

Cockermouth

Future Flood Risk Management

January 2018

Background

Following Storm Desmond, flood risk management authorities were commissioned by Government to reduce flood risk not only at community level, but to look for options to reduce flood risk across the County from Source to Sea. This means we have taken a new approach, working at a catchment scale to integrate land management, development and resilience from the tops of the fells down to the coast. In order for us to deliver flood risk benefits across the County in this way we are now part of an established partnership called Cumbria Strategic Flood Partnership (CSFP).

What does Cumbria Strategic Flood Partnership do?

The CSFP aims to lead, coordinate and monitor the management of flood risk across the County. This Partnership brings together Flood Risk Management Authorities including the Environment Agency, Cumbria County Council, District Councils, United Utilities and representation from other organisations including land managers and community groups who have an interest in, or responsibility for, flood risk management.

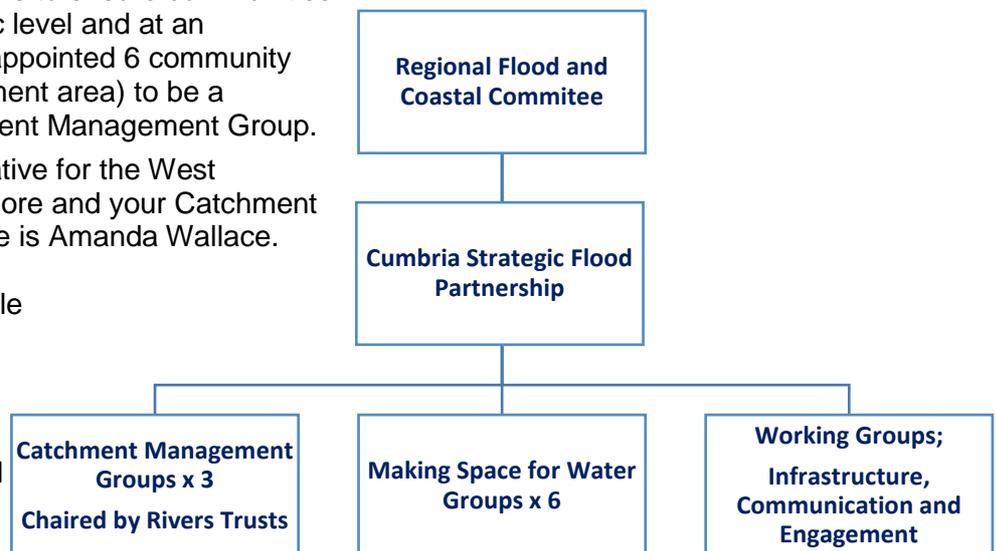
The CSFP is structured over two levels – the Board (strategic level) and Catchment Management Groups (operational/delivery level). The Board takes an overview of the whole Partnership, setting the direction and ensuring the three Catchment Management Groups deliver their objectives. The Board is currently chaired by Cumbria County Council, and the West Cumbria Catchment Management Group is chaired by West Cumbria Rivers Trust.

Cumbria Strategic Flood Partnership Community representation

A key objective of this Partnership is to ensure communities are represented at both a strategic level and at an operational level. The CSFP has appointed 6 community representatives (2 for each catchment area) to be a member of the Board and Catchment Management Group.

Your community Board representative for the West Cumbria catchment is Sue Cashmore and your Catchment Management Group representative is Amanda Wallace.

If you have any queries on their role within the CSFP, you can send an email to the Environment Agency mailbox at CLfloodresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk and we will forward your email to the relevant representative.



For more information on the CSFP visit www.cumbriastrategicfloodpartnership.org or email CSFP@cumbria.gov.uk

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Cockermouth

Future Flood Risk Management

Work undertaken in Cockermouth

Following the flood event in December 2015, the Environment Agency has:

- Delivered recovery works including improved resilience work at The Croft and gravel removal from the River Derwent from the confluence with the Cocker to downstream of Gote Bridge.
- Repaired and improved the resilience of Gote Road Pumping Station with a new electrical control panel.
- Removed trees and debris from Bitter Beck and the River Cocker to improve channel conveyance.
- Continued to carry out maintenance work, monitored and removed gravel from key locations in Cockermouth.
- Undertaken appraisal work, which has incorporated community ideas and understanding of the town and catchment, to identify a long list of options which was published during the summer of 2017.
- Completed a review of the current defences. This is used to inform the ongoing appraisal process.
- Undertaken modelling work through the Derwent catchment, including Cockermouth. This new hydraulic model will improve our understanding of flood risk in the area.
- Added forecast levels to Derwent catchment river gauges on the gov.uk website to facilitate community monitoring.

What next?

In the summer of 2017 we published the “long list” of options, and since then we have been refining each option, measuring their viability against the following four tests;

1. Technical feasibility
2. Environmental sustainability
3. Economic viability
4. Community support

We now have a “short list” of options for Cockermouth and want to share these with the local community. These options currently represent a sufficiently good return on government investment to allow the scheme business case to progress. We will continue to develop and refine the short list options required for the full business case, which will be used to secure the most viable flood risk management scheme using the four tests above.

If funding can be secured we will then progress with detailed design and construction, which includes planning applications, all other approvals, permits and landowner agreements required to deliver a scheme.

Options which are most likely to move forward include improvements to existing flood walls and embankments to protect properties on both sides of the rivers.

Completion of the river model for the Derwent catchment is due in early 2018. This will improve understanding, inform the current appraisal work, and support applications for government funding and partnership funding.

- Continue to work with other flood risk management authorities and partners to identify opportunities for joint working to reduce flood risk. One such example is our work with United Utilities in their work to change the management of Thirlmere Reservoir.
- Undertake a review of gravel management and triggers based on the modelling outputs.
- Support Natural Flood Management research and development throughout the catchment.

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- Improvements to the river level gauging station at Southwaite Bridge including raising equipment above the December 2015 flood level and improving data transmission from the station.
- Continue to employ a catchment based approach through the Catchment Management Group and working groups.

Outline Delivery Programme



The Strategic Outline Business Case provides a high level understanding of the flood risk and demonstrates the need to continue working on a scheme and complete the Final Business Case.

The Final Business Case provides all the detailed technical, economic and environmental information to justify a compelling case to investment the money to build a scheme.

The appraisal process takes time. As we are spending Government's money in providing flood risk management we must follow their rules and procedures.

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For further information on the funding process and the rules we must follow, please read the “guide on how the Environment Agency fund and deliver flood risk management schemes” under the ‘Funding’ section of the Cumbria Strategic Flood Partnership website <http://www.cumbriastrategicfloodpartnership.org>

We are currently organising a community drop-in which will take place in Cockermouth on the 7th of March 2018 at Cockermouth Town Hall. Drop in anytime between 2pm and 7pm. We will formally share the “short list” of options with you and will have plans showing where each option could be located. We will provide an update on the next steps.

Cockermouth Flood Action Group and Cockermouth Emergency Response Group

Residents within your town have produced a community plan to ensure the local response is coordinated and comprehensive in an emergency situation. If you would like to speak to your local flood action group or emergency response group about this work or another local issue, you can contact them by emailing the clfloodresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk mailbox and we will forward your queries to the group.

Contacting the Environment Agency

If you would like to contact the Environment Agency about future flood risk management you can email CMBLNC-PSO@environment-agency.gov.uk. If your query relates to community or personal resilience please contact clfloodresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Be flood ready

We will never be able to guarantee a completely flood-free future, and so we encourage anyone living or working in a flood risk area to be aware and to be prepared. We can support you by; signing you up to receive free **flood warnings**, helping you to produce a **personal flood plan**, offering **property resistance and resilience** information and supporting the ongoing work of your **community flood action group**.

It is important that you are prepared for flooding and we encourage you to take 4 simple steps:-

1. Sign up to receive free flood warnings.

Over **59% of properties** within Cockermouth have not yet registered to receive flood warnings. The Flood Warning Service is a free system which is used to warn you of imminent flooding to land and property.

2. Know what to do when a flood warning is issued. Have a personal flood plan for you and your family.

3. Keep an eye on the situation. You can monitor the river levels online at <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/river-and-sea-levels> and search for your nearest river gauging station.

4. Keep up to date with early warnings of heavy rain which could lead to flooding by registering for Cumbria Community Messaging. This is a free e-mail service and is complementary to our Flood Warning Service.

To register visit www.cumbriacommunitymessaging.co.uk

For information on the above, visit
<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings>
or ring Floodline on 0345 988 1188



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