

A FLOOD CHARTER FOR BLEASBY 2007

The Bleasby Flood Action Group has been considering how, whilst ensuring that all the responsible authorities take our needs into account, the parish can best assist in defending itself against further floods. At the last meeting held it was decided that adopting a charter would be a useful way of getting everybody on board and also keeping ourselves reminded that the threat of flood will not go away. We all need to play our part in ensuring that we have taken all the actions we can to minimise the risk of flooding such as experienced this year and, in the recent past, from the river. The Parish Council endorsed the idea and so the charter that follows is for us all, the residents of Bleasby, Goverton, Gibsmere and outlying parts of the parish, to consider. Hopefully we will all be willing to take up the pledges at the end of this piece.

BLEASBY FLOOD CHARTER

1. We accept that our village's location makes us vulnerable to flooding both from the river and from flash flooding from the hills and surrounding open land and we understand that the risk of flood will always be with us and is predicted to increase as a result of climate change.
2. We therefore accept that we need to take preventative and protective action locally and support national initiatives in the interests of our homes and village.
3. We accept that we are each responsible for the economic use of water and other resources and for the proper disposal of all forms of waste.
4. We also accept that we need to make provision for the safety of our properties and families before there is any threat of flood but that we need to bear in mind that protective actions we take may worsen the situation for others.
5. We therefore appreciate the value of working together and supporting each other and of communicating and cooperating with our neighbours in particular and with plans and schemes for the Parish as a whole.
6. We recognise the importance of our natural water courses and systems, and the part they play not only in water management but also as habitats for our flora and fauna, and that these need to be considered in any water conservation or management activities.

7. We respect the wisdom of our forebears who lived and worked on this land in years gone by, who learned to live and farm effectively and safely with similar flooding hazards to those we face, living on the driest parts and creating drainage networks to help them manage the land.
8. We recognise the crucial role of farmers and landowners in protecting the essential elements of our countryside - trees, hedges, banks and waterways - all of which help maintain effective water management and protect our precious environment.
9. We actively and earnestly encourage all responsible agencies to work together locally and nationally to ensure that all possible is done to minimise the threat of flooding and mitigate its consequences.

WE PLEDGE TO DO ALL WE CAN TO MINIMISE THE RISKS OF FLOODING AND DAMAGE TO OUR ENVIRONMENT AND TO BE PREPARED FOR FLOOD INCIDENTS BY:-

- Conserving all water supplies and avoiding waste and pollution
- Disposing of all waste in the appropriate way and not flushing away non-natural solids
- Avoiding the creation of barriers to easy drainage of surface and flood water by maintaining drains and keeping them free flowing
- Helping to keep waterways open and free of waste
- Avoiding the creation of more areas of non-permeable hard surfaces in our gardens, such as parking areas and patios, which impede natural drainage
- Supporting our farmers and landowners in working with the grain of nature, managing their land to ensure the best drainage and soil retention possible
- Working together for the common good of our parish in any way we can to prevent floods occurring and, should they occur, to minimise the effects
- Taking care of the more vulnerable in our community

WE CALL UPON THE DISTRICT AND PARISH COUNCIL TO

- Resist the building of properties in sites which are vulnerable to flooding or where adequate infrastructure is not in place to ensure the proper management of waste and surface water