

26<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PLACE BOARD**

**WASHINGTON AREA PLACE BOARD- June 26<sup>th</sup> 2013**

**Flooding Incident Update**

Significant locations affected by multiple flooding events.

**1 Coverdale Usworth:**

Cleansing to both the sewer and highway drainage system has been completed by Northumbrian Water Ltd and SCC respectively. **(SCC/NWL)**

A hydraulic model has been completed by NWL consultants who are now undertaking detailed design for a solution based on a 1 in 40 return storm. NWL have cautioned, that whilst the proposal will reduce the flood risk to properties, it can't guarantee houses won't flood in the future. **(NWL)**

**2 Coach Road Estate, Usworth:**

New highway drain connection and gullies installed further works to be agreed with colleagues in Children Services, with respect to improvements to school field drainage. **(SCC)**

Existing school field drainage checked and cleared. **(SCC)**

**NWL** consultants carrying out a drainage area study to identify problems in the public sewer network.

Extensive CCTV undertaken and cleansing on sewer line that takes council gullies. Foul line cleansed and placed on monthly Programme of Preventative Maintenance (PPM). **(NWL)**

The surface water storage tank and the Combined Sewer Overflows have been placed on monthly PPM. NWL consultants have recently completed a study of the location. The hydraulic modelling undertaken by the consultants has taken into account the complex flooding mechanism prevalent in the area. Properties in the area are considered at risk and a scheme is to be considered for a funding bid. If scheme bid not successful then property level protection to be offered. **(NWL)**

**3 Holley Park (Surrounding Area), Lambton**

SCC has carried out some drainage improvements within the park, however to properly understand the sources /mechanisms of the flooding, a study has been commissioned to produce an appraisal report which will contain factual and interpretive information about the possible causes of the flooding and will also provide us with some recommendations. It's anticipated that the report will be completed next month.

**4 Princess Anne Park**

There has been significant damage to a number of the park's features.

- a) **Culvert Grille**-The culvert grille has been completely flattened by debris washed down the watercourse and will require full replacement.
- b) **South footbridge**: Historically large amounts of debris build up against the bridge which are not removed. This includes large sections of trees, several shopping trolleys and general rubbish. This has increased since the heavy rain. On the upstream side of the bridge the gabions have started to collapse and are falling into the watercourse. The bank on both the upstream and downstream side of the east abutment has collapsed next to the bridge and is starting to threaten the footpath.
- c) **North footbridge**: All of the gabions have fallen into the watercourse leaving the abutments vulnerable to scour. The abutment foundations are becoming exposed at both the front and the sides. The riverbank adjacent to the abutments is collapsing into the watercourse due to its weak granular composition. The footpath hasn't been affected so far.
- d) **West footbridge**: The gabions on the west side of the bridge have collapsed exposing the abutments and banks to the oncoming flow of water. The gabions on the face of the abutments are collapsing and starting to fall away from the front face of the abutments. The gabions on the south east side of the bridge are still in place but are in poor condition whereas on the north east bank the gabions are starting to move. The banks on the west side of the bridge are collapsing. The collapse is very close to the footpath but hasn't affected it so far.
- e) **Stilling Ponds**: The north wall at the bottom of the stilling ponds has partially collapsed damaging the gabions in front of it.
- f) **Embankment support to footpath**: Section of embankment has slipped undermining a localised area of adopted footpath, temporary barriers currently in place however options for its reinstatement are being considered.

A scheme is currently being worked up which will address the damage caused, and mitigate future problems. SCC have had initial discussions with a local sub contractor regarding access arrangements and the selection of suitable equipment. A proposal is expected from the sub contractor next week.

Durham Wildlife Services have been working closely with Highways and Transportation staff to advise on what work can be carried out without a full ecological survey being undertaken. It is anticipated that work in and around the bridge abutments should be free from any environmental constraints. This would allow work to commence at the bridge locations, subject to procurement timescales, during the summer months. The ecological survey along the watercourse would be undertaken at the same time to determine the appropriate timing for the other works.

## **5 Beech Grove, Springwell**

Two residents meetings have been held, hosted by Sharon Hodgson MP and attended by NWL, EA, SCC representatives, the farmer and local ward members.

At the last meeting in May it was agreed that the council would submit a bid for funding to the Environment Agency for both a study and a mitigation scheme. The bid has been submitted and we're likely to receive feedback on how successful it has been in October 2013, for a possible start in 2014-2015. SCC to install a new gully outside of 60 Beech Grove.

## **6 Albany Estate**

A number of streets on the Albany estate suffered flooding in last summer's storms. Following these storms SCC undertook significant gully cleaning and flushing works throughout the estate. In addition NWL removed significant amount of root infestation from their sewers but has also referred the problem in some of the streets to their consultant for further consideration. NWL has not given any indication at this time to when the consultant will provide any further information.

## **7 South View**

The main problem in South View and the adjacent area is that when high tides coincide with heavy rainfalls the river Wear bursts its bank. Although there is a threat of flooding to properties, in recent times flooding has generally affected only the gardens. At those times SCC continually monitor the river conditions and have staff available with sandbags. As a major river, flood risk management is the responsibility of the EA. There are other issues close-by where a local watercourse, which runs into the Wear affects a local resident in "the Larks" where his garage floods. An improved culvert grille is required (owned by the Woodland Trust) which will improve the flow characteristics of the watercourse. SCC are awaiting an application from Woodland Trust for the new grille to consider and approve.