

April 2001 Notes

Public meeting at Theberton village hall to review state of the local waterways, and measures to be taken to improve control of flooding 'chaired' by Mr B Daymond.

The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everybody. then introduced the gentlemen from the Environmental Agency, the body with overall responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the waterways and coastal defences of the country.

Mr. Stan Jeavons, team leader, operations Norfolk and Suffolk, Mr Stuart Rabrook; day to day management sea defences. ' .

Mr Jeavons referred to maps he had brought to the meeting and placed on view on the floor [I still have originals DAR] he pointed out the areas of responsibility of the Environmental Agency, these waterways being marked in blue. "There are permissive powers, the right to go in and do the work" Mr Jeavons then pointed , out the waterways which were the responsibility of the I.D.B., these being marked in pink.

As background, the meeting was informed that four small IDBs were incorporated into the E.A., there was no cross subsidy.

All other water courses are common responsibility. The E.A. own no land; there were many restraints on the E.A. in carrying out the work and liaison is always in progress interested and responsible bodies such as English Nature, RSPB etc

Turning to the current proposals Mr Jeavons said that there were plans to carry out desilting works on the main cut in mid summer and on drain no 7 in late august /september.

All work is delayed by the present foot and mouth crisis.

Mr Dick Woods queried the areas coloured, both in respect of the blue and pink. stating that they did not include parts that the IDB had regularly attended to. The answer given was that the IDB may have covered this area by arrangement with the local land owner. There were further observations that the work should have been done as, before.

The meeting was told that the total monies available to the E.A. Norfolk/Suffolk for 2001/2002. was £900,000 to cover all the sea defences and the 500 miles of water ways of Norfolk/Suffolk. This money was raised by a precept on the respective county councils. In addition there was a higher land drainage rate paid direct to E.A. There were also grant aid sources for specific projects: 70% from M.A.F.F. and 30%. from councils .

The powers of the E.A. are under Act of Parliament -the Land Drainage Act, and the Water Resources Act.

In the event of flooding of houses, the E.A. takes additional responsibility. Mention was made that the sea level was rising at 5 m/m per year, or approximately 2" per decade . This exacerbates the frequent difficulties at ordinary high tides, and of course spring and autumn tides, the sluice being very frequently tide locked. Mention was made that matters were only made worse by lack of, or even, non- maintenance.

Mrs. Robb raised the point that a pump could be installed at the sluice, it seemed to be agreed that , on a ten year view, a pump may be appropriate. The E.A. mentioned that on a ten year view, there were already 20 or 30 projects on which a view was being taken. it was always a matter of money, or lack of it.

Chairmans intervention-that there were two issues, drainage locally and drainage up river.

Mr Jeavons made the point that development added to the pressure, the combination of factors ,sea level rises ,the very heavy rain of this season, and quicker drainage from upstream.

Further ref. to a pump.how much? Mr Jeavons "cost of a pump £500,000. cost of improvements to the sluice "250,000. " Ref. was made to the availability of European grants in ref. to coastal maintenance and habitats .

Mention was again made to grants from M.A.F.F. for what were described this time as "Capital works.". Chair mans intervention, asking about the benefits to accrue from the proposed work, answer, better flows better general control .

Qu .from the floor, as to which bank the work would be carried out on, observations made as to the desirability of laying the deposits on alternate banks successively to maintain a common level in holding the water back in respect of the main cut. There were difficulties as there was a footpath on the on bank Mr Javons said this was a frequent problem, and the authorities were always reluctant to allow even the most temporary closure and often refused. Work was not always done in the best way. The chairman thanked the visitors, suggested that a meeting should be held in some twelve months, to review progress. The meeting closed with expressions of thanks to the chairman .

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