

## East Hagbourne Parish Council - Flood Report, January 2014

Since the events of 2007/2008 which saw some very wet weather, East Hagbourne Parish Council has been working with other authorities to minimise the risk of flooding particularly from Hacca's Brook. The heavy and persistent rains of the past few weeks have reminded us of the importance of being prepared. Since 2007, the stream below Blewbury Road has been extensively cleared by SODC and OCC have carried out substantial works on the road drainage, particularly in Blewbury road and Main Road.

An important part of our preparedness is the work parties carried out by local volunteers under the leadership of the Parish Council. The area downstream of Blewbury Road is cleared each year and the vegetation was recently trimmed along Parsonage Lane.

The following report summarises the experiences following the recent heavy rains.

Following a few weeks of rainy weather, the ground was fairly saturated at the beginning of January 2014. On the night of Monday 6 January a belt of heavy rain came through, fortunately moving quite rapidly. As a gauge of its severity, several roads in Oxfordshire remained closed several days later.

### Tadley

At around 08:30 on Tuesday 7 January, the stream was high and the lower channel running full. There was standing water outside 41 Blewbury Rd, but this cleared quickly. The drains outside 61 Blewbury Road were draining freely, but a little later the water level began to rise there.

This seems to have been caused by a big surge of water running off the fields. The back garden of a house along Blewbury Road was flooded and in danger of entering the house, so a neighbour dug a channel to release the water into the road. This may have contributed to a temporary overloading the drains outside no 61, although the reduced head caused by the high water level in the lower stream channel probably contributed.

Fast action by neighbours put sand bags to protect adjoining houses and the Fire Brigade was also called. They pumped water to the stream avoiding it rising higher in the road.

At about 09:30 there was a strong surge in the stream itself which was already running high and reaching the bridge in the cottage behind no 42. This surge was also seen at the monitoring station on the Mill Brook at Blewbury (and lasted less than an hour) so seems a widespread phenomenon.

### Learnings:

- *we know the stream channels downstream were in good condition, because they had been maintained over the winter and inspected the previous day.*
- *the road drains were also running freely, but became overwhelmed by the field run-off*
- *the Fire Brigade were very helpful in mitigating the situation*

### Next time:

- *ensure that water from the fields can run off gradually to avoid a surge*
- *explore digging a surface channel from outside no 61 to the stream to limit the depth of standing water*
- *ensure we have sand bags in time!*

### Main Road

A torrent of water cascaded across the road outside Kingsholme. As noted above, two of the three ducts under the road were blocked and the surplus water ran across the road reaching a considerable depth and threatening Kingsholme.

Road drains along the road were overwhelmed, but the excess flowed along the surface and found its way into the stream, unfortunately contributing to the problems around Kingsholme

- *the item is reported on OCC's web site, as well as by email to OCC*
- *ensure we have sandbags available.*

### Village Car Park

There was a large puddle over the drain nearest to the Village Hall (the one that caused trouble in the past)

- probably not a cause for immediate concern as the water drained away fairly rapidly, but monitor for future maintenance action

Coscote

A large area of water which became impassable - several cars were disabled in the water. West Hagbourne was closed.

Hagbourne Mill

Standing water occurs at this point after rain and has been reported on the OCC web-site. It was particularly bad on this occasion

**For future reference:**

if you're in a life threatening situation then please dial the emergency services on 999

- if it is a none urgent call then please call the emergency service on 101
- if you are concerned about a vulnerable person with a social care need with an issue that cannot wait until normal office hours please call the county council's emergency duty team on 0800 833 408.

**Sandbags are available from:**

- Abingdon – Cattle Market car park, next to the council offices at Abbey House
- Abingdon – B&Q, Fairacres retail park
- Crowmarsh – from the South Oxfordshire District Council office car park, Benson Lane
- Henley – from Kings Road car park.

**Who is responsible for what:**

- the property owner – ensuring that their own property is protected, being prepared to vacate your house if necessary
- [Environment Agency](#) – determines the level of flood warning and works to alleviate potential flooding issues
- [Oxfordshire County Council](#) – road closures and sand bag distribution (working with other agencies)
- [South Oxfordshire](#) and [Vale of White Horse](#) District Councils – sand bag dumps and direct sand bag distribution to those at greatest need (working with county council).

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