

## **SAFAG-report to Shipston Town Council-March 2025.**

Following Geoff Smith's decision to stand down from an active role, the core working group members are now Mike McCarthy, Brian Cooper, Ben Goren and John Dinnie. There are other volunteers available to help as and when required.

Following a presentation by Mike McCarthy to Stour Valley Lions, SAFAG was invited to submit a funding application. The request is for £5,000 and this is intended to cover the projected costs for a flyer (designed by Ben Goren) about flood awareness to be delivered to those properties most at risk from flooding in Shipston and the surrounding communities, together with the estimated costs for repairs/upgrades to the interventions on PigBrook. In addition, it's intended to research an early warning system for the upstream catchment of the Stour. This may include measuring gauges which can be installed on some of the watercourses feeding into the Stour. These would enable the water flow volumes to be monitored at an early stage, as there is a delay of a few hours before Shipston is affected.

Because of the identified flooding risks to vehicles parked in the Mill Street car parks, Brian Cooper will be preparing a notification which will be delivered to the local hospitality establishments (pubs/hotels/guest houses etc) close to the town centre, with the request to monitor the river gauge at Shipston during periods of heavy/prolonged rainfall. The communication will ask that visitors/guests who have parked at the Mill Street car parks be warned if the river level rises to 2.9m so that any vehicles parked there can be moved to a safe location. Details of how to access the website for the river gauge will be provided, together with how to sign up for automatic flood warnings.

In the absence of any SAFAG headed paper, it's proposed to reproduce the notification on STC letterhead, with a statement that it has been prepared and delivered by SAFAG, a Working Group of STC. SAFAG contact details will also be provided. This is still being investigated as Ben Goren may be able to design an appropriate dual STC/SAFAG logo letterhead.

Strengthening the leaky woody dams which have been affected by the significant rainfall events will be a targeted priority. It's intended to use rebar to reinforce the structures. Consequently, a further supply of rebar is required.

**Recommendation- that STC approve the purchase of an additional supply of rebar. 1m x 10mm-a total of 40. Quoted cost (with free delivery)-£115.96.**

April/May-Brian Cooper intends to approach local parish councils and Chipping Campden Town Council to request donations towards the cost of repairs and upgrades to the catchment area interventions. In addition, an application to Tesco for support from their Community Funding programme was investigated, but their priority is currently targeted on struggling children and families. There is a long lead in time and any application would have to be made in the name of STC. May be revisited in the future.

Mike McCarthy attended a multi-agency meeting at Frankton Sewage works and a workshop at Draycote Water, promoting Shipston catchment issues. Also had discussions with Suzanne Ward (EA Senior Manager).

In response to a request from the President of Shipston Bowls Club, Mike McCarthy visited to discuss the constant flooding of the clubhouse. Unfortunately, there is no immediate solution as the proximity to the Stour places the building at high risk.

Mike McCarthy had a meeting with WCC about the storage of SAFAG's consumables at the WCC depot on the Brailes Road. This is in case SAFAG needs to move from this site due to any possible re-development at the rear of the depot.

Ben Goren attended a meeting of Brailes PC to discuss localised flooding issues.

Following the flooding of 22 homes in Long Compton, Mike McCarthy attended an on-site meeting with Mark Banning and Rianveer of WCC Flood Team, together with Sam Gibson of the Long Compton Flood Group. Despite a follow up, there has been no response to the raised concerns. SAFAG will seek a meeting at WCC to emphasise the need for action. Long Compton is affected by flooding from Nethercote Brook and its tributaries.

A report from the Environment Agency (EA)/Severn Rivers Trust (SRT) has been sent to Estate Management/Landowner of Compton Scorpion about the possible installation of several ponds, wetland areas and leaky dams. It's anticipated that, if any scheme were to proceed, the main funding is likely to be covered by the EA and SRT.

John Dinnie has carried out some assessments of the interventions on PigBrook, including photos. There is identified work to be carried out as there is evidence of damage and scouring which will undermine structural integrity. For some of the minor repairs, this will provide an opportunity to call on the volunteers to assist (SAFAG workday). It's likely that 'what3words' will be used in the future to identify the exact locations of the woody dams.

Ben Goren and Mike McCarthy met the organiser, Kirsty Righton, of a Farmers Group in Brailes to discuss a possible SAFAG presentation and walkabout for the farmers during the summer.

Mike McCarthy and Ben Goren walked Hen Brook in Brailes to assess the 10 NFM interventions. Although they are over 5 years old, they are in good condition. They will benefit from a minor amount of maintenance work to improve their attenuation and it's planned to have a SAFAG workday to attend to this in the Spring.

Following the advertised consultations about the proposed South Warwickshire Local Plan, Mike McCarthy has submitted a response on behalf of SAFAG.