

FAG Report to the Hambledon Parish Council 2nd March 2020

At the time of this writing, there is still a Flood Alert remaining in force from the Environment Agency. We continue to see fluctuating readings from the two reference measurements at Broadhalfpenny Down and Whitedale Farm, hovering above the flood trigger points well outside of the historical timeline. BHD stands at 63.320 AOB and Whitedale at 58.432 AOD (28/02/20). The highs for BHD were recorded at 62.08 in December 2000, and 61.86 in February 2014; the high for this season is 66.220 AOB. As this data is higher than we've experienced since 1994, it is safe to assume we are presently on a learning journey following the implementation of the Big Pipe, and future forecasting might be adjusted by the EA, and dare we say – Climate Change.

There is water ingress into cellars and from overflowing wells from the bottom of West Street to the beginning of East Street at the shop, effecting fourteen properties, thus far. To date, only one well continues to need pumping, along with two cellars, and one cellar being pumped to avoid damage to contents. It is noted this particular property has lead two hoses across the pavement, as there are no available pump points. Over the past two days the levels have been maintained at around 36" in depth, and slowly rising. However, with the current rain forecast (28/02/20) there will be an increase. There have been no real panic situations, although it is stressful to some of the properties with vulnerable residents, currently being supported by members of the FAG. We note many more owners are stepping-up their protection efforts with the current weather situation, which is commendable, and more people are signed-up to the EA warning sites available on the internet.

Headwall and Ditch

We are keeping-up our normal watch on the area below the Forge Tea Room, and have noticed the water level in the catchment basin remains high and is slow to clear. We have mentioned this to Hampshire Highways, and they have advised they are also checking the situation and do not believe there is any problem with blockages at this time.

Sewerage

The status of the foul drain system appears to be getting worse, with manhole covers lifting on the Fareham Road where there is continuous flooding, along with sporadic use of tankers at the pumping station. We are trying to get an update on the situation, but as yet have not made contact in spite of efforts.

Open Items with Highways – Gullies

There has been some progress with the line-items that require further responses, mainly in the area of sucking-out the gullies. On Thursday 27th February, a night shift was pressed into service on West and East Streets, and it appeared that a significant number of gullies were pumped-out. The work was witnessed by the undersigned at 22:30, and the crew seemed well organised in their efforts in the low traffic at that time. It would have been nice, however, if we had been previously advised so property owners were made aware of the noise and flashing lights in the middle of the night. The FAG were not contacted, as promised.

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We will continue to monitor the list of open items, and record activities to clear issues, and maintain liaison with Highways. To date, information has been very sparse.

Expenses

The FAG can report there have been no moneys expended to date for the HPC account.

Summary

We would like to say the end is in sight, but the constant changes in the weather is making prognostication more difficult by the day. It must be said, our confidence in the Big Pipe and bulk of the resiliency measures is growing with the ongoing experiences this season – it's just dragging on for far too long!

A meeting of the FAG is being planned for March to review our efforts this season, and to make adjustments in our future planning based on Lessons Learnt. We continue to communicate on a regular basis with the property owners on our list, and invite anyone to contact the FAG with concerns, problems or questions. Lots of gratitude so far, and very few complaints!

Respectfully Submitted by,
Jan Jarvie
Chairman, Flood Action Committee