

# BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP

## MINUTES OF THE BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP'S MEETING AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY, 28 MAY 2013

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b><u>ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN</u></b></p> <p>1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the May Meeting and noted that:</p> <p>a. <b><u>Weather</u></b>. It had been a quiet month, apart from some rain that day and on 14-15 May.</p> <p>b. <b><u>External Publicity</u></b>. There had been a visit on Friday, 24 May from an Assistant Producer of Blast! Films, but he would return to this subject under Agenda Item 4.</p> <p>c. <b><u>Flood Risk Insurance</u></b>. Mrs Mary Dhonau had visited on Friday, 24 May and had informed him that the end date for the Statement of Principle had been extended by one month from 30 June to 31 July. It would appear that the Government and the insurance industry are still far from agreement on what should replace it, but Mrs Dhonau's view was that an arrangement would eventually be produced. However, how good this would be from the householders' point of view remained a moot point.</p> <p>2. There were 25 members present and apologies were received from Mr Grumbley, Mr Mullenger, Mr Pritchard, Mrs Griffiths, Mrs Parker and Miss Easson.</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 April Meeting which had been circulated earlier with the Agenda and which were also available in hard copy on the tables for those members without computers. The Minutes were proposed by Cllr Avery, seconded by Mr Sebbage and agreed.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING</u></b></p> <p>4. <b><u>Maund Court Planning Application</u></b>. The planning application for the erection of one poultry building and extension to two poultry buildings at Maund Court had been approved, subject to a number of conditions. Mr Grumbley said that the full details could be found on the Herefordshire Council website and that he hoped that the conditions would be enforced. However, he was still not confident that the potential for flooding on the main road (A417) had been sufficiently addressed.</p>	

<p>5. <b><u>Annual BFGP Report.</u></b> The Chairman noted that the Group’s Annual Report had been presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday, 13 May and was now available on the Parish Website.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 4 – EXTERNAL PUBLICITY</u></b></p>	
<p>6. <b><u>Visit of Blast! Films.</u></b></p> <p>a. The Chairman reported that Mr Tom Wilde, an Assistant Producer at Blast! Films, had visited Bodenham to view a working party session on Friday, 24 May. He had been filming material for a Channel 4 documentary about weather generally, which would obviously include a section on flooding.</p> <p>b. Mr Wilde had started by conducting a filmed interview with Mrs Mary Dhonau about flood insurance matters, followed by ones with the Chairman and the Secretary about the flood risk in Bodenham and the work of the BFGP. He had then visited the working party and filmed members jetting drains along the Millcroft Brook in the area of the pumping station downstream from Brockington Road bridge, before going on to film other members clearing the stretch of the Brook between the C1125 and the Golf Course. This had given him the opportunity to complete a final interview, this time with Mrs Rebecca Burnill. Mr Wilde had said that no date had yet been set for the showing of the documentary on television.</p> <p>7. <b><u>The Daily Telegraph.</u></b> The Chairman went on to say that on Wednesday, 22 May he had been contacted by Ms Jessica Winch, who is a personal finance reporter at <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>. She was researching the subject of flood risk insurance and had interviewed the Secretary over the telephone on the subject at some length. (<b><u>Afternote.</u></b> The Finance Section of the 2 June 2013 <i>Sunday Telegraph</i> included the resulting article, a copy of which is attached).</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 5 - TREASURER’S REPORT</u></b></p>	
<p>8. The Treasurer reported that there had been no income or expenditure during May and therefore the balance stood at £2,113.37.</p>	
<p><b><u>ITEM 6 – FUTURE PLANS</u></b></p>	
<p>9. <b><u>Working Party Sessions.</u></b></p> <p>a. <b><u>Friday, 24 May</u></b> The Chairman said that at the last working party session members had continued to use the petrol water pumps to clear the drain pipes along the Millcroft Brook and also tidy the banks of the Brook between the Golf Course and the C1125.</p> <p>b. <b><u>Friday, 7 June.</u></b> He added that the next working party would meet on Friday, 7 June at 6.00pm at the Brockington Road bridge to continue the work in the Millcroft Brook. It was suggested that the Group should also consider removing debris from the Moor Brook near Upper Moor Farm on the lane between Chapel Lane and Rowberry Lane.</p> <p>c. <b><u>Annual BBQ – Saturday, 27 July at 6.00pm.</u></b> The Chairman reminded</p>	<p><b>Chairman Secretary</b></p>

<p>members that the Annual Barbecue would take place at Mr &amp; Mrs Clark's house, Rosewood, on The Moor. All those wishing to attend should contact Mr or Mrs Clark direct. The Secretary had produced a poster which was attached to the Agenda and would also be published with the Minutes. The Chairman invited Mr Clark to brief the Group at the June Meeting on the Barbecue.</p>	<p><b>All</b> <b>Mr Clark</b></p>
<p><b><u>ITEM 7 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></b></p> <p>10. <b><u>Early Warning Telemetry System.</u></b></p> <p>a. The Chairman said that he had received notification from Hydro-Logic Ltd that the Group needed to replenish its credits which pay for the telephone alerts which some members of the Group receive from the system. The bad weather over the Winter had meant that our stock had become rather depleted. The Secretary would buy some more and recover the cost from the Parish Council. (<b><u>Afternote.</u></b> The Secretary has now bought a further £36 of credits for the system).</p> <p>b. The Chairman added that Mr Hawnt had suggested that, as we are still getting an unnecessary number of alerts, we should carry out another review of who gets alerts and when. The Chairman said that he would have a look at the graph for the past year and see what changes could be made. It might be, for example, that, simply by very slightly raising the water levels at which alerts are triggered, the Group can significantly reduce the number of alarms generated. He planned to discuss this further at the next Meeting in June.</p> <p>11. <b><u>AGM – Election of Committee.</u></b> The Chairman reminded the Group that the election of the new committee will take place at the AGM on Tuesday, 27 August. The Secretary will be contacting all the current Area Representatives and Committee Members and asking them if they wish to stand for re-election for a further year. A list of the current area representatives and committee members had been sent with the Agenda and was available on the tables for those without email. (It is also attached to these Minutes). He asked anyone who would like to stand for any of the positions to contact the Secretary.</p> <p>12. <b><u>Date of the Next Meeting.</u></b> The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 25 June 2013.</p> <p>13. There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.53pm.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>

Councillor KA Mitcheson  
Chairman

25 June 2013

# 'To stop the floods, we had to do it ourselves'

**Jessica Winch** discovers what home owners can do to protect their property from flooding

Two days after moving into their farmhouse in Herefordshire in the summer of 2007, Babs and Tony Mitcheson noticed that there was an awful lot of water in a nearby brook.

Three weeks later their village was hit by the July floods and the Mitchesons had water coming up thick with mud through their flagstone floor.

"The thing in our favour was that we had just moved in and most of our possessions were in boxes, which neighbours helped us carry upstairs," Mrs Mitcheson said.

The 2007 floods caused about £500,000 worth of damage to the village and displaced thousands of people across the country. According to industry figures, insurers responded to 185,000 claims, paying out a total of £3bn.

In the Mitchesons' village of Bodenham the problem was not the nearby River

Lugg; the flooding was caused by surface water that couldn't drain properly through the watercourses and drains.

So the Mitchesons and around 30 other volunteers decided to take action. They formed a local flood protection group and set about clearing the ditches, drains and watercourses.

"It became clear that, apart from the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board, who came instantly to dig a relief channel, we had to do it ourselves," said Mrs Mitcheson.

The first two years were spent clearing built-up debris from all the surrounding watercourses and drains. The group also filled hundreds of sandbags to store around the village and set up a "buddy" system so the elderly or disabled had someone to help them move valuables in the event of a flood.

They applied for Environment Agency funding and the village was granted around £160,000 to fit

houses with flood protection equipment. A flood warning system was donated to the village and installed last summer.

"Without a doubt, if we hadn't taken these measures we would have flooded again," said Mrs Mitcheson. "It's given us the confidence to know we have the facilities and the ability to prevent the damage of the 2007 floods ever happening again."

With flooding the biggest natural hazard facing Britain, industry bodies are urging communities to take matters into their own hands.

Paul Cobbing, head of the National Flood Forum, said: "Everybody's at some sort of risk; it is just the level of risk. We need to be thinking about a range of measures: is the drainage system adequate; what simple maintenance work can be done; what can be done to better protect your home and to reduce the impact of flooding if it does occur?"

He said communities at risk



Rebecca Burnill, Tony and Babs Mitcheson and Tony Clark at work

should have an emergency flood plan to help keep people safe, so there are organised volunteers who can help people to get ready for flooding and provide useful information to fire and rescue services, for example. Communities can also work effectively to reduce flood risk over time, working with, encouraging and lobbying local authorities and agencies to identify and address the causes of flooding. A well organised community can make a huge difference because they have local knowledge.

"There is a lot that can be done individually and as a community to help," Mr Cobbing said.

Such measures can also help reduce insurance premiums, although the Association of British Insurers (ABI) recommends using a specialist broker to approach an insurer rather than going through automated risk-assessment processes.

A spokesman for the ABI said community measures in particular could help bring down premiums. "Anything that can be done to reduce the risk of flood and the damage it causes will be

reflected in insurers' pricing if they have information about it," she said.

The ABI has produced a template for insurers to assess property-level flood defence measures, which can be found on the Environment Agency's website.

However, the spokesman said: "What will make the biggest difference to premiums are the agreement between insurers and the

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**'We would have flooded again if we hadn't taken these measures'**

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Government and flood defence spending on a national level."

The body said this month that it had failed to reach an agreement with the Government to meet a June deadline for a new deal on flood insurance. Insurers will voluntarily honour the existing deal, guaranteeing that flood cover is available to every household in the country, until July 31.

Figures from the ABI suggest that if a new deal is not reached home owners could face soaring insurance premiums and 200,000 home owners in high-risk areas will be unable to find or afford cover.

A spokesman for the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs said negotiations were at "an advanced stage". She said: "Both the Government and the industry are working hard on an agreement to secure affordable insurance for people at risk of flooding." She added that the department was spending £2.3bn to tackle the risk of flooding.

Mary Dhonau, head of the Know Your Flood Risk campaign, said taking steps to mitigate flood risk in your home and community was worth doing for "peace of mind" as much as insurance considerations.

"When you stop and think of the stress of an insurance claim and the fact that insurance costs have risen prohibitively since 2007, taking steps to mitigate against floods can help you, both with insurance and peace of mind," she said.

**BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP**  
**2012/13 Area Reps and Committee List**

**Agreed to stand  
for election in  
2013/2014**

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Cllr Tony Mitcheson</b>	
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Mr Tony Clark</b>	<b>Post Vacant</b>
<b>Operations Manager:</b>	<b>Mr Mike Stephens</b>	<b>Post Vacant</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Mrs Babs Mitcheson</b>	

**The Moor:**

<b>The Moor Road:</b>	<b>Mr Tony Clark</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Orchard Close:</b>	<b>Mr Robert Pritchard</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Chapel Lane:</b>	<b>Mr Robert Pritchard</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Brockington Road: (2 -31&amp; 35)</b>	<b>Mr Simon Dowler</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Brockington Road: (1, 32-34, 36 – 42A)</b>	<b>Mrs Rebecca Burnill</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Brockington Road (43- 54):</b>	<b>Mrs Gwen Bowden</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Siward James:</b>	<b>Mrs Gillian Baines</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ash Grove Close:</b>	<b>Mrs Jean Fryer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ash Grove View:</b>	<b>Mr David Harris</b>	
<b>Ash Grove View:</b>	<b>Cllr Alec Avery</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Millcroft Road:</b>	<b>Mrs Barbara Gibson</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Bodenham Village:**

<b>Bridge to War Memorial:</b>		
<b>The Forge</b>	<b>Mr Simon Nickols</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Church and Bodenham Village:</b>	<b>Mr David Ayshford Sanford</b>	
	<b>Mr Mike Mullenger</b>	<b>Yes</b>

# **BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP**

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## **BBQ**

**Saturday 27 July 2013**

**at 6.00P.M.**

**at Rosewood, The Moor**

**Please bring your own food and drink**

Please let Kay or Tony Clark  
know if you plan to attend:

**On 797943 or [kay@rosewood166.plus.com](mailto:kay@rosewood166.plus.com)**