

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes

of the **Special Meeting to address local flood problems**,
held on Thursday 1st November 2012 in the Hadwin Lounge,
Hurworth Grange, Hurworth on Tees.

Those attending:-

Ian Holme (Chairman), Jean Peacock, Peter Foster, Val Hughes, Tony Winnett,
Tony Needham, Ken Pattison, Jill Russell, John Howard, Chris Pratt, Norma Kyle.

Also present, Martin Swainston, Reporter (Northern Echo), Peter Allan (Parish Clerk)

Ken Pattison took the Chair, and welcomed the following invited guests:-

Nothumbrian Water – Geof Graham and James Connor

StreetScene – Gary Bennett

DBC Flood Dept. – Bill Westland

Fire Brigade – Steve Cummings

Police – Chris Reeves

Environment Agency – .Catherine Marshall,

Borough Councillor – Martin Swainston

The chair welcomed members of the public, and expressed delight that the meeting was attended by over sixty residents.

The Chair outlined the extent of the problems which the heavy rain had caused on 22nd September, and the reason for this special meeting.

Geoff Graham (GG) and James Connor

Geoff stated that over 3000 properties in the area had been affected by the storms, and the damage caused was wide-spread. He was aware of four locations in Hurworth Parish which had uncured flooding. He gave a detailed report on the work which had been done to identify the causes of the problems, and outlined the actions which were already scheduled to remedy the causes, and preventative measures which are being put in place.

The problem areas identified are:-

- The Glebe
- Blind Lane
- West End & The Chase
- Roundhill Road area.

Members of the public asked specific questions, and received answers providing more details of the actual work which is being undertaken. In the fullness of time a complete hydraulic capacity

analysis will be carried out, but this could take two years. In the meantime restrictor plates have been installed and more will be installed.

Members of the public expressed concern about sewage leakage from the pipes at Hurworth Grange, leading to The Glebe and Roundhill Road. Mr Graham stated that the sewage pipes were actually being leaked inwards, and not outwards, and the pipes are 1.5 meters under the ground. The pipe is to be repaired in the next two weeks. Geoff Graham (GG) also assured the meeting that the sewage discharge from the Grange was not the cause of the West End flooding. Cath Mapplebeck (CM West End) also seriously queried the use and usage of the restrictor plates, this being further emphasised by the chair. Again, assurances were given by GG that an inclusive solution would be found but for the time being the restrictor plates would remain even though it was clear they were the cause of the new problems on West End (Chair's comment). CM expressed her grave concern at this as that meant they were still exposed to exactly the same risks. NW (GG) was asked by the chair to report on a day to day basis and to convene a meeting with West End residents in the near future to fully acquaint them of progress. This was agreed by GG.

There was concern expressed about the ditch on the east side of the farm being blocked. Mr Terry Fidell (of Glebe Farm and Bedburn Trust) informed the meeting that he had now cleared the ditch, down to the grid, and the principle should work better. However it was not possible to know if the pipe is clear down to the soakaway, nor if the soakaway is actually there, or whether or not it finishes at the field boundary wall or goes beyond. Bill Westland (DBC) stated he had certain powers to deal with land drainage problems and requested that Mrs Miller (Friars Pardon flooding) get in touch with him.

GG also agreed to comment on why there had been a feedback of sewage to the toilets in the bungalows on The Chase. This was not connected with the surface drain clearance on the Chase.

Eileen Miller thanked the Fire Brigade for their help in pumping away excessive flood water at 26 Friars Pardon.

Tony Needham stated that the residents of Blind Lane were experiencing extreme volumes of surface water coming from the fields onto their properties. The pond in the rear field belonging to Dr. Williams is becoming larger over time and is over-spilling into residents gardens. Mr. Hanson, one of the residents, has cleared a culvert out on his property which has alleviated some of the water spilling out onto the lane. TN also asked NW if they would investigate a surface water pipe that runs from the bottom of Elmfield Rd into a trap/soakaway next to Dr. William's pond as he believes this may have become damaged and is therefore creating a 'French drain' effect allowing excess water from the fields into the pipe system. Geoff Graham from NW agreed to carry out some investigations in this respect.

Mr Isles, 2 Blind Lane, stated that Blind Lane acts as a bowl for drainage from several areas of the village, which run down from higher locations. He reported that there is only one gully, and that is often blocked. He believed that modifications to the water flow elsewhere, like the Chase and Ashfield Grove are contributing to the problems and volume of water in Blind Lane and West End. It was agreed that Northumbria Water will meet with Mr Isles and Tony Needham and study this situation.

Derek Dodswell, Neasham P.C. reported on the damage and problems at Neasham, which were relatively minor, due to the extensive work carried out on their flood prevention plan. However, there are problems with the sewage station, which appears to be over loaded. It was agreed a meeting will be convened with NW to investigate this.

Les Waugh reported that there are serious problems with the water flow in Cree Beck. There are many blockages, including trees, and the flow of water to the River Tees is being restricted, and hence causing serious flooding. Martin Swainston supported this view and will urge DBC to have it cleared.

Peter Foster thanked the police and fire brigade for their great efforts on 22nd September, despite the traffic overload caused by the closing of the A1 motorway. Cllr Foster alluded to the exceptional flooding in Roundhill Road, and concluded that the state of Cree Beck probably caused this, he believes this has been aggravated by the holding ponds not being maintained. **Bill Westland** undertook to look into this, and the problems of Cree Beck.

Frank Morton made reference to the islands in the river Tees, and suggested that this was altering the water flow. Peter Foster stated that the island had been removed three times. **Catherine Marshall**, from the Environment Agency agreed to investigate this.

Ken Pattison thanked everybody for their participation and the Special Meeting was closed at 7:15pm.