

**Minutes of Meeting of
Queen Camel Flood Committee (FC)**
held 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 16th February 2024
at Mill House.

Present: Daniel Casley (DC) Steve Millard (SM)
Peter Farror (PF) Chris Teale (CT)
Rosemary Heath-Coleman (RHC) Arthur Thring (AT)
Martin Lilley (ML - Chairman) Andy Voysey (AV)
Gary Linscott (GL)

In Attendance: Bryan Norman (BN - for the Parish Council - PC)

Apologies: Christine Richardson (CR)
John Brendon (JB – ex-officio for PC)

1. Introductions

1.1 *Welcome & Apologies:* ML welcomed everyone and asked everyone to introduce themselves for the benefit of CT, who was joining the FC as cover for Wales (actioned by SM) in place of the late Maggie Hunter. ML also recorded the above apologies and thanked RHC for hosting the meeting.

1.2 *Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:* In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the Chairman had to be elected on an annual basis; the FC had also always had a Vice Chairman. RHC proposed, AT seconded, that ML continued as Chairman. DC proposed, PF seconded, that GL continued as Vice Chairman. These were unanimously agreed and ML and GL both accepted their continuing roles.

1.3 *Review of Roles of FC members:*

1.3.1 See **Attachment 1** covering members and responsibilities. All present accepted their roles as defined and CT agreed to be the future cover for Wales. In accordance with ToR 5.5 **CT was required to sign the PC's Volunteers' Policy.**
Action RHC with the Clerk

1.3.2 It was noted that the Help Team had not functioned as defined - see responsibilities on **page two of Attachment 1**. ML was arranging to meet with CR to discuss this going forward. He also thought it would be wise to have a supporting Help Team Leader and asked all present if anyone felt able to add this to their role. No one did as each FC member was already fully committed. It was proposed that a link with the Memorial Hall for access should be added to the Help Team's role. Also noting that the requirement for the Help Team was for fit and able and properly trained individuals.

Action with ML regarding CR and future Help Team

1.3.3 It was agreed that the Help Team Leader should:

- a. Confirm the composition of the Help Team
- b. Confirm that the equipment issued to the Help Team Members was still in working order.
- c. The Help Team should identify those properties where individuals were most likely to need assistance in flood protection and support. (connect with para 3.2)
- d. Arrange a suitable date for the Flood Help Team to receive further guidance on their roles and responsibilities and, for example, be shown how to install flood barriers/gates at those properties identified as needing assistance.

e. Consider, along with the Memorial Hall Committee, what if any assets could be prepositioned in the Hall in the event of it being activated as an Emergency Evacuation Centre – and the mechanism by which this centre could be opened and operated - especially “out of hours”.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 29th March 2023: it was agreed unanimously by those who had attended that meeting that the Minutes were a true reflection of the meeting. These were later signed by ML and forwarded to the PC Clerk.

3. FC Terms of Reference (ToR):

3.1 *Annual Review of ToR:* See **Attachment 2** for the document that was reviewed and is to now be forwarded to the PC for ratification.

3.2 *Scope of Area Covered by FC:* It was noted that while the ToR covered the whole parish and included a primary responsibility to reduce the risk of flooding, historically the main purpose had been to protect houses and their occupants and livestock from flooding and the public from accident. As directed by the PC a mapping exercise was being carried out to identify all properties likely to flood in light of the May incident, advise residents and in conjunction with the Help Team be prepared to assist.

3.3 DC emphasised that the most important role of the FC was the protection of life.

4. Flood Risks & Mitigation – ML shared the contents of Attachment 3

4.1 *The Flood of 9th May 2023:* the following was shared:

- There was only some 20-minutes formal notice of the flood; too little to save personal effects. It was subsequently recorded as the deepest flood since records began and probably the fastest rising (covered the table top where the FC was sitting).
- Flood warnings needed to take account of the speed of water rising as well as the depth of water.
- Houses in the parish that had never been flooded were flooded on the 9th May.
- It was noted there had been at least three near fatalities in addition to the drowning of sheep and chickens. DC remained concerned that the public continued to walk on footpaths that were flooded so that their edges and the depth of water was unknown and with little apparent concern that they were at serious risk.
- BN observed that during a flood situation the packhorse bridge caused obstructions.
- AT was concerned that with Global Warming the risk of frequent and increasingly deep floods would increase notwithstanding statements to the contrary by the Environment Agency.
- ML advised that County Councillor Henry Hobhouse was considering if a dedicated village flood meeting was needed. If anyone had ideas on this, would they please let ML know.

4.2. *The Flood Contact Plan:* required review. Not discussed but this would be done by **DC and RHC** and then shared with the FC for review.

4.3 *Parish Strategic Flood Risk Assessment:* This was on the new PC website and had been updated but GL and ML would check it again. **Action GL/ML**

5. Parish Council Related Matters:

5.1 *The PC Input to Somerset Council for the Section 19 Report:* The PC has submitted its comments to SC in preparation of SC's Report – there being no timeline for the completion of this final report.

5.2 *The clearance of the River Cam and Henshallbrook culvert:*

- Responsibility for the River Cam and Henshallbrook was debated. It was noted that riparian owners were responsible for the banks of their property and to the middle of the water course – and for Henshallbrook from either side - but the Environment Agency was responsible for keeping the River Cam clear of blockages.
- The culvert was discussed and it was accepted that it would be wasted effort for QCCLT to clear the culvert under their property (the external car park) unless Somerset County (Highways) cleared their stretch that ran from the exit of the Mill House culvert across the A359 to the point it reached the car park. ML advised there was a meeting booked with Highways on Tuesday, 20th February. County Councillor Hobhouse was leading.

5.3 *The Mapping of the Flood Impact:* In conjunction with ML, BN was mapping the parish (includes Wales) to identify properties at risk of flood (see post meeting extract from PC September Minutes). The map would include areas of deep water. There was a suggestion that properties would be colour coded but this brought a warning that this could have significant financial implications (property values and insurance premiums).

A risk analysis was required. Action BN with all

Post Meeting – extract from PC Minutes:

09/12 Flooding: It was RESOLVED that the Flood Committee should produce a map with house names, residents and telephone numbers for the 16 properties involved in the May flood. It was NOTED that a greater contingency response is needed.

5.4 *The Councillor budget submission of itemised equipment and training requirements each October (4.7 of ToR):* ML advised that there was little spend at present. Training of the Flood Help was discussed.

5.5 *Attenuation Ponds:* BN tabled a paper, see **Attachment 4**, and asked all present to let him have any comments. **Action ALL**

5.6 *Drains:* The clearing of drains remains an issue and the PC is asked to ensure Somerset Council carry out routine preventative maintenance and clearance.

5.7 *Flip-down flood signs* – It was noted that the PC action to replace the signs remained outstanding.

Carried forward:

- Inventory of FC equipment – last minutes: It was noted that the equipment in the top cupboard in the Marples Room, owned by the PC, was no longer required for road closure and BN was asked to confirm with the PC that this equipment could be transferred to the FC and added to the FC's inventory on the FC page of the website. The Flood Committee has no current use for any of this equipment.
- The position of Flood Warden remains vacant.
- SLACCU: (GL and SM nominees on FC). Nominee for PC outstanding.

6. AOB

- 6.1 The Annual Village Meeting was planned for 17th May. ML would present flood matters if invited by the PC.
- 6.2 RHC asked that for historical purposes, the height of the May 2023 was marked on the church gate stone pillar.

7. Date, Time and Venue of next Meeting – TBA by ML

Meeting closed at approximately 9.30 p.m.

Rosemary Heath-Coleman
19th February 2043

To: FC members and PC liaison representative

Cc: Parish Clerk – for remainder of PC and County Councillor,
Henry Hobhouse, and for PC website.

Names on the Flood Plan cascade plus new householders
who were flooded 9th May 2023 – **action with FC members
for their cascade.**

Flood Committee (FC) Members & Prime Responsibilities

Daniel Casley:
Tel: 01935 850266
Mob: 07974 394928

Flood Plan, plus Open Pathway Retreat Centre and Laurel Lane cascade
e-mail: danielfrmindfc@icloud.com

Peter Farror
Mob: 07720 388365

Back-up support to Andy Voysey for the Old School protection
e-mail: peter.farror@btinternet.com

Rosemary Heath-Coleman:
Tel: 01935 850254

FC secretary responsible for procedures and minutes plus Mill complex.
e-mail: rheathcoleman@gmail.com

Chris Tearle:
Mob: 07896 030469

Wales cascade
e-mail: christophertearle@hotmail.com

Martin Lilley
Tel: 01935 851779
Mob: 07760161195

Chairman/Village Coordinator, sluice control and support for early warning plus start of cascade
e-mail: martinlilley@yahoo.co.uk

Gary Linscott
Tel: 01935 851567
Mob: 07872 820446

Vice Chairman, **Parish Strategic Flood Risk Assessment document** and Grace Martins Lane cascade plus support for sluice control.
Also SLACCU contact in the event of a village emergency.
e-mail: gsmllinscott@gmail.com

Steve Millard:
Tel: 01935 850962
Mob: 07808 824834

Blackwell/Old Kennels/The Nook cascade.
Also SLACCU contact in the event of a village emergency.
e-mail: stevemillard29@gmail.com

Christine Richardson
Tel: *not in use*
Mob: 07787 516931

Leader for volunteer Help Team – evacuation before and restoration after a flood.
e-mail: christine_richardson@hotmail.co.uk

Arthur Thring:
Tel: 01935 850104

Own and adjacent property and Mildmay Arms
e-mail: arthurthring@gmail.com

Andy Voysey
Tel: 01963 441010
Mob: 07484 608354

The Old School including tenants – protection.
e-mail: andy.voysey@btinternet.com

Parish Council appointed liaison representative for the FC:

Bryan Norman
Tel: 01935 851384
Mob: 07957 388922

e-mail: bryan.norman@queencamelpc.org.uk

Flood Help Team Members and Responsibilities

Leader: Christine Richardson 07787 516931

Help Team

Abby Dalton +44 7769 906111
Maggie Foster +44 7901 788301
Paul Baines +44 7786 419384
Jane Cocker +44 7813 809487

Responsibilities

Leader:

- To put together a team of volunteers (minimum of six, preferably with some back-ups), able bodied who will be willing to assist with the tasks listed under Help Team, understanding that some tasks may be required during the night-time as well as during the daytime.
- To maintain the Help Team contact list that is shared with the FC and also with the PC as these are volunteers.
- To distribute to new volunteers and recover from volunteers standing down, PPE and to maintain an updated whereabouts log.
- To report to the FC any identified training needs or other issues.

The Help Team under the coordination of the Leader:

- To maintain fit-for-use the PPE equipment assigned to each member.
- To assist with the fitment of flood gates at properties that have been supplied this equipment;
- To position additional flood warning signs, their posts and warning tape;
- To assist with the fill/movement of sand bags to other vulnerable properties;
- To assist with the movement of furniture and other preparations (following EA advice) ahead of potential flood at properties known to be at risk of flooding;
- To assist with the evacuation of vulnerable persons and animals from properties at risk of flooding or from flooded homes noting that the primary responsibility lies with the Emergency Services and they should not put themselves in danger in flooded areas or homes.
- To assist with the restoration of properties after the flood or risk of flood.

**Queen Camel Flood Committee (Working Group)
Terms of Reference
Adopted 22nd May 2023**

1. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Flood Committee (FC) is to seek to reduce the risk of flooding in Queen Camel and to provide help and support to residents in preparation for and during flood events, thereby reducing risk to life and property.

The FC may liaise directly with government, the police and other authorities, agencies and organisations in order to fulfil its responsibilities during active flood events.

2. Membership

There will be a minimum of six members. The Parish Council will appoint at least one parish councillor as liaison between the FC and the Parish Council.

The Chairman will be nominated by the FC annually.

The FC will maintain a list of members and Help Team volunteers and fill vacancies as they arise.

Vacancies may be filled by Queen Camel parishioners through self-referral to the FC. FC members will vote to accept new members and will inform the clerk of the names of those appointed.

3. Meetings

Meetings will take place flexibly with a minimum of one per year, which will usually take place in early autumn and will review all of the FC's responsibilities.

Minutes will be taken by a member of the FC and a copy provided to the clerk.

4. Reporting and action

Draft minutes shall be accepted as a report to the next council meeting. A short verbal report may also be given by the parish councillor member of the FC.

If a resolution is required the parish councillor member of the FC shall ask the clerk to add this to the Parish Council agenda.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Parish Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (PSFRA)

To maintain a PSFRA that will identify the risks to life and property and identify the corresponding risk mitigation plan/s in place to reduce these identified risks to 'As Low as Reasonably Practicable' (ALARP).

5.2. Communication Plan

5.2.1 To provide a Flood Plan that sets out the communication process with:

- (a) owners of properties within the parish at risk of flood,
- (b) the volunteer Help Team,
- (c) Government agencies and other organisations responsible for flood matters, including the established Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) within the county.

5.2.2 To liaise with neighbouring parishes in respect of all aspects of flood mitigation.

5.2.3 To have at least one FC member attend the Annual Village Meeting, and present updates if requested.

5.3 Road Closures and Flood Warning Signs

5.3.1 To liaise with the Police to secure relevant road closures in times of flood.

5.3.2 To put out flood warning signs on footpaths where there is a risk to the safety of people.

5.4. Equipment

To have custody of flood equipment listed on an inventory kept up to date by the FC and to ensure the equipment is maintained in a serviceable condition.

5.5 Training and safety

The FC will join, in coordination with the Parish Council, relevant networks to ensure that it is informed by local authorities including Somerset Rivers Authority and the Environment Agency.

The FC will take advantage of the training, resources and advice available from Somerset Council (*Somerset Prepared*) as the overarching organisation responsible. To be covered by Parish Council insurance all members of the FC and regular flood volunteers should be registered with the Parish Council (through signing the Volunteer Policy). In an emergency additional volunteers will be deemed registered by providing their name to an existing volunteer.

Training in manual handling and safety will be paid for by the Parish Council.

5.6 Records

The FC will deposit copies of its plans, lists and minutes with the Parish Clerk. The FC will supply updates of the information published on the Queen Camel Parish Council webpage to the clerk to maintain its currency.

5.7 Budget

The FC will review anticipated costs each year and the councillor member shall submit an itemised request for budget to the clerk each October to cover equipment and training needs.

6. Privacy

6.1 The names of FC members will be published in the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

6.2 Contact details of FC members shall be supplied to the clerk by the Chair. By joining a working party (i.e. FC) members consent to their address, email address, and telephone number being stored electronically and made available to other members of the working group (i.e. FC) and the clerk.

6.3 Members and volunteers must provide written consent for their name and/or other personal data to be published on the Queen Camel Parish Council website.

7. Other relevant documents

The activities of the FC are subject to Queen Camel Parish Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Volunteer and other policies that can be viewed at: <https://queencamelpc.org.uk/yourcouncil/policies-procedures-publications/>

8. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the FC for re-adoption by the parish council.

**Chairman of QC Flood Committee
Report to QC Flood Committee 17 February 2024**

1. Following the severe flood in May 2023 a number of initiatives have been undertaken by both the PC and Somerset Council – these fall into two areas:
 - a. Flood Prevention/Mitigation measures.
 - b. Flood Warning measures.

2. FLOOD PREVENTION AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Whilst flooding cannot be prevented and may increase in frequency as a result of climate cycles and global warming, certain measures can be undertaken to control the flow of water which reduces the risk of flooding. This Attachment 3 highlights the use of Alleviation Ponds. Through FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) and YCRT (Yeovil Community Rivers Trust) Central Government funding has been sought for the construction of such ponds and improvements to the river infrastructure in order to improve and regulate flow.

3. FLOOD WARNING MEASURES

An improved warning system of possible flooding is being initiated. (given the very short notice in May 2023 of the flood in QC) The River Cam Monitoring Group, which comprises all of the PCs along the R Cam met on 31 Jan to discuss and implement the installation, by the Environment Agency, of a number of river level monitors along the R Cam which would, when linked, provide a current picture of the state of the river – be set to give warnings of rising levels and these will also be linked to a number of rain gauges to provide better data¹. This project had started with Blackford and Yarlington and an interim Whats App Group has been set up which relays this information and is set at appropriate levels to give warnings – the picture will be complete when Sparkford, Queen Camel and West Camel monitors are installed. The Weston Bampfylde river gauge will be included in this network².

4. Flood Prevention – Property

The prevention of flooding to private properties remains primarily a house holders' responsibility. Recent events have shown that hitherto properties that have never flooded may now be at risk. Advice is widely available as to what is available to prevent water ingress and actions on warning of flooding. A revised "handout" is being produced for QC and surrounding PC's for distribution to householders covering flood related issues. The QC Flood Committee is able to advise as to what current householders in at risk properties have done and may be useful for those now wishing to take preventative, contingency actions.

¹ RNAS Yeovilton Met Section have kindly agreed to develop an analysis of historical data so that it would be possible for example to know if a level of "x" at Blackford will result in an increased level at QC by what approx. time -

² The Blackford gauge triggered an Amber alert on 18 Feb which gave warning of river levels rising.

Flooding at Queen Camel and West Camel

The Case for Provision of Alleviation Ponds
By Bryan G Norman BSC (Est Man) (FRICS)

1. The 2019 Report by the Environmental Agency in conjunction with Highways England located upstream of Queen Camel some 240,000-cu.m of alleviation ponds. The 2019 cost was estimated at £8 million (£33 cu. m) and the benefit at only £6.9 Million.
2. In my opinion, the costs were over-estimated as little of the excavated material is moved off site. Also, the benefit of £6.9 million was an underestimate being based only on one flood.
3. I have recalculated the cost/ benefit analysis based on the May 2023 flood as follows:

Houses flooded = 88 at £100,000	£ 8.8 Million
Repair two damaged bridges/roads	£ 1.0 Million
Damage to 'Old School' and shed	£ 2.0 Million
Other damage to West Camel	£ 1.0 Million
Total:	£12.8 Million

This excludes damages further downstream at Bridgehampton etc. and to farmland.
Note: flooding also occurred at the sewage works which then polluted water that flooded in Queen Camel.

4. There have been seven floods in 23 years since 2000 and our ignoring first and last 5 to 7 years therefore it is incorrect to use only a single year.
5. Allowing for some deferment I calculate that future damage should be based on a 2.5 X.
6. Cost of construction 240,000-cu.m at £40 totals £9.6 Million.
7. Therefore, a threefold benefit 10/32.
Note: this will also benefit all areas downstream and if their damages were included, the benefit would be over 4 X.

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