

LOWER SEVERN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

In the Stroud District Council area, the Elmore Back pumping station replacement work has been completed, apart from a screen being fitted to the outfall pipe into the River Severn. This screen will prevent debris deposited by high tides from entering the outfall pipe and clogging it. The work took longer than expected, and proved to be more costly than the original budget. It involved complete demolition of the original building, which was found to be not sound enough to house the new pump. This pump is now fish, eel and elver friendly, allowing safe passage of these creatures from the river into the inland rhynes and streams. Lessons learnt from the replacement of this pump will be carried over into design work for pump replacement at the Board's 4 other pumping stations, 3 of which, Lapperditch, Wick's Green and Marshfield are in the SDC Severnside area, with the other at Oldbury, just inside South Glos. Discussions are taking place with the Environment Agency to see whether the remaining pumps can be adapted to make them fish, eel and elver friendly, instead of complete replacement. This could be considerably less expensive in the long term.

Elmore Back is the second pump to be replaced, the first being at Saul. Unfortunately, some of the concrete used in the Saul replacement has been found to be substandard. It has started crumbling and has had to be replaced. The contractor used to replace the Saul pump is no longer in business, so an insurance claim was made, which covered approximately half the replacement cost, the rest coming from Board's reserves.

The four pumps in the Severnside villages of Elmore, Longney, Epney and Fretherne with Saul are in place to help prevent excessive flooding of land and property happening in times of prolonged heavy rainfall.

The condition of the Western Bank of the Gloucester/Sharpness canal in the Frampton on Severn area is causing some concern in that particular area. It acts as a defence against flooding of the village by the River Severn, and in the event of it failing, would have massive repercussions. LSIDB is in touch with Canals and River Trust, The Environment Agency and Bristol Water to ensure that these organisations are aware of the concerns of local people in respect of the canal bank. Bristol Water takes approximately half of the Bristol City's water supply from the Gloucester/Sharpness canal.

The September LSIDB meeting was the last for former SDC Councillor, Graham Littleton, who has retired from Board membership. Graham served for 44 years as a Board Member, 24 of them as Chairman. He oversaw many changes to the Board's structure, including amalgamation with other, smaller Boards in the surrounding areas, and changes to staffing structures. His retirement leaves a vacancy for an elected Member to the Board.

Cllr. John Jones

SDC Representative, Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board.