

## FAG Report to the Hambledon Parish Council 06/09/21

**The Flood Action Group** is currently getting started with early preparation for the 2012/22 Flood Season, taking into account the continually fluctuating weather conditions experienced so far this year. The situation with groundwater is frequently monitored, along with regular communication with the Environment and other agencies, to maintain our knowledge and awareness of national reactions to climate change. Readings from the Shoothill GaugeMap are compared with previous data we have collected, currently higher than 2020 with recent rains, but reasonably stable at the present time given the time remaining prior to December.

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|----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| 17/09/20 | BHD 42.850 AOD | Whitedale | 33.032 AOD |
| 01/09/21 | BHD 45.380 AOD | Whitedale | 37.493 AOD |

Communication with those properties in the village at risk from flooding will commence with emails from the FAG, and some personal contact with new residents, as from mid-October. The thrust of the information we provide will continue to amplify the responsibility for flood defences being down to the property owners themselves. Getting them to get an early start is always difficult, and we hope the effect of world climate change will enhance people's focus on the urgency with the fear of the "unknown" in mind.

The FAG will also be putting an article in the next Hambledonian to provide early information on the upcoming flood season and flood defences, the latest issue of which should arrive in early October. One of the elements we will be stressing again is the difference between management of surface water, and the effects of groundwater rising into cellars, and overflow of wells in some cases. There continues to be feelings amongst some of people in the village that the Big Pipe eliminates the need for pumping, which we intend to clarify.

**1) Headwall, Catchment Basin and Ditch** – The promises made by HCC Highways with respect to planned maintenance of these areas, along with the cleaning of the 200+ road gullies, has not commenced and no further updates have been received. The ditch is nearly totally choked with vegetation and other debris, and a new and potentially more serious discovery has been made with the infestation of Himalayan Balsam, stretching from the catchment basin down to the foot bridge, reaching in excess of 2.5 m in height. WCC Highways is aware of the additional need for urgency in removal of the hazard to flow and the environment, along with downstream contamination of property from the plants going to seed. The proprietor of the Old Forge Tearoom, Ed Piercy-Jones, spoke with two gentlemen (sub-contractors) over a week ago, who were surveying the ditch, indicating they were preparing a proposal and quote to HCC for the proper removal and disposal of the vegetation, specific to Himalayan Balsam.

**2) Noisy Manhole Covers** – The noisiest of the many annoying examples, has now been fixed at the bottom of Back Lane, but there remain a number of other aggravating covers on both West and East Streets requiring similar remedial actions. From feedback received by villagers who have been contacting Highways and service providers that (own) the covers, the slow responses are down to a "lack of subcontractors" available to do the work.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Jan Jarvie  
Chairman, Flood Action Group