

Flood Working/Action Group Report for October Parish Council Meeting

NFM Project in the Slade

Current situation:- Dates for building the “Leaky” Dams have been set as the 29th and 30th October. The work will be directed by Tyler Randall of Thames 21, and Jerry Wood and Marie Jones have identified a band of volunteers to conduct the work.

- Unfortunately, Cotefield Trees, our preferred contractor (not least as they prepared the Tree Survey report for the Slade last year), are not available on the 29th – so we have made arrangements for them to come onto the Slade on Thursday 22nd Oct to cut down the trees necessary for building the dams.
- Unfortunately Tyler is not available on the 22nd Oct, so we made arrangements for him to come to the Slade on the 21st Oct to identify the trees (or at least the type and size of trees) that Cotefield will then work on the following day. Final trimming of branches prior to being fitted will be done by Marie. (The Cotefield team will access the Slade through the Tyrell Rec – subject to the weather. Thanks to the Tyrell rec for ok’ing this.)
- ***IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER VILLAGERS WITH A SUITABLE CHAIN SAW LICENSE THEN THEY WOULD BE VERY WELCOME ON THE 29TH AND/OR 30TH OCT.***
- Tyler is also liaising with Tony Brummell of CDC for the necessary Watercourse Permit that will be required to undertake this work.

As a reminder – the project is funded by a grant from OCC, raised against this specific project. The two major expense areas are:-

- Thames 21 – to fund all the work that Tyler and Thames 21 have done and are doing on the project. We are currently working to establish an approved Purchase order for Thames 21 that we can pay against.
- Cotefield Trees – for their team.
- The money from OCC has been received into ringfenced Parish Council funds and invoices will be paid out of these funds.

Jerry Wood continues to play a major role in keeping this project moving forward.

Drainage to/from the Courington Lane/Workhouse Lane junction

A meeting was held on Weds 23rd Sep to discuss minimising and slowing the rain water flowing off the Bloxham School playing fields onto this junction. This meeting involved the School, CDC and OCC, the Parish Council and affected residents. It was a positive meeting and several actions were agreed, including:-

- It was noted that since the original work to connect this field drainage to the external drains was not (or would not) have been judged to be development – so no Section 23 application would have been required.
- The bund in the lower field is to be widened – to the maximum possible extent (judged to be between 600-800 mm). Work to be priced and scheduled.
- The existing baffles will be extended to this new width and raised by one more “plank”.
- To prevent water from the bund overflowing into the neighbouring property a groove (swale) will be cut in the bank at a level below that of the neighbouring property to allow water to flow into the field.

- A flow restrictor (a plate) will be added to the concrete pipe exiting the bund to ensure that excess flow does not flow directly into the pit on Courtington Lane.
- Install a water barrier across the bottom of the field gate. This will probably be rubber or another suitable material.
- The School advised that Bourton Drains were booked to work around the school during half-term, and the lines around / under the car park towards the Workhouse Lane junction were to be added to their job sheet.
- There is a need to understand the origins of the drains arriving at the grid covered pit outside the school on Courtington Lane. CDC will liaise with the School and Bourton Drains to have them do the camera work.
- Installing a larger (than the existing) line under the school car park is still under consideration – but the challenges are recognised as being:
 - o Feasibility – can the line be installed to avoid existing services as well as providing a good flow path (it was noted that the existing line has a number of turns and bends which leaves it more liable to blocking) and,
 - o Budgetary – ideally the work would be done within the previously defined budget.

CDC (Tony Brummell) is preparing the task list, work timings and results of work undertaken from these discussions, and that is not yet available.

Village Drains

- There has been extensive work reported from around the village of contractors marking up and working on drains. Unfortunately we do not have any knowledge of the various activities being completed – although we obviously welcome that drains that have been observed to be inoperable for significant periods are being addressed.
- OCC continue to tell us that Bloxham drains and gulleys are due a complete clean during October – although we are not aware of any dates yet. They continue to emphasise the importance of using FixMyStreet to report any blocked drains or related issues.
- **If villagers find that there has been no response or action on their FixMyStreet submission after 4 weeks then please let me know (inc. date submitted and reference number) and I will see whether we Parish Council can get any action.**
- We are continuing to have an exchange with OCC to identify a suitable contractor who we (Parish Council) could engage to do “emergency” drain clearance if it was needed. Unfortunately, some of the most frequently seen teams around the village are not insured to do highway work.

Stop Bloxham Flooding

As part of the process of spreading information about flooding to more people in the village, a new community website has been launched to bring together information about flood risk in Bloxham and the work being undertaken to make the village more resilient to future flooding.

www.stopbloxhamflooding.co.uk

The Stop Bloxham Flooding website has been developed following the serious flooding experienced in the village, including during Storm Bert in November 2024. Its central message is deliberately straightforward:

“Keep drains clear. Slow the flow.”

We are very thankful for all the work Jerry Wood has done to get this site launched – but to become an indispensable benefit for the village requires that that we get lots of community input to the site.

Additional NFM opportunities around the village.

These continue to be investigated but we are not getting any real traction with the landowners at this time. But, the new website (above) has been circulated to the Landowners via the Natural England rep for Bloxham, and he has emphasised that the community is very keen to have a good relationship with the farming community, and that we are explicit about this on the website. There is a section on [landowner funding mechanisms](#), and although the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier options have, for a while, been elusive, someone will be hired in the next month specifically to put these schemes together for targeted habitats, and specific projects like NFM.

Neil Hegarty
5 October 2026