The Lympstone Flood Resilience Group (LFRG) has continued to address all flooding issues of concern to the village both at a strategic level and through the work of the two teams of flood wardens.

We commented on the proposed housing allocation sites in the East Devon emerging local plan and appeared at the EDDC site selection meetings. The sites of particular concern for their flooding impact, on the north side of Hulham Road, have now been dropped. We have commented on planning applications, most notably the proposal for 42 houses south of Meeting Lane and the various proposals at Thorne Farm. Concerns about the negative impact of surface water runoff from the new Dinan Way project on the Wotton Brook were addressed in meetings with DCC Highways and mitigating measures have been included in the project design.

Regarding the additional section of flood wall to be constructed at the upstream end of the walled channel, the Environment Agency (EA) have indicated that this work may be scheduled to start in September

We have attended meetings between Lympstone Water Quality Group and South West Water (SWW) to discuss any alterations SWW may be considering to some of their surface water outlets, with a view to reducing the flows that are pumped to Exmouth. LFRG are concerned about any resulting additional flows into the Wotton Brook

Perhaps the most noticeable achievement during the year has been the final resolution of the high tide pooling problem outside the shop and The Swan in The Strand. This problem had plagued the village for at least a generation, although not quite as long as the previous problems in Chapel Road. New valves have been installed with the cooperation of DCC Highways and The Environment Agency, and waters are no longer able to surcharge from our regular tides into the roadway at these locations. We are aware that a similar remedy is possible for the Underhill roadway between the rail bridge and the surgery, and this is our next challenge. Sadly, the pooling further along Underhill does not offer an achievable solution because the roadway there is effectively part of the floodplain .

The Estuary season thus far has been kind to us. Despite some severe weather conditions these have not coincided with high tides. The Estuary Warden Team have operated the gates efficiently and promptly ensuring minimum disruption to villager's estuary access. We have, however, continued to experience difficulties with the increasing age of the floodgates making their operation problematic at times. We suffered from some inept maintenance by the Environment Agency contractors, which took months to rectify. With the cooperation of the Lympstone Harbour Board an experimental regime of mechanised beach dragback got underway in October. This shows promising results for easing the clearance of shingle build up behind the gates when closed. A new telemetry box showing floodgate status has been installed at the Sailing Club, replacing the 20 year old predecessor.

We have worked with the Parish Council in a protracted process of negotiation with The Environment Agency on the renewal terms of the partnership agreement enabling the Estuary Wardens to legally continue operation of the floodgates for the forthcoming five year term.

The Inland team has seen a change in the way it operates this year. Towards the end of last year, we were advised by DCC Highways that due to health and safety concerns and environmental risks we should no longer lift road gully covers and clear the sumps

ourselves. Fortunately, we received a Locality Grant from our DCC Councillors that enabled us to use a Jetvac contractor to clear the gullies at most of our surface water hotspots. On December 6th two members of the Inland team accompanied the Jetvac around the village, managing traffic, and clearing twenty-nine gullies in ten different locations, removing nearly a ton of sump debris. It is likely that a small number of hotspot locations will require a second visit from the Jetvac, which we will try and achieve with the balance of funds available.

The Inland team also spent time in December clearing the roadside ditch and undergrowth along the upper end of Underhill to reduce the pooling that regularly occurs there due to inadequate drainage infrastructure.

Finally, most of a day in November was taken up clearing the bed of the stream in the field adjacent to the road at Sowden Corner. The stream takes the highway run off from six gullies at Sowden Corner and can be overwhelmed in the event of heavy and sustained rainfall causing backing up of the surface water on to the highway, resulting in significant pooling.

As an established community group of some eight years standing the LFRG has gained significant experience in managing the local flood risk and planning future resilience measures. We are very happy to share and exchange our experiences with other communities and on three separate occasions this year we have presented aspects of our work to the Devon Community Resilience Forum and the Exe Estuary Management Partnership.

LFRG would like to thank the webmasters of Lympstone.org for re-organising the group's information on a dedicated page of the village website. There is now significant new content, and we hope the information is relevant and easily accessible. We will endeavour to keep the site current with a reasonable number of new posts each year.