



Heidi Head, Clerk to Eaton Bray Parish Council
EATON BRAY PARISH COUNCIL
17 Hammond Street,
Aston Clinton,
Bucks,
HP22 0AJ

Your ref: -
Our ref: -
Date: 01/03/2021

Dear Ms. Head

RE: Flooding – Eaton Bray

We have been made aware of flooding in the following locations within Eaton Bray in the last few months; The Comp, Eaton Park/The High Street, and Harling Road.

- The Comp – flooding primarily associated with blockage of a trash screen.
- Eaton Park – flooding primarily associated with blockage to a culvert and subsequent overland flow.
- Harling Road – flooding primarily associated with run off from land onto property and highway.

Routine investigation in response to the flooding reports received by CBC, supported by site visits, has identified the nature of the flooding to be associated with the maintenance and condition of private drainage features.. Advice has been provided to this effect to the relevant landowners in the above localities and we understand the remedial works are to take place on this basis, CBC Highways have also attended Harling Rd to inspect/clean the highways drainage to ensure flow.

As you may already be aware, the Land Drainage Act 1991 requires that a watercourse be maintained by its owner in such a condition that the free flow of water is not impeded. Those owning land located immediately adjacent to or abutting a drainage ditch, river or any other inland body of water is in legal terms a 'riparian owner' and will have certain common law rights & responsibilities. These are summarised below.

RIPARIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) You have the responsibility to pass on flow without obstruction, pollution or diversions affecting the rights of others.
- 2) You must accept flood flows through your land, even if these are caused by inadequate capacity downstream.
- 3) You must maintain the bed & banks of the water course, and also the trees & shrubs growing on the bank. You must clear any debris even if it did not originate from your land/person.
- 4) You must keep the bed & banks clear of any matter that could cause an obstruction, either on your land or downstream if it is washed away.
- 5) You must keep any structures that you own clear of debris. These structures include culverts, trash screens, weirs and mill gates.
- 6) You are responsible for protecting your property from water that seeps through natural or man-made banks.

The area of Eaton Bray falls within the Buckingham and River Ouzel Internal Drainage Board's district (the IDB) and as such they have the relevant powers to uphold the Land Drainage Act in this area. We understand the IDB is active in the area with monthly checks on known hotspots, annual programmed works, and less frequent maintenance and minor improvements. This makes the best of the existing (urban constrained) system. From correspondence with the IDB we understand they are arranging for condition inspections of the strategic drains under their control, we aim to work with the IDB on this exercise to ensure a mutual understanding of the issues. We also understand the IDB has undertaken detailed analysis of the local drainage in the area of Eaton Bray and analysis of potential opportunities to make changes that could reduce the local flood risk in the future, and that they are exploring possible funding opportunities to this effect.

The catchment received an exceptionally high amount of rainfall in January with a total average rainfall of 92mm, which is 182% of the Long Term Average. The 6 month rainfall accumulation was 486mm (152% of LTA); making it the 2nd wettest 6 months ending in January since the record started in 1981. At the time the flooding occurred there would therefore have been limited capacity for infiltration, triggering additional overland run-off and high loading on the capacities of the local surface water drainage networks. These conditions will have exacerbated any issues within the drainage network that at the time impeded flow.

The Council will conclude our investigation by way of letters to riparian owners we have made contact with thus far, to remind these of their responsibilities and the

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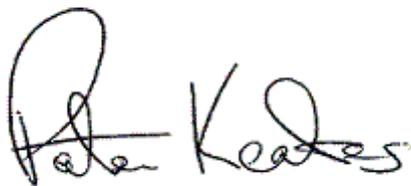
importance of managing assets under their control to ensure flow is not obstructed and to ensure downstream conveyance of flows.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Parish Council to promote the role and responsibilities of riparian owners locally and ensure maintenance is prioritised. The ideal time to advise riparian owners to undertake works is late September through to March, as this should minimise impact on nesting or breeding birds and will help prepare for increased winter flows.

We are aware there are intermittent issues with highways drainage throughout the area, we advise these are reported as soon as they occur via the CBC Highways online 'report it tool' (<https://fixmystreet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/>), so that the necessary action may be considered by the Council

We hope the above will be of use.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Keates
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