

Full Council

Report Title:	Flooding in Thame
Meeting Date:	15 October 2024
Contact Officer:	Mandy Sturdy, Town Clerk

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide a summary of evidence of flooding in Thame following heavy rains on Monday 23 September 2024.

Action Required

2. To receive the results of the data gathering exercise / survey.
3. To consider any action / response / next steps within our powers.

Background

4. On 23 September 2024, Thame experienced substantial heavy rain, and between midnight and 9am, 76mm of rain had fallen, equivalent to around a month's worth of rain.

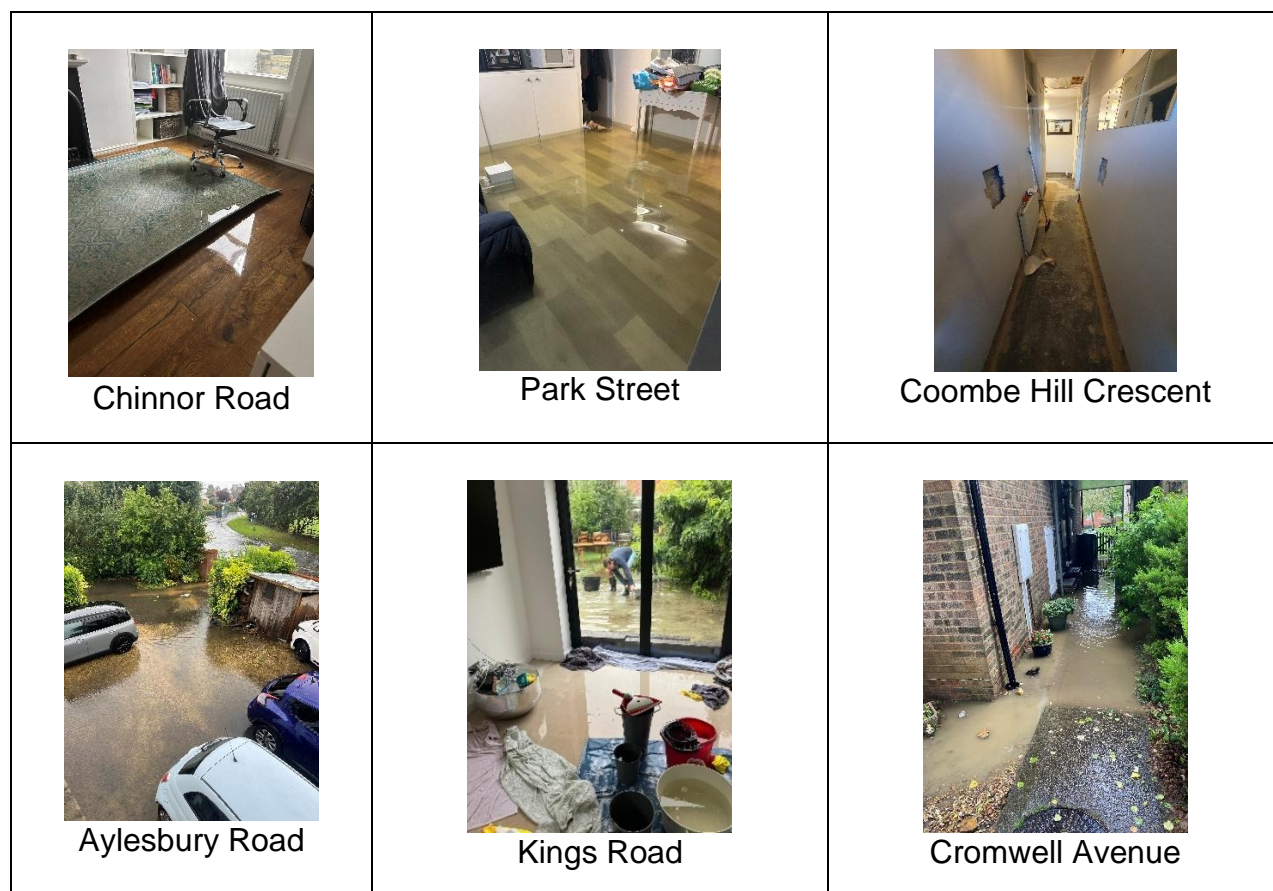
Rainfall to 9am (mm)	
Thame	76
Prestwood	75
Stockenchurch	64
Croydon	56
Tring	56
Stevenage	55

Figure 1 - Rainfall to 9am (mm) on 23/9/24. Source: BBC News

5. During the week of 23 September 2024, TTC communicated information to residents through the usual channels as well as creating a '[Flooding Information](#)' page on our website, and featured a [detailed item on Flooding](#) in its newsletter. The Information Centre was inundated with calls from concerned residents regarding property flooding and road closures. Most schools in Thame closed for the day, along with a number of town centre shops including Sainsburys, Boots and Morrisons. Aylesbury Road and Tythrop Way (two high-traffic roads) were formally closed, and many roads were only just passable. Thame also received media coverage on the local ITV evening news.

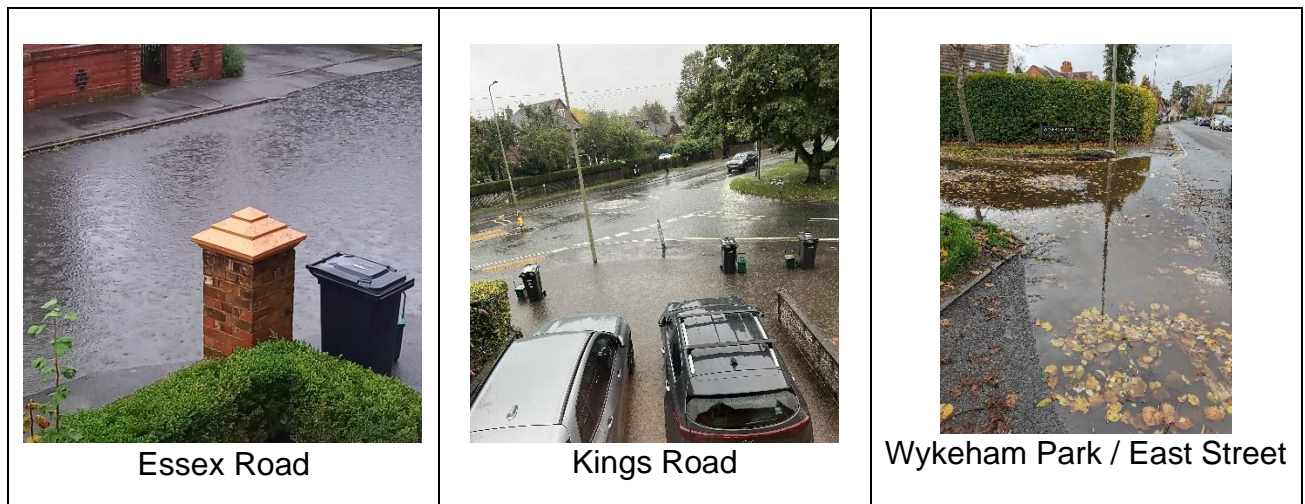
The Survey

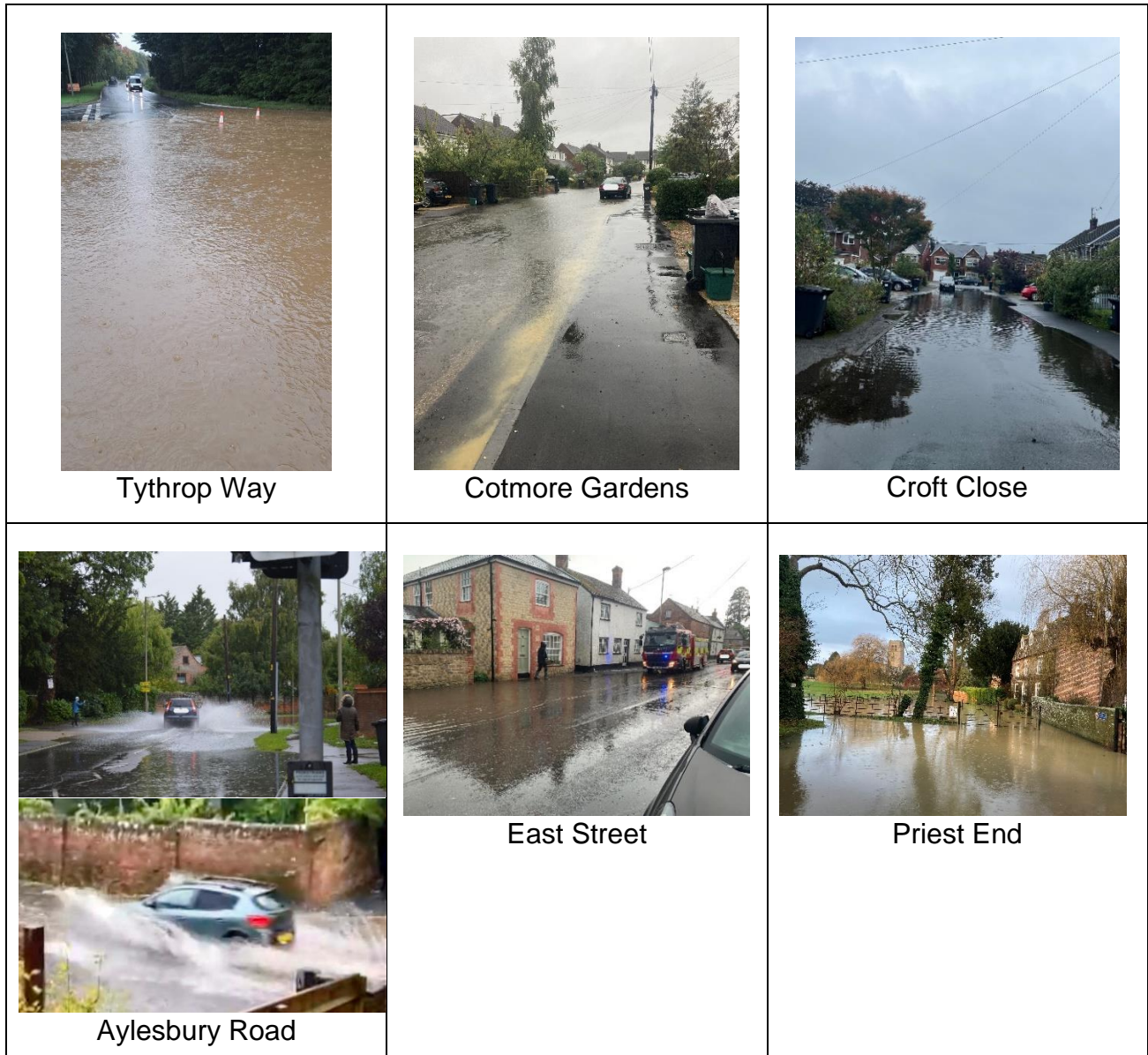
6. TTC held an online survey from 26 September 2024 to 8 October 2024, with the aim to collect real-life experiences and evidence of flooding impacts in Thame, both from the recent event and from longer-term issues. The survey received 67 responses.
7. Thame Town Council wishes to thank residents and businesses who have provided them with personal accounts and images, most of which relate to the flooding event on 23 September 2024 with some from the flooding in December 2023/January 2024.
8. Appendix A shows a summary of the responses.
9. The locations of the flooding have been mapped out, and further detail about each flooding report can be found by clicking on each pin. The red coloured pins indicate that multiple reports were received in that location. The map shows the issue was widespread across Thame and not confined to one area.
The map can be viewed here:
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1qyslUHMAQUIJ-geEHhsNbRibA5Bx5oo&ll=51.74408716165827%2C-0.9862698000000059&z=15>
10. The following images show properties which experienced flooding either internally or within their gardens/amenity area. Reports of property flooding were also made on East Street and Priest End.





11. The most reported affected roads were Aylesbury Road, Tythrop Way, East Street, Kings Road and Croft Close. The following images demonstrate the scale of the flooding on these, and other, roads in Thame:





12. Blocked drains were resident's main cause of concern with regards to flooding, with a number of residents providing photos of drains completely blocked by mud / debris / vegetation, such as on Church Road, Aylesbury Road and Windmill Road.



Montesson Square



Brookside Sewage Pumping Station

Resource Appraisal

13. The Council is already investigating flood mitigation in Cuttle Brook following flooding of properties on Cedar Crescent earlier this year. This is partnership work with SODC, the Environment Agency, local volunteers and stakeholders to introduce natural features that will slow the rate at which water enters the Cuttle Brook at both Rycote Meadow and the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve.
14. Ongoing investment in Thame Museum as a council asset to repair the leaking roof.
15. No additional expenditure is planned other than Officer time to progress any necessary action agreed by the council arising from this report. Therefore, Councillor support would enable quicker action.

Risk Assessment

16. Communications so far have clearly stated the TTC's role (e.g. through neighbourhood planning) and level of influence (primarily lobbying and working with other authorities).
17. The Town Council should consider any risk arising from any action or inaction.
18. It should be noted that the flooding event on 23 September 2024 was exceptional, with some roads/properties flooding for the first time as a result. Notwithstanding the severity of the issue and the impact this had on many residents, the council should ensure action is proportionate and lawful within the role of the Town Council.

Legal Powers:

- Localism Act 2011

Recommendation:

- i) To receive the results of the data gathering exercise / survey.*
- ii) To consider any action / response / next steps within our powers.*