



Worplesdon Flood Forum Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held Friday 15 November 2019 at 10.30am

In the Sports Pavilion, Worplesdon Memorial Ground

Present:

Cllr R Brothwell – Guildford Borough Council
Miss S Brown - Resident
Miss H Cleasson – Resident
Mr B Crampin – Surrey County Council
Mr R Everest – Resident
Mrs V Fear – Worplesdon Parish Council
Ms K Fielding – Surrey Wildlife Trust
Mr T Gamble – Activate Learning, Merrist Wood College
Mr S Knight – Resident
Mr J Lewis – Surrey County Council
Cllr A McShee – Guildford Borough Council
Cllr J Messinger – Worplesdon Parish Council
The Rt Hon Anne Milton
Cllr S Morgan MBE – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr J Morley – Resident
Cllr T O'Toole – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr T Peebles – Surrey County Council
Mr R Scholfield - Resident
Mr B Shirley – Guildford Borough Council
Mrs J Smith – Resident
Mr J Taylor – Activate Learning, Merrist Wood College
Mr P Trevena – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mrs V Wells – Resident
Mrs G White – Worplesdon Parish Council
Cllr K Witham – Surrey County Council

Apologies:

Cllr D Bird – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr A Dillon – Resident
Environment Agency
Ms A Keeping – Thames Water
Mrs J Kinge – Resident
Cllr B McShee – Guildford Borough Council
Ms C Mason – Thames Water
Cllr N Mitchell- Worplesdon Parish Council

Meeting commenced 10.35am

All meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Items on the Action Plan were reviewed as follows:

FAIRLANDS

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.

2019: Ms Mason to provide an update.

2019: Whilst Ms Mason was unable to attend the meeting, a report was provided: 30m of 100mm sewer has been replaced post CCTV shows no issues, fully operational. Item to be removed from the Action Plan.

Location: Road gulley – Fairlands Avenue, by shops

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

2018 Update: Mr Lewis advised that the gulley could not be fixed until the pavement works had been completed. This gulley 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.

2019: Mr Lewis to provide an update.

2019: Mr Lewis confirmed that no action has been forthcoming as yet. More capital is likely to be released after Christmas. Mr Lewis and Miss Brown to liaise regarding the issue and action.

Same location - additional 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.

2018 Update: This location is already included in the jetter programme.

2019: Mr Lewis to confirm if there are still issues at this location.

2019: To await the jetting proposed for the issue above to establish if there is still an issue at this location. Mr Lewis to liaise with Miss Brown if necessary as noted in the location above.

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.

2018 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.

2019: Mr Crampin to provide an update.

2019: Mr Crampin explained that a CCTV survey was undertaken at the start of 2019. It showed that there is a pipe which goes across the field (from behind Quakers Way to the bridge at Littlefield Common, just beyond the noticeboard), and that there is a break in this pipe near the cricket square. No further action is proposed by SCC at this time. Item to be removed from the Action Plan.

Location: 51 Fairlands Road

Issue: Main sewer discharging into garden.

2018 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.

2019: Ms Mason to confirm if this issue has been resolved.

2019: Whilst Ms Mason was unable to attend the meeting, a report was provided: Root cut has been carried out in our mains and private lateral on foul sewer. Mrs Fear read out a statement from the resident which stated: 'I hope going forward the Water Board will keep a strict eye on the drainage situation and I won't have to wait until my toilet floods? The whole episode was very distressing, and that was the second flooding since living in Fairlands.'

Mrs Milton asked how frequently these events have been affecting the resident but this information was not available during the meeting. It was proposed to remove this item from the Action Plan.

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

Issue: Water ponding on main road.

2018 Update: Mr Lewis advised that he had inspected the site during rain on 30 October 2018. 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.

2019: To receive an update from Mr Lewis.

2019: Mr Lewis is to continue to monitor this location.

10.47pm Mr Peebles arrived.

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

Issue: Ponding on carriageway.

2018 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.

2019: Mr Gamble and Mr Lewis to provide an update.

2019: Mr Gamble to address this issue as soon as feasible.

Location: Fairlands Road near the mini-roundabout at Littlefield Way

Issue: Mr Trevena and Mr Morley have determined that there is significant tree ingress to the surface water drain. The issue was reported to Thames Water. Whilst Thames Water were investigating, Mr Lewis from SCC met Mr Trevena onsite together with the team from Thames Water.

2019: To receive an update from SCC and Thames Water.

2019: Mr Trevena highlighted that the manhole is full of roots. Mrs Fear had reported the issue to Thames Water who stated to Mr Trevena, that after their initial site visit, they needed to raise another job card for it. Subsequently Mr Lewis had been in contact with Ms Mason. Ms Mason said that Thames Water had no responsibility in this area for surface water drainage. Mr Peebles advised that it is possible to map systems where there are gaps between those mapped assets and those adopted however a cost is involved – and it can be quite significant (estimates from £10,000 for a 3-week long desktop assessment to £35,000 for a more comprehensive large scale 3km network investigation). Mr Crampin is to confirm the extent of mapping in the area whilst Mrs White will ascertain if Worplesdon Parish Council has funds available and whether the parish council would financially support mapping, if necessary.

A resident asked if the current roadworks on the bend at Louis Field and Sandpit Heath were likely to be related to this issue. Mrs Fear advised that these roadworks are Affinity Water, so relate to water supply rather than waste.

Mrs Milton thanked both Mr Morley and Mr Trevena for their ongoing efforts in this area.

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.

2018 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.

2019: Mr Trevena to provide an update.

2019: Mr Trevena advises that the pump has now been removed. Remove from Action Plan.

Location: White House pond

Issue: Crassula helmsii /bullrushes

2018 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.

2019: Clerk to the Council to provide an update.

2019: Worplesdon Parish Council to ask residents what they would like the parish council to do as costs required to undertake the significant works required are anticipated to be between £10,000 and £30,000. A resident advised that the developer of White House is proposing to discharge a 9" land drain into the pond. The Clerk to the Council, Mrs White, explained that an alternative would be to consider further land drains.

Location: Jacobs Well roundabout (at the end of Salt Box Road)

Issue: Rain water has been completely covering the roundabout making the highway exceedingly dangerous (edges of the carriageway were not visible as the water overtopped the kerbs).

2019: SCC to provide an update.

2019: It was further clarified that the flooding is not limited to this location, but also to near Stringers Barn and beneath Salt Box Road bridge. Mr Lewis advised that the location is on the jetting list for December. Weir gullies feed into the nearby ditch and stream. Mr Peebles asked if the ditch is of sufficient depth. It was suggested that Robert McDonald of SCC would be able to offer further guidance. As an aside, Cllr Witham noted that the footbridge at Oak Tree Close was well used by residents. Surrey Wildlife Trust, Surrey County Council and Worplesdon Parish Council to liaise further regarding this issue.

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.

2018 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.

2019: To receive updates.

2019: The water is continuing to run across the road at this point, not helped by willow tree roots blocking the ditch. The roots need digging out. Mr Peebles confirmed that he was not sure if it is still in the SCC program of works for consideration. Borough Councillors to investigate to find out who is responsible for maintenance of this ditch.

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.

2018 Update: Ms Fielding advised that the ash trees were removed due to ash die back (ADB) 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 2018 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.

2019: To receive an update from SWT on the progression of ADB and to be advised of any other tree related diseases which may affect the parish.

2019: SWT are dealing with trees on a case-by-case basis. No further works are planned.

Location: Frog Grove Lane before the junction with Aldershot Road

Issue: The road is continuing to experience standing water at the location which has been on this Action Plan in past years.

2019: Mr Lewis to provide an update please.

2019: Mr Morley dug out the grips before the recent prolonged wet weather. He highlighted the importance of keeping these clear. Mrs Milton thanked Mr Morley for his continued attention to this area. Mr Lewis to keep a close eye on this location.

WORPLESDON

Location: Blanket Mill Farm

Issue: Hardcore being laid on flood plain.

2018 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.

2019: Can the EA confirm whether or not this situation is ongoing or if it has been resolved?

2019: The Environment Agency confirmed that as per the minutes that they visited the site with a representative from Surrey County Council in 2018. The EA issued letters to the landowner and since

then we have had no further reports of activity on site in relation to importation of material. Therefore, the EA view this matter as closed.

Cllr B McShee to liaise with the resident to establish if this matter can be removed from the action plan.

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.

2018 Update: During the Flood Forum meeting 2018, 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.

2019: Flooding is still occurring in this location and planning applications are still being submitted. SCC to provide an update on the letters issued.

2019: Mr Trevena confirmed that his investigations with both Mr White (Assistant Groundsman, Worplesdon Parish Council) and Mr Morley, that tree roots have formed a significant blockage. Mr Lewis advised that week commencing Monday 18 November 2019 this location was scheduled for jetting and root cutting. Jason Lewis advised that an additional gulley has been installed at this location.

Location: Holly Lane, Worplesdon Road roundabout

Issue: Flooding occurring on the roundabout

2018 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.

2019: Flooding is still occurring in this location. SCC to provide an update.

2019: Mr Lewis advised that SCC repeatedly jet in this location and this will again be jetted w/c 18 November 2019.

Ditches - Littlefield Common - Mr Everest thanked Merrist Wood College for hand digging their ditches in 2018 and stated that the ditches on Littlefield Common, on the northern side of the A323, still need to be cleared by Surrey Wildlife Trust.

2019: SWT to provide an update.

2019: Mr Everest explained that there are now lots of Alder saplings growing in the stretch of ditch previously cleared by Merrist Wood. Mr Gamble to schedule the removal of these before they grow significantly.

~~**Coombe Lane – New gas main** – When the SGN contractors installed the new gas main in Coombe Lane in 2018, they damaged the Parish Council's land drains. This was reported to Chris Raven of Land Services who has been acting on behalf of SGN over the past two years.~~

~~**2019: Item to be removed from the Action Plan as the issue has been resolved.**~~

Blackwell Farm – Cllr N Mitchell provided a report which was read in his absence by Mrs White:

Date: 16 November 2018

The University were in the early stages of designing a proposed mixed-use, but predominantly housing, development. Concerns expressed by Worplesdon Parish Council (WPC) were related to run off from the development either flooding the dwellings downstream or the lack of surface water flowing onto Whitmoor Common causing a loss of SSSI habitat.

WPC explained that Fairlands, Wood Street Village and Jacobs Well are all downstream of the development, and that there have been flooding issues in all of these areas in the recent past. The University have calculated that the development will result in approximately 43,000m³ of storm water as a peak level. The proposal is to store this water in linked balancing ponds throughout the development site, and release it into the drainage system at the current rate. Therefore, the proposal is to maintain the stormwater flow the existing rates. To give a more tangible idea of 43,000m³ this is the equivalent of 21 Olympic sized swimming pools.

Measures to maintain the flow of surface water will be implemented during the construction period and this will be monitored by the University through its environmental department. The University have held meetings with SCC and agreed essential terms for the development, although these were not divulged during the meeting. There will be petrol interceptors included in the surface water drainage system through the development, so pollutants will not enter the discharged water system.

Subsequently there has been a presentation to the general public at Surrey Sports Park to present outline proposals for the housing development. An outline planning application is likely to be the next stage. No timescale for any planning application or construction period have been made available. Worplesdon Parish Council will monitor and respond as appropriate.

Mrs White added that the University of Surrey have expressed their interest in meeting with Worplesdon Parish Council to further inform and develop our ongoing relationship. Mrs Milton suggested holding 3-monthly informal chats with University of Surrey. Ms Fielding of Surrey Wildlife Trust expressed an interest in attending too. Mr Peebles highlighted that Worplesdon Parish Council should ensure that the CIL and s106 list is up to date – especially for flood prevention schemes, and also that residents should be invited to attend, not just the agencies.

John Morley - The Parish Council nominated Mr Morley for a Mayor's Award in early 2019 which we are pleased to say he was awarded for his ongoing efforts to prevent flooding across the parish.

Hockford Sewage Treatment Works - Cllr N Mitchell provided a report which was read in his absence by Mrs White:

Thames Water (TW) kindly took a small group of members of the flood forum on a visit around the sewage treatment works (STW) on 5 July 2019. The STW currently treats 125 l/s or 10,800m³ of foul water per day throughout the year. This equates to foul water from 22,500 dwellings or approximately 90,000 people based on an assumed 120 litres of foul water per person per day. The total volume of foul water treated per day would fill 5 ½ Olympic swimming pools. Approximately 30m³ of treated clean water is returned to the river system each minute throughout the day [Mr Morley highlighted that this water was double filtered prior to discharge].

TW explained that there is an ongoing process of upgrading the existing facility to cope with possible future needs and improvement in treatment techniques. Indeed, TW have taken one primary settlement tank out of operation to allow for surge conditions.

New screens have been installed into the system and these bail up materials such as paper or other food items that are not fully digested, such as tomato pips, sweetcorn etc. Once the effluent has been removed from the foul water it is stored in a closed tank similar to a gas holder. The end product is then pumped into tankers and taken away to another central processing plant where it is made into fertiliser and other useful materials. During an average week three to four tankers leave the site full of effluent.

Based on the above figures, the three most significant developments either currently under construction or likely to be applied for within the parish would result in the following increases to the volume of foul water requiring treatment:

Location	No of dwellings	Volume (m ³ /day)	Percentage increase
Carters Yard	45	22	0.2%
Keens Lane	150 (excl care home)	72	0.66%
Blackwell Farm	1,800 (proposed)	864	8.0%

We would like to thank all at Thames Water for organising this invaluable visit.

Worplesdon Flood Forum posed some questions to Thames Water in advance of the visit. The questions and answers are listed below:

Q. Have there been any environmental incidents during thunderstorms/extreme weather events over the last two years?

A. As shown during the visit, the site is equipped deal with a large volume of flow with 4 primary settlement tanks and one storm tank. As such there have been no compliance issues on this site in the last two years.

Q. What impact has the heavy rain events/extreme weather conditions had on the entire sewage and waste system – and that locally. Are they still experiencing significant issues with surface water infiltration of the foul system?

A. During storms, the site does experience higher flows. In this instance, the site will treat flow to full treatment before the storm storage and spill is utilised.

Q. What capacity has the sewage treatment works got – i.e. land north of Keens Lane, Blackwell Farm, and any other future developments such as those from Normandy or elsewhere.

A. There are no plans to develop or extend the site as far as we know.

Q. Are residents in Fairlands and/or Gravetts Lane still experiencing issues of sewage backing up?

A. Please may I have specific postcodes, we can look into this and feed this back. Obviously due to GDPR, we will not be able to disclose properties, more of an overview.

[Mrs Fear to continue to liaise with Miss Mason regarding this issue]

Q. When is the new sewage treatment works at Slyfield envisaged to be completed?

A. Guildford Sewage Treatment works will be the first works we have built since 2005 and is part of our 2020- 2025 business plan. The new works will be built on brownfield land and replace the existing site which Guildford Borough Council will use for local housing.

A copy of the Thames Water press release can be found [here](#).

Q. When is the increased diameter foul sewer due to be commissioned at the land north of Keens Lane?

NO RESPONSE

Any other matters of concern:

Frog Grove Lane – Cricket Club bend

A resident highlighted that 5 bungalows flooded at this location in 2002/3. Since then it appears that there has been no significant effort by SCC to maintain the ditch/watercourse. [This location was also where a road traffic collision took place due to black ice – however the ice was caused by a separate issue which has subsequently been resolved by Mr Lewis/SCC]

2019: Resident, Mr Crampin and Worplesdon Parish Council to liaise and look at the map to clarify the location for SCC to provide feedback.

Worplesdon Road – failure of roadsweeper to adequately remove fallen debris

Cllr Messinger highlighted that the roadsweeper is not properly sweeping debris at this location.

2019: Guildford Borough Council to provide feedback.

Salt Box Road – proposed as a burial location in the Local Plan

Cllr Brothwell highlighted the proposed use of this location.

2019: Mrs White explained that Worplesdon Parish Council have repeatedly highlighted the flow of the watercourse, the point where drinking water is abstracted in relation to the site and its proposed future use. It was suggested that a working party be established to work in conjunction with Cllr Brothwell to discuss this and any other issues.

Oak Hill – flooding at lower Pinks Hill access road

Surface water drains are blocked again.

2019: This location is on Mr Lewis's jetting list.

Wood Street Village Green pond – high level of water

This is a balancing pond. A stopper has been placed in the outflow by persons unknown which means that the emergency outflow is the only exit for water.

2019: A resident requested the addition of a trash screen to the outflow due to the volume of leaf matter which falls into the pond. Mrs White explained that consent would be necessary from Surrey County Council. Mr Trevena highlighted that one willow was felled earlier this year after it required emergency tree works. The remaining willow is deemed safe and is to remain. Mr Trevena explained that the Groundstaff check the pond including the outflow at least once per week, as does Mr Morley (unofficially).

Jacobs Well – Clay Lane link road

A resident commented that it had all gone quiet with respect to the proposed link road and hoped that this plan, which routes across the flood plain, in dead in the water.

Investment in Flood Prevention

County Cllr Witham reported that Surrey County Council has agreed £270 million of funding for long term flood risk schemes across Surrey towards a total of £640 million, being the largest investment in flood risk in the UK to date. While this is mainly for the River Thames Scheme, to protect some 15,000 properties and tens of thousands of people living and working near the Thames (following the floods of 2014) but this funding also includes £33 million to spend over 10 years on other local flood alleviation projects across Surrey. Mr Peebles confirmed that significant schemes had been undertaken over the last 4 years and any additional investment would be welcomed.

Mrs Milton thanked everyone for attending – residents and those from the various organisations - and their ongoing support of the flood forum.

Meeting closed 12.06pm