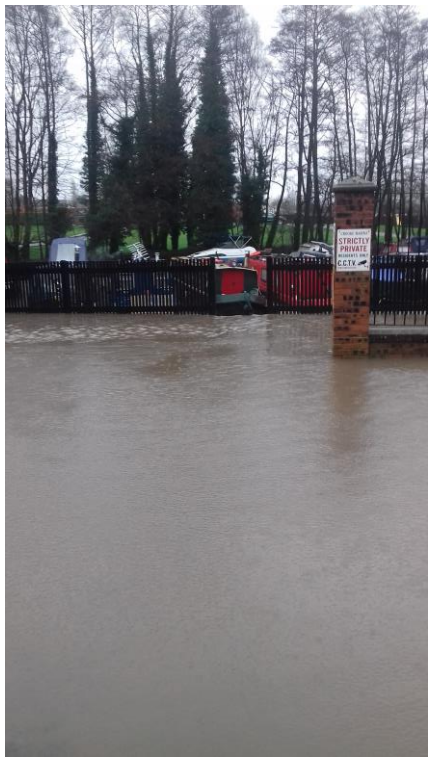
406 – Crooke Village Flooding Issues – 24 February 2021

Some areas of Crooke Village have a history of experiencing flooding during and after heavy rainfall. There are several water courses which meet or run alongside each other close to the entrance of the village and the resultant of this has on occasion led to the village being cut off from vehicular access. Climate change is creating scenarios which are causing some low lying homes to come under threat, although to date, as far as we are aware, no homes have actually been flooded.

The Parish Council has recently received many photographs and videos from several residents of the village. These demonstrate the severity and nature of the problems being experienced by residents.



One of the areas to also be affected is Launs Wood. This was once held up to be one of the beauty spots of the area. Heavy rains and influx of water from upstream via the

Mill Brook have put it under threat. The brook often bursts its banks and has caused tree damage and death in the woodland. It has in effect become a wetland.

Wigan Council are working with the CVRA on the issues affecting the village. The Parish Council have been sent designs for a flood alleviation scheme.

In 2017 three dams were built in Launs Wood to slow the flow of water down Mill Brook in heavy rain. A wall was built around the two pipes that go under Crooke Road to 'hold the water' when the capacity of the pipes has been reached. This holding wall back floods the field where the playground is. When that is full the water comes over into the road and has on several occasions created flood water at the lower end of the village.

When this happens the main road, sewer and waste water drains are filled with the flood water, causing properties causing properties to get 'backwater' up the drains and subsequently be at risk from flooding. Even the new drains in the road, installed during the work carried out in 2017, drain into Mill Brook. So, when the Mill Brook is full that water also come back up, onto the road and fills the domestic drains.

Since 2015 there have been at least six occasions when water levels coming down Mill Brook into the village and emptying into the Crooke Marina and then the River Douglas have been so high that they have caused flooding in the road.

On the other side of Crooke Village flow the Leeds – Liverpool canal and the River Douglas. There have been fallen trees in the river for several years and they are still there. There are fears that these trees have the potential to 'dam' the river, as they are

clogged with debris, which includes plastic and mattresses. Their presence makes it more difficult for potential flood water to disperse.

As far as the River Douglas and the canal are concerned, Shevington is downstream from Crooke Village. Where Mill Brook are concerned, Shevington is upstream and one of the inspection chambers in Memorial Park – the one in Church Lane – is linked to a system that eventually feeds into Mill Brook.

There is considerable concern amongst the residents of Crooke Village that the new land drainage system to be installed in Memorial Park will add to the flooding threat in Crooke Village.

The design for the drainage scheme has been shared with the drainage engineer at Wigan Council, who has assessed it and has reported the following:

'With regards to the discharge points, the existing manhole to the south-east corner of the site connects to the public sewer network which flows through the housing estate and outfalls into Ridgewood. Which as the resident states falls into Lawnswood. However, the design you have sent over shows a restricted rate of water flowing through the system, which would see less water entering the network than would fall naturally based on a greenfield runoff rate.

The drainage strategy outlines a reduced rate of discharge to the existing network which would see less water entering the system and flowing through to Crooke Village.'

The design of the new drainage scheme in the park uses two outlets for the water: one in Church Lane and one in Shevington Lane. Some of the surface water will enter via an inspection chamber in Church Lane, which will flow towards Mill Brook and then Crooke Village. The remainder will enter via the inspection chamber in Shevington Lane and join a system that flows towards Gathurst and enters the river downstream from Crooke.

The LA's drainage engineer has suggested that it might be worthwhile asking our consultant whether it would be possible to use a single connection point – the one in Shevington Lane.

The drainage scheme the Parish Council have commissioned incorporates sand-based structures. According to the LA's drainage engineer, these are designed to store surface water and control the rate at which it is released into the road drainage system, etc. In other words, they act as mini attenuation tanks. This means that the surface water run-off will be slowed down before being released into the local water courses, minimising the risk of local flooding.