



WEST SOMERSET FLOOD GROUP

**Minutes of the Meeting held at Roadwater Village Hall,
on Wednesday 7th December 2022 starting at 2.00.pm.**

Present : Chair Brenda Maitland-Walker (Carhampton): Vice-Chair Ian Aldridge (Williton): Mary Coles (Roadwater): Caroline Moore (Nettlecombe): Mel Mileham (Winsford): Brian Martin (Sampford Brett): Heather Wilson (Crowcombe) Olivia Campbell (Watchet) Susan Smith (Carhampton) Craig Palmer and John Bonar (Minehead)

Apologies: were received from Christine Dubery (Treasurer – Dulverton): Dave Sherman (Roadwater) Barbara Wilson (West Bagborough) and Peter Payne (Williton)

Presentation from Tiffany Tapper -Wessex Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor, for the Environment Agency - please see Flood Resilience leaflet attached.

Flooding incident hotline 0800 80 70 60

Environment Agency Hot line : 0345 988 1188 or Textphone 0345 602 6340

If you require a quick dial code please contact Tiffany - tiffany.tapper@environment-agency.gov.uk

The EA has grant funding for up to £5,000 per community for equipment, e.g. spades, storage shed, torches, high vis jackets etc. If you wish to apply for Grant funding please contact tiffany via the email above, and she will send you an application form.

Treasurer's Report

Christine was unable to attend the meeting but confirmed there was £83.50 in the bank towards the cost of maintaining the website. She also mentioned there were a few members who had not yet sent the £5 annual fee towards the cost of the website. Brenda said that invoices were sent out in April 2022, but if any Parish or Town clerk hadn't received it, if they contact her she will resend it again.

Brenda welcomed the new members from Carhampton, Minehead, and Watchet

Update from Members

Minehead

John said they were just getting to grips with their Flood Plan and Craig said he was in the process of understanding who or which organisation was responsible for the various

rhynes and streams in Minehead and Alcombe. Brenda offered to meet up and do a walk around if required.

Crowcombe

Heather said they were still having problems with mud and debris blocking the gulleys, but things were complicated due to the death of Anthony Trollope-Bellew as now all the surrounding land was being held in Probate. The problem regarding the car parking was also on hold for the same reason. Brenda suggested contacting Highways to see if something more can be done to keep the gulleys clear of leaves and mud.

Williton

Ian mentioned his concern about planning issues and the fact that land was being developed on/by a flood alleviation area. He reported the EA were applying for funding to undertake some clearance work on the West Williton ditch.

Watchet

Olivia reported there had been flooding along West Street, and that the Town Councils allotments situated in that area had been subjected to landslip into the sea. She said that the EA had been very supportive and were helping them with updating their Flood Plan.

Sampford Brett

Brian reported that in October a letter was hand delivered to all those affected by the surface water flood event in mid-August outlining what the PC is doing and calling for volunteers to help manage future events. The letter included advice on flood prevention and resilience. It was also delivered to other properties along the route of flooding, with advice for the community on minimising the impact of future events. We now have a list of 15 Flood Group Volunteers. This is an excellent response for a small community. We are putting together a flood response plan.

We have been successful in getting a grant of £1,685 from Somerset Prepared for a new storage facility and flood management equipment. Thanks to Tiffany Tapper and Emma Giffard. We will start ordering this in January. Telemetry monitoring/early warning system: On October 18th, Jan Swan and I met in the village with Emma Giffard (SRA) and Gareth Varney (EA) and confirmed the location of where the equipment will be located. The conclusion was that the location will be in the stream on the corner of Brett Close. I was then notified by Emma Giffard that there is an update to this: The EA will install telemetry above and below the 'trash screen' outside Sampford House. So one will be there and the other will be on the corner of Brett Close. It is likely to be installed early in 2023. It will be maintained by the EA for 5 years, and then given to the PC. It is designed to issue alerts by email and other methods as the water reached different levels in the stream.

There was a general discussion on the fact that the EA provides help, support and maintenance for the first 5 years, and then the Parish takes over responsibility for the maintenance.

Concern was expressed that owners of the part of the stream where telemetry is sited sometimes move house and there may be a need to ensure the new owners are also happy to keep telemetry on their area of the stream. Concern was also expressed about all the statutory authorities cost shunting the responsibilities for the longer term maintenance, as well as one Parish taking all the responsibility, when other Parishes/Towns may benefit downstream. Tiffany agreed to take this up with the EA. And report back.

Winsford

Mel said she was now in contact with Ian Harper (Devon EA) and that a meeting had been arranged for 10th January. She asked if Brenda could also attend, and agreed to forward time and place details.

Mel said there had been discussions about possible installation of 'Leaky Dams' but that these do not appear to have progressed. Brenda said she would ask Jo Osborne (FWAG) whether there were any in the pipeline. Mel said the Withypool mast had been erected now for over two years but it was still not in operation, and the area suffered from lack of mobile signal. Brenda said she would try to find out why there had been such a long delay in making it operational.

Nettlecombe

Caroline said although she had been given the job of sorting out a Flood plan for the Parish she was new to the area and was finding it difficult to get information about flood issues. Members suggested she contact a number of people who would have knowledge of historic flooding issues. It was also suggested the Parish might like to call a meeting of people who had flooded or were concerned about flooding to attend a meeting to share information for a Flood Plan.

Roadwater

Mary said that volunteers had been working on clearing the gulleys in Slade Lane, and the pipe installed by Highways in Kerswell Lane appears to be working well.

Carhampton

Brenda that she had again reported ongoing flood issue at the top of Park Lane, but was told by Jo Osborne that Highways are now saying that it is not their problem it is the responsibility of the owners of the adjoining land to maintain the ditches. Brenda agreed to meet on site with FWAG and a representative from the LLFA to see what could be done. It was agreed a site meeting be arranged early January.

Time, Date and Place of next meeting

The next meeting to be held at **Sampford Brett Village Hall on 1st March 2023 starting at 2pm.**