

# FAG Report to the Hambledon Parish Council 05/09/22

## Overview

We are now heading towards the planning phases of the 2022/23 Flood Season, commencing in mid October. This effort is a bit more complicated than previous years, owing to the very changeable weather conditions developing, and forecasting by the met office, which has been fraught with a good deal of sporadic fluctuations on short notice. The Flood Action Group (FAG) plans will address issues and risks based on our previous experiences, along with providing assistance for new residents who may not be aware of the effects of the weather, and our resiliency measures. The aspect of cellar pumping this season, gives us reason to believe the need will be somewhat less owing to the current aquifer levels. However, heavy and sudden rains could quickly alter the situation, including the dryness of the ground effecting run-off.

As of 30<sup>th</sup> August, the aquifer levels, compared with 2020, and 2021 are –

17/09/20	BHD 42.850 AOD	Whitedale	33.032 AOD
01/09/21	BHD 45.380 AOD	Whitedale	37.493 AOD
30/08/22	BHD 42.720 AOD	Whitedale	32.343 AOD

We are also a bit at ease with the effects of surface water flooding, given the performance of the Big Pipe since installation in keeping our roadways essentially open and dry. But we must remain cautious as the entire piping system has not yet been pressed-up to date with cellar and overflowing well water entering into the system through major pumping operations. We cannot rule-out system failures until ultimate testing of the pipe during torrential rain events.

**Headwall, Catchment Basin and Ditch** – Unfortunately there has been no maintenance carried-out during 2022, and the overall status of the flow routes are poor to say the least. Visual inspection of the inside of the pipe extending upstream, indicates a significant amount of silt for an indeterminate portion of its length, lowering its capacity. The catchment basin has a large build-up of mud and debris up to the top of the dam, so dropping out of flotsam is not working. The ditch is very overgrown with vegetation on the bottom and both sides, which makes visual inspection very difficult from walking its length. The hedge shrubbery at the top of the East bank has grown substantially, overhanging the walls, which is an area of concern. At such time as they are trimmed, there are a number of holes that will appear in the hedge line, increasing the danger to walkers and cyclists. We note the exceptionally dry weather we've had, has reduced the normal amount of water being discharged into the ditch, so we will continue to monitor the condition of the system as a whole, and record any issues as they arise

The problems with the ditch banks and the condition of the hedge row adjacent to the B 2150 have been brought to the attention of Hampshire Highways a number of times since 2019. In spite of numerous promises being made, we've not seen any sign of any report or a plan to address our concerns with erosion of the banks and dangers of the deterioration of the verge. We have made Cllr Hugh Lumby aware of the likely failure of the sides of the ditch, and the danger to people walking on the grass, where they are very close to unobstructed openings and drop-offs to the bottom of the ditch. He has taken this onboard by personal contact, and has further agreed to survey situation first-hand by visiting the site.

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**Scheduled activities for the FAG** - An email will be going out to all of the members of the FAG to ensure readiness for the upcoming flooding season, along with confirmation of their continued participation. We will also be sending out information to all of the “flooders” that are on the watch list in preparation for their plans for possible groundwater ingress. We are reminded there are a number of new property owners that will require special attention, along with those people who are considered to be vulnerable.

Should there be any sudden weather events, or unexpected emergencies, the FAG will stand ready and react as appropriate, keeping the HPC abreast. If additional information is required, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Jan Jarvie  
Chairman, Flood Action Group