

FLOODING IN APPLEBY MAGNA - WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Flooding is sadly not something new to Appleby Magna, but whilst it might seem like it is never-ending, a lot has been happening. The purpose of this newsletter is to update you on what is happening, what is coming up, what is asked of you and how best to keep in touch.

Since the devastating floods in November 2019 and February 2020, a group of residents got together to try and do something to improve the situation. The 'Appleby Magna Resilience Group' was formed, and is now established with 4 people (2 of whom had to leave their homes due to flooding in 19/20). 1 of the group is a councillor on the Parish Council, so they are affiliated and connected to the work that the Parish Council do, which is in everyone's interests. Despite everyone having full-time 'day' jobs, they are all actively involved in making things better for the village, and supporting Appleby Magna residents with the impact of flooding.

It is important to recognise that the impact of flooding, (both water and/or sewage), is incredibly upsetting, concerning and not something that any of us want to experience in our village. To everyone that has been affected by it, in the past and/or presently, please do let the Resilience Group know if there is anything they can do to help.

The Resilience Group meet the following organisations on a regular basis:

- North West Leicestershire District Council
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Severn Trent

Lots of assessment work and investigations have taken place, and remain ongoing by both the Environment Agency and Severn Trent. The EA are beginning to monitor the contamination. Severn Trent have been monitoring the impact the rainfall has on the system and are continuing to assess whether infiltration is also a factor.

WHY?

Whilst the issues are not straightforward, one common fact is now accepted, and proven. When there is considerable rainfall, the amount of water that runs towards the village from the surrounding fields is a significant factor in both flooding and sewage system overloading. Work is currently being done to establish where this water flow can be diverted to and/or slowed down (both of which will aid the village to cope with the amount of water).

With regards to the sewage system, when the brook breaches in Duck Lake, and floods the road, it is understandable that it floods the sewage system, and then it bubbles up in other locations such as Black Horse Hill. However, it remains unclear on the precise reasons why the sewage system struggles at times when there has not been considerable rainfall. This remains at the top of the agenda for when the Resilience Group meets with Severn Trent.

WHAT IS IN IT FOR YOU?

Whilst the group recognises it is hugely difficult to deal with tankers pumping out the sewage system, or Severn Trent carrying out analysis in man holes, this work is all helping the village to become less of a flood risk.

The Appleby Magna Resilience Group is determined to make the village a place that is flood resilient, where people can live and enjoy their surroundings without concerns about flooding and/or sewage.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The Resilience Group need your support, including who we contact, how we act and what we record:

1. Please report all flooding issues to the following authorities. The more people that report it, the more impact we can collectively achieve.
2. Call Severn Trent on the incident number 0800 783 4444 (record the log number)
3. If there is sewage coming up to road level and then going down the drains on the road, call the Environmental Agency on 0800 80 70 60. Inform them of the issue and quote the Severn Trent log number. Please advise them that raw sewage is going into the brook which goes straight into the River Mease and is having an impact on the River Mease SAC (Special Area of Conservation. Please also mention this is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) affecting the River Mease (which the EA are responsible for).
4. Please send an email to the below email address with the above reference numbers, along with any photos and/or videos you have to the Resilience Group email address: resiliencegroupapplebymagna@gmail.com

We are currently asking organisations such as the Environment Agency as to the potential effects for humans, pets and wildlife due to sewage being present on the road, particularly around Black Horse Hill. Until we have assurances this is not harmful (and let's be honest at times it looks just like raw sewage), we would suggest residents take great care when walking where the flooding is present, or has been. The Resilience Group have seen people walking their dogs in the water, and we would hate for anyone's' pets to get poorly as a result.

The Resilience Group have also received a couple of reports of residents being 'less than friendly' towards Severn Trent and/or the contractor they have used to pump out the sewage system. The Resilience Group ask that the village remain courteous to these people, as the issues are not totally their responsibility. Furthermore, the Resilience Group are concerned that if Appleby Magna becomes a 'hostile' environment, these organisations may refuse to attend, and frankly, the village needs all the help it can get.

Lastly, the Resilience Group need to understand your views and questions so that they can best represent you when talking to various organisations. Please contact us at: resiliencegroupapplebymagna@gmail.com with anything you want us to ask on your behalf, and any ideas you have for what could be done, both short term and long term. Please include your name, and house number and road number when you email.

NEXT STEPS?

Due to Covid-19, the Resilience Group have had to move to online communications only. Please make sure you encourage your friends and neighbours to email the Resilience Group to ensure they have everyone's' contact details, so they can send regular updates and obtain your views. If you know of a neighbour who cannot email, please can you either send an email on their behalf and/or print out this newsletter for them.

THANK YOU!

Finally, the Resilience Group want to thank everyone in the village for their great determination to make things better, for the amazing community spirit and for working so well together to help us all overcome this challenge.