

28/8/15
2 Firview Close
Marlow
BUCKS
SL7 1SZ

Dear Kelly

As per our email exchange, please see below my responses to your queries, I am sorry I can't be at the meeting in person.

1. **How did flooding in 2013-14 impact on you and your property/ your street/ your village?**

The ground floor of our property was flooded by approximately 2-3 inches of water and the house had to be evacuated. We were required to find alternative accommodation for 6 months whilst the house was repaired.

Our road was inaccessible by car for the 3 days prior to our home flooding and we were required to walk through a few feet of water to get to our house. At the time our son was 6 months old so this meant we were unable to leave the house unless there were two of us as we also had to carry the pushchair and other required necessities.

Only one side of our road flooded, this was houses 1-3 which is slightly lower than the other. The other side narrowly missed their houses being flooded (by about 2 inches of floodwater) although the properties all had their garages flooded.

2. **In the event of flooding, did you know who to approach for help?**

No. We had no idea who to call and the published websites for the agencies and local authorities were not helpful in directing you.

3. **Which local authorities or partner agencies did you approach for help and were you satisfied with the response?**

We tried the local council, the environment agency, the highways agency (responsible for the A404 drainage ditch at the end of our garden, which contributes to the flooding in our road), the county council and Thames Water.

It became very clear that there was no joined up communication plan and no one was clear on who was responsible for what and what action needed to be taken. Most importantly it was extremely obvious that each agency was reticent to offer help in fear of 'accepting responsibility'.

4. **In your opinion, what could have been managed better/improved at the time of the flooding?**

We needed to understand who to call and who was responsible for what action.

We urgently needed to receive pumps for our road. We are able to pump the water from the A404 Drainage ditch (which is a primary contributor to our road flooding) back over a dam in the ditch and into the river. If the pumps are powerful enough this keeps the

water down by an inch or so and whilst the road is still inaccessible the houses are much less likely to flood.

We had great difficulty getting help. In the end the required number of pumps were deployed 12 hours after our house flooded and upon deployment the water level dropped sufficiently that the floodwater left the flooded properties. We strongly believe that if action was taken sooner we wouldn't have flooded.

It was also clear that there are certain trigger points that some agencies wait for before they will escalate anything. For example; the environment agency published flood status seems to drive the deployment of pumps and sandbags. Our road was still on flood alert when we were a foot or so deep which meant agencies were less likely to want to help us as we were not yet on flood warning. Based on previous flood statuses and updates (during winter 2013 for example) the flood status update was probably 24 to 36 hours later than in previous flooding events. A resident on the ground can clearly see that a road is flooding, rather than relying on a computer model which can't predict exactly how a flood will progress. The agencies need to pay more attention to the feedback they are receiving from residents, particularly if it consistent and coordinated.

The majority of our neighbours are elderly, one is registered disabled and 3 residents live alone, there needed to be help available to them in order to get in and out of their house and to prepare their home for flooding, as they are unable to do this themselves.

5. [What help and support have you received subsequent to the flooding? Do you feel more confident/better prepared should another flood event occur in the future?](#)

We haven't received any direct support following the flooding, other than a flood feedback form through the letterbox from Thames water. I have involved myself in the town council flood committee in an effort to improve our preparedness for any future floods, and I think we are moving in the right direction. We do need to ensure that there is a clear communication plan in place for residents and also for agencies to ensure a prompt response to any future threat.

I don't think we are there yet.

On a personal level I feel more prepared as we have taken individual action to better protect our property (via our own research rather than any advice given by agencies).

I hope this is what you needed and if you should require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely



Amanda Webb