



Worplesdon Flood Forum Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held as a hybrid meeting on Friday 18 October 2024 at 10.07am

Present (in person or via MSTeams):

Ms J Ashton – Resident	Ms J Longman – Environment Agency (EA)
Mr R Bower – Resident	Mr S McIntyre – Resident
Mrs L Bridger – Resident	Mrs H McIntyre – Resident
Mr M Bridger – Resident	Cllr N Mitchell – Worplesdon Parish Council
Cllr H Brooker – Guildford Borough Council	Mr I Parr – Environment Agency
Cllr P Brooker – Guildford Borough Council	Zöe Franklin MP – Chairman of the Flood Forum Meeting
Mr G Burch – Resident	Roger Steer – Resident
Mr M Covington – Resident	Mr A Treasure – Surrey County Council
Mr A Dillon – Resident	Mr P Trevena – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mrs V Fear – Worplesdon Parish Council	Mr C Webb – Resident
Mr T Gamble – Merrist Wood College	Mrs G White – Worplesdon Parish Council
Mr D Jeffries – Resident	Karen Young – Clerk to West Horsley Parish Council
Mrs J Jeffries – Resident	

Apologies:

Mrs H Barnsley – Guildford Borough Council
Ms A Keeping – Thames Water
Mr S Knight – Resident
Mr J Lewis – Surrey County Council
Mr J Morley – Resident
Ms C Mason – Thames Water
Mr P Sutton – Resident
Mr G Whittaker – Surrey County Council
Cllr K Witham – Surrey County Council

Residents are reminded that for items to be added to the standard 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 10.07am

Zöe Franklin 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 (1 March 2024) and the informal minutes from the walkabout (5 July 2024) were agreed and signed by Zöe Franklin MP.

Agenda Item 3: Rickford – Multiple properties experienced flooding on 04.01.24 (SCC Ref No 2848209/100521 and Thames Water Ref No 00504965)

Feedback provided by Thames Water (read out by Gaynor White) states that the issues at this location were raised for further investigations into the line between the properties and Hockford Sewage Treatment Works. This has gone static due to the erroneous job type it was allocated, for which Thames Water apologise. The Field Operations Specialist at Thames Water has now raised two further pieces of work in order to conclude the investigations (New Thames Water Reference Nos. SA1636962 and SA1636963)

Following the previous Flood Forum meeting, feedback provided from Guy Whittaker (SCC), sent via Cllr Keith Witham, states that the ditches Mr McIntyre has referred to are not linked to the flooding of their properties and we [SCC] therefore have no plans to do any works on them.

It was noted that the field landowner (on the opposite side of the road to the properties) had cleared their ditch. SCC had jetted the culverts under the road over a period of three days. Residents stated that they'd lived there for 30 years and seen little to no SCC maintenance in that time. SCC have enforced on the field landowner but appear to have failed to maintain their own land.

10.17am Andy Treasure arrived

Andy Treasure apologised for his late attendance, explaining that he had been on-site at Frog Grove Lane with SCC Highways.

He reiterated the feedback from Guy Whittaker that the flow of water is as it should be. It is still believed to be a Thames Water issue. It would be advantageous for Thames Water to meet onsite with Surrey County Council to discuss the matter further as, somehow, the surface water is entering the Thames Water network. Andy Treasure further explained that there is still believed to be an issue with the culvert which passes beneath Ellesmere.

Residents have had three occasions this summer alone where sewage has entered their gardens. On one occasion one inch of rain fell in just four hours, when the monthly average is three inches. A number of the residents have been regularly clearing debris from the other side of the road to their properties.

Actions:

Zöe Franklin MP	To follow up with SCC re timeline and evidence to catalyse Thames Water to act. This should be taken directly to Thames Water as the Risk Management Authority for foul water flooding.
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Simon McIntyre stated that the flow might be fine but the capacity is not. He further explained that Norton Farm are having a 3-phase supply installed and the new supply cabinet has been installed in a wetspot, which is concerning for both the installation electrician and the nearby residents.

Residents were reminded that all blockages, on each and every occasion, were to be reported to SCC.

Please see actions and associated timescales derived from the site meeting at Appendix 1.

Mark Covington interjected to explain that he had a Thames Water issue (not included on this agenda) which had had its ticket closed because not enough fellow residents had complained. The original ticket was raised by a service engineer from Thames Water! These frustrations were echoed by the residents from Rickford.

Andy Treasure explained that he could both sense and understand the frustration from residents but explained that the correct agency has to deal with the issue. All stages of drainage are important – and all the pieces have to work effectively to work together.

Actions:

Zöe Franklin MP	To liaise with Gaynor White and Victoria Fear regarding the actions list from the Rickford site meeting held after Storm Henk
Zöe Franklin MP	To liaise with Mark Covington directly regarding his Thames Water issue

Agenda Item 4: White Lyon House, Perry Hill – Service road flooded following heavy rain. (SCC Ref No 170687 and 142459)

A resident spoke and explained that a specialist care provider had refused to consider visiting her property due to the flooding at this location.

Actions:

Worplesdon Parish Council	To remind Guildford Borough Council of the necessity to deploy the road sweeper regularly to this location
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Agenda Item 5: Mulberry Cottage, Coombe Lane – Flooding to garage. (SCC Ref No 163185)

The resident explained that, over the past 25 years flooding had tended to happen every couple of years, but that in the last 12 months it had occurred on three occasions. He acknowledged that climate change is affecting this situation. The resident feels that whilst SCC have undertaken a site visit

to investigate, the ACO drains along the edge of his driveway and the drain off Coombe Lane near to the drive to his property, are insufficient to take the volume of water.

Gaynor White explained that a contractor will be digging out a section of drainage ditch on the opposite side of the lane in December 2024.

The resident explained that his understanding of the drainage at this location is that the small pipe leading into the chamber that feeds a larger one near the laurel hedge, and then he suspects it soaks away.

The resident thanked Worplesdon Parish Council for their help and support with this issue.

Actions:

Worplesdon Parish Council and Coombe Lane Resident	To await the SCC report into the flooding issue and to allow the ditch works to be undertaken [SCC report emailed 19.9.24]
Coombe Lane Resident	To provide WPC with a copy of the SCC report to allow discussions to take place regarding whether an enlarged pipe off Coombe Lane would help alleviate this issue

Agenda Item 6: Sunnyside, Perry Hill – Run-off through garden and driveway to blocked drain on road. (SCC Blocked drain reference No 165818)

The resident who had reported the blocked drain stated that SCC had cleared the drain and there was no issue following the rainfall on 24 October 2024. [Remove from future agenda]

Jacobs Well

Agenda Item 7: Harry’s Meadow – Debris in the ditch has been reported to GBC

No update had been received from Guildford Borough Council regarding the SANG, as it had been previously indicated that no remedial works to the ditch would take place until the SANG was progressed.

Actions:

Worplesdon Parish Council	To contact GBC regarding timescales for the Burpham Court SANG
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Two videos were shown to attendees to highlight the sheer volume of water which comes from the Hogs Back, through Backside Common, and along Frog Grove Lane.

Actions:

Worplesdon Parish Council	To report issues with flooding beneath the railway bridge on Backside Common to Network Rail and SCC Rights of Way
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Mark Covington explained that he is very concerned that the culvert opposite his home (cricket club bend on Frog Grove Lane) is exceptionally deep and there is no grille to prevent anyone who unwittingly falls into the water from being swept into the under-road culvert.

Actions:

Andy Treasure (SCC), Peter Trevena (WPC), and Brent Shirley (GBC)	To meet at this location to ascertain suitability for a grille given the provision of grilles across other watercourses at locations in the village [Post-Flood Forum Update: Andy Treasure met with the resident following the meeting and advised that SCC would not fit a grille at this location. There is an existing safety rail around the culvert, but SCC could consider grille installation in conjunction with the landowner.]
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Wood Street Village/Broad Street

Agenda Item 8: Aldershot Road (near glasshouses) – Internal flooding of multiple properties along Aldershot Road including Fairoaks (outbuildings), Pine Park, and Halifax Close (This item to be addressed in conjunction with the issues affecting the flooding at Frog Grove Lane/Aldershot Road junction due to the drainage system at this location) [SFRS Calls received at 22:14, 22:20, 23:04, 23:13, 23:14, 23:17, and 23:44 on 04.01.2024. Thames Water Ref Nos 00505296, 00505591, 00505308, 00505316, 00505320, 00505258, and 00505721]

Feedback from Thames Water states that this is a new estate and there are blockages in the foul line. The pipework has not been adopted by Thames Water yet, but the main Thames Water line has been checked and is free-flowing with no defects.

Andy Treasure explained that the formal S19 investigation report is yet to be finalised into the Storm Henk flooding. He further explained that through physical inspections it has become apparent that a culverted watercourse has been terminated and diverted into surface water drainage. This is for Vivid Homes to address.

SCC are continuing to liaise with the company who operate the glasshouses as their tanks are believed to potentially have an impact on drainage in the vicinity.

Actions:

Vivid Homes	To remedy the culverted and terminated watercourse issue
Vivid Homes	To address the issue regarding the blockage in the foul line

SCC	To circulate a copy of the S19 report (including Zöe Franklin MP)
SCC	To feedback to the Flood Forum following communications with the glasshouse operators

Mark Covington suggested that the minutes of Flood Forum meetings should be circulated to GBC Planning.

It was highlighted that, where appropriate, WPC submits comments on planning applications and references flooding/drainage concerns – as it did for both the Vivid Homes site and the Land North of Keens Lane development.

Peter Trevena explained that there is a potential blockage in the main river watercourse – a tree has fallen over the watercourse on Merrist Wood Golf Course, with the root ball lying in the main river.

Actions:

Peter Trevena (WPC), and Ivan Parr/Janice Longman (EA)	To take the potential blockage issue offline and feedback findings/action at the next Flood Forum meeting
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WPC thanked SCC for the recent comprehensive ditch works undertaken along Aldershot Road near Halifax Close to Fair Oaks.

Agenda Item 9 – Frog Grove Lane/junction with Aldershot Road – Multiple issues with ditch maintenance together with significant continuing instances of highway flooding at this location. (SCC Ref Nos. 2452233, 2406258, and 170732)

Peter Trevena explained that he felt the issue could be remedied with some letterbox gullies, non-return valves, and 6” pipes. He also asked if the possibility of colouring kerbstones directly adjacent to drainage assets could be considered at this location so that the assets could be readily located when flooded for ease of rodding/clearing.

The Environment Agency confirmed that they had written to Merrist Wood Golf Course to reiterate the golf club’s riparian responsibilities.

A resident asked: Why are assets cleared on a bi-annual schedule when leaves fall annually?

Andy Treasure explained that the schedule of SCC works is determined by an algorithm. The algorithm requires floods or issues to assets to be reported each and every time they occur.

Mark Covington stated that he had been quoted £800 to undertake the same job that SCC Highways said would cost considerably in excess of that figure, and explained the reasons for this. Due to Mr Covington’s issues with Thames Water and SCC, Zöe Franklin MP asked him to liaise with her directly.

Actions:

Andy Treasure (SCC)	To determine if key drainage-asset corresponding kerbstones can be highlighted in paint
Zöe Franklin MP	To liaise with Mark Covington regarding his Level 2 complaint with Thames Water and Surrey County Council.

Agenda Item 10 – Blocked grilles at Wood Street Village – These caused internal flooding to at least three residential properties at Wildfield Close in January 2024 [SFRS Calls received at 20:09, 20:10, 20:12, and 20:31 on 04.01.2024, and 10:27 on 05.01.2024]. 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, together with minimising fly-tipping at this location.

11.04am Roger Steer, Roger Bower, Geoff Burch, and Janet Ashton left the meeting.

Andy Treasure explained that the report covering the flooding at this location is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

11.10am Roger Steer rejoined the meeting.

Actions:

Andy Treasure (SCC), Ivan Parr (EA), and Peter Trevena, Gaynor White & Victoria Fear (WPC)	To walk the watercourse at this location
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Agenda Item 11 – Oak Hill/Pinks Hill – Repeated flooding at this location including causing a vehicle to leave the road. (SCC Ref No 2414769)

It was explained that this location flooded during the unnamed rainfall event on 14 October 2024 which essentially cut the village off unless you were fortunate to be driving a 4x4.

Highways had cleared the drains on the land for which Highways was responsible some time ago but the land between the highway and the land occupied by WinSpeed is the responsibility of a different SCC department.

Actions:

Andy Treasure (SCC)	To take the matter of maintenance of the maintenance of the intervening SCC land with the appropriate department, and work with the Countryside Team.
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Rydes Hill

Agenda Item 12 – Liddington Hall Drive – Surface run-off [SFRS Calls received at 18:44 and 18:46 on 04.01.2024], blocked ditch and track enlargement. (SCC Ref No CE004941 and 2487424)

This has caused flooding to a number of properties along this road, which has in turn caused potential structural damage to a property. A site meeting was held at this location in January 2024.

Roger Steer echoed the frustrations of other residents as someone who has lived in his home for 32 years. He explained that he experienced flooding back in 2013, during Storm Henk, and has averted flooding on two occasions since Storm Henk by utilising 40 sandbags to divert the water around his property.

Roger explained that it has become apparent through surveys that his home is in a slight dip which is the point where the water then goes to being the lowest point. Roger confirmed that SCC dug the roadside ditch and cleared the culvert, but asserted that both the SCC culvert capacity is inadequate, as is the Merrist Wood ditch. Roger explained that he has an ongoing insurance claim against Merrist Wood College (Activate Learning) regarding the damage to his property.

SCC confirmed that works were carried out on common land as far as Poplar Cottages, but residents are of the opinion that the culvert at Poplar Cottage is of an insufficient diameter.

A resident below Poplar Cottages has also historically experienced flooding and it was determined that the unofficial widening of the access track to Poplar Cottages may have caused this.

With regard to the widening of the Poplar Cottage track it is not certain if Poplar Cottage does have a formal right of way over Rydes Common. Surrey County Council's Land and Property Department have asked their legal team to look into the matter.

Tim Gamble (Merrist Wood College) explained that ditches had been dug but that more ditch works were scheduled to be undertaken in November 2024. He confirmed that SCC cleared the letterbox drains at this location.

The Liddington residents have asked that Merrist Wood College improve their communication with residents and they would ideally like sight of the official management plan for the field opposite their homes.

Andy Treasure stated that at the site meeting (held January 2024) residents had agreed that they would work in partnership and would assist with clearance work.

Actions:

SCC Land & Property - Legal Team	To confirm if Poplar Cottages have a right to utilise the track over common land
Gaynor White (WPC)	To forward the email from SCC Land & Property to Andy Treasure (SCC)

Andy Treasure (SCC)	To send his Maintenance Engineer out when Tim Gamble (MWC) is onsite
Tim Gamble (MWC)	To continue to regularly check and monitor the ditches and drainage at this location
Tim Gamble (MWC)	To revert to his manager with regard to the request for improved communications in future, and for the management plan for this location
Andy Treasure (SCC) and Tim Gamble (MWC)	To have a site meeting regarding Roger Steer's increased flooding incidents in 2024 [This had been delayed due to annual leave and sickness]

Other items mentioned briefly that were not on the agenda:

Monitoring Schedule:

Agenda Item 13 – Keens Lane (near Pitch Place) – Pond overtopping the road. (SCC Ref No 2415960 and 2062956)

SCC undertook jetting at this location. SCC have been tree cutting on Chitty's Common for the last four days, and the trunks and logs have been piled more than 6' high in the near vicinity of the pond.

Action: Gaynor White to email SCC regarding the logs to request immediate removal. Andy Treasure to simultaneously ask SCC for a timescale for removal.

Agenda Item 14 – Keens Lane/Montague Place – Flooding to a property during Storm Henk. (GBC Planning Enforcement Ref No EN/24/00024 and 2860977)

SUDs and swales have been found to be dry at this location, despite being inspected during and post heavy rainfall. Barchester Care Home (Silver Birch Care Home) had highlighted their concerns regarding water ponding onto their patio area. Silver Birch were advised by Peter Trevena to report the encroaching flood water to both GBC and SCC. Peter Trevena highlighted the apparent ludicrousness of having double grilles on the culverts at the development because it essentially is trapping some debris within the culvert. Excuses were made by contractors onsite regarding TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders) when asked why they haven't removed saplings from drainage channels.

Action: Andy Treasure to contact the management company and further liaise with Peter Trevena.

Agenda Item 15 – Wood Street Village Pond – Sewage leaking at times of heavy rain. (Thames Water Ref No 00742499)

The email response from Thames Water stated that, despite photographic evidence showing toilet paper strewn around the manhole cover, every time they have received a report relating to this and the network engineer or crew have attended, the foul water line has been found to be running freely with no visible signs of it overflowing.

Thames Water also stated that they have checked the surface water line that leads to the ponds and found no pollution or foul water in the line. The network engineer has observed an oily substance and foam in the water, which could be as a result of road runoff or flytipping but cannot confirm this as the

source. On each occasion the engineer's findings have been sent to their pollution control team for review however Thames Water believe that the source is not a Thames Water asset. Thames Water will review this again on receipt of additional information, evidence or photographs to suggest otherwise. Thames Water endeavour to attend as quickly as possible once a report is received, however the engineer may not see what the reporting person saw at the time.

Action: WPC to email through the photos of the debris that had been discharged by the Thames Water manhole. Zöe Franklin MP to assist WPC in getting Thames Water to investigate this further.

Agenda Item 16 – The Pines, Broad Street – Possible pollution entering the watercourse again at this location

Peter Trevena (Head Groundsman) to monitor the situation and, if concerned, to report the potential pollution to the Environment Agency.

Agenda Item 10 – Date of next meeting: Friday 14th March 2025 – 10am

The next Flood Forum meeting will take place at: Unit 2 – Saxton, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX on Friday 14th March 2025, commencing at 10am.

Zöe Franklin MP further explained that she is involved with a government group looking specifically at water and planning.

Andy Treasure explained that he had come directly from Frog Grove Lane where teams had discovered approximately 200m of drainage blocked by a utility cable which had been inserted into it. This will be the subject of enforcement to remedy. The team had also discovered two gullies packed full of concrete.

Mark Covington mentioned that when the pavement renewal took place along Frog Grove Lane the contractor used the opening to the cricket club track as their site base. The contractor backfilled the ditch on making good the work site. A pile of debris has been dumped by the SANG ditch contractors and this has encouraged multiple recent flytips.

Residents asked for Actions from the previous meeting to be covered at the start of each meeting, as had been undertaken historically and removed at the suggestion of SCC. Victoria Fear (WPC) explained that this makes for a significantly lengthier meeting as each agenda item essentially ends up being discussed twice. Instead, it was suggested that previous actions be covered at the start of each relevant agenda item.

Zöe Franklin MP thanked all those who had attended the meeting.

11.52am Meeting closed