

Thornborough Flood Action Group Report December 2022

History, Actions and the Future

On December 23rd, 2020, prolonged rain caused flooding in Thornborough, Thornton, Buckingham and the country at large.

Three properties were flooded in the centre of the village and two more at Thornborough Mill. Also, several properties were flooded in Thornton.

We established a 'Section 19' investigation and report on this event. A Section 19 flood report is a public statement of the circumstances of a flood event, which establishes the responsible risk management authorities as well as the functions they have exercised or propose to exercise as a result of the flooding event.

Such a report was made by Buckinghamshire Council (BC) with the help of rivers authorities and Thornborough Flood Action Group (TFAG) and all the flood affected residents.

The Thornborough Flood Action Group was formed in conjunction with Thornborough Parish Council (TPC), the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and a number of Bucks Council departments works to alleviate the effects of future heavy rain events.

During the subsequent visits by the various people responsible for maintenance a number of road ditches and gullies were identified as needing work.

In June 2021 the IDB carried out clearing of the stream bed at Lower End and widened the stream upstream of the bridge. They also improved the stream downstream of Hatchets Leys Lane. These works should significantly improve the water flows out of the village centre.

The landowner of the field adjacent to Back Street cleared ditches within and outside his fields as part of the improvement works.

The Section 19 review was done by BC's Consultants and was then reviewed by TFAG and by the affected residents at Thornton Mill and House. The latter weren't too impressed.

This Autumn TFAG members with the very helpful support of the landowners inspected both brooks which join just upstream of the playing field with a view to identifying possible places where the flow could be temporarily delayed.

TFAG have spoken to all the landowners upstream of Tonne Brook entering the village and are delighted with the flood mitigation measures taken – to slow the flow of water into the village centre.

Tonne Brook to the south of the Thornton Road enters the village at Bridge Street. The other stream to the north of the valley, Thorn Brook, enters via the ford in Back Street.

TFAG decided that there were limited further opportunities to significantly delay flows into the village and will instead focus on asking residents to be vigilant in identifying blocked flow channels and then reporting them to TPC for pushing BC to get them cleared.

The fact that Thornborough warranted the expense of a significant piece of scientific analysis and reporting should act as an incentive to BC staff to be quicker to respond to complaints. We hope...

TFAG expert and civil engineer (Crad Allerton – former Thornborough resident), Ray Goodger and Bernard Garbe are a part of the TFAG team and will be happy to advise homeowners in the village on measures that they can take in flood mitigation from the knowledge that we have gained in this investigation.

We are certain that there will be another flood event in the next few years – in any month of the year.

So our message is 'adopt a drain'. Blocked drains were a significant cause of the last flood. All drains have been cleared by BC in the last year, but residents can (and did) help significantly in clearing blocked drains thus alleviating flooding – but not all drains were cleared.

Adopt your local drain and keep it clear of leaves and other debris to help yourself and your neighbours. Contact me if I can help.

Thanks,

Bernard Garbe

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