

Dear Parish Council Clerks / Chairs

At the evening meeting in July at Burton Fleming Village Hall, I agreed to arrange for Engineers from my team to carry out an inspection of the Gypsey Race, from Foston on the Wolds down to Rudston.

The inspection was completed last month, and attached is a report prepared by the lead engineer.

We will now be writing to riparian owners of sections of the watercourse which have impediments to flow, where ownership is clear, and reminding them of their responsibilities. These are property owners within the villages. Where ownership is not clear, i.e. parcels of land between villages with no address, we will need to arrange for the Councils Legal Team to carry out land searches. There is a cost associated with all Land Searches, so it would help us if Parish Councils could advise us of land owners details if known.

Just a few comments in relation to the report:

- Our standard letter advises riparian owners that they should comply with environmental and ecology legislation, but we will also be pointing out that the Gypsey Race is a chalk stream and that there are guidance notes published by Natural England about how to manage and maintain a chalk stream.
- I am not too concerned about some of the restrictions between villages, for example some old bridges restrict the flow. There is an argument that if the system is totally clear upstream of a village, then it will speed up the flow into the village. Although we have done no hydraulic modelling to prove this, sometimes slowing the flow upstream of a town or village can help to reduce flood risk to properties.
- The damaged bridge parapet (location 9) has been passed to the Councils Bridges team to investigate.
- The Councils Streetscene Enforcement Team have been asked to deal with the burnt out car parts and tyres between Burton Fleming and Rudston.
- Our Contractors recently removed a large tree stump / roots from the watercourse just downstream of High Street, Rudston, which was causing an obstruction.
- An email was recently forwarded to me by one of the Ward Members with lots of photographs of weeds and vegetation in the Gypsey Race, with no reference to where the photographs were taken. Most of these photographs showed lots of seasonal weed growth, which does not necessarily impede the flow and it will die off in the winter months. Please could I remind all Parish Councils, if you or residents have any concerns about restrictions in the Gypsey Race, or any other watercourse, please contact my team directly with details and the location. We cannot take any action if the information is not sent to us.
- We are also in the process of arranging for one of our Contractors to replace the non return valves from the highway drainage systems opposite the pub in Burton Fleming into the Gypsey Race.

Please note, we do not normally carry out detailed proactive watercourse inspections because we do not have the resources to inspect every watercourse in the East Riding every year. This was a one off good will gesture. As detailed above, if you have any future concerns, or are aware of any restrictions please let us know. Some resident groups in the East Riding and Parish Councils organise "ditch walks" each year and either invite an Engineer from my team to attend, or report any restrictions identified to us so that we can take the appropriate action. Although Land Drainage Authority Enforcement Powers are permissive, we at the East Riding take the matter extremely seriously and make every effort to contact riparian owners to remind them of their responsibility, and if needed enforce, when we become aware of any impediments to the flow of water.

I trust that this helps, and if you could help with any land owner details it would be appreciated.

Kind Regards

Steve Charlton

Principal Engineer - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Team