

Water Management Report

2020-2021

The areas of Girton most directly affected by flooding are those alongside Beck Brook and Washpit. There has been concern that construction at Eddington, and the A14 upgrade, may adversely affect both these watercourses, and this is being monitored. However, it is felt that the carefully managed water control systems at Eddington may have a positive effect on the flow through Washpit, and on into Beck Brook.

Professor Robin Irvine, whose home has been flooded several times, and I, have worked as a team of two in monitoring and reporting on water management issues. We have been joined by Harry Chalk from the Environment Agency. This collaboration is working extremely well, and we meet via zoom around four times a year.

There is a monitoring station on Washpit at the end of Dodford Lane which sends daily reports back to the Environment Agency. However at times of concern due to heavy rain, the Environment Agency can receive instant readings so as to more closely monitor the situation. This is backed up by visual checks by nearby residents.

The most worrying incident happened at Christmas 2020. On the evening of 23 December I was phoned by Harry Chalk who was aware of rising water levels, and a flood warning was issued at midnight that night. Water in Beck Brook was worryingly high. I did not visit Washpit due to safety concerns in the dark. Christmas Eve thankfully saw the water start to recede. Water did not enter any homes, though most gardens alongside the Beck, and probably alongside Washpit, were flooded.

Councillor Lynda Harford and I have looked carefully at the drainage ditches alongside the new NMU. These will continue to be monitored.

Cracks in the parapet of the Oakington road bridge are being closely monitored by the Environment Agency, and by individual residents. Further downstream on the Histon side, overgrown vegetation has been cleared, and the Beck appears to be running smooth and clear. Likewise vegetation has been cleared by the Golf Club from their side of the Beck.

Upstream, the Environment Agency requested removal of a bridge and some posts, which had been erected without permission, and this has been done.

Despite many attempts at clearing and improving drainage, Duck End continues to flood. Unless things have improved after the most recent attempt at clearance, I'd be grateful for nearby residents to monitor this and let me know the situation.

Finally I'd like to remind residents of their riparian responsibility, meaning that it is their responsibility to keep any watercourses bordering their properties clear of vegetation or other impediments.

Mary Rodger

April 2021