

2017

Diddlebury Flood Action Group

Work Party 22nd October 2017

Images

Diddlebury Parish Flood Action Group

Progress Report # 6 – October 2017

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Following these meetings, site visits by the Agencies have been arranged to view problems at Corfton, Peaton, Peaton Strand, Diddlebury and Bouldon and these will take place in the next few weeks.

The other good news is that Luke Neal of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust (WLT), is now working full time in the Corvedale. He has already surveyed and designed around 50 sites for leaky dams or similar structures upstream of Diddlebury in the Diddlebrook catchment in cooperation with Delbury Estates. These will be constructed in a few weeks after the 1st February 2018, when the shooting season finishes. The FAG will then assist the WLT by taking regular images from fixed points above some of these structures so that their efficacy can be determined and measured over time. Once work has been completed in the Diddlebrook catchment, Luke will move on to the Pye Brook catchment.

Luke is also to arrange for de silting the Diddlebrook at the bottom Mill Lane which the FAG will then maintain. It is hoped that schoolchildren from the Corvedale Primary School will then be able use the stream as an environmental resource.

We are trying to ascertain ownership of the wall beside the bridge carrying Mill Lane over the Diddlebrook and a request for information has been placed in this web page and will also appear in the forthcoming edition of the Corvedale News. The reason for this is that while the Shropshire Council accept ownership of the bridge and have it in their regular maintenance programme, they do not as yet accept ownership of the adjacent wall. Only when they do will it enter their maintenance programme. The wall is essential to direct flows emerging from beneath

the bridge along the stream bed towards the foot bridge and not into adjacent properties. At the moment it is not in good repair and needs re pointing. If this work is not soon carried out, the wall will then require more major rebuilding work and in the meantime, if it were to fail during a flood event, it would lead to serious flooding of nearby properties.

We hope soon to be in a position whereby all relevant Planning Applications will be sent to us for comment on the flooding aspects of the proposals.

We are now officially Affiliated to the National Flood Forum who are to establish a Corvedale Forum, linking up all the Flood Action Groups in the Dale.

Geoff Neden

17th October 2017

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Mill Lane Bridge

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We are appealing to any long term residents of the village or the neighbourhood whose ancestors may have talked to them or their parents about this work, to pass on to us any information they may have. It's a long time ago so this is a long shot but worth a try! You can contact me on 01584841815 or gmeden@googlemail.com.

Geoff Neden

FAG

16th October 2017

Diddlebury Parish Flood Action Group

Shropshire Wildlife Trust - Land Owner Event held at Beambridge Clubroom and Wilderhope Farm on 22nd June 2017

Notes on Meeting

The meeting was well attended, principally by land-owners or their land agents or tenant farmers, together with various Flood Action Group (FAG) representatives. Unfortunately there was no complete list of attendees available.

The event was hosted by Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT), and started with a general introduction by Kate Singleton, followed by introduction of the four speakers. These were Kate Singleton of SWT who spoke on pollinators, Luke Neal also of SWT who spoke about 'Slow the Flow' (STF), Anne-Marie Jones of Natural England who spoke about Catchment Sensitive Farming and Liam Bell of Millichope Estate who spoke about the Estate's work in re-establishing grey partridge habitat.

Each of the above spoke about their work and conservation philosophies and then we made visits to examine the practical work being carried out at various sites.

The over-lapping of all the above topics was well understood by all of those involved in carrying out practical works; this fact would clearly assist in achieving all parties' goals in the future. It was particularly good to see and hear the understanding, sympathetic and supportive views of the farmers present, most of whom were already practising many of the preferred methods proposed by the speakers.

We were all provided with copies of two documents - Habitat Creation and Management for Pollinators (85 pages) and Increasing the Value of Hedges for Wildlife with Relaxed Cutting Regimes (2 pages) both published by Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (www.ceh.ac.uk). Both these documents can be viewed, downloaded, and printed from the CEH website noted above.

Basically, the main thrust of these reports is two-fold. First, instead of field hedge cutting every year, it is proposed that hedges can be cut every two or three years; this allows the hedges to provide increased amounts of blossom and berries. In addition, if the hedge cutting takes place in late winter, rather than as traditionally in early to mid-autumn, then overwintering wildlife benefit from more food in the form of hawthorn, blackthorn and blackberries. There are negatives to this of course as hedges adjacent to roads and lanes etc. need to be cut annually to ensure safe visibility but there are plenty of hedges between fields where this relaxed cutting regime can be adopted.

Second, the provision of habitat strips in fields, usually adjacent to hedges, and appropriately planted and managed is proposed. The recommendation is to provide between 0.25 and 0.5 hectares of appropriate wild flowers per 100ha, depending upon whether the landscape is lacking in flowers in the first place or not. The areas suggested do not have to be to the complete perimeter of a field, as they could be in corners or awkward, less accessible portions of fields. Also, shading from hedges and/or trees can have an important effect on the value of pollinator habitat, as can the aspect and prevailing weather.

Obviously the 85-page document provides much detailed information about habitat planting and management, mainly for pollinators but also for small mammals.

The grey partridge re-establishment issue dealt with the use of hedges and habitat strips where provision of some bare ground away from the hedge and some intermittent bare narrow strip 'corridors' between the bare ground through the wildflower corridor into the hedge would provide safe access for fledglings.

Partridges are ground-nesting birds and as farmland has historically been cultivated right up to the hedges their habitat has been reduced and the birds have been in severe decline. This

habitat loss combined with increased use of pesticides has caused the reduced survival rate of chicks and thus the severe overall decline in the grey partridge population.

It is hoped that increased areas of suitable habitat and reduced use of pesticides will contribute to a reversal of this trend.

Finally, all members of the FAG are well aware of the STF information provided by Luke, and have seen it in practice in the form of leaky dams between Westhope and Culmington. However, it was good to see the Wilderhope Farm leaky dams in places which, I suspect, are still awaiting a real test! The proposal to record the effectiveness by dated and timed photography will add to the wealth of information already available.

The meeting concluded back at Beambridge over a buffet lunch and further general informal discussion amongst all present.

Andrew Kirk

FAG

Diddlebury Parish Flood Action Group

Progress Report #5 – March 2017

The Group recently held a regular Multi Agency Meeting where we join up with representatives from local Government Agencies to discuss flood related issues - including our input to local Planning Applications. A good working relationship has been reached with these representatives and this has resulted in quick responses to specific local problems such as blocked drains.

In January, Sarah Halford from Peaton presented a Paper on our behalf to a Conference held at the University of Gloucestershire to discuss Natural Flood Management (NFM).

A trailer for the forthcoming film "High Water Common Ground" which promotes NFM and which is based on interviews with members of Flood Action Groups across the Country, including Diddlebury and Culmington is available via the following link:<https://vimeo.com/194145332> . We hope in the next few months to arrange a public showing of the full film to all those interested in the whole of the Corvedale.

Actual construction work on Slow the Flow Structures should commence in the Diddle Brook catchment during the next Financial year with work in the Pye Brook catchment following on.

Geoff Neden

10th February 2017

Diddlebury Parish Flood Action Group



Thursday 15th Feb
7.30—9.30pm
Diddlebury Village hall

Join us for a progress update on our
work in the Corve Dale



- 7.30pm Luke Neal, River Officer— Slow the Flow in the Corve Dale
- 7.45pm Environment Agency— Update on 'farming rules for water' coming into force April 2018
- 8pm Short film
- 8.30pm Refreshments and informal chat

“Natural flood management means working with nature
to reduce flooding”

“Slow The Flow” project funded by the RFCC supported by:



Notice of Meetings

Green Futures Seminar - 1st February, Craven Arms

The Environment Agency will be giving information to landowners and farmers about the next round of regulations and funding available at 7.00pm in the Craven Arms Community Centre.

Progress on Slow the Flow - 15th February, Diddlebury

A Progress Report on Slow the Flow in the Corvedale will be presented by Luke Neal of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust at the Diddlebury Village Hall at 7.30pm. The talk will be followed by a short film. Refreshments will be provided and after the film, Luke will be available for an informal chat

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