

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of UFFINGTON PARISH COUNCIL held in the Tom Browns School Museum at 7.30pm on Monday 21st April 2008.

1. **Present:** Cllrs Mr. G. Banks Chairman, Mrs. S. Smith, Mrs. K. Pilcher, Mr. J. Helsby, Mrs. H. Godsell, Mrs. B. Jones - Clerk.

Guest **Mr. Gordon Hunt – Drainage Engineer** from **Oxfordshire Highways**.

10 Members of the public

Apologies: None

The Chairman, Cllr G. Banks opened the assembly, introduced and welcomed Gordon Hunt. Cllr G Banks explained what the Council have been and are doing, to alleviate flooding in Uffington.

- Cllr G. Banks showed a map with the water flows, ditches and the worst areas of flooding. In particular, Shotover Corner where some work had been done on ditches. A letter from Stockholm Farm has been received, in response to the Council asking them to please clear the field ditch. They are going to clear the ditch in August after harvesting.
- The Council have reported to the Highways about culverts not working efficiently at Fawler Road, Craven Common and Woolstone Road.
- Letters have also been sent to householders to ask them to clear the ditches/culvert that are blocked and to point out to the house owner that it is their responsibility to keep their part of the ditch/culvert working.
- A list of the houses flooded last July was sent to the Emergency Planning Officer at the Vale.

Introduction

Gordon Hunt introduced himself and explained he was a drainage engineer and had fixed the flooding under the railway at Cuckoo Bridge.

Responsibility

- Gordon Hunt stated that, the road side edge of a ditch was the responsibility of the Highways and the ditch and the property side was the responsibility of the house owner.
- Any pipes/culverts under an entrance to a property are the householders' responsibility and a pipe/culvert under the road was Highways.
- The Highways have the authority to connect to any watercourse on a property. Water courses need to be free of branches and trees.
- The Highways can serve a notice to properties about ditch clearing.
- It is the District Councils concern if properties are being flooded.

Highways Action

Over 5 years, the budget for drainage schemes, has increased to £550,000 last year, then at Christmas by an extra £200,000 to £750,000. European money has been requested, not to repay old budgets, but to do new work.

Peter Dela, Land Drainage Engineer from VWHDC is making reports on the flooding. A priority is given to flooded houses, second to roads.

The county is adopting and backing sustainable drainage now. It is building new roads, pavements and driveways that will be porous. The Environment Agency will not desilt or dredge anymore as it is too expensive. So roads that have no kerbs make it cheaper to maintain the highways and water can flow easily into the ditches etc

The bridge over Rosay Brook on the bend of Fernham Road is going to be replaced with the same size bridge this year.

An upsizing of a culvert to take the flow of water is not always the answer, as this could lead to floods further down the line. To slow down flooding, areas of land may be flooded instead.

To protect your own property there are 'Flood Fairs' showing boards for front doors etc. but these are expensive and cannot all be fitted to listed properties.

Problems

The pipe at the bottom of Upper Common Lane/High Street goes under the public footpath. It needs replacing and possibly to be rerouted into the pond.

Pipes are now 18" diameter not 6" as most of the old pipes are in Uffington. For example, probably just outside the museum where the pipes are old and have may be collapsed due to heavier traffic.

It was pointed out that the village was cut off in 1994 floods, July last year and indeed this year in January 2008. All roads into/out of Uffington were flooded. Shotover Corner always floods first, even when there is only a little rain.

On the field side of the houses in Upper Common Road, there used to be a ditch. Some residents have bought this land and they have been informed that the ditch needs to be re-dug, as has the landowner of the field and the Highways. The homeowners have apparently, a deed from the farmer that they bought the land from, saying that he will dig the ditch. These homeowners need to take this up with the farmer to make sure the ditch is reinstated and provide Gordon Hunt a copy of the deed.

Trees planted 10 years ago along Sower Hill on the road side of the ditch, should not be there, unless there was a licence granted.

It was suggested that perhaps a 'Flood Planning' Committee should be set up in Uffington.

Action

Gordon Hunt offered to come out and see the problem areas, and if he can, to advise residents of necessary action to take to reduce the risk of flooding.

This was arranged for Tuesday 29th April 2008 at 9am at Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall. Cllrs. Graham Banks, Sharon Smith and Helen Godsell with members of the public concerned would attend.

The meeting was closed with the Council thanking Gordon Hunt for his attendance and valuable advice.

2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on Monday 17th March 2008 were proposed by Cllr Mrs. Sharon Smith, seconded by Cllr Mrs. K Pilcher & signed off by the Chairman.
3. **Matters arising:**
Burial Fees Review was approved & signed off by the Chairman.
Standing Orders Review was approved & signed off by the Chairman.
4. **Planning:**
 - a) New Buildings - the Clerk forwarded the Parish Council comments.
 - b) Old Smithy House - no objections.
 - c) The Crest, siting of mobile home for 'Granny Annexe' - Appealed.
5. **Finance:**
We are awaiting a reply from Sovereign about their financial contribution to the new play equipment.
6. **Jubilee Field:**
 - **Play equipment**
The Clerk has written to the WHST to request the money donated for the new play equipment.
Playdale have said they will start on 12th May (otherwise 19th May). Installation may take 5 days.
Mr. P Armishaw has given permission for Playdales 21ft container to be sited in the THMH car park.
Cllr. Mrs. H Godsell would be on site to greet Playdale and deal with any concerns.
 - **Donation**
A donation to the Canal Trust for borrowing their mower was agreed £25. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs. S Smith, seconded by Cllr. H Godsell and Cllr. Mrs. K Pilcher.
7. **Upkeep:**
Thank you to everyone who took part in the litter blitz.
8. **Correspondence:** None
9. **Date of next meeting:** Monday 19th May 2008 at 7.30pm is Annual Meeting, in the Museum as usual.