

## Alfold Flood Forum

27 June 2014, Alfold Village Hall

Present:

Anne Milton MP (chair)  
Beverley Weddell, Clerk to Alfold and Loxwood Parish Councils  
Andrew Hagger, Thames Water  
Alan Whitehead, Thames Water  
Hilary Murgatroyd, Thames Water  
Jenny Elliott, Thames Water  
Andy Adams, Southern Water  
Mark Howarth, Surrey County Council  
Nick Laker, Waverley Borough Council  
Doug Hill, Environment Agency  
Cllr Donal O'Neill, Waverley Borough Council  
Cllr Mary Foryszewski, Waverley Borough Council  
Residents of Alfold and Loxwood  
Apologies: County Cllr Victoria Young

Anne Milton (AM) stressed the need to put information in writing (email is fine).

**ACTION: AM to write to Minister – to ask whether he has considered fining water companies when homes flood with sewage.**

Parish Council:

- Beverley Weddell (BW) reported that Clappers Meadow residents would have a 'ditch day' the last weekend in July.
- Details of planned maintenance dates were still awaited from WBC and SCC  
**ACTION: Nick Laker and Mark Howarth**
- BW had walked the Loxwood stream with the Environment Agency, the Parish Council would fund a survey of what can be done, but the EA could not fund the work until 2017.

Surrey County Council:

- SCC had created Flood Risk Partnership Board with all appropriate agencies. The knowledge from Flood Forums across the county was feeding in useful information. The County had 53 Section 19 investigations to complete, Mark Howarth (MH) was pressing for investigations into areas with a Flood Forum to be completed first, as so much of the information and data had already been collected. **ACTION: MH to arrange for Parish Council to meet consultant to progress Section 19.**
- Teams would be in the area this week, and enforcement visits would include one to Springbok.
- SCC have staff available to help with the completion of applications for repair and renewal grants.

Environment Agency:

- Dough Hill (DH) reported that a workshop for Parish Councils would be held in October.
- SCC had put in a bid for £1m+, the allocation had not yet been signed off. Bids would be assessed on cost v benefit and number of homes affected, the whole sum may not be forthcoming and authorities will need to find remaining funding.  
**ACTION: DH to provide information to AM, and AM to write supporting letter.**
- **ACTION: DH to check what bids had been submitted in West Sussex, and update AM and BW in case supporting letter needed also for Loxwood from Andrew Tyrie.**
- The Repair and Renewal grant scheme had been extended to septic tanks.

Cllr O'Neill:

- Cllr O'Neill (DO'N) reported that the new Resilience forum for the whole of Waverley had met and were looking at flooding but also power supply. He believed the Government did not realise how much investment was needed.

**ACTION: DO'N to email AM, AM to write to Minister.**

Waverley Borough Council:

- Concern was expressed that trees were not being cut back sufficiently to ensure power cables were not adversely affected by trees.

**ACTION: Nick Laker to investigate and report to AM**

Thames Water/Southern Water:

- Both companies had shared a consultant.
- The system was designed for waste water, there were problems with groundwater ingress; inundation occurred not only if pipes were porous or damaged, but also through manhole covers and ventilation points.
- The survey commissioned from Atkins had highlighted the need to keep surface water and waste water separate.
- There was a need to take into account proposed development in the area.
- Work needed had been identified:
  - Clappers Meadow, where surface water behind houses must be managed
  - Horsham Road, where a natural low point and busy area for the sewage system meant the sewer needed to be modified and re-routed.
  - CCTV survey had been carried out when the groundwater level was high but the flow was low. It had shown joints displaced, which needed repair.
- Would be considered by Thames Water Panel in a few weeks.
- Ofwat had announced it was reclaiming money from Thames Water because the benefit was not sufficiently evidenced. Thames Water therefore needed all possible evidence so residents were urged to contact anyone who had been affected but might not have submitted a questionnaire.

**ACTION: Andrew Hagger/Hilary Murgatroyd to email AM, AM to write to Thames Water.**

- Southern Water had identified a flood relief scheme in Loxwood, which was to be submitted to Ofwat on the day of the meeting. Had conducted a huge survey of customers showing that internal flooding should take precedence over external flooding.
- AM reported that the Chief Executive of Thames Water had written to confirm that a permanent stand-by generator would be installed at Clappers Meadow; it was on order to arrive October.
- AM reported that she had met Richard Aylard, the External Affairs and Sustainability Director of Thames Water, to highlight examples of engineers who arrive at homes without sufficient history awareness and to urge the introduction of a triage response to call outs. There was a difference between in-house staff (who visit to identify problems) and contractors (who were often commissioned to carry out work).
- Loxwood residents reported that they were disappointed with the standard of customer care.

**ACTION: Southern Water to ensure senior customer services team communicates with Loxwood residents.**

**ACTION: residents to ensure that any blocked ditches, culverts etc are reported to BW so that she can refer to relevant authority.**

Anne Milton extended thanks on behalf of everyone to Beverley Weddell for all the hard work she had put in (and would continue to put in!).

NEXT MEETING: Friday 24 October 10.30 am Alfold Village Hall