



# ***Southdean Estate Residents' Group***

## ***Newsletter November 2023***

### ***Flooding Update***

It is unusual to be writing to you at this time, but we find ourselves in unusual times. November has brought uncharacteristically high rainfall and with it has come problems for many Southdean Estate residents.

The committee held an extraordinary meeting on 7.11.23 to discuss the impact of the rainfall on the estate. The committee was joined by Jacky Pendleton and Martin Coulton. Martin is a member of the local Flood Watch and was a huge help to residents in Southdean Drive during the flooding. As a local Councillor Jacky was able to provide invaluable background to the situation and outline the actions taken on behalf of the estate.

There are two main areas on the estate where flooding has taken place:

- The north end of Southdean Drive.
- The end of Southdean Close and adjacent houses at the beginning of Shaw Close.

Following the flooding Jacky Pendleton had spent significant time contacting Southern Water and our local MP, Nick Gibb. She reported:

- Local infrastructure throughout West Sussex was incapable of dealing with the volume of water that fell in such a short and intense period.
- Changing weather patterns mean that these events are more likely to be repeated.
- Residents should consider actions which would reduce the potential risk in the future. The National Flood Forum offers guidance in this area and the committee are working to arrange a briefing from them.
- The incidents of sewage ingress to gardens and houses is the responsibility of Southern Water. She has made many representations to them, up to CEO level, with the assistance of our MP. She will continue to hold Southern Water to account and has requested a meeting with them to discuss issues across the Arun district. She will be attending seminars on flooding that Southern Water are hosting next month to ensure that our voice is heard.
- The Environment Agency has responsibility for dealing with rainwater and there have been many areas across the region that have been significantly more affected by flooding than the Southdean Estate, so we are not seen as a priority.

## **Report on the impact of the heavy rainfall**

Southdean Drive had three properties at the north end of the road which had water ingress. Many others experienced flooding in their driveways and gardens. Some residents pumped water onto Shrubbs Field, which made the situation worse for residents at the north end as the field was flooded, leading to water from the field entering their properties.

Southdean Close and Shaw Close saw a number of houses, drives and gardens flooded. The main issue resulted from the sewers being full of surface water which backed up to the lowest point, which is the end of Southdean Close, backing on to Shaw Close and to West Drive. This caused water, and in some instances sewage, to be forced out of manhole covers in the road and into residents' properties.

## **Committee action**

- The National Flood Forum has been contacted to set up a briefing meeting for residents.
- Regular drain cleaning will be organised.
- The Parish Council will be contacted to pursue the siting of a pipe in Shrubbs Field to alleviate overflow into Southdean Drive.
- Seek a volunteer from the East side of the estate (Southdean Close, Shaw Close, Rose Avenue, Greenway, Tuscan Avenue & St Nicholas' Lane) to volunteer for the local 'Flood Forum'.

## **Advice and reminders to residents**

As a community it is critical that we work together to ensure that our own and the properties of other residents are protected against excess water. It is therefore important to remember that all verges should be grass or another permeable material to facilitate drainage.

Residents affected in any way should consider flood prevention mechanisms that do not have a negative impact on other properties.

We understand the difficulties properties are facing but it is illegal to pump water onto any highway and more specifically Shrubbs Field.

We would welcome a volunteer from the East side of the estate to represent this area on the local 'Flood Forum'. If you are interested, please get in touch via [southdeansec@gmail.com](mailto:southdeansec@gmail.com)

On a more positive note, we hope to see many of you at our Christmas gathering at The Elmer on 14<sup>th</sup> December. If you have not bought tickets, these are available from your road rep.

If you are not able to join us on that evening, please accept the best wishes of the committee for the Christmas period.