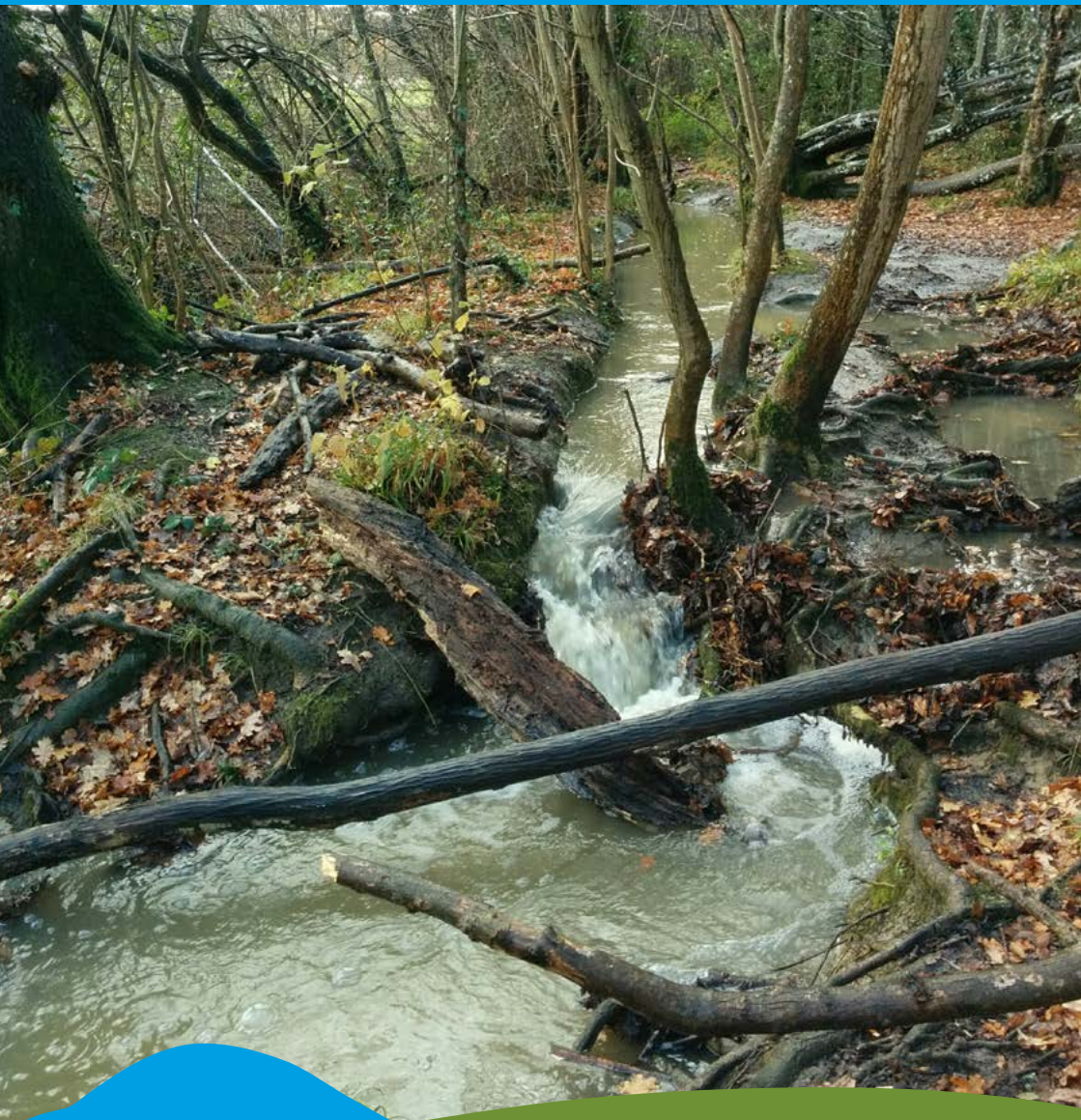


Slow the flow



**Rain gardens & other DIY ideas to help
protect Hassocks from flooding**

Why does Hassocks flood?



During extensive or heavy rainfall the many streams that run through Hassocks struggle to cope and often overflow causing flooding and have done so for many years. West Sussex County Council estimate 658 properties in Hassocks are at high risk of flooding.



Dale Avenue 2016

Where does the water come from?

Hassocks is a 'wet spot'. Situated at the foot of the chalk downs, the rock acts like a giant sponge absorbing and holding rainwater, and releasing it slowly through springs into the streams. When the sponge is saturated, further rainfall runs off quickly and streams swell, increasing from a few inches deep to several feet within a few hours.

All rain goes somewhere

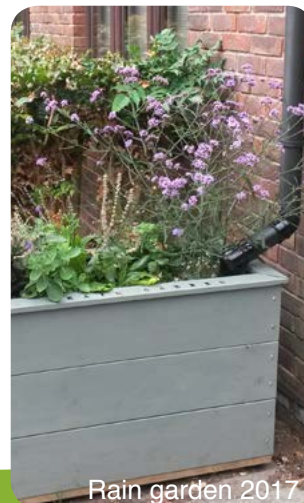
Geology is only part of our flooding problem. Rainwater collected by impermeable surfaces, such as roads, roofs, driveways and car parks drains into the surface (or storm) water drainage system and is discharged straight into the nearest stream. During rainstorms this water adds to the volume of water already in the streams, increasing the likelihood of flooding.

SuDS to the Rescue!

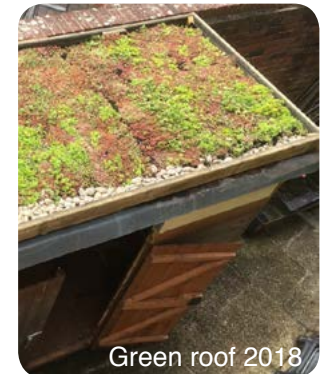
So what can be done? There are many ways you can help 'slow the flow' to minimise local village flooding. These techniques are often referred to as 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' or SuDS.

Rain gardens

Rain gardens can be a shallow depression in the ground or a raised planter box. In your garden, both types connect to a downpipe from house roof, garage or garden shed. They fill up with water after rainfall and reduce peak flows in the streams by slowly releasing water over some days. Rain gardens filter runoff and so improve water quality in our streams. No planning permission is needed. Grass verges can also be converted to rain gardens, collecting runoff from roads to reduce the volume going into storm drains. Plant with nectar-rich flowers to feed bees and other insects.



Rain garden 2017



Green roof 2018

Absorbent Trees

Planting a tree or adding shrubs to your garden will help absorb rainfall during heavy storms. Research shows that trees can intercept up to 25% of the rain falling on them, preventing water from reaching the ground, even during the winter. Pollutants are filtered out and water quality improved. The leaves and rough surfaces of trees also trap and filter out dust and air-borne particles creating a healthier environment for us all.



Green roofs

Green roofs look great and are environmentally friendly too. Any flat or gently sloping roof can be transformed and garages and garden sheds are ideal. All that is needed is a bit of simple reinforcement to ensure your structure can bear the extra weight. Rain falling on a green roof is absorbed by plants and soil, slowing the flow of water and allowing it to drain away naturally. Green roofs have further benefits and can double or even triple the life span of a roof. The insulation provided by the layer of plants above helps protect and insulate the structure making it more energy efficient. Green roofs attract wildlife, providing much needed habitat in urban areas.



Grand Avenue 1960





Water Storage

Plants love rainwater and by fitting a water butt you can capture water that would normally go straight down the drain. Cheap and easy to set up, a water butt will save you money on water bills and will help reduce the risk of flooding during times of heavy rainfall.



Use less water

A third of the water we use at home is flushed down the toilet. During heavy storms extra rainfall can enter the sewage system, causing flooding. Installing a toilet cistern bag helps avoid this. It saves over a litre of water per flush. Free water-saving gadgets and tips are on your water supplier website.

Slow the flow

In the countryside, leaky dams, seasonal ponds, and floodplain tree planting are all methods of natural flood management, which work to slow and reduce peak flows.

Make it permeable

Water cannot pass through concrete and other hard surfaces such as asphalt. Combined, all our small driveways, stone patios, and paved gardens can contribute to flash flooding during severe storm events. There is now legislation in place to ensure that all new driveways over 6m² must be made from permeable materials. Options available range from inexpensive gravel to clever rubber-resin systems. Any hard surface that you can replace with soil, plants or permeable options will help reduce flooding.

The Gardening for Rain - Responding to Change project has been financially supported by Postcode Local Trust - a grant giving charity funded entirely by players of People's Postcode



For more information or details on getting involved take a look at our websites:
www.hkdtransition.org.uk
www.hassockscommunity.org.uk
www.oart.org.uk