



# Martock 2030

## Martock Neighbourhood Plan

### Newsletter 4 - June 2017

#### Floods and Drains

After traffic, flooding is the second most frequently raised matter at Martock planning meetings. The big problem is that we don't actually know enough about it. Nor do the experts, not because they are incompetent - far from it - but because the data we have about floods and causes of floods in the village are unreliable. This newsletter provides a bit of information and is also a request for help.

#### We need information about past floods



Water Street. When? in the 1930's?

30th October 1993. Water Street.

Please send pictures like these of past floods, preferably with the date. Many thanks to Shelley Bacon for these.

#### Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS)

The new planning laws state that any new housing estates on green fields must not increase run-off more than the natural drainage from the field. This means that builders must try and ensure that as much as possible of the rainfall must be absorbed into the ground. The remainder must be retained in a pond. The pond must only release water as fast as the natural run-off from the field. It is supposed to do this automatically by a bit of kit called a hydrobrake.

Sometimes it's not a pond. In the rejected Orchard Way proposal they wanted to put plastic tanks under some drives that were filled with what look like coca-cola crates, to hold water back.

This idea is good in principle but it's causing problems. One problem is who maintains the hydrobrake, dredges the pond or cleans

the crates? The drainage authorities do not have to take this on and so are not. The builders always say 'a management company will be created'. But who pays for the management company work and what happens when it goes broke. We can't get answers to these questions.

#### Why do our floods seem to be so sudden and erratic?



This picture of Sparrows Corner in February 2014 tells us a lot about drainage around Martock.

First. Look at the right hand side of the road. No water. Yet this is the bottom of Ringwell Hill, a large field covered in grass. Why no water? Because the rain is all absorbed, helped by the root channels of the grass. Our clay soils can absorb as much as 50% of their own volume of water. But they can only do it slowly. And once absorbed they let it out only slowly.

Second. Look at the left side. Lots of run-off which is actually liquid clay, ready to silt up our culverts and rhyne. This flood

was February 2014 and the soil had been saturated by two weeks of showers and could not absorb the sudden downpour. The winter wheat in the field above had not quite grown long enough roots to let the rain through fast enough. A couple of weeks later and this flood probably would not have happened.

And third. Why did it cause a flood? The road drain down Bower Hinton was not blocked. The three drain covers on the corner were clear but they just could not take the water fast enough. The flood quickly went down after the rain stopped.



The water all ends up at the bottom of the valley in places like the recreation ground

## Slowing the flow



After the water leaves us they get it at Parrett Works. This was the road bridge there in 2008

The new planning rules say that new buildings must not flood and must not contribute to flooding anywhere else.

This means that we must, in the Neighbourhood Plan, consider how we can 'slow the flow' into the Parrett to help ourselves and also our neighbours on the Levels. Money is often available to help with this and we must take advantage of it.

There is currently a 'Hills to Levels' scheme which has allowed the repair and replacement of many small mechanisms to slow the flow down the rhynes and to ensure that all the flood control mechanisms are in working order.

In the past funding has been available to landowners and public bodies to create ponds and plant water-absorbing trees to help slow the flow.

There is a pond, for example, at Cartgate that was created as a nature reserve and

doubles as a pollution control device to retain any nasty liquids that may have to be washed off the 303 in an emergency. It is also part of our flood control plan; a sluice gate there can be lowered in an emergency to hold back water that would otherwise reach the village.

What else should be in the Neighbourhood Plan?



Water held back by flooding near Stoke Road. Better here than Water Street but dangerous for traffic

## Our bridges



Hurst Brook in 2012. Problems occur when not all the water flowing can get under the main road bridge.

How will the new development near here affect the flow?

The critical bridge under the road is near the Church where Mill Brook flows through a small passage. If the flow here is greater than the bridge capacity the Grade I listed Treasurer's House is at risk.

The 2013 floods in East Street happened when the water flowing down Foldhill Lane

was more than both the Foldhill Lane and East Street drains could cope with. The flood water, and the East Street drains enter Mill Brook near the George

The recent drain repairs, they say, have addressed this. Let us hope so.

### More information.

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- ▶ Find out more and make comments on the MartockPlan website.
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