

SPECIAL REPORT ON SEA SURGE AT BOSHAM

10TH MARCH 2008

Introduction

The events on Monday 10th March were unprecedented during my 5 year tenure as Parish Council Water Bailiff. I have therefore decided to catalogue the day in chronological order from my perspective and have incorporated the observations/actions from Local Flood Plan Observers and helpers who were present on the day.

These were Eric Hinkley (EH), John Hinton (JH), Peter Newman (PN) and Peter Stern (PS). Tim Martell (TM) also features.

Date/Time	Observations/Actions
7 th /8 th /9 th March	Weather forecast warnings for low pressure system to cross southern country on 10 th March. Strong southerly winds coupled with record high spring tides expected at 1313 on 10th.
9 th March	Stumps End grille cleared by JH in preparation
1243	PS measured the sea level at the south end of Bosham Sailing Club from the lower edge of a windowsill on the building: guestimated sea level 5.3 m tide gauge (2.7 m Ordnance Datum) EH marked sea level at HT on "hump" on Shore Road/Stumps Lane for future level measurement.
10 th March	
0100	EH marked sea level at HT on "hump" on Shore Road/Stumps Lane for future level measurement
0714	EA issue Flood Warning for Chichester Harbour to Selsey Bill section.
0730	Alan Moulton shuts Leat sluice.
1100	Flood Warning noted on EA website
1139	I issue storm warning to recipients on Local Flood Plan via email and stress that the risk is sea flooding rather than fluvial. Observers (EH, JH & PN) have already been organised by PP in his absence.
1142	I phone EA Floodline for information but am told no danger of flooding (at my postcode/home address it transpires!!)
1240	Arrive at Stumps End grille with EH PN positioned at The High Street/Quay area. PS visiting area.
1242	Concerned at the rising sea water levels at Stumps End grille sea wall I phone EA Ops Team on mobile. All resources are occupied at Selsey incidents.
1245 approx	PN reports tide level reaching Rev Inman's doorstep and water has entered electrical manhole and short-circuited causing arcing/explosion. Fire Service called. (Photo A1)
1250	I visit Trippett pipe/Harbour Way. Overtopping into Central Stream and sea water enters Meadow House garden and Mary Day garden.

Date/Time	Observations/Actions
1255	Sea water vents out of TOP of Stumps End grille chamber due to outer flap leaking seal. (Photo A2) Sea over-topping protective bank on Shore Road (Gosport side). Sea then flowing across field garden and down access track into Stumps Lane and therefore “bypassing” sea wall and hump. (Photo A3)
1300	Overtopping occurs opposite Stumps End grille and water flows around Shore Road hump and rushes to Stumps Lane. Tide level overtops Shore Road hump for about 10 mins. Attempt to ensure outer flap is fully down and closed. Turning mechanism underwater!! (Photo A4)
1310	<p>I return to Harbour Way and witness approx 1ft water in Meadow House garden and rising. I contact Fire Service to report imminent flooding of property. I visit the property and meet neighbour, no occupants so cancel Fire Service call. (They subsequently attend!). (Photo A5)</p> <p>PS tries to revisit Sailing Club position of 9th March. (Photo A6) This point is inaccessible, so measured sea level near the SW corner of the building from the top of the post on the wall supporting the flood barrier: guesstimated sea level 5.8m tide (3.3m OD). Water in Bosham Lane covered entrance to Bosham Walk, extending 10 -15 m further north. Very strong wind and pouring rain and hail. (Photo A7)</p>
1315	Stumps Lane now flooded and has extended to junction with Taylors Lane. (Photo A8) EH marked sea level at HT on “hump” on Shore Road/Stumps Lane for future level measurement (estimated level 3.3 OD)
1330	Whilst at Meadow House garden I am asked by Mr Pollock to advise on his generator organisation in the event of power cut.
1350	Meet with PN at Stumps Lane to obtain update. Stumps Lane flood now dispersed into holding area.
1400	Return home

Date/Time	Observations/Actions
10 th March (contd)	
1410	I telephone and brief Patsy West (Parish Council Chairman) on situation.
1420	I telephone Quaymaster to enquire about possible power cut but power OK. He is bailing out his office. Sailing Club and Anchor Bleu flooded.
1505	Report the flooding to EA Floodline for their records. Difficulty is that they required every postcode for affected properties!!! The system can't cope with someone reporting third party flooding only personal property flooding it seems.
1605	Contact Loafers. They have had flooded utility room and pond is full. Pump RCD failed but as the Leat was closed by Alan Moulton earlier in the day I am concerned where extra water has come from. (PN visits on 11 th to discuss with them).
1730	JH cleared Stumps End grille and reports that all the inner flaps worked well.
1800	Meet with EH to inspect Stumps End outer flap. Mechanism works but the seal looks inadequate. Meet with TM who has offered to inspect grille at next high tide (0200!!). Very grateful for his offer.
2013	Email brief report with pictures to Chichester EA team.
2130	TM visits Stumps End grille and all OK.

Date/Time	Observations/Actions
11 th March	(Another high tide forecast at 1345)
0130	TM revisits Stumps End grille. Also clear. Tide level approx 6" below top of wooden structure around high level discharge pipe but outer lower level sluice flap had not sealed as water level on inside was approx 18" below top of brick wall. Wind westerly force 5ish and tide peaked just over the 5m mark according to www.cambermet.co.uk .
0930	EH visits Stumps End grille and clears weed from outer flap mechanism.
0940	I report the leaking outer flap to EA Operations team. A sluice keeper is to be sent.
0950	I contact EH to update.
1100	Meet Nick the sluice keeper at the outer flap (by chance). He inspects the flap and agrees that the seal is not tight and identifies a dropped hinge as the probable cause. He will report it and recommend a new outer flap!!
1320 - 1400	PS monitored water level at same site at Sailing Club windowsill as on Sunday 9th. Peak water level at 1355 hrs, guesstimated 5.4 tide gauge
1340	EH, JH and I meet at Stumps End for possible rerun. PN in place at Quay/High Street.
1400	High tide much lower than yesterday with no danger of overtopping.
1415	EH, JH and I inspect the area that caused the flood bypass and down into Stumps Lane. The existing protective bank at the site needs to be extended into the property to ensure water does not escape into garden and down driveway it seems. EA need to be informed.
1430	Returned home
1430	PN visits Loafers. The RCD on pump trips and won't reset, though it did set for long enough yesterday to drain the house. The very heavy rainfall around 1300 hrs on 10th caused temporary flooding of the road at the Bosham Lane/ Sunny Way intersection. This surface water creates a head that stalls the flow in the Leat past Loafers, in a pipe very close to the house, which leaks water into their mezzanine cellar. This has happened on a number of occasions in the past. The highways drainage outlet in Bosham Lane, though recently cleared, was probably blocked with leaves. (PS)
1756	EA issue another Flood Warning for Chichester Harbour to Selsey Bill.



David West
 Bosham Parish Council Water Bailiff
 12th March 2008

END OF SPECIAL REPORT

APPENDIX



A1



A2



A3



A4



A5



A6



A7



A8

(Photos courtesy of Messrs Hinckley, Newman and West)