

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP

MINUTES OF THE BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP'S MEETING AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE, AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY, 26 APRIL 2011

ACTION

ITEM 1 – WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the April Meeting.
2. There were 25 members present and apologies were received from Cllr Mullenger, Mrs E. Davies, Mrs E. Watson and Mr R. Bowden.

ITEM 2 – MATTERS ARISING

3. Update on the “Flood Alleviation Strategy Preliminary Assessment”.

a. At the March Meeting, Cllr Mitcheson had read out an email from Cllr Grumbley regarding Herefordshire Council’s “Flood Alleviation Strategy Preliminary Assessment”. This is copied below with Cllr Grumbley’s update and comments on it in italics.

“There is to be a meeting of the County Flood Partnership on 4 April. As a result of the Environment Scrutiny meeting on 28 February, the following points are being raised at the Flood Partnership meeting.

1. To confirm that the 20 sites considered do not leave others worthy of consideration out of the process.

Mr Faulkner's Report considered 23 sites at risk of flooding. There are considerably more which were identified in Mairead Lane's work after the 2007 floods. They are not forgotten but these 23 represent high priority sites which can be considered in a reasonable timescale.

2. To produce a prioritised set of flood risk sites with a rough order of costs.

This is being done - at least in part for the Environment Agency's assessment this year.

3. To confirm that the Faulkner Report’s cost/benefit rationale is sound.

This will be done.

4. To set in place actions to seek funding for flood alleviation measures.

Flood alleviation measures will be subject to the annual budgetary process.

5. To confirm correct representation on various relevant flood defence committees, especially the Environment Agency Midlands Flood Defence Committee.

The Herefordshire Cabinet Member responsible is now a full member of the Midlands Flood Defence/Resilience Committee.

6. To make recommendations on deployment of the (ring fenced) area grant funding for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

This will be a matter for the Cabinet Member appointed after the 5 May elections. In principle, Officers support deployment of some of this towards a Flood Fair/Exhibition.

7. That Mr Brian Faulkner's hydrology report is put on the Council website immediately.

Mr Faulkner's Report has been scrutinised by Herefordshire Council's legal department who have raised a number of questions. Once answered satisfactorily the Report will be put on the website. The Council needs to be sure of sources and potential liabilities prior to release.

8. The Head of Highways ensures that Herefordshire submits a bid against the latest round of DEFRA Individual Protection Grants."

A bid has been submitted for Bodenham. Environment Agency comments have been favourable. The results are due on 13 May.

b. Cllr Grumbley confirmed that an updated bid for Individual Protection Grants had been submitted by Mr Steve Hodges on behalf of Bodenham and that this time, the prospects of the bid succeeding looked "hopeful".

4. **Proposed Flood Protection Exhibition – Wednesday, 20th July 2011.**

Cllr Grumbley told the meeting that Mr Steve Hodges had been tasked with organising a Flood Fair/Exhibition for Herefordshire and had been talking with Shropshire to discuss how they had organised their event. Whilst it was understood that the BFPG were keen to hold their own Flood Fair/Exhibition in Bodenham, if Herefordshire Council were to use public money to fund the event, it was likely that they would wish to organise it in their own way and in their own chosen location. However, if Bodenham were successful in its bid for Individual Protection Grants which, as already said, will be known on 13th May, then, if the Cross Keys/Withington experience was any guide, firms will be invited to the village to discuss options with residents who are eligible for the Grant. Until the local election results are known (5th May also being the date for these elections), nothing further can happen. Cllr Grumbley added that he would ensure that the Parish Council and the BFPG were made aware as soon as the results of the bid are known.

Cllr Grumbley

ITEM 3 – TREASURER’S REPORT

5. The Treasurer told members that the new drainage rods, which had been approved at the March Meeting, had now been purchased. He had also used the opportunity to purchase additional rods which would be very useful to the Group. This, together with the payment for the hire of Siward James from January to March, had left a balance of £1,604.09 in the Group’s account.

ITEM 4 - FUTURE PLANS

6. Cllr Clark announced that because of the Royal Wedding, Easter and the Bank Holiday, the next working party session will be on Friday, 13th May at 6.30pm. All those willing to help should meet at the Ketch Lane Junction wearing wellies and equipped with loppers, spades, brooms, etc. Dates for subsequent sessions will be announced on 13th May and at the next monthly Meeting.

7. He then thanked Mr Mike Stephens, who had already started the annual maintenance procedure by spraying the ditches in Chapel Lane which had been cleared by Amey earlier in the year. Mr Stephens now proposed to start spraying the Millcroft Brook banks between the C1125 and Brockington Road.

ITEM 5 – BFPG REPRESENTATION ON THE PARISH COUNCIL

8. Cllr Clark went on to tell the Meeting that, of the ten current members of the Parish Council, six would be standing down at the May Election, of whom five were members of the BFPG. As matters stood, this would leave no BFPG representative on the Parish Council.

9. Continuing, he said, by way of background information, that at the public meeting in the Parish Hall in January 2008, held as a consequence of the floods in the previous year, the Parish Council had agreed to nominate an official to walk the watercourses around the village to check the state of the flap valves, the growth of vegetation and any potential blockages. Prior to the BFPG being formed, he and Cllr Tilford had undertaken this task and even after the Group was established he and Cllr Tilford, as Parish Councillors, had continued in this role. When Mrs Deidre George retired from the Parish Council, her role as Emergency Officer – organising the allocation and storage of sandbags throughout the Parish – had also been taken on by himself and Cllr Tilford. In addition, both of them, together with Cllr Mitcheson, had been responsible for liaising with Mr Steve Hodges at Herefordshire Council over grant applications to the Environment Agency - a very important contact which the Group and Parish Council cannot afford to lose.

10. Cllr Clark went on to say that, if the Parish Council Elections in May result in there being insufficient Parish Councillors to carry out all the Parish Council’s responsibilities, BFPG members may well be approached to be co-opted on to the Council to cover these flooding-related tasks. He reminded members that the BFPG were effectively a sub-group of the Parish Council. All the equipment purchased by the Group belonged to the Parish Council; all the BFPG’s meetings and events were organised with the approval of the Council; and its activities are covered by the Parish Council’s insurance. There was therefore the possibility that the Parish Council may also wish to delegate specific flood-related tasks to

members of the Group. He urged members to come forward to help discharge these important responsibilities.

11. Cllr Clark noted that Cllr Grumbley would not be standing as the Hampton Court Ward Councillor at the May Elections. Cllr Grumbley was not only a member of the BFPG but had worked tirelessly as our local Councillor to maintain the high profile of the Group and had supported each and every BFPG venture, either locally or at District Council level. Cllr Clark said that he would be sorely missed. He added that, once the outcome of the Elections on 5th May is known, it will be very important to invite the new Councillor for the Hampton Court Ward to join the BFPG and to have the same relationship as that which had been enjoyed with Cllr Grumbley in order to maintain the Group's high profile with Herefordshire Council.

12. Finally, Cllr Clark proposed a vote of thanks to the Parish Council for all the help and support which it had given to the BFPG, and especially to those members who, in addition to himself, would not be standing again: Cllr Tilford, Cllr Mullenger, Cllr Avery and Cllr Mitcheson. This was unanimously supported and the Chairman also thanked Cllr Clark for not only giving such a detailed brief to the Meeting but also for all that he had himself done for the Group.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – ELECTION OF THE BFPG COMMITTEE

13. The Chairman informed members that the Election of the Committee and Area Representatives will take place at the BFPG AGM at the August Meeting. As happened last year, the Secretary will be sending out forms to the Area Representatives and Committee Members asking if they wish to submit their names for a further term on the BFPG Committee. At the same time, if any other member of the Group wishes to put their name forward to serve in any capacity, they should contact the Secretary. All members of the Group, regardless of whether they are on the email address list or not, will receive notification of the forthcoming BFPG Election and will be able either to nominate themselves or to support another nomination for one of the posts.

Secretary

All

14. The Group were reminded that, in light of Cllr Clark's briefing at Item 5 above, there could well be additional tasks to be allocated to members of the Group. A further update on this will be given at the June Meeting, once the results of the Parish Council Elections are known.

Chairman

AGENDA ITEM 7 – HVA VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR

15. Cllr Grumbley told the Meeting that Hereford Voluntary Action had sent out a glossy leaflet asking for nominations for, amongst other awards, the Voluntary Action Team of the Year. He felt that the Bodenham Flood Protection Group fitted perfectly into this category and wished to nominate the Group. However, before he could do so, he needed the Group's approval! There was also the incentive of a prize which was £200 for the First Prize and £100 for the Second. There was unanimous agreement that he should put the Group forward for the nomination. The results will be known on 16th May.

Cllr Grumbley

16. The Secretary reminded Cllr Grumbley that the BFPG had its own page on

the Parish Website which showed the work which the Group had undertaken around the village since its very first meeting on 27th February and its subsequent creation as part of the Parish Council in August 2008 and this might provide him with details for the citation.

Afternote: Cllr Grumbley has now submitted the nomination.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. **Bodenham Open Gardens.**

a. Mr Steve Lavender reminded the Meeting that there would be an Open Garden Event in Bodenham on Sunday 12th June in aid of the MS Oxygen Therapy Unit at Whitecross in Hereford. He asked for volunteers to help with the plants stall at Verncroft and with afternoon teas at The Forge. The organisers have agreed that, if the BFPG are able to provide help with the afternoon teas, the proceeds from the teas will go to the BFPG. To date we have the following volunteers:

(1) **Plants Stall at Verncroft.** Mr and Mrs Jackson – introduction to be made by Mrs Anita Griffiths.

(2) **Afternoon Teas at The Forge.** Mr & Mrs Tony Clark, Mrs Gwen Bowden and Mrs Liz Davies.

b. If anyone else would like to volunteer to help with either of the above, please contact Mr Steve Lavender at steve@verncroft.plus.com or by telephone on 01568-797751, or Mr Simon Nickols on sgnickols@yahoo.co.uk or by telephone on 01568-797144. For any other offers of help, please let Babs Mitcheson know on BabsMitcheson@aol.com or by telephone on 01568-797170.

All

c. The event is already on the Parish Website under ‘Bodenham Village’ in the ‘Clubs & Societies’ section and posters advertising it will be in the May and June editions of the Parish *Newsletter*, as well as on notice boards around the village.

d. Mr Lavender added that:

(1) All those who had volunteered to help out at the Open Gardens in any capacity would not miss out as there would be a preview tour of all the gardens on Friday evening, 10th June - starting at 5.00pm at Garden 1, Maundfield Cottage (the home of Jacqui and John Price) and finishing at Garden 10, The Forge.

(2) On the Open Garden Day itself - Sunday 12th June - the Gardens would close at 5.00pm and everyone would make their way to The Forge for 5.30pm for the Prize Draw for a bottle of Broadfield Court Reserve Wine and a very large box of Thornton’s chocolates.

18. **Collapsed Brook Wall at the Millcroft Road/Ketch Lane Junction.**

a. Cllr Mitcheson told the Group that the work undertaken by Amey on the collapsed retaining wall at the Millcroft Road/Ketch Lane junction had now been completed. The work was of a very high standard and in addition to the repairs to the wall, the Amey employees concerned had also gone out of their way to clear the build up of silt which had accumulated since last year on the exit side of the culvert, as well as to remove the blocked and inadequate drainage pipe on the Pugh's field side of the road and to replace it with a larger one which was "fit for purpose".

b. He also mentioned that, very regrettably, during the course of their work, they had had to face some extremely unpleasant and totally unjustified abuse from a small number of members of the public who for their own selfish reasons objected to the road closure.

c. Cllr Mitcheson suggested that the BFPG should request the incoming Parish Council to send a letter of appreciation to Amey, thanking them for the standard of their work and the exemplary conduct of their employees.

Secretary

AGENDA ITEM 9 – DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

19. The next Meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 31st May at the Seward James Centre.

20. There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.53pm.

Signed: Mrs P Sandford
Chairman

31st May 2011