

Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council
Tuesday 9th April 2024

13. Correspondence.

- 13.1. 20240321 Notice of Election for Police and Crime Commissioner Election - 2 May 2024 *For information* Cllrs are informed that the Clerk has received notices of the above election to post on the Parish Council notice boards.
- 13.2. 20240327 DALC #12 2024 E-bulletin *For information* Cllrs are informed that this bulletin includes a reminder for Town and Parish Councils to renew membership to DALC (see item below) and that an updated 'Practitioner's Guide' with best practices for 2024/25 accounts has now been published. Cllrs are informed that the Clerk has read the full list of changes, the most notable changes this year include: a) Stronger encouragement for local councils to use [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domains for website and emails. b) A recommendation that local councils publish their full internal audit report on their website alongside the Annual Governance and Accountability Return to support smaller councils in their work to be more transparent and accountable to their communities, as well as improving the quality of internal audit services to local councils. Cllrs are informed that the Clerk already does follow this practice.
- 13.3. **20240427 DALC Membership Renewal for 2024 25 *For consideration*** Cllrs are informed that **membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) is due at a cost of £439 plus VAT. Councils are required to complete a membership renewal form should the Parish Council wish to renew. Cllrs are reminded that membership to DALC includes the access to the following services: up to date advice and guidance by email and phone, with access to further finance, HR and general legal advice via the National team (NALC); regular updates and information on local government matters via the website and regular email bulletins; training and development for councillors and clerks; opportunities to engage with other member councils; being part of DALC's network of mutually supportive councils.**
- 13.4. 20240328 Traffic and Transport Forum Agenda *For information* Cllrs are invited to attend the next meeting of the Traffic and Transport Forum at 6:30pm on 24th April 2024 at Totnes Guildhall. The agenda includes discussion on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and receipt of any community matters.
- 13.5. **20240402 Nkuku Carpark flooding *For consideration*** Cllrs are informed of correspondence from staff at Nkuku asking for assistance in finding the owner of the land above the store. [A link to a video](#) was provided, showing that run-off from the field is flooding the carpark.
- 13.6. **20240402 Screw Lane drainage - document for April's PC *For consideration*** Following verbal updates made by a Member of the Public at recent monthly meetings, the Parish Council has received correspondence that includes a report on drainage at Screw Lane, for consideration.

Screw Lane Drainage



1 Purpose

The document reports on progress, and proposes a series of actions to;

- 1.1 Retain the water in the fields to the north of Screw Lane (SL)
- 1.2 Reduce the flooding of SL
- 1.3 Control the water going down to Harberton with some enhanced culvert and buddle hole works

(Actions from SL south to Harberton not included in this document. Separate study)

2 Background



SL's drainage was a regular feature in Parish Council minutes for many months prior to the Sept 2023 flooding.

Since then, flooding in the Parish has focussed minds.

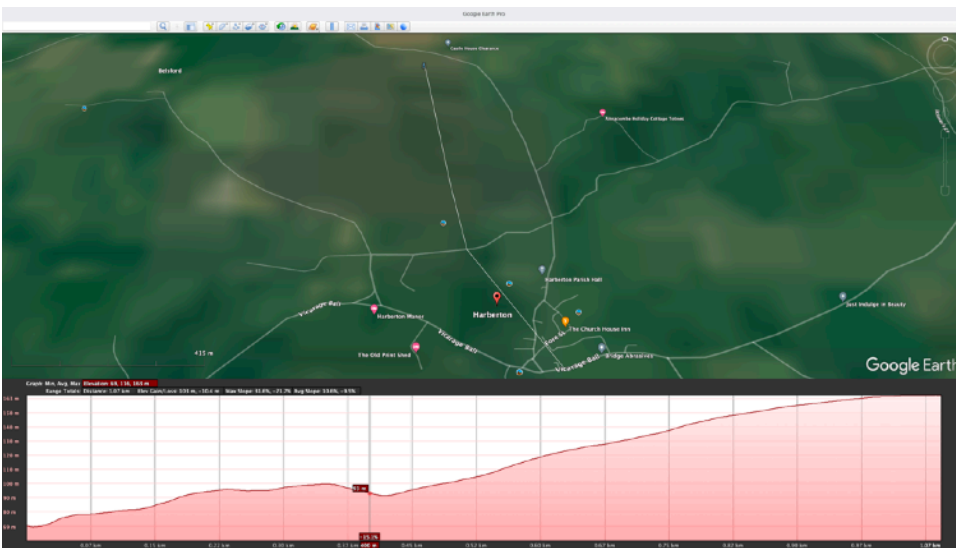
This document is one of a series following the flooding of Sept 2023 and focuses on SL and the rising land to the north. For the others, see here <https://www.harbertonparishcouncil.org/2023-flooding/>

3 Why is Screw Lane important?

The Environment Agency reports that the rising ground to the NE of Harberton is a capture bowl prone to flash flooding.

SL follows a 100m AOD contour line approximately half-way up the rising land above Harberton.

The gradient more than doubles above SL with more land area above SL than below (see Appendix 1 for detail) The lane is also a dividing line of land ownership on both sides, bisected by the Highways Agency.



If we can control what happens above, along and immediately below SL, Harberton's flood risk from the NW is reduced significantly.

Note that most of the flow appears to originate at the eastern end of SL.

4 Farmer's intentions

The author and Cllr Richard Morris met the farmer Mr Rogers in the fields above SL on Tuesday 26th March

He informed us that he;

- 4.1 Cannot discharge water from the land onto the Highway surface.
- 4.2 Will effect the recommendations of this year's Soil Report (see above link)
- 4.3 Will implement a series of field gate closures up the gradient to the North, dig capture strips thus raising the effective height of the various existing hedgerow banks parallel to SL



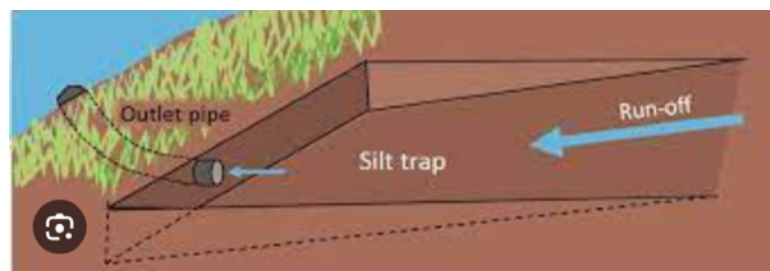
4.4 The gateway to the '20 acre field' mid-way along SL will be closed and a new entrance created in the area of Mill Cross at the western end of SL



4.5 The soil at the lowest bank adjoining SL will be removed and re-distributed to higher ground, forming an attenuation strip along the length of this northern bank of SL.

These works will provide a series of parallel capture / soak trenches along several higher contours that should arrest excessive water above SL.

4.6 The area around the culvert towards the eastern end of SL will be cleared to provide a silt trap (see below)



5 Culvert and drain under the road

There is a buddle hole and culvert leading to a drain under the road. This has been blocked for most of the winter and was rodded twice in March due to a build-up of silt from the field.



Highways have cleared the ditch but are not prepared to build a raised kerb (see W241731540 in Appendix 2)

The Parish Council needs to re-visit this request as Highways deem it 'too rural' to take action.

Highways need reminding that it was it's action to lay the drain across the road the created this open watercourse.



The existing culvert entrance can be enhanced on the roadside edge to give resilience and more access for clearing and rodding from both sides of the road.



Examples of bank retention around a culvert

6 South side bundle holes



In March, Highways dug 2 soak-away channels into the lowest point in SL on the southern bank.

It would be useful if these can be opened up to create buddle holes with the black piping that is used on the holes nearby on the same bank.

The landowner needs to be approached to seek approval



7 Conclusions

The management of water is complex at the best of times. With the Sept 2023 flooding and now the wettest March for many years, SL is suffering.

A combination of retention and controlled run-off is a pragmatic approach that should be effected and monitored over the next 12 months. Whilst it will solve many of the routine periods of medium to high rainfall, no mitigation can be assured for a last Sept's volumes of water.

8 Recommendations

- 8.1 Endorse and monitor the farmer's actions in section 5
- 8.2 When the silt trap has been formed in 4.6, seek permissions and funding for the creation of an enhanced culvert on the northern roadside and into the hedgerow bank.
- 8.3 The author volunteers to monitor and rod the drain under the road regularly
- 8.4 Seek landowner's permission to create 2 extra buddle holes through to Orchard Field on the south side
- 8.5 Lobby Highways to construct a raised kerb along kerb stream as this is a dropped edge into which someone has already driven and more will no doubt follow
- 8.6 Study the southern flow paths to Harberton

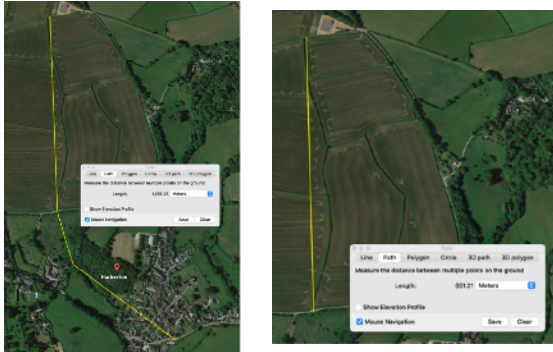
Peter Cogley April 4th 2024

Appendix 1

Screw Lane is a dividing line in terms of flow distance, relative gradients, and soil cultivation. It bisects the elevated terrain. It runs east/west roughly along a contour, 101 m AOD at Gills Cross in the east, 96 m at Belsford Mill crossroads in the west. It has a hump around half-way approx 20 m east of Threshing Barn's driveway.

The total water stream path length in plan view is 1125 m with 650 m being above Screw Lane

The land rises 22 m (90 - 68) to Screw Lane then upwards by 73 m (163 - 90) above Screw Lane



The gradient along the stream flow path is;

- 1 Vicarage Ball to Screw Lane is 2.7 deg $[\tan^{-1} 22/(1125-651)]$
- 2 Screw Lane to Trig point is 6.4 deg $[\tan^{-1} (73/651)]$

The cultivated land is 2.4 times steeper than that below Screw Lane with roughly equal areas above and below of about 60 acres

Appendix 2



Dear Sir/Madam,

W241731540

Debris/Obstruction, Debris/Obstruction
Location: Mill Cross to Gills Cross, Harberton

Thank you for contacting us about this issue, which was originally reported on 23-March-2024. The record was completed on the 26-March-2024.

The following information is now available;

Thank you for your report. It would be too expensive to remove and dispose of waste generated from cleaning these features across the county so it is DCC policy for the arisings to be used to build the sides of the ditch and spread on verges.

Although there may be advantages to install kerbs the location is consider too rural and does not warrant this installation.

Please do not respond to this email as it is system generated. If you require further information please visit our [website](#)

Thank you.

Highway Neighbourhood Group
Devon Highways