

23rd – 27th December Hemingford Abbots

23rd Dec Heavy rainfall all day.

Considerable amounts of accumulating surface water. All but two of the usual areas of pooling water remained relatively clear, thanks to jetting of drains/gulleys c3 months earlier by CCC Highways (after persistent requests by HAPC over 18+ month period)

Areas with extensive amounts of water across whole carriageway were on Rideaway, near the gate to The Limes, and at junction of New Road and High Street. **Both drains here need attention.** Royal Oak Lane had pooling water.

The Splash (pond) near 30mph limit on Rideaway, overflowed across road. This pond receives water from ditch flowing south on west side of Rideaway. Water continues in culvert under the road to ditch behind Rideaway Drive gardens, then behind The Dingle, culvert under New Road (water overflowed here) to behind The Thorpe and continues east to river at Fenstanton. **Ditch along Rideaway, culverts under Rideaway and New Road, and ditch between Rideaway and New Road very likely to require clearing and maintenance.**

A1307 flooded across whole of west bound carriageways from the Rideaway junction. Road closed by Police c 8.00 p.m. Probably caused by water flowing down Moats Way. **Residents cannot remember this ever happening previously.**

24th Dec Early morning **EA Flood Alert** for the Hemingfords,

followed by late morning **EA Flood Warning** for the Hemingfords.

The Flood Warning - *to take action now* - suggested that property on specific streets was in imminent danger of flooding. Residents were alarmed and worried - many reports of people moving furniture.

Noted that in the 1998 and 2003 floods, no residential properties in Hemingford Abbots were flooded. Since the installation of the St Ives & Hemingfords Flood Alleviation Scheme of 2005-07 residents have considered themselves to have even less likelihood of being flooded, so hence the concerns on receipt of the Flood Warning.

Parish Council members were monitoring events and watching EA river level data at Offord and Godmanchester.

The Hemingford Hub (residents' welfare group) using Whats App to check on wellbeing of elderly and vulnerable residents at Quiet Waters – the lowest area of the village.

EA closed floodgate at Quiet Waters early afternoon.

Small amount (puddle) of water in Quiet Waters. Northern end of Meadow Lane flooded (as usual) and The Stilts and The Ridings accessible only by car or if wearing tall wellingtons. Sheep on meadow sought dry land on old railway embankment – farmer bringing fodder.

A1307 reopened mid morning. Other accumulated surface water now decreasing.

27th Dec Flood Warning updated.

Noted 2nd surge of river levels late in the afternoon.

30th Dec Flood Warning no longer in place

Overall:

Hemingford Abbots suffered only minor disruptions. The village is fortunate to be protected by the FAS.

Throughout the 4 days HAPC and also the Hemingford Hub were alert and regularly monitored the situation, despite the holiday period. HAPC received offer of help, if needed, from DCs.

Police/Highways Officers organised closure of A1307 and diversions.

Looking forward:

Maintenance and clearance of ditches needs to be prioritised. This has lapsed in recent years. EA and HDC co-ordination needed here, plus liaison with landowners.

Likewise regular clearance of highway drains and gullies by CCC and Highways England needs to be maintained.

Should a drain be installed in Royal Oak Lane as this is an area where water pools?

Was the EA Flood Warning appropriate for Hemingford Abbots? Or should it have remained as an Alert? If Warnings are sent when there is no danger, there will come a time when they will be ignored when actually needed