

**A Record of the Meeting of the  
Sampford Brett Flood Response Volunteers Committee  
A Sub-Committee of Sampford Brett Parish Council**

**6pm, Monday, 25th November, 2024  
Sampford Brett Village Hall**

**Attendees:**

Martin Blazey, Clive Brooks, Paul Burnett, Richard Crabb, Martin Harris, Guy Kennett, Brian Martin (Chair), Dave Martin, Andy Pawson, Al Pilkington, Alex Pilkington, Tracey Skinner (Deputy Chair), Dave Smith, Jan Swan, Phil Swan, Simon Tremlett.

**Apologies:**

Amanda Boyd, Richard Bulpin, Leone Martin, Jon Toulson.

Brian welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending and being so supportive to the community.

**1. Approve record of last meeting - 29th April, 2024:**

The record of the last meeting had been circulated to all volunteers prior to this meeting. The approval of this as a true record of the meeting was proposed by Clive Brooks and seconded by Phil Swan and unanimously supported.

**2. Actions arising from last meeting:**

- The collapsing bank outside Longcroft has been removed and a wall built. Andy & Caron have done an excellent, high quality job and there will be no problems with the stream flow past their property.
- On the recommendation of Dave Smith at the last meeting, Brian removed the old board which was sitting on top of the trash screen on the stream outside Sampford House. It had become slippery and a potential risk to anyone using it.

**3. Community Flood Plan:**

Brian said that the annual revision of the Community Flood Plan has now been issued to all the volunteers. It is part of the Community Emergency Plan for the Parish. The version of the Community Flood Plan on the parish council website is edited to remove the contact details of the flood response volunteers and the vulnerable properties.

The changes to this annual update are minor:

- On the map, Figure 1, the words 'Storm Grid' have been changed to 'Trash Screen'.
- In Table 1, the List of Flood Response Volunteers with Contact Details, two names have been removed as they have moved, or will be soon be moving out of the village. One contact phone number had an error in it and this has now been corrected.
- In Section 5, an additional contact name and number has been added under 'Somerset Council/Somerset River Authority'.
- In Section 9, 'Review of the Community Flood Plan', the word 'significant' has been added in the sentence 'Any significant changes and recommendations will be put to the Parish Council for approval.'

#### 4. Update on Membership

Mark Dascombe has moved out of the village in the summer and Dave Smith is also moving imminently. Both will therefore no longer be volunteers, but we thank them for their time for helping us since the group was set up. There are currently 21 volunteers.

#### 5. Telemetry Gauges:

Brian said that the two stream level gauges are working well and have proved very useful. He reminded everyone that one is by the trash grid outside Sampford House (the upstream or US gauge) and the other is on the corner of Brett Close (the downstream or DS gauge). These were installed by the Environment Agency and are both battery operated, powered by solar cells. The level of the stream is measured every 15 minutes. Alerts are sent out when the level breached pre-set levels (Lo, Hi and HiHi) - and these alerts are received as texts and emails by three of the volunteers (Brian, Jan and Simon T.)

They are both positioned by trash screens on the stream. These need clearing of plant debris, twigs and occasionally logs, buckets and plant pots! During heavy rain episodes it is important that these are cleared as often as possible as the stream level can rise rapidly when the screens are blocked. The debris is taken to the recycling centre. As an example, Brian said that over the past 48 hours there was 1.4 inches of rain. There were phone alerts from the stream gauges in the early hours of Sunday morning (yesterday). He got out of bed twice to clear the trash screen outside Sampford House. This is important as the due to blockage by plant debris and logs it had risen to road level. The level immediately dropped. There was some discussion of how we can minimise the disturbance of nighttime phone alerts without losing the urgency of early warnings. We will have a discussion with the Environment Agency.

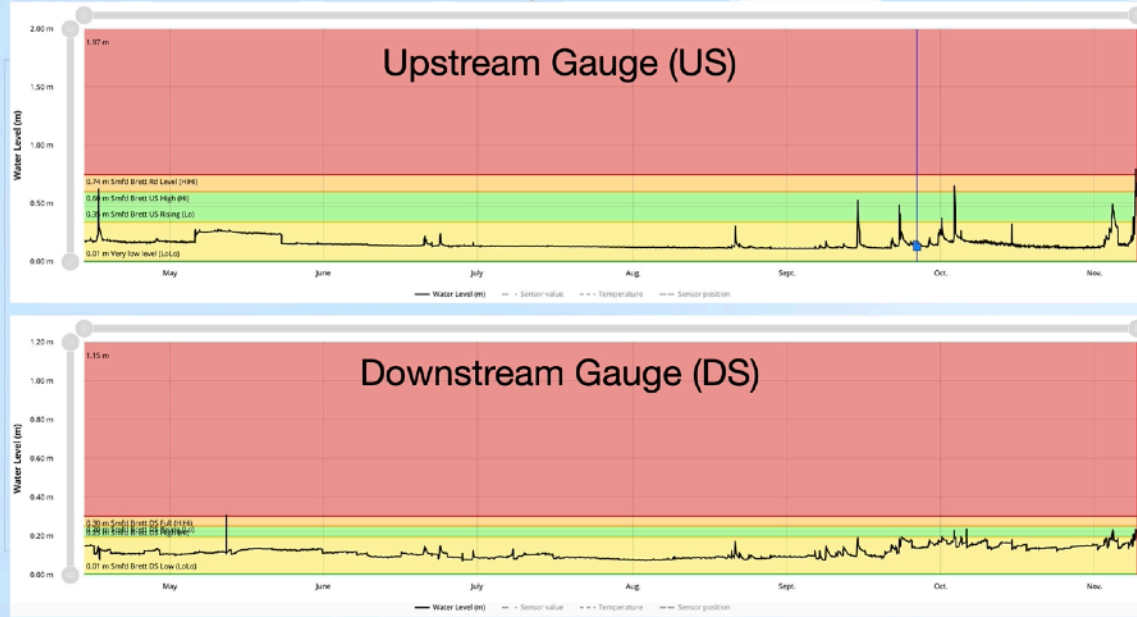
#### 6. Events since the last meeting:

Despite heavy rains and flooding in many areas of the south-west over the past six months, Sampford Brett has mostly avoided prolonged downpours. There have been no flooding events since the last meeting at the end of April. The total rainfall since that meeting up to today is 540mm or 21.4 inches. The highest rainfall was in September and October. Brian described the data for the stream and the river.

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>RAINFALL (mm)</b>	<b>RAINFALL (in)</b>
<b>May</b>	68	2.8
<b>June</b>	13	0.5
<b>July</b>	61	2.4
<b>August</b>	18	0.7
<b>September</b>	167	6.6
<b>October</b>	128	5.0
<b>November (up to 25th)</b>	85	3.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>540 mm</b>	<b>21.4 in</b>

# Stream Height Since Last Meeting

Data from US and DS Gauges 29th April to November 25th, 2024



## Doniford Stream River Levels Over the Past Week up to 25/11/2024



### 7. Flood storage shed equipment update:

Brian reminded the volunteers of what equipment is in the dedicated flood shed in the village hall car park. There have been no changes to the inventory since the last meeting.

The previously used sandless sandbags, which had been stored outside, began to deteriorate in the summer after about 9 months. Up to that point it seems they are reusable, which is useful to know as a cost saving measure. There are 40 used sandless sandbags, and these are being disposed of, over a number of trips, in the combustible waste skip at the recycling centre as per the guidelines.

**8. West Somerset Flood Group:**

These quarterly meetings involve a number of parishes in West Somerset. Brian usually attends these. Matters discussed include updates relevant to our parishes re: regulatory bodies, councils, authorities, emergency and utility services. We also share experiences and lessons learned.

Brian shared a few points from the most recent WSFG meeting when there was a talk on coastal erosion on the Somerset coast by John Buttivant, Coastal Engineer at the Environment Agency.

**9. Date of Next Meeting:**

To be decided.

*BAM 25.11.2024*