

## Wyre Flood Forum

Minutes of meeting held Thursday 15 December 2022

Meeting held at Civic Centre and via Microsoft Teams

### PRESENT:

#### Civic Centre:

##### **Chair**

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

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

Cllr Roger Berry (RB) Neighbourhood Services & Community Safety Portfolio Holder  
Cllr Phil Orme (PO) Preesall Ward and Preesall Town Council  
Cllr David Walmsley (DW) Jubilee Ward  
Cllr Collette Rushforth (CR) Preesall Ward  
Cllr Kenneth Minto (KM) Stanah Ward  
Ian Amos (IA) Cleveleys Park Ward

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

Roger Brooks (RBr) Garstang Town Council

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

Paul Long (PL) Wyre Council (Engineering)  
Mark O'Donnell (MO) LCC (Highways)  
Olivia Tindale (OT) Natural England

##### **FLAG Representatives**

Phil Jenkins (PJ) Thornton FLAG  
Nigel Litherland (NL) Thornton FLAG  
John Quine (JQ) Thornton FLAG  
Linda Rowland (LR) Preesall FLAG  
John George Thompson (JT) Hambleton FLAG  
John Bracken (JB) Churchtown FLAG

##### **Others**

Richard Green (RG) Carleton Resident  
Peter Holt (PH) Carleton Resident  
Edward Greenwood (EG) Fleetwood Resident  
Ian Somerville (IS) Fleetwood Resident

#### Via Microsoft Teams:

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

Graeme Kellott (GK) Environment Agency  
Mia Mullender (MM) Environment Agency  
Chun Teh (CT) United Utilities  
Dan Blacow (DB) United Utilities  
Stuart Bond (SB) United Utilities  
Louise Ashworth (LA) United Utilities  
Luke Matthews (LM) United Utilities  
Adam Sugden (AG) Fylde BC

##### **FLAG Representatives**

David Astall (DA) Great Eccleston FLAG

**Apologies:**

Cllr John Shedwick  
Cllr Alf Clempson  
Cllr Elizabeth Webster  
Cllr Tony Johnson  
Cllr Richard Rendell  
Diane Andrews  
Darren Bell  
Brian Birkett  
Pippa Hodgkins  
Dawn Bromley  
Tom Myerscough (TM)  
Roger Weatherell (RW)  
Michael O'Flaherty  
Ashley Anderton (AA)  
Alan Ellerton

LCC Councillor, Thornton & Hambleton  
LCC Councillor, Poulton-le-Fylde  
Brock-with-Catterall Councillor  
Preesall Town Council  
Cleveleys Park Ward  
Out Rawcliffe Parish Council  
Fylde BC  
Lancashire County Council (Flood Management Team)  
Environment Agency  
United Utilities  
Wyre Rivers Trust  
Churchtown FLAG  
Hambleton FLAG  
Preesall FLAG  
Hambleton 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.

**2. Apologies:**

Apologies were noted as above.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting:**

CG asked whether there were any comments on the minutes of 08 September 2022.

**Matters arising:**

There were no matters raised from the previous minutes.

The minutes of the meeting were therefore confirmed as a true record.

**Actions:**

- *“The Making Space for Water Group arrange for a walk through with Thornton FLAG to include the section of Royles Brook on ICI land and behind Woodland Ave, Thornton.”* PL confirmed that the Group has agreed to undertake a walk through but no date had yet been agreed with the FLAG.

**4. What’s going on in the region - Reports from Flood Management Authorities:**

**United Utilities:**

- DB gave an update on the Dynamic Networks Monitoring; installation of the sewer flow meters in the Fleetwood catchment is progressing – The meters will allow UU to monitor flows in their foul network to highlight areas of concern where there is localised flooding or where spillages to the river network could occur. He noted that the meters need time to calibrate and to determine what is normal operation and what is unusual activity.
- DB reported that UU have been undertaking maintenance works to the pumping station on Kiln Lane, Hambleton. He was aware that residents had raised concerns about activity at the station, but wanted to assure them that this was normal activity and there were no issues at the station.
- DB reported that a long-standing issue of odours in the area around Champagne Ave, Cleveleys is being addressed – monitors have been placed in the area to establish the source of the odour, so that it can be removed.
- DB confirmed that there were no major flooding incidents to report and things were very much “business as usual”.
- **Questions to UU**
- JT said that despite repeated reports of flooding in Hambleton to the agencies, there did not appear to have been anything done to resolve these issues.

He said that he had reported to the EA that the outfall to the river that takes water from Riverside Drive and Wyreside Drive is not working – during heavy rainfall no water comes out of it. He said that the EA reported later that this is a UU asset and had been confirmed working correctly. JT did not consider this correct and asked that it be checked again.

He added that not enough work was being undertaken to resolve the issues in Hambleton and asked that the outstanding issues be addressed as a matter of urgency.

PL replied that, over the last 18 months, there had been considerable work to resolve flooding issues in Hambleton, principally by LCC, but also by the other agencies. He reported that major works had been undertaken to resolve the flooding on Kiln Lane (which had proven to be a major blockage in a private culvert), along Carr Lane and on Sandy Lane. He also noted that the reported flooding on Peddar Lane was not related to the drainage on Riverside Drive and Wyreside Drive and that the issue was resolved by a local resident clearing leaves from the roadside gullies.

MO confirmed that LCC (Highways) had undertaken significant repairs including the blocked culvert on Kiln Lane, and installation of new drainage and repairing of existing issues on Carr Lane. He also confirmed that the RMAs had formed a special work group to deal exclusively with flooding in Hambleton.

DB said that UU would take a look at the outfall and report back to the Forum on any findings.

#### **Action - UU**

- RBr noted that the main issue that is being reported to the Forum is silting up of existing drains. He reported that a recent issue outside the hairdressers in Garstang had been resolved by cleaning silt in the highway drainage. He said that the authorities are spending a lot of time and money talking about flooding issues when they should be concentrating on clearing blockages and desilting watercourses. He added that this was extremely frustrating for local residents who suffered from frequent flooding due to blocked drainage systems.
- MO replied that in Wyre and Fylde there are two gully machines working full time to clear blockages. He said that, while ten or twenty years ago every gully in the region was cleaned annually, cuts in funding means that now cleaning of gullies is looked at differently. Gullies that are on primary routes or are known to block regularly are included as part of an annual clean while all others are only cleaned when reported as blocked. He noted that there are 30,000 gullies that need cleaning, and so far this year only 40% of them have been completed.
- MO reported that two to three ago there had been a short but heavy rainfall event that coincided with a high tide and caused some minor localised flooding; LCC received around 150 calls reporting blocked gullies and flooding of roads. As the tide receded and surface water outfalls were released the floodwater dropped and the number of genuine issues was less than a handful. He noted that asking the current system of allowing the public to report blocked gullies inundates the service and diverts key equipment away from the genuine need. He also noted that, in many cases, the issue causing flooding often turns out to be related to private drainage; while LCC will clear drainage that is their responsibility, often the root cause is private.
- PH said that the dyke system was the “motorway” for surface water drainage. When the dykes are blocked the water cannot flow freely and spending money on clearing gullies has limited benefit. Hillylaid Pool watercourse did not used to flood, but it is now so heavily silted that the water levels in the dyke are permanently high and water does not flow. He said that the dyke used to draw water from the roadside gullies and this is no longer the case.

- RBr said that we need the combined talent of the various agencies to work together and make sure that the main dykes are regular cleared to maintain flows.
- PJ added that there are a number of areas in Thornton where access to the watercourse is very restricted and the FLAG is concerned that these areas are not being fully maintained to ensure flows – only by a return to regular desilting such as when this was done by Wyre Council will allow the dykes to become free flowing again. GK replied that he had issues with this comment, but would cover them in his report
- CR asked for confirmation on responsibilities – LCC are responsible for roads and gullies, and EA are responsible for watercourses? She has noticed a lot of changes in the last few years that the main watercourses in the Pilling area are not being maintained as well as previous – she asked whether this is a problem due to cuts to maintenance budgets. PH said that he believed that the EA would not remove silt as they consider it beneficial to wild life. He noted that the EA has planted trees adjacent to the watercourse at the end of New Lane, Thornton which prevents cleaning of the watercourse by mechanical means and that the silt level in this watercourse was now so high that it no longer flowing properly. He added that Wyre Council have been asking National Highways to clear culverts of silt, which would be naturally cleaned by the action of flowing water if the watercourses were properly maintained.
- GK replied that the EA are undertaking regular maintenance of Hillylaid Pool watercourse including regular vegetation cuts and desilting of the watercourse close to Holts Farm where machine access is possible. Further downstream, where the area is wooded, close to School Road, access by machine is restricted and works are undertaken by hand. He noted that the main works currently focus on weed removal; he added that there is little weed growth in the channel at the moment due to the tree growth. As such he is proposing that watercourse maintenance in this area will concentrate on obstruction removal to improve flow. He also noted that the bed of the watercourse is lower than the invert level of the bridge on Belvedere Road and that removal of silt upstream of the bridge would have no effect on flow. Moving further downstream, there is no machine access so desilting is restricted. He also noted that the bed level isn't a smooth gradient and there are a number of artificial peaks and troughs where roads cross over the watercourse. He added that there is no point desilting a section of the watercourse if the water is unable to pass an artificially high barrier further downstream.
- GK acknowledged that the whole surface water network is connected and that highway drains and UU surface water drains discharged to the main watercourses; any blockages here would have an effect on local drainage and could lead to flooding on the highway. He agreed that there needed to be a joined up approach to tackle the issues in the Thornton area catchment, but did not consider that desilting works on their own would improve the situation.
- GK confirmed that the EA had a small maintenance team of just three people to deal with watercourse maintenance and relied heavily on contractors to undertake most of the works.
- PH noted that the depth of the water in the dyke upstream of Belvedere Road is four foot higher than it should normally be. He noted that the dyke had not been desilted in at least fifteen years and suggested that it should be cleaned out to see what happens. GK replied that he would not be able to do this as he could not get funding for the works as there are not enough properties at risk of flooding to justify the costs. PH did not accept this response arguing that the cost would be minimal as the desilting could be undertaken by a digger on a pontoon in around two days.

- CG said that the agencies needed to work better together to resolve this issue, and that this is the point of the Flood Forum. He said that there were possible solutions that could be agreed between the flood agencies and local landowners. He noted that there is currently a study on surface water drainage in the Thornton area and hopefully the report would identify works that could be undertaken to improve the flooding situation. He did acknowledge that one of the difficulties in approving works is that the number of properties at risk from flooding remains low and funding is based on properties at risk.
- CG noted that the silt is coming off the land and the best thing would be to prevent silt entering the watercourses in the first place. PH acknowledged this but noted that he had been made aware that operatives from Wyre Council no longer collected cuttings from mowing grass verges but allowed them to go down the highway gullies and into the dykes. He noted that there is a huge volume of silt coming off the Arundel Estate into the dyke on the farm. He added that the built up of silt in the watercourse prevents his land from draining quickly and leaves standing water on his fields. If further rainfall occurs the land can no longer absorb any more water and leads to flooding to local properties.
- CG asked OT for her comments as she deals with Land Management for Natural England and they have been doing some good works around the country on getting rid of water. OT said that the kind of soil dictated how well it could hold water. She asked PH whether he put muck back on the ground – PH confirmed this – so the land was likely to have a high organic content and would likely make a good sponge to hold water. She noted that work is currently being done to hold back water higher in the catchments as due to the high levels of development in Thornton the land has less of a sponge effect as it is built over.
- RBr said that he had been looking at the minutes from the making space for Water meeting on 24 November – he noted that PL had asked whether the EA had obtained a quotation for works to desilt Hillylaid Pool and GK had replied that he was still awaiting a quotation. He also noted that there were reports of trees blocking the watercourse and some metal fencing at the same location. He concluded that the free running of local watercourses was paramount in reducing flood risk.
- CR asked what happened as a consequence of the MSfW and Forum meetings; the meetings should not just be for people to go over issues time and time again and nothing gets resolved - can we not contact the EA CEO and demand that the EA prioritise the desilting of watercourses?

MO agreed, adding that there are a number of people on the Forum who could influence others to make the changes needed to resolve most flooding issues. He noted that there are limited budgets and limited resources, adding that those with political influence should be looking to increase these to allow the agencies to better undertake their roles.

CR said that Wyre Council should be putting pressure on the EA to sort out issues with clearing watercourses and protecting properties. KM noted that the main issue is that the EA does not have the money to undertake extensive works on a regular basis – CR replied that the EA should prioritise their works and fight their corner to get money required to undertake the works.

GK replied that the EA already prioritise their works and this is to ensure that the maximum number of properties are protected from flooding for the limited budget available. Money is currently spent on areas with the most flood risk to property.

- JT noted that a lot of landowners are responsible for maintaining watercourses, but many are not aware of their individual responsibilities. He noted that the landowner has recently cleaned out the watercourse off Marsh Lane, Hambleton into which four pipes discharge.

He noted that two of these pipes belong to UU and are running well, but two belonging to LCC (Highways) are blocked and lead to flooding of the highway during heavy rainfall.

**Action - LCC (Highways)**

- JT noted that it can be difficult to ensure that issues are reported to the correct persons and it often feels like complainants are passed from pillar to post when contacting the various agencies. He considered that there should be a team dedicated to dealing with issues in one location, who can go in and sort out all issues in one go, rather than sorting issues on a piecemeal basis.
- PJ noted that the Thornton FLAG held a meeting recently and queried what the future role of the FLAG was, as they are repeatedly reporting issues which are not being addressed. He said that the FLAGs were doing a good job in reporting issues but they are concerned that works are not being done.
- CR asked how many properties are at risk from flooding from watercourses – CG replied that there have been a number of studies which have concluded that there are around 40 properties are at risk of flooding in Thornton and around 130 properties in total across the whole borough. CR queried this low number, but CG pointed out that the main risk to properties is from the tide and here there are in excess of 30,000 properties at risk. This is why a lot of money and effort is being put into building new sea defences. The flooding from watercourses is really more inconvenience flooding (ie flooding of roads and gardens) with very few residential properties affected. He added that current maintenance works are targeted in areas where the limited budgets could have the biggest effect.
- RBr said that a change in approach is required to ensure that the works demanded by the public were being undertaken.
- RB said that financial pressures are a major factor in getting works undertaken, as is the lack of manpower in all agencies. He said that a lot of national expenditure is going on social and caring issues and budgets for maintenance are restricted. He noted that, due to a lack of staff, many works are contracted out to third parties which he considered to be expensive and inflexible.

On top of these issues, changes to the climate is also having an effect with more severe rainfall events taking place.

He considered that for a change in approach to be undertaken, it was likely that the introduction of Internal Drainage Boards would be necessary, but queried the cost in setting these up. At the moment he considered that the Flood Forum is the best means of reporting and resolving flooding issues.

- CR said that during heavy rainfall her field is reduced from two acres to 10m by 15m due to flooding – she said that this is not just “inconvenience flooding” as it has serious knock-on effects – she reiterated the words of those present that something urgent needs to be done to improve local drainage.
- MO noted that LCC has the Love Clean Streets app [Report It on the go with Love Clean Streets - Lancashire County Council](#) that allows the public to report all manner of highway problems, including flooding, but this creates major problems for the authority as it raises people’s expectations and overwhelms the limited resources.
- CG said that drainage issues needed to be addressed by the authorities as a collective and this is the role of the MSfW Group and Flood Forum. He noted that there are a myriad of issues that need to be addressed. JQ noted that an improved surface water system would ease the load on the UU systems so there is an incentive for UU to contribute to works on watercourses. CG noted that UU have contributed to the new wetland sites.

## **Environment Agency:**

A pre-meeting update to the Forum is included as [Appendix 1](#)

GK provided an update on maintenance works;

- As previously discussed, the hinge on the east gate of the Garstang flood barrier is broken – as such the east gate cannot be operated; the west gate remain operational. The EA cannot undertake repairs until Spring / Summer so the stop logs upstream of the east gate will remain in place over the winter period.
- The cast iron tidal flap on the Fleetwood Quay outfall from Copse Brook has been replaced. There remain issues with the headwall and it is hoped to tie in repairs to the headwall with the Fleetwood scheme – GK will advise once more information is available.
- The watercourse maintenance team have undertaken desilting works on the Cockers Dyke and Wheelfoot watercourse in Pilling. He explained that the EA does undergo desilting works but targets such works where it would have the most benefit.
- GK reported that a tree in Hillylaid Pool, behind Baines School, Thornton as reported by Thornton FLAG, has now been removed. He is chasing up the removal of a tree behind Millfield School.
- The EA are planning to remodel all the tributaries on the River Wyre, including Royles Brook, Hillylaid Poo, Springfield and Horse Bridge Dyke (including silt level readings) so that the flood modelling can be refreshed by 2024. Hopefully funding will be available to undertake this works, which make lead to targeted desilting works.
- In response to the query from Thornton FLAG as to whether EA's contractors are accessing the watercourse behind Woodland Ave and School Road, GK confirmed that he had spoken with the contractor and confirmed that this is the case. He reiterated the proposed change to the policy that, in future, in wooded areas, contractors will concentrate more on removal of obstructions.
- The new access at Stanah outfall has been completed. It is proposed to desilt the outfall before Christmas to have improve flows under normal conditions.
- With regard to the desilting of Hillylaid Pool behind School Road, GK reported that his contractor has confirmed that they cannot access the watercourse with a machine to undertake desilting works, so haven't provided a quotation for this. He did note that access into this section of the watercourse is very restrictive and machinery cannot gain access.
- GK confirmed that the camera on the watercourse by D-Fit on Red Marsh Industrial Estate is operational and Thornton FLAG have been given access to the website to allow them to monitor it live.
- With regard to a joint inspection of watercourses and NPL land, GK said that he would make himself available for any planned visit.

## **Questions to EA**

- JB thanked LCC (Highways) and Wyre Council for investigation works on the surface water drainage in Churchtown. He asked if there was an update on the condition of the pipe in front of the bungalows on The Avenue. PL replied that the drain was heavily blocked with silt and debris but is now clear and running free. He confirmed that this is a 6" pipe which eventually discharges in to the River Wyre downstream of the bridge. He noted that the jetter was unable to pass beyond 40m downstream of the manhole, so it is

assumed that there is a connection to the main A6 drain close to the junction of the Avenue and the A6 rather than a direct connection to the river. It was also noted that several of the road gullies on the east side of the A6 were blocked and LCC were planning to clear these.

- JB asked whether a camera survey would be undertaken on the A6 and the access to Kippax Farm – PL replied that this would need to be discussed with LCC, but would be helpful. MO confirmed that the gullies had now been cleared.
- JB asked if there was any update on the proposal to install a penstock downstream of Green Wood. PL confirmed that he had discussed this with the FLAG and that he would be writing to the owner of Green Wood to ask for consent to undertake this work.
- RBr asked whether the EA undertake regular testing of the Garstang barrier – GK confirmed this was undertaken once a month.
- RBr asked whether there was a conflict between schemes to retain water on land and others to clear land. GK replied that the approach to storing water depended largely on location – further up the catchment there is a wish to retain water on the land to slow the flow downstream, while in developed areas the wish is to remove it to prevent flooding to properties. He did not consider this to be a conflict, more a case of using the correct strategy for the specific area.
- JT noted that the culverting of watercourses is a major issue and often results in surface water unable to discharge to a watercourse and flowing onto the highway, KG replied that the EA do enforce this on main river watercourses.
- KM asked what the EA's plans are for reducing the height of embankments, particularly Over Wyre, where the watercourses are no longer running into the river because the embankment is now too high. GK noted that the scheme was undertaken around 1980 to protect residential property from flooding. The River Wyre is embanked downstream from Scorton and contains water within a relatively small area within the embankments – the EA does not have any plans to lower embankments, but will continue to maintain the existing structures. PH noted that watercourses run through the embankment and have a non-return valve which closes when the water level is high – he noted that the water level in many watercourses is artificially high due to the lack of desilting and many of the valves are now shut and the water no longer discharges.

### **Wyre Council:**

- CG confirmed that Wyre Council has now signed the contract for the Phase 1 works on the sea defences at Rossall Beach which are expected to start in March 2023. The bigger scheme is going through MMO licencing and planning permission. This is expected to be completed early in the New Year.

### **Questions to Wyre Council**

- KM noted that part of the scheme involves storing of large boulders on the grassed area opposite the Sea Cadets' base in Fleetwood – he noted that this is a highly used area, while the sunken car park nearby is not as heavily used and could be utilised. CG replied that the car park is not large enough to accommodate the number of boulders and welfare facilities required, is not located close to the works (as is the grassed area) and does not provide a direct access to the promenade. He confirmed that it had been considered but dismissed as unsuitable.

KM noted that the land opposite the Sea Cadets' base has a historic covenant on it preventing its use; CG confirmed that the Council has taken legal advice on this and confirmed that the covenant did not prevent its use for these temporary works. He added there isn't an alternate site nearby that the Council own and could use for the sea defence works.

IS noted that it had been reported to the Blackpool Gazette that both phases of the sea defence works have been approved which is incorrect. CG replied that the article confirmed that funding for the two schemes had been approved from the EA, which is correct. He confirmed that Phase 2 of the scheme does not yet have planning consent but had been applied for. He also confirmed that the Council has considered the complaint made about the covenant on the land and had sought out further legal advice.

IS stated that he had made a formal complaint to the Council but had not yet received a response. CG replied that the complaint has been passed back to himself to consider additional information and a response would be sent shortly. He added that this meeting was not the correct forum to discuss this matter and that a response would be sent.

IS noted that the scheme is to be presented to the Planning Committee in January and queried how permission could be given if the legal response had not yet been received. CG replied that the council's position is that the covenant did not prevent use of the site. He noted that the covenant is not a planning consideration and that issue of noise and vibration will be considered as part of the planning process.

RBR noted that this issue was not directly related to flooding issues and did not think that it was something that the Forum should be discussing.

### **Lancashire County Council (Highways):**

- MO provided an update on the works being undertaken by LCC (Highways)
- LCC (highways) have continued planned and reactive maintenance and clearing of highway gullies. Since 9 September and up to 18 November LCC have cleaned 4,389 highway gullies (this is 49% of the total number of LCC gullies).
- During recent heavy rainfall LCC received 150 complaints of defects in a two hour period, most of which resolved themselves as the tide level dropped and gullies were allowed to drain.
- LCC have continued to identify long-standing flooding issues, including works in St Michaels; Bull Park Lane / Grange Lane, Hambleton; and High Street, Garstang. He noted that further works on private land were required for High Street and this required further discussion.
- Other works included Poulton Road, Fleetwood and Station Road in Thornton

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

- RBR asked for an update on the flooding on High Street / Lancaster Road. MO replied that the drain has been inspected and there is an issue (blockage or collapse) under private land. It is a fairly large job and will need to be discussed further with the residents and the MSfW group.
- LR asked whether the recent works to clear roots in the drainage on Park Lane, Preesall have been completed. MO confirmed that some works have been undertaken but were not complete yet. He raised a concern that the principle fault was likely to be the private discharge downstream. LR confirmed that residents on Green Lane, Preesall had cleaned out the private culvert and water was running well. She added that

improvements undertaken have meant that, so far this year, the properties have not suffered in flooding in 2022. She thanked the authorities for their help in dealing with flooding issues here.

LR noted that one of the main causes of flooding into properties was from vehicles driving through highway flood water. MO informed the Forum that LCC had obtained funding to provide road closure barriers on Lancaster Road and Sandy Lane and to empower residents to close roads during flooding.

- CR said that the new LCC reporting system is fantastic, but acknowledged that it opened the authority to significant work in dealing with all the reported issues.
- RB said that he was disappointed that the proposed works at Sunnyside Terrace could not go ahead as the landowner has refused consent for works on their land. He hoped that these works could be agreed.
- CR said that there is significant water running down Preesall Hill and asked reiterated her request to look at making improvements to the drainage at the bottom of Carr Gate. She asked for a meeting with PL / MO to look at possibilities. This was agreed.

**Action - CR / PL / MO**

### **Natural England:**

- No report was received.

#### **Questions to Natural England**

None raised.

### **Wyre Rivers Trust:**

- No report was received from the Trust.
- CG reported that the Trust has been undertaking a great deal of work in the Wyre catchment, including the wetlands scheme on King George's Playing Fields, Thornton which has now been approved and will go ahead in the summer of 2023.
- RBr noted that TM had previously talked about soil quality – he added that soil quality is the most important asset in dealing with water. Both CR and CG agreed, particularly on the uplands area where water storage is important in reducing flooding downstream. He said that there is a new scheme for paying farmers to manage their land for the public good. - [The Environmental Land Management scheme - National Audit Office \(NAO\) report](#)

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

None raised.

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

- PL reported that the MSfW Group met (via Teams) on 24 November and that minutes of the meeting have been distributed to the Forum.

#### **Questions to MSfW Group**

None raised.

## **6. 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.

### **Churchtown FLAG**

- JB said that there were no issues that had not been discussed in the meeting.

### **Cleveleys FLAG**

- DW reported that there had been significant rainfall in November, but no flooding had been experienced. He noted that the main risk to Cleveleys in November is high spring tides, especially if combined with a strong westerly winds; fortunately the winds had been only moderate and from the south west.

### **Garstang FLAG**

- RBr said that all matters had been previously discussed but reiterated his request that the flooding issue on High Street is investigated as a matter of urgency.

### **Great Eccleston FLAG**

- DA submitted a written report to the MSfW meeting of 24 November including
  - Flooding on Raikes Road during heavy rainfall
  - Flooding to St. Mary's Road (junction with Pennine Way)
  - Flooding to Copp Lane

Full details are reported in the minutes of the MSfW meeting

### **Hambleton & Stalmine FLAGs**

- The FLAG submitted a comprehensive report to the MSfW meeting of 24 November detailing the main issues in Hambleton and Stalmine. – most have been / are being addressed in the Issue & Actions Log.
- JT queried the comments re Rydal Ave / Coniston Ave and Pauls Lane – PL replied that the two areas, although far apart, are connected by the same culverted watercourse. He added that the issue at Pauls Lane was probably related to local issues there which would be investigated.
- JT presented a number of photographs showing recent flooding to MO and asked that the issues be addressed.

### **Out Rawcliffe FLAG**

- No report has been received.

### **Preesall FLAG**

- LR said that, to date, 2022 had been the first year in some time that the properties on Sunnyside Terrace had not suffered flooding. She gave her thanks to the RMAs and looked forward to the issues being resolved long term.
- PO asked whether the tidal flaps on the 'lakes' estate in Preesall were being maintained – PL replied that while the older properties in the area discharged northwards to the sea, the newer properties discharged to the watercourse to the

north of the roundabout on Pilling Lane. As this watercourse has now been reversed and flows towards Meadow Ave and beyond, it is assumed that the estate no longer flows out through the tidal flap. Further investigation will be required to confirm this. PL noted that BB is currently investigating the drainage in this area and will be looking at this later in the year.

- PO noted that during heavy rainfall events, there is substantial flooding on Green Dicks Lane and queried the capacity of the pump on Pilling Lane. CR seconded this, noting that when the pump switches on the water level drops quickly. CG noted that the pump is automatic; he noted that the station is included in the Innovation Fund and asked that, as the scheme developed, PO and CR worked with the council to provide local knowledge.
- PO noted that the river is changing its course and there is concern that the tidal flaps, including Grange Pool, Pegs Pool, Hackenshall watercourse, and Green Lane were cleared through the salt marsh so that water could fully discharge. CG noted that the issue is that the salt marsh is building up higher than the land behind and Natural England were against machines going onto the salt marsh to clear flaps.

### **St. Michaels FLAG**

- No report was submitted
- PL reported that he had attended a number of meetings with the FLAG to discuss flooding issues in the village – these are covered in the MSfW minutes.

### **Thornton FLAG**

- PJ thanked the EA for installing a camera on Royles Brook watercourse – this allows the FLAG to remotely monitor levels in the watercourse.
- PJ reported an update on the investigation if the culvert under the electricity sub-station at Stanah – National Grid have confirmed a potential collapse of the culvert and are addressing the problem.
- The FLAG is planning three site visits in January with Wyre and the EA to look at issues in Thornton.
- The FLAG is looking to inspect a potential land slip on Hillylaid Pool to the rear of Hastings Road early in the New Year.
- PJ reminded the Forum that removal of the debris from Royles Brook close to Anchorsholme Lane East is still outstanding – the EA have previously agreed to include this section as part of their maintenance works.
- The FLAG are planning to inspect Hillylaid Pool from 104 School Road towards New Lane in the New Year and will forward any issues to the MSfW group.
- RB asked whether National Highways had completed clearance of all culverts under the A585. PL replied that he was aware whether all had been completed although Anchorsholme had been done and work had been done by Morrisons roundabout. He would check with NH and report back.

#### **Action - PL**

- RG said that he was very disappointed with the progress of these works, which have been promised for over 17 months, although he added that the works may not be necessary if the watercourse was properly maintained and allowed to flow. He queried the claim that siltation of the watercourses was not a big problem and not the main issue.

- KM asked whether there was a known issue with Horse Bridge Dyke on Breck Road, Poulton – he said that golfers were reporting that the watercourse was running the opposite way to how it should. It was noted that National Highways are working on the watercourse as part of the new road works. JQ noted that a new headwall has been built on the Breck Road side of the works and were working on the opposite side; when the river is high water cannot discharge freely into Skippool Creek and will build upstream of the outfall; this may be why it appeared that the watercourse was running the opposite way.
- PH said that there was little point in NH clearing the culvert on New Lane as it would likely silt up again until the siltation levels either side of the pipe were lowered. CG said that the trapping and removal of silt before it got into the watercourse is important; while agreeing this, PH did not consider that this was a realistic goal and there is lots of silt coming from many sources.
- PH considered that, should there be significant and prolonged rainfall then it was likely that New Lane would flood again.
- DA noted that Wyre operatives who cut grass were continuing to blow cuttings into the highway gullies, blocking them – he said there was potential for flooding as a consequence. CG said that the operatives had been instructed not to blow cuttings into the gullies and would be reminded again.
- RBr said that the meeting had been refreshing and that there is a consensus of the Forum that works to clear silt from watercourses.
- RG noted that since the EA took over maintenance of watercourses from Wyre Council, the works were not getting done to the same standard – he asked whether the Council could take back cleaning of watercourses. PJ noted that this had been discussed previously, but had not been progressed.

## **7. Communications Update:**

- Following some confusion on 27 June as to who contact during a flooding event, Wyre has updated contact details on its website. <https://www.wyre.gov.uk/emergency-planning/flooding/8>

Other information is available at [The Flood Hub](#)

## **8. Emergency Planning Update:**

- PL confirmed that Section 2 of the Multi-Agency Flood Plan is to be updated. This includes specific site information, including contact details, pumping plans and any site specific issues. PL will be contacting the FLAGs at some point over the coming months to seek updated information.

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

- No requests were made.

## 10. Any other business:

- EB reported that, in March 2022, Professor George Aggidis gave a lecture on behalf of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, in which he stated that we should prepare for a rise in sea level of 3m over the next 100 years. EB noted that none of the current defences, either on the coast or along the river would withstand such a rise – what are we going to do to prevent extensive flooding?

CG replied that the current defences have allowed for a projected increase of 1m over this time period. EG noted that the defences being built now are meant to provide flood protection for at least 100 years – he noted that the additional increases in the sea wall level of 1.25m was not sufficient should we experience a tidal surge of 1.2m as experienced in 1927.

CG noted the comments but confirmed that the Council could only work with the official projected figures based on information from the IPCC. He added that the sea defence works aim to also build up beach levels to build up natural defences.

EG said that he considered that the role of the Environment Agency is mainly to ensure that residents could get insurance for flooding; he noted that Ian Rowland (EA) had previously noted that the EA “is not responsible for loss of land or property.”

CG replied that management of flood and coastal erosion risk from the sea was not just about putting up big barriers but creating buffers, and that does not necessarily need huge concrete sea defences. This new approach is the objective of the innovation scheme that that Wyre Council is leading on through the Flood & Coast Resilience Innovation Programme. [Flood and coastal resilience innovation fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/flood-and-coastal-resilience-innovation-fund)

## 11. Next meeting:

- 09 February 2023. 1pm start - Details to follow.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Pre-meeting report from Environment Agency (December 2022)**

#### **Maintenance Programme:**

The maintenance work the Environment Agency plans to carry out this financial year (1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023) 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 September 2022 from the Environment Agency:**

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

Garstang Flood Basin Training dates from September 2022 to November 2022:

08/09/2022

26/10/2022

10/11/2022

Catterall Flood Basin Training dates from September 2022 to November 2022:

08/09/2022

26/10/2022

10/11/2022

Highgate Park Training dates from September 2022 to November 2022:

28/09/2022

26/10/2022

28/11/2022

## **Maintenance Work:**

The majority of our frequent grass and weed cuts have now been completed with vermin and wrack removal work programmed over the winter months.

We would like to update you on the current situation at Garstang Flood Gates. Following reports that the east gate was out of alignment, we organised an inspection to determine the cause. The investigations have been undertaken and have revealed that the hinge on the east gate has detached from its concrete mounting. This means that we will not be able to operate the east gate until it is repaired. To undertake the repair, the gate will need to be removed to allow access to the hinge mounting. This is a specialist activity which requires careful planning. Any in channel works during the winter period present a safety risk to personnel and risk equipment (scaffolding etc) being washed away and potentially increasing the damage to the gate, therefore the repair work will be planned after the winter period.

We understand that this will cause concern to the local communities and to ensure that a standard of flood risk protection is provided to people and property downstream of the basin, additional stop logs have already been installed upstream of the floodgate on the east side. These allow us to be able to use 90% of the basin capacity and provide a good standard of protection. The stop logs will remain in place over winter and 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 tidal outfall door at Copse Brook in Fleetwood failed and allowed tidal water to flow upstream into Copse Brook. We have replaced the damaged outfall door on Copse Brook which is now functioning as required. We are now considering options to refurbish the site and will keep you updated on any progress.

## **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. Our current best estimate for the planning application submission is winter 2022/2023. We are planning to engage with the public on the scheme design and planning application submission in advance of this.

Further information relating to the scheme is available via the scheme's Flood Hub 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 Cope Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme:**

The scheme will construct approximately 800 metres of tidal flood defence wall and reconstruction of the Cope Brook outfall to provide protection to Fleetwood. The scheme will protect over 2,200 properties from flooding from the Wyre Estuary Frontage. Since the last update we have received an indicative allocation of £4.6M of Other Government Department Funding on top of the £1.77M of Local Levy funding from the North West Regional Flood and Coast Committee. We had already received 'technical approval' of our Outline Business Case, subject to the funding gap being bridged. We are now in a position where we could resubmit the Outline Business Case for full approval and move towards the Full Business Case when detailed design would be undertaken. However, due to delivery commitments on other schemes we are unable to proceed at this time. The scheme is within our work plan ready to be restarted when delivery resources are made available.

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). ABP are providing project support by contributing to the cost of the structural survey and providing us with Ground Investigations that will help inform the final design options. The Our Future Coasts project being led by Wyre Council has an ambition to create an area of saltmarsh on 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 continuing to work with both partners looking at a range of delivery options.

### **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