

# BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP'S  
MEETING AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE  
AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2014**

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b><u>ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN</u></b></p> <p>1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the October Meeting. He recalled that there had been a certain amount of rain over the previous month, including ex-hurricane Gonzalo, but that, at least in part because of all the work the Group had done this year, it had not been sufficient to affect levels in the local watercourses.</p> <p>2. <b><u>Apologies.</u></b> There were 26 members present and apologies were received from Mr Brown, Mr and Mrs Griffiths, Mr and Mrs Rudge, Mrs Davies, Mrs Parker and Miss Gibson.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b></p> <p>3. The Chairman asked members to approve the Minutes of the September Meeting which had been circulated earlier with the Agenda and which were also available in hard copy on the tables. Approval of the Minutes was proposed by Mr Tony Clark, seconded by Mr Derek Sebbage and agreed.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING</u></b></p> <p>4. <b><u>Herefordshire Council.</u></b> The Chairman said that he had reminded the District Councillor, Cllr Jeremy Millar, that the BFPG was still waiting for a response from Herefordshire Council about the Ketch Lane and Pugh's Field culverts and also about the Group's offer to help the Council and Balfour Beatty with monitoring and signing road closures when the Ketch Lane junction is flooded.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 4 – EXTERNAL CONTACTS</u></b></p> <p>5. <b><u>Sandbags.</u></b> The Chairman reported that the Parish Clerk had been contacted by Herefordshire Council regarding the Parish's requirement for sandbags for the coming winter. On the Group's advice he had requested a further 150 to be located at the Parish Hall next to the salt bags. Once it is known that the request had been successful, a notice will be put in the <i>Newsletter</i> and circulated to all BFPG members.</p> <p>6. <b><u>Convergent Volunteers Project.</u></b></p> <p>a. The Chairman reminded members that Warwick University's Business School was engaged in a Defra-funded project looking at how best use can be made of 'convergent volunteers', <i>i.e.</i> those volunteers who turn up without prior warning to offer their help during a flooding emergency. Two members of the Warwickshire University team, Mr Chris Smith and Mr Graham Hieke, had visited Bodenham and</p>	

taken part in a working party session in the Millcroft Brook on Friday, 27 June. They had also taken the opportunity to talk to Group members over refreshments at Millcroft Farm afterwards and had followed this up by conducting telephone interviews with one or two members subsequently.

b. The Chairman reported that the Project Team had recently sent him the full draft study Report for comment. This ran to some 130 pages and drew on evidence from academic literature on the handling of volunteers, as well as examining how other countries tackled the issues raised by convergent volunteers in emergencies. So far as this country was concerned the Project had looked at three case studies – Bodenham after the July 2007 flood and Boston in Lincolnshire and Tonbridge in Kent during the floods of December 2013.

c. The Bodenham case, of course, showed volunteers coming together after an emergency and trying to prevent a future one by proactive work, not least in physically clearing watercourses. The other two case studies were very different in scale; Tonbridge had over 250 houses flooded and Boston about 1800. They were also different since those involved were much more concerned about how volunteers were pulled together to clean up houses which had been flooded, how to distribute money and other donations, such as furniture and white goods, to those who had been affected by flooding, who should be responsible for organising the volunteers – for example, the local council or the British Red Cross - how communications should be arranged (a great deal of use was made of Facebook), and so on.

d. The Chairman concluded by saying that the draft Report made 14 recommendations, but most of these were not directly applicable to Bodenham because they were aimed at government and local authorities. Nevertheless the Report made interesting reading, there were some lessons to be learnt for Bodenham, and he had commented on it fully so far as the BFPG was concerned.

#### 7. **Defra Project - Surveying for Flood Resilience in Individual Properties.**

a. The Chairman reported that the Secretary had been invited to join the Board of the Defra Project “Surveying for Flood Resilience in Individual Properties”. The aim of the Project is to encourage wider use of property level flood protection (PLP) “by developing a cohort of competent surveyors”. The research is concentrating on the training and assessment of surveyors who will provide the initial risk assessment of properties - so called ‘independent flood risk advisors (iFRA)’ - rather than those who will look at the actual installation of flood protection equipment in houses. (The latter is obviously important as well, but is being looked at separately).

b. Independent flood risk advisors will need to know where to find and assess existing data about flood risk; they will need to have a knowledge of building construction and what would be the consequences if a property was flooded; they will also require a knowledge of flood insurance, of methods of alleviating the risk of flooding both at individual and community level, and of what equipment and services are available for this. All this will lead to the definition of a skill set against which independent flood risk advisors can be properly accredited.

c. The project team are trying to involve as wide a variety of stakeholders as possible and this includes ‘consumers’, *i.e.* people who have already installed PLP,

or who are in the process of trying to obtain PLP because they may be able to provide important insights into householders' expectations and the affordability of PLP equipment. The stakeholders also include insurance companies because they should be interested in having a high quality scheme where they can have confidence that surveyors are fully competent. Also on the Board are representatives of local authorities and other bodies who want to see an accreditation scheme set up, as well as training organisations who will ultimately play a large part in making it work.

d. The Chairman said that the Secretary was due to attend a Board Meeting in London the following day (29 October). Also attending would be a representative of Aviva Insurance and so she would take the opportunity to talk to him about how the fitting of personal protection equipment affects insurance in general and those in Bodenham in particular.

8. **Northamptonshire Flood Warden Training Event (Saturday, 15 November).**

The Chairman recalled that he and the Secretary had been invited to give a presentation to the Pathfinder Groups in Northamptonshire on 15 November. They had been asked to talk about the work of the BFPG under the heading "*Real Life Flood Events and Lessons Learned*" and, in fact, were the first item on the programme for the day. Due to the early start and taking account of the nearly three hour journey, the need to avoid travelling across England in the morning rush hour, and the need to set up before the start of the event, the Chairman said that they had no option but to travel to Northampton the evening before. Unfortunately, this meant that they would not now be able to attend the BFPG Quiz Night on the 14 November, something they had not appreciated when they first accepted the Pathfinder invitation. He very much regretted this, but on the positive side it gave another team a better chance of winning!

9. **Fallen Trees in the River Lugg.**

a. The Chairman drew members' attention to the work Mr Rodney Minchen and Mr Mike Mullenger had done in monitoring the River Lugg as it passed through the Parish. Some time ago Mr Minchen had notified the Secretary that there were a number of fallen trees in the Lugg and these had, as in the past, been reported to the Navigation Officer, Mr Paul Senior, but nothing had happened. He had then reported them to Ms Lynn Bulbeck at the Environment Agency, but had received a reply to the effect that the Agency would look in to it. As the build-up of debris became greater, Mr Minchen had persisted in raising the issue.

b. The Chairman said that he was now pleased to report that this persistence had paid off as now, many months later, Mr Minchen had contacted the Secretary to say that the obstructions in the river had been cleared. The Environment Agency had not only cleared the trees which had been reported, but many more besides and there was now a lot of tree timber stacked on the banks. Accordingly, Mr Minchen had written to Ms Lynn Bulbeck on behalf of the Group to thank her and the Agency team responsible for carrying out the work.

c. The Chairman added that he was sure that members would also join him in thanking Mr Minchen himself for his proactive approach and for securing a successful outcome to an issue which, if left unresolved, could have posed many problems for the village.

	<b>Action</b>
<p><b><u>ITEM 5 - TREASURER'S REPORT</u></b></p> <p>10. The Chairman reported that as at 30 September the balance stood at £2,650.60. However, the Secretary had submitted an invoice for printer ink (only) used over the period 1 September 2013 to 3 October 2014. This amounted to £70.00 and she was happy to answer any questions about it. He asked if he could have a proposal that she should be reimbursed. This was proposed by Mrs Bowden, seconded by Mr George and agreed.</p> <p>11. The Chairman reported that the only other recent expenditure had been an invoice from the Siward James and Arkwright Trust for room hire from July to September inclusive at a cost of £18.00. Therefore, taking into account the approval of the ink expenditure, the total expenditure for October was £88.00. The balance of account therefore now stood at £2,562.60.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 6 – FUTURE PLANS</u></b></p> <p>12. <b><u>Working Party Sessions.</u></b> The Chairman reported that the final working party session for the 2014 ‘season’ had taken place on Friday, 10 October. Sixteen members had helped with the clearance of summer growth in the Millcroft Brook from Brockington Bridge up to the Golf Course and down to Millcroft Barn. Most of the vegetation had been cleared and he expressed his sincere thanks to all those who had taken part. Despite having had vehicle problems, Mr and Mrs Stephens had come out the following Sunday and, helped by the Chairman, Secretary and Mr Rudge, had disposed of the vegetation placed on the side of the brook. The working party sessions would start again around April 2015.</p> <p>13. <b><u>Annual Quiz Night.</u></b> The Chairman reminded everyone that the BFPG Fund-Raising Quiz Night would take place on Friday, 14 November in the Parish Hall. The Secretary had produced posters and flyers for the event and had the notice put in both the November issue of the <i>Newsletter</i> and the village section of <i>The Hereford Times</i>. Mrs Bick reminded everyone that it was a fund-raising event and asked for their support in attending and getting their friends to come along for what would undoubtedly be an enjoyable evening. Posters and flyers were now out around the village. There would once again be light refreshments during the interval. Mrs Watson added that she would be very grateful for any raffle prizes to come direct to her or to Mrs Dowler who had offered to help with the Raffle.</p>	<b>All</b>
<p><b><u>ITEM 7 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></b></p> <p>14. <b><u>Winter Preparations.</u></b> The Chairman remarked that 2014 had so far been a year which had presented few flood risks, but that this was not a reason to be complacent. Now was the time when members should be making final preparations by checking any flood protection equipment they might have, practising putting it up and taking it down, and checking that it still fitted properly. If they were part of the ‘buddy system’ they should also be making sure that they had checked with the person they were supporting that their precautions were similarly prepared. He urged members to take action now and not leave it until later.</p>	<b>All</b>

	<b>Action</b>
<b><u>ITEM 8 – DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</u></b>	
15. The next Meeting will be the final meeting of 2014 and will be held on Tuesday, 25 November at 7.30pm in the Siward James Centre.	
16. There being no other business the Meeting closed at 7.55pm	

Chairman  
Councillor KA Mitcheson

25 November 2014