

# MAISEMORE PARISH COUNCIL



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15 January 2014

## **River Severn Flooding and road closure on the A417**

Maisemore Parish Council at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January received a significant representation from local residents wishing to voice their concerns in relation to the failure on behalf of GCC to make significant improvements to the A471 between Maisemore and Over bridge to elevate/prevent flooding and closure yet again of the trunk road.

A Flood Impact Statement (attached) was prepared and presented to GCC following the floods of 2012. The findings still hold true and the Parish Council urges the County Council to acknowledge its responsibility to Maisemore residents and businesses, to residents and businesses of parishes along the diversion route and all the tens of thousands of commuters who equally suffer the horrendous consequences of closure due to flooding of the A417 -

The A417 was closed due to flooding for 8 days from 3.1.2013 and the consequential chaos, disruption and damage has been well evidenced by residents and the press. The Parish Council meeting was recorded by Radio Gloucestershire and our concerns were broadcast during the Mark Cummings show on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

The summary view of all the complainants is that it is unacceptable repeatedly to close a major trunk road for extended periods of time with no apparent investigation of a permanent solution. A summary of the representations is set out below:

- As a principle, a busy "A" road should not be susceptible to repeated closure.
- The section of the road that is flooded, and therefore requires attention, is relatively short (2-300 meters).
- There is no viable alternative route. The recommended diversion is very long (A40, M5 and M50). The most widely used local diversion is via the B4215 and an unclassified road, which is unsuitable for heavy traffic and includes a one-way bridge that was never designed for large vehicles. This road has now become dangerous because of potholes and severe damage to the verges caused by large vehicles using the road during the last week. There have been many minor accidents and break downs during the last week on this unclassified road.
- There is very heavy traffic on the B4215 when the A417 is closed and this results in increased journey times of approximately 90 minutes for all journeys from Newent and surrounding communities. There is a large impact on many communities – not just Maisemore.

- The local bus service between Maisemore and Gloucester did not run through Maisemore when the A417 was closed – leaving elderly and vulnerable people without transport or access to shops and longer response times for emergency services.
- Many local businesses and organisations, including the White Hart PH and Hartpury College, are suffering badly

The issues the PC wishes the County Council to urgently consider are: -

- Raising the A417 with viaducts to allow free flow of water
- Review the evidenced subsidence of the A417 at the flood marker boards
- Improve the road closure signage approaching the A417 at Over bridge roundabout from all directions
- Improve road closure signage through Hartpury and approaching villages
- Inspect the weight bearing and condition of the bridge over the Leadon at Upleadon
- Reconsider identifying/creating turning areas for the largest vehicles which fail to heed the road closure signs on the A417
- Re examine the Impact assessment and assess the real economic cost to the County Council taking into account the damage to surrounding roads, bridges, highways time, policing time, EA time and loss of revenue from businesses, not to mention the number of people who did not even go to work, or go to town to spend money.
- Request that the Environment Agency dredges the East channel of the Severn to avoid the flood waters 'pooling' across the meadows and over the A417. The A417 was still under water even though the west channel of the Severn running alongside was within its banks
- Request funding from EU reserves which we understand is set aside to mitigating against future civil emergencies

If you require photographic evidence to support any of the points raised, please advise as there is an abundance of evidence to support these claims.

The Parish Council understands that there is a meeting next week of the Flood Defence Committee to discuss Flooding issues and it is our strongest request that the issues associated with the flooding of the A417 are paramount to your discussions.

Please find accompanying this letter the Impact Assessment Report that was sent to you in March 2013

Yours sincerely,

Adeline Raine  
Clerk Maisemore Parish Council