

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE
AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY, 11th MAY 2015**

Present: Cllr Roger Austin, Cllr Alec Avery, Cllr Stan Davis, Cllr Dennis Jackson, Cllr Tony Mitcheson (Chairman), Cllr Pam James-Moore, Cllr Jeff Pollard, Cllr Rhian Powell

10 members of the public were present.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies were received from Cllrs Bob Clarke and Robin Knott, and from District Cllr Bruce Baker.
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The Minutes were accepted as a true record. (Proposer: Cllr James-Moore; Seconder; Cllr Pollard).
3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.** There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
4. **The Chairman's Report.** Cllr Mitcheson presented the Chairman's Report, which is attached as Annex A.
5. **Reports from Local Organisations.**
 - 5.1 Mrs Gwen Bowden presented a report from Bodenham Leisure Club, which is attached as Annex B.
 - 5.2 Mrs Gwen Bowden presented a report from Bodenham Christian Fellowship, which is attached as Annex C.
 - 5.3 Cllr Mitcheson presented the annual report of Bodenham Flood Protection Group, which is attached as Annex D.
 - 5.4 A report was tabled from Bodenham Community Charity, which is attached as Annex E.
6. **Comments from Members of the Public.**
 - 6.1 Mr David Tilford commented that it was sad that Cllr Powell was standing down from the Parish Council.
 - 6.2 Mrs Gwen Bowden thanked Cllr Mitcheson, the Clerk and the Parish Council for all their work over the previous year.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2014/15

The Council has completed another busy and varied year, which has been dominated by planning matters and, in particular, by the arrival of developers intent on exploiting the planning loophole created by the lack of an agreed local authority plan – Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy – and of an approved Bodenham Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council, together with a large number of local residents, accepted that the Bodenham should play its part by accommodating its share of the additional housing which the country needs. It therefore did not raise any objection to an application by Bell Homes to build 40 houses in the location identified in the draft Neighbourhood Plan as the preferred site – the field opposite England's Gate Inn. Outline planning consent for this was granted, but it is still too early to say whether or not Bell Homes' detailed plans will prove to be acceptable.

Meanwhile, Bovis Homes declared their intention to build 49 houses on the land next to the C1125 South of Chapel Lane, known locally as Shuker's Field. This was a location which the emerging Neighbourhood Plan had already rejected as unsuitable for development and, when in due course Bovis Homes submitted a full planning application for the site, the Parish Council and over 250 residents objected to it on a large number of grounds, including the potential increase to the local flood risk, the additional burden which would be placed on an overloaded sewerage system, and the site's proximity to an intensive dairy unit. It remains to be seen what effect this opposition will have, but if ever there was a case where local wishes should prevail, this is it.

Most recently a third potential developer has emerged with plans for up to 10 houses on land on the A417 adjacent to England's Gate. This brings to nearly 100 the total number of additional houses which Bodenham Moor is faced with having to accommodate. Given that this is a settlement of only some 240 dwellings, that the local roads are narrow and in places dangerous, that the sewerage system is inadequate, that there is little local employment, that the bus service has been reduced to a bare minimum, and that surface water flooding is an ever-present risk, such a potential 40% increase in the size of the Village appears unreasonable, not to say unsustainable. We shall have to wait and see what the decisions on the three planning applications are, but meanwhile I should like to thank all those members of the Parish Council and of the local community who have devoted time and effort to try and ensure that the future development of the Parish conforms to local wishes. In addition, special thanks must go to Mr David Tilford for all the help and advice he has provided on the technical planning aspects of these three cases, not to mention nearly 20 other planning issues over the year.

Local wishes were clearly expressed in a survey carried out in September/ October last year to support the Neighbourhood Plan which is now in its third year of gestation. This is an extremely important project for the future of the Parish, but it is proving to be a far longer and more bureaucratic undertaking than was ever envisaged at the outset. Progress has been far slower than we would have wished and, when each expected hurdle in the process is cleared, another unexpected one seems to appear. Aside from bureaucracy, the complicating factors have been the lack of resources in the form of people willing to give up their time to take the project forward and uncertainties associated with the delayed completion of Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy. Nevertheless, progress is being made and I should like to thank, first, the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, and especially Mr David Tilford, for all they have contributed, second, all those who helped with the distribution and collection of questionnaires without whom the survey would not have been possible, third, all those local residents who have shown their support by attendance at our public meetings and, finally, Locality and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for providing the funding which has brought the project this far.

Turning to other matters, the Parish Council was able in December to reduce the Precept for the coming financial year by some 19% to £11,500, while still retaining enough funding both to continue work on the Neighbourhood Plan and to begin addressing one of the key issues raised both in the 2012 Parish Plan and in the recent Neighbourhood Plan survey. Repeated efforts over several years to enlist local authority support in improving road safety have achieved little and it is clear that in this, as in flood protection, if we want things done, we are going to have to do them ourselves - and pay for them. While the Parish Council's speed indicator device (SID), now in its fifth year of operation, continues to 'educate' at least some drivers to obey the 30mph limit, there remains a need to do much more to reduce vehicle speeds. This applies particularly to those on the C1125, but, with all three major planning applications mentioned above affecting that road, the Council have taken the decision not to spend time and money on traffic calming measures there until the future of the developments is clearer. Instead, work has started on measures to reduce speeds on the 40mph stretch of the A417 through the Parish. It is hoped that these will take the form of vehicle activated signs facing in both directions, as well as 'gates' at each end of the speed restriction, and we have started a dialogue with Balfour Beatty on how these might be achieved.

We owe our thanks to Balfour Beatty for this in anticipation, but more especially for the practical help which their Locality Steward, Mrs Donna Tregenza, has already given us. Having her as a single point of contact on all highway and footpath matters has proved, at least from our point of view, to be a most successful innovation and she has been most proactive in her support, for which we are grateful. Of course, not every problem can be solved overnight, but we now have a degree of confidence that progress is steadily being made.

The same is true of the Lengthsman Scheme which has also proved a real success. It has given the Council and members of the community at large the ability to identify issues of concern, whether it be grass cutting, hedge trimming or litter clearance, and to have them speedily resolved. We have now moved on to the new scheme under which the Lengthsman's capability is extended to the repair of minor potholes which will be another welcome step forward.

It would be wrong to pretend that everything the Council has touched has reached a successful conclusion. The future of the Parish's greatest leisure and environmental asset, Bodenham Lake, is not yet finally decided, although a satisfactory conclusion seems imminent; the community speed watch initiative failed to attract the six volunteers needed; large lorries continue to use Chapel Lane; dog fouling remains a problem yet to be overcome; we have yet to find a Parish Footpaths Officer and may have to employ a contractor to undertake that responsibility; and very few ideas were forthcoming for the commemoration of the First World War, although it could be argued that we still have 3 ½ years remaining in which to find some.

However, these slight negatives are far outweighed by the achievements. The defibrillators project is nearing a successful conclusion thanks to the efforts of Cllr Rhian Powell and Mrs Margaret James and to the financial support given by the Bodenham Community Charity and by local residents attending the coffee morning and taking part in the quiz. Mr Jonathan Sant is to be congratulated and thanked for establishing Bodenham's first public lending library in the telephone kiosk opposite England's Gate Inn. Our thanks must once again go to the members of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group for ensuring that for another year the risks of flooding have been minimised across the Parish, but especially in Bodenham Moor where they are greatest. Thanks are also due to Cllr Rhian Powell and our Parish Clerk for organising the two litter picks, as well as to all those who took part in them and helped keep the rising tide of rubbish on our streets at bay a little longer. Finally, as Editor of the *Newsletter*, Mrs Susan Haworth is to be thanked for once again providing the Parish with its key source of local news and information.

I should like to conclude with three other expressions of thanks. The first is to anyone I may have inadvertently forgotten in my description of the past year. The second is to Cllr Jeremy Millar, who has been our Ward Councillor for the past five years, for all the advice and guidance that he has given the Parish Council over that time. Much of his support has been ‘behind the scenes’, but it has been invaluable, for example, in minimising the cuts to the 426 bus service and, indeed, raising the prospect that part of the reduction may be reversed. He also deserves our particular thanks for the help he gave to the Bodenham Flood Protection Group in ensuring the successful completion of ‘Project Bodenham’ when the installation of Environment Agency-funded flood protection equipment was in danger of stalling.

My final thanks go to our Parish Clerk, Chris Smith, and to all the members of the Parish Council itself for the work they have undertaken on behalf of the community over the past twelve months and for the support they have given me personally. It is only through the willingness of such individuals to devote so much of their time and expertise to the common good that Bodenham is (to quote the Neighbourhood Plan) a “vibrant, caring and safe community in which all residents feel comfortable and valued.”

Tony Mitcheson

K.A. MITCHESON
Chairman

May 2015

BODENHAM LEISURE CLUB**REPORT FROM AGM APRIL 2014 – AGM APRIL 2015**

The Leisure Club has 39 members and averages approximately 22 each meeting. The meetings are twice monthly, the second and fourth Monday afternoon and are mostly held in the Parish Hall.

We have had a variety of interesting talks including viewing “Herefordshire from the Air”, “The Aurora” and “Life under Water”. We had a talk from Leominster Rescue about “Rescuing Hedgehogs”, “The Role of a Volunteer at the Olympic & Commonwealth Games” and “Bees & Honey”.

Also Quizzes, a Beetle Drive, Puzzles and Bingo.

Our trips went to Mid-Wales to watch the Red Kites feeding, Weston-super-Mare and Cosford RAF Museum.

We have had three lunches and an afternoon tea and all were served by the committee in the Parish Hall. A coach went to the Three Elms, Hereford for Christmas lunch.

The meetings, in the Parish Hall, always have a Raffle, Sales Table and light refreshments.

Subscriptions will be raised to £12 per annum from January 2016.

One Officer, Mrs. Bowden and one committee member, Mr. Bowden, stood down from the committee at the AGM.

Thank you.

Gwenllian Bowden
Chairman, Secretary,
Programme Secretary

The Officers are now as follows:

Chairman – Mrs. M. Bick

Treasurer – Mrs. D. Pugh

Secretary – Mrs. M. Hughes

A new committee member, Mrs. N. Murdoch, is Programme Secretary

Annual Report April 2014 - March 2015

The Fellowship is independent of any denomination and is a member of 'Churches Together in Hereford' and the national organisation 'The Evangelical Alliance'. The Fellowship is run on a week by week basis by its members, with a body of Trustees (including three Fellowship members) overseeing the work.

The Fellowship welcomes visitors to any of its services and meetings.

In the year to 31st March 2015, donations of £1,926 were made to 16 Christian mission and international aid organisations.

Sunday Worship

During the year Bodenham Christian Fellowship has continued worship at the Chapel each Sunday from 10.30am - 11.45. The regular attendance at Sunday morning worship varies from 15 to 25. It is a joy to welcome several friends from Moor Court in Bodenham on a regular basis. The services included a monthly Fellowship Service when members take part, with speakers from the Fellowship and other churches, chapels & mission organisations on the remaining Sundays. Services are informal and are followed by refreshments.

On the first Sunday of each month there is also a one hour service of Praise & Worship at 9am which is followed by coffee & croissants. The Fellowship welcomed one new member during the year.

During the year we welcomed the following speakers for their first visit to the Chapel: Paul Jones from Newent, & Rob Thomas from Hereford.

Bible Study & Prayer Meetings

A weekly Bible Study & Prayer meeting has been held on Thursday evenings at the homes of members. Studies in the last year have included "Book of Romans", selected Psalms and a further study in the book of Isaiah.

Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is produced which is available from the Chapel and Post Office or can be delivered on request.

Ladies' Bible Study

A Ladies Bible Study is held twice a month at the Chapel on Tuesday mornings. This is led by Margaret Seccombe. Studies have included "The suffering servant" from the book of Isaiah; "A Royal Rescue" from the book of Esther; and the jewel of Christian contentment;

Café@Chapel

Café@Chapel is a joint venture with St. Michael's Church. This continued on Thursday mornings from 10.30am - 12noon throughout the year and is an opportunity for anyone to call in for coffee and a chat. Attendances during these mornings are now regularly in double figures and have on occasions exceeded 20. Donations of £537 from the proceeds in 2013-14 were given to:- British Heart Foundation; Close House (Hereford); Muheza (via Dr. Collins); St. Michael's Church (Bodenham); St. Michael's Hospice (all £100); The Neuro Foundation (£37).

From the 2014-15 proceeds of £415, £105 was given to each of Lugg Valley Cancer Research (in memory of Pat Austin), Midlands Air Ambulance, and Ear Aid Nepal. £50 each was given to St. Michael's Hospice & the Bodenham Parish Council defibrillator fund.

Foreign Mission

Mike Smith made two further two-week visits to Nepal, leading medical teams in the provision of E.N.T. clinics and surgery.

Arthur & Yvonne Etheridge continued leading the Hereford based Hope Carriers Trust, which sends aid to Romania mainly for disadvantaged children. Several truckloads of aid were sent during the year, and the Trust is also involved with the provision of facilities for young adults.

Chapel

During the year two of the Chapel Windows were replaced at a cost of approx. £2,450. (others to be replaced when funds available).

Seasonal Workers

For the tenth year members of the Fellowship hosted evening meals for migrant workers employed by S&A at Marden. 30 fruit-pickers (all from Romania) attended over 5 occasions during the spring and early summer.

Evening Presentations

The Chapel was hired out on various evenings for 'Travels with a Camera' with 13 presentations including Wisley Gardens; Tenby; New England; South America; Myanmar; Nepal; Afghanistan; France; and diving in Indonesia. £522 was raised for Hope Carriers Trust during these evenings and a further £388 for charities chosen by speakers.

Wedding

We celebrated the wedding of Emma Louise Price to Jeffrey Andrew Dolphin on 10th May 2014.

Other events

An evening was held in June to hear about the work of S.A.S.R.A. (The Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association).

Hire of Chapel

Until the summer the Chapel was hired on Wednesdays for Art Classes led by Rob Pritchard. During the year it has also been hired by the Bodenham Women's Group, Folk Club, Book Club & Defibrillator group. The Chapel continues to be available for regular or occasional use by other village organisations or individuals, with hire charges currently being £7 per hour, £15 per session or £25 per day.

Bodenham Christian Fellowship can be visited on the internet at:

www.findachurch.co.uk/churches/so/so55/bodenhamcf/index.html

Entries and events are also included in the Bodenham newsletter and on the Bodenham Village website

www.bodenhamparish.org.uk

Contacts:

Mrs. Pat Horrigan

Secretary Tel: 01568 797044

Mrs. Marion Pearson

Treasurer Tel: 01432 830028

David Hill (email d.hill952@btinternet.com) Newsletter Editor Tel: 01568 797531

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP**REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING****(11 MAY 2015)****FLOOD RISK**

We have been extremely fortunate over the past 12 months in having had adequate, but never excessive, rainfall and at no time have we had any major concerns about the risk of flooding. Indeed, there have only been three occasions (26 November, 12 December and 15 January) on which even the first (0.5m) alert was triggered on the early warning telemetry system in the Millcroft Brook.

GROUP ORGANISATION

At the AGM on 26 August 2014 the members of the Committee and all the Area Representatives generously agreed to remain in post, thus ensuring continued stability for another year. At the same time Mr Tony Clark also kindly volunteered to ease some of the Secretary's and Operation Manager's workloads by assuming responsibility for the Group's stocks of sandbags and for monitoring the state of local watercourses, a task colloquially known as 'walking the brook'.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

As always, the Group's Meetings on the last Tuesday of each month have been very well supported, with an average attendance of 30 members.

FLOOD PRECAUTIONS

Working Parties. The lack of any immediate flood risk did not mean that the Group could afford to become complacent. A full 'season' of working party sessions was conducted in 2014, with an average of 12-15 members attending every alternate Friday evening from April to October to cut back vegetation and clear stream beds. The main effort, as always, was devoted, first, to the Millcroft Brook, which was heavily overgrown in its upper course through the Village and heavily silted in its lower reaches upstream of the Ketch Lane culverts, and, second, to the Orchard Close drainage system where, once again, the clearance of vegetation took several evenings of hard work. Working parties have already started again for the 2015 season.

Environment Agency.

Although the relief channel at Millcroft Farm was constructed as long ago as August 2007, followed by the widening of the adjacent Brook in early 2008, these changes to the local topography have never been reflected in the Agency's mapping. This is an important omission because the whole purpose of these works was to reduce the flood risk, not only to Millcroft Farm, but to neighbouring properties upstream along the Millcroft Brook. It could be expected that this, in turn, would have the effect of reducing insurance premiums for the properties concerned.

The Group therefore raised this issue with the Environment Agency and an Agency team eventually surveyed the relief channel on 7 August 2014. In due course a revised assessment of the flood risk to Millcroft Farm was received stating that this is “low”. However, it remains to be seen whether the survey will make any difference to the Agency’s mapping of the local flood risk and, if so, how long this will take to appear.

River Lugg Internal Drainage Board (IDB). The IDB re-surveyed the relief channel at Millcroft Farm on 23-24 March this year to assess the extent to which it had become silted up over the 6½ years since it was constructed. Their contractor then spent three days (25-27 March) removing the accumulated silt and restoring the channel’s profile. As already mentioned, the relief channel plays a key role in reducing the flood risk to the whole western end of Bodenham Moor in two ways. First, in severe weather, when the culvert at Millcroft Farm is surcharged, the channel takes excess water away and deposits it safely back in the Millcroft Brook further downstream; second, when the River Lugg is in flood and water cannot escape through the Ketch Lane culverts, the lower part of the relief channel ensures that water is diverted across the flood plain, rather than back up the Brook. The Group is therefore extremely grateful to the IDB for its continued interest in, and maintenance of, the channel.

Balfour Beatty. The Group has continued to develop its contacts with Balfour Beatty and, in particular, with their Locality Steward, Mrs Donna Tregenza. She has been very supportive and, although much remains to be done, for example in repairing drains and flap valves, we would like to record our thanks for all her efforts on our behalf. We have, in turn, offered our own help to Balfour Beatty, for example in putting out and taking in flood signage, when required.

Sandbags. As usual, during last summer the stocks of sandbags, both those held in cages and those on private premises, were checked and repaired or replaced as necessary. This resulted in the central reserve of both empty bags and filled sandbags being depleted and so Balfour Beatty were asked to provide 200 empty and 300 filled bags to make good this deficiency. This caused some initial difficulty when Balfour Beatty questioned whether this was their responsibility, but they were eventually persuaded that it was and fulfilled the request, for which we were most grateful.

FLOOD RISK INSURANCE

The passage of time since the floods of 2007 has meant that most local residents have now resolved any flood risk insurance issues that they may have had and the frequency of requests for help and advice on this score has greatly reduced. However, we continue to do what we can to provide it, where necessary and look forward to the time when the new Flood Re scheme comes into operation later this year.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Inadequate Culverts. As mentioned in previous reports, the poor design and inadequate capacity of the Ketch Lane culverts and the partial blockage of the ‘Pugh’s Field’ culvert remain the Group’s main concerns. These have been raised with Herefordshire Council on a number of occasions, but we have yet to receive a response.

Flood Reporting and Signage. Similarly, we have still not received any response from Herefordshire Council to the Group’s offer, made over a year ago, to assist with the flood reporting and signage.

Proposed Housing Developments.

Recent proposals for housing developments in Bodenham Moor and the effect these might have in increasing the already substantial risk to parts of the Village, such as Orchard Close, have been, and remain, of great concern to the Group. Members have generally accepted the requirement in Hereford Council's emerging Core Strategy for Bodenham Moor to accommodate some 40 additional houses in the period up to 2031. They have also been supportive of the draft Bodenham Neighbourhood Plan's preference for these houses to be located in the field opposite England's Gate Inn, a preference partly based on an assessment that this will not increase the flood risk to other nearby properties. The same is not true of Shuker's Field where Bovis Homes are proposing to construct 49 houses and where there is real concern that such a development would increase the already significant flood risk to neighbouring properties in Chapel Lane and Orchard Close, worsen the risk to Brook House and Eastfields/ Gravel Farm, and make it even more likely that the adjacent pumping station will be flooded and raw sewage will be released into the surrounding area and, *via* the Moor Brook, into the River Lugg.

On 12 June 2014 the Chairman, the Secretary and Mr David Tilford met the civil engineer contracted by Bovis Homes to carry out a flood risk assessment for their proposed development. They walked the entire area with him, including the drainage system West of Orchard Close, explained the history of flooding in the vicinity and highlighted local concerns and the very real reasons for them. However, this seemed to achieve little since the flood risk assessment eventually produced in support of Bovis Homes' planning application is clearly flawed and inadequate, while Bovis Homes' representatives have been simply dismissive of any related concerns expressed to them.

On 17 March the BFPG submitted a letter strongly objecting to the planning application, as did a large number of the Group's members individually. It remains to be seen what the outcome of this application, and of one by Bell Homes for the development of the field opposite England's Gate Inn, will be.

EXTERNAL CONTACTS

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Sadly, one of our greatest supporters, Cllr Jeremy Millar, has decided to move away from Herefordshire. This will be a great loss because, for the four years that he has been our Ward Councillor, he has been an unfailing source of useful information, help and advice. He was instrumental in arranging the visits of two successive CEOs of Herefordshire Council, which gave us the opportunity to raise issues of concern at the highest local authority level. He provided us with links into, first, Amey Herefordshire and more recently Balfour Beatty, which had the effect of raising the Group's profile with them and easing the way to gaining their assistance. This was of critical importance when 'Project Bodenham' was in danger of stalling and Cllr Millar stepped in to arrange a meeting with Amey Herefordshire which ensured that the project got back on track to a successful conclusion. We would like to record our thanks to him for all that he has done for the Group and to wish him well for the future.

RESEARCH

Convergent Volunteers Project.

As reported last year, the Group was invited to contribute to a Defra-funded project conducted by Warwick University's Business School into how best use can be made of 'convergent volunteers', *i.e.* those volunteers who turn up without prior warning to offer their help during a flooding emergency. Two researchers visited the Group's working party session on 27 June 2014 and took on the role of convergent volunteers themselves by helping in the task of clearing silt and vegetation from the bed of the Millcroft Brook. They then joined the Group for refreshments afterwards which gave them the chance to talk to individual members about their experiences and motivation in volunteering.

The Project Team subsequently sent the BFPG their full draft study report for comment. This ran to some 130 pages and drew on evidence in academic literature on the handling of volunteers, as well as examining how other countries tackle the issues raised by convergent volunteers in emergencies. So far as this country is concerned the Project 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. The Bodenham case, of course, showed volunteers coming together after an emergency and trying to prevent a future one by proactive work, not least by physically clearing watercourses. The other two case studies were very different in nature and scale; Tonbridge had over 250 houses flooded and Boston about 1800. The draft Report made a number of recommendations, but most of these are not directly applicable to Bodenham because they are aimed at government and local authorities. Nevertheless, there were some lessons for us to learn, and we have commented on it fully so far as the BFPG is concerned.

Surveying for Flood Resilience in Individual Properties.

The Secretary was invited to join the Board of the Defra Project "Surveying for Flood Resilience in Individual Properties" which is aimed at encouraging 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, rather than those who will look at the actual installation of flood protection equipment in houses.

The Secretary attended the first Meeting of the Board in London on Wednesday, 29 October 2014 as a 'consumer' representative. This was followed up by e-mail correspondence to which she has also contributed. Owing to another important commitment she was not able to attend the second Board Meeting on 12 February 2015, but took part in discussion after the meeting by e-mail.

Participatory Geographic Information Systems for Flood Risk Communication.

The Group received an e-mail in February this year inviting it to contribute to a research project being carried out by a MSc student at the University of Leicester on 'Participatory Geographic Information Systems for Flood Risk Communication'.

There is a move towards getting citizens to take more responsibility for where they live and how they manage the associated risks, to tap into their detailed knowledge about local flooding, and to allow them to get involved in making decisions about how local flood risks are managed. Taking advantage of advanced software and the internet, Participatory Geographic Information Systems provide the means for achieving all of this, although the technology is not yet fully developed and there are many pitfalls in how it is applied. The Secretary completed an on-line questionnaire on behalf of the Group.

Involvement of Volunteers in Achieving FCRM Outcomes.

In October 2013 the BFPG was approached by Forest Research, who had been tasked by the Environment Agency (EA) to look into the working relationship between the EA and voluntary workers and groups working with, or for, the Agency. The Chairman and the Secretary completed an on-line questionnaire and then a member of the research group, Dr Bianca Ambrose-Oji, attended the BFPG's Meeting on 26 November 2013 and spent some time talking to members. She was keen to find out why, after some 5 years since the 2007 floods, the Group still functioned, why members had volunteered in the first place, and what they each got from being a volunteer. She subsequently sent her draft report to the Secretary for checking.

Nothing further was heard until, on 16 March this year, the Environment Agency announced the results of this and much other research under the heading of "Investigating and Appraising the Involvement of Volunteers in Achieving Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Outcomes". This consists of five reports which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/investigating-and-appraising-the-involvement-of-volunteers-in-achieving-flood-risk-management-outcomes>

The fourth of these reports includes four case studies, of which the BFPG is one. These are all very different, but are interesting both for their diverse approaches to mitigating flood risk and for their many similarities (such as the predominance of retired volunteers and those living in rural areas, the apathy of the general population, the issue of insurance, and so on), as well as some of ideas they produce. (Bodenham's case study is at Section 4.8.4 and is illustrated with photographs and quotes from BFPG members).

Flood Resilience at a Community Level in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. On 2 April 2015 we received an e-mail from Mr Steven Forrest, a PhD Researcher on Flood Resilience at the University of Groningen, in which he invited the Group to take part in an on-line survey. This was part of a four year research project being conducted by an international team based at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands and Westminster University in England. The research is funded by the University of Groningen and is focussing on ways of increasing flood resilience at a community level in both countries. The present survey was aimed at obtaining a better understanding of the status of flood groups across the UK and their roles in local flood risk management and in community resilience to flooding. It was completed by the Chairman.

TRAINING

Northamptonshire Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Project.

In December 2012 Defra launched the Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder scheme backed by £5M of government funding. As a result 13 projects have been established across the country with the aim of encouraging local communities to come up with innovative ways to reduce the flood risk to their localities. Northamptonshire is one of the local authorities taking part and has funding of £384,030 for their project, of which some £299,150 is coming from Defra.

The County has 15 parishes involved and held a Training Day for these Pathfinder Groups on Saturday, 15 November 2014. A total of 26 volunteer flood wardens drawn from across these communities attended and the Chairman and Secretary were invited to talk about the work of the BFPG under the heading "*Real Life Flood Events and Lessons Learned*". Mrs Mary Dhonau, who was leading the seminar, introduced this presentation by saying that the whole countrywide Pathfinder Scheme was based on the example set by the BFPG.

The Training Day proved to be very well organised and interesting. There was a great deal to be learnt from the other presentations and, in particular, from that by the member of Northamptonshire County Council leading the Council's work on flood protection and resilience. Her work on developing the Council's flood protection website was especially impressive and she said that she would be very willing to share her Council's ideas and experience with the relevant members of Herefordshire Council. This offer has been passed on to Herefordshire Council, but it is not known whether it has been taken up.

EXTERNAL PUBLICITY

BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester.

Although not directly relating to the BFPG, the Secretary was interviewed by Nicola Goodwin for the BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester early morning programme on Thursday, 14 August 2014 on the subject of the proposed developments in Bodenham Moor. She emphasised that Bodenham is not a NIMBY village, but that there is grave concern that new developments will not address the local flooding and sewerage issues adequately.

At just after 5.00pm on Thursday, 29 January this year the Secretary took part in a live interview by Jonathan Ray on the Andrew Easton programme to discuss remarks made by Hilary Benn, the shadow Communities Secretary, on the subject of planning.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Annual Barbecue. The Annual Barbecue was held on Saturday, 28 June 2014 at Willow Cottage, Maund Bryan by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Schwartz and some 40 members and guests were given the unusual treat of Canadian style spare ribs and other barbecue fare in very pleasant surroundings.

Annual Bonfire Party. The Annual Bonfire Party was held at Millcroft Farm on Saturday, 27 September 2014 and was attended by 35 members.

Annual Quiz Night. The annual Quiz Night was held on Friday, 14 November 2014 in the Parish Hall. In a very enjoyable and successful evening some £335 was raised for BFPG funds. Once again particular thanks must go to Mrs Anita Griffiths and Mrs Maureen Bick and their team for making all the arrangements and to Mrs Tricia Sanford for again acting as Quizmaster.

Annual Coffee Morning. The Group's annual Coffee Morning was held on 14 February 2015 in the Siward James Centre and was again very well attended, raising just over £400 towards the Group's work. As always, we are extremely grateful to everyone who supported us so generously and, in particular, to Mrs Liz Davies and her team for making the event such a success.

SUMMARY

Once again, this has been a busy and most successful year for the Group and sincere thanks must go to the Environment Agency, to Balfour Beatty, and to the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board for their support, as well as to Cllr Jeremy Millar for all he has done for us as Ward Councillor, and to Mr Rod Hawnt and the Hydro-Logic Group for their continued and generous maintenance of the

telemetry system. However, as always, the key to the continued success of the Group has been the enthusiasm and hard work of its members. Accordingly, the greatest thanks go to all those who have continued to support the Group, whether by taking an active part in working party sessions, by attending and contributing to meetings, by helping to organise social events, or by lending their support in any other way.

K.A.M.

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP
2014/15 Committee and Area Representatives List

Chairman/ Operations Manager: Cllr Tony Mitcheson
Treasurer/ Secretary: Mrs Babs Mitcheson

The Moor:

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

Bodenham Village:

Bridge to War Memorial:	Mr Mike Mullenger
Church and Bodenham Village:	Mr David Ayshford Sanford

Maund Bryan:

Mr Philip Broomhead

Report of the Bodenham Community Charity 2014/15

The Bodenham Community Charity is a registered charity Number 218404

The current trustees are

Dr Carolyn Knight Chairman
 Mrs Susan Hack Secretary
 Mr Stan Davis
 Col Hugh Diamond
 Mrs Louise Layton

Dr Knight and Col Diamond are nominative trustees and are appointed by nomination of the Parish Council for a term of 4 years. Their appointments were reconfirmed by the Parish Council in 2011 and will expire in November 2015. The remaining three trustees are co-optative trustees. Mr Stan Davis was re-appointed as a co-optative trustee in 2014.

The Trustees normally meet twice a year in May and November when any applications are considered. The Trustees will, if required, arrange additional special meetings to consider urgent applications.

The objects of the charity are to help “either generally or individuals resident in the Parish who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons”

There is further detailed guidance in the charity scheme concerning the making of grants but the objects enable the trustees to make a wide range of grants. For example, the charity has in the past assisted with medical equipment and expenses not otherwise available on the NHS, travelling expenses, fuel costs, equipment and books for students and the cost of extra-curricular school expenses such as school trips and music tuition. It has also in the past made grants to Parish organisations including a past Bodenham Youth Club, the CAP as well as assisting the Flood Protection Group. It is an express criterion for the making of any grant that all other sources of finance (particularly public funds) have been considered or otherwise exhausted. There is no means testing but the trustees consider carefully what applicants tell them about their personal circumstances or the funding of any group or organisation.

All applications and grants are treated in the strictest confidence and the identities of individuals receiving grants are not generally disclosed.

During 2014 a grant was made to St Michael’s School, Bodenham. The Parish Council will also be aware that a grant has been made in 2015 to assist in the purchase and installation of defibrillators.

S Hack Secretary April 2015