

Kirkley Stream Flood Report – December 2015

1. Background

This newsletter is to update you on progress since the distribution of the October newsletter and public meeting. Please refer to the October newsletter for background details.

This update covers the whole of the Kirkley Stream (or Brook as it is sometimes known) from Carlton Colville to its outfall into Lake Lothing at Kirkley Ham, not just the area around Velda Close/Adwyck Way that was the subject of the Section 19 (Flood & Water Management Act) investigation.

2. Reports published

We received a few minor corrections/comments on the draft Section 19 Investigation Report and the wider Kirkley Stream Report and we have now published the final versions reflecting these comments. The Section 19 report is attached to this newsletter and both reports can be viewed and downloaded from: www.greensuffolk.org/SFRMP/FIR.

3. Taking forward the recommendations in the Reports

The reports make a number of recommendations in relation to the Kirkley Stream. Progress against these recommendations is detailed below.

1. A topographical survey of Kirkley Stream from Bloodmoor Roundabout to Kirkley Ham (bed and bank) in relation to property thresholds, highway attenuation areas, flood storage area, etc has been completed. This has indicated the extent of clearance work that is needed and will also be used to determine longer term actions that might further reduce flood risk. We have also reviewed access arrangements for inspection and maintenance.
2. Clearance of vegetation and removal of silt in those areas where the survey has indicated this is needed has been agreed. The work will take place in early March and will be jointly funded by Anglian Water and Suffolk County Council directly. The work will include clearing more access routes into the stream and removal of vegetation in the channel and banks, in accordance with an agreed specification. The work timetable and specification have been influenced by advice from our ecologists, who will be on site during the works.
3. Upstream of Bloodmoor Roundabout, in the section defined as main river, the Environment Agency has undertaken clearance work to increase flows in the stream. Removal of a mature oak tree in the stream, that may be a factor increasing flood risk, has had to be delayed. The tree may be an important bat roost and until we can determine this when they emerge from hibernation in late March, we can do nothing due to the legal protection afforded to the bats. If the tree cannot be removed a by-pass channel will have to be considered and agreed with the landowner. Suffolk Highways and Anglian Water have also inspected and, as necessary cleared, their drainage systems in the Carlton Colville area.
4. The key agencies are currently in the process of agreeing ongoing maintenance procedures and responsibilities. These plans will be shared with you shortly. Having undertaken the necessary clearance of the stream all the way along, these procedures will be put in place.

5. The survey undertaken has been utilised to inform the flood risk model and we are also looking at whether other options, such as increasing the capacity of the flood storage and highway lagoons or providing other attenuation areas, would further reduce flood risk. These longer-term activities will become part of the wider Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project (LFRMP). This £25+ million project aims to reduce all flood risks – tidal, river and surface water – delivering surface water improvements in the next few years and tidal protection by 2019/20. The Kirkley Stream area will be given the highest priority.
6. Anglian Water's trash screen, at the junction of Tom Crisp Way & Southwell Road, which catches debris as it flows down the stream, is being reviewed and may be redesigned and a telemetry monitoring system put in place. This would give a warning when blockages are occurring allowing more rapid and easier removal of debris, reducing the chances of flooding caused by blockages within the stream. Anglian Water will report on the feasibility of this early in 2016. In the interim a level monitor will be installing on the current grill. This monitor will have a radio link to the Anglian Water pumping station in Fen Park. This will notify their Operational Management Centre in Lincoln if water levels rise in Kirkley Stream to enable local action to ensure the stream is kept free from such blockages. This work should be completed by the end of January.
7. Another matter that was a cause of concern was the impact on new development on flood risk and whether there are any means to limit any new discharges into the Kirkley Stream. All relevant parties are meeting to discuss this in January. This is largely a matter for Waveney District Council (as planning authority) but Anglian Water and the Environment Agency and Suffolk County Council are working with them to consider what can be done and make recommendations to the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership in spring 2016.
8. The report proposed that flood resilience measures to be considered for properties at significant flood risk. This will be a matter for the home owners and Housing Association to progress as they see fit. We understand that few property owners are intending to install flood resilience measures as these are expensive and not covered by insurance.
We are aware that the Cotman Housing Association residents are now back in their homes but several of the private residents in Velda Close are still not back in their properties and it may be many more months before they can return. Our thoughts are with everyone who faces a difficult Christmas in temporary accommodation and to all who live with the ongoing stress, anxiety and many practical effects resulting from the one night of flooding last July. To all in this unenviable position please rest assured that we are all doing our best to reduce the risk of it happening again.
9. The Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) will continue to provide support to the residents of Carlton Colville and Aldwyck Way/Velda Close in the development of their own Community Emergency Planning groups.

4. Next steps

We will continue to keep you informed about our activities by sending out updates such as this one and have arranged another public meeting on **Friday 1st April 2016 4.00-6.00pm at Waveney District Council, Riverside**. We hope to see you there. Meanwhile, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like further information.

Best wishes for Christmas and a Happy New Year from us all

Helpful contacts:

Anglian Water: 03457 145 145 (24-hour, 7 days a week)

Environment Agency Flood Line: 0345 988 188 (24-hour)

Suffolk County Council: 0345 606 6171 (emergencies);
0345 606 6067 (office hours)
floods@suffolk.org.uk or online reporting on www.suffolk.gov.uk

Waveney District Council: 01502 527133 (emergencies); 01502
562111 (office hours)

Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit: 01502 523321 (office hours);
contact via Waveney District Council in an emergency