

Reducing flood risk in Abingdon

Newsletter

March 2018

We have secured partnership funding from the Vale of White Horse District Council and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) to progress work to reduce flood risk in Abingdon.

We are looking into a number of options all of which include a potential flood storage area at Abingdon Common with possible complementary measures such as natural flood management and property level resilience to further reduce flood risk.

Background

The Rivers Ock, Thames, Stort and the Sandford Brook all contribute to flooding in Abingdon. In July 2007 over 400 residential properties and 20 commercial properties flooded internally. In 2017 we built a flood wall to reduce flood risk to St Helen's Mill. We have temporary defences available to deploy in Potenger Way, Tower Close, Meadowside and Hermitage Road. We have also carried out modelling and surveying and ground investigation work.

Modelling results

Using improved techniques and the latest flood data we have updated our flood modelling for the River Thames and the River Ock. The Environment Agency will use the results to update their planning flood map later this year.

Flood storage area

We have used the modelling results to help us review the options to reduce flood risk in Abingdon. We have found that all the feasible options include a flood storage area at

Abingdon common. However, there is still a significant amount of investigation required, and a scheme has not yet been designed or approved.

The area which could be used to store flood water at Abingdon Common is floodplain and farmland. We have been meeting with local landowners to share the modelling results and the proposed options. To complement a flood storage area we are also looking into the benefits of natural flood management in the wider catchment and property level resilience.

Natural flood management

Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding, for example restoring bends in rivers, slowing the flow, tree planting and changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water.

We have looked into the benefits that natural flood management could offer. Our results show that in combination with a flood storage area natural flood management would be



effective in reducing flood risk. Natural flood management would also bring environmental benefits and could help reduce flood risk to smaller communities upstream.

Property level resilience

Property level resilience is a way to reduce flood risk to individual properties. This is done by installing products such as flood doors, door barriers, automatically closing airbricks, non-return valves and sump pumps to reduce the amount of water getting inside the property.

Forward look

- **28 March 2018** - public drop-in, see details below
- **March 2018 to March 2019** – Development of the flood storage area design and modelling. Continue to investigate complementary options.
- **Spring 2019** – Planning application submission
- **End 2019** – Full Business Case approval
- **2020** – Estimated construction start date subject to approvals

To find out more about our plans to reduce flood risk in Abingdon and talk to the project team, come to our public drop-in

Abingdon Community Space

18 Bury Street, OX14 3QT

28 March 2018

Drop in any time from 2.30pm to 7pm

We are keen to hear your views and learn from your local knowledge to help shape our plans

Displays will be up in the community window from the 26 March to the 1 April

To contact the project team, or to request to be added to the mailing list email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk