

## **BLEASBY FLOOD ACTION GROUP – REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – APRIL 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

First, the good news – there has been no flooding in the parish this year – surface water and anticipation yes, but no flood. Bad news – it is accepted that Global Warming is happening, along with significant climatic change, whilst the World's governments address the situation with words, but, as yet, they do so with insufficient action.

With the hottest and driest summer ever this year (recorded in Bleasby at 37 degrees in the shade) and the average annual temperature for the British Isles, now reaching above 10<sup>o</sup> c, and with the warmest years ever recorded occurring during the past decade, we might think that our constant concern about the risk of flooding in the parish is now misplaced. On the contrary, we must not now become complacent as global warming and accompanying changes in weather patterns bring the risks of flooding into sharper focus. We appear to be moving into a period of weather extremes with the Met Office confidently predicting more intense storms along with more sudden, heavier and prolonged rainfall.

We have had several flood alerts from the Environment Agency as well as weather warnings from the Met Office during 2022. During the third week of last February we had to be prepared for high winds and potential flooding as a result of storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin crossing the Atlantic. By 22<sup>nd</sup> February the Trent had risen alarmingly and came within less than 20cms of causing a flood, this being a good example of the predicted increase in storms likely to cause wind and flood damage, and characterised here by the resulting river surge caused by heavy rainfall over the Pennine catchment area of the Trent.

During spring 2022 Severn Trent Water informed us that they were fitting sensors in our village manholes following higher than usual sewer blockages here. So we must remember to put nothing other than human waste and toilet paper down our toilets, nor any fats of any kind down sinks and drains.

In August and September we had more warnings of flash flooding owing to very heavy rain falling on bone-dry ground surfaces brought about by the drought conditions of the summer, followed by a series of flooding risks on the Trent tributaries in October and November. Each of these warnings and incidents necessitated action to alert the FAG members, monitoring water levels, checking for blockages, preparing equipment and, when necessary, implementing any necessary action.

All this activity requires coordination, and here I must pause to express the FAG members' great sadness at the passing of our long-time Flood Coordinator, Elaine France, who died unexpectedly on January 7<sup>th</sup>. This loss will be keenly felt not only by members of Bleasby FAG, past and present, (Elaine was instrumental in the foundation of BFAG, its long-standing Chair and dedicated member of the Group) but also by all the long-standing and 'community active' members of the many parish organisations that she was involved in throughout her life here in Bleasby.

The greatest risk to this parish will be complacency on personal, local, national and international levels. Remember – apart from Upper Goverton we are only 50 feet above a sea level that is rising!

Peter Cast, on behalf of BFAG