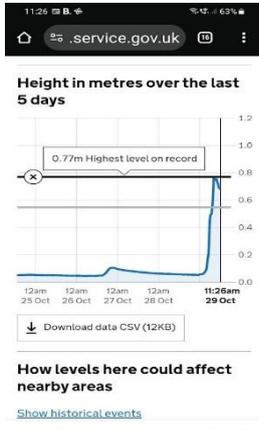


## Report on flooding Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

The rain started around 11am on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and initially wasn't too heavy. There wasn't a great amount forecast so the rapid rise of the beck was surprising. By 7.15am on Sunday morning there had been 26mm and the beck was at its peak. This was the same level as Boxing Day 2015 when there had been 75mm in 24hrs. We seemed to have had less than others with Gilling having almost 40mm so I think it was the amount further up stream that pushed our levels up. The rain stopped around 8am and the beck level held steady for a while before starting to fall.



Sandbags were used to try and stop the water from going through front doors. The worst affected were Priddens at Ford View, John and Maria Anderson, Harwood Cottage next door to them and the bakery. The Priddens flood door did not fix properly because the threads in the door jambs were either broken or spinning around. I believe they'd had a new door fitted and the fastenings had not been put back well enough. Also, no brackets fitted that pushed the door downwards to make it seal at the bottom. The next day me and Steve Smith mended the fixings including making new brackets. John Anderson didn't get his door fitted quickly enough due to the beck rising so quickly and unexpectedly. Sandbags were used on both doors of the bakery both inside and out and water did seep through but most was mopped up until the levels dropped.



I had a few sandbags on a pallet that I took down straight away but the main stock has been kept in a shed on Hovingham Estate just outside the village on the road to Stonegrave. When I went to get some, I found that the shed had collapsed on top of them making it impossible to get with a forklift. This meant that 5 trips with the pickup to handball them on which was far from ideal and very slow. I did the first trip and Clare did the others with help from various residents. I reported this to the estate and said it was not satisfactory to find them in such a state. Also moving forwards, we need to have them stored closer to the village either at Hall Farm or the Estate Home Farm. I have discussed this with Alice so hopefully we can get this done.

The Environment Agency warning was too late and didn't go to everyone on the list. Usually the EA phone me first to see if a warning should be issued but I didn't get that call. They claim they tried both my mobile and house but didn't leave a message on either!! I have found out that they are in an "action short of strike" which means anything out of hours is automated which obviously failed. Apparently we were not the only ones that didn't get a warning. I put a message on Hovingham Matters to tell people that even if they thought they were registered for the warning that they should do it again to be certain. This was the advice from the EA.



There is a new lady who has joined the EA called Beth Kenna. She had already contacted me a few weeks ago and I was due to meet her to discuss how the beck and overflow channel works. I contacted her first thing Monday after the flood and she came out straight away. She seems very practical and speaks commonsense and wants to help us.



I had already told her about the weed growth near Pasture House and she has now spoken to the maintenance team and they are going to clear it as soon as the beck drops down to normal levels. She agrees that it needs doing every year otherwise it will just get worse. The problem is that it is quite wide at that point so the flow is slow which allows the weed to grow. There was some weed growing just below the ford in front of John and Marias but I have scraped that out with the forklift.

The overflow channel worked very well again and was at full capacity and once again saved the village from even more flooding. There has been an issue with sheep bars next to the weir in the park which were put in to stop the sheep from wandering up the channel. This was never a problem when cattle were in the park. Again I have spoken to

Alice to see if there is another way it can be done so it does not stop the flow. The bars had been taken out before the flood on Sunday.



I had a look at the three tubes under spa road after the flood and there was quite a bit of grass that had washed down.

Also I felt that the banks of the channel needed to be pulled back a bit both before the road and after it. It is key that the water hits the tubes straight on to give it maximum speed and efficiency. I asked the estate if they could do it with their digger.



This is the entrance to the tubes after the flood showing the debris washed down.



This is after they have cleared it and it is running quite full on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November after some more rain. Unfortunately the estate only did the upstream side and not the down stream as well. I have arranged with Alice to walk the length of the channel once the water has gone as there are a couple of places further down that need a bit of attention.

Some residents on Brookside have received letters from NYC about their house being eligible for inclusion in Property Flood Resilience scheme. This involves filling in and sending off a four page survey and then a firm called JBA Consulting coming to visit them. Some residents have done this and some haven't. The Bakery have not been included in this so I have spoken to JBA and told to expect a call from the bakery. I believe they have done the survey and spoken to JBA. I told Beth Kenna all this and how JBA said the process would take a few months which seems too long and too complicated. She knows of JBA and has sent them a message to see if the whole thing can be coordinated into one rather than a lot of separate visits. I have also asked her to see if they can supply some flood doors for the bakery. That would be a great improvement in the short term. We have organised a visit with her and two of her colleagues who are civil engineers to have a look at the relief channel to see if it can be improved. The estate is interested in doing improvements (i.e possibly widening) but only after seeking professional help from the EA which seems sensible. The last thing we want is to do something to make it worse. Richard Orange-Bromehead designed the channel in 2000 so he should be involved and I will discuss it with him.

We had a lot of volunteers who turned out to help which just shows what a great community we have. Going forward it would be good to have a call out system to ask residents for help. One possibility would be to set up a WhatsApp group of volunteers which I will look into doing.

Overall the channel and "our system" worked well considering how quickly the beck rose and the fact it was during the night. We seem to have a great new contact with the EA who wants to work with us to improve things. We need to continue to keep up the maintenance and keep evaluating what we can do to make things work better.

Mark Wilson 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023