

A message from the Chairman, Jeff Fear

Alongside our annual maintenance programme, this year the Board has carried out de-silting of 12,250 metres of watercourses in the lower catchment by the traditional method. In the upper catchment, we have used the Conver silt pump in Queen Sedgemoor, North Wootton, Westhay and Catcott areas stretching over 5,600 metres. In the Axe catchment five structures are either being repaired or replaced stretching from the Broadmoor Sluice to the Landcourse Rhyne, some of which are part of the Health and Safety work.

Flood prevention work has been undertaken at Lympsham and will continue in West Huntspill in the autumn. The latter work at the request of Sedgemoor DC. Investigation work continues at East Brent, Bason Bridge, Westhay and Barton St David. The Board has worked with two parish councils namely Brent Knoll and Butleigh and in conjunction with funding from the 'Hills and Levels' project we have been able to improve access for rhyne maintenance in previously very difficult areas. Negotiations are underway with Natural England and Somerset Wildlife Trust regarding the operation of the water level management plan for SSSIs in the South Drain and North Drain catchments.

Our involvement with the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) continues with four Drainage Board members sitting on the SRA Board. Hopefully more work will be undertaken in the Axe Brue catchment; de-silting has taken place on the Hixham Rhyne and Cripps River. The Board will be undertaking work on behalf of the SRA and also the Environment Agency with whom we will using public sector cooperation agreements which are now in place.

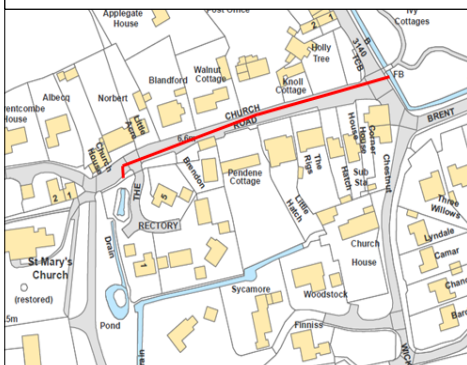
Simon Bunn has replaced Andy Sherwood as the Boards' Development Control Officer with Sariquia Purchase providing support and assistance. Drainage engineer Rob Kidson has joined the team, funded by the SRA. We also have two Trainee Technicians, Jack Roberts and George Hellier who will undertake all aspects of training to ensure we have skilled staff in the future.



Safety work to structures

Every year the Board invests funds in keeping its large stock of water level control structures in proper working order and safe for any member of staff or Board member to operate. This requires a continuing programme of inspections and works. The Board have obtained grant aid funding to assist with this work from the Defra/Environment Agency capital budgets.

All IDB structures have been inspected, risk assessed and assigned a priority. Work has commenced on the highest priority projects. Sites require improved safety railings, fencing or raising of an operating hand-wheel, others require significant reconstruction or replacement of old stop-logs with new tilting weirs and penstocks.



Church Road culvert

Church Road, East Brent is at risk of flooding due to the poor condition of an existing culvert in the road and the lack of access to be able to maintain or improve it. The Board are investigating the construction of an additional culvert running in parallel to the existing to increase capacity and reduce flood risk to local residents, therefore a new culvert is being designed. With this additional culvert the Board will be making changes to the debris screening arrangements at the entrance to the culverts. This is intended to prevent debris rapidly building up on the existing screen in stormy conditions causing blockages and forcing the water to over flow from the pond into the Old Rectory area.

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Change of land ownership

The Board would like to take the opportunity to remind rate payers that when there is a change in land ownership, the Board must be informed of the changes. This allows the Board to keep its information up to date and provide accurate drainage rates.



Culvert Inspections

The Board is being funded by the Somerset Rivers Authority to carry out an inspection of all minor culverts under public highways in the Axe Brue and Parrett area where they form part of the local drainage network. This work will establish whether they require repair or replacement, and how urgently is work is required. The inspector is working with the Board Expenditors and contractors to locate and uncover the culverts some of which have not been visible for many years. This information is being collected to provide evidence for the engineers to understand the extent of the work required and ensure both the drainage system and the road network can operate effectively without sudden failures or blockages.



Enquiries

For general enquiries please call:
01278 789906
(09.00hrs – 17.00hrs Mon-Fri)
Out of hours: 07887 687746
Email: admin@somersetdbos.co.uk
www.somersetdrainageboards.gov.uk

For enquiries please contact:

Clerk/Legal: Nick Stevens
Engineering: Iain Sturdy
Finance: Stephen Gee
Rate Collection: Carrie-Anne Porter
Kendra Kingston
Environment: Phil Brewin

**Flooding incidents out of hours
should be reported to the
Environment Agency on:
0800 807060**

37 Angling Club Tilting Weir

Increasing development and run off from Woolavington prompted the Board to re-examine the drainage network between Woolavington and the Huntspill River.



When a proposal came forward from the 37 Angling Club to upgrade their ponds on Woolavington Level, the Board took the opportunity to work with the Club to bring in drainage improvements and improved control of water levels. The Club undertook earth and channel works around the ponds whilst the Board installed a new tilting weir to manage levels on the Stoning Pound Rhyne for the benefit of the fishery and the upstream land. The Board agreed a budget of £12,000 and the scheme has been delivered at a total cost of approximately £10,000. The main contractor was Ken Marsh Plant Hire & Groundworks. Tilting weir provided by HC Water control.

Meetings Calendar 2017/18

Dates of the Full Board meetings are:

13 June 2017 10.30am

17 October 2017 10.30am

30 January 2018 10.30am

Venue: Bradbury House, Highbridge

For the complete meetings calendar visit:
www.somersetdrainageboards.gov.uk

Telemetry

Information from water level monitoring stations can be accessed from the Consortium website:
www.somersetdrainageboards.gov.uk/operations/telemetry
Username: SDBC
Password: SDBC

Prosecution

It is an offence, punishable by a fine of up to £5,000, if any person without the consent of the Axe Brue Internal Drainage Board, interferes with any sluice, or other water control or structure or appliance for controlling or regulating the flow of water in, into or out of a watercourse (Section 66(6) Land Drainage Act 1991).

Neither the Axe Brue nor Parrett IDB's will tolerate tampering with Board sluices or structures.

Direct Debits



From 1st April 2017 your drainage rates may be paid by Direct Debit. A mandate is included with this newsletter, please complete it and send it back in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Income

The Board has resolved to set the rate for the current financial year:

Axe Brue Drainage Board: 6.740p in the £

Annual Channel Works

The Board will maintain approx. 610,000m (380miles) of watercourse as part of the annual works programme

Membership

(all elected members are unpaid volunteers)

| District | Member |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Berrow & Brean | W Welland |
| Brent Knoll/East | E Champion |
| Brent | C Durston |
| | D Tratt |
| Lymsham | C Pople |
| Burtle & Poldens | P Thorne |
| | J Lukins |
| Cheddar & Axbridge | B Stitch |
| | R Clapp |
| Glastonbury | P Judah |
| | M Watts |
| | N Lukins |
| Huntspill | M E Wall |
| | D Watts |
| | J Fear |
| Mark | R Willcox |
| | R Adlam |
| Meare to Street | A Franks |
| | A Neale |
| | R Whitcombe |
| | M Boley |
| North of Axe | C Ainge |
| Wedmore | T Tincknell |
| | E Badman |
| | J Frost |
| Wookey | M Smith |

Vacancy: Highbridge & Burnham and Wookey

Appointed Members

D Banwell, H Case, A Chidgey,
Cllr L Corke, Cllr P Costello, Cllr J Denbee,
Cllr A Gilling, Cllr P Ham, Cllr A Hamlin,
J Healey, Cllr D Hill, P Holms, S Hughes,
Cllr W Human, Cllr R Keen, Cllr T Killen,
Cllr R McKenzie, Cllr G Noel, Cllr J Parham,
D Poole, Cllr J Savage, Cllr E Scott, R Shaw,
Cllr J Woodman and T Youngs.



De-Silting Works

Over 12 Km of conventional winter de-silting works have been undertaken at Lymsham (5500m) on sections of Wrentmoor, Groves, Dulhorn & Lymsham Rhynes and at Mark (6770m) on the Southwick, Old Southwick, Northwick, Cripps & Bawdens Rhynes.

De-silting using a Conver Silt Pump has also been undertaken in Queen's Sedgemoor & Burtle.

This type of work is essential to maintain the viewed rhyne system in good order to help reduce flooding and improve conveyance across the Board's area.