



## Worplesdon Flood Forum Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held as a hybrid meeting on Friday 17 November 2023 at 10am

### Present (in person or via MSTeams):

Mr S Russell – Communications Officer for Angela Richardson MP  
Ms H Barnsley – Guildford Borough Council  
Cllr D Bird – Worplesdon Parish Council (online)  
Ms D Brown – Office of Angela Richardson MP  
Ms Mollie Cronin – Office of Angela Richardson MP  
Mr A Dillon – Resident  
Mrs V Fear – Worplesdon Parish Council  
Ms J Longman – Environment Agency (EA) (online)  
Mr G Melly – University of Surrey (online)  
Cllr N Mitchell – Worplesdon Parish Council

Mr J Morley – Resident  
Mrs Angela Richardson MP – Chairman of the Flood Forum Meeting)  
Mr P Sutton - 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  
Mrs C Shepherdly – Ockham Parish Council  
Mrs R Neish – Ockham Parish Council

### Apologies:

Mr R Everest – Resident  
Mr T Gamble – Merrist Wood College  
Ms Alice Keeping – Thames Water  
Mr S Knight – Resident

Mr J Lewis – Surrey County Council  
Ms C Mason – Thames Water  
Cllr K Witham – Surrey County Council

**Residents are reminded that for items to be added to the Flood Forum agenda, reporting reference 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 10.13am

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 (24 February 2023) were agreed.

### **Agenda Item 3: Holly Lane roundabout continues to flood**

The drainage system has been jetted and the flooding appears to have been alleviated. The contractor had been unable to provide evidence of general maintenance. Traffic management wasn't required in the end.

### **Agenda Item 3\*: Holly Lane – blocked surface water drains**

This item is included with Agenda Item 4.

### **Agenda Item 4: Service Road, Rokers**

The ditch is missing on Farm Close/Merrist Wood side of the road. The blocked drain is believed to have been unblocked. Remove item from future agenda.

### **Agenda Item 5 - Location: Rickford – Three properties experienced flooding in Autumn 2021**

The residents were not present; however, the Clerk advised that the ownership of the field opposite the properties is unknown.

Surrey County Council confirmed they would contact the field owners, albeit unless there is a specific planning condition relating to drainage, the County Council has no right to tell the field owners what to do. Nevertheless, the field owners and the property owners all have [riparian ownership responsibilities](#).

Item to be left of the agenda as there are multiple drainage issues at this location which have not yet been addressed.

Andy Treasure arrived 10:20.

### **Agenda Item 6 – Rickford – Right of Way access compromised during wet weather [SCC Ref. IC 30859/31025].**

The item should be re-reported. Lots of works have been undertaken at this location. As SCC have marked it as 'closed', re-report it when it reoccurs. The water at this location is believed to be surface runoff. Gaynor White (WPC) to raise this issue with Tim Gamble (MW).

### **Agenda Item 7 - 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].**

There are multiple blocked letterbox gullies at this location. The opposite side of the carriageway has grips but these also need re-digging. A sink hole has formed in the pavement at this location [to be reported by WPC officers].

Andy Treasure advised that having reported an issue, if it isn't resolved within fifteen days, a complaint should be lodged with the County Council.

Mr Treasure also advised that funding is allocated on a priority basis. Surrey County Council uses algorithms to decide where the limited funding available should be allocated.

WPC to highlight on social media the importance of reporting flooding (Also notify the local schools and the FLGCA). Remind everyone to assume that no-one else has reported it!

### **Agenda Item 8 - 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**

Following the site visit Thames Water had cleared out root ingress from their system. No resident in attendance regarding this issue. Remove this item from future agendas.

The issue of ditch maintenance in Gravetts Lane was highlighted as an ongoing area of concern but needs to be reported each time it causes flooding to the highway.

**Agenda Item 9 - Tangley Lane (near cottages) – Severe flooding has affected motorists and pedestrians at this location [SCC Ref. 2485651, ME921160, 2403922, and 2404862].**

Enforcement action is ongoing at this location. Continue to monitor.

**Agenda Item 10 - Open ditch – Treebys/Queenhythe – To establish land ownership/responsibility for maintenance of this ditch [SCC Ref. 2406226].**

Still awaiting SCC to install a handrail following receipt of quotations. Continue to monitor as no timescale has been given for installation.

Potential impact of adverse possession at this location. Residents have no right to extend their property onto Surrey County Council owned land.

Concerns were also raised regarding the maintenance of the oak trees which back on to Queenhythe. This matter to be reported to SCC re tree inspections and risk to properties.

**Agenda Item 11 - 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.

**Action:** Helen Barnsley will raise this with Leigh to request an update (as this work will likely be dependent on the SANG works at Burpham Court Farm).

Guy Whittaker suggests utilising Volunteer Groups to clear the silt build-up – although the efforts of volunteers are being discouraged in some flood groups.

**Agenda Item 11\* - Blocked drain, Jacobs Well – Reported by resident. [SCC Ref. 2060618]**

Remove from future agendas.

**Agenda Item 12 - 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 provided a short history relating to the potential blocked or missing connections required to facilitate the removal of water in the area. The main priority at this location is to establish the full extent of the drainage system (from Frog Grove Lane to Silvesters), locate the blockages, and assess the works required to reinstate water flow.

This matter requires more investigation and time by Surrey County Council's Highway Officers and Enforcement Team.

**Agenda Item 13 - 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) confirmed that they had removed the blockage noted following the summer 2023 flood forum walkabout. Janice confirmed that she had asked for the channel to be desilted previously, but the EA understandably prioritise desilting relating to property flooding.

Multiple vehicles have been written off due to the depth of water at this location.

The possibility of a depth marker and associated 'Road liable to flooding' signage was discussed. Guy explained that as the area is not a ford, no depth marker would be possible but the flood signage could be a possibility. A request will need to be submitted to SCC Highways for flooding signs as the water constitutes a road safety issue as people reverse onto the A-road to avoid trying to wade through it.

Andy Treasure (SCC) suggested that the Flood Forum agenda report flooded roads as highway safety concern if consistently flooded year-round and the issue is a risk to life or the environment rather than flooding the highways as part of the drainage system. That the flooding issues discussed and seen on dashcam footage on 17 November while alarming were following widespread flood warnings, and highway flooding would be expected.

Victoria Fear highlighted that the village can get cut-off due to the depth of water at both Oak Hill and at Frog Grove Lane which means that unless you have access to a 4x4 you are stuck.

Video footage of the location experiencing flooding outside of named storm events was requested.

Andy Treasure suggested the Flood Forum prioritise three issues to concentrate on, those of the most concern to progress these to a form of completion and then look at next priorities to manage the large agenda.

**Agenda Item 14 - 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].**

The question was asked as to whether SCC could enforce against SCC for their failure to dig ditches at this location. Guy Whittaker confirmed that enforcement action can be undertaken although did not commit to it in this case. The issue is believed to be between the road and Winspeed's premises.

Jason Lewis (SCC Highways) had arranged for the Highways section to be free of restrictions, but the ditch on the common land beyond had not yet been re-dug, despite repeated requests. This matter to be re-reported.

11:15am Ockham Parish Councillors C Shepherdly and R Neish left the meeting.

**Agenda Item 15 - 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.**

Worplesdon Parish Council could consider the provision a community skip to support a community clean up event. GBC's contractors are no longer removing the debris removed from the grilles by Peter Trevena (WPC) which means that the debris is, in some instances, re-entering the channel. Brent Shirley used to coordinate the removal of the pile – which is now massive.

A community event would team up with Angela, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire & Rescue, the EA, JET, GBC, SCC Resilience, etc. The importance of flooding reduction to be highlighted on all skip publicity. [Aim for end of January 2024.

**Agenda Item 16 - Sandy Lane, Frog Grove Lane – The blocked ditch causes water to flow across the road, and this freezes in winter [SCC Ref. 2440668].**

The pavement has been reconstructed at this location which has added an alternate facet to the problem. The ditch water is now flowing, but the new pavement is now higher than that which was there previously. The main highway flooding issue seems significantly improved (although this will be tested when freezing temperatures are experienced throughout winter) however now a large puddle has formed restricting access up the green lane of Sandy Lane. Guy Whittaker asked the resident who reported this new issue (Mr Peter Sutton) to present a photograph/s and accompanying report.

Peter Trevena noted his thanks to the contractors employed by SCC who had done such a thorough job of resetting letter box gullies whilst relaying the footpaths.

**Agenda Item 17 - Liddington Hall Drive – Blocked ditch and enlargement of access road has increased run-off [SCC Ref. CE004941 and 2487424].**

Works were undertaken at this location in January 2023. The matter is believed to have been resolved due to no further contact from the resident. Remove from future agendas.

**Agenda Item 18 – 26 Rydes Hill Crescent and Kingsland, Rydes Hill Road – Potential blockage has caused residential flooding. [SCC Ref. 47075]**

The resident believes that the ditch on the Chitty's Common needs re-digging.

11:33am Mr P Sutton left the meeting.

Guy Whittaker had looked at this issue and commented that the existing pipe on the residential property is only 15cm. The resident could replace with a larger diameter pipe. Similarly, Guy also suggested that the resident could remove the connection to the pond and instead direct the water to the Thames Water carrier. It is not believed that the ditch is the issue. As the road is a private road, the easiest option is for the resident to put the water into the Thames Water carrier.

Remove from future agendas.

**Agenda Item 19 - 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 again explained the history to the pond and Commons maintenance in the area and reminded attendees that the pond immediately behind Pitch Place House is unadopted, and therefore unmaintained. Peter Trevena explained that he believes there is an obstruction to the culvert underneath the footpath at the roadside. SCC have requested a survey for broken pipes but this is likely to be in the next financial year – 2024/25.

Cllr N Mitchell highlighted Taylor Wimpey's failure to reinstate the road to pre-construction condition. It was suggested that this be reported to GBC as a planning breach: failure to meet contractual obligations.

**Agenda Item 20 - Date of next meeting:**

The next formal Flood Forum Meeting will take place on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023** – commencing at 10am at Worplesdon Parish Council’s office. All are welcome.

**Any other business:**

- Sandbag Supplies – Supplies are available at locations around Guildford. A map to find these is available on GBC’s website. GBC were asked to confirm that stocks at Fairlands were readily available to members of the public. Helen Barnsley will check as part of their stock audit. WPC to ensure that the location of these stocks is publicised in the next newsletter, on social media and on our website.
- Andy Treasure (SCC) explained that Thames Water’s online reporting is to be upgraded to include the option to input photographs.
- Andy Treasure also explained that the management of the multi-area Surrey-wide Flood Forum Group has been handed to the National Flood Forum. They are looking at meeting twice per year. Victoria Fear has attended a meeting, as had Cllr Mitchell. Andy Treasure would ask if Angela Richardson MP could be considered to be invited to join the group.

Mrs Richardson thanked all those present for taking the time to attend.

Meeting closed 11.58 pm.