

CROWD: Clean Rivers Of West Dorset

CROWD Report on the River Simene February 2026

1. Flooding of a house in the north of the parish. It's surface water flooding and away from any streams and steep slopes – an unexpected location for flooding. It looks like blocked drains, probably for over 100 metres across a field. The Flood map shows this house's driveway is at high risk, but the flooding was on the road too, which isn't shown as at risk and was still over 230 cm for about 100 metres when I visited over 24 hours later. The owner was grateful for belated flood protection advice and information about Flood Re. This government-backed scheme is being phased out over the next 14 years to be replaced by Flood Risk certificates, trials of which will be starting soon.
2. The effect of the removal of topsoil to a depth of over 1.5 metres from the flood plain near the main entrance of the Foundry Lea development seems to be having a positive flood mitigation effect, both upstream and downstream. According to the people who run the old Bridport Foundry, they would have expected flooding in the field behind their building to have been higher during two recent storms. This water is flowing through the 900mm pipes in the causeway to the bridge without impediment as far as I can tell. The excavated ground provides somewhere for a large volume of water to accumulate, relieving pressure upstream, while allowing the rest of the catchment to empty.
3. I have two sets of results from the new CSI monitoring point on the Simene. where the Simene enters Symondsburry Parish **and** where it leaves the Symondsburry Estate, namely, at the bridge on the West Road by the Old Bridport Foundry. These show the same level or less silt in the water at the lower site. In future I hope to coordinate with Caroline Pearce so we can compare simultaneous readings above and below Foundry Lea.
4. A new 'Mud Spotter' initiative is being launched by Dorset Catchments Partnership. Watch this space.
5. Dorset Wildlife Trust are building soggy dams on the Simene. Near Crepe Farm, Symondsburry and higher up near Filford. Cllr. Barry Bates worked on both, and I joined him on the latter.
6. RSVP (Restoring Vegetation to Simene Project) is balsam bashing plus. The idea is to encourage the regrowth of native species. I hope to have a meeting with the riparian landowners of the top of the catchment in the near future. This project has the support of SPC and Netherbury PC. I think the parish council doesn't have to get involved in operational details, but should be kept informed of progress. It has the support of various groups.

Bob Hamblett