

Flooding

Andrew Chapman

Finally, the Environment Agency has been and cleared the length of Dauntsey Brook through The Green. Water is flowing well with plenty of capacity under the Old Sodom Lane Bridge.

I especially would like to thank the landowners doing ditch clearance along Idober Lane. I also know that they want to lower the levels in places still further before restoring the culverts across the gateways and possibly increasing the width downstream.



On the negative side, however I've had reports from two different digger drivers about the totally unacceptably aggressive behaviour of a small minority of drivers. I understand that the Speedwatch team have had similar experiences. Flooding closes the lane for several days each year, yet a small number of antisocial individuals will not wait two or three minutes for work to continue.

I've been learning more of the history of Idober Lane. A ditch along the eastern side of the road was filled in around 1937 in order that the road could be widened. As seems the case with many of our flooding problems, the job wasn't thought out fully and now the only way that some of the fields can drain is across the road. I've raised this with Wiltshire Council and am trying to get agreement to fix it.

Wiltshire Council is still failing to involve the parish and town councils in decisions on flooding. They are however working closely with the Environment and Highways Agencies, who have now spent about £100,000 of public money on studies... and to what effect? A group of town and parish councils (Dauntsey included) are continuing to put pressure on Wiltshire Council to get local knowledge actively involved with county flooding issues.

I've met with Jonathon Seed, chair of Wiltshire Council's Northern Operational Flood Working Group, which has replaced the old NWDC Flood Working Group. While it was a useful discussion, we are still left with the situation where Wiltshire Council feel there are too many parish councils to be involved with, so we are excluded. Once again, local knowledge is being ignored and decisions are made in ignorance by statutory agencies.

Dauntsey and Christian Malford continue to work well together and we have agreed that the next stage is to approach nearby parish councils in an attempt to form a formal Dauntsey Vale Drainage Board. Wiltshire Council, Highways Agency and Environment Agency don't understand our drainage and flooding problems and even seem to be trying to evade their responsibilities. As the old saying goes, "if you want a good job doing, do it yourself!"