

Is the condition of our local roads “going with the flow”?

Research* from the University of Bristol, published in 2023, has shown that the likelihood of extreme rainfall events in the UK is steadily increasing and that by 2080 the frequency is likely to reach three times that of 1980 in the South of the country, with up to ten times more likelihood in the North of England and Scotland. Hardly surprising then that the [Met Office](#) reports that March brought more than 150% of the average rainfall in England and Wales with much of this concentrated in the South.



2080 may still be some time away, but recent downpours have demonstrated the need for communities across the country to maintain both natural and artificial drainage systems that have, in many cases, reliably channelled surface water safely away for much longer than the last century.

Over recent times ditches, culverts and drains in many areas around our parish have become shallower, constricted or in some cases totally blocked. The water which once would flow harmlessly away to established streams instead now often helps to deepen the edges beside the already pot-holed highways or even flows across our roads and lanes steadily worsening their already often poor condition.



The Parish Council regularly seeks the assistance of Hampshire Highways by reporting serious road damage, but it is clear that ever more constraint on county resources means that many of our roads are becoming increasingly dilapidated. We may not locally be able to provide the tarmac to fill the holes, but regular attention to the ditchways, to the cuts which allow water to flow into them from roads and to culverts laid under driveways can play a part in reducing water damage to our infrastructure and avoiding potential overload of the sewage system.

If you have a ditch, drain or culvert on your property do please check that it is flowing freely. Your action will not only help to protect your local environment, but that of the community in general.

*['Variability conceals emerging trend in 100yr projections of UK local hourly rainfall extremes'](#) by Kendon E.J et al. in *Nature Communications* , March 2023