

## **Sewage and Flooding in Cherington – Stakeholder Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> July

**Time:** 9:30-11 am

**Venue:** The Barn, Cherington, Stourton and Sutton under Brailes Village Hall, Stourton, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire, CV36 5HG, United Kingdom

**Chair:** Manuela Perteghella MP

**Minutes taken by:** Leticija Petrovic – Senior Caseworker for Manuela Perteghella MP

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### **1. Attendees**

Manuela Perteghella MP (Chair), Barbara Babbage (Resident), James Webb (STW Catchment Manager), Louise Creswell (STW Strategic Lead), Iain Cameron (Parish Cllr – Cherington), Mike McCarthy (Shipston Flood Action Group), Catherine Berry (STW Catchment Lead), Mark Banning (WCC Flood Risk Management), Luke McCusker (STW Water Quality), Jo Barker (WCC Cllr Shipston), local residents

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### **2. Welcome and Meeting Purpose**

Manuela Perteghella MP opened the meeting, noting this was a follow-up to the **14 March 2025** stakeholder session. The aim remained to secure measurable progress on flooding and sewage issues, ensure agencies were accountable, and maintain an open channel between residents, local councils, Severn Trent Water (STW) and Warwickshire County Council (WCC).

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### **3. Updates from Agencies**

#### **1. Opening Remarks**

**Manuela Perteghella MP (Chair)** – Welcomed attendees and thanked them for their continued engagement. Reminded the group that the March 2025 meeting had resulted in a clear set of actions and today's aim was to check progress, address new concerns, and make sure agencies were delivering on commitments.

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#### **2. Severn Trent Water (STW) Operational Update**

**James Webb (STW Catchment Manager)** –

- Confirmed the shaft tank opposite the mill has been fully stripped, cleaned, and restored to optimal working condition.
- Described CCTV surveys carried out on the network; identified significant blockages caused by root ingress, fats, oils, grease, and wipes.
- Said crews are using high-pressure jetting and installing epoxy resin sleeves to prevent root re-growth and further infiltration.
- Work programme: 22 separate jobs scheduled for completion by January next year; clearance for Upper and Lower Cherington expected within one month.

- Once clearances are complete, hydraulic modelling will be undertaken to determine actual network capacity and identify where additional investment is needed.
- Confirmed new storm tanks at the treatment works have increased throughput capacity from 8 to 14 litres/sec; however, these have not yet been tested under heavy storm conditions due to the dry summer.

**Barbara Babbage (Parish Cllr)** – Asked for a clear, transparent long-term plan rather than piecemeal works. Queried whether upgrades will consider projected housing growth in the South Warwickshire Local Plan.

**Louise Creswell (STW Strategic Lead)** – Explained STW’s risk-based prioritisation process: combines frequency of incidents, consequence for customers and environment, and vulnerability factors. Cherington’s updated modelling results will feed into the next investment planning cycle.

**Dave Passingham (District Cllr, Shipston South)** – Raised concerns about the Stretton reed beds and the capacity of storage tanks there, particularly during extreme rainfall events.

**James Webb (STW)** – Agreed to check with the Wastewater Recycling team regarding reed bed maintenance schedules and report back.

**Iain Cameron (Parish Cllr)** – Emphasised the need for proactive capacity planning now, not post-development, warning that the Local Plan’s 2050 housing targets could overwhelm current infrastructure.

### 3. Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Update

**Mark Banning (WCC Flood Risk Management)** –

- Flood barriers: some timber models are necessary due to listed building requirements; WCC is providing training for residents and relatives to operate them, and exploring bracket modifications to improve ease of use.
- Ditch and gully maintenance: relies heavily on public reporting; enforcement powers exist for landowners who fail to maintain watercourses.
- Flood strategy refresh: overdue; a public consultation will be launched to gather input.
- Funding for major capital works in Cherington is currently limited, as the area has previously received Property Flood Resilience (PFR) funding.

### 4. Additional Concerns and Reports from Residents

**Martin McCarthy (Shipston Flood Action Group)** – Warned that severe storm events are likely this winter. Urged agencies to prepare contingency measures, including pre-positioning tankers, sandbag distribution, and closer coordination with community flood wardens.

**Luke McCusker (STW Water Quality)** – Reported on STW’s collaboration with residents carrying out citizen science water sampling. Said STW is working with the Environment Agency to agree on a data-sharing protocol so results can inform operational planning.

**Residents questions** –

- Reported incidents of untreated sewage flowing into fields.
- Queried why Event Duration Monitors (EDMs) were not providing accessible data for Witchford and Ascot locations.
- Asked about separating wastewater and surface water systems to reduce load on the network during storms.

**James Webb (STW)** – Will check EDM availability for Whichford and Ascot and report back. Said surface water separation would require major capital works but could be considered as part of long-term strategy if justified by modelling.

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## 5. Progress on Actions from March 2025

- **Summary works report** published on STW website (July 2025) with River Stour EA data.
- **Historical spill data** made available via STW's online storm overflow map.
- **New inlet pipe query**: technical schematic awaited.
- **Upper Brailes hydraulic proposal**: awaiting confirmation from Developer Services.
- **Shaft tank monitoring**: cleanse planned August; no full storm test yet.
- **Highway drainage**: charges clarified; no exact volume data.

**Schedule 3 lobbying**: raised in Parliament; DEFRA **confirmed** commitment to SuDS see response below:

***“To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure that local water companies promptly implement new requirements following the enactment of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.”***

Response received from Emma Hardy, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Water and Flooding since July 2024

This Government is strongly committed to requiring standardised Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments. These should be to designs that cope with changing climatic conditions as well as delivering wider water infrastructure benefits, offer reuse opportunities, reduce run off and help to improve water quality, amenity, and biodiversity. It is also important to ensure appropriate adoption and maintenance arrangements are in place.

- **Floodgate usability review**: underway; adaptations in progress.
  - **Upstream water retention with farmers**: discussions ongoing with RFCC.
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## 6. Updated Rolling Tracker

No.	Action	Lead	Previous Status (Mar 2025)	Update (Aug 2025)	Timescale
1	Publish Cherington works summary & EA River Stour data	STW	Planned	Completed – July 2025	–
2	Provide historical sewage spill data	STW	Requested	Available via online map	Ongoing
3	Confirm new inlet pipe locations & permits	STW	Outstanding	Awaiting site schematic	Next meeting
4	Follow up Upper Brailes hydraulic proposal	STW / Developer Services	Planned	Awaiting confirmation	Next meeting
5	Monitor shaft tank performance during storms	STW	Planned	Not tested due to dry weather; cleanse Aug 2025	Ongoing
6	Lobby for Schedule 3 & removal of auto-connect	MP	Planned	Raised in Parliament	Awaiting govt timetable
7	Review timber floodgate usability	WCC	Planned	Training & adaptations in progress	Ongoing
8	Support upstream water retention with farmers	WCC/EA/MP	New	Discussions with RFCC; local inclusion needed	Ongoing
9	Include citizen science water quality in tracking	STW/EA/Residents	New	In progress with local testers	Ongoing
10	Provide tank capacity & storm resilience data	STW	Requested	Pending storm test	After winter
11	Assess timeline for treatment works upgrade	STW	New	Estimation pending	After modelling

12	Improve inter-agency coordination	All	Ongoing	Reinforced in meeting	Continuous
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## 7. Next Steps

- Follow-up meeting in **six months** post-winter to review:
  - Shaft tank performance
  - Modelling outcomes
  - Investment risk profile
- Circulation of these minutes via Parish Council and MP website.