

# **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<sup>th</sup> JULY 2011**

### **Action**

#### **AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME**

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the July Meeting and, in particular, our newest member, Mr John Rice, who has recently moved into Ash Grove Close. There was also a special welcome to Mr Robin Barber (Chairman), Mr David Swain (Vice-Chairman) and Ms Karen Yates (Parish Clerk) of Brimfield and Little Hereford Parish Council.

2. The Chairman reminded the Meeting that there was a display in the entrance hall of the various flood protection products which were likely to be mentioned in Mr Peter May's Survey Reports which householders should be receiving very shortly. Mr May is on holiday at present, but has asked that, if anyone has any questions about their Report, they should pass them to the Secretary. She will collate them and send them to him in time for his return.

3. There were 34 members and three guests present. Apologies were received from Mrs Bowden, Mr S Dowler, Mrs T Edwards, Mrs J Fryer, Ms B Gibson, and Mr & Mrs R Hemming.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2 – MATTERS ARISING**

##### **4. BFPG AGM: Closing Date for Election of Committee and Officials for 2012.**

a. The Chairman informed members that all those who have given their names to the Secretary are now on the Nomination List which was on the back of the Agenda. If anyone else would like to put their name forward, she asked that they should please let the Secretary know before they left the Meeting as nominations would then close. She also announced that she would not be standing again and thanked the Group for their support during her time as Chairman.

b. Mr David Tilford expressed members' thanks to Mrs Sanford and the current BFPG Committee for all that they had done during the past year.

##### **5. Update: Award of EA Grant for Property-Level Flood Protection.**

a. Cllr Tony Mitcheson took the opportunity to inform members that on 18<sup>th</sup> July he had been co-opted back onto the Parish Council and was now not only the Council's BFPG representative, but also the Emergency Co-ordinator, Official Brook Walker and Sandbag Co-ordinator!

b. He then updated the Meeting on the Property-Level Flood Protection

Grant. He said that the Secretary had been chasing Amey Herefordshire to get the Survey Reports issued as soon as possible so that householders would have the opportunity to read them and digest their recommendations during August. It had been hoped to have them prior to the Meeting, but with some 43 households surveyed, it was not surprising that there had been some delays. It was now hoped that they would be available for delivery on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> July.

c. Each Report would have a covering letter from Amey stating whether or not that property had been assessed as eligible for a share of the Grant. If the property had been nominated, the householder would be invited to a 'private viewing' of flood protection equipment which would be held at the Siward James Centre on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> September from 3pm to 8pm. At this 'private viewing' they would be asked to decide exactly what flood protection equipment they did, and did not, want fitted to their houses.

d. It was possible that, having looked at the Report on their property, some householders might not wish to take part in the Scheme. If this was the case, it might be possible for the money earmarked for their property to be re-allocated to another not at present on the list. Because of this, Amey want everyone who has been offered a share of the Grant to decide by 31<sup>st</sup> August – *i.e.* the day after the next BFPG Meeting – whether or not they want to remain in the Scheme and attend the consultation on 12<sup>th</sup> September. Those on the list of eligible properties should either contact Amey direct, or let the Secretary know as soon as possible.

e. Cllr Mitcheson turned next to the owners of properties which are not eligible for funding, because they do not meet the criteria laid down by the Environment Agency. He said that they would be told in the covering letter to their Reports that they too will have an opportunity to view and purchase the same flood protection products as those on the nominated list. This will be at an Open Flood Protection Exhibition which the Group are planning to organise and Mr Tony Clark would be giving more details on this later in the Meeting.

## 6. Visit to UK Flood Barriers Ltd, Droitwich.

a. Cllr Mitcheson went on to report on the second BFPG visit to UK Flood Barriers at Droitwich. This had been organised by Peter May, the Surveyor from JBA Consulting, so that members could familiarise themselves with the types of flood protection equipment now available. Fifteen members of the Group had attended and had received a detailed briefing from Ms Sarah Vaughan not only on the flood protection products, but also the work of UK Flood Barriers in trying to educate householders on the need to accept that owing to climate change an increased risk of flooding was inevitable.

b. UK Flood Barriers also house and run one of the two national water testing tanks and the Group were treated to a demonstration of the various flood protection products in action. The tank houses the ground floor of a small house which is fitted with all the equipment supplied by UK Flood Barriers. The tank was filled with water up to a height of about 3 feet and the inside of the house remained dry. One by one the various protective measures were then removed and the Group were able to see the ingress of water *via* drains and air bricks into the property - a stark reminder of how quickly large amounts of water can find its

way into a house through even a single airbrick. All those who had taken part in the visit had been very impressed with what they had seen.

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – TREASURER’S REPORT**

7. The Treasurer reported that the current balance in the Group’s account was £1,704.09.

**AGENDA ITEM 4 - FUTURE PLANS**

8. **The Proposed Timetable for Working Party Sessions.**

a. Mr Tony Clark announced that he would be standing down as Operations Manager at the AGM and would be handing over to Mr Mike Stephens. Mr Stephens then reported that the most recent working party session had taken place in Maldwyn Pugh’s field on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July. The Group had cleared the ditch leading to the pipe behind the Moors Brook flap valve and also cleared a path to the flap valve itself. This had been lifted and cleared of the debris behind the flap. At the same time the area in the Brook around the valve was also cleared to give water a clear run into the stream. It had been noticed that there was a strange smell from the drain leading into the ditch near the flap valve and the Secretary was asked to bring this to the attention of the Parish Clerk.

(**Afternote:** The Secretary has done so and the Parish Clerk has contacted Welsh Water, who have investigated and replied that:

- (1) The main sewer is flowing normally.
- (2) The storm water pipe in the field has grey water in it. Welsh Water think that someone in Orchard Close has connected a washer or dishwasher to the storm water pipe.
- (3) If the problem persists, then Welsh Water would be willing to meet Parish Councillors on site).

b. Mr Stevens then told the Group that the next Working Party Session would take place at 6.30pm on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> August at the Millcroft Brook. Cars can be parked at Millcroft Farm and the aim of the evening will be to clear the Brook to the Ketch Lane/Millcroft Culvert of any vegetation build up on the bed of the stream which cannot be dealt with by spraying.

9. **Social Events.** There was general agreement that the Group’s social events were still popular and so dates were put forward for the BBQ, Bonfire and Fund Raising Quiz Night. (**Afternote:** As a result of responses to the Secretary the original times and dates have had to be changed to:

a. **Annual BBQ.** This will now take place at The Forge on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September starting at 6.00pm.

b. **Annual Bonfire Party.** As agreed, this will take place at Millcroft Farm, but now on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> October starting at 6.30pm for drinks and bonfire lighting at 7pm).

Secretary

All

Mr Simon Nickols

Cllr Tony Mitcheson

10. **Annual Fund-Raising Quiz Night**. It was agreed that Mr Roland Hunt would be asked once again to be the Quiz Master and Mrs Maureen Bick kindly volunteered to organise the event. The Secretary was tasked with contacting Mrs Ida Knott and confirming the dates in November that the Parish Hall would be free.

(**Afternote**: The Secretary has established that the first and last weekends of November have already been booked by others. However, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> of November are free. The Secretary has provisionally booked both these dates and will confirm which one is chosen in due course. Unfortunately Mr Hunt is unable to take on the role of Quiz Master as he has prior commitments during November. Mrs Bick will now look for a new Quiz Master and Adjudicator and report back to the Secretary once she has confirmation of names).

Secretary

Mrs Maureen  
Bick

11. **Proposed ‘Open’ Flood Protection Exhibition**.

a. Mr Tony Clark reminded members that not everyone whose properties had been surveyed by Mr Peter May would be eligible for the Grant. This had been discussed at the two previous BFPG Meetings and it had been agreed that the Group would ask Herefordshire Council to put on a Flood Protection Exhibition open not only for all residents of Bodenham, but also for those of all the other parishes in the County. On 26<sup>th</sup> June the Secretary had therefore sent an email to Herefordshire Council asking if they would sponsor such an event in Bodenham, and for this to take place on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, *i.e.* shortly after the ‘private viewing’ for those nominated for the Flood Protection Grant. This date had been chosen to ensure that residents in the Parish whose properties are not eligible for funding still have the opportunity to purchase flood protection products themselves. In addition, by having the two events close together it might be possible for ‘non-eligible’ residents who choose to purchase products on the approved list to have them fitted at the same time as ‘eligible’ property owners, possibly even before the end of the year.

b. Mr Clark went on to recall that at the Group’s two previous Meetings the Group had also agreed in principle that, should Herefordshire Council decline to pay for the Exhibition, Mrs Mary Dhonau should be asked to organise it for the BFPG at the Group’s expense. As Herefordshire Council had not yet replied to the Secretary’s email, it looked increasingly likely that, if the event was to take place, the BFPG would have to organise and pay for it from its own funds. Mr Clark reiterated therefore that the proposal was to engage Mrs Dhonau to organise an Open Flood Protection Exhibition from 2pm to 7pm on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, followed by an Open Forum chaired by Mrs Dhonau on property insurance. The anticipated cost was around £500. He asked if members were still agreeable to covering this cost.

c. Mr Mike Stephens asked why the BFPG should be paying for an open event from its own funds, and what benefit such an Exhibition would have for the Village. Mr Clark replied that, first, it would enable all those who had not been given a grant for property-level flood protection to see what products were available and to purchase those items which had been recommended in their Survey Reports. Second, and just as important, he had discussed with one supplier the possibility of a discount for those residents who wished to protect their property but would not be receiving a grant. The firm had agreed, in

principle, that, if an open event was held at Bodenham, any business received by it on that occasion would result in a discount to Parish residents on any of the firm's products ordered then. It was in Bodenham's and the BFPG's own interests to look after those residents who would not qualify for a grant and this was regarded as the only appropriate way of doing this.

d. He added that it was hoped to offset much of the cost of employing Mrs Dhonau, and the cost of the hire of the Parish Hall, by charging for refreshments which would be available throughout the day and evening. He also reminded the Meeting that in the past the cost of hiring venues for the BFPG's events had been generously paid for by private donations and this might happen with this event too.

e. After much discussion, it was proposed by Mr Clark and seconded by Mr David Tilford that up to £500 should be made available to fund the proposed Flood Protection Exhibition. This was agreed and the Secretary was asked to discuss details with Mrs Dhonau. (**Afternote:** The Secretary has contacted Cllr Jeremy Millar, the District Councillor, and told him of the Group's decision. Cllr Millar has subsequently arranged for Cllr Mitcheson, Mr Clark and the Secretary to meet members of Herefordshire Council to discuss the proposed Exhibition further).

Secretary

12. **EA/Amey Proposal for a New Flap Valve on The Moor Brook.**

a. Mr Clark went on to tell the Meeting that, during Mr Peter May's first visit to the BFPG in June, Mr May and Mr Dan Trewin of the Environment Agency had been made aware that the Group were concerned that the Moor Brook flap valve was so heavy that it repeatedly caused silt and debris to build up in the pipe behind it. Mr May had subsequently been shown the situation and as a result the Secretary had received an email from Mr Trewin indicating that there was the possibility of Environment Agency funding for a more suitable replacement flap valve and that Amey Herefordshire had been asked to submit an application for this.

b. However, the Secretary had received an e-mail from Mr Jackson of Amey Herefordshire that morning stating:

"I note that on your agenda for the BFPG meeting for 26 July that you have an item for the flap valve at The Moor Brook.

The possibility of changing the flap valve was suggested by Peter May of JBA and pending a full study a grant bid was submitted to the EA. An investigation into the alternative flap valves (their operation, their benefits, their weaknesses) has been completed and the site has been visited to consider the suitability of the alternative flap valves. The conclusion of the study is that there will be no benefit (and potentially dis-benefits) in replacing the existing flap valve and so the grant application has been withdrawn.

The reasons for this action are as follows:

The existing flap valve needs only a small amount of water to open it, it is not overly susceptible to malfunction due to debris, and it is robust.

The alternative flap valves are susceptible to malfunction if there is debris in the water. The reduction in the level of water to open the valve is minimal. The valves are not as robust as the existing valve.”

c. It was generally felt that the tone of Mr Jackson’s email was unfortunate and there was particular disappointment that he had not conveyed his thoughts to the Group, let alone offered to discuss the matter, before making the decision to withdraw the grant application. This was felt to be, at the very least, discourteous. The Secretary was therefore asked to take the matter up with Cllr Millar and it was agreed that the checking and maintenance of the flap valve will remain a priority task for the Working Parties.

Secretary  
Mr Mike  
Stephens

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **13. Updated BFPG Submission to the Community-Led Plan.**

a. Cllr Mitcheson reported that he had updated the BFPG Submission to the Community-Led Plan in light of the Property-Level Flood Protection Grant. Copies of the amended draft had been circulated to all members on email, and hard copies were on the table for all those who were not.

b. In essence, the Grant had not affected the overall thrust of the Submission and had not changed its recommendations. Although the Parish is very grateful to the Environment Agency for the Grant, which will undoubtedly help to protect a large number of houses from flooding, it does not address the real concern, which is to reduce the risk to the community as a whole of flash flooding occurring in the first place. To achieve this the main recommendations of the two recent independent hydrological reports on the Millcroft Brook need to be implemented; first, the two small culverts at the Millcroft Road/ Ketch Lane junction need to be replaced with a large box culvert and, second, Herefordshire Council must discharge its responsibilities for properly and regularly maintaining the Parish’s drains and watercourses.

c. Mr David Tilford commented that the second paragraph of the Submission should stress that the 1998 and 2007 events had been due to flash flooding and, in part, to inadequate maintenance by Herefordshire Council. Cllr Mitcheson agreed to amend the paragraph accordingly and asked members to read the new sections of the Submission (marked in red) and to let him know if they had any comments on it by Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August. This would allow him to forward the document to the Community-Led Plan Steering Group in time for their next Meeting.

All

d. Mr Tilford proposed that, subject to any further amendments received by 4<sup>th</sup> August, the Submission should be sent to the Community-Led Plan Steering

Group. This was seconded by Mrs Kay Clark and agreed.

**Cllr Tony  
Mitcheson**

**AGENDA ITEM 6 – DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

14. The next Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> August. This will also be the AGM. As she would not be standing again, the Chairman once again thanked all the Committee and members of the Group for their support during her tenure.

15. There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

**Signed: Mrs P Sanford**  
**Chairman**

**30<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

**BFPG COMMITTEE AND AREA REPRESENTATIVES LIST**

<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>2011</u></b>	<b><u>Agreed to Stand for Nomination for 2011/12</u></b>
<b><u>Chairman:</u></b>	Tricia Sanford - Standing Down	<b>Tony Mitcheson - New candidate</b>
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	Tony Clark	Tony Clark
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	Babs Mitcheson	Babs Mitcheson
<b><u>Operations Manager:</u></b>	Tony Clark/ Mike Stephens	Mike Stephens
<b><u>Assistant Operations Manager:</u></b>	<b>New Position</b>	<b>Robin George - New candidate</b>
 <b><u>Area Representatives</u></b>		
<b><u>The Moor:</u></b>		
<b><u>The Moor Road:</u></b>	Tony Clark	Tony Clark
<b><u>Orchard Close:</u></b>	Robert Pritchard	Robert Pritchard
<b><u>Chapel Lane:</u></b>	Robert Pritchard	Robert Pritchard
<b><u>Brockington Road –North Nos 2 – 30:</u></b>		
	Simon Dowler	Simon Dowler
<b><u>Brockington Road – North Nos 1 – 32 and 32 - 44:</u></b>		
	<b>New Position</b>	<b>Rebecca Burnill – New candidate</b>
<b><u>Brockington Road – South:</u></b>		
<b><u>Siward James Close:</u></b>	Gwen Bowden	Gwen Bowden
	<b>New Position</b>	<b>Iris Evans - New candidate</b>
<b><u>Ash Grove Close:</u></b>		
<b><u>Ash Grove View:</u></b>	Jean Fryer	Jean Fryer
<b><u>Millcroft Road:</u></b>	David Harris	David Harris
	Barbara Gibson	Barbara Gibson
<b><u>Bodenham Village:</u></b>		
<b><u>Bridge to War Memorial:</u></b>		
	Simon Nickols	Simon Nickols
<b><u>The Church and Bodenham Village:</u></b>	David Ayshford-Sanford	David Ayshford-Sanford
	Mike Mullenger	Mike Mullenger

**Those listed in the right hand column above are those who have put their names forward as willing to fill the positions on the Committee.**