



## STOCKBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL RESILIENCE PLANNING

**December 2020**

Despite another wet autumn, the groundwater levels at the Environment Agency Stockbridge Main Hut monitoring station are stable and water levels sit **below** the 'Typical Range' and as such, we're currently some way off a flood risk. Details can be seen on the Gaugemap link below which is updated every 6 hours.

Our main concern in Stockbridge is fluvial and groundwater flooding which happens over a prolonged period of heavy rainfall. There is usually a 10-14-day lag between rainfall and the resulting groundwater levels. This lag shortens over the winter as the underground chalk aquifers become saturated and groundwater rises. Flash flooding is another risk to Stockbridge which can happen during short, but heavy periods of rainfall which could leave the drainage system unable to cope with the volume of rainfall. The gullies have, fortunately, never failed to do their job, albeit some have in the past been found to be partially or completely blocked, but this highlights the importance of continuing to keep the gullies clear of any debris. If you do find that gullies are blocked and you are unable to remove the blockage safely, please contact the parish clerk who will instruct a councillor to take a look and remedy this.

During the flooding event in 2013/14, a few properties to the north of the High Street were affected, and one had to be demolished and rebuilt. However since then we have not had any major incidents and this is largely due to the construction of two new flood relief projects which was funded equally by HCC and TVBC, and we are enormously thankful to Roger Tym for acting on behalf of the Houghton Fishing Club and applying for planning permission as well as negotiating the funding for these works. While there is not a lot one can do to control groundwater, Stockbridge Parish Council have been carrying out invaluable work alongside HCC/TVBC of maintaining vegetation and watercourses in order to minimise the effects of rising groundwater. You might have noticed a mechanical road sweeper early on a Monday morning (if you're awake early enough!) which the Parish Council recently secured, and this is now a weekly fixture. We are currently negotiating a regular manual street cleaner so we can not only keep the High Street looking nice, but can remove all debris from drains and gullies that the mechanical sweeper can't get to.

It's also important not to underestimate the work of the Houghton Fishing Club that happens quietly in the background, but something we all benefit from. We owe our gratitude to the Fishing Club's manager and his team who are out all day and night, at times of high risk, to make sure no blockages occur in the free flow of water downstream. They work tirelessly every day of the year to manage the rivers, and they are always happy to provide maintenance advice to the parish council and property owners with riparian rights.

One very important factor of flood prevention is keeping watercourses clear and if you are a riparian

owner you do have a legal obligation to maintain your section of the river. There is an EA leaflet entitled 'Living on the Edge' and a recent HCC publication entitled 'Flood Risk Management Guidance for Landowners' that outlines riparian responsibilities. Both of these documents can be found on the parish council website.

A lot of work is being done behind the scenes with TVBC and HCC and we are confident of their support; not only in times of an emergency but their work throughout the rest of the year in monitoring water levels and flood risks. We have been repeatedly assured that it is very unlikely that the parish council would ever need to raise an alarm of flood risk because the Borough and County councils are already monitoring water levels before we notice any signs of flooding in the village. If an emergency arises, they are ready to act quickly.

This is not to say that the parish council will be complacent and rely on the work of the Borough and County councils alone because we are best placed as local people to understand our community, the geography and topography of the village, and those individuals and households that are most at risk.

For this reason we will be seeking permission from all households in Stockbridge, who consider themselves vulnerable in the event of flooding, to retain personal details in order to pass these to the emergency services for them to store on their secure resilience system, strictly for use in emergency situations. The required form can be found under the Resilience section of the parish council's website and is entitled 'Emergency Contact Form, in the event of flooding' and we would be grateful if you could complete and scan a copy back to the Parish Clerk, or send it in the post to her. It's important that if you would like to be on the list that a form is completed because we cannot store your personal details without your written permission. If you have any issues accessing the form, or any queries related to it, please contact the Parish Clerk ([clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk)). If you are unable to return the form to the clerk, for whatever reason, please let the clerk know and we can arrange for a councillor to collect this from you. This master list is being refreshed alongside reviewing and updating the parish council's existing resilience plan which was formally adopted in 2017.

As a parish we are in a good position against the risk of flooding, particularly because of the work of the Houghton Fishing Club, but should it occur, we will display updates on the parish council website ([stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk](http://stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk)) and notice boards, as well as other key points in the village. We also encourage you to add your e-mail address to the database on the parish council website to be kept up to date with all our news: <http://www.stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk/community/stockbridge-parish-council-12514/home/>

For the latest flood information and guidance pamphlets go to: <https://sites.google.com/view/groundwatergraphs> or call the Environment Agency (EA) Floodline on [0345 988 1188](tel:03459881188) option 1 and enter Quickdial code 0122231.

Alternatively, for the latest 6 hourly groundwater readings go to the GaugeMap website at <https://www.gaugemap.co.uk/#!Detail/16515/12238>

It is strongly recommended that all residents at risk register with the EA for automated flood warnings at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>

For further information contact the EA FLOODLINE on [0345 988 1188](tel:03459881188).