

Want to know what's being done about the road flooding? Read on!

Hello, as the Highnam Flood Warden, I would like to update the parish on items occurring behind the scenes to reduce flooding and help with flood responses in the future. Please share this information with others who may not have seen it.

The focus will be the flooding on the 23rd of December 2020 and mainly the A40. The flood event occurred after 52mm of rain fell on already waterlogged soil. Whilst almost all main drains and ditches were overcome with the quantity of water, there were some key issues that worsened the situation.

The A40 by Over Farm to the Toby Carvery is drained by an underground pipe (culvert) that takes water from road drains and farm ditches, then follows the road before heading under the traveller's park opposite the Toby Carvery, the railway and then to an Environment Agency water gate (sluice) that sits on the banks of the Severn.

As far as we can tell, there are no records of the culverts route beyond the Carvery, it has not been cleaned for a long time and the out fall is partially covered with silt.

As each landowner has responsibility to keep clear the water courses flowing through or under them, Highways England, Network Rail, the Lower Severn Drainage Board, the Environment Agency and landowners will be coming together to ensure the cleaning operation takes place.

Highways England are also surveying/mapping the culvert and checking their maths to demonstrate its ability to take the rainwater that is supposed to flow through it.

Getting all these entities talking has taken a while and having the works completed will take further time.

The first signs of action will take place towards the end of the re-surfacing work being carried out. The collection chambers on the side of the road will be emptied by a large tanker (last done in August 20) and Highways England employees will be seen inspecting the areas around and under manhole covers.

Moving on to the Highnam traffic lights. The area is often flooded by small rainfall events and issues to resolve it are complicated due to road or asset ownership. The B4215 is a Gloucester Highways asset whereas the lights and beyond are a Highways England asset. Highways England built the junction in 2008 but handed it back to Gloucester Highways once completed.

GH have been back and forth with HE to try and resolve the flooding but again the issue appears to be with culverts flowing back to Linton Farm and uncertainty as to their location and outflow. GH now have a work order in place to inspect and clean the clogged kerb stones which Councillor's hope will lead to a reduction in the severity of the flooding.

The flooding at Linton between the Highnam Roundabout and traffic lights was exacerbated by a missing drain guard at the entrance to the culvert that flows under the road to the farm, which allowed debris into it and partially blocked it. The culvert has been inspected by Highways England and works to clear the ditch adjacent to Highnam Court will be taking place soon to ensure the water cannot collect debris as it flows.

Flooding was greatly reduced at the approach from Ross to the Highnam roundabout after a parish landowner cleared ditches, pipes and created temporary dams on the southern side that support Gloucester Highways drainage. They are also investing in new ditches later in the year to carry even more water away from the road.

Two Mile Lane routinely floods and sees an influx of vehicles during flood conditions due to the effect on local routes. Resurfacing is planned to address the potholes, but Councillors are wary about encouraging these works without first resolving the poor drainage there.

So what are the various authorities doing to help with the immediate response in the future?

Straight after the flood event, there was a large meeting where many key figures got together to raise and share ideas. Much came out of it and there will be various reports made later in the year detailing changes. Immediate responders such as the Fire Service will also be changing their procedures, an example being drafting more call handlers at short notice when a large event occurs to handle the increased call volumes.

Did you suffer with the floods? Was your house flooded or your access blocked by the water? Please raise the issue using the [Flood Online Reporting Tool](#).

This helps the local authorities build a picture of the local issues and will allow resources to be directed to try and fix the issues in future. The more responses, the more it will highlight problem areas.

Want to plan for the future?

Consider following the pointers in [this booklet](#), sign up for flood warnings with [the Environment Agency](#) or create your own [personal flood plan](#).

A [useful tool to check river levels](#) is available that will help if you use the A417 to Maisemore regularly and want to see if it is likely to be open.

I hope this is helpful to residents in some degree, and hope that as we move out of the pandemic and into the summer, we can enjoy some respite from recent issues.

Rees Keene - Parish Councillor and Flood Warden.