

EA Project Team Visit

An Environment Agency project team together with specialist consultants have recently visited Charlton. They came to view the Merry Brook and the surrounding area prior to reviewing the existing proposals and making detailed recommendations. These will now be presented to the Regional Flood Defence Committee at their special meeting in September when they will be considering the priorities for future schemes.

CFC Flood Report

A comprehensive report 'Flooding in Charlton' has been submitted by the Charlton Flood Committee to the Environment Agency. It collated the replies from a questionnaire distributed throughout the village with other local information. The eleven page report covered the impact of flooding on businesses and individuals including effects on health, work and education. Using information about insurance claims it estimated the cost of flooding since 1993 to be in excess of £1.8M. The EA project team have been given the report to assist them build their business case for the scheme.



Brook Clearing Work

CFC volunteers recently cleared the Merry Brook from the Canada Bank bridge to the footbridge on The Green. A large quantity of stone was removed together with a road sign and excess vegetation. The EA have also been at work clearing the stretch below the footbridge where they have removed vegetation and will be removing a fallen tree.



CFC at Charlton Church Fête

Members of the CFC showed photographs of flooding in the village and discussed the proposed defence scheme at the annual fête on The Green. The scheme was widely supported with many wondering why it was taking so long. Contributions 'in the welly' raised £27.

Support From Cllr Liz Eyre

WCC Cllr Liz Eyre continues to support CFC's efforts to get a flood defence scheme for the village. She said, 'I congratulate the flood committee on its thorough report 'Flooding in Charlton'. The full social and economic impact of the floods have been documented. Together, with the support of the village, we have done all we can to ensure the EA has full knowledge of the all the events since 1993, including near misses.'



Plant Sales Raise Funds

Garden plants were snapped up quickly when they went on sale in the spring to raise funds for the village flood defence scheme. Locally grown plants were in great demand and soon sold out raising a total of £170.

History of Flooding

Charlton has suffered flooding in the village on many different occasions. Since 1993 there have been five separate dates on which flood water from the Merry Brook has entered one or more houses. More recently, in March and December 2008, there have been 'near misses'.



Brook Lane, March 2008



The Green, December 2008



Bus negotiating floods, December 2008



Sandbags out in Brook Lane, December 2008 (after dark)

Flood Defence Scheme

Wychavon District Council first proposed a flood defence scheme for Charlton following the April 1998 floods. At that time, however, they were unable to find the required funding. Responsibility has now passed to the EA who have prepared outline plans to build three 'storage ponds' upstream of the village. Three earth barriers with pipes through them would allow the Merry Brook to flow unimpeded most of the year, but would limit the flow through the village to a safe level under flood conditions. The EA are now preparing a detailed proposal for consideration by the RFDC.

Contributions Pledged

The EA estimates the cost of the scheme at £612,000. Contributions have already been pledged by Worcestershire CC (£40,000), Wychavon DC (£5,000) and Charlton PC (£2,500). Local groups and individuals have also raised around £500.

"The EA are very well aware of my strong support." *Peter Luff MP.*

"This is a much needed scheme not only for Charlton but the wider area." *WDC Cllr Tom McDonald.*

"There is widespread support for the EA's proposal. Landowners who may be affected have been approached and none have objected in principle." *Charlton PC chairman Brian Browne.*

Conservation Reports

The National Environment Assessment Agency, part of the EA, are considering the habitat, biodiversity and other surveys that will need to be undertaken before a pond storage scheme could commence. The surveys can be carried out using 'in-house' EA expertise with the assistance of external specialists as necessary.

Survey of Drains

The Worcester company Drain Jet Surveys, together with WCC Highways have been carrying out a detailed inspection and survey of the drains in Ryden Lane and Brook Lane. High pressure water jets were used to clean the pipes and colour television pictures have been recorded using special inspection cameras. The team have removed some blockages and will report their findings to WCC Highways Department.

*Produced by Charlton Flood Committee, August 2010.
Photographs by Chris Perks and CFC.*