



# Dauntsey Parish Council Drainage Board

## Flooding Report

### Highways Agency (HA)

The meeting to discuss the HA flooding report eventually happened at the end of September. I've asked HM Treasury to release the report to the public... and am still waiting. Should anyone wish to read it however, I have a copy that you can read, but not borrow or copy.

The report is quite long (almost 100 pages) and quite heavy going but concludes that only four houses flood in Dauntsey and the M4 has no effect on anything. So if you live in one of the other 30 to 40 affected properties, it must just have been your imagination!

It is difficult to understand how HA could expect any intelligent person to accept such findings.

### Dauntsey 2012

According to Wessex Water's latest newsletter, rivers are at their lowest levels since 1976. However, Brinkworth Brook flooded last January and is still in need of a lot of maintenance – until this is done, Dauntsey gets Brinkworth's floodwater!

This picture shows Boscastle 2004 under a 1 in 100 year flood. **This could easily be Dauntsey.** Next year it will be 80 years since Dauntsey's last 1 in 100 flood.



In 1932, the areas flooded included all of St James, The Green and Olivemead Lane. There are now a lot more houses and the raised M4!

The next 1 in 100 flood will be MUCH worse than 1932, potentially affecting almost every house in our community excluding Dauntsey Lock. For The Green, expect water to at least windowsill level.

Drainage Board work to date has significantly reduced the risk of the more regular flood events, but 2007 or worse conditions will still cause flooding.

Christian Malford had three houses flooded in 2007. They have three parish councillors in their flooding group, 14 flood wardens and working groups of 15 to 35 turning out to clear their ditches. Dauntsey has one parish councillor (me), two other members of our Drainage Board and assistance from a small group of local farmers, all of whom have my sincerest thanks.

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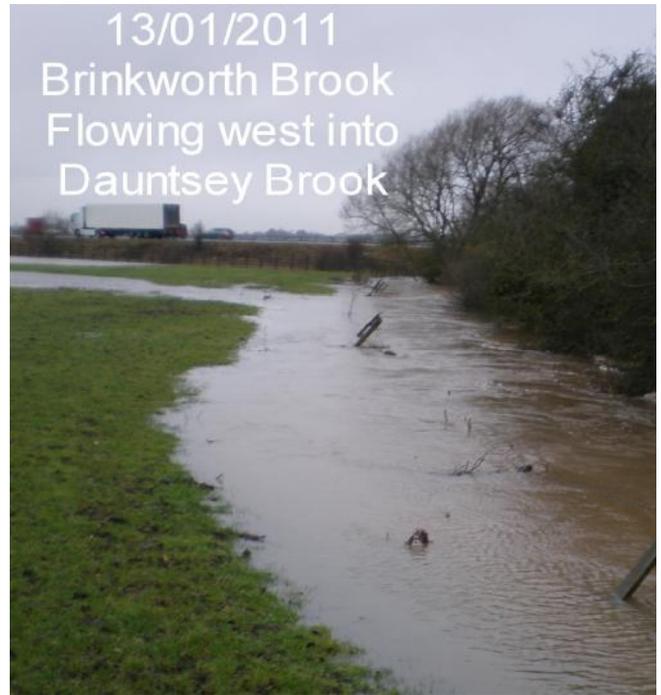
# **Dauntsey Parish Council Drainage Board**

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Dauntsey's two main flooding problems are the M4 (which the Drainage Board is fighting to improve) and a lack of maintenance. As property owners, you clear your gutters every year to stop them overflowing: Ditches, drains and watercourses need the same regular care. Dauntsey has done quite a lot since 2007 but Brinkworth has done almost nothing.

Brinkworth's rainfall catchment area is approximately eight times that flowing into the first Dauntsey Brook culvert. Whatever cannot get under the M4 at Grittenham comes down to Dauntsey (as shown in the photo taken last January). In both 2007 and 2008 enough water came from Brinkworth to flood onto the M4 from the south at the Church Lane overpass. In a 1 in 100 flood there is likely to be a wall of water flowing across the M4 from the south into The Green – 2007 will seem like a puddle by comparison.

Dauntsey needs flood wardens plus people to regularly walk and inspect our watercourses. We need help to put pressure on Brinkworth, Highways Agency, Environment Agency and others to solve our problems. We need everyone to ensure that regular maintenance is done on all watercourses.



## **Are you willing to help or are you happy to wait for the water to flood your home?**

I believe this problem is solvable, but only if a lot more of the community are willing to help. If not, then I see little point continuing to fight a battle that doesn't have active community support.

Unfortunately, Louise Swayne has had to step down for personal reasons. Louise has done a lot to help over the last three years and everyone has much to thank her for. Many thanks Louise.

Unless the Drainage Board can get more active help, it is likely to close at the end of the year. So fit flood gates to all your doors and park your cars in Brinkworth or Dauntsey Lock whenever heavy rain is predicted.

*Andrew Chapman*

29<sup>th</sup> October 2011