LAMBOURN VALLEY FLOOD FORUM MINUTES

22nd April 2024

On-Line Conference

		Action
•	Attendees	
	Karen Nelson – Thames Water Shelly Hartnoll - Thames Water Howard Woollaston – WBC / Lambourn / Boxford Clive Hooker - WBC / Downlands Rachel Carden – Upper Lambourn Paula Saunderson – Newbury Chris – Lambourn Martyn Wright - East Garston Nick Voysey - Great Shefford Richard Hancock – Environment Agency James Potter - Eastbury Andrew Gorton - Eastbury Jon Winstanley WBC Vicky Rieunier – Lambourn Emily Merritt – WBC Emergency Panning Paul Bacchus WBC flood and drainage Linda Bowden – Great Shefford Oliver Steed – Lambourn Jamie Neal Fiona Louisa Freeman Fiona Brewer	
	Sami Gabriel - WBC	
	Apologies	
	Nigel Foot	
•	Minutes from Previous meeting	
	No comments	

•	Matters Arising From Last Meeting	
	Not discussed	
•	Great Shefford 'Bypass' Flood Alleviation scheme	
	 Richard Hancock: Waiting for groundwater to drop, it has dropped 2 inches, but not as fast as hoped. Expect six to eight weeks before significant drop. BAMM expect start date end end May, as soon as we can get physically on site, but may not be able to dig before August. Pump not running at the moment, as levels have fallen BAMM hope not to do any road closures, but will raise the curb on the east side for 200 yards and will need to apply to close the road the for 8 weeks during the day 9-5, but not during rush hour or over night. Where is diversion route? Paula Saunderson: Impact on Trindeldown? Rachel Carden: Can the schools be informed? Linda Bowden: Three farmers will be impacted if work is going on during harvest Jon Winstanley – Any diversion will need to be approved by WBC 	EA /WBC
•	Sewage:	
	 Situation in Upper Lambourn / Lambourn has meant discharges in from two manholes Oxford Street and Newbury Street Lifted every cover in upper Lambourn. Drones show ponded areas in fileds 1.5m above TW network, running down the road, and flow into the network at the top end. Some investigations needed with private properties and will write to residents. Needs levels to drop to do more investigations. EA not expecting groundwater to drop until July August / Before TW can start lining work. Lambourn: Have sampled every week, and cleaned up but still see contaminations. Need help from community in what they put into the 	

network.

• Have done some cleaning, but debris in the system.

- Surcharging has slowed down
- Eastbury: Big flow has meant tankering, and sorry for disruption, but it is necessary to avoid discharge. Have had external flooding, due to pump system discharging, may be ground water getting in so will follow up.
- Surharging in Back Street. River level may be a problem

Andrew Gorton: Slimy growth on the road surface making road surface slippery in Eastbury. Residents are asking for slime to be cleaned off.

Howard Woollaston: Eastbury Church will be a polling station, and there have to be questions about that. Weed may be growing fast due effluent from bodily functions, and will be need to be cut.

James Potter: Contaminated water has promoted growth

Question: Are there restrictions in the river between Eastbury and East Garston?

Shelly Hartnoll: ATACs are discharging from Lambourn & E Garston, plus phosphate levels also higher than normal.

Shelly: Is the river still in flood?

Andrew: Yes

Shelly: If river still in flood can't do anything about the slime, but after that would be happy to provide a sweeper.

Sami Gabriel: Advice from EA is that it is blue green algae, so can't be done yet.

Richard: Regarding weed cutting, need to speak to Ops team who should be on site in Eastbury tomorrow.

Andrew: Will have to do it from the bank for safety.

Richard: They will make their own judgement

All

TW

EΑ

Howard: Church is the emergency centre Karen: Is it wise to send people to such a site? James: It is the only place other than private barns. Karen: Tankering is probably taking some water away. Karen: In East Garston - Have been some blockages. • ATAC has been operating throughout the winter. Minor spills from manholes. In Shefford - Have tankers in the village and at the pump station Sometimes you will see no tanker due to waiting elsewhere Karen: Have had good dialogue with new Sewage group. Martyn: • Group has had a constructive dialogue with TW, and focused on which aspects are within TW powers to do something about. TW Were problems with ATAC in East Garston, due contractor failures which are being followed up. Vicky: Thanks for TW help. **Lower Lambourn** Howard: Winterbourne has had problems Paula: WBC / EA / Have a number of gardens flooding, and no loos. TW Winterbourne and Bagnor have had help, but below Donnington have had a repeat of 2014. Below Boxford there are 30+ sluices, which when opened

- have an impact downstream
- ARK are catchment leaders
- Can't find anything on a management plan for the Lambourn, needs to be like the Hamble. Something is missing at the top level.

Sami Gabriel:

- Sprout ditch beside A339 and joins the Lambourn, collects a lot of debris.
- Narrows just before it goes into the Lambourn
- Local groups looking at monitoring.

Paula:

- Also problems on the W side of the A339 and we will be looking at it with EA and WBC
- Lots of river water in peoples gardens and lots of slime, and no help for people especially when elderly, will take this forward through Newbury FF

• Valley River Management Plan

Howard:

Need a whole valley management plan

Paula:

- No funding for a big review.
- Need to find out who could manage what
- Need to identify what are the critical wet spots, and can then go to the relevant bodies to find out what they can do.

Nick:

Did the EA not look at a whole river management plan?

Richard:

- Colleague did put together a register of assets in the Kennet, but did not get to an agreement due to very large number of landowners and asset owners, and liability issues.
- There is no organisation with the powers to enforce this,

would need a change of government.

Jon:

• This would be a full time job, we don't have the resources on top of what we already have.

Howard:

Want to see a comprehensive long term solution.

Paula:

- We don't have the right hydrological management below Shefford.
- Field run off is greater.
- Will support have anything Howard wants to do.
- Have a lot of out of bank flooding in lower Lambourn nothing to do with TW
- Thanks to TW water tankering help.

Shelly:

- Cirencester has a level of understanding with landowners to understand how they are managing water.
- In Upper Lambourn found huge cascade of water from drone that is not going into the right place. Need to look at groundwater management in whole of the Lambourn catchment.

Paula:

- Can't have a groundwater project that stops at Shefford.
- Can we have a bit more of can do rather than a can't do.

Richard:

- You can't say water is in the wrong place, it will come out where it wants to.
- Eastbury is a fluvial scheme not a groundwater scheme, as is Shefford, and will not prevent groundwater flooding
- Very important to understand that nothing can be done to prevent groundwater flooding, important that everyone

understands that.

- We have some of the best groundwater data on the Lambourn in the Country. We are remodelling.
- EA has now powers to deal with flooding in peoples gardens, and it is the responsibility of the owners.

EΑ

Howard:

 Can we look at the West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme as a route to lowering the water table in the summer?

Richard:

 Pang Valley FF have looked at this, but the infrastructure is not up to lowering the water table.

Paula Bacchus:

- Project Groundwater will be visiting Lambourn and Pang Valley later this week, and will ask if they can look below Shefford.
- Will look into sharing critical information done in the past
- Ditches are sometimes built for specific storm events, so did not prevent flooding in Winterbourne despite scheme not filling up.

WBC

Karen:

- Huge amount of upstream water running where it should not be, need to look at how best to manage this.
- Cannot be the right solution to have it cascading over roads.

Paula:

Topology of the downs has completely changed in my lifetime,

Paula:

There is a need for landowners to manage water.

Jon:

79 applications for flood support, and 49 for rate rebates

	across West Berks, and some business applications, will	
	still accept applications	
	 Section 19: Still in the throes of investigation. 	
•	Date, Time and location of next meeting.	
	TBD	
	By teleconference	All