**Parish Council November 2013 – Annual Report of the Flood Wardens**

**Introduction**

The Flood Plan for the Village has been in place for just over a year and as part of keeping it current and ‘live’ is was planned that an annual review be undertaken. This will ensure that an on-going record will be kept of action during the year and updated information on contacts and their numbers is available. It will necessitate an update of a few pages which will need to be inserted in the fifteen copies of the document but the loose leaf format will, as planned, enable us to achieve this without a full reprint.

**Flood Events**

There was a severe flood event 22nd – 28th December 2012 at which time the PS over-pumped in excess of half a million tonnes of water to the river from the Green Brook. A major flooding incident was averted by the PS and we gained first-hand experience of the pressurising / depressurising of the culvert which helped the case for the culvert lining that has just been completed.

**Strategic Work Undertaken**

1. The Flood Plan for village was completed and copies printed and circulated to the statutory bodies involved in flooding action – EA, SCC, LDC.
2. Requests from us for a lining to the brick culvert on The Beck have been heeded and a scheme has been implemented during October this year by the EA / SCC Highways to line the whole culvert improving its structural integrity and significantly improving its coefficient of friction and hence its flow characteristics. This will significantly reduce the risk of culvert collapse at time of pump operation and make the system work far more efficiently.
3. We presented our Flood Plan to EA staff at a staff training day. We are to become a Case Study on the EA website to help promote communities help themselves through development of their own Flood Plan.
4. Input thoughts and ideas to the statutory bodies including future improvements for the storm drainage network for the village. We have ideas on reducing the flows in Green Brook at peak flow times by diverting flow, talks are on-going.
5. We help people in the village develop their own Personal Flood Plans.
6. We keep the Parish Council informed of actions taken on flooding matters and maintain the plan on their behalf.
7. A desk top exercise indicated that the plan as drafted will support and assist action to minimise flooding impact successfully.
8. Two reports were written to help residents with their house insurance issues.

**Practical Work Undertaken**

It has been a fairly busy year with a considerable amount of work having been undertaken. Some of the key elements are:

1. **Elford Mill** – we have been able to work with the Environment Agency to generate a flood bank scheme for the residents to protect the Mill complex against floods up to a 100 year return period. We have secured the necessary Flood Defence Consent for the scheme and are awaiting planning approval having submitted a full application and supplementary reports. The residents are to implement the works in 2014.
2. **St Peter’s Church** – We drained flood water from the boiler room and renovated and reinstated a dual pump system. The electrical supply to the pumps and the boiler room lighting was also improved as part of the work. An information sheet has also been produced to guide future action / operation.
3. **Home Farm / Pimlico Cottage** – Advice and physical help was given to curb flooding on the paddock at Home Farm and prevent flood water entering Pimlico cottage. Advice has been given on works to remedy the situation in the future. The works are being put in hand at the present time and we are available for support during construction.
4. **The Osiers –** From inspection we identified that the lid on the discharge culvert to the PS on The Osiers was blowing completely off during the pump operation leaving an un-protected opening in the road. This operational issue could only be identified during an operational event and once the EA were told they immediately bolted the lid down to prevent future problems.
5. **Land to Rear of 10 -20 The Beck –** Further investigation has been undertaken in order to assess the flooding created by field run-off to the rear of these properties. The matter is complex as is the solution and to date no action has been possible.
6. **Planned Support –** Some of the key elements of our plan are to set up a help desk during a flood event, providing food and drink for Emergency Services, keeping a ‘live’ incident board available by the helpdesk, locating and helping with sandbags, clear screens / headwalls of debris, fit flood barriers to doorways, maintain a constant presence on street.
7. **River Monitoring** – This is an on-going process during periods of heavy rain and during flood alert / warning periods.
8. **On site Monitoring** – Our monitoring action helps keep people re-assured that action is in hand to keep everyone safe. Feedback has shown that walking the streets with a FW’s fluorescent jacket on has makes us visible and sends out the clear message something is happening and it is being dealt with.
9. **Auxiliary Flood Wardens** –We keep a team of nine AFW’s informed of any flood risk situation as well as each AFW having a copy of the operational form of the Flood Plan. Periodic meetings are also held with the whole team. New AFW’s are appointed as people leave the village and we have a waiting list of additional people ready to help as AFW’s.
10. **Secured External Resources** – We have secured help from the EA, SCC, STWA and private companies to support survey work undertaken by us and remedy drainage problems identified as flaws in the drainage network.
11. **Provide Local Knowledge** – We have provided local knowledge to all the statutory bodies when they are involved in drainage matters in the village. We have also delivered several hundred information leaflets for SCC for the culvert works.
12. **On-going Logs** - We keep an on-going log of flooding events and actions taken with regard to flooding matters to inform future action.

**Conclusions**

The plan has not really been tested as it only requires major action if there are problems with the PS and we hope that is not going to be the case. Certainly given the investment in the main storm drainage network by the EA and more latterly SCC the village centre is better protected from flooding than at any time in the past.

We have been able to generate a scheme for the residents at Elford Mill and adjacent properties that give them comparable protection to the rest of the village albeit that the residents will have to fund the works. Again the complex will be better protected from flooding than at any time in its history.

Various smaller drainage issues have been addressed and remedied thanks to action focussed through the plan. Its existence has ensured the village has a point of contact for such matters and it is being used.

We should not lose site of the role Matthew Ellis played in the early stages of the production of the plan and action during the 2007 floods. His energy and commitment harnessed support for us form both local Authorities and Statutory bodies and ensured we made early progress on outstanding matters on the network. Nothing drives action like success.

Latterly the Parish Council itself should be applauded for having the foresight to see the benefit of having a plan for the village and backing it with funds to ensure a competent and quality plan could be produced.

We are to be a Case Study for the EA and it is good to think that our work can be used in generic form to help and encourage others to have a structure to allow them to help themselves at a critical time.

We have had two changes of personnel in the AFW ranks due to people leaving the village however two volunteers were instantly available to step into the breach so we are still full strength.

A partial update will need to be produced over the next month and we may need a small sum to finance any printing / postage costs. The PC will be kept advised.

Recommendations

That the Parish Council approve:

1. the use of the Elford Flood Plan as a Case Study by the Environment Agency;
2. a figure of £40 for the printing of update pages for the 2013 review of the Flood Plan.

DRH – PC/AR/ 1 03/11/2013