

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE
at 7.00 pm on Monday, 14th May 2018**

Present: Cllr T Clark Cllr J Crane Cllr P James-Moore
 Cllr R Layton Cllr D Tilford Cllr K Tremain

District Councillor Bruce Baker was also in attendance.

4 members of the public were present.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Collin, Jackson and Mitcheson.
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th May 2017.** The Minutes of the previous Meeting were accepted as a correct record (Proposer: Cllr Tilford: Seconder Cllr Jackson).
3. **Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
4. **The Chairman's Report.** Cllr James-Moore read the Chairman's Report, which is attached as Annex A.
5. **Sub-Committee Reports.** Reports from the Parish Council Sub-committees are attached as Annex B.
6. **Footpath Officer Report.** No report from the Footpath Officer had been received.
7. **Reports from Local Organisations.**
 - 5.1 Reports were received from the following local organisations and are attached as Annexes C - H:
 - Bodenham Leisure Club
 - Bodenham Christian Fellowship
 - Bodenham Community Charity
 - Bodenham Flood Protection Group
 - St Michael and All Angels' Church
 - Bodenham Ramblers
8. There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Annex A

Chairman's Report 2017-18

My report this year will be to recognise the hard work done by the various sub-committees whose reports are included in the minutes of this meeting.

I would particularly like to single out Councillor Tony Mitcheson, who with Councillor David Tilford, has worked tirelessly to produce the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Mitcheson has also led the Flood Protection Group and now he has volunteered to guide us through the complex Data Protection Policy.

Councillor Tilford has again led the Planning sub-Committee and we are grateful for his expertise in producing statements on Planning applications. During the past year the Parish Council has considered 34 planning applications

We hope that this year we will achieve our aim to make the A417 safer. One improvement traffic wise has been the erection of several road signs to S&A Produce in Marden, avoiding Chapel Lane.

The SID continues to be used around the Village and Mr Derek Pritchard has kindly offered to help with the moving of the equipment.

Another project that we hope will be completed this year is the update of the playground on the village green.

The development of England's Field is nearing completion and has nearly 100% occupancy. We must thank Bell Homes for replacing the wooden bus shelter with a state of the art brick building which blends in with the houses on the site.

Our footpath officer Mr Mike Darley continues his good work in Village and we have a new Lengthsman, Mr Richard Morgan, who has worked in the area for some time, namely in the Churchyard at St Michael's Church and at Siward James Close.

During the year Councillor Alec Avery resigned. We thank him for his contribution to Parish Council matters. We are now seeking to co-opt a new Councillor. It would be good if we could lower the average age of the Council.

We were sorry to lose our CSO Steph Annette who has been a great friend of the Village. Steph has moved to the Kington area and we wish her well.

Finally I would like to thank:

- the Vice Chairman Tony Mitcheson and all the Parish Councillors for their support and contribution to the work of the Council.
- County Councillor Bruce Baker for attending our meetings and showing interest that in the activities in our Village. Councillor Baker was instrumental in the introduction of the new signs to S&A Produce.
- all members of the public who regularly attend our meetings. We value their comments and questions.

All of the work done by the Council would not be possible without the diligence of our Clerk, Chris Smith for which we are truly grateful. Thank you Chris.

All Council news is of course available on the Parish Website - www.bodenhamparish.org.uk which is regularly updated and in the monthly Newsletter which is edited by Sue Haworth a service she provides voluntarily .Thank you Sue for your valuable work.

Pam James-Moore
May 2018

Annex B

Sub-Committee Reports

Lengthsman Sub Committee Report

This sub –committee was set up in June 2017 to complete one specific objective.

“To review the Lengthsmans’ existing schedule and determine if it meets current needs.”

The three sub –committee members viewed all sites. A revised schedule was prepared and distributed via email to all Parish Councillors in June 2017.

The revised schedule was presented to the Parish Council at the Sept PC Meeting, together with additional recommendations on employing a new temporary Lengthsman for the remainder of 2017 and a permanent Lengthsman for 2018.

As the single objective for the Sub Committee has now been completed, there is no longer a need for it retention.

Dennis Jackson, Tony Clark.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

During the first part of 2017 the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was revised to take account of the 61 responses received to the Regulation 14 Consultation held between 3 October and 14 November 2016. With so many comments to consider - some of them very detailed - this proved to be a lengthy process and involved the Parish Council in seeking advice on the more technical points from our independent planning consultant.

However, steady progress was made and the results were compiled into a draft Consultation Statement. This set out details of when and how local residents, as well as other organisations with an interest in the NDP, such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Welsh Water, had been consulted in the preparation of the draft Plan. It also included transcripts of all the responses received to the Consultation, together with the Parish Council's replies to them and the changes to the draft Plan which resulted.

At the same time a new, updated version of the draft Plan was produced incorporating all the latest modifications and this took the Parish Council to the point where, at its Meeting on 4 September

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2017, it was able to give its formal approval to the draft NDP being submitted for consultation under Regulation 16. This, however, was subject to the proviso that no further amendments were required following Herefordshire Council's review of the draft Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in the light of the latest draft Plan.

On Tuesday, 19 September a public Steering Group Meeting was held in the Parish Hall to provide parishioners with feedback from the Regulation 14 Consultation and the consequent amendments to the draft NDP, as well as information about the way forward through the Regulation 16 Consultation and Examination to a Referendum

By 11 October 2017 the draft Plan and its ten accompanying documents – including the Consultation Statement, HRA, SEA, Basic Condition Statement and related maps – were ready for formal submission to Herefordshire. Unfortunately it was only then that the Parish Council were alerted to the publication by Herefordshire Council of its 2017 Five Year Housing Supply Statement. Since the NDP's housing figures must obviously agree with that Statement, there had to be a process of consultation with Herefordshire Council's Planning Department to reconcile the two documents. This delay meant that the draft NDP and associated documents were eventually submitted on 10 November and, following Herefordshire Council's approval of them, the Regulation 16 Consultation commenced on 23 November.

The Consultation ended on 11 January 2018. Five days later Herefordshire Council informed the Parish Council that they had recommended the draft Plan for progression to Examination and at the same time they provided copies of the responses to the Consultation. There were 17 of these – some from Herefordshire Council departments, some from statutory consultees, such as Welsh Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England, one from a local resident, one from Wellington Parish Council and three from developers, one of which contained information indicating an intention to apply for consent for up to ten houses at the East end of Millcroft Road. All these responses are now on the Parish Website at <http://www.bodenhamparish.org.uk/evidencebase.asp> and also on Herefordshire Council's website.

On 26 January Herefordshire Council forwarded the CVs of three Inspectors who would be available to examine the draft Plan and from these Mr Richard High, who has much experience of examining neighbourhood development plans, notably those of smaller towns and villages including, for example, Breinton's NDP, was chosen. He started his Examination at the end of March and, as part of this, visited the Parish on at least two occasions and sought clarification of several points in the NDP. He was also called upon almost immediately to decide whether or not to consider a response to the Regulation 16 Consultation which had been submitted nearly six weeks late. This he allowed, subject to the Parish Council being given the right to reply.

He delivered his Report on 9 May and a copy of it can be found at <http://www.alphadocs.co.uk/bpc/pcd/Bodenham%20Examination.pdf>. In it he recommended that, subject to certain modifications, the Plan should proceed to a referendum. While he did not accept certain aspects of some of the policies we had proposed and recommended that these be amended or reworded, most importantly for the future properly managed and sustainable growth of the Parish, he did agree that our housing calculations are robust, that they meet the requirements set out in Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy, and that the settlement boundaries which we have defined in the Plan are appropriate.

We can therefore say that in all key respects the Plan has emerged very successfully from this stage of the neighbourhood planning process.

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We will now work with Herefordshire Council on producing the final, modified version of the Plan ready for the Referendum which is likely to be held in July or August.

Parish Hall Report 2017-2018

The Parish Hall has retained all its regular hirers, probably due to the reasonable rate charged. Various other bookings have continued.

Maintenance is always an issue. This past year CCTV has been installed following vandalism to the back fire door; this necessitated a new fire door to be fitted. New security lighting was also installed.

In the near future, it is planned to fit a new fire door in the main hall and also fit a new boiler room door.

Decorating internally and externally is also on the Agenda.

Flicks in the Sticks will be continuing and will re-commence in September.

Annual Report of Bodenham Parish Council, Planning Sub-Committee – March 2017/April 2018

The Planning Sub-Committee comprises Councillors Pam James-Moore, Jim Crane, Tony Clark, and David Tilford.

Members assess proposals having in mind that the National Planning Policy Framework requires the planning system to be 'plan led' by which decisions are made in accordance with policies in the development plan. In the case of Bodenham Parish this consists of Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy and the Bodenham Neighbourhood Development Plan (full 'weighting' is only given to the NDP policies once it is adopted). Exceptionally other material considerations may be taken into account in framing a view. Material considerations are not defined in the planning regulations. Any effect a development may have on residential amenity is always given the most careful consideration.

Although the Parish Council is consulted on all planning applications it doesn't have decision making powers which rest with the Local Planning Authority (Herefordshire Council).

A total of 34 planning applications were considered over the year up to March 2018 of which the Parish Council had no objection to 29. The Local Planning Authority approved 24 applications, refused consent for 2, and 8 had yet to be determined as at 10 April 2018.

David Tilford - 10 April 2018

REPORT OF THE PLAYGROUND SUB-COMMITTEE

The Playground Sub-Committee held its first meeting in June 2017, to consider the updating of the current playground, which is now approximately 20 years old.

It was decided to obtain the views of as many users as possible, and a questionnaire was made available in early July. This public consultation generated twenty five responses. The comments received not only identified issues which were of general concern, but also made suggestions for improvement in terms of new play equipment.

Based on this feedback, three companies, which specialise in the design and equipping of playgrounds, were contacted. Arrangements were made to meet a representative from each firm, and over the course of the next few months, three separate meetings were held on site to seek their advice and discuss ideas.

Samples of the materials, which it had been suggested could be used to re-surface the playground, were subsequently received, and the Sub-Committee made a site visit to another playground in Hereford in January 2018 to see these materials in situ. Whilst there, the opportunity was also taken to look at recently installed play equipment.

The Sub-Committee have now received design proposals from two of the three companies initially contacted, Kompan and Eibe, together with their quotations for the works. Both companies have suggested new layouts, new equipment and new surfacing to solve the current drainage problem.

A public meeting was held on Saturday, 14th April at the Siward James Centre, when the new designs, and samples of materials, were on display. Although turnout was lower than expected, those who did attend were able to speak to representatives of both Kompan and Eibe who explained their proposals in more detail and answered queries. Members of the Sub-Committee were also in attendance.

The Playground Sub-Committee will meet again in the near future to review the outcome of the public meeting. It is expected that the design will be refined in the light of comments received, and that a report with recommendations will then be made available to the Parish Council in due course.

Cllr K Tremain
14.4.18

Annual Report of the Transport Sub-Committee, Bodenham Parish Council May 2018

The Transport sub-committee comprises Councillors Tony Mitcheson, Jim Crane, and Parish Clerk Chris Smith.

Primarily the sub committee is concerned with traffic management and road safety matters within the parish, liaising with Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty regarding transport infrastructure within the parish, and dealing with transport related matters raised by members of the community.

The Parish Council have retained funds to support the installation of a Village Gateway scheme on the A417 and other minor works, and is currently considering the effective use of Section 106 funds now available as a result of the new 'Englands Field' housing development in Bodenham Moor.

The Village Gateway scheme for the A417 has had the support of the Parish Council for some time and discussed again at the April meeting following research paper published by the Department of Transport, ROSPA and others considering the effectiveness of traffic management schemes in rural villages. The proposal was re-confirmed by the Parish Council. Two initial quotes have been received, consultations held with Balfour Beatty and the Locality Steward, and at a meeting of the sub-committee on 30 April the proposed design and placement of the gates was agreed to be presented to the Parish Council in May.

In addition to the Gates on the A417, the sub-committee is also considering enhancements of the speed signs on the C1125 and C1121 in order to visually improve the repeater speed signs entering the village. A further 'Gateway' is possible on the C1125 and this will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting to seek the views of Councillors.

As the Community Commissioning model is not yet in place approval from Balfour Beatty will be sought before any orders are placed.

A site meeting was held earlier in the spring to consider improvement of the Ketch lane corner. Discussions included the landowner and no objections raised at that time. Balfour Beatty will be asked to produce an outline drawing and to advise the sub-committee regarding necessary works.

Works to improve the visibility at the Woodhouse lane exit onto the A417 were discussed with the householder on the corner earlier in the year and a compromise solution agreed allowing HC to remove the existing hedge and replace with a fence allowing better visibility at this very dangerous corner. Unfortunately the householder died during the negotiations and the property was subsequently sold. The new owners will now be approached with a view to agreeing the proposal. We are indebted to Ward Councillor Baker for undertaking the difficult negotiations.

Councillor Mitcheson has put forward a proposal to HC to use Section 106 funds to alter the stretch of the C1125 between the new Englands Field development and the Doctors surgery by building a 'chicane' allowing traffic only one way at a time and incorporating a pavement if space allows. We are waiting for a response.

Leisure Club Report 2017-18

The Leisure Club has 33 members and meets twice a month mostly in the Parish Hall. It is now more involved with the Royal Voluntary Services than previously.

We enjoy talks, slides shows, musical afternoons, games, bingo, in-house afternoon teas and lunches, Christmas lunch at a chosen venue and three coach trips a year.

The Leisure Club welcomes visitors.

Annex D**Annual Report April 2017 - March 2018**

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 officers and members, with a body of Trustees (including five Fellowship members) overseeing the building. We welcome visitors to any of our services and meetings. In the year to 31st March 2018, donations of £2,340 were made to Christian missions, aid organisations and local charities including £577 raised from café@chapel in 2016-17, and £529 raised from Travels with a Camera.

Sunday Worship

During the year we have continued to worship at the Chapel each Sunday from 10.30am - 11.45. The regular attendance at Sunday morning worship varies from 12 to 25. It is a joy to welcome several friends from Moor Court in Bodenham on a regular basis. The services regularly include a monthly Fellowship Service at which 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. We welcomed 2 new members into the Fellowship in the year.

During the year we welcomed the following speakers for their first speaking engagement at the Chapel: Jeff Hankins (from), Ian Greig (from Weobley); & Tim Simpson (from Hereford);

Our music is regularly provided by an Electronic Hymnal though several visiting speakers have brought musicians. Our thanks go to Tony Smith for playing the keyboard at our Carol service as well as at Wedding & Thanksgiving services.

Bible Study & Prayer Meetings

A weekly Bible Study & Prayer meeting has been held on Thursday evenings at the Chapel or homes of members. Studies in the year have included 1 Corinthians, Ezekiel & 'The Cross'.

Ladies' Bible Study

A Ladies Bible Study is held twice a month at the Chapel on Tuesday mornings. This has been led by Margaret Seccombe. Studies have included 'Christ's passion - the centre of human history', selected Psalms, 'Free for all' - a study in Galatians, & 'Jesus through Old Testament eyes'. Meetings in 2018-19 are being led by Rebecca Burnill.

Café@Chapel

Café@Chapel is a joint venture with St. Michael's Church. This continues on Thursday mornings from 10.30am - 12noon throughout the year and is an opportunity for anyone to call in for coffee and a chat. Our thanks go to all those who have hosted café during the year. Attendances are now regularly in double figures. Donations from the 2016-17 proceeds of £578 were made at the start of 2017-18 to the following charities: Anita Goulden Trust (in memory of Pat Barbrook) £100; Midlands Air Ambulance £100; Muheza Hospice Care (Dr. Karilyn Collins) £100; Hereford Night Shelter £100; Hope Carriers Trust £89; Ear Aid Nepal £89.

The distribution of the 2017-18 donations of £546 has been agreed and distributed in 2018-19 as follows: St. Michael's Hospice £100; Muheza Hospice Care (Dr. Karilyn Collins) £100; Hereford Night Shelter £100; Close House (Hereford) £100; Hope Carriers Trust £73 & Ear Aid Nepal £73.

Newsletter

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

Foreign Missions

Mike & Fiona Smith continue to make support visits to the ENT hospital in Pokhara, Nepal on a regular basis and have spent much of the last year in Nepal. Hope Carriers Trust delivered aid and shoeboxes to Romania.

Chapel

During the year the main chapel building was redecorated.

Evening Presentations

The Chapel was used on autumn and winter evenings for 'Travels with a Camera' with a variety of presentations:

Presenters were John Rice, Barry Wilson, Mike Steadman; Jennifer Easson, Robert Williams, Brian Skinner, Iain Skinner, Dr. Karilyn Collins, Peter Strevens, Audrey Nunn & David Hill. Places visited included Patagonia, Caribbean, New Zealand, Amazon, Andalucia, Oregon, old Hereford, the Danube, Tanzania, Iceland, Nepal & UK.

After expenses, £158 was raised for Hope Carriers Trust and £158 for Ear Aid Nepal and a further £213 for charities chosen by speakers.

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), when A.S.R. Lee Philipson from Winchester and Perham Down camps told us about his work.

There was one wedding in the year, that of Rhian Hill to Andrew Hillier, and a Thanksgiving service for the life of Vera Ling.

'Welcome packs' were distributed to the occupiers of the new homes at England's Field and to several other new residents in the village.

Hire of Chapel

During the year the Chapel has been hired each week by a local Art Class and occasionally by the Bodenham Women's Group & Bodenham Book Club. 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

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

www.bodenhamparish.org.uk

Bodenham Christian Fellowship: Charity Number: 1162981

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

Annex E

Report of the Bodenham Community Charity 2017/18

The Bodenham Community Charity is a registered charity Number 218404

The trustees are

Mr Stan Davis

Mr Rowland Hunt

Mrs Louise Layton

Mrs Margaret James

Miss Susan Newbould Secretary

Mr R Hunt is a nominative trustee and was appointed by nomination of the Parish Council for a term of 4 years in 2015. Mrs James is also a nominative trustee and was appointed by nomination of the Parish Council for a term of 4 years in 2017. The remaining three trustees are co-optative trustees.

The Trustees normally meet twice a year in April/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 and Bodenham Local History Group as well as assisting the Flood Protection Group and contributing to the cost of installation of defibrillators. 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.

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All applications and grants are treated in the strictest confidence and the identities of individuals receiving grants are not generally disclosed. During 2017/18 a grant was approved to St Michael's School, Bodenham.

S Newbould Secretary April 2018

Annex F

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING **(14 MAY 2018)**

FLOOD RISK

Overall, rainfall during 2017 was exceptionally low; indeed, the Millcroft Brook was virtually dry in the early part of October and by the middle of January ten months had passed since - on 22 March 2017 - the early warning telemetry system had last issued an alarm. That situation, however, abruptly changed on Sunday, 21 January when at 5.15pm the level in the Millcroft Brook reached 0.5m and eventually peaked at just over that at 6.40pm. Then on 5 March the water level in the Brook rose to 1.2m overnight and the relief channel at Millcroft came into operation. There was a further alert on 16 March when the level peaked at 0.7m. Indeed, local rainfall figures available from the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board for the first three months of 2018 indicate a possible repetition of the situation in 2007 which led to the flood which damaged so many properties in the Parish and the subsequent creation of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group (BFPG). The lessons to be drawn from all this therefore remain the same: with the Millcroft Brook properly maintained by the Group, the relief channel available and the Ketch Lane culverts kept clear by BFPG members, the system is just about capable of coping with normal rainfall and is as good as we can make it until we can get the Ketch Lane culverts replaced. While, therefore, we have to keep up the good work, we have to remain prepared!

GROUP ORGANISATION

At the AGM on Tuesday, 29 August 2017 the members of the Committee and all the Area Representatives generously agreed to remain in post, thus ensuring continued stability for another year. The list of Committee Members and Area Representatives is attached at Annex A.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Meeting on 27 February 2018 had to be cancelled because of snow, but otherwise throughout the year the Group's Meetings on the last Tuesday of each month have taken place as planned and have been well supported, with an average attendance of 20 members.

FLOOD PRECAUTIONS

Working Parties. For the tenth successive year we completed a full 'season' of working parties during 2017, with an average of 11 members attending a total of 13 evening sessions from April to October to clear away silt and cut back vegetation. Only in this way can we ensure that the local watercourses are as well maintained as possible and any flood risk correspondingly minimised.

River Lugg Internal Drainage Board. The Board has again generously provided the BFPG with some of the herbicide needed to suppress growth along its watercourses and thus greatly reduce the time and physical effort which members have to spend on maintenance work. The Board has also carried out its usual mowing and spraying of those sections of local watercourses which its contractors can reach.

Spraying. The resignation early in 2017 of the one member of the Group who was qualified to spray herbicide along our local watercourses deprived the Group of an important capability. Without spraying the physical task of keeping vegetation from choking the Millcroft Brook and Maund Bryan drainage system becomes appreciably harder, a matter of concern for an organisation whose members are mostly retired and none of whom are getting any younger. The Chairman therefore took it upon himself to restore that capability and, having passed the necessary courses, is now qualified to carry out spraying on and near water, starting as soon as there is a significant growth of watercress this year.

Sandbags.

As usual, the stocks of sandbags, both those held in cages and those on private premises, were checked and repaired or replaced as necessary.

A small band of eight BFPG members also generously gave up their time on the morning of Wednesday, 7 June - not to mention their paintbrushes and in one case a lot of their paint - to the task of painting the sandbag storage container behind the Parish Hall. With so many willing volunteers the job took less than three hours and, although it did not transform the container into an object of beauty, it has at least helped to protect it from the elements and made it less of an eyesore.

The sandbag cage at the front of the Parish Hall was vandalised early in the year and this brought forward the plan to move the cage to join the one already in the school car park. A working party completed this task on 11 August and this means that the number of sandbags available in an emergency to those living in the Conservation Area has been doubled.

The Early Warning Telemetry System. From May 2017 onwards the Parish Council has funded the maintenance of the early warning telemetry system, the initial five year period of free maintenance kindly donated by Hydro-Logic Ltd (now Hydro International) having come to an end. Unfortunately, the system's sensor failed during the summer and had to be replaced, but, that apart, the system has continued to be invaluable in ensuring that those local residents most at risk have adequate warning in the case of any possible flooding emergency.

Crayfish.

The local watercourses, especially the Millcroft Brook, are home to a large number of crayfish. Unfortunately, these are Signal Crayfish, a species which was introduced into the UK from Sweden in the early 1970s for farming, to supplement the declining Scandinavian crayfish market. Since then, Signal Crayfish, which are larger and more aggressive than the White-Clawed Crayfish and other native crayfish, and also carry a 'plague' which is fatal to native crayfish, have been displacing the latter across much of the country.

Their presence in large numbers in the Brook creates two issues for the BFPG. First, because the crayfish burrow into the sides of the Brook, they are undermining its banks in a number of places, as well as creating more silt. Second, they cause something of a legal problem because members of the Group frequently catch them in the normal course of clearing vegetation, such as watercress, from the bed of the stream. However, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to release, or allow to escape, any non-native species into the wild in the UK, except under licence. The Prohibition of Keeping of Live Fish (Crayfish) Order 1996 (as amended), also makes it an offence to keep any crayfish in England and Wales, except under licence (with specific exemption areas – not including Herefordshire - for Signal Crayfish). It seems to follow that any Signal Crayfish which members inadvertently catch during working party sessions should be despatched humanely.

In response to this four members have attended a two day course on trapping, identifying, recording and dealing with Signal Crayfish which was run by the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust at Bodenham Lake. At present, the Trust only have funding for such work on the River Lugg, but we have asked for this to be extended to the Millcroft Brook this year, if possible, so that the BFPG can play an official part in the Trust's project.

FLOOD RISK INSURANCE

With the help of Mrs Mary Dhonau the Group continues to maintain, and has recently updated and re-issued, a list of insurance firms and brokers who specialise in providing flood risk cover at reasonable rates. This is available to any local resident on application to the Group's Secretary.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There was only one minor health and safety incident during the year. This occurred after the 9 June working party session had finished and members were returning to their cars when one member suffered a fall which caused minor cuts and bruises. This is only the second health and safety incident in the Group's nine year history and has been duly logged as such.

DATA PROTECTION

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force on 25 May 2018 and the Parish Council has been preparing the necessary policy documents to comply with it. Since the BFPG operates under the aegis of the Parish Council it will be covered by the Council's arrangements, but BFPG members will all have to be approached to provide their written consent to their personal details continuing to be held on the Group's database.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES**The Ketch Lane Culverts and the Orchard Close Drainage System.**

On Friday, 30 June a meeting was held at Millcroft Farm to discuss the possible replacement of the Ketch Lane and Orchard Close culverts. The meeting was arranged by Cllr Bruce Baker and was also attended by Mr Geoff Hughes, Herefordshire Council's Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate, Mr Hockenull, Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP)'s Senior Drainage Engineer, and Mr Hodges, the Services Team Leader of Mr Hughes' Directorate. At that Meeting options for the possible replacement of the culverts, based on two study reports prepared by BBLP, were discussed and some progress was made in deciding the way forward on these projects.

Following that Meeting, Cllr Baker kindly arranged for two Herefordshire Council Cabinet members, Cllr Philip Price (Infrastructure) and Cllr Barry Durkin (Transport and Roads from 1 September), to visit Millcroft Farm on Monday, 31 July to discuss the Ketch Lane culverts in particular. After the Chairman had briefed them on the reasons why the culverts needed to be replaced, he and Cllr Baker showed them the culverts in question. The Meeting was a positive one and Cllr Price even suggested that BBLP's proposed 'Option 2' for a replacement culvert did not go far enough - that a longer culvert fully aligned with the Millcroft Brook upstream of the junction would, he felt, provide a better solution and the possible extra cost could partly be balanced by eliminating the need to demolish the existing Victorian (East) culvert. Cllr Price undertook to take the issue forward and we await further developments.

EXTERNAL CONTACTS**Environment Agency.**

In July we received media reports that the Government had allocated £15m for natural flood management schemes across the country and that £1m of this was to be spent on three sites in Worcestershire and 8 sites in Herefordshire, one of the latter being Bodenham. According to the Environment Agency's website at the time, the funding allocated to the eight sites in Herefordshire is to protect 3,800 dwellings and totals £626k. The date for the approval of the Herefordshire business case was shown as September 2017, with construction starting in January 2018 and finishing in March 2021.

Mr Andrew Osbaldiston from the Environment Agency subsequently contacted the Secretary and indicated that he was involved in the Bodenham Natural Flood Management Project. He requested access to the data from the early warning telemetry system, which was granted, but a promised meeting with him has not yet taken place.

Ryedale District Council. On 4 August we received an e-mail from the Council Solicitor at Ryedale District Council in Malton in North Yorkshire asking a series of questions about the BFPG's legal status and our use of pumps. This was because a Parish Meeting in the Ryedale area was considering applying for a grant to purchase pumps to alleviate flooding during periods of high rainfall. The Chairman replied appropriately, although it would seem that Ryedale proposed to use large pumps to lower the level of a watercourse during rainfall, whereas our small pumps are only for pumping water out of single dwellings in, or after, an emergency.

Visit by the Belgian Delegation.

One of the highlights of the year took place on 6-7 October when the Chairman and the Secretary hosted a visit by a delegation from East Flanders in Belgium who were in England on a tour organised by Defra to study how best to involve local residents in preparations for flooding, a type of flood risk management not previously exploited in Belgium.

The Belgian delegation consisted of:

- Dr Hannelore Mees, Spatial Planning Officer from the Province of East-Flanders.
- Mr Brendan De Baets, Participation Officer from the Province of East-Flanders.
- Dr Barbara Tempels, a Researcher from Ghent University.
- Mrs Liesbet Vande Castele, Environmental Officer from the City of Geraardsbergen.

They arrived by train at Malvern Link station on the morning of Friday, 6 October and were entertained to lunch at Millcroft Farm where they were briefed on the BFPG by the Chairman and had the chance to meet and discuss flooding issues with Mrs Mary Dhonau and Cllr Bruce Baker. This was followed by an extended series of discussions throughout the afternoon, starting with Cllr Philip Price, Herefordshire Council's Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, and Mr Steve Hodges, Directorate Services Team Leader at Herefordshire Council, during which the visitors were able to discuss flooding at county and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLPA) level.

Towards the end of the afternoon they were joined by Mr Jason Walker and Mr Andrew Osbaldiston from the Environment Agency's Tewkesbury Office, when the visitors were able to examine flood risk management from the Environment Agency's perspective. For the last part of the afternoon the visitors attended a working party session on the final downstream section of the Millcroft Brook, followed by refreshments at Millcroft Farm when they had an opportunity to meet BFPG members socially. They stayed overnight at England's Gate Inn where the Chairman, Secretary and Cllr and Mrs Tilford joined them for an evening meal. The visit ended the following morning (Saturday, 7 October) when they were driven back to Malvern Link to catch the train to London and from there back to Belgium.

The whole visit went extremely well, helped, not least, by the visitors' excellent English. Certainly they indicated that the long return trip to Bodenham had been well worthwhile in furthering their research and they expressed their warmest thanks for the way they had been looked after. Thanks are also due to all the members of the Group who contributed to the success of the visit, and particularly to Cllr Tilford for his help in providing transport for the visitors.

RESEARCH

In November an article in the *Hereford Times* described how some watercourses in Herefordshire were running dry because of the lack of rainfall earlier in the year and mentioned that research was being carried out at the University of the West of England into the effects of drought and climate change. Readers were encouraged to report on the way that the dry weather was affecting their own local river systems.

The Chairman therefore wrote to Professor Nevil Quinn at the University explaining that the Millcroft Brook had recently been dry and Professor Quinn replied thanking him for the information and asking for permission to quote it in future publicity. He also enclosed the more detailed article behind the *Hereford Times* piece and said that, being based in the University's Centre for Floods, Communities and Resilience, he was interested in the work of the BFPG. The Chairman responded by offering to

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provide any further information he required and inviting him to visit the Group if he had an opportunity to do so.

EXTERNAL PUBLICITY

BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester. The Secretary was interviewed live on air at 4.25pm on Thursday, 20 July, the subject being the tenth anniversary of the July 2007 flood and the subsequent formation and work of the BFPG.

The Hereford Times. Following the Presentation of the British Empire Medal to the Secretary on 23 July, *The Hereford Times* carried a short description of the event, accompanied by a photograph.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Garden Party and Annual Barbecue. Another highlight of the year took place on Sunday, 23 July, when the Lord Lieutenant, The Dowager Countess Darnley, presented to the Secretary the British Empire Medal which had been awarded in the New Year's Honours in recognition of the Group's community work in flood protection. The Presentation was attended by 44 members and guests and was followed by the Group's first ever Garden Party, which, in turn, later morphed into the Annual BFPG Barbecue. The whole afternoon and evening were a great success and particular thanks are due to everyone who contributed so much time, effort and expense to helping with the organisation of the event by making donations, contributing food, lending tents and helping to put them up and take them down, clearing things away at the end of the evening, and so on. Members were extraordinarily generous, and all of this combined with the good weather to make the event both enjoyable and memorable.

Annual Bonfire Party. The approach of Storm Brian forced the postponement of the Bonfire Party at Millcroft Farm. This proved to be a wise decision because, when, on the evening of Sunday, 22 October, the event was held 24 hours later than originally planned, the weather was dry and mild. Some 30 members and guests attended and, once again, thanks are due to all of them, and especially to those who contributed additional wine and food to the occasion.

Annual Quiz Night. The Group's Annual Quiz Night on 24 November was attended by some 40 members and guests and was a very successful and enjoyable occasion, raising just over £251 for the Group's funds. Thanks go to all those who supported the occasion, but especially to Anita Griffiths, who organised the evening, to Tricia, Steve and Felicity Coney, who provided the Quiz, to Tony and Kay Clark who ran the raffle, and to Jeremy and Sheila Schwartz, Nina Dowler, Kathy Tremain and Ann Hartfield who helped with the refreshments.

Annual Coffee Morning. Despite rather poor weather and a change of date from February to mid-January, the annual Coffee Morning on Saturday, 13 January 2018 was a great success. The amount raised totalled £382, which was a wonderful achievement so soon after Christmas and on such a cold day, and thanks are due to everybody who supported or contributed to the event in any way, but especially to Mrs Liz Davies and her team of helpers.

The Group's Tenth Anniversary. Members have proposed that the Group's Tenth Anniversary should be celebrated by an event in the Parish Hall on Sunday, 9 September 2018 which would be open to all. Quite what form this event might take has not yet been decided, but a sub-committee to plan it has been formed and held its first meeting on 30 April.

SUMMARY

Once again, the Group has enjoyed a very busy and successful year and has continued to do what it has always done since its inception – whatever it can to protect the local community from flooding, not only by maintaining the Parish’s key surface water drainage systems, but by pressing for these to be improved in order to reduce still further the risk of flooding. As always, we have been helped in this by others and our thanks once again go to the Parish Council for helping to defray the cost of the telemetry system and the spraying courses, as well as to the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board, Hydro-International, and Balfour Beatty Living Places for all their varied help and support. Special thanks also go to our District Councillor, Cllr Bruce Baker, as well as to Cllrs Philip Price and Barry Durkin, for their interest in our activities and in our concerns over the Ketch Lane and Orchard Close culverts. However, at the risk of repeating what I say every year, the continuing success of the Group is attributable, above all, to the enthusiasm and hard work of its members. Accordingly, the greatest thanks go, as always, 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, by making donations, or by lending their support in any other way.

K.A.M.

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP
2017-18 Committee and Area Representatives’ List

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

The Moor:

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

Bodenham Village:

Church and Bodenham Village:	Mr David Ayshford Sanford
Sandbag Cages Keyholder	Mr Barry Wilson

Maund Bryan:

Mr Philip Broomhead

Bodenham Ramblers Annual Report



BODENHAM RAMBLERS Bodenham, Herefordshire

Bodenham Ramblers Report for Parish Council AGM 14th May 2018

The Club continues to thrive and attract new members. However, a concerted effort has been made to draw in more new members of all ages (18-80+) by targeting some of the new developments in Bodenham, Wellington and Canon Pyon.

Our AGM in March was well attended by 40 members and finished with a slide show of some of our activities during the year, again very kindly put together by Joanna Weightman. The assistance of Bob Bowden with the sound system was greatly appreciated. This was followed by refreshments and “nibbles” with much chatter and interaction with fellow members.

A percentage of our members are now in the “more mature” age range and thus unable to manage the longer walks. In view of this one of our members has very kindly set up the Bodenham Stroll, Chat and Coffee Group with a short walk of approximately 1 mile round the Bodenham Lake area followed by coffee at Bodenham Golf Club. These are proving quite popular. Even those not walking sometimes just turn up for coffee; a good way of keeping in touch.

Our holiday this year is a visit to Dolgellau, Southern Snowdonia for 4 days at the end of April 2018 with 34 members signed up. Our accommodation promises inspiring landscapes with views from each room to take our breath away which all sounds wonderful. All we need now is an improvement in the weather!

The bench for our departed Rambler, Ron Munden, is now in situ at Queenswood and a commemorative walk took place in the park on Monday 16th April.

A most enjoyable Christmas Lunch at Hereford Golf Club and the raffle raised a very respectable £153 for the Air Ambulance Fund.

Our summer walks programme again covers a wide ranging area throughout Herefordshire and beyond.

As always the Club welcomes anyone who is thinking of joining a walking group.