



Worplesdon Flood Forum Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held as a hybrid meeting on Friday 24 February 2023 at 10am

Present (in person or via MTeams):

Ms A Adams – Resident
Mr S Ashell – Communications Officer for Angela Richardson MP
Ms J Ashton – Resident
Ms H Barnsley – Guildford Borough Council
Ms D Brown – Office of Angela Richardson MP
Mr A Dillon – Resident
Mrs V Fear – Worplesdon Parish Council
Ms J Longman – Environment Agency
Cllr B McShee – Guildford Borough Council
Mr G Melly – University of Surrey
Cllr J Messinger – Worplesdon Parish Council
Cllr N Mitchell – Worplesdon Parish Council

Mollie Cronin – Office of Angela Richardson MP
Mr J Morley – Resident
Cllr B Nagle – Worplesdon Parish Council
Cllr M Price – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mrs Angela Richardson MP – Chairman of the Flood Forum Meeting)
Mr D Snipp - Resident
Mr A Treasure – Surrey County Council
Mr P Trevena – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mrs G White – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr G Whittaker – Surrey County Council
Cllr K Witham – Surrey County Council

Apologies:

Cllr R Brothwell – Guildford Borough Council
Cllr D Bird – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr R Everest – Resident
Mr T Gamble – Merrist Wood College
Mr J Hockley – Surrey County Council

Mr S Knight – Resident
Mr J Lewis – Surrey County Council
Ms C Mason – Thames Water
Cllr A McShee – Guildford Borough Council
Rev Alex Russell – Worplesdon Parish Churches

Residents are reminded that for items to be added to the Flood Forum agenda, reporting codes from the appropriate authority should be included with their requests. This allows the agencies involved to address the issue/s more effectively.

Meeting commenced 10.00am

Mrs Angela Richardson MP introduced herself as Chairman of the meeting, and welcomed all those present, in person and online, to the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting (25 November 2022) were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Agenda Item 3: Presentation by Andy Treasure, SCC: Reporting Flooding

Mr Treasure explained the importance of reporting flooding to the appropriate authority – and similarly, within SCC (Surrey County Council) particularly, to the correct department.

- Small river flooding should be reported on 01483 505050, or on 01344 949371 out of hours (GBC).
- Street sweeping/cleansing is the responsibility of GBC (01483 505050).
- Flooding to roads/highways and property should be reported to SCC on 0300 200 1003, online or via the direct flooding enquiries email address (flooding.enquiries@surreycc.gov.uk).
- Fluvial River Flooding should be reported directly to the Environment Agency on 0345 988 1188/enquiries@environmentagency.gov.uk.
- Public sewer issues (including sewage in surface water) should be reported to Thames Water on 0800 316 9800 or Southern Water on 0330 303 0368 (depending on who is responsible for treatment of wastewater and sewage in your area).

Everyone affected by flooding should report it so the resolution gains momentum.

SCC Highways can be contacted on 0300 200 1003 or via the highways email address (highways@surreycc.gov.uk).

The SCC's Online Reporting system is highly effective for reporting Highways issues and provides a reference number when completed. It also allows residents to send photos to accompany their report. Reporting can be completed online in under 5 minutes. If residents can't access the internet, they can always contact the call centre.

Mr Treasure referenced the reported flooding on Tangle Lane (near the cottages) as an example. He explained that two members of SCC's Planning team were involved in addressing the matter, who had met with local residents and the developers, together with the Highways Officer and SCC's Enforcement Team.

Don't assume that someone else has reported whatever the issue is, and it is important to report it to the right person. All people residing in a street and affected by whichever type of flooding **need** to report it to highlight the issue.

Cllr Nigel Mitchell asked how long landowners are given when enforcement action is taken against them.

Mr Treasure highlighted that if you are unhappy with how a report has been processed and actioned within the response timeframe, you can make a complaint on the SCC homepage [<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/contact-us/complaints-comments-and-compliments>].

The SCC response time is being reduced from 28 days to 15 days, and the KPIs [Key Performance Indicators] are closely monitored. Approximately 2,000 reports and enquiries are received per week for County Councillor Keith Witham's ward, however this can be made up of numerous reports relating to the same issue.

Helen Barnsley (GBC) commented that their street cleansing sweepers are very responsive to filed reports.

Agenda Item 4: Review of effectiveness of SCC's Reporting System and SCC's ability to resolve long-standing issues

Andy Treasure stated that SCC supports the WPC facilitated Flood Forum. Gaynor White explained the perspective of the Parish Council in that cases are closed before the actual root issue is resolved, and in most instances, capital investment is required to resolve these longstanding issues.

Andy Treasure responded that a risk-need evaluation takes place on every report to ensure that there is a comprehensive assessment to spend the very restricted capital investment budget; citing the St Mary's issues – in that the puddle is inconvenient, but there is no risk of flooding to property.

Gaynor White referenced the vehicles written off following passing through the flood water on Frog Grove Lane. Andy Treasure highlighted that it's flooding to properties rather than flooding to vehicles that is their primary concern but stated that whilst these vehicles might have been noted on social media as having broken down due to water ingress, SCC had not received any formal notification that the water had been responsible for those issues. Andy Treasure requested that WPC publicise the importance of reporting and reporting to the correct authority in the Parish newsletter and on social media.

Cllr Mitchell asked if SCC widely advertise their complaints procedure for those affected by damage to property (including vehicles).

Agenda Item 5 - Location: White Lyon and Dragon public house/St Mary's – the large puddle is continuing to collect on the service road during heavy rain [SCC Ref. 2406135 – case closed by SCC but issue remains].

No update had been received from Mr Kunkler (owner of the second track). SCC have cleared out drains in the area and GBC have swept the road. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 6 - Holly Lane roundabout continues to flood – Repeatedly reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2406145 – case closed by SCC but issue remains].

It was requested that the Parish Council report the issue one final time if flooding occurs again at this location. The matter can be escalated to a complaint if the report is not actioned.

Agenda Item 6* - Surface water drain blocked with soil/grass, Holly Lane (between top roundabout and Pitmore Farm) – Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2406152 – case closed by SCC but issue remains].

This item was included with Agenda Item 6.

Agenda Item 7 - Decking structure built over a watercourse, Coombe Lane – Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2437475 – 28-day response deadline missed].

Guy Whittaker visited the location on the way to the meeting. There is nothing to enforce because the decking is a clear span. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 8 - Service Road, Rokers – Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2485565].

The ditch is to be re-dug at this location, which is believed to form part of the historic Quaker Burial Ground. To remain on the agenda.

Agenda Item 9 - Rickford – Three properties at Rickford [Holly Bank, Rickford Bungalow and Ellesmere House] experienced flooding, together with two experiencing water surging up through toilets, during the rainfall event on 20/10/2021. Reported to SCC.

The Public Health Act 1936 gives Worplesdon Parish Council the power to enforce however the issues would be most effectively addressed by SCC (due to the surface water issues including the blocked watercourse exacerbated by collapsing oil drums) and Thames Water (sewage surge). For WPC to have full access to Land Registry records, the PC needs to apply for an account and pay the necessary fees.

Agenda Item 10 - Rickford – Right of Way access compromised during wet weather periods. Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. IC 30859/31025].

Remain on agenda pending SCC action.

Agenda Item 11 - Perry Hill Antiques – Resident has reported repeated flooding of the property, forcing the closure of the business on multiple occasions. Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2040264 – case closed by SCC].

Remedial works undertaken and deemed successful. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 12 - Aldershot Road (between Newlands and Hunt's Farm) – Serious flooding of the carriageway which has been reported to SCC. Grips and ditches need to be maintained including cleaning letterbox gullies (SCC) [SCC Ref. 1591440, 240620 and 81591440 – case closed by SCC but issue remains].

Remain on agenda.

Agenda Item 13 - 4 Gravetts Lane – Multiple issues at this location – Sewage had flooded the garden of the property and multiple manhole covers in the road keep lifting. Both SCC and Thames Water dispute the ownership of manholes at this location

Thames Water had cleared out root ingress from their system. Thames Water will monitor this issue.

Remain on agenda.

Agenda Item 14 - Tangley Lane (near cottages) – Severe flooding has affected motorists and pedestrians at this location [SCC Ref. 2485651, ME921160, 2403922, and 2404862].

This agenda item is at the enforcement stage whilst ditch clearance works are awaited. Monitor.

Agenda Item 15 - Ditch between 52 Fairlands Avenue and the Doctors' Surgery, Fairlands – Lack of maintenance – overgrown with vegetation and significant debris (including a shopping trolley). Reported to SCC [SCC Ref. ME-50096925].

This is a riparian ownership issue. Both landowners informed. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 16 - Doctors' Surgery car park, Fairlands – car park showing signs of flooding.

Letter issued by WPC to the Doctors' Surgery. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 17 - Open ditch – Treebys/Queenhythe – To establish land ownership/responsibility for maintenance of this ditch [SCC Ref. 2406226].

Awaiting SCC to install handrail following receipt of quotations. Continue to monitor.

Agenda Item 18 - Rain Garden – Woking Road/Salt Box Road roundabout [SCC Ref. 2360959].

Remove from future agenda following the effective £65,000 investment from SCC.

Agenda Item 19 - Harry's Meadow, Jacobs Well – Debris in the ditch has been reported to Guildford Borough Council (GBC) on a number of occasions [no reference number provided by GBC].

Gaynor White highlighted that this has been repeatedly reported to Leigh Edwards. The tree debris has been removed but the silt build-up remains. This issue is likely to be resolved as a result of the Burpham Court SANG works. Continue to monitor.

Agenda Item 18* - Blocked drain, Jacobs Well – Reported by resident. [SCC Ref. 2060618]
Continue to monitor.

Agenda Item 20 - Aldershot Road, outside the Vivid Homes building site/glasshouses – Highway flooding during October 2021. Surrey Fire and Rescue were in attendance to pump out water to make it passable to vehicles [SCC Ref. 2406250 – case closed although issue not resolved].

Gaynor White highlighted that it appears that there are connections blocked or now missing to facilitate the removal of water in the area. The main priority is how to get access to the location here the blockages are to assess the works required to reinstate water flow.

10.59am Angie Adams left the meeting

At 11am a minute's silence was observed to mark a year since the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Agenda Item 21 - Frog Grove Lane/junction with Aldershot Road – Ongoing landgrab: issues with ditch maintenance together with significant continuing instances of highway flooding at this location [SCC Ref. 2452233 and 2406258].

Janice Longman (EA) is in the process of Asset Performance clearing before the end of the financial year which should address the significant blockage which has been identified. This item to be kept on the agenda. SCC stated their intention to reinstate letterbox gulleys at this location and along Frog Grove Lane during the 2023/24 financial year. The bridge under Aldershot Road was cleared two weeks prior to this Flood Forum Meeting, as was the bridge under Frog Grove Lane. To receive an update from the EA on this agenda item at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 22 - 46 Frog Grove Lane – Property discharging surface water onto the highway across a footpath [SCC Ref. 2485695].

SCC liaised with the homeowner. The owner has been told who to contact and what to do. The pipes have been removed from the footpath. Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 23 - Oak Hill/Pinks Hill – The flooding at this location caused a vehicle to leave the road and required police attendance in November 2022 [SCC Ref. 2414769].

Gaynor White provided the background to historic issues at this site. The land at this location is in the ownership of Surrey County Council – both Highways land and land maintained by Countryside Estates. Highways have maintained the ditch they are responsible for but the ineffective ditch on the Countryside Estate managed land still needs resolving. Guy Whittaker (SCC) confirmed that SCC can enforce against SCC if action to clear the ditches is not forthcoming. Guy Whittaker to speak to Countryside department on Monday to discuss this issue further.

Agenda Item 24 - Sewage discharge at Wood Street Village Pond - During 27 August 2020 and overnight during October 2021 in response to significant rainfall event. Manhole lifted on grass verge [Thames Water Ref. SA-525236 - GU3 3DU].

Peter Trevena talked through the background of this issue and explained that he had met a Thames Water engineer at this location because the engineer was unable to locate the manhole. The engineer

explained that this issue was caused by a hydraulic lock which caused the sewage leakage. The pond is fed through surface water from The Oval. WPC expressed an interest to have sight of the wider drainage maps at this location, which SCC and WPC agreed to take offline. Item to be removed from future agenda.

Agenda Item 25 - Blocked grilles at Wood Street Village – These caused flooding to residential properties at Wildfield Close in October 2022. Past discussions related to the involvement of Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council with regard to the effectiveness of removing silt and arisings from these and other grilles.

Peter Trevena commented that the Broad Street grille is silting up again. GBC to de-silt the grilles because they have declined to provide Worplesdon Parish Council's Head Groundsman with a key. Gaynor White read an email response from Stuart Craggs (JET Team) regarding the provision of a community skip for a single day, in conjunction with the JET Team and Surrey Police – the purpose of this is to try to minimise the amount of fly-tipping and debris which can end up blocking the grilles in periods of heavy rain.

11.17am Janet Ashton left the meeting

Stuart Craggs to liaise with Surrey Police to see what is feasible at this location regarding a community skip day, and also what is likely to be most effective. It is believed that it should be relatively easy to organise, with enough notice, support and advertisement, and could be a useful opportunity to advertise the facilities and support available at The Hive, Park Barn. It is not feasible to arrange this event over a weekend due to the costs of staff overtime at each of the agencies.

Agenda Item 26 - Bramble Close – Flooding to gardens and garages reported. Ditch clearance took place on the nearby Common in Autumn 2022 [SCC Ref. 2335489].

No further reports of flooding have been received from the residents following the recent significant ditch digging that took place and the discovery that the manhole cover was not in place at the time the flood from the sewer occurred. Remove from future agenda.

County Councillor Keith Witham commented that subsoil investigations will be taking place early in the new financial year (2023/24) regarding the significant subsistence outside the nearby Cricketers pub on Aldershot Road.

Agenda Item 27 - Sandy Lane, Frog Grove Lane – The blocked ditch causes water to flow across the road, and this freezes in winter [SCC Ref. 2440668].

Gaynor explained that this issue has gone on for years, and relates to the risk of the ice causing a road traffic collision. This is part of a 2023/24 scheme unless funds allow for the area to be addressed before the end of this financial year. It is envisaged that the ditch will be re-dug, the tree stump removed, and the drain beneath Sandy Lane is to be jetted.

11.26am David Snipp joined the meeting.

Agenda Item 28 - Liddington Hall Drive – Blocked ditch and enlargement of access road has increased run-off [SCC Ref. CE004941 and 2487424].

Issue to remain on the agenda as no timescale has been provided for resolution.

Agenda Item 29 - Littlefield Cottages, Littlefield Common – Concerns raised by residents relating to drainage ditch in Merrist Wood long field and also the ditch on common along front of Littlefield Cottages.

Item to be removed from future agenda but residents to be encouraged to monitor the situation closely.

Agenda Item 30 - Keens Lane (near Pitch Place) – Pond overtopping the road, which is exceptionally dangerous in the winter. This has been reported to SCC [SCC Ref. 2415960 and 2062956]. It appears that one pond is on unregistered land and is therefore not being regularly monitored or maintained.

Gaynor White explained the history to the pond and Commons maintenance in the area and explained that the pond immediately behind Pitch Place House is unadopted, and therefore unmaintained. Peter Trevena explained that when he noticed the water was overtopping, he removed a plastic bag which was blocking the outflow and also rodded to try to get the water level to drop and flow to resume. He felt that there was a blockage in the culvert on the South side of the road.

WPC to write to Countryside Access at SCC regarding the following items:

- Unadopted pond (directly behind Pitch Place House)
- Maintenance of existing pond on Chittys Common (SCC owned)
- Highways maintenance (for the blockage under the road)

This item is to remain on the agenda.

County Councillor Keith Witham stated that a condition survey of the Keens Lane road surface will be undertaken when Taylor Wimpey's works are complete. It is estimated that there's still 12 months of works required to complete the development project.

Guy Whittaker commented that the Taylor Wimpey site water is pumped to the North from attenuation tanks.

Agenda Item 31 - Rosebery Housing Association, Roman Farm Road – vegetation noted to be severely overgrown as a location where a lack of ditch maintenance caused residential flooding previously [SCC Ref. ME-50098979].

Angela Richardson stated that this action is very positive to see (the housing association had addressed the overgrown vegetation and cleared the banks of the watercourse). Remove from future agenda.

Agenda Item 32 - Date of next Flood Forum Walkabout:

The Flood Forum Walkabout will commence at 10am on **Friday 14th July 2023**, meeting at the maypole/pond end of Wood Stret Village Green. Please wear appropriate footwear to cover the 6km distance which will be covered during the course of the walk.

Agenda Item 33 - Date of next meeting:

The next formal Flood Forum Meeting will take place on **Friday 17th November 2023** – commencing at 10am at Worplesdon Parish Council's office.

Mrs Richardson thanked all those present for taking the time to attend – residents and those from the various organisations including Guy Whittaker - and for their continuing active support of the flood forum. Guy was thanked for his on the ground knowledge, which, like Peter Trevena's, is invaluable.

Meeting closed 12.34 pm.