



PRELIMINARY REPORT REGARDING ONGOING AND FUTURE FLOOD PREVENTION IN CHIDEOCK.

The floods of Dec.19th and later in Feb. served to highlight a longstanding issue in Chideock as well as drawing attention to some others.

The land forms natural escarpments and plateau features which face south- south west perfect catchment for prevailing winds.

The soils are greensand in nature seasonally waterlogged due to clayey slowly permeable subsoils. Degradation of soil structure where soil becomes compacted and impermeable leads to run off and flooding, modern farming has the ability to change soil structure very quickly although compaction can be a subtle process.

Ploughing and drilling of crops must be done during dry season, wait till the wet season (after sept) and the weight of tractor and plough smearing action easily compresses the soil to a depth.

So now comes the rainy season the soil is impermeable very compacted the inevitable occurs.

Surface capping. Where soils have a high sand and silt content bare soil becomes sealed due to the battering action of rainfall as an end result field suffers run off.

Responsibility – WE are familiar with UK roads eg HE for Strategic Roads, County for the rest.

The land and rivers/waterways is similar. EA cover main rivers, many cases navigable. County are responsible for the rest.

In the case of Chideock our first port of call is Lead Local Flood Authority. Dorset Council. Any instance of flooding must be reported to this dept, they are the ones to act. The only other alternative being HE if the flood concerns blocked drains/culverts on A35.

It is County who can employ the Land Drainage Act, they can decide riparian ownership of watercourse on farmland, advise farmers on good housekeeping practice, prosecute for fouling of a

watercourse and should a landowner refuse to accept responsibility they can legally enter to carry out works claiming restitution of costs as per the Act.

Andrew Proberts-Engineer flood risk management,Dorset Council,was kind enough to accept my invitation to walk through the area affected by flooding to get a first hand look and assist in a course of action.

The walk commenced with FP17.



As can be seen the watercourse is in need of attention,bearing in mind it is the route of surface water drainage from Park Farm and above as well as Quarr Hill. Riparian ownership is being investigated hopefully those responsible for its upkeep will commence upkeep.

Crossing A35 the private road to the Firs checked the culvert which blocks leading to flooding rear of Park Farm Cottage.

Agreed the watercourse itself is in need of restoration.The grid is a necessity to prevent debris washing further into and blocking



culverts downstream. Requiring frequent clearance,again the ownership is being sought as it appears it may be on private land.

Attention should be brought to the unpleasant act of disposing of garden waste onto the banks and inevitably into watercourse.This is a major no no considering a waste facility is a 10 minute drive away.

(passing Clapps Mead via the footpath, to the right of the bridge is further evidence of this practice) it has to stop.

To Park Farm Rd has a grid to deflect run off from beyond, completely full of silt,requires simply lifting and 10 minutes with a shovel.



Housekeeping at the farm, slurry by lower barn containing oily deposit which in wet periods washes directly into stream, sheets of plastic waiting disposal which ended up blown into the watercourse.



THE



MEADOW.

Run off in progress, the above pictures refer to the earlier paragraphs regarding soil and its management. Taken recently they serve to highlight seriously bad land management going against all advice. Visible capping of almost the entire field.

Maize should never be grown on poor draining soils, it is impossible to harvest without damaging soils.

Level fields should be used to avoid channelling water downslope. Timely management, harvesting

early autumn followed by deep ploughing to loosen compacted soil then early drilling to ensure good crop cover before onset of wet winter months.

Just following simple recommendations would I feel sure go massively to removing future risk of run off from the meadow. Perhaps the benefits of growing winter wheat could be looked at.

Sown in the autumn as a cover crop prevents soil erosion over winter helping to maintain topsoil can be left as cover or cashed

The alternatives invariably lead to cries of who pays for it and nothing happens.

Definition: Riparian Responsibility

Land or property owners that have a watercourse in or adjacent to their land

Must let water flow without obstruction, pollution or diversion

accept flood flows through their land

keep banks clear of anything which may cause obstruction either on their land or downstream if washed away.

Maintain the bed and banks and trees and shrubs growing on banks plus clear litter and debris even if not from their land

keep structures ie culverts, screens etc clear of debris.

Again the solution is so simple if people face up to their responsibilities. I make no apology for sounding draconian but the consequences can affect many who are incapable through age or other reasons of helping themselves.

Lastly H E . and the A35 an e mail brought a response within 2 days ! Connect phoned me to ask which drains needed attention, jetting was already planned.

I requested
footpath
clearance. The
picture an
example of
what will end
up blocking a
drain cover.

They are
aware of
the failing



embankment Quarr Hill and Spring surface planeing should rectify many pothole problems.

If anything has been missed apologies to pc the report was very last minute hoping to include some details of land ownership/responsibility but it was proving not quite so straightforward.

Mr Mick Downes.

Post script to the report

Following a study of the effects of the run off from the meadow and where it comes from goes to. There is no run off above the bus stop opposite Broadmead.

It starts under the bus shelter plus adjacent banking, quickly overrunning the kerb onto the highway where it picks up speed, volume is added to the flow as further down more permeates through the grass bank.

Shortly after reaching the treeline some of the permeation through the bank is removed by a French Drain .

Highways rainwater surface drains appear not to cope but this is misleading, they only fail to cope when blocked by debris, straw, leaves twigs even dead avians!

Brings us to Park Farm Lane, either side of the junction are two vital drains which must be clear at all times if not the flow will reach homes, normally on eastbound side of A35, however continual flow will push water over crown of road to the westbound side aided by traffic which seems oblivious and fails to slow.

This situation causes ingress into School House garden and Bilberry driveway.

The main cause of Dec 19th flood, highway drains blocked by flailing of hedges days before and zero clearance of any of the debris .

Of note it only took the clearance of two sets of drains by Park Farm Cottages and the opposing sets on westbound side to alleviate all standing water. Leaving just the clear up of silt left behind.

Note to residents if you see a drain blocked by leaves and twigs let pc know and it can be cleared before it is too late .