

FACE

Fleet and Crookham
Environment **is Threatened**



January 2014.

HART VALLEY UNSUITABLE FOR FURTHER HOUSING AS FLOODING STRIKES AGAIN

Nature vividly demonstrated the course of the Hart River over the weekend of the 4th Jan 2013 as we saw some of the heaviest rainfall in recent years. Man-made drainage systems failed the test and the ditches, streams, and rivers that have naturally drained this area for centuries took over their role as the low-lying land of the River Hart Valley again showed its unsuitability for further housing development.

At Hitches Lane to the West of Fleet the drainage system could not cope and water running through the low-lying land came out of drains and flooded the road although drivers continued to brave the flood with dramatic results.



IMG001
Hitches Lane



IMG002
Hitches Lane

Further along the valley at Dogmersfield, the River Hart flooded houses and gardens and the roads became impassable due to flood waters.

Press Release



IMG003
Gardens flooded at
Dogmersfield



IMG004
Gardens flooded at
Dogmersfield



IMG005
Road impassable at Pilcot
Road, Dogmersfield

Slightly upstream at Crookham Village the river broke its banks and low-lying fields were flooded. There was run-off across Crondall Road and in Stroud Lane with the road having to be closed for some time.



IMG006
River Hart bursts its banks
at Crookham Village



IMG007
Flowing water in Stroud
Lane, Crookham Village

Further upstream the natural water meadows of the River Hart near the Basingstoke Canal and at Zephon Common Lane showed their true nature. Here the river again broke its banks and created a massive flood plain on the fields almost reaching nearby homes. Three households were cut off by the flood until late evening on Saturday. Had this water not been held here by this flood it would have been even more serious downstream in Crookham Village, Dogmersfield and Hitches Lane.



IMG008
Poulters Lane Water
Meadows



IMG009
Fields at Zephon Common
Lane



IMG010
Course of River Hart at
Zephon Common Lane

Further along the valley the stream and ditches around the aptly-named Watery lane filled up and over-flowed further soaking the land at Albany Farm.



IMG011
River Hart bursts its banks
at Watery Lane



IMG012
Waterlogged land at Watery
Lane

This land holds water during the winter that will be slowly released providing the gentle trickle of water into streams and rivers that sustains life in the dry summer months.

Martin Grant is proposing to build on this land and provide an urban drainage scheme based on 'balancing ponds' to absorb the water that the land would normally do.

On the Zebon Copse Estate, the man-made drainage systems failed to cope with the run-off from roads and housing, with 'balancing ponds' overflowing and flooding the roads and gardens of the estate. The adjacent roundabout on Redfields Lane next to Redfields Garden Centre was also dangerously awash. This overflow also passed run-off water into the Hart Valley contributing to the flooding downstream.



IMG013
Zebon Copse Balancing Pond
overflows to roads
Church Crookham



IMG014
Roundabout awash at
Redfields Lane
Church Crookham

Back in 2007 there was similar major flooding in the estate as the balancing pond overflowed. The 2007 flooding was supposedly due to be 'once in 500 year rainfall' but here we are seven years later with the same or worse problems.

A FACE IT spokesperson said "The weather over the last month has demonstrated why the Hart River runs in a valley and the area has a high water table. Water meadows and low-lying land act as natural water storage in the peaks of the season and naturally release it over time into the streams and rivers. These events show the unsuitability of this land for further large-scale development and the inadequacy of the provision in existing developments for the peak events which occur with apparently increasing frequency and severity."

FACEIT is the local campaign group for the Fleet and Crookham areas of Hart with an increasing membership and profile. The group has been actively engaged in the planning process and has encouraged Hart to review and improve local plans for the benefit of the community and the environment.

Ends

Pictures courtesy of FACE IT members.

For further information see www.faceit-group.org or contact publicity@faceit-group.org or action@faceit-group.org