



Wyre Making Space for Water meeting
Minutes of meeting held Thursday 25 February 2025

PRESENT:

Civic Centre:

Carl Green (CG)	Assistant Director Engineering, Wyre Council
Paul Long (PL)	Senior Engineer, Wyre Council
Andrea Dennison (AD)	Assistant Emergency Planner, Wyre Council
Lorah Cheyne (LC)	Flood Risk Coordinator, Lancashire County Council
Martyn Dugdale (MD)	Assistant Flood Risk Engineer, Lancashire County Council
Mark Cook (MC)	Highways Operations Manager, Lancashire County Council
Bethany Foster (BF)	Flood Risk Officer, Lancashire County Council
Graeme Kellott (GK)	Asset Performance Advisor, Environment Agency
Daniel Archer (DA)	Asset Performance Team, Environment Agency
Pippa Hodgkins (PH)	Flood & Coastal Risk Management Advisor, Environment Agency
Ruth Kennedy (RK)	Planning and Permitting Team, Environment Agency
Phil Wylie (PW)	Drainage Performance Engineer, United Utilities

Apologies:

Rachel Crompton	Principal Flood Risk Officer, Lancashire County Council
Tom Myerscough (TM)	General Manager, Wyre Rivers Trust

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

1. Introduction:

PL welcomed all to the meeting and all introduced themselves.

2. Apologies:

Apologies were noted as above.

3. Minutes of previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting of 28 November 2024 were agreed.

Matters arising:

Hillylaid Pool, School Road, Thornton

GK reported that this was still outstanding and would be undertaken as part of the routine maintenance. He confirmed that this isn't seen as being a priority as it is not causing any flooding issues. It was agreed to remove this item from the priority works list.

PL noted that Thornton FLAG have raised concern that the embankment against this section of watercourse appears to be collapsing. GK will have the maintenance team check this when next in the area.

Action - EA

Sunnyside Terrace, Preesall

PL said that TM has confirmed that the construction of the water attenuation feature behind Sunnyside Terrace is planned for spring 2026, but that he would try to expedite this so that the works are completed before winter 2025.

PL reported that he had yet to check the watercourse outfall on Sandy Lane. He would try to do this prior to the Flood Forum on 13 March.

Action - TM, PL

Cottam Hall drainage

PW reported that no further work has been undertaken on this issue – he noted that this was now a riparian owner issue and UU would not be undertaking any further work. MC reported that he was not aware of any repeat of flooding on Blackpool Old Road. It was agreed that this issue could be removed from the Issue & Actions log.

Stanah pumping station:

GK confirmed that the transfer of the pumping station from Wyre Council to the EA is still ongoing. It remains to be completed soon.

Springfield pumping station:

PL confirmed that he has been in touch with Haven Holidays, owners of Cala Gran Holiday Park about them taking over the operation and maintenance of the station. They are keen to take over the operation of the station provided that it is brought up to good condition. PL confirmed that the roof has now been replaced, and the building structure is now good.

Garstang flood gate:

GK reported that plans to repair the flood gate are now on hold. While works on installing the crane pads are complete, the Environment Agency is now re-evaluating the project – no further works are planned at this moment.

Thornton siltation survey:

GK confirmed that EA do not have any plans to carry out major desilting works in 2025/26 due to budget restrictions. He did report that works to desilt Royles Brook watercourse on White Carr Lane are being considered for July/August 2025.

Action - EA

White Carr Lane, Thornton flooding:

PL reported that he been in touch with McDermott Home with a view to reducing the surface water run-off from the Meadow Gate site off White Carr Lane. While the site has been constructed correctly and in line with the planning approval, there is an opportunity to reduce the run-off further to reduce the risk of flooding on White Carr Lane. Currently, McDermott Homes are remodelling the site to see what can be achieved.

MC confirmed that closure of White Carr Lane during a flooding event was not an option unless access was not possible or was unsafe; it would be better to address the issue of standing water on the highway and stop this being washed into properties by passing traffic. LCC agreed to look at the road to see whether there were any low spots that could be raised or whether additional kerbing could be installed to retain water in the watercourse. Additionally, LCC will look to desilt their culverts at the same time that the EA undertake desilting works.

Action - LCC (Highways)

CG suggested that TM be asked to consider a water retention scheme on private land upstream of White Carr Lane to reduce water flows in the watercourse.

Action - WRT

Foot bridge at Catterall flood basin, St Michaels:

GK confirmed that the new bridge has now been installed, and work is underway to remove the old one.

Intersection of Royles Brook and Anchorsholme Road East watercourse:

GK confirmed that this work remains outstanding due to difficult access issues. He confirmed that the work remained on the list and would be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

Inskip flooding:

Following further complaints from the Parish Council and Cllr Salter a further check is required on the outfalls – it is reported that the blockages in the flap valves have not been removed and there remains a risk of flooding. PL to investigate this and report back to the Flood Forum next month.

Action - PL

Moss Side Lane, Great Eccleston:

MD confirmed that the case still resides with LCC Legal Team and there is no update on this matter.

School Road, Thornton:

MD confirmed that there had been no further correspondence with Network Rail on the proposal to daylight the culvert to the rear of properties.

Action - MD

Rosslyn Ave / Pilling Lane, Preesall:

MD reported that no further works were planned for this area.

PL noted that the watercourses to the west of Rosslyn Ave are in very poor condition and needed to be cleaned out – he requested that MD and he carry out a joint inspection and contact the owners to undertake the works

Action - PL / MD

Derby Crescent, Inskip:

PL reported that no action had been taken on this issue as it remains a UU (Preston) issue. PL to contact UU for any updates regarding the overflows from the foul pumping station on Derby Crescent and report back to the Forum.

Action - PL

Stricklands Lane, Stalmine:

PL confirmed that recent investigation works undertaken by LCC have confirmed that the culverted watercourse adjacent to Ambleside was found to be blocked solid and damaged in some areas. The pipe has been exposed and cleared so that it is approximately 70% clear.

LCC and UU have agreed to equally pay for lining the upper section of the pipe (approximately 40m length) while the residents will dig a new watercourse to divert the flow west of the damaged culvert. LCC (Highways) will also look to relocate the highway gully connection away from the properties to reduce the risk of internal flooding.

A brief visual inspection of the site has suggested that the sewer flooding to the rear of the properties may be related to the flooding on the highway and caused by a surface water drain in the driveway of one of the properties – it is considered that resolving the flooding on the highway will resolve the sewer flooding to the rear. PW confirmed that UU have looked into this issue and were unable to locate the source of the flooding – he agreed that the drain in the driveway connects to the combined system and could be a source of the flooding. This has been reported to the residents and will be investigated further should there be a repeat of flooding in the rear of the properties.

UU are still looking into resolving the underlying problem of surplus surface water in the combined sewer system.

Norman Close, Thornton:

PL reported that he has not yet revisited the site to see whether the works promised by Morrisons has been undertaken. He will check this and raise any issues with the store manager.

Action - PL

4. Updates from Members:

Wyre Council:

PL confirmed that he has received correspondence from the FLAGs (see below) – these issues were discussed – comments added to the FLAG reports below.

Environment Agency:

GK reported that works to repair the embankment at Six Arches, Scorton are now complete.

GK confirmed that routine watercourse maintenance works will continue this year without the delay suffered last year as a new contract was agreed.

GK reiterated that works to repair the flood gate at Garstang are now on hold – he was unable to provide any further detail at this time. The EA will provide an update at the next Flood Forum.

PH reported that the proposed works to build new defences at Hambleton (along with the compensatory works at Out Rawcliffe) have also been put on hold. No works are currently planned for 2025/26 while the scheme is re-evaluated. The EA will provide an update at the next Flood Forum

LCC Highway Authority:

MC reported that the slot drain on Sandy Lane, Preesall has now been cleared and is running well. He added that, when inspected, the drain did not appear to run anywhere so a new connection has been made to the watercourse to the north of the drain – this is now running correctly.

LCC (Flood Risk Management):

MD reiterated that investigative work on Rosslyn Ave., Preesall has now concluded, with the discharge to Wheelfoot watercourse confirmed and cleared.

Investigation of the surface water drainage from the new estate on Hollins Lane, Forton has identified that the developer has connected the new system to the incorrect drain and works are needed to remedy the situation.

Action - MD

United Utilities:

PW reported that the flap valve recently repaired on the beach at Knott End is again buried beneath the sand. He noted that there were no reports of further flooding.

PW reported that no action has yet been taken regarding the large surface water attenuation tank on Thorncross on the Swan Drive estate, Thornton. He confirmed that the outfall is full of silt and not emptying. UU will be looking into this to ensure that the tank remains usable. He added that the tank is at the head of the drainage system, and it is unclear what its role is at this location. PL confirmed that the downstream section of the tank is part of the Swan Drive drainage system which is maintained by Wyre Council.

PW confirmed that investigative works into the combined sewer flooding in Stalmine (and much of the downstream system) are continuing and much is “business as usual”.

Wyre Rivers Trust:

TM was not at the meeting – no report was received.

5. Issues from Flood Forum and FLAGS:

PL noted that the Issues and Action log has been updated to reflect recent works and additional requests for actions. (An updated copy is attached as Appendix A)

The following reports were received from FLAGS – responses are shown in italics

Churchtown FLAG.

Teams meeting held with FLAG on 24 February 2025.

1. **Flood Events** - On 1st Jan 2025 significant flooding into Ainspool Lane and Smithy Lane. The water in Ainspool Lane and The Avenue then connected top water in the Green Wood, required the WBC pump working for 12 hours before the water level in Ainspool Lane started to drop, pumping up and over into Ainspool Brook, the only space available. **Smithy Lane** was flooded as usual from water entering from the A6 through the farmyard, with the gullies in the upper part of Smithy Lane not taking any water away. Only way to protect properties here is to lift the lid of the sewer manhole in the Lane. Further discussions needed with LCC to learn of the final work in this area, the new manhole into the A6 verge and why Smithy Lane still floods.
2. **Avenue Hotspot eliminated** – Eventually, this hotspot has been fixed by LCC contractor JC Jetz who traced the route of the lower 150 mm pipe in MH7 outside the Avenue bungalows to the River Wyre behind the Memorial Hall, cleared roots, cleaned it and lined certain sections. MH7 with its benched invert, remains self-cleansing, as verified by the CFLAG inspection on 19 Feb 25, confirming the CFLAG recommendation from 2016 onwards that this 150mm pipe was key to sorting out the Avenue Hotspot. On 1 Jan 25 when the Wyre was likely higher than MH7, water was still being pulled down into MH7 and away owing to the water speed suction effect across the end of the outfall pipe, even more if the pipe end is set towards the downstream direction as has been done very recently by JC Jetz at the 450mm pipe immediately north of Kirkland Bridge.
3. **Ainspool Lane Flooding (East)** – WBC must know the actual cost of mobilising the pump each time Ainspool Lane is threatened by flooding from the Green Wood. Cumulatively this will have now exceeded the cost of implementing the CFLAG's Experimental Penstock solution to prevent the repeated flooding of Ainspool Lane. Meanwhile the cost of not trying this experiment is mounting.
4. **New Flood Route Ainspool Lane (West)** – Whilst monitoring the 1 Jan 25 local flooding in Churchtown, it was observed by Wardens that the manhole lid was being lifted by water from the Ainspool Brook, which at that time was higher than the A586. The flap valve on the outfall into the Ainspool Brook cannot be working and the water finds its way under the flood embankment, takes a 150m surface route westward behind the hedge, breaks through across the verge, flows across the A586 and flows back eastward along the south side road channel until it spills into Ainspool Lane. A second contributor to the Ainspool Hotspot. LCC in 2024 did work all the way along this drainage system from Tarnacre to Ainspool before continuing to the A6 so their reports of that western section may throw some light on this new problem.
5. **Ainspool Field** – Moderate flooding in this field 1 Jan 25 but difficult to pinpoint exact locations of ingress, or indeed collection points of surface water. The whole the Garstang Flood Defence system is operating at its limit already, especially the storage between the flood protection embankments of this section of the Ainspool tributary adjacent to this field which backs on to all the houses along Ainspool Lane and Church Street and onward to the Green. The Ainspool is blocked off whenever the level of the Wyre is higher than the Ainspool, by design, and it holds its full quota very often, with no way of offloading any excess until the Wyre level drops again.
6. **Effect of Housing Developments** - This means that any failure of the attenuation systems of the housing developments on the A6 that mainly drain into the Ainspool, will be catastrophic for Churchtown. It is easy to absolutely prevent this provided the necessary steps are taken and assured.

What the people of Churchtown would like to know, via the CFLAG is –

1. Are storage capacities of attenuations and discharge details independently checked? *Details are checked by Wyre Council Engineers, LCC (for developments of 10 or more properties, the Environment Agency and UU – recommendations are made to Wyre Planning Team for consideration.*
2. Do design details confirm means of access to systems for inspection and maintenance? *Details for large developments are generally included in design drawings. For single properties or small developments, the designs may not show specific inspection details.*
3. Are the built systems been independently checked for compliance with the designs? *All developments are checked by building inspectors for compliance with the planning permission.*
4. Are enduring funding, inspection, maintenance and repair responsibilities all legally in place? *Responsibility for maintenance resides with local residents, who typically employ a management company to carry out all inspections and works.*

Any omission creates a new flood risk for Churchtown. How do we know?

7. **Garstang Barrage Repair** – Churchtown residents are always aware of the consequences of any shortfalls or operational failures at Garstang Barrage and so remain anxious that the Eastern Gate repair is taking so long. A quicker lower cost alternative method of lifting the gate has been suggested by CFLAG.
8. **Upper and Mid Wyre NFM Project** – This is underway with one component for the Ainspool Sub-Catchment that will benefit Churchtown by slowing storm flows. Water level loggers are being installed, and topographic surveys are being done throughout the tributaries within the Ainspool sub-catchment. All this work is to provide Churchtown with a greater margin of safety from flooding.

Cleveleys FLAG.

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. No report received.

Garstang FLAG

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. No report received.

Great Eccleston FLAG.

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. The following issues were raised by the Group.

- a) Repeated flooding on the A586 Garstang Road close to Wall Lane (note that this lies just within Fylde Council area) – unclear where this is originating.
- b) Potentially related to the first issue, highway drainage covers are being lifted close to Wall Lane during heavy rainfall and concerns are being raised that this is a danger to traffic

Hambleton & Stalmine FLAGs

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. The following issues were raised by the Group

- a) Suspected blocked highway gullies close to the junction of Pauls Lane and Sandy Lane.
- b) Potential cross connection of foul sewage in from Highfield (Fisheries) Leisure Park on Ghants Lane. *UU are aware of this and are investigating.*

Out Rawcliffe FLAG

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. No report received.

Preesall FLAG

PL attended FLAG meeting on 17 February 2025.

Issues raised:

Lancaster Road culvert:

The FLAG remains concerned about the differing water levels either side of the culvert and have asked that the MSfW Group investigate this.

ACTION - LCC (Highways)

Dykes and Gullies:

It was noted that the slot drain on Sandy Lane has now been cleaned and connected to the watercourse off Sandy Lane. An update on connecting the new watercourse on the west side of Sandy Lane to the east side is requested; PL said that he would investigate this and report to the next Flood Forum.

It was reported that a number of trees had been uprooted on the embankment of the watercourse behind Sunnyside Terrace – PL said that he would notify the Environment Agency in case the watercourse was blocked, or flow was restricted. Responsibility for removing the trees resides with the landowner.

The Group asked for an update on clearing the watercourse adjacent to Sandy Bay caravan site, Pilling Lane. EA to update at the Flood Forum

ACTION - EA

The FLAG passed on their thanks for all the hard work undertaken by all the flood agencies in protecting their properties from flooding.

Pilling FLAG

No meeting was held ahead of the MSfW meeting. No report received.

St Michaels FLAG

PL attended a meeting of the FLAG on 6 January 2025.

Issues raised:

Moss Side Lane, Great Eccleston:

Residents from Moss Side Lane requested an update on what actions are planned to reduce flooding which prevents access/egress to their properties on an annual basis.

Highway flooding A586:

Residents report that the highway gullies on the A586 Garstang Road in the vicinity of The Barn 1 Garstang Road requires cleaning as they are surcharging onto the road and into residential properties

ACTION - LCC (Highways)

Thornton FLAG

No meeting held in advance of the MSfW meeting.

Report received from FLAG - 23 November

a) Royles Brook Pumping Station

- i. The desilt of Royles Brook from the YMCA pumps to Meadows Avenue remains outstanding. The silted section of the dyke creates a higher low level than if it was cleared. Understand that this is being planned? *Wyre Council is looking into this and has requested quotations for the work to be undertaken.*
- ii. The Culvert desilt is planned and Riparian connections investigated. Riparian owners need to prevent backflow of any private drains. Camera survey identified around six connections, have the residents been contacted and informed about the connections yet? *Recent inspection shows it 50% full of silt. A price to remove the silt is being sought, but as the culvert is private, it remains unclear at this time whether the Council will fund the works. A letter has yet to be sent to residents – awaiting cost estimates.*
- iii. YMCA PS Gauge boards were to be relocated at the same time as the above desilting work. If the desilt work is delayed over a long timeframe, then could the gauge boards be fitted as an independent task. The gauge boards provide a clear indication that the level start equipment is operating correctly. *This will be considered but is best undertaken when undertaking desilting works.*
- iv. There was mooring of a camera at the PS and /or a remote level indication, is this still on the table or are we wholly reliant upon the telemetry? *A high level alarm has been installed in the pumping station to warn of high watercourse levels, Installation of a remote camera has been discussed with no plans agreed yet.*
- v. The electrics in the PS, certainly the switch gear, are mostly 1987 originals. Has the PS been identified as an aged asset which will need updating in order to maintain reliability or avoid obsolescence? *All three pumps have been recently refurbished and the telemetry upgraded. There are no current plans to upgrade the station further.*

b) Royles Brook watercourse

- i. Woodland Ave - King Georges field flood scheme works well but we have noticed the water is very slow to flow down Woodland Avenue. This is regularly higher than historical level shows at the Seniors debris screen. The culvert under Fleetwood Rd North may also need checking for silt build up.
- ii. Woodland Ave - Location V16. Our team gained access to Royles Brook behind one of the homes which the EA (Graeme Kellott) also visited. Work is still required to clear vegetation and fallen tree branches in this area. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance*
- iii. Woodland Ave - location V18. Obstruction in the dyke, branches etc. Photo supplied. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance*
- iv. Location W16. Small island with reeds etc in the middle of the dyke requires clearing. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance*
- v. Location 14X. Fallen branches across the dyke adjacent to the Sandyforth car park. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance.*
- vi. We are unable to check the condition of the dyke between locations 15X and 16X as it runs behind the houses. Could you please confirm if this section has been inspected as part of the EA programme. *EA confirm that this is inspected*

- vii. Any update on the installation of telemetry at the D Fit camera location. As we have discovered over the years waiting for the Stanah Pumping Station to start automatically on high levels is too late to alleviate high levels in the Hillylaid Pool and Royles Brook dykes up stream. *DA confirmed that the screen is to be upgraded in 2025. There are no current plans to install telemetry at this site.*

c) Hillylaid Pool watercourse

- i. Location 31DD Various branch obstructions with a tree encroaching into the dyke. Photos previously supplied. This is on New Lane just down from the rail crossing. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance.*
- ii. 29 and 30CC. Numerous obstructions which require removal. Access to the area quite poor. We had to cut back undergrowth to gain access. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance.*
- iii. Outfall into Hillylaid Pool at the rear of 104a School Rd. Pictures previously supplied. Water only a few inches deep in the dyke with 1/3 of the culvert under silt. Area around this outfall requires desilting. *EA are aware.*
- iv. 25CC Fallen brickwork and concrete across bottom of dyke still requiring removal. *EA are aware and will remove as part of their routine maintenance*

d) Springfield watercourse

- i. The development at the Hickory's Smoke House has commenced and a concrete foundation and wall installed next to the drain which flows from the west side of Fleetwood Rd North and joins up with the Springfield Dyke system. *This forms part of the works to increase local land levels but will not affect the flow of water in the watercourse. An 8m easement will remain around the watercourse.*
- ii. How will the Centurion Park drainage ditch be maintained as the developer is now the riparian owner and is there a plan to install a brick chamber on the east side of the culvert under the road to allow clear access for Lancashire County Highways Division to maintain the culvert under Fleetwood Rd North. If no prior forethought has taken place, can the planning department ensure that work is undertaken to remedy this situation? *Maintenance will be the responsibility of the Management Company for the site – there are no plans to install an access chamber.*

e) Stanah Area

- i. Any update on the camera installation work at the Stanah Pumping Station from the EA and possible time scale for the work to be completed? *Still outstanding*
- ii. During recent exceptionally high tides the concrete tank from the screws was full and water wasn't exiting to the river. Any updates, what did the investigation find?
- iii. The dyke at the Cathrow Way estate was requiring remediation by POS Landcare. Could you confirm if the work has now been completed, please? *POS Landcare have confirmed that the work was completed on 12 Nov*

f) White Carr Lane

- i. The surface water attenuation scheme at the Meadow Gate development is not functional. Water passes straight through the Balancing Ponds and directly into

Royles Brook. The Optimum Hydro Brakes appear to be over sized and do not attenuate. Will this be put right as the Brook is already overloaded and floods out onto the lane? Meadowgate residents were unable to leave the estate due to Royles Brook flooding out onto the road at both ends of WCL due to highway flooding from RB. *PL has contacted the developer and will be looking at options to reduce flows from the site to Royles Brook. This is at a very early stage.*

e) Wordsworth Avenue / Royles Brook School

- i. *UU have no current plan to undertake any works in this area. Concerns have been raised that there are cross connections of foul discharge into the surface water system and UU are unwilling to connect to the pond and watercourse network while such connections exist.*

f) Additional Issues.

- i. The long-standing blockage at the junction of Anchorsholme East and Royles Brook on Marsh Farm. I believe the EA were attending to this, any updates please. This could have an impact on the water levels in White Carr Lane although would restrict volumes coming into Thornton. *This was discussed above – still outstanding*

- ii. **Victoria Road East (East of Morrisons roundabout)**

The highways north side floods the gulleys and eventually flows across the footpath and into the gardens of around six bungalows, this then flows north and into the Calder basin.

The tarmac footpath is dipped at each driveway entrance allowing rainwater to leave the highway and into the adjacent gardens. LCC have confirmed the gulleys clear but has the main section been proven which takes water away to Four Lane Ends?

We did mention if it was possible to raise the footpaths just like Mark did on Fleetwood Rd North opposite Bourne News. Any proposals for this issue? *Nothing currently planned for this site.*

- iii. There are still issues on Lawsons Road with its junction with Briar Road. We are not sure if this was as a result of the dykes being full and that the levels were not reduced prior to heavy rain on the 23 July 2024. Has there been any investigation work in the area to check for blockages. *Blockage downstream of the site cleared by EA August 2023. Flooding mechanism has not yet been established, although the area is low lying.*

- iv. We are very aware of the increasing problem with siltation in both Royles Brook and Hillylaid Pool.

I know we are still waiting for the recent silt survey from the EA. Has this now been completed and will the results be shared at the forum and any possible remediation work discussed? *The Environment Agency have confirmed that they intend to undertake dredging works on White Carr Lane (Royles Brook) later this year. There are no current plans to carry out any other desilting works.*

6. Updates to Issues & Actions Log:

The updated Issues & Actions log, 19 February 2025, was considered and updated. The new log, 04 March 2025, accompanies these minutes. Most issues have been discussed earlier in the meeting.

7. New issues:

None raised

8. Any Other Business:

No matters raised

9. Next Meeting:

29 May 2025, 10am start - in person at Wyre Civic Centre and via Teams
- Details to follow.