

WORPLESDON FLOOD FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 9 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 10.30AM

IN THE SPORTS PAVILION – WORPLESDON MEMORIAL GROUND

Present:

Miss Shirley Brown – Resident
Mr Ben Crampin – Surrey County Council
Mr Ray Everest – Resident
Mrs Victoria Fear – Worplesdon Parish Council
Ms Katy Fielding – Surrey Wildlife Trust
Cllr Samantha Fisk – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr Tim Gamble – Merrist Wood College
Ms Rachel Hopkins - Environmental Agency
Mr Steve Knight – Jacobs Well Residents’ Association
Mr Jason Lewis – Surrey County Council
Ms Carley Mason – Thames Water
Cllr Bob McShee - Guildford Borough Council/Worplesdon Ward
Cllr Jan Messinger – Worplesdon Parish Council
The Rt Hon Anne Milton MP
Cllr Nigel Mitchell – Worplesdon Parish Council
Cllr Sandra Morgan MBE – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr John Morley – Resident
Mr Tor Peebles – Surrey County Council
Mr George Rice – Surrey County Council
Ms Hannah Stagg – Thames Water
Mr Peter Trevena – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mrs Gaynor White – Worplesdon Parish Council
A resident of Worplesdon

Apologies:

Dr Alan Dillon – Resident
Mrs J Kinge – Resident
Mr T Harrold - CPRE
Mr Cyril Mitkov – Thames Water
Cllr Keith Witham – Worplesdon Ward

Meeting commenced 10.35am

FAIRLANDS

Location: 20 Gumbrells Close

Issue: Blocked gulley

Update: Mr Lewis advised that this had been inspected on Tuesday 6 November during heavy rain. Issue not apparent.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Rydes Hill Common, near Poplar Cottages

Issue: Blocked damaged sewer – additional maintenance/scaling of pipes required.

Action: Ms Mason to take back to Mr Mitkov requesting a progress report.

Location: Sime Close/Sidney Court

Issue: Surface water discharging into the soakaways in Sime Close – surface water runoff from Keens Lane due to the local topography exacerbates the issue.

Update: Raised kerb-line installed by Surrey County Council. The soakaway issues need to be addressed by the Sime Close Management Company at the request of local residents.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Road gully – Fairlands Avenue, by shops

Issue: This gully repeatedly blocks. It currently has vegetation growing out of it.

Update: Mr Lewis advised that the gully could not be fixed until the pavement works had been completed. This gully is on the jetting programme and will be jetted when the jetting lorry is next available. All complaints have to be prioritised. Surrey County Council prioritises issues that cause internal household flooding. The complaint has been passed to the officer dealing with the scheme.

Same location - new issue raised by Miss Brown. Since the pavements have been resurfaced, water is flowing from the road onto the pavement like a river. The complaint was phoned through to Surrey County Council three weeks ago, no response has been received.

Update: This location is already included in the jetter programme.

Location: Ditch - behind Quakers Way

Issue: A resident has infilled the ditch and placed compost bins and other garden paraphernalia, including paving slabs over the ditch which can no longer function properly

Update: Mr Crampin advised that Surrey County Council will carry out a CCTV survey to ascertain whether the pipe that runs through the middle of the sports field connects to the ditch which runs behind Quakers Way as evidence will be required should potential enforcement be required.

Agreed: Surrey County Council to arrange the CCTV inspection next month.

Location: Pond – neighbouring Aldershot Road

Issue: Due to a ditch being dug incorrectly, a pond has formed in the wrong location. The water now gathers at the side of the Aldershot Road, over-topping in times of high rainfall and creating ice across the highway.

Update: Ms Fielding advised that the ditch, which had been incorrectly dug, has been dammed and the ditch which runs along the fence line between Littlefield Common and Littlefield Manor has been dug out. Surrey Wildlife Trust is monitoring the work to see whether any additional work will be required.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: 51 Fairlands Road

Issue: Main sewer discharging into garden

Update: Contractors have been observed de-rooting the connection between the property and the main sewer line.

Action: Thames Water to advise when work completed.

Location: Ordinary watercourse behind St Michaels' Avenue, Littlefield Common

Issue: Historically, residents have placed gates and 'bridges' over the watercourse. The 'bridges' are now rotting with age. If they should collapse into the watercourse, this could potentially cause a blockage.

Update: Ms Fielding advised that Surrey Wildlife Trust has had a meeting to discuss this issue. As these structures were installed by landowners, liability for any problems arising as a result of their installation lies with the current land owner in accordance with riparian ownership legislation. Mr Peebles advised that if any of the structures do collapse, Surrey County Council will be willing to assist Surrey Wildlife Trust in terms of enforcement action.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Littlefield Common pond

Issue: Pond allegedly not filling with water.

Update: Ms Fielding advised that SWT have monitored this pond during the summer months. At no time did this pond dry out. Surrey Wildlife Trust does not wish to dig any more ditches.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Culverts beneath the A323

Issue: The sides of the banks are collapsing causing excess silting of the culvert. In addition, debris is entering the culvert.

Update: Mr Crampin advised that when flooding occurs, it is the common which is affected. No properties are at risk as a result of this. If the water is attenuated at a faster flow it could potentially put downstream properties at risk. Surrey County Council does not consider it necessary to install a trash screen at this location.

Agreed: Surrey County Council will monitor this location. Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Culvert beneath the A323 (nearest to St Michael's Avenue)

Issue: The culvert is partially blocked by silt, branches etc.

Update: Surrey County Council is not planning on changing the trash screen at this location.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Common land situated between Gravetts Lane and the entrance to Hunts Farm

Issue: Water ponding on main road.

Update: Mr Lewis advised that he had inspected the site during rain on 30 October. The ditches onto the adjacent common land have been dug. There is no drain where the surface water currently gathers.

Action: Mr Lewis and Mr Trevena to inspect this location together.

Location: Gravetts Lane near the junction with the Aldershot Road (A323)

Issue: Ponding on carriageway.

Update: Mr Trevena digs the grips out, however the culverts are blocked therefore the water cannot discharge into the water course.

Agreed:

(1) Mr Gamble (Merrist Wood College) and Mr Lewis to inspect the ditch and, if necessary, arrange for the ditch to be cleared.

(2) Mr Trevena and Mr Lewis to discuss offline.

11.05am – Mr Everest left the meeting.

JACOBS WELL

Location: The Brook, Brookside & watercourse near Queen Anne Farm, Jacobs Well Road

Issue: Submersible pumps are being placed in the watercourse. There is a risk of electrocution for anyone entering the water course.

Update: Mr Trevena inspects the ditch on a weekly basis. The pump by Queen Anne Farm is on private land. Ms Hopkins advised riparian owners are permitted to abstract up to 20 cubic metres of water per day, however, the Environment Agency has the power to prevent water abstraction if water levels are low.

Agreed: If the pump is again placed in The Brook, inform the Environment Agency who will issue a polite letter to the owner of the land.

Location: White House pond

Issue: Crassula helmsii /bullrushes

Update: Quotations to spray the weeds have been sought from two companies over the past 3 months. No response yet received from either company. The ten-year licence granted by Surrey County Council to Worplesdon Parish Council expires 31 December 2020.

Agreed: The Parish Council needs to consider whether or not to apply for a further licence.

Location: Moat House pond

Issue: Water can currently back flow into the pond from the Brook, which could potentially result in overtopping into the Recreation Ground.

Update: Mr Crampin advised that the installation of a non-return valve to prevent the pond over-topping during high rainfall would require consent from Surrey County Council.

Agreed: Worplesdon Parish Council to take no action but will monitor the situation. Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Hurst Farm House, Clay Lane

Issue: Water is standing in the ditch – Is there a blockage?

Update: Mr Lewis advised the water is no higher than the outlet.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

WOOD STREET VILLAGE

Location: Frog Grove Lane bottom of Sandy Lane

Issue: Water pools on the highway. During sub-zero temperatures, black ice forms causing a severe risk to motorists.

Update: Mr Morley advised that Surrey County Council (Ian Fowler) had proposed an improvement scheme for this location, however, funding for this project had been withdrawn. There is definitely a collapse at this location. Tree roots are the major issue.

Mr Peebles advised that responsibility for this ditch lies with the riparian owner. The clerk advised that the tenant farmer disputes responsibility for the ditch, hence previously the Parish Council shared the cost of clearing the ditch: however, the Parish Council no longer has the funding to be able to carry out such work.

Actions:

(1) Mr Morley to discuss this issue with the land owner and tenant farmer.

(2) Mr Crampin and Mr Lewis to assess this location from a maintenance perspective.

Location: Frog Grove Lane, near the junction with the Aldershot Road

Issue: Flooding of road due to blocked grips.

Update: The grips need to be regularly dug-out to enable water to flow into the adjacent watercourse. Mr Peebles advised that all flooding issues need to be reported to Surrey County Council. It was agreed that if the Parish Council's Groundsman clears the grips to prevent/alleviate flooding this should also be reported to Surrey County Council.

Agreed: Remove from the Action Plan.

Location: Broad Street Common, beside The Pines Industrial Estate

Issue: SWT's contractors recently removed a number of dead/dying ash trees. A considerable amount of foliage is building up near grille number W9/2.

Update: Ms Fielding advised that the ash trees were removed due to ash die back and the severe risk of the trees falling onto the adjacent buildings in the Industrial Estate. The clerk enquired why the Parish Council has not been formally consulted about the Wildlife Trust's proposals to deal with ash die back. Ms Fielding advised the walkabout at which this topic was to be discussed, had been cancelled due to lack of attendance, however, the Wildlife Trust will be contacting the Parish Council in due course.

No one from Guildford Borough Council was present at the meeting.

Agreed:

(1) Cllr McShee to chase up the borough council to establish when the foliage will be removed from the grille. Cllr McShee to inform the clerk in due course.

(2) Worplesdon Parish Council to assist the Wildlife Trust by advertising this information on its website and social media platforms.

WORPLESDON

Location: Blanket Mill Farm

Issue: Hardcore being laid on flood plain.

Update: Ms Hopkins advised the EA has issued a letter to the riparian owner to every named property registered with HM Land Registry under the land owner's name.

Agreed: If further allegations of importing material into the flood plain are made, the Environment Agency will issue a further letter and will speak directly to the owner of the land. The EA will monitor the situation.

Location: Flooding of service road beside the White Lyon and Dragon

Issue: There is insufficient surface water drainage in this area. Currently there is only one drain in the service road. Surface water and silt is draining from St Mary's Church, St Mary's Gardens and Worplesdon St Mary's (Perry Hill) and the car park of the White Lyon and Dragon causing this drain to frequently silt up. Additional drainage is required on private land to resolve the issue.

Several new homes are now to be built in St Mary's Gardens, this will exacerbate the problem.

Update: Mr Peebles advised that surface water drainage is only considered in detail in major applications, where a consultation between the lead local flood authority is carried out. Minor developments rely on planning officers' knowledge which is erratic, however, drainage can be included as a policy requirement in

a Neighbourhood Plan. The clerk advised that Worplesdon Parish Council had been represented at the Examination in Public and did get changes made to the Local Plan during the main modification

consultation process. The Parish Council has previously considered preparing a Neighbourhood Plan but, on the advice from two planning experts, had chosen not to seek a Neighbourhood Plan due to (a) the issues and likely costs involved due to Whitmoor Common Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment. (b) In addition, Neighbourhood Plans require a substantial time investment for which the Parish Council currently lacks the staff resources.

Mr Peebles advised that:

- (a) When properties are being built it is important that local residents report any silt/debris build up to the borough council's planning enforcement team, particularly if planning conditions have been applied. This will help the planning team to enforce conditions and may provide opportunity for SCC to carry out their own action.
- (b) There is currently no legal mechanism to the highways dept. to prevent the discharge of surface water run-off onto the highway, unless the flooding blocks a pavement. The highway authority is only responsible for dealing with surface water run-off from the highway itself.

Agreed: Mr Lewis to use an appropriate (Surrey County Council) template to write to the various organisations/residents at this location requesting the installation of additional drainage on private property to address the surface water run-off issues at this location.

Location: Holly Lane, Worplesdon Road roundabout

Issue: Flooding occurring on the roundabout

Update: The work required at this location will require the installation of temporary three-way traffic lights, which will involve a considerable cost.

Agreed: The county council will address this issue as and when it can.

Blackwell Farm

It was agreed that the proposed meeting with Blackwell Farm should go ahead, but that only representatives from Worplesdon Parish Council should attend. It was agreed that Cllr Nigel Mitchell (as the Parish Council's Flood Forum representative), the clerk and assistant clerk should attend the meeting with the University of Surrey along with the Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP.

If development of the strategic site goes ahead, mitigation will be required to ensure the surface-water run-off remains at the existing green field run-off rate.

Mr Peebles emphasised the need for the community to engage with developers at an early stage so that the needs of the community can be built into the development. Legislative requirements will be addressed by Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council at the appropriate time.

Other matters of concern not on the Action Plan:

Ditches Littlefield Common - Mr Everest thanked Merrist Wood College for hand digging their ditches and stated that the ditches on Littlefield Common, on the northern side of the A323, still need to be cleared by Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Action: This is to be added back onto the agenda of the next Flood Forum meeting.

Coombe Lane – New gas main – When the SGN contractors recently installed the new gas main in Coombe Lane, they damaged the Parish Council’s land drains. This has been reported to Chris Raven of Land Services who has been acting on behalf of SGN over the past two years.

Mrs Milton thanked everyone for coming, particularly the officers from the various organisations.

Meeting closed 12.11pm

