

Brimfield, Orleton and Little Hereford PFR Scheme 23 August 2022 (5pm), Brimfield Village Hall

Attendees: Steve Hodges (SH) – Herefordshire Council
James Fishlock (JF), Joel Hockenhull (JH), Jenny Allen (JA) – Balfour Beatty Living Places
Cllr John Stone (JS) – Ward Councillor for Leominster North & Rural
Boris Pearson – Brimfield & Little Hereford Parish Lengthsman

1. SH welcomed the meeting attendees and introduced the council representatives
2. JH introduced the project:
 - A flood alleviation scheme to eliminate water entry into properties had not proven to be viable, therefore a Property Flood Resilience (PFR) scheme is being promoted. Environment Agency (EA) grant monies have been made available as a secondary option for resistance measures.
 - Correspondence was sent to properties who were shown to potentially be at risk from flooding based on EA mapping and PFR surveys were undertaken at properties who initially responded to an invitation to join the scheme.
 - Flood recoverability measures are not funded.
3. JH gave a brief description of some of the main resistance measures recommended:
 - First point of entry as water rises – brickwork holes and service penetrations would be sealed.
 - The installation of auto closing airbricks (property owners prompted to check the number of airbricks they have).
 - Non-return valves would assist if there are low lying drainage devices inside properties (as water can enter properties via backflow through foul drainage pipes).
 - Industry standard flood doors rely on seals being kept clean and so demountable flood barriers could be considered more reliable as they rely on a secure seal.
 - The focus needs to be on installing measures at low points of the property.
4. JH spoke about measures which could be used to remove flood water from properties:
 - If properties have a timber floor, then the installation of a sump pump beneath the floorboards could be an option.
 - Puddle suckers could potentially be a better option for those with suspended concrete floors.
 - JH asked those who haven't already done so to read the PFR Survey report, in particular Table 7 of the recommended resistance measures and provide JA with feedback on which measures they feel may suit their property/lifestyle best.
5. SH, JH and JF provided an update on the project timeframes:

- The EA grant has been approved in principle. Submission of grant application – Mid September.
 - Grant approval by EA would follow a regional flooding meeting – Early November.
 - Process to access funding – End November.
 - Commercial engagement following receipt of a service order – Christmas.
 - BBLP will have to follow a tender process to demonstrate that quotes have been received from the market
 - Delivery of project – Spring/Early Summer – anticipated it will take 2/3 months to deliver.
6. SH and JH discussed the potential budget – this was originally estimated as being £234,000 but will be confirmed as part of the grant application process.
7. Questions & Answers:
- Concerns were raised about the technical detail of the PFR Survey reports and whether more detailed surveys can be undertaken.
 - It was explained that we have to follow an EA process and that there is a finite amount of funding, so remaining funds to deliver the scheme would be diminished.
 - Has an area wide solution been considered?
 - An assessment has previously been undertaken by WSP to quantify how much storage would be required to significantly reduce the flows in the brook. We could not attract sufficient funding to undertake an holistic scheme.
 - Can additional de-silting works be promoted, particularly at the old A49 highway bridge?
 - The Brimfield and Little Hereford Flood Group has actively removed silt at several locations on the brook, enhancing flows and completing improvements at the Farm Bridge. Previous discussions with Amey, BBLP and the EA had been held regarding the distance of the Farm Bridge to at-risk properties.
 - An update was sought regarding the capital funded programme works to remove silt build up from under the old A49 road bridge? The Parish Council may be able to provide financial support.
 - Following the meeting the old A49 highway bridge was inspected. The bank upstream of the bridge has become solid with deposited silt, one proposal would be to deliver the upstream works as a separate project.
 - Following this meeting, JH has been able to confirm that the works are programmed for completion by BBLP this financial year (2022/23). JH is to liaise with Peter Clements about the salmonoid issues and an acceptable method of working within the Brimfield Brook.

- Residents advised that the River Teme highway bridge at Little Hereford is badly silted up. Reports suggest that there has been a difference in water levels on either side of the bridge during flood events.
 - SH will liaise with the EA as the River Teme is a main river.
- A query was raised about the effectiveness of PFR measures proposed at Field View Cottages as floodwater percolates up through the floor.
 - The suggested measures are due to be discussed further with the PFR surveyor following a site visit after the meeting.