

Charlton Parish Council

Flooding Report August 2009

Summary

Charlton, a village with 143 properties in the main part of the village, suffered serious floods in April 1998 and again in July 2007 when 12 properties (8.4%) in 1998 and 27 (18.9%) properties in 2007 were internally flooded. The Environment Agency (EA) has carried out maintenance work to the channel of the Merry Brook that has made some improvement to flow, but to significantly reduce risk of future floods EA proposes to construct storage ponds upstream of the settled area of the village. To fund this project, the EA is applying to the Midlands Regional Flood Defence Committee (MRFDC), and also to Worcestershire County Council, Wychavon District Council, and Charlton Parish Council (CPC). The MRFDC considered the EA scheme at its February 2009 meeting, but it was not included in the funded schemes at that meeting. The MRFDC will be considering the Charlton scheme again in September 2009.

Location

The Merry Brook rises on the north slope of Bredon Hill and flows north, crossing Hinton Lane, and runs parallel to Haselor Lane to cross under the B4084 road from Pershore to Evesham. It continues north parallel to Boston Lane and Yessel Lane until it meets the higher ground of Ryden Lane and turns west to enter the settled area of Charlton north of The Bight, whence it runs westward between properties and across The Green to the Cemetery Bridge at Charlton's western boundary. It continues through farmland to enter the River Avon at Jubilee Bridge. The estimated fall from Hinton Lane to the river is 20m, a gradient of 1:325. The catchment area for the Merry Brook is estimated at 11 sq. km.

Flooding History

In the 1980's flooding of the The Green occurred frequently. On 9th April 1998, after 100mms (approx) rain in 24 hours, 12 houses in Brook Lane and Merryfield were flooded. There were 3 further flooding events, and on 20th July 2007 an estimated 125mms of rain fell and 27 properties in Charlton were flooded. Road access to homes north of the Merry Brook were impassable for many hours. The damage to property was severe. One road in the centre of the village was flooded to a level above 1.3m. In Brook Lane, The Hollies and Merryfield 16 properties were flooded, and 10 homes and the Gardener's Arms public house in lower Ryden Lane and The Green. The Severn Trent sewerage station was flooded.

Flooding Alleviation Work.

Subsequent to the April 1998 floods, some remedial work to alleviate flooding was done by WDC (then the land drainage authority), by widening the brook bed downstream of Canada Bank bridge. The Parish Council had silt removed from the section across The Green.

In 2005 WDC handed over Land Drainage responsibility for the Merry brook from east of The Bight to the River Avon to the Environmental Agency (EA).

In September 2006 EA undertook channel maintenance work from the outflow to the River Avon upstream to the Cemetery bridge.

Following the 20th July 2007 floods, a bank of silt had accumulated downstream of the Canada Bank bridge. The Parish Council asked EA to inspect the Merry Brook with a view to silt and debris

clearance. EA visited Charlton in August 2007 and agreed that maintenance work would be done by them. This work, which included a flood relief channel around the footbridge on The Green, was done in April 2008. This has improved flow capacity, but would be unlikely to prevent flooding in heavy flow conditions.

The EA proposes a Storage Pond scheme upstream of The Bight to significantly reduce the risk of properties being flooded in Charlton.

Consultation

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| January 2008 | EA Maintenance Supervisor attended a meeting at Charlton arranged by local residents. A Residents Flooding Action Group was formed. |
| February 2008. | The Parish Council arranged for EA Manager, WDC, WCC, and Severn Trent to address a public meeting in Charlton. |
| May 2008. | The Parish Council formed a Flooding Working Group with 4 Parish Councillors and members of the Residents Flooding Action Group to ensure information on flooding was shared. |
| November 2008. | EA held a "Drop-In" at Charlton for all Charlton residents. |
| February 2009 | EA held an open meeting with Charlton residents to outline their Pond Storage scheme. |

Landowners who could be affected by the scheme have been approached and none has objected in principle.

Present Position

At the WMRFDC meeting in January 2009, all the available funding was taken up by schemes with higher priority, but the EA will re-submit the Charlton scheme to the MRFDC meeting in September 2009.

The Parish Council at their Council Meeting on 9th July 2009 agreed to contribute £2500 to the EA scheme.

Wychavon District Council have stated their support, and in addition to proving contribution in kind of £62 000, have pledged a further £5000 contribution.

Worcester County Council have also expressed their support and have pledged £5 000, and may increase their pledge.

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