

Readers' photos reveal extent of flooding – and value of natural defences – in Wey valley

Once-threatened meadows again prove their worth



River Lane, Wrecclesham, living up to its name on Sunday morning, says Tempe Mansfield



Farnham's natural flood defences at Bishop's Meadow (Photo by Ruth Marshall – FD01-25-26)



No kidding! (Photo: The Mill at Elstead)



The River Wey swelled in Gostrey Meadow, with levels rising higher throughout the day

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PHOTOS have flooded in after a deluge of rain across the area left roads, meadows and pub car parks deep under water this week.

Water levels reached particularly high levels in the River Wey valley through Farnham and Elstead – but fortunately stopped just short of causing serious damage to property.

Aerial photographs by Allan Arthurs, of Media Techniche Ltd, reveal the extent of the flooding in the precious water meadows surrounding Farnham – with Bishop's Meadow again showing its worth to the town centre.

Once threatened by development, *Herald* proprietor Sir Ray Tindle stepped in to purchase the meadow in 2010 to allow the newly-formed Bishops Meadow Trust time to raise the money for the town to buy the land.

Thanks to the work of the trust, the meadow remains one of the few remaining water meadows in this part of the country, providing a haven for wildlife and rare flora, not to mention an important natural flood defence.

The long-standing man-made flood defences at Gostrey Meadow were also put to good use this week, as the swollen River Wey snaked its way through Farnham town centre.

Historically, parts of the built-up area of Farnham close to the River Wey were subject to flooding. But after a catastrophic flood in September 1968, work was set in hand to install a two stage relief system along the river.

Completed in 1971 this can be clearly seen in Gostrey Meadow and Borelli Walk.



Seven swans a swimming... on The Mill at Elstead's car park!



Flooded boardwalks at Weyburn near Elstead (by Dawn Davidsen)



The flooded River Wey valley, looking west towards Alton (Photo: Allan Arthurs / Media Techniche Ltd)