**Cubbington Parish Council - Flood Prevention & Maintenance Working Group**

**19th October 2023 – 7pm-9 pm – Pavilion – Meeting No. 3**

**ACTION POINTS – ONGOING RECORD - FINAL**

**Present:** Cllr Gary Willoughby (Chair)

Cllr David Saul

Martin Key - CSFW Martin Young – Severn Trent Water (apologies)

Cllr Paul Watkins James Webb – Severn Trent Water (apologies)

Cllr Colin Marrow Jack Bradley – Environment Agency (apologies)

Jane Chatterton – Clerk (apologises) WCC Highways – Jeff Morris

WCC Flood Mgmt – Scarlett Robertson

**Objectives (mission statement):**

Cubbington Parish Council have no direct responsibility for Highways, drains, sewers or water courses but will promote positive actions and hold responsible agencies to account. The Working Group will develop an active and supportive engagement with both the responsible agencies and the community, particularly those residents with a recognised risk of flooding to their properties. The Group will also monitor Service Level Agreements for the agencies, the level of risk and priorities given to the most vulnerable areas within the village.

(Shared & endorsed with Parish Council 27th July 2023)

1. **Agree the areas of Cubbington at risk of highway, surface water, foul and river (water course) flooding – consult WCC, WDC flood maps & supporting information.**

**ACTIONS**:

1. Paul to take some snap shoots of the flood risk areas on the WCC website.
2. Identifying a list of streets that have been flagged by WCC.
3. Work through the list of house numbers to carry out a “deep dive” on which house numbers are listed.
4. Identify the contradictory information.

**COMPLETED**. Insurance classifications are based on postcodes only, not the elevation of properties – clearly some properties in high risk street will not flood. This has to be an individual negotiation with insurance companies by property owners. Advice has been offered to residents in ‘at risk’ roads to assist them to challenge Insurers flood risk assessments.(**see Appendix A below**), thank you email received from one resident. <https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk> )

1. **The following roads were identified as highest risks Roads and now have the named Community Street Flood Wardens assigned:**

* New Street – Cllr Paul Watkins
* Penns Close – Martin Key
* Knightley Close – Cllr David Saul
* Ladycroft – Martin Key
* Price Road – David Saul

**Further ACTION**:

1. Confirm ownership of the ditch behind The Grange, off Mill Lane, establish who has the responsibility for the maintenance of the ditch & frequency, as it is believed that this contributes to the flooding and flow elsewhere – Land Agent – Godfrey Payton, Farmer Mr Elliis, charitable trust land owners Thomas Sotherne. ***Action Scarlett Robertson to contact landowner*** **advising them of their responsibilities**
2. **Pingle Brook – main river & water course responsibilities**

1. Contact the EA to establish when the Pingle Brook and culverts were last checked/inspected? (**COMPLETED** - Site meeting with EA 4th Sept and EA attended 7th Sept meeting – see notes below)

* 3No. EA officers attended site with Gary Willoughby 4th September and walked the brook between Price Road and Ladycroft.
* Gained access c/o Margaret Smith No. 30 Ladycroft.
* EA do have an annual inspection schedule for the brook but can sometime not gain access so there may be 2 year gaps although access to the brook is via a gate adjacent to the screens near Thwaites. These are in inspected weekly / monthly and cleared ahead of any heavy rainstorms forecasts on a maintenance schedule.
* Spoke to 2No. Residents Brian Patterson & Ann Wright on-site – 2 common themes, not everyone knows of the their Riparian responsibilities and the flow in the brook is much less since the 2014 flood alleviation scheme at Mill Lane (which seems to have done its job).
* **The EA do not inspect the retention ponds and culverts for the Mill Lane flood alleviation scheme, promoted after the 2007 floods. It does not appear on their maps and could be a Warwick District Council responsibility, EA to check their records as it was a jointly funded scheme. Jack Bradley to contact WDC and establish ownership – feedback to Working Group. Key concern £1M scheme not being inspected or maintained**.
* **Gary Willoughby to email Pam Redford WDC Councillor**, Cllr Redford investigating

**Mill Lane Scheme – feedback from EA 19th Oct meeting**

I had hoped to get back to you with information from Warwick District Council. They have acknowledged my enquiry but are yet to respond with any answers. I will pass on anything I find out.

**Action - Scarlett Robertson WCC Flood Management Team – believed this to be a WDC responsibility and also to contact WDC directly to confirm.**

* The EA officer that normally inspects the brook (5 years) stated that the inlet culvert entrance at the school was smaller than the outlet into the brook behind Ladycroft – could be a hydraulic ‘pinch’ point? **The school site inlet has a large retention pond and is controlled by penstock and has screens. Historic construction, inspected by EA two times a year. The working group requested that Jack Bradley and EA colleagues undertake a hydraulic technical assessment of these assets to ensure its operation is still ‘fit for purpose’**. **See Appendix 2 for EA feedback**
* There is a dual culvert crossing the Offchurch Road as it goes under Thwaites. Inspection officer mentioned that the culvert under Thwaites was CCTV’d a few years ago, looking its age but nothing seriously wrong them ie. Blockage or collapse.
* Photos from the site visit 4th Sept available on request.
* Some bricks in the bed of the stream towards the Offchurch Road but not a concern, some poor state of repair to bank sides, encroachment that has narrowed the stream, ivy and other vegetation overgrown in places, partially collapsed tree emphasing the importance of riparian responsibilities of residents.
* EA have only one report of a blockage on the Pingle Brook – reported 2017!
* **Overall assessment – brook condition currently is not an issue.**

Wording provide by EA for joint communication now included in guidance note.

*Pingle Brook - You may have Riparian Responsibilities*

*Riparian landowners have responsibilities relating to the watercourse. A riparian landowner is anyone who owns a property, or land, alongside a natural watercourse and relates to the stretch of the watercourse which falls within or adjacent to the boundaries of their property. For more info please see:*

[*https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse#owners-your-responsibilities*](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse#owners-your-responsibilities)

Also contact details for different scenarios:

* *Environment Agency emergency incident hotline for incidents or blockages to the watercourse which you believe to be an immediate flood risk -* ***0800 80 70 60***
* *The non-urgent contact email for any other enquiries regarding the watercourse -* [*enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk*](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk)

1. **WCC Flood Management Team – Scarlett Robertson**

1. Scarlet Robertson [scarlettrobertson@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:scarlettrobertson@warwickshire.gov.uk) will be the Cubbington contact going forward.
2. Scarlett confirmed that a review of all flood risk areas is ogoing – completion expected early 2024. Current data on incidents reported, etc indicates that Cubbington is not considered high risk.
3. Scarlett reiterated the need residents to report problems and we encourage direct reporting. This is a key message in the Guidance Sheet & Cover note
4. **Severn Trent Water – feedback provided by email – Martin Young**

**ACTION**: Obtain an extract from the Severn Trent’s DG5 (sewer flooding) register for Cubbington. (M Young STW to contact any properties on the register) (**COMPLETED** – James Webb STW has contacted the 7 properties on the Register (shared map) but no personal details can be released – data protection. No recent flooding issues reported. General point – the numbers of reported problems or contacts are not telling STW that there is a serious problem and therefore not driving any investment or capital schemes.)

Other STW actions / Next Steps .....

* Discuss Rugby Road / Windmill Hill with clean water colleagues:
* Ongoing, ad-hoc water main repair works, are there any plans to replace the main longer term? 2 No. Bursts on this section since July meeting causes extensive traffic disruption (traffic lights). Capital mains renewal? Another pipe repair taking place 20th October 2023
* Extract from clean water response as below:
* I’ve checked our list of schemes and we don’t have any plans for renewal of the mains in this area.
* I’ve looked in SAP (Management Reporting System) and it does look like there has been a lot of main repairs on Rugby Road in the past year, which does suggest that the main is in a vulnerable state.
* I think the reason this has not been flagged up sooner is because the leaks don’t cause supply interruptions, as far as I can see from our records. Some of the leaks have been reported, but not in connection with no supply calls. Others have been detected by our water network technicians. Priority for renewal is usually given to areas where customers lose supply when the mains fail repeatedly.
* We’ll have a closer look at the repairs in this area and see if the notes against these jobs back up my initial thoughts that the mains are in poor condition. Sometimes, a job reported as a burst main will turn out to be a communication pipe repair (pipe from watermain to stoptap in footpath), leaking valve, or something similar, so the main itself is still in good condition.
* If the records indicate that the mains are coming to the end of their service life, then we’ll write up a capital investment request for renewal.
* If we do request investment, then it will be from the 2025-30 capital funding blocks. We’ve essentially come to the end of our funding for the current 2020-25 investment period. This scheme will be added to the list of existing schemes for 2025-30, which will then be prioritised by our capital management teams according to the impact on the network. Which means that this may not necessarily be a high priority for investment in comparison to other schemes. The business is planning to invest a lot of money in mains for 2025-30, but costs are also going up and we have many areas needing renewal.
* Sorry I can’t tell you that we’ve already got a scheme in place for this area, but I hope this is helpful.
  + Mud left on road after works completed – can we make sure we tidy up properly / employ a road sweeper as necessary. Discussed with Distribution Service Technician and will ensure this is implemented for any future works
* Further discussion with WCC Flood Team to understand issues and areas for collaborative approach. We have our quarterly meeting scheduled for November 7th. Cubbington will be on the agenda for discussion. Scarlett Robertson confirms
* Investigate smell issues at Church Terrace / Church Lane vicinity. Local residents understand filter beds existed at the rear of Church Terrace many years ago. Sewage smells have become more frequent recently at times of hot weather / low flows on sewerage system. May need input from Non-Infra Teams (M Young). Are there any wider works planned here, some recent notices of investigation were posted advising of this.
* I believe James has spoken to waste water recycling colleages regarding this and has raised a job for attendance. Apologies but I haven’t had chance to review the outcome of this. What I would advise is that if any further smells are experienced then these should be called in to the 0800 783 4444 call centre and also let James know, so that we can respond and investigate as and when the incident occurs. Jeff Morris WCC Highways offered a suggestion that some highway drains may have historically been wrongly connected to the foul sewer and in hot dry weather / low flows smells are likely caused by evaporation of water in the swan neck from the drain to the sewer. The smells seems to have been traced to two road drains Church Lane, an option for residents is to flush those drains so water creates an airlock again to prevent smells. If smells are noticed best to call 0800 783 4444 to report so it can be assessed asap.
* GW-DM emails 8th Sept – STW Field team attended site 8th September traced smells to storm drain Church Lane, drain not on STW plans, potential cross connection between foul and surface water road drainage systems? Gary Willoughby to email Jim Morris WCC Highways – may require joint investigation with STW (**Completed**)
* CCTV Survey the full length of foul and surface water system along Church Lane / New Street. NB there was a question regarding change in pipe size (sewer records doesn’t show this) but can we look out for this. (ONGOING ACTION – Martin Young – James Webb - surface water discharging into Pingle Brook completed – all good – foul system CCTV outstanding) All CCTV complete – no issues found – Gary to contact Martin to confirm no smaller diameter pipe indentified as per local knowledge from residents near school?
* Understand plans for Cubbington Growth Scheme – Coventry Road developments. To investigate potential reinforcement of existing sewerage system as well)

I have asked the question, which has so far been met with a less than positive response. I will continue to press the issue as the scheme design progresses, but can’t promise any movement on this. Growth schemes are put in place just to deal with growth, and don’t address any existing issues, unless they are remedied by the same network improvement or with minor changes. This one is a bit more complex, but I will keep asking the question.

* Model the impact of the actual storm event to understand areas that may have flooded from the STW system. (**COMPLETED** – Historical sewer flood design is as follows – New Street 1:5 year storm event, Knightly Clse 1:10, Penns Clse 1:5, Offchurch Road 1:5. The June storms were classified as a 1:15 year event)
* Offchurch Road Sewage Pumping Station – James Webb to undertake a review of alarms, telemetry and pump operations. Telemetry was checked. The pump station appears to have been working during the time of the flooding incident.
* Martin Young to provide larger schematic of the area For next time

1. **WCC Highways** **– Jeff Morris**
2. Inspection frequencies for highway drainage, gully, ditches in and around Cubbington (obviously focused on lowest point in Old Village.) We expect seasonal variations that take into account weather, intense summer storms, autumn leaf fall when conditions can lead to drain blockages and HIGH RISK consequences (flooding).

Jeff Morris confirmed that inspection and cleaning are on a quarterly basis in Cubbington, this is in progress now during October. At risk’ roads’ gullies were cleaned two weeks ago.

1. Gully and ditch maintenance frequencies – ditto season variations – Road gullies as above, ditches often responsibility of landowner / farmers unless specifically owned by WCC Highways and can be adhoc or as / when problems reported. Culvert inspections ie. Offchurch Road near Thwaites is the responsibility of the Bridges Team within WCC.
2. How WCC flag Cubbington as high risk in their response to flooding calls and your rapid response teams if they exist? WCC are currently developing a new reporting system on the WCC website which will help to identify vulnerable streets. Jeff confirmed the contact number for reporting issues for the guidance sheet. Out of hours is supported by an Officer; priority at times of floods will be safety first, signage, road closures, preventative actions, H&S of road users and public etc. NB it is unrealistic to pump flood water away, tankers finite resource.
3. Quality control on work undertaken by contractors. Contractors expected to do the job correctly but Jeff to review standards after quarterly schedule completed.
4. Instructions to WCC & WDC – blowing grass cutting / no mow May hay onto the highway in high risk areas of Cubbington – WDC Review is awaited

Jeff Morris agreed to take away a yellow line repaint issue near Penns Close raised during the meeting.

1. **Community communications & involvement with the Working Group**
2. Engagement with residents to be via an identified person to act as a “Community Street Flood Warden” in each of the “at risk” and highlighted areas described in Section 2 above. An information pack is available c/o West Mids
3. The CSFW will be the main contact to bring forward and disseminate information back and forth to residents and attend future meetings.
4. CSFW key role is also to look after the vulnerable members in their street who are unable to help themselves or have access to internet, etc.
5. **Keeping Parishioners better informed – communications on website, newsletter, etc - Working Group visibility**

**ACTION**:

1. Standard agenda item for each CPC meeting (Ongoing).
2. Add reporting information to the website. (Ongoing)
3. Final draft of the joint information / guidance leaflet together with a cover letter has been agreed. STW have kindly offered to print and help issue (only to the high risk streets). Information will be posted on the parish council website for all other residents to access. STW is also to provide Flood Questionnaire to those residents and EA have provided riparian rights information. Agreed a target to deliver to high risk streets only late October / early November.
4. Quarterly Parish Council magazine. (Ongoing)
5. Gary to share Flood Street Warden pack & CPC Information powerpoint slides with STW & EA **(COMPLETED)**

**Additional issues**

**ACTION**:

1. Find out where the sewerage (foul & surface) goes to from the properties on the Hazelwood estate and Stables. (**Completed** – STW confirm all foul and surface water flows through village to Offchurch Lane PS)

**Date of the Next meeting**

Thursday 30th November 2023 7:30pm - The Pavilion

***Appendix A -*** Letter issued to residents – home insurance premiums linked to flooding risk.

Dear Resident

Following the recent flooding event earlier this year in June, Cubbington Parish Council has formed a Flood Prevention & Maintenance Working Group and is liaising with WCC Highways, WDC, Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency.

As part of this ongoing work, we have checked the Government flood risk register.

<https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk>

This identified some properties in the village which are registered at high risk from surface water flooding but which from our knowledge of the area should be reclassed as low.

**Your property is one of those affected.**

Your home insurer has access to the register (based on postcodes) and may have used this information in calculating your premiums which might be higher than necessary as a result.

The postcode information whilst correct for some, takes no account of the elevation of your property and therefore may overstate your flooding risk.

We thought it would be helpful to draw this to your attention in case you were not aware and might care to check with your insurer. You may also request a reclassification. This can be done through Lead local flood authorities (LLFA) who are responsible for managing the flood risk from surface water and may hold more detailed information. Your LLFA is Warwickshire County Council.

Should you at any point wish to sell the property the searches would also pick up this information which might prejudice your sale.

We hope you do not mind us contacting you over this matter and trust it has been helpful.

Regards

Cubbington Parish Council

**Appendix B** – EA (Jack Bradley) feedback on Cubbington School retention pond / assets

**Flood Storage Area**

I have spoken with some experienced staff about the flood storage area at the school, and associated penstock. The FSA was built by the council before the EA became the risk management authority in the area and although it has some flood mitigation benefits, these are not clearly defined. The area is maintained for public safety (access to lifebuoy rings) and assets on the channel are monitored (trash screens are regularly cleared).

As for the penstock, I previously mentioned that we do not operate this under any circumstances. I am informed that it is essentially a redundant asset for these reasons listed previously.

**Conclusion – EA are responsible for H&S, public safety and ensuring flows are a maintained. If this historic assets operation and size is still ‘fit for purpose’ is unknown.**