

Broadhembury Parish Council
Public Meeting for Kerswell Residents to Discuss Flooding Issues
11 February 2016

Meeting Outcomes

- (i) Vyv and Keith will organise the construction of 2 leaky dams along the Marsh Green road and monitor the impact, assisted by Kerswell residents.
- (ii) A number of residents have volunteered to clear ditches and explore additional ways to identify and support flood prevention schemes. More volunteers requested.

Meeting Notes

Present/Apologies – see attached list

- 1 Introductions:** Meeting led by **Vyv Game** – Parish Councillor (Retired Headteacher)
Accompanied by **Keith Bone** – Retired Land Surveyor with some knowledge of water management; he also has useful contacts.

Additional Information

- The water courses are small streams, so the Environment Agency will not get involved.
- The Devon Flood Risk Management Team is helpful – they assisted with the Luton/Wilderness Lane work.
- Howick Consultants have been engaged to survey the situation in Kerswell, but this will take time; the flood risk management team have 'given their blessing' for a trial scheme.

- 2 Meeting Purpose** **To outline the issues and make a proposal**, following representations to the Parish Council by the occupants of Brook Cottage and Spring Cottage about flooding of their properties.

- 3 Actions to date:** Vyv and Keith have researched the situation by walking the area and talking to residents, especially in the vicinity of the flooded areas and the Weaver. To note also that they successfully improved a flooding situation in Luton/Wilderness Lane and have that experience to draw on.

4 Where does the water come from?

Kerswell is in a 'bowl'. There appear to be 3 main water routes into the hamlet causing the flooding:

- (i) From the Marsh Green area down the lane – noted that the culvert is blocked.
- (ii) From the area of Windwhistle Barton via ditches & through Brook Cottage garden.
- (iii) From the other side of Windwhistle Cross past Great Moor Barn & Meluishes.
- (iv) Also reported by a resident – water pouring off the fields onto the lane opposite Sandyway.
- (v) And, while not a source into Kerswell, it was noted that the Matthews Cross area is often flooded.

(i) and (ii) meet in the centre of the village, together and/or separately causing the reported area of flooding.

5 Possible Solutions

The meeting was reminded of the improbability of obtaining significant support or funding – solutions will need to be simple, inexpensive and reliant on self-help!

Vyv explained the potential solutions that had been considered, as follows:

- a) A large piped ring main positioned around the outside of Kerswell – might work but too expensive.
- b) Widen the routes and the stream out of Kerswell to enable the water to clear more quickly. This would be expensive and involve widening the stream through private gardens – so not realistic.
- c) **Slow down the water passing along the existing routes into Kerswell. This may be possible.**

6 The Proposed Action by the PC through Vyv and Keith – to try (c) above for one route

The ditch (known as The Goyle?) from Marsh Green appears to be suitable for the construction of up to 4 'leaky dams' along the side of the lane. (An explanation was given of how these work and how they are constructed.)

With the help of volunteer labour from Kerswell residents, at a cost of approximately £50 for each dam for materials, it is proposed to build 2 trial leaky dams alongside this lane and then to monitor the effect. If improvement is seen, funding will be sought – hopefully from the Devon Flood Risk Management Team – for the cost of materials to replace the trial dams with 4 robust leaky dams along the length of the lane. These will be longer lasting.

7 Responses/Comments/Concerns

- The ditches generally, and the Marsh Green one in particular, are full of builders' rubble. Furthermore, even if the rubble is removed, it is believed more will appear.
- Concern was expressed about keeping ditches (and the dams) clear of obstructions – but noted that slower flow rates are a benefit if ditches are deep/wide enough not to overflow. Use of attenuation crates was suggested in dams – but costly?
- Concern was expressed that the soil along the Marsh Green lane may be unsuitable.
- Query – who will pay to repair this lane if it is damaged by the dams? Vyv *suggested* that while he thought damage to be unlikely, if the venture is supported by Devon Flood Risk Management, they may underwrite the risk.

8 Other Action – local clearing of blocked ditches, culverts etc.

A number of volunteers offered time and labour to undertake this elsewhere in Kerswell, especially in the vicinity of Brook Cottage, Pales etc. It was noted that support would be needed to get rid of the debris and possibly for materials etc. to support these tasks.

It was agreed that the group would undertake to plan this work, to seek the support of local landowners/farmers and to lobby, for example Paul Diviani, Philip Skinner...

Volunteers at the meeting included Richard Broad, Suzanne McQueenie, Mary Keegan, Alan Mugleston...

9 Other Comments

Mary Keegan – concerned about the foul drainage infrastructure which appears to be inadequate in Kerswell.

Brian Russ – Parish Councils can ask for an increase in their precept – should BPC do this?

?? – Natural England will pay farmers to aerate their soil to improve water soak-up. Should the Parish Council ask farmers to consider this?

Thanks were expressed to Bill and Marilyn Sivewright for generously hosting the meeting and to Vyv and Keith for their work so far.

Attended

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| Spring Cottage | Christine Dunford & Richard Pearce |
| Castle Comer | Ann Green |
| Pales | Cecile Critchell |
| Partridge Green | Alan & Barbara Mugleston |
| Southview Cottage | Sophie Fitzgerald |
| Meadow House | Richard Brown |
| Old Matthews Farm | Albert Prangnell & Mary Keegan |
| Meluishes | Linda Wilson |
| Weaver's Edge | Valerie Jones |
| Pales Farm | Richard Broad |
| Great Moor Barn | Alison Chappell |
| Rivendell | Rob Gleave |
| Brook Cottage | Suzanne McQueenie |
| Haymans | Brian Russ |
| Weaverbrook House | Bill & Marilyn Sivewright |
| Tahini | David Hinshelwood |
| Nantucket | June Evans |
| Hope House | Flic Hart |

Apologies

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| Blackdown View | Richard Cluett & Dawn Barber |
| Budleigh Cottage | Pauline McKenzie |

Flic Hart
12.02.16