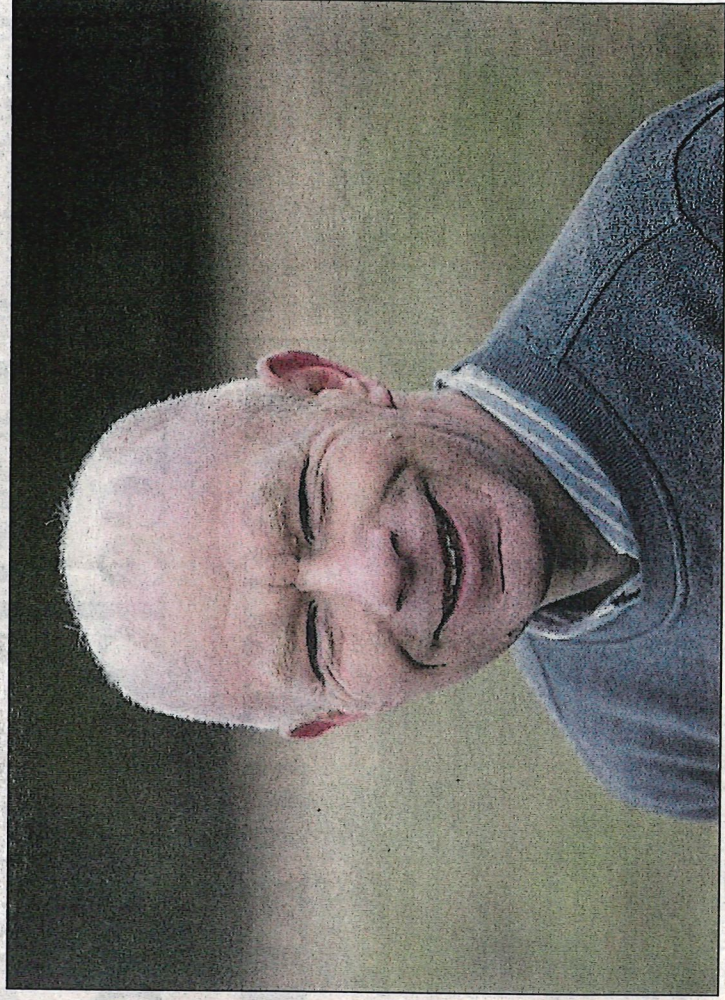


Villages blighted by flooding gearing up to defend themselves from dormant river



Flood barriers erected by Canterbury City Council in South Barham Road, Barham. Picture:



Cllr Mike Sole says villages along the Nailbourne need to be prepared for flooding

‘We need to be ready for this’

By Gerry Warren
gwarren@thekmgroupp.co.uk

Villages previously blighted by flooding are gearing up to defend themselves as a dormant river flows through the area.

It follows several weeks of rain which has resulted in the Nailbourne running fast, especially through Barham.

Now, an engineering team from Canterbury City Council (CCC) has deployed barriers in the village and is closely monitoring the water course.

Homeowners there are only too aware of the damage the Nailbourne can cause from previous bitter experience of having their homes flooded, most recently in 2014.

Now they are praying for a dry spell to ease the flow of the river, which normally lies

dormant unless there is wet weather in the winter. CCC says it is putting measures in place to mitigate the impact.

They have been welcomed by Nailbourne Ward county councillor Mike Sole (Lib Dem), who believes past experience and knowledge will help shape the appropriate measures.

“We need to be ready because water levels are rising quite quickly and we also have to be aware of the threat from groundwater,” he said.

“Both the city and county council as well as Southern Water have a lot of experience in managing these situations and I’m reassured that everything is being done.

“We can only hope it doesn’t get too bad, which results in homes being flooded.”

Currently, South Barham Road is flooded and Kent

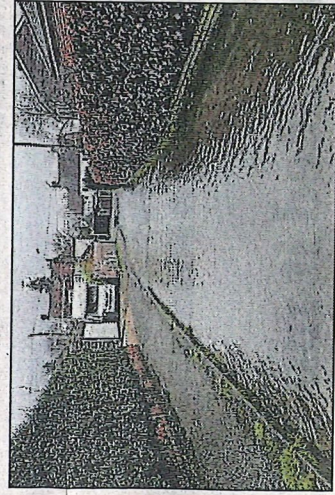
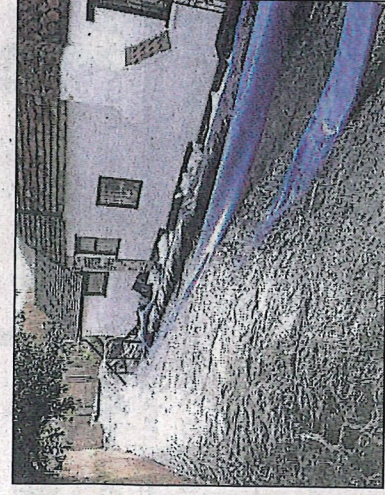
County Council has been asked to close South Barham Road and The Causeway.

“We are not currently in a flood situation,” said city councillor spokesman Rob Davies, “but our flood status over the coming weeks remains heavily dependent on upcoming rainfall.

“We have begun deploying demountable flood barriers along South Barham Road and preparing to close the floodgates at Bishopsoverne and Bridge as soon as conditions require.”

Waste collection operator Canenco is also currently reviewing its contingency plans to minimise any disruption to waste collection services in the affected areas.

There are similar precautions in nearby Bridge, where flooding has been a serious issue in the past.



Pictures show previous incidents of flooding in the village, as well as more recent events

The chairman of the parish council, Cllr Alan Atkinson, said: “I do not mean to be alarmist, but we do need to be prepared for what might happen.”

Bridge is currently the subject of two separate ‘low level’ Environment Agency Flood Alerts.

But Cllr Atkinson fears the situation could deteriorate until mid to late February, with further winter storms testing

preparedness.

He says he has met with some residents to discuss the current status and expects to attend the next meeting of the Little Stour

and Nailbourne River Group on Saturday, March 9.

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