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**Subject:** Update on flood schemes in Hughenden Valley

David,

Thank you for the insights into flooding in Hughenden Valley that you shared with Hannah and I last week. As we discussed in our meeting, we have not received any reports of significant internal property flooding in this location, and for this reason we are not able to allocate staff resources to Hughenden Valley in the same way as we do in our more heavily flooded areas such as the Chalfonts. Nevertheless, I committed to a meeting with you and local residents in the New Year.

In the meantime, I have asked the Strategic Flood Management team to put together an email update for you, which you are most welcome to share with residents and the DIG group.

1. **Flooding history:**

No Section 19 investigation has been triggered at this location. Criteria set out here:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-flood-risk-management/flood-investigations/>

- There is a long history of flooding issues in Hughenden Valley from a combination of groundwater, fluvial and surface water sources.
- The most significant events appear to have been driven by groundwater levels in the chalk aquifer of the Chiltern Hills.

- High groundwater levels can lead to surcharging of the foul sewer network in the village, overflowing of the groundwater-fed Hughenden Stream, and increase surface water runoff and flooding in the area.
- Flooding driven by groundwater can cause substantial disruption in the area due to its long duration.
- There have also been other flood events when heavy rainfall falls on a saturated catchment, resulting in surface water runoff, flooding of highways and overwhelming of local drainage.
- Notable events that the LLFA are aware of are as follows:
  - **Winter 2001:** 21 properties were reported to have been affected. It is not known whether these properties were flooded internally or externally (it predates the establishment of the LLFA).
  - **Winter 2013/14:** The area of Hughenden Valley experienced flooding issues for several weeks. Thames Water installed temporary pumps in March 2014 on Boss Lane and Valley Road to pump excess surcharge from the Hughenden Valley trunk sewer into local watercourses. Thames Water stated that the foul sewage system flooded due to a combination of groundwater infiltration, surface water runoff from surrounding land and properties, surface water misconnections and river water overflowing from Hughenden Stream.
  - **October 2023** - the Harrow pub garden was flooded from the road after a downpour. There was a report to Fix My Street of blocked drains.
  - **17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> February 2024** – Flooding of Warrendene Road and the garden of the Harrow pub. Several cars became stranded. Flood water invaded the gardens of some 6-8 houses and entered at least one property. Buckinghamshire Highways cleared the gully system and silt trap on Warrendene Road. Consideration of the installation of a swale discussed with local community and local members and declined.
  - **September 2024** - Sandbags were distributed by Highways during the event to several properties. Following dissemination of the online flood questionnaire, only one report of internal flooding has been received to date. The team will continue to monitor survey responses received.

## 2. Highways drainage works:

- Capital Drainage Works undertaken or planned at:
  - Valley Road (at the junction with Coombe Lane)
  - Valley Road (at the junction of Trees Avenue / Trees Road)
  - Boss Lane

- Valley Road (at the junction of Orchard Close)
- The contact for further information on these works would be the Local Area Technician, [james.tunnard@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:james.tunnard@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

### 3. **Potential Natural Flood Management scheme:**

- The SFM team have received £613k for the Bucks (Thames) NFM project as reported here: [Report for Flood Capital Programme 2024\\_25 Capital Release.pdf](#)
- This project is in early phase of development and options assessment/feasibility is due to conclude in Summer 2025. There are 4 focus areas including Hughenden, West Marlow, Chesham Bois and Monks Risborough.
- River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT, Andrew Moseley, who has obviously been in contact with DIG) are a partner in the contract that we have awarded to Thames 2100 for delivery of the feasibility element of the Bucks (Thames) NFM project.
- As we discussed in our meeting, I would encourage strongly encourage residents and members to make their priorities clear if they would like a Hughenden Natural Flood Management scheme to be taken forward (noting the feedback on the swale proposal on Warrendene Road earlier this year)

Finally, I wanted to acknowledge the good work being done by the DIG group and highlight the various sources of information available to them and the community that they might not yet be aware of:

- The National Flood Forum have guidance on [Protecting Your Property](#), which provides advice on how property owners can make their own property more resilient to flooding.
- Our new [Buckinghamshire – BeFloodReady](#) website also explains how Property Flood Resilience measures can mitigate the impact of flooding on people's homes.
- Homeowners who have already suffered damage from flooding can also ask their home insurers about the ['Build Back Better' scheme](#).
- [Project Groundwater](#) is researching innovations in groundwater flooding including modelling, mapping, warning, nature-based solutions and property flood resilience measures. The groundwater flood risk mapping will cover Hughenden and will be available in February 2025.
- For any general flood related queries to the Council please contact [floodmanagement@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:floodmanagement@buckinghamshire.gov.uk). However highways flooding impacting safety should always be reported to FixMyStreet.

I hope this information is useful. Please do contact me if you require anything further.

Warm Regards

Jilly

Cllr Jilly Jordan

Deputy Cabinet Member Environment & Climate Change

Great Brickhill Ward

Chairman Winslow & Villages Community Board

Buckinghamshire Council