

Operational Flood Working Group South Hybrid Meeting
held on 6th December 2023

Andrew Davis	Chair Cllr
Jonathon Hitchman	Great Bedwyn
James Hardy	Berwick St James
Den Parrett	Shrewton
Mike Holm	Environment Agency
Sven Hocking	Salisbury
Jill Adams	
Steve Malpass	Environment Agency
Graham Axtell	Wiltshire Council Highway Engineer
Robert Yuill	Amesbury
Emma Biggs	Wiltshire Council Drainage
Danny Everett	Wiltshire Council Drainage
Len Turner	Warminster
Denise Nott	Area Manager Local Highways
Charlotte Fry	Wessex Water
Bill Parks	Warminster
Steve Crossley	Wilton
Jim Oliver	Aldbourne
Nat Cole	Britford

Statutory updates

- Weather has been particularly wet and major incidents occurred in West Dorset/Somerset. On Monday 50 – 60 ml of rain fell within a very short period of time.
- Flood alerts have been issued for Tisbury – The Nadder but luckily there has been no property flooding reported in Wiltshire.

Wessex Water

- No major updates

Wiltshire Highways.

- Issues on A350 and liaising with the landowners. Several named storms arrived in short succession, with the ground already saturated the rain has nowhere to go with drains, ditches, and watercourses full. Vehicles are driving through flood water and causing issues with bow waves and getting stuck.
- Thanks for Wiltshire & Dorset F & R for updating the spreadsheet enabling better statistics which gives a better understanding of what is happening within Swindon & Wiltshire with regards to flooding.

Parish Updates

Shrewton

- Thanks to the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and Wiltshire Council last Thursday for the Groundwater presentation. The event was well attended by residents, around 50 people in all with stands and lots of information. The event overran by at least an hour.
- The river is currently running, however no properties have flooded, if the river level is due to high groundwater the PC are happy to work with landowners and the EA to help resolve localised problems.

Wilton

- Waiting for Milestone to undertake some jetting and CCTV in Churchill Court re the non-return valves as they don't want a repeat of previous flooding.
- Community Engagement session arranged for January 2024
- Flood barriers were deployed at Crow Lane by the flood resilience group.
- Accumulation of silt in ditches and culverts is causing concerns.
- Thanks to the PEAS scheme they are in good order in the event flooding occurs.

Amesbury

- Sewer works were undertaken in the town centre by Wessex Water.
- No reports of any flooding at the Town Council meeting held last night.
- The Rivers Trust is looking at undertaking Restoration work at Lords Wall, the EA and Wiltshire Council will also be involved. Unfortunately, there have been delays in the planning.
- At one stage there was an additional flood group in the town, but they have gone quiet. Robert asked to raise the issue of a flood plan at the amenities meeting.
- Work needs to take place on the A303 which heightens the need for the community to have a strong robust plan.
- Robert asked why the study of surface water flooding was being done, as nobody has knowledge of this ever flooding. Danny advised that given the right circumstances it could flood, which is why the work is being undertaken.

Warminster

- Looking to arrange a meeting in early February of the flood group to pick out outstanding issues.
- Michael advised the funding bid will go to the next Regional Flood Defence meeting as they have missed the recent one.
- Town needs to recruit more flood wardens and a press release is going out soon.
- The flood storage areas on Groveland's / Fore Street is working well. Excavations on the western side undertaken in early August show the field is holding water and connecting into the channel which flows into the site.

- A deal needs to be made with the developer re excavating the storage area and the installation of a sewer. Len to discuss this with Danny. Discussion on putting a hydro-break where the sluice used to be. The developers have been asked to renew their plan as the previous one was of poor quality. To be discussed at the next Warminster flood group meeting.

Salisbury

- Have been in touch with all the flood wardens and gone through the plan and asked them to check on their areas and properties at risk. Advised owners of properties a risk to invest in sandbags/property protection.
- The city has a contract with Serve-On, who will set up a control room in the Guildhall.
- Concerns regarding a property with a kitchen below river level and unable to contact the owners. Aware one property has installed a pump and not sure if the EA are aware of these.
- River levels up and higher than normal at Churchill Gardens. There have been a lot of developments on greenfield sites and concerns raised about them causing flooding and asking if more accurate weather predictions be made.
- Mike advised the Met Office can accurately predict up to 10 days, but beyond that it diminishes.
- Conversations continue regularly with The Close and they are up to scratch with their flood plans. A couple of properties close to the river are concerned about flooding. It is down to the owners to protect their own property not the council.
- Michael advised he has responded to the local plan with concerns and updated the flood risk. Highlighting the groundwater vulnerability and flood risk concerns.
- Danny advised that he is asking for the SFRA to be updated and advising town and parish councils to keep records of flooding within their community. Developers are asked to undertake ground investigations and the site at Harnham A3039 have issues. Concerned that a full investigation of ground conditions was carried out. We can comment on specifications that we have requested. Groundwater is a moveable feature this is why we ask residents/town and parish councils to collate evidence of groundwater flooding.
- Robert advised a site in Amesbury was refused on the grounds of flooding, went to appeal, were over-ruled and unable to use likelihood as a defence.

Aldbourne

- Groundwater levels are currently 1.5 metres off the 2014 levels and everyone keeping a close eye on it. To date no reports of flooding to property.
- The Bourne rose about 3 weeks ago, and with the silt clearance completed everything is flowing well.
- Hopefully Martin Cook arranging clearance of the problem gullies which helps keep the surface water running into the Bourne and off the streets.

- Collated lots of evidence on rainfall and looking to correlate this with levels of groundwater but unable to do so currently. Advised talking to Guy Parker.

Great Bedwyn

- Schemes put in by Danny appear to be working. Around 50ml fell during the September storm causing flooding to property with only 1 experiencing internal flooding.
- The water level in the River Dun rose and began to affect the railway and ponding occurred by the station.
- Jonathon currently working with the parish to take ownership of the plan which will be up to date. The village “handyman” is tasked with monitoring vulnerable gullies and grips and will go out if a weather alert is received.
- Currently being very proactive with surface water issues and working with local landowners and Kennet catchment partnership on natural flood management scheme.
- Frog Lane, Jonty will chase up the Canal Trust.
- Cricket Club – aspiration to turn part of the car park into a flood storage area to slow the flow. Kennet catchment partnership to undertake a feasibility study.
- Lots of properties need to be digging out their ditches, this was last done some 10 years ago. To improve drainage in Brook Street and slow it down.
- Concerned that as their community improves the flow and surface water drainage that water is not pushed further downstream and to ensure water levels in the Dun do not rise excessively. Encourage better use of the water meadows and challenges with the landowner to keep the ditches clear.
- Owner of property in The Knapp reporting sewage is backing up. Advised by Thames water to fit non return valves as there was no incapacity in the system. Danny advised to go back to Thames Water.
- Currently piloting rain garden scheme via Thames Water and putting it through soakaways.

Britford

- Flood plan finally completed, and sumps and pumps have been used twice this year to keep properties from flooding.
- Main carrier is just about coping with the volume of water.
- Applying for funding to undertake a survey as a couple of bridges need reinstating.
- Obstruction in the Navigation is causing higher water levels. Written to the owners but no action taken. 2nd letter from the parish going out soon.
- EA has cleared trees in the river, but the banks are so overgrown the middle of the river cannot be seen.
- Jim Wrigglesworth advised there is correlation between levels and abstraction Mike to discuss with Jim.

- Asked if drainage had received the local plan, advised we can only make recommendations, concerns re surface water and high ground water make it very difficult.
- Parish advised to submit their concerns via the planning process and to any applications made. The parish are concerned and worried about the next flood event. Danny advised we have a policy in place to try and prevent development in what drainage consider unsuitable locations. We also ask the developer to provide better information. If the developer appeals to the planning inspectorate and is successful, we can only do what the inspectorate advised.

Berwick St James

- Advised the parish steward has been very supportive and making a difference to the flood risk.

Drainage

- Around 50 plus properties flooded across northern parts of Wiltshire and we are contacting all the town and parish councils to collate information about what happened.
- We are sending out AO maps requesting they are annotated with details of what happened, to talk to resident. Reports instances of highway drainage on the MyWilts app. Talk to local landowners about blocked ditches and use ditch letters where appropriate. Any questions email the drainage team.
- Advised some residents are reluctant to report flooding, Danny advised if it is not reported then we cannot deal with it, and they will not get assistance. Grants are available to build back better.

A.O.B

PEAS

We do not have an unlimited supply of gel sacs and would suggest that town and parish councils who might wish to purchase additional supplies. Details of supplies can be found on the web.

Our supplier is: <https://aetflooddefence.com/>

Town and Parish councils, please advise your residents of these websites.

Useful email addresses regarding flood protection, advice & information

Property Flood Resilience <https://floodmary.com/>

National flood forum <https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/>

National flood forum blue pages, business involved in property protection
<https://bluepages.org.uk/>

Property Care <https://www.property-care.org/homeowners>

Flood Plans

If you haven't got a flood or resilience plan you should consider making one. If you have a plan ensure it is up to date, including all your contacts. If any contact details change, please contact the drainage team to allow us to amend our records.

Date of next meeting

February 21st Warminster Civic Centre, online or in person, 10 a.m. start.

Action log:

Wilton awaiting repairs of non-return valves (NRV)	Drainage Team, Town Council
Robert to remind Town Council to undertake a flood/resilience plan	Robert Yuill, Amesbury Town Council
Warminster flood group meeting early Feb re-outstanding issues	Bill Parks, Town Council
Warminster funding bid to Regional Flood Defence Committee	Mike Holm Environment Agency
Warminster new development flood storage and sewer installation	Len, Danny Everett
SFRA needs updating – to follow up	Danny Everett
Aldbourn groundwater levels high to continue to monitor	Parish Council
Albourne Gully Clearance	Martin Cook
Aldbourn ground water and rainfall correlation	Jim Oliver/Guy Parker (Environment Agency)
Gt Bedwyn updating plan	Jonathon Hitchman/Parish Council
Gt Bedwyn Frog Lane to chase up Canal Trust	Jonathon Hitchman/Parish Council
Gt Bedwyn incapacity issues in The Knapp, advised to go back to Thames Water	Jonathon Hitchman/Parish Council
Britford to apply for funding re survey of bridges	Britford Parish council
Britford Correlation between extraction and river levels	Mike Holm/Jim Wrigglesworth
Britford Planning concerns advised parish to submit their concerns	Britford Parish Council
Town & Parish Councils to ensure flood plans and contacts are up to date and inform the drainage team of these	Town & Parish Councils