saying the ground is saturated the developers much come up with a way of mitigating this, so you should continue to collect evidence.

Kington St Michael

- Working on their emergency plan.

Trowbridge

- Danny has been contacted by the football club.
- H28486 inspection – Graham to write to Renate re any queries or questions.

Melksham Without

- Meeting next Monday re Bowerhill trash screen, awaiting update from the EA re Shurnhold. Lot going on. Charlotte had no updates re the first-time sewage scheme for Beanacre and will share any information when she receives it.
- Planning issues around Dunch Lane

- The Melksham Bypass is causing debate as one proposal has it coming out by Beanacre and where they are proposing to put a new bridge is where the worst flooding occurs. Any proposal would be looked at and modelled by the EA to ensure no harm is done, but it is still early in the stages. Chris asked to put something together to enable Charlotte and Danny to look at.

Lacock

- Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan has raised concerns around the numbers of houses they are looking to build and how this might impact on the village. Bewley Lane always floods, and it only has a small drain. The parish council should keep in communications with local landowners who are in most cases willing to assist in keeping their ditches and watercourses clear.
- The parish wish to know if the sewage beds at Reybridge are monitored for the amount of flow into the river, opposite Lacock Abby. It was originally built for 20 houses and there are now 70 connected. The ground is saturated. Wessex Water should be monitoring it and feeding back to the EA. Wiltshire Council would not be involved unless is reported via Environmental Health. Always seeing WW vans there. The beds discharge round the corner from where the children swim, requesting this is looked at.
- Question about farming subsidies and flood schemes as there is currently no incentive for landowners to clear their ditches and also for allowing their land to flood.

A.O.B

- Ditch letters – reminder to parishes the ditch letters are there to help you. By using the ditch letters and being more proactive town/parish councils are assisting the drainage team as this then gives us written evidence of conversation and letters that neighbourly conversations have not worked. It allows us to prosecute more successfully because they have already been warned. It is not a waste of a stamp.
- Following a query which suggested that Wiltshire Council was responsible for town and parish volunteers/flood wardens – Renate has put a paper together, with advice from corporate insurance advising that neither Wiltshire Council nor the EA are responsible for flood wardens. They are recruited by the town or parish council and are therefore their responsibility. Advice is also included on what town and parish councils should consider in respect of their flood wardens or any volunteers recruited by them.
- Flood/Emergency Plans – reminder to ensure all the contact details are up to date, as well as your plan.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 26th May 10 am – in person or via Teams, link below Council Chambers Monkton Park Offices, Chippenham.

You let us know if you are planning to attend in person.

