

Mrs Julie Buttle
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Your ref:
Our ref: CCKI/PD/57366
Date: 12 February 2021

Dear Mrs Buttle

Flooding on Moss Lane Catforth

Thank you for your letter dated 27 January 2021, on behalf of Woodplumpton Parish Council, regarding the flooding situation in Catforth.

You made a number of points and I will address each one in turn:

Generally the topography of Catforth is significantly flat. The surface water will drain eventually to a main river via a system of land drains, watercourses and culverts along flow paths following the contours of the land. During the process, any excessive rainfall will collect in the lowest areas thus causing the farm land and highways to flood. These areas are shown on the flood risk plans which are based on the topography and any recorded flooding.

There will always be a problem in those low lying areas that are not connected to a formal drainage system or watercourse system with an outfall. In those cases, the only way the water will drain is to percolate into the ground. This will be made worse if the ground is already saturated.

There are also watercourses and culverts forming part of a network where there is evidence of heavy silting and/or blockages where the county council could consider taking enforcement action. This action would only be taken as a last resort and only pursued if it meets our criteria. These issues should be reported online using our ['Report it'](#) facility or by telephone on: 0300 123 6780.

When our new highway defect reporting system was set up, it was designed to simplify and speed up the process of reporting highway gully problems as a priority. We are currently in the process of upgrading it to simplify and speed up the process of reporting other drainage problems for investigation.

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I recommend that anyone wishing to give a descriptive report of a drainage problem should contact our Customer Access Team directly by telephone on: 0300 123 6780 during working hours. Alternatively, residents may prefer to send details to us via email at any time at: highways@lancashire.gov.uk.

We are unable to supply a named officer to speak with every resident whose raises flooding concerns. However, residents have a right to a response for any reports logged on our system and we can only apologise if a response has not been given.

The agendas and minutes of the Making Space for Water meeting have never been published or circulated to bodies outside the relevant risk management authorities. These meetings are not open public meetings and elected members and politicians are not invited or encouraged to attend. Although an exact date has not yet been set, the next Preston Making Space for Water meeting will be in March 2021.

Lancashire County Council (LCC), as lead local flood authority (LLFA), is a statutory consultee for all major planning applications. Therefore, Preston City Council automatically asks us for comments on planning applications. All applications are carefully considered and checked to ensure that the proposed drainage strategy meets all the sustainable drainage criteria. Where new developments back onto existing properties, we ask for detailed information on proposed land levels. Developers are actively encouraged to keep any change in levels to an absolute minimum.

Unfortunately, we cannot answer questions about problems with the United Utilities sewer networks, so any issues should be directed to them.

I note the comments made about the non-return valves on the outfalls off Rapley Lane. We will check the operation of these valves and arrange for any repairs if they are not working correctly. During heavy rainfall when the non-return valves are working, the highway surface water will accumulate in the highway because the system is full and there is nowhere for that water to go to.

The hydro brake structures which restrict the run-off from Broughton Bypass are robust structures requiring minimal maintenance. Therefore, we would expect that any discharge which flows to New Lane Brook is working as intended. We are not aware of a maintenance regime which checks the hydro brakes and other elements of the sustainable drainage on Broughton Bypass, however, we will make further enquiries to clarify the situation.

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Flooding to gardens and open spaces can be reported via the online system or via the Contact Centre on 0300 123 6780. Each report will be carefully considered, but Flood Risk Management will only investigate where the issue meets the investigation criteria.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Iddon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

County Councillor Keith Iddon
Deputy Leader of Lancashire County Council
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport