

16th January 2020 Cabinet Meeting Item 15 - Statement Mr P. Denmead

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to Duncan Hounsell, he has been a breath of fresh air and Saltford residents really appreciate his efforts, together with the continued support of SPC and SEG.

The situation in Mead Lane for residents and others is worryingly serious. The previous Conservative administrations' lack of procedure, process and general 'seat of the pants' attitude, has found us where we are today and has put at risk a vital environmental asset. (I wish we had some way to send them the bill.)

Recently, I've been grateful to be able to demonstrate, to some cabinet members evidence of serious damage already done and continuing to happen at Mead Lane to the Stabilisation Works, due to the mooring of boats.

Multiple berthing movements of heavy narrow boats on natural river bank is unheard of.

To allow this on a vulnerable river bank which has been subject to stabilisation works is reckless.

One of the primary aims of the environmental report at the time, from the officer responsible, I quote: 'to take into account the biodiversity of the area and future aesthetics' 'whilst promoting flora and fauna ..., along with, aquatic planting on the river edge.'

This is a bio engineering structure i.e. plant vegetation is vital. This vegetation is missing .

It has been said that there are 'no visible cracks on the road surface', when this is the case, it will be too late because the road will already have moved!

Visible cracks in the road prompted the Stabilisation works to be undertaken in the first place, at high cost.

Why did we, the public, have to provide the environmental and engineering reports for the Stabilisation works to the Council ???

There is, already, a huge berthing capacity of:-

6 marinas, 3,200 meters of alongside berths, 4 purpose built waiting pontoons, 80 miles of berths on the Kennet & Avon, easy access to Bristol docks and, in fact, B&NES owns 6,000+ meters of river bank.

Much of it safe and more suitable for berthing.

We, the residents, are very worried that the next flood event at Mead Lane will have devastating results.

Nobody wants this to be the next 'environmental head line' when things go wrong. With climate change we can't afford for defences not to be in a 'secure' condition and capable of withstanding the next extreme weather event.

A look at the river today - makes it all very real!

On behalf of the residents of Mead Lane and Saltford, I urge members to take immediate action now to avoid the serious environmental risks.

We stand by to offer more information and data at your request.

Peter Denmead

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RYA Yachtmaster Ocean Certificate, 35 years a boat owner.