



EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING
7.30pm 11th DECEMBER 2024
STOKE PRIOR VILLAGE HALL

MEETING PAPERS

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Councillors are summoned to an extra ordinary meeting of the Group Parish Council to be held on

**Wednesday 11 December 2024 at 7.30pm
in Stoke Prior Village Hall**

which will consider the business set out in the agenda below.

5th December 2024

Allan Drew, Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

114/24 Apologies for absence

To receive: any apologies for absence.

To consider, if necessary: excusing absence of members to the following meeting.

115/24 Declaration of interests and dispensations

To receive and record: any declarations of interest in agenda items in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted in July 2021.

To consider: any applications for dispensations in accordance with Standing Order 25.

116/24 Planning Committee and planning applications update

There have been no new applications since the meeting on 20 November 2024

Update

233037 Ashwood House Stoke Prior HR6 0LG

Application for the discharge of details reserved by condition 3 attached to planning permission 232181

Approved, condition 3 discharged

117/24 Ward Councillor's report

Cllr. Baker will report on Herefordshire Council's response to the recent and extensive flooding across the County.

118/24 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman will summarise Council's current plans (as made before the extensive problems caused by Storm Bert, 23-25 November 2024) to improve drainage within the Group Parishes. These plans are currently on hold pending any decisions taken at this meeting.

119/24 Public participation

Under Standing Order 8, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and ask or answer questions. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.

The purpose of this extra ordinary Council meeting is to discuss flooding issues in the Group Parishes. Members of the public should use this opportunity to present their views to Council and have their issues and ideas recorded so they can be discussed in the next agenda item.

120/24 Council discussion

Council to discuss issues raised in this meeting and to consider any changes to current plans.

121/24 Matters for discussion at the next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 7.30pm in Risbury village hall

The Chairman will close the meeting.

Agenda item 120/24 Briefing on Drainage Issues & Actions

This briefing paper summarises the current position of Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council (HFSP GPC) regarding improvement of drainage within the Group Parishes.

1. Background.

For the last 30 years Government has been active in both recognising and legislating to combat the challenge of climate change. A summary of legislation is in section 5 but ultimately the legislation places responsibility for flood management squarely onto County & District Councils and Unitary authorities. Herefordshire Council is a Unitary authority and is responsible for all aspects of flood management and prevention within the County. Parish Councils have no responsibilities in the National Strategy and although communities have a role they also have no responsibilities. However, it would seem to be common sense that community effort is focussed through the Parish Council such that self-help can be maximised.

“Drainage” in this context refers to the management (usually removal) of surface water from anywhere in the Parishes. In practice, and also in law, the management of drainage is-

- on private land the responsibility of the landowner
- on public land, such as highways, the responsibility of public bodies, including Highways Agencies, Principal Authorities (such as Herefordshire Council) and Internal Drainage Boards.

Drainage can be broadly split into two main assets-

- Open ditches which collect surface water and lead it to a place where it can be handled effectively
- Drains consisting of underground pipes and associated hardware which transport surface water in areas where ditches are impractical (e.g. under highways, in built-up areas etc.)

In the broadest of terms (so not always correct)-

- Ditches are the responsibility of the landowner on whose land the ditch runs.
- Drains are owned by, and the responsibility of, the local County/District/Unitary Council.

2. Local drainage grant scheme

Until this year, 2024-25, drains were completely managed by Herefordshire Council through its contractor Balfour Beatty. Ditches are maintained by landowners, sometimes assisted by the Parish Council, and sometimes such work is charged back to the landowner.

In 2024-25 for the first time Herefordshire allowed Parish Councils to carry out minor work on drains and created a grant scheme to enable work to be done. Details of this scheme (local drainage grant) were published in July and HFSP GPC made an application under this scheme in September. This application was approved by Herefordshire in October and the list of works proposed was to be carried out almost immediately.

However, in the light of two severe recent storms (Bert & Darragh) work has been suspended should this meeting decide to change the spending priorities.

3. Grant funding

Until 2022-23 there had been almost no grant funding from Herefordshire to the Parishes. However, in 2022-23 the Parishes received a grant to carry out basic maintenance work on ditches, drain tops and “grips” (The channel cut into the verge from the highway to lead water into a ditch adjacent to the highway). This work had always been carried out but at Parish expense. In 2023-24 the grant was more generous and the Parish Council decided to focus on two key blackspots-

- Wheelbarrow Castle, where significant improvements were made centred on removing a fallen willow tree which was obstructing the ditch by Cross Cottage.
- On the C1110 in the area of The Heath where a cross road drain was cleared of roots resulting in an existing soak away becoming more effective.

In 2024-25 grant funding from Herefordshire is-

Grant	Funding £	Description
Lengthsman	2376	Ditches, scraping drain tops, clearing grips
Nominated Task	1188+1188	Creating a silt trap at The Heath (Match funded)
Local Drainage	8575	See schedule
Total	12139+1188	£1188 is Parish match funded contribution

The works proposed (and approved) for the local drainage grant were agreed at the Council meeting on 20 November and are-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL. DRAINAGE WORKS 2024-25								
Category	Detailed work	Parish	Estimated days of work	Contractor	Price	Start date	Anticipated end date	Notes
1. Ditching Works	Around Risbury, Blacksmiths Lane, C1110 east of village	H	1	DC Garden Services	1050	Dec-24	Jan-25	
	In the region of Wheelbarrow Castle	F&SP	0.5	DC Garden Services	525	Dec-24	Jan-25	
	In the area of Risbury Court	F&SP	0.5	DC Garden Services	525	Dec-24	Jan-25	
	TOTAL		2		2100			
2. Drainage Asset Survey	Map drainage assets in the Group Parish	HF&SP	4	David Bell	1000	Nov-24	Dec-24	
3. Minor Drainage Schemes	Create silt trap in sump serving drains at The Heath	F&SP	1	TBA (still awaiting quotes)	750	Oct-24	Nov-24	tradition.frozen.highly
	Investigate & repair blocked/crushed drain on C1110 around The Gate House	H	1	TBA (still awaiting quotes)	750	Oct-24	Nov-24	jaws.ballpoint.successor
	Investigate & repair blocked cross road drain on C1110 near Butterfield on C1110	H	0.5	TBA (still awaiting quotes)	375	Oct-24	Nov-24	field.pheasants.stray
	TOTAL				1875			
4. Gully Clearing and Cleansing	Drains around Stoke Prior centre	F&SP	0.5	Herefordshire	900	Jan-25	Jan-25	lunges.forkful.washroom
	Drains around the Heath	F&SP	0.5	Herefordshire	900	Jan-25	Jan-25	tradition.frozen.highly
	Drains along C1110 in Risbury centre	H	0.5	Herefordshire	900	Jan-25	Jan-25	excavated.adhesive.specifies
	Drains between Risbury and Bowley Lane junction		0.5	Herefordshire	900	Jan-25	Jan-25	jaws.ballpoint.successor
	Total		1.5		3600			
Grand Total					8575			

These works were expected to be commissioned by now but have been delayed for a short time pending the outcomes from this meeting.

4.Councillor engagement

For some years HFSP GPC has agreed specific roles for individual Councillors. Drainage was one of these roles and the lead Councillors are-

- Cllr. Janette Fullwood for Ford & Stoke Prior Parish
- Cllrs. Rob Pugh & Ken Bemand for Humber Parish.

All other Councillors have a supporting role in drainage issues by reporting problems they see or which are brought to their notice by residents.

Recent Councillor reports include the following-

Issues from Cllr. Fullwood – Ford & Stoke Prior	
27 November 2024	<p>Yesterday evening I drove to Bodenham via Bowley Lane.</p> <p>This is now in addition to my bolded notes at the bottom of my report of yesterday. There is still a large part of the road flooded between Eastmead and Railway Cottages. The newish drain fitted adjacent to the road when Eastmead was developed is completely blocked. The dip in the road between Eastmead and Railway Cottages is holding water, the lengthmen have from time to time dug a grip into the field but once again it was not in the correct place??</p> <p>From Ashbed Cottage to Railway Cottages there is still significant gravel & debris on the roadway,.</p>

A report regarding the heavy rainfall on Sunday 24th November 2024 in parts of STOKE PRIOR

From The turn into School Lane & The Pink Cottage

The flood gates at Priory Farm worked well and appeared to protect the farmhouse from the excess water levels. There were two results from this as the excess water was diverted into both the Prill and along School Lane onto Stoke Prior Road rushing past the Village Hall towards the War Memorial. The level of water overwhelmed the pump in the cellar of the garage at Stonelynne.

Normans Lane

The level of water bringing down large stones from Normans Lane was excessive. The use of this bridleway has increased due to the developments that have been ongoing to the properties alongside the lane. To date none of these works have been completed. The damage from the water to the entrance splay onto Normans Lane has created a number of deep potholes in the tarmac. On 24.11.24 Parish councillor Bemand cleared out the two grated drains. A video is available of this area. The roadway was littered with stone debris brought down by the power of the water. We are informed that later that morning a digger belonging to The Bungalow in Normans Lane cleared this soil & rubble from the Stoke Prior road and reinstated it back onto the bridleway.

Village Hall

Sadly the new scalping base laid beside the entrance steps to the Hall were washed away down the road during the flooding.

The Prill Cottage, War Memorial to past St Lukes Church

Water was gushing across the road along The Prill, The owner of Prill Cottage was attempting to prevent the water entering the rear of her house from the adjacent stream with as many bags of soil as could be filled. The grated drain next to The Grill Cottage garden gate is still blocked. At Devon Cottage the high level of the water was mm from the doorstep. Thankfully it did not get into the property. From The War Memorial to past the Church the water was impassable by car.

Residents of The Bury spent a number of hours opening up as many surface water drains as possible to alleviate the flooding from 7am - mid day. Numerous cars trying to find a way out of the village were turned back from this location. By 3.30pm the level of water had subsided. The landowner removed the extensive rubble and debris from the road into the field opposite St Luke's Church. This serious flooding has impacted the operation of the sewage treatment plant for residents of all 10 properties at The Bury Barns and so far in 2024 this flooding has happened three times in the last six months.

Wheelbarrow Castle

This road way remained passable with care. However by Monday 25th November the water levels were again very high. The owner of Eaton Farm managed to rod out the dilapidated Inefficient drain under the gateway entrance from the road into the field belonging to Cross Cottage. Due to the ditching done in late September the water eventually receded with two hours.

DAMAGE

There is a destroyed inspection cover in the verge of Midsommer House which belongs to the Council & needs replacing. A number of the striped warning posts outside Devon Cottage have been broken or washed away. The roadside drain at Wheelbarrow Castle needs a protection

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	<p>barrier. Storm drains at The Prill & outside Church still need clearing.</p> <p>The above report only covers the areas I personally visited & I have photographs of these locations</p>
<p>17 October 2024</p>	<p>I have received this today regarding the gravel that has appeared from the flood yesterday. Jackie Brett is quite correct the state of the road is quite hazardous.</p> <p>On a more positive note Wheelbarrow Castle has flowed well, water is still flooding down the footpath adjacent to The Slough but not collecting in the road at previous levels. It would be good if the lengthsman could cur and remove the roadside debris between the manhole & Cross Cottage as this will cause problems later on. Andrew Price, Eaton Farm, has recently done an amazing job in the lane & ditch along side Cross Cottage and water is now flowing at a pace.</p>

Issues from Cllr. Anne Grace – Humber Parish (Steensbridge)

<p>27 November 2024</p>	<p>Steens Bridge has been badly effected by flood water. The A44 was flooded from Station Cottage down to The White House. The field, Humber Brook and drainage ditch flooded and the water came also most up to the road. When I looked in the afternoon, I could only see the top two bars of the large field gate, the fireman said when they arrived you couldn't even see that, it was shocking to see.</p> <p>I have copied below 2 emails I received from Valerie Tuffy at Brook House, which are self-explanatory.</p> <p>4 houses in Humber Close flooded because of the storms yesterday. 124 to 127.</p> <p>2 families have babies and toddlers , 2 families have teenagers.</p> <p>When they phoned the Stonewater emergency line it was unavailable yesterday . Because of lots of flooding in Stoke Prior they couldn't get sandbags out to them.</p> <p>When they got through to Stonewater the lady was very unhelpful.</p> <p>1 of the houses had previously flooded (the previous tenants) The water was coming out of the drain in their downstairs toilet. That family have a baby and a toddler and for health reasons they are going to stay with parents while they try and get it sorted .</p> <p>I knocked yesterday at Humber Close to ask that if parish council can obtain more sandbags have they somewhere to store them they said yes the shed. It came in their back and front doors.</p> <p>Stonewater told them they don't supply them. They don't have insurance and had only just put flooring down and their Christmas tree was up.</p> <p>Also Grant and Gail (The White House) have had to move out because of the flood damage, home during the day, I feel really sad. After all their work to flood proof their home and it came down the road down their garden path and in the house, they opened the flood gate to let it out and an hour later it came from the field across the lane and straight back in the flood gate. I said call the fire brigade, they were not going to win this battle on their own.</p> <p>We were lucky this time. It came down the garden path and we had sand bags, first time ever we had to use the pump. .</p> <p>But it got into our hen shed (5") and the outbuilding with the lawn mower in and Helens stuff and spare furniture was stored in there 😞</p> <p>We will need a few more sand bags, don't expect this will be the last time.</p>
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Issues from Cllr. Richard Thomas – Humber Parish (Risbury)

<p>23 November 2024</p>	<p>There is a large puddle at Hollywall croft, just north of Risbury Mill.</p> <p>I had a call from Peter Leddington Hill this afternoon about the water, he has tried to clear it and so have I in the past half an hour.</p> <p>The culvert on the eastern side of the road is clear. The pipe running behind the cottage into the ditch, is hardly running.</p> <p>I suspect that the blockage has been caused by water from the north, running down the road and the ditch from the direction of Sunny Bank.</p> <p>I did try to attempt to clear the point where the ditch meets the drain, just up from the cottage in the summer, but it really needs more time, or a mini digger.</p> <p>I am fairly sure that clearing the pipe at that end and very likely jetting the pipe will solve the problem. I suspect that it is blocked where the two pipes meet. I am not sure exactly where that is, but Pete probably does.</p> <p>Pete and/or I would be happy to meet anyone there doing the work, I presume we have funds for sorting the problem? I fear if we ask Balfour Beatty to come, it will either be in the new year, we'll have 10 vans, 20 men and a day wasted. I really won't take more than a couple of hours. To be honest, if I'm feeling charitable that day, I'll probably get on a spade and help myself.</p>
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5. Legislative Background

The lead public body for dealing with flooding is the Environment Agency (EA). In 2020 the agency published a National Strategy¹ which, amongst other things allocated responsibilities for dealing with flooding and drainage.

All County Councils and Unitary Councils (such as Herefordshire Council) are classed as lead local flood authorities. These authorities have the following responsibilities, many of which arise from the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA 2010)-

- developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk (surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) management in their areas (FWMA, 2010)
- preparing preliminary flood risk assessments and flood risk management plans for sources of flooding other than main rivers, reservoirs and the sea (Flood Risk Regulations 2009)
- carrying out works to manage flood risk from surface water and groundwater (Land Drainage Act 1991)
- maintaining a register of flood defences infrastructure in its area (FWMA, 2010) —
- consenting to certain structural changes on ordinary watercourses (Land Drainage Act 1991)
- investigating flooding in its area (FWMA, 2010)
- acting as a statutory consultee for planning authorities and respond to the drainage design for major planning applications (Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015).

Additional bodies with responsibilities are-

- Water Companies
- Riparian landowners
- Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) For Herefordshire this is the English Severn & Wye FCC.

Interestingly within this National Strategy Parish Councils have no responsibilities allocated to them. However, communities do figure in the strategy although they have no formal responsibilities. The community can focus its efforts through the Parish Council and collectively take actions to improve resilience against flooding.

¹ National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy