

Upton Bishop Parish Council (UBPC)

Drainage, Ditch and Grit Bin Survey with Balfour Beatty (BB)

15th February 2021

Introduction - Grit Bins

On Friday 15th January, Balfour Beatty representatives Paul Hunter and Neil James met with members of the Upton Bishop Parish Council, Keith Cornwall, Alison Feist, Mike Robins and Brian Spencer. The purpose of the visit was to:

- a) Highlight to BB the lack of maintenance that has been carried out around just a section of the Parish (as an example of our problems) that has contributed to flooding during recent heavy rainfall. This flooding has been made worse due to water not being able to enter ditches and gullies because of the lack of grips and the lack of cleaning and jetting of gullies.
- b) Review the condition of the drains and gullies through Upton Crews, around Crow Hill, at Tanhouse and Phocle Green. Interestingly, only two days prior to the meeting, BB sent a jetting vehicle to attend to some of the issues on the Upton Crews section of road known as Church Road ahead of our walkaround. Despite this many of the gullies were still full and unserviceable on the day.
- c) Discuss the problems encountered at Powell Croft sewage treatment works over Christmas – Paul Hunter originally stated this was nothing to do with him (this was a fair comment as he is part of the Highways Team), but we discussed it on the day, and this clearly is a huge issue that a part of BB is responsible for although it is unclear who.
- d) Review the state of grit bins in light of the 'audit' carried out by BB in 2019**
See Appendix

Summary

3-Monthly Inspections

All of the work we asked BB to look at should, we understand, be routinely reviewed by the Locality Steward on his 3-monthly inspection of the Parish. It is unclear what the Job Description of the Locality Steward entails. Clearly, if he is carrying out a 3-monthly inspection as he tells us, it would seem appropriate that he check the gullies, ditches and salt bins as, after the roads themselves, these are the key assets paid for and owned by HC. None of these assets appear to be on the 3-monthly inspection. Further, any obvious potholes and roadside degradation due to water erosion should be reported but it has become the norm now to simply wait until these are reported by members of the public or the PC. It does rather feel as though we are doing his job for him. There are several examples of severe roadside erosion on B roads that presumably will stay there until we report them.

It is clear from the Locality Steward's report that he is very busy, we are just not sure he is busy doing the job he is paid for by the Parishioners.

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Appendix

At the meeting on 15th January, Paul Hunter had his attention drawn to the appalling state of some of the grit bins. He commented that the blue bins were not intended for village use and agreed that a review should take place.

Subsequently a survey of all the Parish bins was undertaken by the PC to see how this compared to the BB Audit carried out only 18 months earlier in 2019.

The BB Audit comprises of a map showing each of the bin locations. It was stated that all of the bins were in good condition. This is not an audit. A copy of the audit has been requested under FOI.

The PC have produced a photographic record with every bin identified on the BB maps with a reference number. These have been posted on the Parish Website as a public record. It shows 54 grit bins of which only 14 are in good condition, 21 are missing and 19 are inappropriate or unserviceable, several smashed beyond recognition.

We trust that BB will honour their commitment to replace the 40 bins that they previously claimed were in good condition.

A copy of the PC audit is available on our website. The map is shown below.

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