

Flood Risk Working Group (FRWG) – Meeting 21st Sept 2021

Minutes

Present: Natasha Inzani, Malcolm Carter

Venue: 11 The Lotts, Ashton Keynes

Apologies for absence: Dominic Ventham, Chuck Berry

- Election of a Chairman – Malcolm Carter agreed to be the Chairman of the FRWG
- Since the formation of the FRWG a great deal has been learned on how most effectively to work with Wiltshire Council (WC), the Environment Agency (EA), and resident groups concerned with a risk of flooding to their properties. Based on this experience it was thought that the purpose and objectives of the FRWG should be updated and clarified.
- The definition of a Flood Risk is fundamental to the purpose of the FRWG. The term is subject to interpretation in a variety of contexts. From the perspective of the FRWG it was agreed that the definition of Flood Risk likely to affect the Ashton Keynes area should be:

“Flooding from surface water or the ground water table that could lead to damage to a property or a risk to public safety”

For clarity, property is considered to be built property, and does not refer to land ownership.

- The purpose of the FRWG was discussed in detail. It was agreed that this was important to the function of the FRWG and that this should be clear and known by the community.

Purpose statement *“To assess the resilience of the local watercourse network to flood risk and to offer support to concerned residents to alleviate or mitigate the effects of flooding through liaison with the appropriate authorities and landowners.”*

It was considered important that the FRWG should not be thought of as an operational working group, which is the role of the Operational Flood Working Group (OFWG) which is hosted and supported by Wiltshire Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

- The Objectives of the FRWG
 - To maintain an overwatch of the potential Flood Risk in Ashton Keynes
 - To publicise the information on flood risk available on the AKPC website, in particular the facility to report a flood risk to the FRWG.
<https://www.akpc.org.uk/index.php/report-a-flood-risk>
 - Liaise with the EA, WC OFWG, resident groups and landowners to alleviate or mitigate identified flood risks
 - To maintain and make public, records and data on flood risks over previous years, so that residents can be informed about the flood risk potential of particular areas.

- The Working Plan of the FRWG: Sep – Dec 2021
 - Current Flood Risks being addressed

The FRWG has been actively liaising with WC Highways and a Rixon Gate residents group to improve the maintenance of the roadside ditches and drainage. WC have scheduled a team to clear the ditches and identified culverts under the road. This is expected to be completed by the end of this week.
 - Continue with the inspection of the watercourse network in and around the village.
 - Contact and meet landowners adjacent to Swill Brook to view and discuss the condition of the watercourse in the section of ownership.
 - Follow up with the EA on a watercourse clearance demonstration visit. The particular watercourse section to be used to be decided following a response from the EA.
- The potential for flooding events leading to flood risks was discussed. Generally, the topography of Ashton Keynes is such that only around 5% of properties are likely to suffer from a flood risk. Areas of known concern are Church Walk from the Thames, The Derry from the flood plain expansion to the south and rising ground water levels, and Rixon Gate from surface water overflow from nearby lakes. It was thought that the effects of climate change would exacerbate flood risk in Ashton Keynes and that apart from the above mentioned areas it would be difficult to predict other areas that could be affected. It was agreed to press the EA for updates on flood predictions as new data becomes available.