

June 2024 Parish Councils – District and County Council reports

With the General Election pre-election period underway, district and county council communications have been restricted in order to comply with election period rules.

A1198 speeding

Thanks were expressed by Bassingbourn Barracks to Whaddon PC for all its work on A1198 speed limit reduction, at a meeting Susan attended at the Barracks on June 6.

The perception at the Barracks is that A1198 speeding is still happening.

Could Susan put the clerk in contact with Bassingbourn PC's clerk and the Barracks Welfare Officer, to discuss joining forces on use of respective MVASs on the A1198?

The Barracks have agreed to work with Bassingbourn's Speedwatch team in setting up their MVAS on the Barracks side of the A1198. They might well be open to doing the same for Whaddon.

Anglian Water March meeting notes complete

Please find attached a copy of notes of the meeting held with AW, for information. Thanks to Malan Peyton for her input.

Watercourse maps

The LLFA (Lead Local Flood Authority – County Council) have just produced a very useful mapping tool on their website which identifies who has responsibility for all watercourses (i.e Ordinary (riparian) / IDB / awarded etc).

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/watercourse-management>

Adjustments to South Cambs Magazine summer 2024 edition

South Cambs District Council has had to adjust its approach to the delivery of the summer 2024 issue of South Cambs Magazine, to ensure it complies with pre-election period guidelines. Just prior to the announcement, all 73,600 copies of the magazine had already been printed and were due to be delivered to residents, with the majority of the magazines being put through letterboxes during the w/c Monday 3 June. However, this would have fallen inside the pre-election period. It was not possible not allow these deliveries to take place, because the magazine contains quotes and images of many Cllrs.

A small replacement for the magazine has been produced containing useful information around registering to vote / Voter ID and the usual middle page inserts from the magazine –

i.e. the bin calendar and what goes in which bin. It is being printed in the current week and then will be delivered to residents during the week commencing Monday 10 June. The full magazine, already printed, will be sent out immediately following the general election.

Quality of Life Survey

Cambridgeshire County Council have launched their second annual countywide Quality of Life survey, speaking to a random sample of 5,500 residents to understand their views on the quality of their lives. The survey – run by an independent market research company Thinks Insight – aims to speak to 1,100 people aged 18+ living in each of the five Cambridgeshire district areas. In addition, they will be talking to people from specific groups who are less often heard from including people who may have been homeless or are from migrant or Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities.

The online version of the survey can be found [here](#) so any resident who wants to can take part can.

Civil Parking Enforcement Request

Members of the public can use this form to make a request:

[Parking Enforcement request - Data Protection - Cambridgeshire County Council website \(achieveservice.com\)](#)

Meldreth Shepreth Foxton Community Rail Partnership and Rail User Group AGMs

These will take place on 2 July, 2:15, at the British Queen pub, Meldreth. Please contact Susan with any questions.

Royston-Cambridge 26 bus new route includes Meldreth and Shepreth

Following a conversation with the new operator and publication of a new timetable:

The Melbourn-based operator A2B will be running the Royston-Cambridge service commercially from June 3rd, aiming to build on strengths and expand where possible to provide a wider service.

Core service runs through Melbourn, Foxton/Fowlmere, Harston and Trumpington Park and Ride, with Drummer Street Bus Station Cambridge the final destination.

All fares are £2 each way.

Timings have been tweaked but all will be kept under review, and your councillors will be keeping in touch with the operator at the service beds in.

In addition to stops on the published timetable, historic stops will continue to be served - so if there's a bus flag, bus shelter or an unflagged stop place you have used in the past, please hail the bus as it approaches.

Several additional modern buses will be added to the fleet over the course of the next few weeks.

The A2B free phone number 0800 001 6255 should be back in order by June 3rd. Your councillors and the Cam Vale Bus User Group will be happy to forward any concerns directly to the operator. A2B have said that they welcome all feedback, as this gives them the best way of getting things right.

(Timetable PDF attached)

Correct disposal of batteries – avoiding fires

Lithium-ion batteries found in mobile phones, vapes, and power packs on electric bikes or scooters have all caused fires in the back of local bin lorries since January – disrupting collection rounds and putting crews and the public in danger. This has included recent fires that have broken out in the back of trucks in Great Shelford, near Rose Crescent in the centre of Cambridge and on the edge of Orchard Park / King's Hedges.

When batteries are put into a wheelie bin, they can go on to get crushed or damaged in bin lorries, which can cause explosions and trigger fires.

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste – a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils – is now reminding residents to ensure they dispose of batteries correctly.

- Vapes should be taken back to vape shops or to the large Household Recycling Centres, like those at Milton or Thriplow, for recycling.
- Larger batteries – such as e-bike batteries, those from a mobile phone, laptop batteries or those that are attached to a device – must also be taken to a Household Recycling Centre.
- Small household batteries can be put in a small plastic bag, tied shut and left on top of any of your wheelie bins (green, black, or blue) on collection day. Most small common household portable batteries can be placed in that plastic bag for collection at the kerbside, including AA and AAA, C and D and button cells. These used batteries are then recycled.
- Residents of flats with shared bins should not leave small household batteries on these but instead, can take them to one of the many public battery collection points at corner shop chains, supermarkets, chemists, and petrol stations as well as those at recycling points and Household Recycling Centres. Visit www.recyclenow.com to see all locations.

Good Life Fund, CPSL Mind

Information on this small community fund, part-funded by Cambs County Council, from CPSL Mind:

[Good Life Fund | CPSL Mind](#)

The Good Life Fund offers grants of up to £1500 to people in our local community to help set up groups that connect people, such as book clubs, craft classes, or activities that encourage people to learn new skills.

The fund was developed with stakeholders, including those with lived experience of mental health, and grants will be distributed to local people for activities that support the Five Ways to Wellbeing, which are: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give.

Small grants can be a catalyst for encouraging people to take the first steps to become engaged in their communities, inspiring them to develop their ideas for groups and activities.

You can apply to the Good Life Fund if:

- Your activity is promoting wellbeing
- There are at least four people involved
- Everyone involved is prepared to volunteer their time, energy and strengths
- The activity is open to all, we encourage equality and diversity to reflect your community!

We regret that grants are not available to charities or organisations, such as Community Interest Companies, to set up groups on behalf of others.

If you would like to learn more about the Good Life Fund you can [watch our information video here](#) or get in touch by emailing goodlifefund@cpslmind.org.uk or by calling us on [0300 303 4363](tel:03003034363).

Anglian Water meeting notes 18 March 2024

2PM at Meldreth Recreation Ground pumping station.

2:30-4:00 at Melbourn Hub meeting room: 30 High Street Melbourn

Attendees – Melbourn area

- Susan van de Ven County Councillor
- Jose Hales District Councillor
- Sally Ann Hart District Councillor
- Nick Garner Meldreth Parish Council
- John Travis Melbourn Parish Council
- Sarah Phillips South Cambridgeshire District Council Environmental Health
- Brian Heffernan Cambridgeshire County Council Flood team

Attendees – Anglian Water

- Gavin Elliott – Water Recycling Network Manager
- Luke Murphy – Water Recycling Asset Performance Manager
- Colin Rogers – Network Support Technician
- Scott Weston – Regional Trenchless Manager
- Emily Linsdell – Regional Engagement Executive (Apologies – car broke down)

AGENDA

1. Welcome

2. Meldreth foul water back-up in about one dozen households in concentrated area: short and long-term solutions to ongoing household foul water back-up resulting in unusable plumbing, and some foul water flooding, as per ongoing correspondence.

3. Meldreth: Water infiltration issue identified in 2022.

4. Melbourn issues – Foul water back-up in small number of household properties in concentrated area: Understand from AW recommendation to steam clean the fat build up along the length of the sewer duct. One of the operatives sent a camera along the pipe and confirmed the significant fat build up was exacerbating the problem caused by the inadequate diameter of sewer pipe.

5. Communication and public reporting

6. Actions and follow-up

7. AOB

Meeting Notes

Response to action points awaited from AW

Response from councillors

Response from SCDC

Response from CCC

How Meldreth Pumping Station works:

Whaddon station pumps to Meldreth Station via Whitecroft Rd/Marys Way junction manhole.

But, Whaddon pumping station doesn't talk to Meldreth. Telemetry.

Problems under rainfall conditions with infiltration into system. Combination of things happening. Whaddon has infiltration too. When two villages both have it, pumping into same system, something gives. **Need to look at Whaddon too. Action: when?** Please see the section 'out of incident mode' below

Meldreth system is dual assist, pumps support each other. Working as it's designed to.

Capacity study of Meldreth pumping station is done via desktop exercise. Dry capacity. Action: Can we have a physical hydraulic modelling exercise?

As the team explained, the capacity of Meldreth pumping station is modelled via a desktop survey, which uses dry weather flows as this is what the system is designed for, and we are regulated on. Since the meeting, we have spoken to our modelling team about the possibility of doing physical modelling. Our Senior Modeller confirmed that we do not build physical models and that doing so would not have any benefits over the desktop exercises that we use.

Measuring system performance:

Would it be a good idea to actually measure the performance of the system? Have good information about the system you own.

Model done previously – trying to work out average flow rate. If surface water flows go into AW system it's terrible. Is that the root cause?

Planning and development, role and influence of Anglian Water:

AW has no power to prevent or control development.

Anglian Water are not statutory consultees but tend to comment if 10 dwellings or more. If specific concerns they probe.

Nor is LFA (Local Flood Authority, ie County Council) a statutory consultee. Needs to be a major development of ten or more. But wouldn't preclude making a representation.

Planning system at SCDC – regardless if one or 1000 homes, would it be helpful for AW to get sight of planning applications?

AW does not get notified of extensions. Nothing on permitted development.

Damson Close Meldreth (new development off Whitecroft near Chiswick End): AW have asked, where is their surface water going? Waiting to hear.

Developers might stick surface into foul water.

What measures exist, or need to exist, to make sure developer puts in proper surface water measures, to prevent surface water entering foul water system? (See below SCDC response)

Incident Mode:

AW has been in 'incident mode' much of the time since September 2023, the first of a series of storms/major rainfall events.

Incident is triggered by number of jobs coming in, flooding.

When ground water high it comes back quickly.

AW don't have capacity to respond to all incidents as they would wish. For example, they have a limited number of tankers to pump out; worst incidents will take priority and others will not get that service. **Does AW have plans to increase response capacity?**

We are focussing on tackling the causes of sewerage issues, such as removing water from our network that shouldn't be there, so that we can make positive impacts in the long term rather than treating the symptoms reactively in the short term.

Regarding tankering, our resources are unfortunately not limitless and we have to continue to prioritise using tankers to ensure we meet our permit conditions regarding sludge treatment and to protect the environment where our assets are impacted by high groundwater levels.

Out of Incident Mode:

When we're out of incident mode, the planned activity is to prioritize different areas with different actions – camera, cleaning, etc.

For Meldreth, to better understand the cause of the drainage issues in the village, we plan to carry out investigations into the root causes. This will involve using a camera to review different parts of our network to understand if there are areas where surface water flows could be influencing the issues being experienced. We are currently in the process of planning these investigations and obtaining required resources. We are unable to give timescales, as this investigation work is also subject to levels in the network. Unfortunately flow through the network is still too great for camera work to be undertaken - we don't have visibility of the state of the pipe work, extra flows and infiltration when the sewer is completely full.

We are also committed to carrying our investigation work in Whaddon to explore infiltration issues.

How much water from road can get into manhole/sewage system? Quite a lot.

Ditches: do you have a programme of assistance for ditches, and if so, how do we access? Can different authorities work together? **AW: we are happy to feed into a multi-agency approach.**

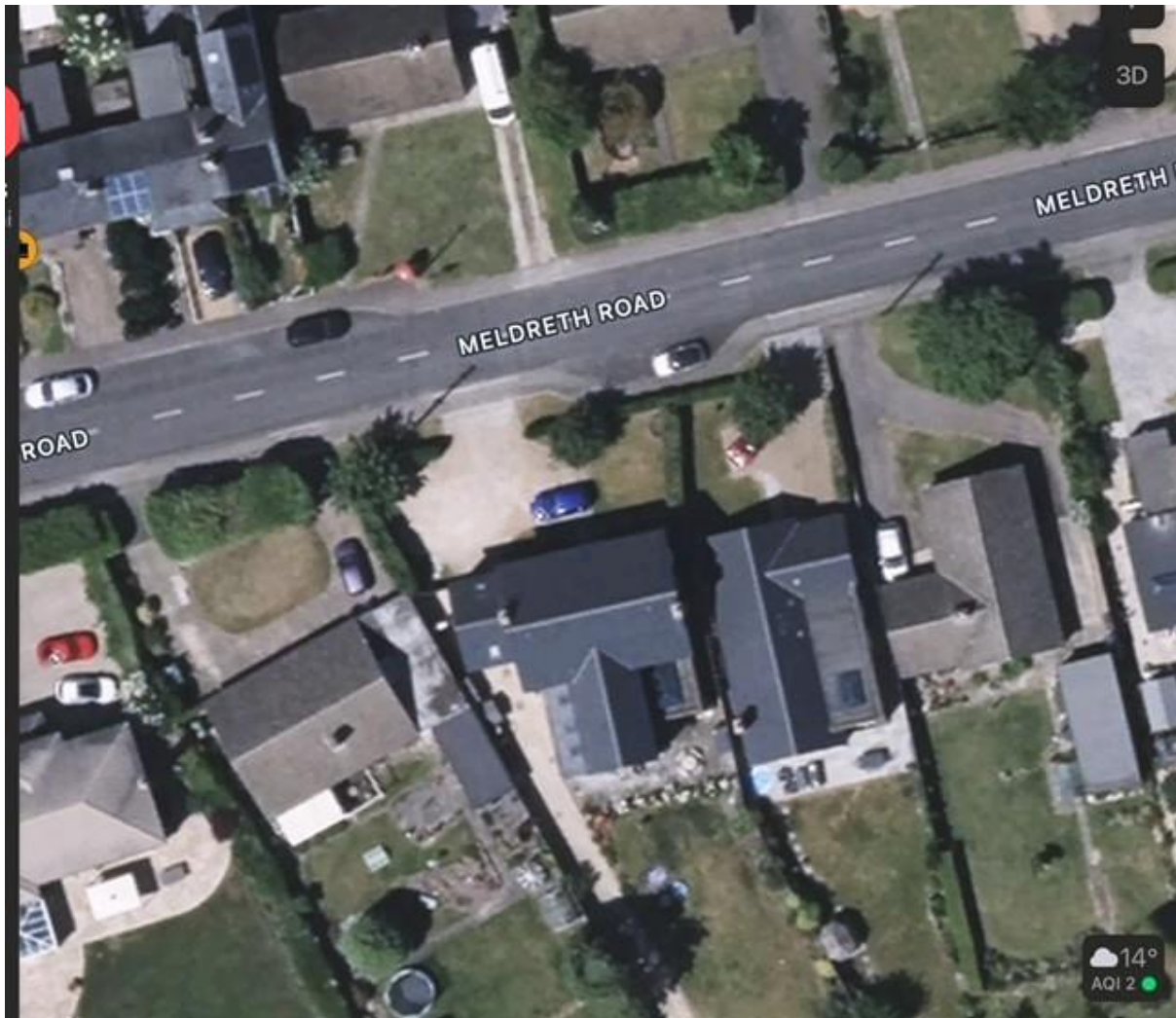
Understanding the local area ground water and springs:

Whaddon: Eternit used to extract water; closed down a few years ago so ground water level is higher, including springs.

Action: Get info from Whaddon Parish Council.

Response:

The rising spring is in Meldreth Road by the old Queen Adelaide site. It is right by the lay-by photo attached. The spring is in the garden with the blue car parked in it. The rising spring is feeding into the drain all the time.



Get clarification from EA when abstraction license expired.

Marys Way Meldreth manhole overflow: Could put forward an application to seal a manhole. That would only push the problem elsewhere. Big drainage ditch right nearby heading toward Whaddon. Effluent into water course: EA would say no. Discharge would be a problem.

Meldreth affected properties follow-up:

Returning Wednesday. Cleaning pipe, hopefully to complete. Need to see how it operates after cleaning completed. Spot check, camera checks. If it wasn't working as it should, problems would not be confined to heavy rainfall events.

Then because Whaddon pumps to Meldreth, AW will camera. When? - Please see section 'out of incident mode' above

Melbourn affected properties follow-up:

Logged report information to be shared by S van de Ven with AW. **Done – emailed to AW Public Affairs. Action: needs AW response.**

Finally, Gavin we alerted you to case work in Water Lane, Melbourn and you said reference numbers would be helpful:

19 March 2023: 23411378

Blockage cleared. Cause believed to be wipes and leaves. Left clear and free flowing. Customer happy.

11 June 2023: 23793829

Blockage cleared. Cause believed to be Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) and silt. Additional high pressure Jetter ordered to attend and clean pipe.

25 December 2023: 24855910

Blockage cleared. Cause believed to be FOG. Left clear and free flowing. Customer happy.

Communication

Vital to get faults logged on AW website or there is no record and response won't happen; prioritization affected.

Best way of asking for help? Most people try call centre. Longer wait. 1000s of calls. Try website. Called self-serve.

BUT: we tested the website during the meeting and it was not operating. Gavin to report this to AW.

If we know we have a problem with the online reporting system, to stop inconveniencing customers by only allowing them to only get so far with the system, we close it down while we sort out the problem and instead ask customers to ring our call centre. This was the case in the afternoon of the 18th March.

Reporting system is onerous. Make it simple.

ACTION: Use residents to test improved reporting system. (Response from AW – limited offer with of phone reporting only, which as stated above is not AW's recommended route. Can anything further be done, AW?)

We are looking into reporting procedures, but we would ask customers to continue to report issues online and over the phone. As explained above, if customers have experienced problems with reporting, this will be because we are fixing an issue with the online system.

We appreciated the feedback that Susan provided on the WhatsApp survey, and as a result we have removed the survey functionality as we appreciated that it is not always appropriate here.

Wider picture and similar problems elsewhere:

We're up against it with climate change and wet weather to this extent becoming the norm. Therefore need to think in new ways. Multi-agency approach needed.

Incumbent on all of us working collaboratively. New builds and how you retrofit solutions. Local attenuation ponds. Money needed.

Question: What is the state of the AW pipe system? Must be old, need better maintenance, and therefore be particularly susceptible to infiltration of ground water.

Anglian Water capital programme: Ten-year programme: various schemes. Five-year period with regulators.

Ground water problem as much as surface water. Planning, highways, sustainable drainage enforcement, riparian responsibilities carried out, surveys need to be real not desktop.

SCDC – sweeper teams getting called out for keeping drains clear of debris. Don't have the capacity to do as much as would be ideal. Five sweepers for 106 villages.

How can we bring agencies together to partner on solutions to deal with climate change? (What does AW see as practicable?)

We are very much aware that the threat of climate change is felt by the East of England region more than anywhere else in the UK. Almost a third of our region is below sea level and extreme weather is becoming more commonplace, with more frequent episodes of drought and flood. The final three months of 2023 alone saw more rainfall than for the whole of 2022, meaning it was the wettest year on record in the East of England. We've seen 10 named storms, and more than one and a half times the normal amount of rain in the last six months.

As you will know, flooding and drainage issues are complicated, with many different organisations having a range of roles and responsibilities. We look after the sewers and any flooding from manholes. The Environment Agency has responsibility for fluvial (main river) flooding and a strategic overview of all sources of flood risk. County Councils (or Unitary Authorities) have responsibility for groundwater, surface water, ordinary watercourses (anything not classed as a main river) and flooding from highways in their role as the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Highways Authority. The nature of the current challenges, and as part of their duties as flood risk management authorities, means all agencies need to work together to develop a plan for managing surface water and groundwater, and reducing the risk of issues like this in future.

Anglian Water is happy to be involved in future collaboration work between the different agencies.

Information, education and individual household action:

If every house had a water butt? Nice but enforceability is hard. Better would be physical infrastructure – balancing pond. But maintenance thereafter is a big problem.

More information and education needed.

Riparian ownership and responsibility – leaflet for local use circulated by CCC and distributed to all parish councils

Question to AW: If you had lots of money what would you do?

'Find out where all the extra water is coming from.'

Water scarcity group - now need foul water group.

Meldreth Village Flood Avoidance Committee. Annual tour of hotspots for all types of water issues. Annual meeting with AW. Always includes SCDC and CCC officers, parish council, SCDC and CCC Cllrs.

Collaborative work possible but needs action points responded to, or exercise is of no value.

Follow-up from SCDC:

- Building Control – we have requested informative regarding surface water discharges to be added to decision notices
- Planning – we will include the same informative on decision notices for householders etc.
- Anglian Water – GCSP will send weekly decision notices to AW
- County – HJ has forwarded email to Frank Jordan
- Intern Project – we will progress this with the UoC (aiming for 6 interns) in the summer
- Comms- GCSP to draft leaflet for Parish Councils to share with their residents (informative) with input from Lee Hillam

Follow-up from Cambs CC:

- It is understood that AW operate financially in pre-programmed spend regimes of Asset Management Plans (AMP's) and it would be good to know which version/incarnation they are currently working to and how any assets of theirs at your location (pumps, sewers etc.) feature with respect to the current AMP.
- In the event that no spending is programmed or ringfenced for the community, could they advise what assets of theirs might be likely to be considered for future AMP's and if there are any "in year opportunities" for unspent or underspent funding.
- Are there any plans to carry out surveys for ground water infiltration of their pipes and (foul) systems that would identify and eliminate superfluous/extraneous contributions to their foul systems?
- Similarly, are there any plans to cctv/survey the foul systems at Melbourn/Meldreth towards identifying mis-connections ([Water fittings regulations \(anglianwater.co.uk\)](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk)) towards educating the relevant customers and residents as well as reducing superfluous/extraneous contributions to their systems? It is appreciated there is a philosophy that one does not find problems until they are sought out by programmed/scheduled surveys, but if this could be considered it is yet another potential "marginal gain" in the battle against surface water flooding in respect of property flood alleviation!
- It is also understood that AW used to run an initiative where they would fund projects that could demonstrate a reduction in surface water contributions to their (foul) systems (e.g. construction of a pond or Natural Flood Management (NFM) initiatives, towards preventing access to AW's' systems. Are there any plans to revive this as previous applications were a bit unnecessarily bureaucratic and were future applications less so, they may invite more interest.