



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, March 14, 2024

Members Present

Chair Jim Donahue

Vice-Chair Diana Smith

Members

Katherine Higley

Debbie Leach

Paul O'Grady

Frances Parkes

Officers Present:

Clerk, RFO Jane Yamamoto

Public and Press: 5 residents, 1 Henley Standard reporter

The meeting started at 20:00.

1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00

Cllr Brazil sent his apologies.

2 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

3 **Public Forum** – an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.

3.1 A resident of Whitchurch Hill, half-way between Whitchurch and Hill and Whitchurch-on-Thames notified the Parish Council that BP Technology was applying for Planning Consent for a small sub-station and PV farm behind their home along with 3 other residents. There is a grass meadow, oak trees and wildlife in an ANOB in this proposed area. Residents were notified that the energy generated from PV will be used to power their own facilities and not to the community. No impact assessments on environment/noise/wildlife etc. have been provided. It was the resident's opinion that the development will be a huge detriment to their views, wildlife and protected oak trees on the boundary. Resident will be presenting to both WOT and Goring Heath's Parish Councils.

4 **Chairman's Announcements** 20:10

Village Green – Thanks Frances for:

- Completing the repair to the car par
- Having the electricity removed from the tea hut in preparation for demolition

Cllr Parkes updated all that the demolition of the Tea Hut on the Village Green is set for April 2, 2024.

Bulletin Printing – Harald Graphics has gone into liquidation and is now out of business. They have offered us the option of having one of the former employees who worked on our account

to provide the same printing service at the same prices at least for an interim period. They would not handle the advertising, but we would get 100% of the revenue.

The Council agreed that to investigate this interim option for a trial period and then rebid the printing contract at a later date.

Graffiti – now seen on several signs in the village – as well as Pangbourne and Goring.

Two Councillors volunteered to clean the graffiti off the signs on the village roads and green.

OCC donated trees – It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to SODC’s offer to plant two trees in the village. The village already had very little space for large trees and had difficulty to accommodate any requests for memorial trees. A smaller Cherry tree may be appropriate in front of Racquets in the High Street but it needs to be well away from the post near the drive that needs to be removable.

A solar farm is being on the grounds of BP Technology Centre – It is not clear where this will be located, but it is likely to be on the Whitchurch Hill. There is a small group of homes near it that will be impacted and residents have already expressed concerns. It could also impact homes in Whitchurch-on-Thames. We are waiting for details from BP to be raised in a planning application.

Residents Issues:

- **Light still out in upper narrows**
 - Light at upper narrows (no. 7) – OCC now says SSE has admitted there is a fault on their side and plan to fix it soon, but this is taking way too long.
 - I have also asked if they can address the light near the Little House that is covered in ivy.
- **Toll Booth is out of cards** – Bridge company has now received a new stock of cards.
- **Toll Bridge resurfacing planned for April**
 - A resident asked if they will address blocked drains as part of this. I have asked the bridge company but I suspect that this is West Berks responsibility.
- **Hardwick Road paving stones replaced** – Richard Wingfield and I have raised this as an issue.

The Council agreed to return to OCC to ask for a flowering cherry tree to be placed by the removeable bollard on the High Street. The Clerk would ask how the residents outside the area owned by OCC felt about a tree as they often tended the area.

5 To approve minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council meeting of February 8, 2024.

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the minutes.

6 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council’s response to the following: 20:15

6.1 P24/S0551/FUL

The Bull Pen, Path Hill, Goring Heath RG8 7RE

Replacing existing yurt with proposed structure

Resolution: The Parish Council voted to support the application.

6.2 P24/S0464/FUL

Whiteways, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HW

Sub-division of existing dwelling into two dwellings; to include proposed single storey rear extension and 2 storey extension to the inner north elevation, construction of a new porch to east elevation and detached garages. Associated parking, landscaping, private amenity and access arrangements.

Resolution: The Parish Council voted to support this application.

6.3 P24/S0635/DIS

Technology Centre, Bozedown Drive, near Whitchurch Hill RG8 7QR

Discharge of condition 12 (Surface Water Drainage) on application P22/S3223/FUL The demolition of buildings; the erection of a new part single storey, part two storey building for the research / testing of electric battery technology and associated test chambers; and the erection of buildings and compound for storage and other ancillary facilities.

Resolution: The Parish Council are not able to submit comments on discharge conditions.

7 To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council 20:20

7.1 SODC District Councillor Report – Cllr Dragonetti (Attachment 1)

7.2 OCC County Councillor Report – Cllr Bulmer (Attachment 2)

8 **Finance:** 20:40

8.1 To approve the payment schedule for March:

Payment	Sub-total	VAT	Total
Staff expenditure (March)			£541.80
Street Solutions (cones/tape)	£55.76	£11.16	£66.92 DD
Community Heartbeat	£52.00 +£11.39 (carriage)	£4.95	£68.34 BACS
OALC (annual membership)	£141.97	£28.39	£170.36

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the payments.

8.2 Receipts:

Receipts	Amount
SSEN (First Aid grant)	£1,430
Herald Graphics (commission)	£70

8.3 Bank Reconciliations (February 2024) (Attachments 3, 4, 5, 6)

8.4 Maintenance Contract for 2024-2025 (Attachment 7, 8) 20:40

8.4.1 The Clerk advised that the Green Team and other members of the Parish had helped to update the details of some of the missing work on the Maintenance Contract and that the Contractor had updated its contract to reflect them. They will provide a schedule of dates for the work this year shortly. Cllr Parkes updated that it was confirmed the cuts on the Village Green would take place on Thursdays. This would allow for any difficulties with equipment etc. to ensure a cut could take place before a Cricket Club home match.

9.0 Insurance Pre-renewal Document (Attachment 9) 20:50

9.1 The Clerk advised the Pre-renewal document was reviewed and would ask the insurance company if 3 new benches should be added to the policy.

10.0 Motion to approve a £500 contribution towards the cost of a replacement post in the WOT Allotments – Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Smith 20:50

- 10.1 A Councillor advised that it was difficult to obtain quotes and was only able to provide one. They also noted that within the members, there were 24 residents from the village, 1 from Pangbourne and 6 members from Whitchurch Hill.
- 10.2 **Resolution:** The Parish Council voted to approve the Motion.
- 11.0 Motion to approve the Emergency Plan V 1.5 (Attachment 10)– Cllr Donahue seconded 20:55
by Cllr Parkes
- Discussion of the following Emergency Team action for the Parish Council:
1. The Parish Council will confirm how affected residents with riparian responsibilities should be notified of planned SODC activities.
 2. Parish Council requested to initiate a consultation with SSEN and local residents in Manor Road and Eastfield Lane who are supplied by pole mounted cable to explain the issue of safety, supply resilience, the trees and seek their views.
 3. Parish Council to request an update from Thames Water on Eastfield Lane Sewage pumping station performance. Instrumentation had previously been added allowing Thames Water to monitor its performance.
- 11.1 Cllr Donahue recommended that the Parish Council purchase empty sand bags to be kept at the Village Hall and a sand box similar to the salt box. It was suggested that it was placed in the Village Green car park and the Clerk would look into the options of boxes. For example, a lockable box.
- 11.2 Cllr Parkes will liaise with Richard about drafting an advisory letter to any residents whose property may be close to the culvert that runs through the village and is a key piece of flood alleviation infrastructure.
- 11.3 The Parish Council discussed the SSEN issues of safety. In Manor Road, the property owners own the land in question. However, in Eastfield Lane, the land is not owned by the residents. A Councillor will address the concerns directly with the residents.
- 11.4 A Councillor reported in January there was difficulty with drainage of sewage. Thames Water placed pumps in the area and disinfectant. They also reported that there were problems in many areas in the county. They discovered that a stand pipe was not working. The village has one pump but the area required two pumps that were always in good working order.
- This past week, there were still issues with sewage. The manhole cover in the middle of Eastfield Lane was lifted and a blockage was found. Thames Water used a high-powered flush. Also, the sensor/indicator that had been promised to be installed had failed.
- Action 196:** It was agreed that the Clerk request a meeting with Thames Water to raise the issues. Richard Wingfield and Cllr Smith will draft a letter to send.
- 11.2 **Resolution:** The Parish Council approved the Emergency Plan.
- 12.0 Motion to seek/accept additional funding for willow tunnel in the Manor Road 21:30
Playground - Cllr Smith seconded by Cllr Higley
- 12.1 SOHA have approved £1000 for projects in Manor Road. It will be used to remove the laurels for the benches. Additional funding will be sought from Mend the Gap for some kind of tunnel. They will not fund for any maintenance.
- 12.2 **Resolution:** The Parish Council voted to approve this motion.

- 13 Parish Council to discuss donation of £300 to the Friends of St. Mary's and St. John's for the acoustic cladding at The Old Stables (Attachment 11, 12) -Cllr Donahue
- 13.1 Cllr Donahue outlined the report and quotation and the Council agreed to support it. Cllr Donahue will raise this as a Motion next month.
- 14 Whitchurch Primary School Parents Association Colour Run Event on Friday, April 19, 2024 21:40
- 14.1 The Clerk advised that the Chair of the Parents Association had requested to use the Village Green for a Fun Run to raise money for the school in conjunction with parents running the London Marathon. They would not use the Cricket green and the colour was non-toxic.
- It was agreed that the event could be confirmed especially as the first Cricket Club match at home was not until May 12, 2024.
- 15 Update from Flood Forum Team on January 2024 flood investigation (Attachment 13, 14,15) – John Southey, Richard Wingfield, Geoff Weir 21:45
- 15.1 Richard Wingfield updated the Parish Council with Attachments 13 and 14 and he will write to the EA.
- 15.2 **Action 195:**Cllr Parkes will liaise with Richard about drafting an advisory letter to any residents whose property may lie near the culvert which runs through the village and is a key piece of flood alleviation infrastructure.
- 16 New light for the Upper Narrows – Cllr Donahue 21:50
- 16.1 Cllr Donahue advised that there was a safety issue with residents' cats being killed and vision for pedestrians. The Parish Council would have to fund this light. Another Councillor also raised the issue of balancing between safety and wildlife. Also, the issue of the payment of the electricity and potential for other sites to request the same. It was agreed that Cllr Donahue would address the residents to see if there were other options.
- Action 197:** Cllrs Donahue and Leach to meet with resident raising concerns on the upper narrows to discuss options.
- 17 Tea Hut Replacement Options – Cllr Parkes 21:55
- 17.1 Cllr Parkes advised that the Tea Hut will be demolished on April 2, 2024. She and Cllr Donahue will bring about 4 options to discuss with costs. For example, if the Parish Council put nothing there, it would need to hire portaloos and a generator for any event; a replacement shed; a small like-for-like building; or refurbish the current pavilion.
- 18 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list.
- 19 To confirm the date and time of the next meetings is Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 20:00.
- 20 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council
It was agreed to send thank you letters to SOHA.
- 21 Meeting closed. 22:00

Report to Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council March 2024

Joint Local Plan

Many thanks to those who submitted feedback to the recently closed Regulation 18 consultation on the preferred options for the new Joint Local Plan. The consultation events were very successful, and analysis of those attending indicated that over 50% had not engaged with the District Council on such matters previously. This is very satisfying because we were explicitly aiming to reach more “lesser heard” voices and chose venues where unrepresented groups would be more likely to attend (e.g. local cafes). We will take forward these learnings for future consultations, particularly on the new Corporate Plan.

Permitted development rights

On the 13 February the Government launched a consultation on changes to permitted development rights. The changes include enabling householders to improve and enlarge their homes, ‘building upwards’ rights, the right allowing the demolition of buildings, changes associated with charging electric vehicles and the right to install air source heat pumps.

To find out more and take part, visit the [consultation website here](#). The consultation closes on 9 April 2024.

2024/25 Council Budget

At its Full Council meeting on 22nd February, SODC approved its budget for 2024/25, including the outlook for the next four years (the Medium Term Financial Plan). While the later years are highly speculative due to the absence of any long-term financial settlement from the Government, the plans for the next two financial years are robust and balanced. Thanks to careful budgeting and higher interest rates the draw on reserves will be much less than had been expected at this time last year (£1.5m versus £3m), and we have also protected all service areas by making no cuts at all. The £500k allocated to our various grant schemes is also included. Given all of the stories in the press these days about Council finances, it is reassuring to be able to report that SODC is in a much stronger position than many and still has some opportunities to invest in our corporate plan priorities.

The government settlement this year assumed that all Councils would impose the maximum increase in Council Tax, so we will be adding £5 to the SODC portion of the Council Tax for a Band D property. This still means that the SODC share of the total collected is just 6%, with some 77% going to OCC and 14% to the PCC. Several parishes and towns in South Oxfordshire now charge a higher precept than the District Council.

Elections help

SODC is still looking for people to work in polling stations on Thursday 2 May for the Police and Crime Commissioner Election. It’s a paid role and fairly easy work.

Peter Dragonetti

OCC BUDGET 2024/25 REVIEW

OCC Full Council met for a marathon 10-hour session on Tuesday 20th February to debate budget proposals. The minority LibDem/Green administration put forward their proposals, then the Conservative Independent Alliance (the official Opposition) and the Labour Group each put forward proposed amendments.

The Conservative Independent Alliance sought to slim down the 50-strong PR/Strategy team, refocus the ever-expanding Climate team, push back the Oxford congestion measures that are intended to extract £57m from motorists over a five-year period, allocate more money for vulnerable children (particularly Special Educational Needs and Disability) and to meet demands from residents to spend much more on roads and drains. Regrettably, these ambitions were thwarted by the LibDem/Green and Labour groups.

At the end of the meeting it became clear the debate had been pointless as the minority administration accepted the Labour amendments in their entirety. The fact that the revised budget papers had been pre-prepared suggested this was always the intended outcome, and that the minority administration believed they could not run the council without wholehearted Labour support.

Full details of the final budget are available on the council website. These show that the Labour amendments accepted by the administration will result in a massive extra borrowing of £23.45m. As usual, Labour focused on Oxford-centric matters, including Oxford parking zones, Oxford ANPR cameras, Oxford congestion, Oxford 'Mini-Holland' project (at a capital cost of £2m per year) and an Oxford 'Citizens' Assembly' (at a cost of £150,000).

The nine priorities of the administration remain unchanged: 1) Climate Emergency, 2) Tackle Inequalities, 3) Health & Wellbeing, 4) Social Care, 5) Sustainable Transport, 6) Nature Access, 7) Children's Opportunities, 8) Vibrant Democracy, 9) Business Cooperation. Despite repeated resident surveys and feedback from Councillors which show that roads and drains are near the top of the list of resident concerns, they still fail to get a mention and it is likely satisfaction with the council will continue to decline.

Address: Councillor Kevin Bulmer, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Email/Tel: kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk. 07803005680

Twitter: [@KevinBulmer@bulmer_kevin](https://twitter.com/KevinBulmer)





Attachment #

Scofell will carry out the services (**Services**) and/or provide and install the materials (**Materials**) for the customer and on the basis specified below:

Customer	Whitchurch upon Thames Parish Council
Start Date	1 st March 2024
End Date	31 st November 2025
Annual Fee	£6250.00 + vat per annum
Payment Terms	Monthly in arrears @ £694.44 + vat per month – payment to be made 30 days after date of invoice (for 9 months March – November)
Specification	As per client specification 2023
Internal ref:	4194

Any services or materials to be provided by Scofell under this quotation will be governed by Scofell’s Standard Terms current at the date of acceptance of this quotation a copy of which can be obtained from Scofell.

Signed for

Scofell Landscapes Limited

By its duly authorised representative

Belinda Wickens		7 th February 2024
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Signed on behalf of

Whitchurch upon Thames Parish Council

By its duly authorised representative

J.M. Yamamoto		14 MARCH 2024
(print name)	(signature)	(date)

Attachment 8

Area	Price per visit	Annual Cost	Quantity	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Village Green / Cricket Outfield	£95.00	£1,900.00	20			1	2	4	5	4	2	1	1		
Wildier Area at South End	£40.00	£320.00	8				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
St Manys Churchyard	£80.00	£720.00	9			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Play Area, Manor Road	£40.00	£360.00	9			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Village Hall, Manor Road	£20.00	£180.00	9			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Maze Field	£40.00	£80.00	1								1				
Footpaths	£160.00	£320.00	2						1		1				
Polish Gardens	£55.00	£890.00	13			1	2	2	2	2	2	2			
Hedge Cutting at Rec Ground	£400.00	£400.00	1										1		
Weed Killing	£360.00	£1,080.00	3						1	1	1				
Total Annual Total		£6,250.00													

BP



The Woolly Shepherd Ltd
Company No. 8455319
Leatside
Foxes Yard
Milverton Road
Tonedale
Wellington
TA21 0AJ
Tel: 01823 400 321
info@woollyshepherd.co.uk

Ref: WS23/TS/OS/001rev

Date: 23 January 2024

Report and Quotation

Customer:

The Old Stables
High Street
Whitchurch-on-Thames
Reading
RG8 7DF

Tel: 07

Email: 

Site: As above

The space is used for social gatherings with typically up to six groups of people having separate conversations.

The customer has explained that it is difficult to hear a particular group's conversation due to the high level of ambient noise from other groups and a tendency for some degree of echo.

A poor room acoustic, that is not attributable to externally generated noise, will almost always be due to one or more of the following:

- the cubic volume and proportions of the building
- architectural form (shape)
- surface finishes
- the response of occupants to a poor acoustic environment

No site visit has been conducted by the Woolly Shepherd Ltd, so all measurements and information used to compile this document were provided by the customer.

In this instance we have received the following information:

- Room dimensions
- Talking video
- Photographs

The Space Under Assessment

The Old Stables Meeting Room



Length: 10.4m
Width: 4.8m
Height: 2.3m
Volume: approx. 116m³



Observations

We have received a sound recording of the space, supplied by the customer and there is a clear issue with reverberation.

Apart from thin carpeting and lightly upholstered seating there are no soft furnishings which may have helped dampen and soften the sound in the room.

The room is a simple, open plan, rectangular shape, with sound being reflected across the space and nothing to break up or diffract the sound.

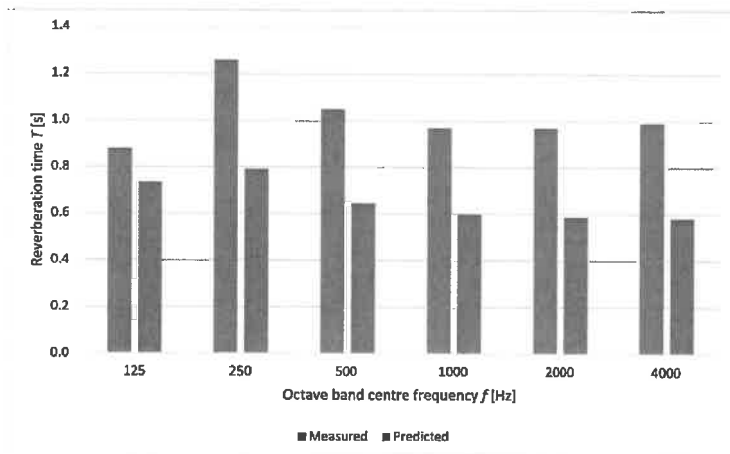
Results, Conclusions & Recommendations

For a Multi-Purpose Hall, Building Bulletin 93 specifies a maximum reverberation time of 0.8 – 1.2 seconds. For speech, in a space of around 116m³, the BREEAM Manual (BS 8233:1999) recommends a reverberation time of 0.5 seconds.

Current calculated reverberation time: 1.0s T_{mf}
Our recommendation: 0.6s T_{mf}

Deleted: , estimated,

The following chart compares the present situation with the predicted outcome, post treatment.



Even allowing for any inaccuracies due to the remote calculation method used, the current reverberation time is significantly higher than the best practice target time for a space of this type.

From the information received we would say that the poor acoustic performance of this room is due to the following factors.

- Sound reflections from hard surfaces.
- Lack of soft furnishings
- Large open space with nothing to break up sound.

In order to address this, we would recommend the installation of ceiling mounted acoustic panels. Due to the relatively low ceiling height these would have to be flush mounted such as Woolly Shepherd Wellington Panels.

It is important for village and community halls to be accessible to all members of the community. Although space with poor acoustics can be problematic for most people, it can be a major issue for other groups.

The current acoustic in this hall, at best, detracts from the experience of those who use it and in the more extreme cases, can distress and even totally exclude members of the community from using it.

The poor acoustics in this hall would be especially problematic for the following groups:

- Young children who are still acquiring their full vocabulary.
- Anyone who is deaf or has any degree of hearing loss, formally identified or otherwise.
- Those for whom English is not their first language.
- Blind and partially sighted people.
- Anyone with special sensory needs, such as those with Autism.

Please see Appendix for further information on inclusive environments.

In order to achieve a reverberation time that will reduce the level of distracting noise and allow groups to carry out their activities without being aware of the acoustics, we would recommend as the ideal solution the installation of

12 x Woolly Shepherd Wellington Panel

Dims: 117cm x 70cm x 7cm

Finish: Natural Wool Felt



Product Pricing

Installed by Customer

Product	Price	VAT	Total
Wellingtons	£2,340.00	£468.00	£2,808.00
Delivery (DIY install)	£215.46	£43.09	£258.55
Total	£2,555.46	£511.09	£3,066.55

Installed by Woolly Shepherd

Product	Price	VAT	Total
Wellingtons	£2,340.00	£468.00	£2,808.00
WS Installation	£1,145.87	£229.17	£1,375.04
Total	£3,485.87	£697.17	£4,183.04

Installation prices are based on access within the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday.

Prices quoted are for absorbers covered in our standard range of finishes. This includes Dove (light) Grey, Heather (dark) Grey or Clotted Cream wool felt for all products.

If you would like an alternative colour or photos, logos, or personalised designs for your absorbers, please contact us and we can discuss available options with you.

All absorbers are supplied with fittings, installation guidance and aftercare information.

Payment In Advance To:

The Woolly Shepherd Ltd
Sort Code: 60-83-71
Acc no: 61921008

Alternatively, please send a cheque payable to "The Woolly Shepherd Ltd" to the address above.

Lead times:

From formal written acceptance of our quote current lead times are as follows:

DIY installation: 2 to 4 weeks
Woolly Shepherd installation: 4 to 6 weeks

Lead times may vary during busier periods, so please check with us when you confirm your order.

Important Information

Please note that if installation can only be carried out during unsociable hours (evenings or weekends), we reserve the right to renegotiate the installation charge quoted above.

Terms & Conditions

1. These are the terms and conditions on which we, Woolly Shepherd Limited offer to deal with you, our customer. They supersede any earlier conditions (including any appearing in our catalogues or web-files). They govern all contracts under which we supply to businesses. They override any terms proposed by you whether in the order or in any negotiations or otherwise.
2. Prices quoted by us are valid for no more than thirty days from the date of the quotation. We may increase prices and change packaging and specifications. All prices quoted or shown exclude VAT unless otherwise stated.
3. Should you wish to accept quotations, please confirm in writing or email. If your organisation usually issues a Purchase Order, please confirm this in writing or email.
4. As soon as confirmation (email and/or PO) has been received we will issue an invoice for payment.
5. Please note, we will not dispatch or install your products until payment has been received, in full.
6. If Woolly Shepherd Limited are to carry out Installations, payment needs to be received a minimum of five working days prior to your installation date. If payment has not been received five working days prior to your installation we reserve the right to cancel your installation.
7. Any delivery time which we propose is only an estimate. If we do not meet it, we shall not be in breach of contract. We may postpone any delivery for a reasonable time, and we are not responsible for consequential losses.
8. You should inspect goods immediately upon delivery and report to us within 24 hours by email to info@woollyshepherd.co.uk any defect or discrepancy. You must sign the paperwork or inform the delivery driver of any damages, defect, or discrepancy. Failure to instruct Woolly Shepherd Limited of these damages, defects, or discrepancy by signed paperwork or email, will prevent credit notes to be raised. You must provide such information as we reasonably request, and any damaged material must not be disposed of. If we are not notified within 24 hours of receipt, then the goods will be treated as accepted.
9. You must ensure that any person acknowledging receipt of a supply is authorised to do so. You agree that the signature of delivery is conclusive proof of delivery.
10. If you do not accept delivery, we will store the goods and charge you for the reasonable costs of storage and insurance.
11. No order that we accept can be cancelled by you unless we agree in writing. Any goods which we agree to accept back must be returned at

your expense, in good condition, accompanied by a goods return note stating our invoice number.

12. Any refund will be made less a 25% restocking charge and any costs incurred as a result of the returns.
13. Title in any goods supplied shall not pass until Woolly Shepherd Limited has received cleared funds and any other debt which you owe us for goods, which we supplied.
14. Unless we agree in writing in advance of supply you must not:
 - re-sell or use goods which we supply under your own brand.
 - use or copy any marketing material used by us.
 - use the name or mark Woolly Shepherd Limited (or anything containing it) in any form on products or any marketing or other material which we have not supplied.
 - re-sell what we supply you outside the U.K without prior written agreement.
 - use or disclose any confidential or secret information which belongs to us.
 - copy products which we supply to you or get others to do so.

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Appendix A

Reverberation Times (RT60)

In situations where surface finishes are highly reflective, sound waves in the 125-4000 Hz range (speech) will not be quickly absorbed and will be reflected numerous times for relatively extended periods of time.

When this happens, direct sound can become masked by the later arriving reflections. As speech becomes less intelligible noise levels tend to increase as occupants raise their voices in an attempt to make themselves understood.

The acoustic performance of a room, in relation to the above, is measured as a reverberation time (T_{60}).

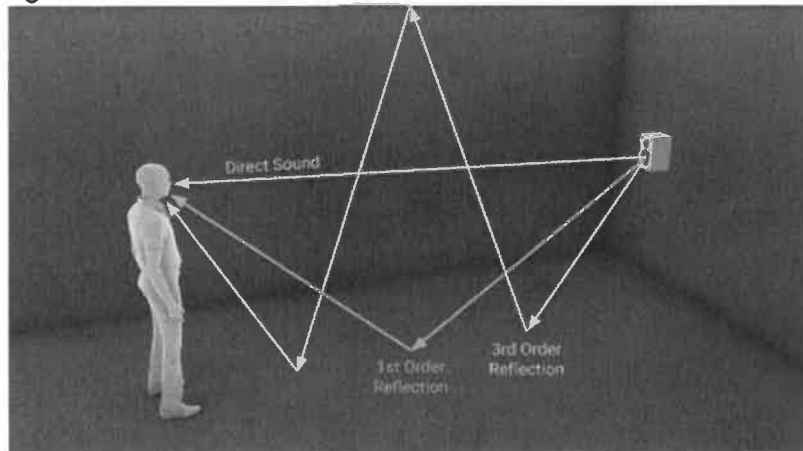
Additional Factors

As useful and important as reverberation time is for assessing the quality of a room's acoustic it does not always tell the full story, especially in small rooms and/or those with features such as vaulted ceilings that focus/concentrate sound in an unhelpful manner.

In smaller rooms, the length of the reverberation time is still important, but as early reflections can be positive (enforcing direct sound) and later ones very negative (smearing/masking direct sound), a reverberation time that is acceptable in a large hall will often be totally unacceptable in a small office. This is because the speech signal received by a listener is a function of the source, distance, early reverberation, late reverberation and noise.

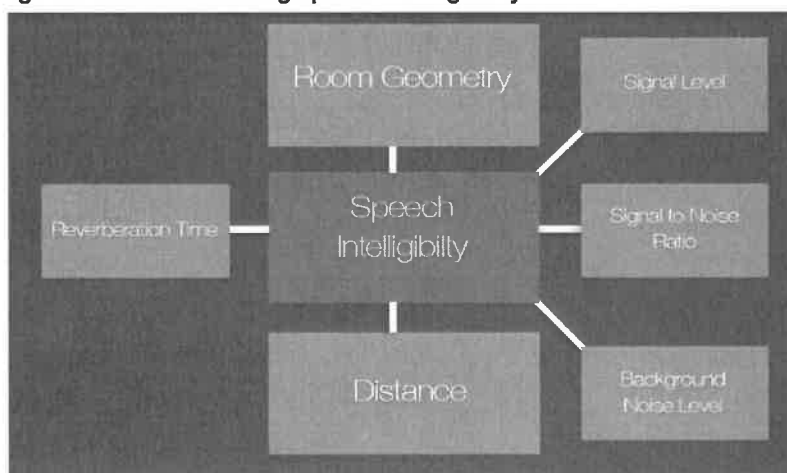
Finally, conditions that are tolerable for hearing adults in casual conversation can be difficult for adults and children in learning situations, and intolerable for persons with hearing, language, attention or processing needs.

Figure 1: Direct and reflected sound



Typical sound wave pathways, adapted from Master Handbook of Acoustics, fourth ed. F. Alton Everest, McGraw-Hill 2001

Figure 2: Factors affecting speech intelligibility



ClapReverb App

On occasion, when a customer does not want to or cannot commission an onsite acoustic survey, we will ask customers to use this iPhone app. We have tested the app ourselves, taking side by side measurements with our calibrated sound meter, and found the results to be very accurate. However, the app is not a replacement for a professionally undertaken sound survey and should never be viewed as such. It is merely an additional tool to help us remotely assess the likely reverberation time of your room.

Recommended Reverberation Times

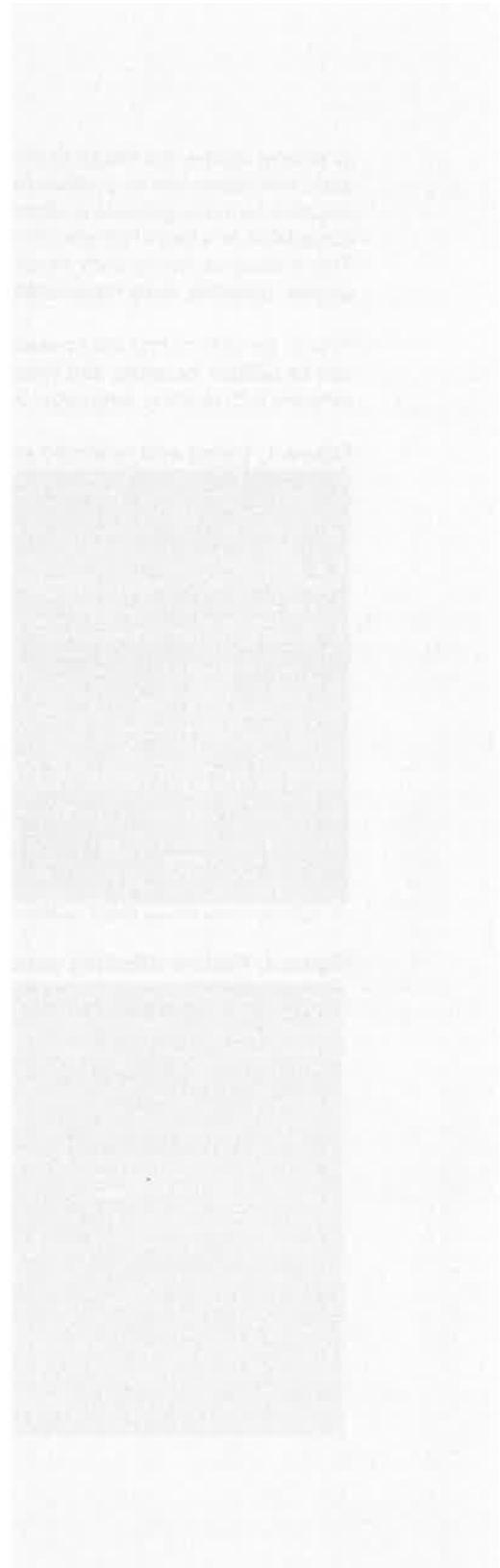
When proposing recommended reverberation times, we generally refer to the publication 'Acoustic design of schools: performance standards, Building Bulletin 93' (BB93), the current version of which was published by the Department for Education in February 2015.

This document sets out minimum performance standards for the acoustics of school buildings, and describes the normal means of demonstrating compliance with the Building Regulations.

BB93 contains the maximum mid-frequency reverberation time requirements. Values for refurbishment are also the minimum acceptable standards for alternative performance standards in new buildings.

In situations such as this, where the room in question is not in a school building, we use this document purely as a reference to help inform appropriate target times.

In addition to this, we also refer to the BREEAM International Non-Domestic Refurbishment Technical Manual 2015, the recommendations of which are based on BS 8233:1999. This document recommends target reverberation times based on the volume of the space and whether it is intended primarily for speech communication or for musical performance. For speech, a lower reverberation time is sought, as it improves intelligibility; for music, some reverberation is beneficial, as it adds warmth.

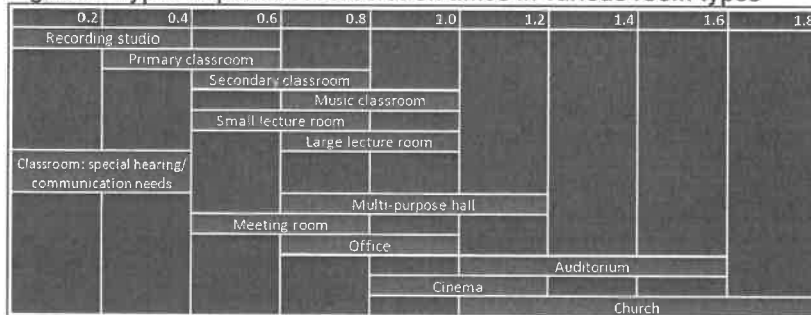


Room volume m ³	Reverberation time <i>T</i> s	
	Speech	Music
50	0.4	1.0
100	0.5	1.1
200	0.6	1.2
500	0.7	1.3
1 000	0.9	1.5
2 000	1.0	1.6

Through careful consideration of the recommendations provided by these documents, we are able to propose an appropriate, best practice, reverberation time for your room.

The following chart may be helpful in terms of providing some context.

Figure 3: Typical optimal reverberation times in various room types



However, in cases where customers do not require or wish for such strict times, we offer recommendations based on the achievement of a significant improvement.

Remote Surveys

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that we provide you with a high-quality service that accurately represents the current reverberation time (T_{60}) of your room, a remote survey can never be as accurate as an on-site survey.

Deleted: high quality

gm

Your remote survey will almost always give us a very good approximation of the reverberation time and on many occasions, we have found remote and onsite measurements to be identical. However, on the odd occasion, where rooms are more complicated in shape and/or densely populated with fixtures and fittings, we have found the difference can be quite significant.

Therefore, in cases where a precise target reverberation time is required, such as for school buildings, we would always recommend that you have an on-site survey.

Appendix B

Inclusive Environments

Inclusivity is the idea that all types of people, for whatever differences, must be included as much as possible in all areas of life and must be assimilated. It means that whatever is afforded to some should be afforded to all, wherever possible.

Well-designed village/community halls provide a vital community space where people can come together, connect, and form lifelong friendships. These halls are a lifeline for many villages, particularly as traditional community spaces like pubs and post offices have closed.

These halls should be inclusive spaces that provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere to everyone. However, all too often when people consider the inclusivity of this type of environment, they will unintentionally exclude those for whom good room acoustics are an essential requirement.

Despite the fact that there are a large number of groups disadvantaged or excluded by poor room acoustics, perhaps the most immediately obvious are those who have hearing loss or are profoundly deaf.

Whilst we only have reliable statistics for those who have been formally identified, the numbers are still very significant with over 12 million adults having hearing loss greater than 25 dBHL. This is equivalent to one in five adults.

The Local Government Association website states the following:

Councils have role to play in building cohesive communities, which are places that:

- offer a common vision and a sense of belonging for all
- positively value diversity
- provide equal opportunities to people from different backgrounds and
- Provide an environment where strong and positive relationships can be developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

Promotion of equality is integral to building community cohesion. Local cohesion may be undermined where some groups have different experiences or outcomes to others, especially where linked to a group's protected characteristics (though difference of opportunity may not necessarily be related to protected characteristics alone).

Councils have a role in helping to tackle inequalities and related issues, such as fostering good relations across and between communities and supporting efforts to prevent extremism and tackle hate crime, including against those with protected characteristics.

Attachment 12

Briefing for the Parish Council – Acoustic Cladding funding request for the Old Stables, March 2024

Objective: For coffee mornings (the Art Cafe), additional weekly community group meetings, events

The project seeks to provide sound absorption to improve hearing clarity. We believe that the improvements will make the user experience more enjoyable and will increase attendance at events.

Community Support

The Old Stables meeting room has been provided by the Diocese of Oxford to the PCC for community activity and events, and has been a great success. One of the first ideas was to organize an Art Café which was opened with a regular monthly coffee morning. The coffee mornings were attended both by regular residents of the villages and by various charities and their followers organizing the particular sessions. By popular demand, this has become a weekly event and continues to be well supported, providing a focal point in the village for both residents and visitors, particularly those walking the Thames Path. The nature of the events held is for gatherings of between 10 and 30 people but holding conversations in groups of between 2 and 6 people. The Old Stables meeting room contains very limited soft furnishing comprising essentially just carpet tiles and the cushioned seats of chairs, with the result that users are plagued by reverberation from the sound of nearby conversations. To compensate, people raise their voices making the overall effect worse. In addition to this regular coffee morning, there are various local groups that use the Old Stables each week, plus regular special events, such as musical or quiz evenings, as well as church events.

Funding

Various individuals have offered to contribute to sound improvements and we expect to receive contributions approaching £1500-1800 from local residents, thereby providing close to 50% of the anticipated project cost. The SODC has agreed to provide a grant of £2,000, leaving a shortfall of between £300-£600. The PCC is not in a position to make a contribution since its building funds are intended for its own buildings which have very high upcoming demands including the St Mary's church spire (ie for the churches themselves rather than the Old Stables which is a diocesan building). Note that the diocese has declined to fund the project since it provides the building rent free.

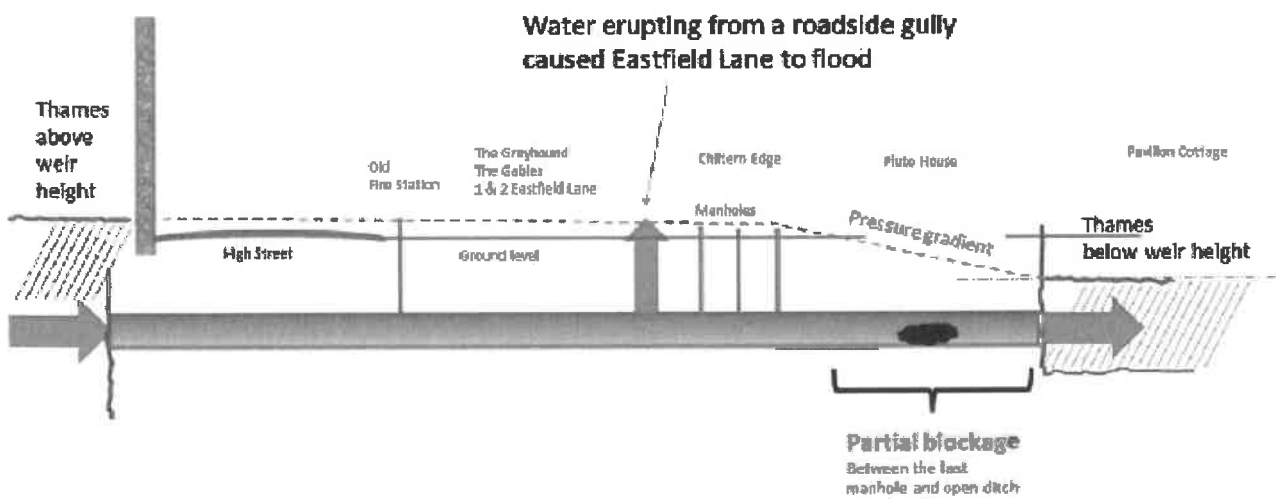
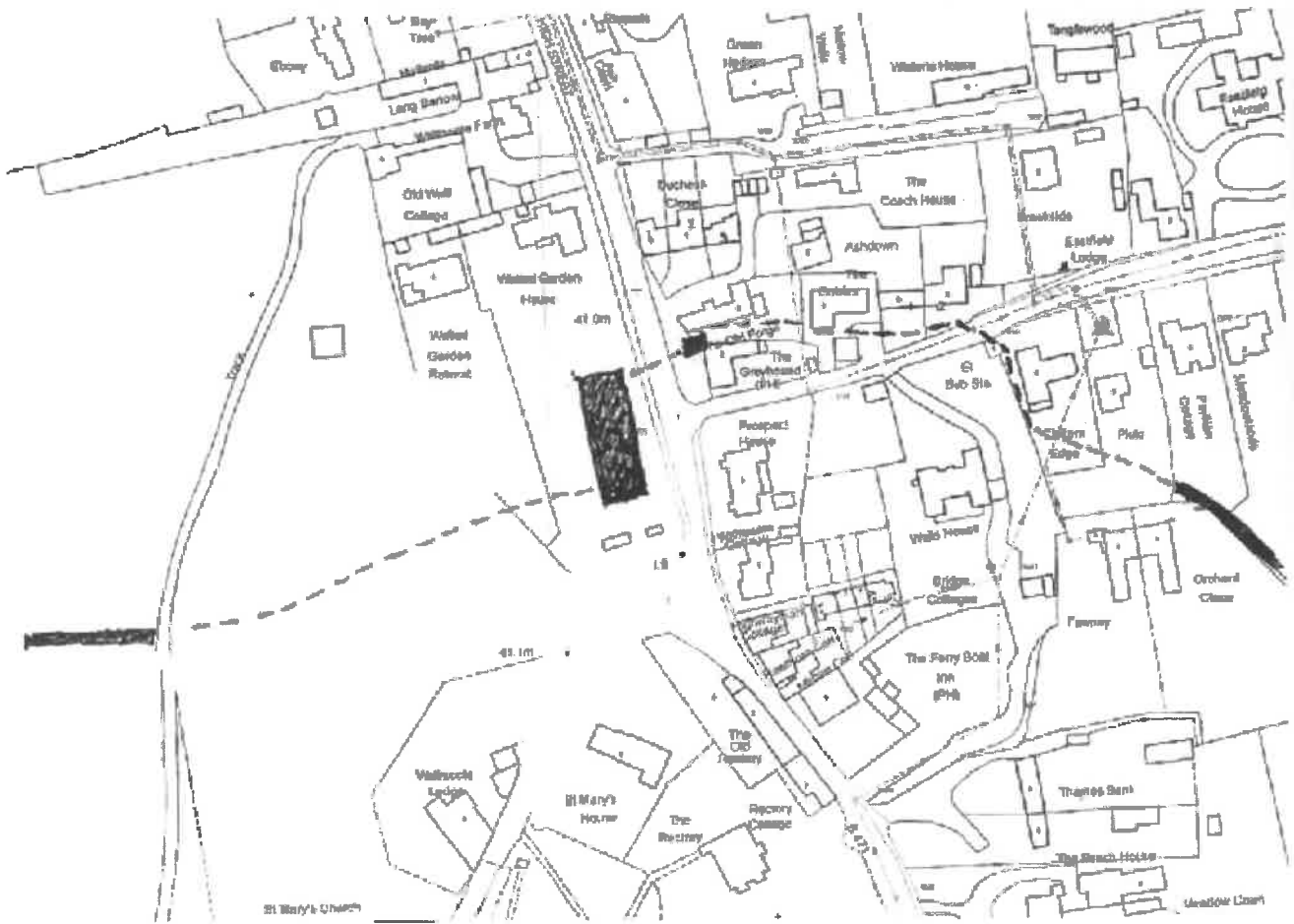
What difference does it make?

Both Whitchurch and Whitchurch Hill have larger Village Halls for local clubs which are rented out for larger events and large gatherings. The purpose for the Old Stables is to provide a more modest level of accommodation for smaller gatherings (typically up to 30 people) in a newly refurbished building with good facilities to create a warm, friendly, and intimate environment. It has been highly appreciated by both residents of the villages and by visitors.

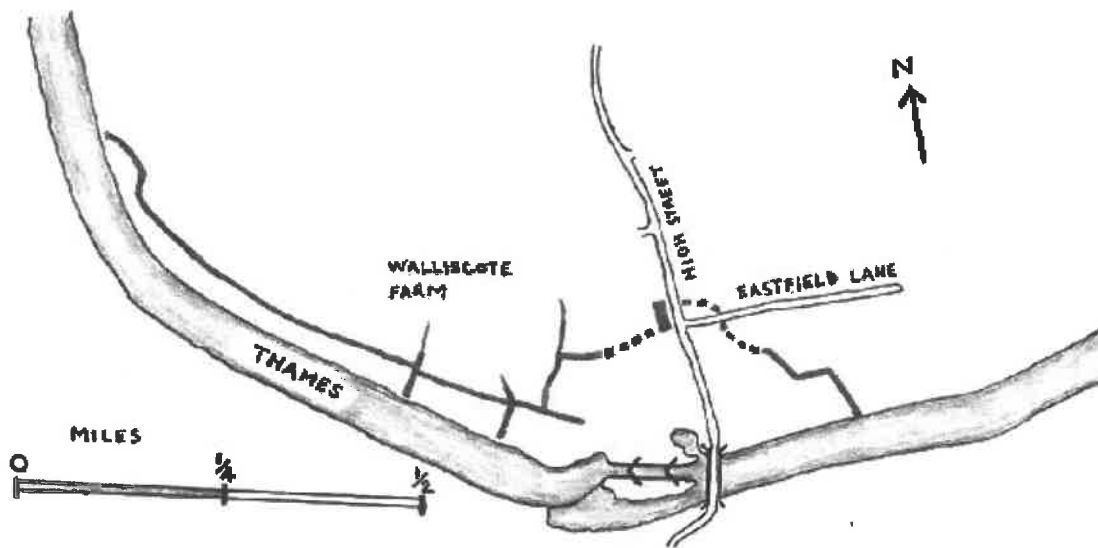
Reverberation tests have shown that we have a severe but common problem in rooms of this type in that there is very limited natural absorption of sound. The project will provide sound absorbing panels which will limit the reverberation and improve the clarity of conversations. The current situation is that some of those attending do not enjoy the experience and tend to leave as it becomes more crowded and noisy. Furthermore, we are aware that some people who would like to come to events do not do so fearing that they will not be able to hear others, making them feel isolated and unable to participate. We expect that the consequence of completing the project will be more widespread use of the facility and better attendance from those who would particularly benefit, ie the elderly and isolated of our community. The meeting room will also become better suited to one off events.



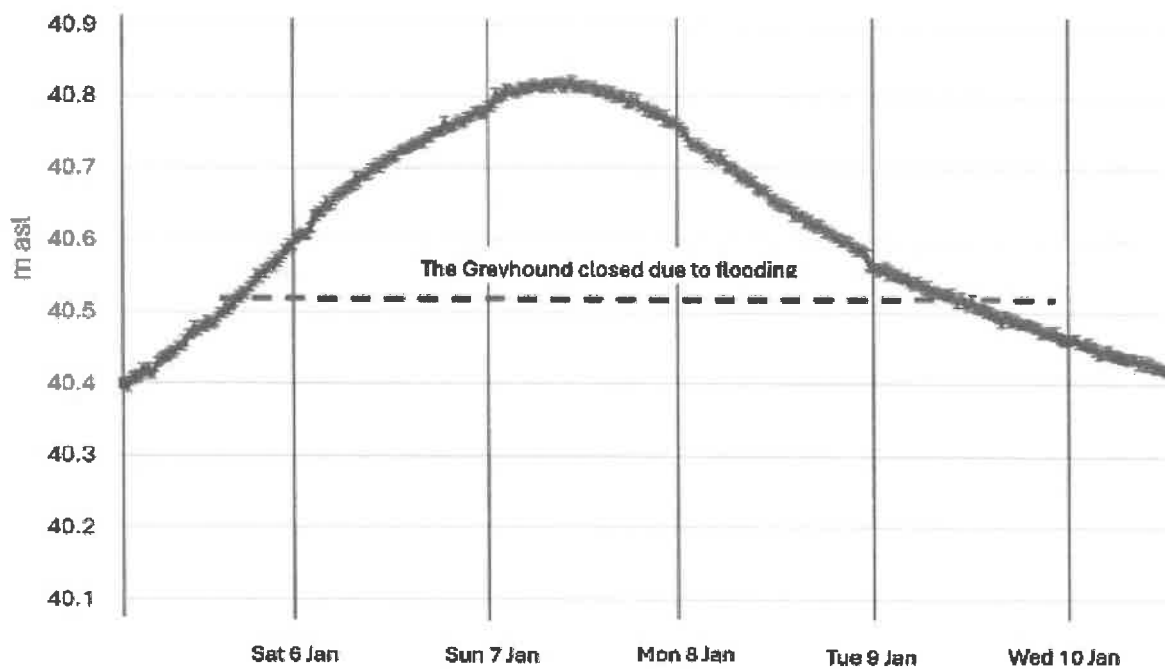
The Village Watercourse



Attadmet 14



Whitchurch lock upstream water level - 5 to 11 Jan 2024



Progress report on investigations following the January 2024 Thames flood, from the Whitchurch Flood Forum, 14th March 2024

Flood levels in the village peaked on Sunday 7th January and caused flooding of some properties in the High Street, including The Greyhound, and in Eastfield Lane, as well as some properties close to the river.

A significant factor influencing the level of floodwater in the High Street and Eastfield Lane is considered by the Flood Forum to be the limited capacity of the pipeline carrying the village watercourse south of Eastfield Lane, which causes the water to build up pressure and emerge from two locations in the more ancient culvert further upstream. One of these is at the Greyhound and the other is in Eastfield Lane.

A two-page pdf document 'The Village Watercourse', presented at a recent meeting of the Emergency Team, shows the route and extent of the village watercourse.

After a similar flood event in January 2014 a partial blockage was found and cleared near the end of the culvert south of Eastfield Lane. There could still be a blockage of some sort, invisible from the surface, which should be investigated.

This year's flooding was exacerbated by the river level upstream of the weir being significantly higher than in 2014, probably due to tree debris brought down during storm Henk partially blocking the weir or gates. This is thought to have raised the upstream level nearer to the 1947 event, regarded as the '100 year' flood.

Under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, an investigation can be requested to investigate flooding, provided certain criteria for severity are met. An application was made on 26th January by the Flood Forum to OCC, the regulating authority for the Act, who subsequently approved it and instructed SODC to carry out an investigation.

We are now assisting Leigh Travers, Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer with SODC, in carrying out the investigation. Our view is that this should focus on the apparent restriction in the flow in the culvert south of Eastfield Lane, but also to better understand the design, gradient, condition and capacity of the whole watercourse system through the village to determine what can be done to reduce the risk of flooding.

A camera survey is expected to be carried out by a contractor working for SODC, with access from the downstream end of the culvert. Owing to the current high

groundwater table we understand this is planned for April or later. Some dewatering of the culvert may be needed.

Our main point of contact with Leigh Travers is John Southey. The other members of the Forum are Geoff Weir and Richard Wingfield.

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