

# Wyre Flood Forum

## Minutes of meeting held Thursday 14 September 2023

### Meeting held at Civic Centre and via Microsoft Teams

#### PRESENT:

#### Civic Centre:

##### **Chair:**

Carl Green (CG) Head of Engineering, Wyre Borough Council

##### **Members of Parliament:**

Paul Maynard MP MP for Blackpool North and Cleveleys

##### **Lancashire Councillors:**

Cllr John Shedwick (JS) LCC Councillor, Thornton & Hambleton  
Cllr Matthew Salter (MS) LCC Councillor, Wyre Rural Central  
Cllr Stephen Clarke (SC) LCC Councillor, Fleetwood West & Cleveleys West

##### **Wyre Borough Councillors:**

Cllr Roger Berry (RB) Neighbourhood Services & Community Safety Portfolio Holder  
Cllr Collette Rushforth (CR) Preesall Ward

##### **Parish and Town Councillors:**

Roger Brooks (RBr) Garstang Town Council  
John Thompson (JT) Hambleton Parish Council  
Phil Orme (PO) Preesall Town Council

##### **Council Officers/Agency Representatives:**

Paul Long (PL) Wyre Council (Engineering)  
George Briscoe (GB) Wyre Council (Planning)  
Mark O'Donnell (MO) LCC (Highways)  
Brian Birkett (BB) Lancashire County Council (Flood Management Team)  
Graeme Kellott (GK) Environment Agency  
Pippa Hodgkins (PH) Environment Agency  
Phil Wylie (PW) United Utilities

##### **FLAG Representatives:**

Phil Jenkins (PJ) Thornton FLAG  
Eddie Waring (EW) Thornton FLAG  
Mike Pollard (MP) Thornton FLAG  
Ashley Anderton (AA) Preesall FLAG  
Alison Anderton (AAn) Preesall FLAG  
Linda Rowland (LR) Preesall FLAG  
Roger Weatherell (RW) Churchtown FLAG  
David Walmsley (DW) Cleveleys FLAG

##### **Others:**

James Sloane (JS) Garstang resident  
Richard Green (RG) Carleton resident  
Peter Holt (PHo) Carleton resident

#### Via Microsoft Teams:

**FLAG Representatives:**

David Astall (DA)

Great Eccleston FLAG

**Others:**

Steve Roberts (SR)

Preesall resident

**Apologies:**

Cllr Mary Stirzaker

Len Harris

Dan Blacow

Tom Myerscough (TM)

Paul Bond

Edward Greenwood

Mount Ward

Wyre Council

United Utilities

Wyre Rivers Trust

Environment Agency

Fleetwood Resident

**The Forum was held as a combination of live event and remotely via Microsoft Teams.**

**1. Introduction by the chairman, Carl Green (Wyre Council):**

CG welcomed all attendees to the meeting and all introduced themselves to the meeting. He said that the aim of the Forum is bring community representatives and those responsible for flood management together to try and resolve tidal and fluvial flooding issues within Wyre. He added that the partnerships formed in the Forum are very open about how things do and do not work and have been very successful.

**2. Update on Wyre Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA):**

GB introduced himself to the Forum as a member of Wyre Council's Planning Policy Team. He explained that he was present to provide a brief update on evidence gathering in relation to flood risk. He confirmed that Wyre Council has appointed consultants to undertake a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (see [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) on behalf of Wyre, Blackpool and Fylde councils. He noted that Wyre Council will be the lead on the project and will be in constant communication with the other authorities.

As part of the Assessment, the Council will be consulting with all stakeholders through an agreed engagement strategy. Additionally, an inception meeting is planned for Monday 18 Sept the Project Steering Group (comprising representatives from the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities Blackpool and Lancashire, and from United Utilities).

GB informed the Forum that, in addition to the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the SFRA will include additional elements, including parts of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) [Shoreline Management Plans – North West Coastal Group \(mycoastline.org.uk\)](http://mycoastline.org.uk) and the Coastal Change Management Areas [Coastal change management area note \(wyre.gov.uk\)](http://wyre.gov.uk).

GB reported that the consultants have been in conversation with stakeholders and are looking to provide a robust piece of evidence that will benefit not only the three local authorities but also the residents and communities within them. He added that should anyone have a question on the assessment they could contact him at [george.briscoe@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:george.briscoe@wyre.gov.uk) or through normal Flood Forum channels.

**3. Apologies:**

Apologies were noted as above.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting:**

CG asked whether there were any comments on the minutes of 09 March 2023.

- PJ noted that he had been absent from the last Forum but had had comments attributed to him in the minutes. PL confirmed that this was an error and should have been attributed to another member of the FLAG.
- The minutes of the meeting were otherwise confirmed as a true record.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**5. Questions from Paul Maynard MP:**

PM noted that during the heavy rainfall event of 23 July several residents on Calder Ave suffered flooding to their properties. Following the event, PM has written to the Chief

Executive of Wyre Council with a number of questions. He said that concerns were raised about the pumping station behind Thornton YMCA and whether its failure on the day contributed to the flooding on Calder Ave. He has also requested an update on the maintenance protocols for pumping stations within Wyre, including the use of automation and telemetry to improve pumping stations.

In regard to Stanah pumping station, he asked whether there would be a transfer of obligations when the station was finally handed over to the Environment Agent to operate; would the EA continue to operate the station manually ahead of any potential flooding event?

PM noted that many of the flooding issues within the borough were considered to be a consequence of high siltation levels within the watercourses in the Borough – he recognised that this is a never ending task but considered that some strategic desilting would help to reduce the risk of flooding.

He asked what the relationship between the main agencies, the EA, LCC, Wyre, UU and Wyre River Trust in respect of who was responsible for dealing with flooding during an event; he wanted to know who the public could call for help during an event.

- CG replied that the purpose of the Forum is to bring forward flooding issues so that the agency best placed to deal with the issue could be made aware and supported as necessary. He said that officers from the authorities met regularly as part of the Making Space for Water meeting to resolve flooding issues as a partnership. He noted that the rainfall of 23 July was very heavy and the drainage systems were unable to cope with that level of rainfall. He considered that the failure of the pumping station on Royles Brook had little, if any, detrimental effect on flooding to Calder Ave as the water levels both upstream and downstream of the station were above the levels of the pumps. He confirmed that Wyre has a regular inspection regime for pumping station under its control. He noted that on this occasion there had been a fault within the station that had caused the main incoming fuse to blow and that only the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) was authorised and qualified to repair this. He added that Wyre have brought in a high volume pump to assist while the station was offline.
- CG confirmed that he had received a number of questions from PM and would be responding to each one, although he noted that most of the issues raised in the list have been discussed in this meeting. In regard of Stanah pumping station he noted that the station was fully automated, although if Wyre Council received early notification of heavy rainfall that could lead to flooding, the station was often used to drain the watercourse network to create storage ahead of the event.

PM asked what was the projected lifespan of Stanah pumping station.

- CG replied the station currently operated very well and that updates had been made to the station such that it has an expected time of at least a further twenty years. He noted that the pumping station using significant amounts of electricity to turn the screws and has a high carbon footprint; to help reduce the need to operate the pumps Wyre has been working with the Wyre River Trust to construct water retention schemes at White Carr Lane, King Georges playing fields in Thornton and at Hillylaid to store water during potential flooding events. While the huge volumes of water that can be stored here are significant, they cannot match the volumes that fell in the July event. He noted that the rainfall event was not dissimilar to the rainfall event of 2017 but the damage suffered was significantly less because of all the works done since then.

SC noted that there appeared to be more rainfall than historically and that this rainfall is often concentrated on small areas at any one time. However, he was concerned about the level of building in the borough and how much is in areas that used to soak up the rainfall. While he conceded that many sites employed SuDS to attenuate water runoff, he said that the Council should be looking to slow down development to reduce the risk of flooding.

DW noted that an inch of rain produces around 114 tons (*approx. 103m<sup>3</sup>*) of water per acre, so the volumes involved are potentially huge.

MO noted that, while it did not directly affect Wyre, heavy rainfall on 12 June put down over five inches of rain in one area with Fylde and led to widespread flooding issues.

JS asked for clarification on the ownership and operational responsibility of Stanah pumping station.

- GK confirmed that the station currently belong to Wyre Council, although the EA have undertaken number of upgrades to the pumps to progress the transfer. He confirmed that it is the intention that the EA will take over ownership of the station, and this was progressing with the EA's estates team. He added that the building is old and the EA are currently undertaking an inspection of the building to determine which parts need further work.

PJ noted that it has been said previously that it is difficult to automate the pumping station to switch on at lower levels to drain the watercourse network when heavy rain was forecast. He noted that the current system relied on Wyre officers manually switching the pumps on and issues often arose when officers were on leave. He said that the FLAG were able to determine the severity of a rainfall event by monitoring the watercourse level at specific points in the system.

- GK replied that he has been discussing the option of installing telemetry on the grid by D-Fit in Thornton to monitor levels upstream of Stanah.

CG asked whether there was an update from the EA about the proposal to install CCTV at Stanah to monitor levels remotely.

- GK replied that he had been holding off the installation of CCTV at Stanah until the EA formally took over the station. He said that he would arrange for this to be installed as soon as possible.

CG said that the installation of CCTV would be extremely useful to monitor levels at the station as well as confirming that the screws were operating in response to high water levels.

GK, in response to earlier discussion on desilting of watercourses, said that there has been considerable discussion on the merits of desilting and the EA are currently tendering for a complete survey of Royles Brook and Hillylaid watercourses to record silt levels and help determine areas of any possible desilting in the future. He added that the length of Hillylaid Pool upstream of Belvedere Road, Thornton has been considered but considered to have limited value due to the level of the culvert under the road. He said that a full survey of the network would help the EA to understand the watercourses better so that future desilts at pinch points could be undertaken.

PM said that he lived on the Blackpool side of the boundary with Wyre Council but part of Royles Brook on the Blackpool side of the boundary was cleaned out on an annual basis.

He said that it was frustrating that one council was undertaking works on one side of the boundary and the other was not.

- GK said that the EA did undertake deweeding works here, so maybe this was work being undertaken by them. MO also noted that part of the watercourse in this vicinity falls under LCC (Highways) and they have been undertaking regular works at this point.

CG also noted that National Highways undertake work to clear the culverts under the A585 Amounderness Way – PL confirmed that he had written to NH on a number of occasions for an update on these works but had not received any response. He would chase this matter again.

PL provided an update on the works to Royles Brook pumping station. He confirmed that the failure of the station was due to an electrical fault which took out the mains fuse. This has now been repaired and all pumps are operating. During testing it was noted that the pumps were making excessive noise and they are planned to be removed over the coming weeks for inspection and maintenance. Additionally, the watercourse upstream of the pumps has been desilted, and the Council is looking to reinstall the telemetry.

PL also informed the forum that works are planned for the coming Tuesday to clean and inspect the private culvert that runs between Calder Ave and Victoria Road East. Dependant on what is found, future works may need to be undertaken.

DA noted that the watercourse on Lancaster Road, Great Eccleston does not appear to have been deweeded recently – he asked if there were any plans to do so. GK replied that the works to Raikes Brook were undertaken in July – he agreed to check and report back.

## **6. What's going on in the region - Reports from Flood Management Authorities:**

### **Environment Agency:**

- A pre-meeting update to the Forum is included as [Appendix 1](#)
- GK gave an update on maintenance works recently undertaken by the EA;
  - The frequent maintenance works have been undertaken this year – works have been completed on the following watercourses
    - Horsebridge Dyke,
    - Inskip,
    - Raikes Brook
    - White Brook
    - Burned House Lane
    - Grange Pool
    - Wardleys
    - Royles Brook

Works are soon to start on  
Springfield  
Hillylaid  
Bispham

- The internal team has also been working on the Wyre embankments and flood basins.

- Work has also been progressing on the Garstang flood barrier – the east gate remains inoperable and stop logs remain in place as a temporary measure. The plan is to remove the east gate so that it can be repaired. It has taken longer to undertake the works and the EA is waiting to see whether the existing crane pads can be used to support the 450 tonne crane required to remove the gate. Should new pads be required then the project is likely to be delayed until after the winter. Until that time the stop logs will remain in position.

GK noted that using the stop logs would mean a slight reduction in the capacity of the flood basin but it would be well above the capacity required for an average flood event.

RBr noted there have been some works undertaken in the area of the gates where a large volume of silt has been left on the east bank. GK said that this was not undertaken by the EA and was likely to be works undertaken by UU for their raw water extraction pipe. PW was unable to comment on this as the work is done by the clean water part of the business.

- GK reported that on 23 July the EA had operated every flood basin in Lancashire in response to the very heavy rainfall. He said that it very unusual to operate all flood basins at the same time, but that this had prevented flooding to a large number of properties. He noted that the EA operates six flood basins in Lancashire and that normally just one or two of these were in operation during a flooding event.

### **Questions to EA**

- PO asked whether the reported works to the watercourse on Burned House Lane included the whole length of the road from the culvert discharging from Green Lane. GK replied that the works included the full length of the watercourse as far as Grange Pool.

GK noted that concerns have been raised about culverts in the watercourse, used to form crossings into local farm land – he said that responsibility for maintain the flow in these culverts resided with the local farm owners. AA noted that the issue of such a crossing on Green Lane East watercourse had been raised at the last Preesall FLAG meeting; he asked whether the EA checked the culverts when work is undertaken. GK replied that, while the EA undertakes annual inspections of the main river culverts to check for damage or excessive siltation, they do not include small farm crossings. He confirmed that he was aware of the culvert on Green Land East watercourse and this needed to be reported to the local farm owner.

- PJ noted that the concrete block restricting flow on Hillylaid Pool was still in place; he asked when this was planned to be moved. GK agreed to look into this matter and update the FLAG

#### **ACTION - GK**

- PJ reported that Thornton FLAG is planning to undertake a walkthrough of Hillylaid Pool behind School Road and invited GK to join them.

- PJ confirmed that the FLAG have asked for additional gauge boards to be installed at key points on the watercourse. He noted that, at the previous Flood Forum, the EA had confirmed that these have been sourced and are currently stored at the Kendal depot. He asked when these could be fitted. GK confirmed that he was aware of the request but was unsure of the exact locations. PJ confirmed that the FLAG would check locations and advise GK of their preferred locations.

#### **ACTION - Thornton FLAG**

- PJ asked whether the section of Royles Brook watercourse on Woodland Ave that cannot be accessed by machinery had been maintained as part of the recent works. GK replied that a couple of sections of Royles Brook were not maintained – one due to a resident refusing accessing to undertake the works, and a second due to poor access. GK confirmed that he had yet to undertake an inspection of the works done.
- PJ noted that the EA have reported that they have reduced watercourse maintenance as a consequence of reduced staffing levels. He asked whether this has had an effect on watercourses in Thornton. GK replied that the EA has not withdrawn or reduced any services within Wyre.
- JT reported that the jammed valve on Hambleton Fisheries has now been sorted and is freely operating.
- JT reported that the flap valve from Salt Marsh Lane that requires attention by the local land owner.
- JT asked whether the EA have a schedule of all flap valves that discharge to watercourses. He asked why the EA did not check these outfalls and were there any plans to do so in the future. GK replied that these valves were not EA assets so had no maintenance planned – responsibility remained with the riparian owner.

### Lancashire County Council:

#### Highways:

- MO provided a summary of the works being undertaken by LCC (Highways), including
  - Cyclic gully cleaning – MO reported that there are 9213 highway gullies in the Wyre area which are on the cyclic cleaning programme, of which 9209 have been cleaned.
  - Works have been continuing on reactive gully clearing has been undertaken as necessary in response to complaints. He noted that there have been a hug number of blockages reported and that the team were having to triage works
  - Clearing of non-cyclic gullies in Hambleton undertaken in liaison with Wyre Council are now complete and works are planned to start in Thornton soon.
  - High Street, Garstang – works have been completed to repair the private drain. Additional works to remove silt and roots have been undertaken but still need to be completed. MO confirmed that the pipe is very heavily silted up and will require additional equipment to be brought in.
  - Survey works has been done on Park Lane, Preesall to resolve the repeated highway flooding. SR said that he had spoken to the crew undertaking the works and this has been attributed to a collapse of the pipe outside no 263 Park Lane. MO said that once the results of the survey work were known, repair works would be drawn up to resolve the issues.
  - Churchtown drainage – MO confirmed that LCC have been working with Churchtown FLAG to survey the existing surface water drainage system at the junction of The Avenue and the A6 to investigate long term flooding issues there.
  - St.Michaels drainage – LCC have been undertaking investigations into the highway drainage around the junction of Rawcliffe Road and the A586



- Other works planned include
  - Station Road, Scorton
  - Station Road, Thornton
  - Woodlands Ave, Thornton
  - Poulton Town Centre
  - Royles Brook School, Thornton, as part of investigation works with the FMT

### **Questions to Lancashire County Council**

- PJ asked for the outcome of a meeting between LCC and UU regarding Royles Brook School, Thornton. BB replied that it has been agreed that the dysfunction is related to levels; however, the investigation has not yet been completed. Excavations within the school ground are still required to check whether the surface water discharges to the pond or not. He noted that the issue remains a priority with LCC.

PW reported that officers from UU had been on site this morning to inspect the drainage – he confirmed that he awaiting information back from the visit, but thought that there may be a possible solution to the issue.

- RBR asked MO whether there have been any new personnel in the St.Michaels FLAG following the departure of John and Pamela Nickols. MO replied that he has been working with the Parish Council, who have taken over the role of FLAG officers at the moment. He confirmed that he has been in liaison with PC officers to look at drainage issues on the A586 / Rawcliffe Road junction, on Allotment Lane and on the drainage outfall into the River Wyre behind the Grapes pub.
- JS asked that the two pipes on Marsh Lane, Hambleton (by the junction with Sandy Lane) be checked and cleared as soon as possible. This has been included in the Issues & Actions items for Hambleton. JT confirmed that this is causing a major problem of highway flooding on Marsh Lane. MO confirmed that these pipes have been previously checked and was surprised that they were still causing a problem – he agreed to get these checked and cleared urgently.
- JS reported that he and MO have received a number of complaints of flooded pavements in Hambleton. MO has looked into this but noted that it was low on the priority list as the main concerns are related to flooding to properties. JT confirmed that he was aware of the complaints but had not noted any issues in the village.
- LR reported that there remains water in the field adjacent to 1 Sunnyside Terrace that needs to discharge to the drainage pipe under Sandy Lane – she noted that there used to be a watercourse that ran down Sandy Lane and discharged to this pipe, but the watercourse was now in such poor condition it no longer appeared to exist. CR said the FLAG were looking to get the contact details of the landowner to get permission to dig out the watercourse. PL confirmed that he had received details from the FLAG.

AA added that during a heavy rainfall event the main roads into Preesall; Lancaster Road and Park Lane were both affected by flooding, restricting access/egress.

MO replied that the issues on Sunnyside Terrace and the areas around Sandy Lane and Lancaster Road were dependant on the works planned by Wyre Rivers Trust to form a wetland on land to the rear of Sunnyside Terrace. He added that Park Lane was toward the top of his To Do list and works would be undertaken here as necessary, in response to the survey currently being undertaken.

- RB noted that, on a recent visit to Abbeystead to look at natural flood prevention measures, hedgerows were being planted alongside the highways to reduce the surface water runoff on to highways. He noted that installing hedgerows in areas that were suitable would be advantageous.

MO said that LCC would welcome any changes that helped reduce flooding on the highways but noted that any introduction of hedgerows would require a maintenance regime as LCC receive a lot of complaints about hedgerows overgrowing footpaths

- PO asked whether the manhole planned for Rosslyn Ave had been installed. BB replied that local services in the footpath had prevented LCC from installing the proposed manhole. In lieu of the new manhole, LCC have renewed the cover on a manhole further downstream which has provided access to the culvert. This has allowed access for CCTV to be undertaken and works are planned to be undertaken soon.
- PO asked whether the CCTV survey of the culvert under the roundabout on Pilling Lane had been undertaken. BB confirmed that this work has yet to be undertaken. PO noted that the roundabout has dropped significantly since it was installed and expressed concern that the culvert underneath may become damaged as a consequence.
- PO noted that Pilling Lane, between the roundabout and Lancaster Road has been recently dressed, and rainwater is now sitting on the new road surface and not running to the highway gullies resulting in major flooding. MO asked that he be sent details of the problem. MS agreed to forward details.

**ACTION - MS**

- RBr noted that in the latest Times newspaper was a report on Natural Flood Management. He said that there is an acceptance from the general public for non-engineering solutions to flood defences and expressed his pleasure that such works were being undertaken within Wyre. CG noted that the works that are currently being undertaken by Wyre Rivers Trust is ground-breaking and is having a significant effect on the reduction of run-off from land and the reduction in flood risk to properties downstream.

PL informed the Forum that TM is planning a second visit to Abbeystead to look at the NFM measures installed there. If any member of the Forum is interested in attending then please let him know at [paul.long@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:paul.long@wyre.gov.uk)

- PO noted that the road closure scheme for Preesall has been abandoned; he asked that MO provide an update on this. MO replied that LCC had been given money to empower Preesall FLAG to legally close off Lancaster Road during a flood event – this required a road diversion to be planned, flood gates to be installed and training for the FLAG members. He said that concerns had been raised that the gates could be closed by third parties and the idea has been shelved while it is reassessed. PO was concerned that the money allocated to the scheme might disappear if the scheme was shelved; MO confirmed that the money is marked for this scheme and was safe.

AA said that, during previous flooding incidents, members of the FLAG had been verbally assaulted by drivers when members had tried to stop vehicles driving through flood water and causing flooding to their properties. He said that training and authorisation of members to legally close the road was essential to help members prevent flooding of their homes.

- MS noted the flooding to Derby Crescent, Inskip had been added to the Issues & Actions log; he noted that the road is on a steep hill and raised concern that water on the road during winter could have a serious ice problem – he asked that LCC and UU look into this issue as a matter of urgency.
- MS asked whether issues on Church Lane, Winmarleigh were still ongoing or could they be removed from the log. RBr replied that, following works by LCC (Highways) the issue is no longer a problem and can be removed from the log.

### Wyre Council:

- PL provided a brief update on works being undertaken by Wyre Council. He reported that most of these had been in response to the flooding on 23 July, and included;
  - Investigation into the operation of Royles Brook pumping station, Thornton.
  - Inspection of the private culvert between Calder Ave and Victoria Road East, Thornton – works are planned for the coming week to clean and survey the culvert.
  - Working with LCC to clean highway gullies in Thornton – works are planned to start on 23 September.
- CG reported that works on the coastal defence scheme were progressing well; Phase 1 of the works was now complete and work has begun on Phase 2. He said that around 20,000 tonnes of rock has been delivered and work has begun on the crossover ramps. He noted that there was good communication with the local community, including a new mural that is being painted within Jubilee Gardens.

### **Questions to Wyre Council**

- MS asked whether there had been any investigation into the flooding in Inskip on 23 July. PL replied that there had not yet been any site inspection, although the issue had been discussed at the Making Space for Water meeting and would be looked into ahead of the next meeting.

MS asked whether the MSfW meeting could be held ahead of the next planned meeting at the end of November and he was concerned about the flooding in Inskip. PL replied that the group occasionally met outside of the planned dates in response to flooding incidents – the last one was 3 August to discuss the flooding on 23 July. PL noted that the flooding incidents within Inskip had not been reported until long after the event, and as such had not been included within the discussion of 3 August.

CG also confirmed that Wyre Council would also be contacting the parish council with the proposal to set up a FLAG within Inskip.

MS noted that Inskip was on the boundary with Preston Council and asked how much cooperation was there with neighbouring authorities. MO replied that LCC discuss cross-boundary issues regularly with neighbouring authorities. PL confirmed that he attended the Lancashire Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) meetings with other authorities within Lancashire to look at flooding issues in the whole of the county. CG also noted that there was the Regional Flood and Coast Committee so discussions with neighbouring authorities is already going ahead.

- PO noted the Council has an out of hours emergency line for reporting issues, including flooding; he noted that some residents have reported ringing but not getting any response. He asked that the Council confirm that this number is being manned 24/7. PL

said that there were two help numbers – the Severe Weather Officer (which includes CG, PL and two others on a four week rota) who deals with flooding and severe weather issues – this number is not publically available but has been given to FLAGS for getting a prompt response. The main council number is available to the public and is the principal number for the public to call. He noted that during a large scale event the telephone line is often overrun with people calling in and may be engaged for some time. During major events the Council may open up additional telephone lines, but this wasn't done on the 23 July.

- PJ asked that additional gauge boards be installed on the pumping station at Royles Brook where they could be viewed from outside the fencing. PL agreed to look into getting this done.
- PJ asked whether there was an update from National Highways re cleaning of the culverts under the A585. He was aware that NH have been contacted several times but had yet to respond, but asked that PL pursue this further.
- PJ asked if local councillors could get involved in helping during flooding events. He said that there was a role for councillors to help reassure local residents during an event and asked that the policy of not including councillors in the response to flooding be re-examined. CG agreed to look in to this.
- MO noted that he had seen recent reports on social media of flooding on Breck Road, Poulton at the junction with Station Road, but nothing had been formally reported to him. PL noted that he had seen similar; there had been a brief period of very heavy and localised rainfall that had briefly overwhelmed the local drainage system but very quickly drained away once the rainfall had stopped. There had been no reports of flooding to properties, just the highway at the junction.
- PHo said that he farmed the land adjacent to Hillylaid Pool for a number of years – he said that the watercourse was not cleaned out often enough and was full of silt. He added that cleaning the culverts out was a waste of time until the silt in the dykes had been dropped. He noted that the water level in the dyke is higher than it should be due to excessive silt and added that the drainage from his fields now discharges a foot below the level of water. He said that the watercourses have not been desilted in the last 25 years.

PO noted the watercourses were dug specifically to drain the land but environmental issues were restricting maintenance of them – he did not consider that prevention of flooding was less important than maintenance of habitat on these man-made structures. SC asked, with all the recent housing construction in the borough, who would be responsible for maintaining SuDS features in the future. CG said that current proposals were that United Utilities would adopt these features in the future. At the moment, maintenance is the responsibility of residents with the work being undertaken by maintenance companies on behalf of residents.

PH said that while he regularly cleaned his watercourse, the watercourse took water from over 400 acres of land and from thousands of houses and he was not responsible for those houses. He argued that regularly cleaning the easy to access parts of the watercourse would help keep clear the hard to reach areas. He said that having three feet of silt to maintain nature along the watercourse.

RBr said that, following the previous discussion on silt in the watercourses, he had spoken to the NFU. He said, unless there is a political change, it cost too much money to desilt watercourses.

MS said that current legislation appeared to place too much emphasis on the ecological focus and, while it is important that we are mindful of the environment, it is not helpful to wildlife if there is widespread flooding from a lack of regular maintenance.

CG said that there are examples of good practise in dealing with flooding and environmental issues together. He cited the works currently being undertaken by TM on King Georges Playing Fields in Thornton, where the construction of a wetland area allowed for environmental improvement, water quality improvement and a reduction in silt going into the drainage system.

GK informed the group that ecology restrictions in Wyre watercourses was not a concern and they did not have a high enough ecology quality. He added that restriction in desilting was down to a lack of funding. He said that it was necessary to prove that desilting the watercourses would have a worthwhile benefit; for this reason the EA will be undertaking a survey of watercourses to identify any areas that would benefit from desilting works.

RBr asked whether it was EA policy not to desilt watercourses. GK replied that desilting works were undertaken where it was found to be economically beneficial. He confirmed that EA maintained watercourses to reduce flood risk and works are undertaken where flood risk is reduced the most.

### **United Utilities:**

- PW provided an update on works undertaken by UU. He said that works were “business as usual” and there was nothing of any major significance to report.

He reported that UU are working on a capital scheme to remove surface water from the combined system on Sunnydale Gardens in Little Ecclestone to ensure that plans for development in Great Ecclestone do not inundate the combined sewer.

PW reported that the monitors that have been put in to monitor flow as part of the Dynamic Network Management (DNM) are now online. CG asked if this data was available to the public online – PW confirmed that the data was for UU use only and is not available to the public.

### **Questions to UU**

- RBR asked what works were being undertaken by UU on the A6 at Forton. PW replied that he was not aware of the works so couldn't give a response.
- PO said that there had been a problem on Moss Side Lane, Stalmine where a UU tanker was parked causing an obstruction to a local coach company. PW replied that he was aware of the incident so could comment. PO asked that PW passed on feedback that in future local residents or businesses are informed in advance of any works that may cause an inconvenience.
- JT raised the issue of three properties on Carr Lane, Hambleton which are affected by flooding sewers during heavy rainfall. He is aware that UU have fitted a non-return valve but this prevents outfall from the properties when closed. PW confirmed that he aware of the issue; he said that the non-return valve prevents flooding from the mains sewer

whenever it is surcharged, but there is always a risk that the properties could be affected by their own drains. He added that the local combined sewer is heavily surcharged with surface water but that UU have been unable to determine where the excessive surface water is coming from. He said that the sewer worked for the vast majority of the time, but only had issues when there is heavy prolonged rainfall.

### **Natural England:**

- No representative was available from Natural England and no report had been submitted to the Forum.

### **Questions to Wyre Rivers Trust**

- No questions were raised.

### **Wyre Rivers Trust:**

- No representative was available from the Trust. PL noted that TM had submitted a brief report to the Making Space for Water meeting, on works being undertaken by the Trust. These details are included in the minutes of the meeting.

### **Questions to Wyre Rivers Trust**

- PHo asked what the cost of the King Georges scheme has been – [King Georges | Wyre Rivers Trust](#) PL was not aware of this, but agreed to find out and pass on the information.

## **7. Making Space For Water technical group:**

- PL reported that the MSfW Group met on 31 August and minutes of the meeting have been distributed to the Forum. He invited questions to the Group,

### **Questions to MSfW Group**

- No questions were raised.

## **8. Local flood action groups (FLAG): reports and questions:**

Issues raised by FLAGs at pre-Forum meetings have been added to the Issues and Action log.

### **Garstang FLAG**

- JS reported that on 23 July, there had been flooding on Hawthorne Ave due to heavy rainfall, resulting in one property being flooded. He confirmed that this had been reported to LCC.
- JS noted that when the Garstang flood basin is closed EA put up signs to warn the public to avoid the area, but people have been noted ignoring these signs and putting themselves at risk. He added that this has been noted in the Focus magazine. GK acknowledged the report and said that the EA would look at this issue.

**Action - EA**

## **Churchtown FLAG**

RW raised the following issues;

- Garstang Barrage – RW said that the condition of the barrage was a major concern for residents who remember the flooding in 2015/16 when 58 out of 100 houses were flooded. The FLAG aims to reassure the resident of Churchtown that everything is under control through communication and relaying of information, so he welcomed the updates from the EA on the ongoing works to repair the east gate.
- RW reported that there have been numerous attempts to locate the surface water pipe under the A586 'The Avenue'. He said that there is a pipe here but the investigations have so far failed to identify the exact run of the pipe. MO replied that LCC were considering digging down on The Avenue at the suspected location of the pipe to confirm the direction and condition of the pipe; he would keep the FLAG updated on any planned works.
- RW reiterated the FLAG's wish to put in a valve between Green Wood and Ainspool Lane to hold back water in the wood to prevent flooding on the lane. He noted that on 23 July there was no flooding during the day but flooding started to occur in the early evening. He reported that just as the water started to come out of the highway gullies Wyre Council brought in a pump, even though no flooding issues had been raised. Because the pump was operated before the flooding occurred the lane did not flood. The pump ran for several areas but pumped approx. six or seven times the volume of water that would fill the lane. Holding back water in Green Wood would have little effect on the Wood but would prevent flooding to properties on Ainspool Lane.

RW reiterated his request for LIDAR data for Green Wood to allow him to better calculate any effect that closing off the pipe from the Wood would have in levels within it. GK replied that the data is freely available but would require specialist software to open it. RW replied that on the bund installation scheme Wyre Council had provided the data in 10 foot blocks and asked if this could be done again.

PL noted that TM had reported to the Making Space for Water Group that the Rivers Trust was looking at a scheme to reduce the flooding from the Ainspool (see MSfW minutes 31 August 2023 – Section 3, Ainspool Works, Churchtown).

RW asked whether a gauge board could be installed on the Ainspool Bridge to help access water levels. PL agreed to look into this.

RBr noted that the Ainspool watercourse has a large catchment area and suggested that a walkthrough of the watercourse would be useful. MO agreed and asked that PL arrange one ahead of the next Forum.

**Action - PL**

## **St. Michaels FLAG**

- No report was submitted.
- MS noted that the FLAG had lost some of its dynamism following the resignation of the previous members, although he noted that the Parish Council has been engaging with Wyre Council and LCC on flooding issues. He noted that several of the issues in the Issue & Actions Log have not been updated for some time and asked they be looked at. He asked whether there was an update on flooding on the A586. MO replied that this is a private issue caused by a private discharge into the River Wyre behind the Grapes pub

having a restricted outfall due to excessive siltation. At the moment the system is working but when the river levels rise the valve closes and water backs up to flood local properties and the highway. LCC have positioned a pump to help clear the water but this is a temporary solution and a more permanent one is required. LCC are looking at alternate drainage routes for highway drainage. MS thanked LCC for the works being undertaken.

### **Great Eccleston FLAG**

- DA provided an update on issues with Great Eccleston

There has been no recent flooding within the village. Issues raised

- Raised manhole on the junction of West End and Leeson Ave. It is thought to have been undertaken by the Developer as part of the recent building works and has yet to be resurfaced. PL to check on next visit.
- Drains on the cycle path of the A586 are blocked and need clearing.

### **Out Rawcliffe FLAG**

- JS reported, yet again, that the Parish Council are concerned about flooding of fields in the area which are a loss to agriculture. He added that the Parish Council will be writing again to the EA.

### **Hambleton & Stalmine FLAGS**

- JT asked for an update on the flooding on Broadpool Lane (between The Shovels and the zebra crossing). PL said that this is a highway drain that may be blocked – it has been reported to LCC for clearing. It was not known whether this work had been undertaken yet.
- JT noted that there is no mention of blockages to Pauls Lane. PL replied that there are no blockages on Pauls Lane – it is suspected that the issue lies elsewhere. He noted that LCC had repaired a collapse on Sandy Lane at the junction with Pauls Lane – he noted that the section of culverted watercourse from Sandy Lane to the zebra crossing has not been checked, so may have a restriction that causes Pauls Lane to back up during heavy rainfall.
- PO reported that a previous issue of flooding on Moss Side Lane, Stalmine that had been resolved previously, has now returned. He asked that this be looked into again.
- PO reported flooding to a property on Stricklands Lane. PL confirmed that he was aware of flooding to this property from sewage to the rear and from highway drainage/sewerage from the front of the property. He confirmed that he had met PW from UU site and discussed the issues with the homeowner. There is also a private culverted watercourse adjacent to the property which may or may not be affecting the discharge of surface water from the highway – PL had offered to clean and inspect this culvert provided that the owner downstream was aware and gave his consent (as the watercourse discharges into a private pond); PL confirmed that the neighbour had refused permission to undertake the works.

PW confirmed that the issue of sewage was similar to the properties in Hambleton previously discussed and that flooding was as a consequence of a non-return valve preventing discharge to the mains. UU is looking to see if there is anything that they can do to resolve the problem.



### **Preesall FLAG**

- LR reported that there have no recent issues.
- AA said that, prior to the heavy rainfall on 23 July, Wyre Council had setup the pump at Sunnyside Terrace in advance. He added that, because there is a flood plan in place for Sunnyside Terrace, the road did not flood and there were no issues on the day.

### **Thornton FLAG**

- PJ said that all concerns had been covered elsewhere in the meeting and in the MSfW minutes; there were no further issues to raise.

### **Cleveleys FLAG**

- DW noted that the borough had just experienced a very wet summer – in July we had four days in the month where more than an inch of rain was recorded. He reported that there were no flooding incidents in the area and the drains are working well. He said that the main flooding threat in Cleveleys is from the sea, not rainfall and he was reassured by the current beach improvement works to minimise coastal erosion and the threat to local beaches and sea defences.

## **9. Communications Update:**

- No updates received this Forum.
- Wyre Council printed a double page spread in Wyre Voice which was sent to every household in March with the Council Tax bill – see p14 and p15 on this link [https://issuu.com/wyrecouncil1/docs/wyre\\_voice\\_2023\\_web](https://issuu.com/wyrecouncil1/docs/wyre_voice_2023_web).
- Emergency contact details are available at <https://www.wyre.gov.uk/emergency-planning/flooding/8>. Other information is available at [The Flood Hub](#)

## **10. Emergency Planning Update:**

- No update received this Forum.
- Section 2 of the Multi-Agency Flood Plan is to be updated soon. This includes specific site information, including contact details, pumping plans and any site specific issues. Wyre Council will be contacting the FLAGs at some point over the coming months to ensure that contact details are up to date.

## **11. Requests for reports for next Forum:**

- CG said that he was looking to have a presentation next meeting on water management to include siltation; additionally, TM will be giving a brief presentation on the works on King Georges Playing Fields, Thornton and Paul Bond would be giving the EA's presentation on "Flood Digital Services and Innovation Projects" – originally planned for this meeting.
- MS asked for future presentations on planning consideration of flooding issues and on the adoption of SuDS systems.

**12. Any other business:**

- None

**13. Next meeting:**

- 14 December 2023. 1pm start - Details to follow.

## Appendix 1

### **Pre-meeting report from Environment Agency (September 2023)**

#### **Maintenance Programme:**

The maintenance work the Environment Agency plans to carry out this financial year (1 April 2023-31 March 2024) can be viewed online at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/asset-management/index.html>.

This is the planned annual flood and coastal risk management (FCRM) asset maintenance programme. You can find a particular location by entering your postcode or navigating the map by zooming in and out.

Please note that this programme is updated quarterly. However, sometimes work may not go ahead as planned due to adverse weather, floods, or other operational or environmental considerations.

#### **Summary of key features:**

- Interactive map.
- It includes a vast amount of detail including extents of work, planned start and end dates, and links out to a description of each type of activity.
- It will be updated on a quarterly basis (eventually monthly), allowing the public to track maintenance progress through the year.

#### **Reporting a problem:**

The most effective means of reporting a potential flooding or blockage problem on a Main River is to report it to the Environment Agency's National Call Centre on 0800 80 70 60. The National Call Centre will collect the relevant information and ensure it is passed to the correct team for assessment. A copy of the Main River Map can be viewed here [Main River Map](#).

### **Here are the present updates since June 2023 from the Environment Agency:**

#### **Flood Basin training dates**

Garstang Flood Basin Training dates from June 2023 to August 2023:

Catterall Flood Basin Training dates from June 2023 to August 2023:

Highgate Park Training dates from June 2023 to August 2023:

Training sessions at the flood basins have taken place over the last 3 months. We have been unable to obtain the dates of these sessions in time for this report, but we will include them in our next report.

## **Maintenance Work :**

- Due to resource constraints within our Field Operations team, the programme of works is reduced from previous years, with priority given to watercourses in higher risk systems. We continue to use our Contractor Framework to assist in the delivery of these works and will review the programme as necessary over the coming months.

We have recently completed frequent maintenance along Royles Brook, Wardley's Pool, Horsebridge Dyke, Grange Pool. Whites, Inskip and Raikes Brook have all had first cut and will shortly be receiving their 2<sup>nd</sup> cut. Maintenance on the main River Wyre banks is continuing.

- The east gate at Garstang Flood Storage Basin remains out of operation due to the hinge detaching from its concrete mounting. We are planning to remove the east gate this Autumn which will allow us to survey the area under the gate and confirm our design to repair the hinge mountings.

The work required to repair the hinge and re-install the gate requires us to work in the channel for prolonged periods. Any in-channel works during the winter period present a safety risk to personnel and risk equipment (scaffolding etc) being washed away, therefore the repair work will be planned as a priority after the winter period.

We understand that this remains a cause of concern to the local community and to ensure that a standard of flood risk protection is provided to people and property downstream of the basin, additional stop logs were installed upstream of the floodgate on the east side in October 2022. These allow us to be able to store around 900,000m<sup>3</sup> of flood water in the basin, for comparison, a typical flood event will see us storing around 325,000m<sup>3</sup> of flood water. The stop logs will remain in place until the repair has been completed. The west gate remains operational and will be used alongside the stop logs to operate the flood storage basin. The Environment Agency is committed to restoring the east gate as quickly as possible.

- The silt surveys planned for watercourses (as per the previous Flood Forum report) are currently out for tender, and the works will begin once a suitable organisation has been identified.
- Finally, we encourage all present to utilise our free 24 hour hotline to report blockages, flooding or pollution incidents so that they can be assessed as quickly as possible – the number is 0800 80 70 60.

## **Project / Review updates:**

### **Hambleton Tidal Flood Risk Management Scheme:**

The proposed scheme will reduce the flood risk to over 600 properties. Linear flood walls are proposed from Kiln Lane, north of Wardleys Pool, to the end of the existing embankment near Peg's Pool. The Hambleton FRMS will provide a consistent standard of protection against a flood event with a 0.5% chance of occurring in any one year. The scheme has included the effects of climate change, with consideration given to the impacts of sea-level rise and increased magnitude and severity of flood events.

The detailed design for the scheme is ongoing. We are engaging with individual stakeholders and members of the community, on elements of the detailed design. We are working closely with stakeholders, such as Natural England and Lancashire County Council Highways, on elements of the scheme that fall within their remit. A public engagement event showcasing the scheme design was held on the 22nd of June which was well attended by the local community. The planning application for the scheme was submitted in early September 2023 and is currently awaiting validation ahead of a 16 week determination period.

Further information relating to the scheme is available via the scheme's FloodHub page (<https://thefloodhub.co.uk/hambleton/>).

If you would like to discuss the scheme further, please contact our Lancashire Partnerships and Strategic Overview team at [CMBLNC-PSO@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:CMBLNC-PSO@environment-agency.gov.uk).

### **Fleetwood and Copse Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme:**

The scheme will construct approximately 800 metres of tidal flood defence wall and reconstruction of the Copse Brook outfall to provide protection to Fleetwood. It will protect over 2,200 properties from flooding from the Wyre Estuary Frontage. Total scheme cost is estimated to be £12M and over £7M will be funded through Government Flood Defence Grant in Aid. We have received an indicative allocation of £4.6M of Other Government Department Funding and £1.77M of Local Levy funding from the North West Regional Flood and Coast Committee.

We have begun work on the final part of the appraisal process – the Full Business Case. We will be working up detailed designs and carrying out engagement with partners and the public as part of this process.

It is our ambition that the scheme will provide a catalyst for the wider regeneration of Fleetwood by injecting capital investment into the frontage, whilst unlocking large areas of derelict land for re-development. We are therefore working closely with Wyre Council and Associated British Ports (ABP). The Our Future Coasts project being led by Wyre Council has an ambition to create an area of saltmarsh in front of the quayside and this would be complimentary to the Flood Risk Management Scheme as it would provide a natural protection to the quayside which the new flood defence would be built upon. It would also create habitat and lead to a significant amount of carbon storage. We are therefore working very closely with Wyre Council and ABP to ensure these intertwined ambitions are delivered together. We have re-engaged with ABP and Wyre Council regarding the Our Future Coasts project and working in partnership to deliver the project for Fleetwood.

### **Upper & Mid Wyre Asset Management Project (following on from the Upper and Mid Wyre Review):**

The Upper and Middle Wyre Asset Management Project was developed following the completion of the Upper and Middle Wyre Review in 2017. In January 2020 we announced that the project was unlikely to commence to the next appraisal stage (Outline Business Case) before spring 2021 due to constraints in available capital funding, as a result of the project's low Partnership Funding score. We are continuing to investigate the funding opportunities available to progress this project. However, progression of the project continues to be dependent on the project's Partnership Funding score improving.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Important Documents**

[Planning & Development | The Flood Hub](#)

[Plan for Water: our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Accelerating adaptation action: Councils preparing for climate change | Local Government Association](#)

[Get in on the Act: The Environment Act 2021 | Local Government Association](#)

[Flood risk and coastal change - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Funding arrangements | Local Government Association](#)

[Sustainable drainage systems review - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[River basin planning process overview - 2. River basin management plans - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Flood risk and coastal change - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)