



“REDUCING FLOOD RISK”

ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2018

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INTRODUCTION

On 20th July 2007 devastating floods hit Thatcham and around 1,200 homes were flooded. Since then a number of people and agencies have been working together to try and ensure that Thatcham is protected as much as possible from flooding in the future. Thatcham Flood Forum is one such group.

Thatcham Flood Forum was created in 2008 for the purpose of:

- Ensuring that Thatcham's interests are represented at local, regional and national level in respect of matters relating to flooding, flood risk and development, management of water and drainage and emergency planning in Thatcham
- Working closely with relevant agencies to ensure that actions identified by the report "Flooding in Thatcham", West Berkshire Council flooding reviews and any subsequent reports are taken forward
- Monitoring and progress provisions of the Surface Water Management Plan for Thatcham
- Monitoring progress on actions
- Responding to relevant consultations (e.g. on drainage plans, the location of new housing etc)
- Overseeing the production, development and updating of a Thatcham Flood Forum website to keep the residents of Thatcham informed by all suitable means

Five years on it is time to review the Forum's purpose and direction and adopt an action plan that sets out its objectives for the future.

On Wednesday 26th June 2013 a brainstorming session was held with representatives of many organisations, residents and stakeholders, whose valuable input has provided the foundation for development of this Action Plan.

The appendix at the end of this document provides a record of all the issues raised during the session.

THATCHAM FLOOD FORUM MISSION STATEMENT

To work with key partners to anticipate and prepare for future major surface water flood events and to put in place physical defences and emergency systems to reduce the impact on local residents and properties.

GOALS / OBJECTIVES

1. To maximise Preparedness for a major flood event.
2. To enforce Awareness of the continuing risk and communicate progress on the implementation of preventative measures.
3. To lead on Action Readiness working with a range of community partners.

KEY ACTIVITIES

1. PREPAREDNESS

Ref	Action	Priority
1.1	Share information with, and learn from the experiences of, other similar organisations	Ongoing
1.2	Lobby developers for installation of flood resilience measures during construction of new properties and social landlords as part of general maintenance	Ongoing
1.3	<p>Work with West Berkshire Council, the Environment Agency and other partners to maximise national capital funding for physical works for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flood retention basins ▪ Property resilience enhancement <p>And work with West Berkshire Council, using Surface Water Management Plan computer models, to identify clusters of properties requiring incremental resilience measures following each retention pond implementation</p>	High
1.4	<p>Work with West Berkshire Flood Action Group to obtain committed implementation of a drainage maintenance regime covering assets owned by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local authorities ▪ Thames Water ▪ Riparian landowners ▪ Landlords 	High

Ref	Action	Priority
1.5	Work with local town and parish Councils to ensure the Forum's comments are expressed during the planning consultation process for proposed developments in significant risk areas	High
1.6	<p>Ensure all historic flood event data is captured so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key flood documents (flood maps, critical drainage areas, strategic flood risk assessments) reflect known reality ▪ Key planning policies for the catchment incorporate the need for mitigation measures both in district plans and policies and local council planning guidelines ▪ Computer models of 2007 event are calibrated to incorporate other flood events and changes to the built environment 	Medium
1.7	Build a plan to attract partnership funding contributions from national and local business, community fundraising, local councils and other bodies	Low

2. AWARENESS

To act as the focal point for information on all aspects of flood risk reduction activities, in the following ways:

Ref	Action	Priority
2.1	Have a presence at local events to promote progress and encourage public participation	Ongoing
2.2	Celebrate significant milestones in implementation of the Surface Water Management Plan with local dignitaries and local/national press	Ongoing
2.3	Develop, maintain and promote web based and social media channels for two way information flow	Ongoing
2.4	Provide a regular “drip feed” of “small wins” to the media channels to reinforce public perception of progress	Ongoing
2.5	Communicate meaningful statistics that are easy to understand	Ongoing

3. ACTION READINESS

Ref	Action	Priority
3.1	Work with local councils to update emergency plans as needed	Ongoing
3.2	Identify and work with community groups to transmit these plans i.e. leaflets, presentations etc	Ongoing
3.3	Ensure emergency telephone numbers for flood victims are available and easily accessible	High
3.4	Design, recruit and roll out a flood warden scheme preferably extending to/incorporating upstream parishes in the surface water catchment	Medium
3.5	Consider creation of a Local Resilience Forum (incorporating Fire, Police, West Berkshire Council and Environment Agency)	Low
3.6	Investigate West Berkshire Council's Incident Room's protocol and assess 24/7 coverage. Consider social media as tool to enhance 2-way communications	Low

KEY PARTNERS

- ✓ Local Town and Parish Councils (Thatcham, Cold Ash, Bucklebury)
- ✓ West Berkshire Council (including Flood Action Group)
- ✓ Environment Agency
- ✓ Thames Water
- ✓ National Flood Forum
- ✓ Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire
- ✓ Neighbourhood Watch
- ✓ Neighbourhood Wardens
- ✓ Thatcham Vision
- ✓ Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Cold Ash Community Partnership
- ✓ Local Community Groups and Organisations

DEPENDENCIES

Resources	Assigned to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Steering Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide direction ○ To prioritise the action plan ○ To monitor progress of the action plan ○ To provide accountability 	Members appointed annually at AGM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Part/Full time “Leaders” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To assign tasks from the action plan ○ To liaise with partners ○ To actively pursue and encourage voluntary participation ○ To motivate the group 	To be appointed at AGM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To prepare and circulate agendas and minutes ○ To prepare documentation as required 	Thatcham Town Council Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To update and maintain Thatcham Flood Forum’s website ○ To issue regular posts on Facebook and Twitter ○ To ensure Forum meetings are well advertised ○ To utilise opportunities to publicise and promote the Forum 	Thatcham Town Council Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To actively source funding streams and pursue funding applications for projects identified by the Forum 	To be appointed at AGM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Treasury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Book-keeping ○ Banking 	To be appointed at AGM

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteers	
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- To take forward individual actions highlighted in the action plan

APPENDIX

Below is a summary of the ideas shared at a brain storming session held on 26th June 2013. Collectively these ideas have shaped the foundation of this Action Plan.

AIMS

- Insurance advice
- Raise concerns over large planning applications
- Fundraiser
- Reduce flooding
- Report to community on Surface Water Management Plan
- Inform on flood risk and climate change
- Influence development planning
- Influence emergency planning
- Maintain long term future of Thattham
- Keep eye on maintenance of drainage (West Berkshire Council/Thames Water)
- Reduce the risk of people's homes being flooded
- Rename/Rebrand Action Group ...
- Need logo and strap line
- Public face
- Equip people with knowledge
- Promote and assist self help
- Work with representatives
- Represent residents
- Retain interests represented at local and national level
- Understand issues
- Communicate both ways
- Need to communicate with households
- Proactive communication
- TTC Planning Committee to inform Flood Forum of planning applications over 10
- Gather data from people set to benefit
- Work with local MP

FUNDING

- Packages for which funding required
- Information pack with sponsorship
- Event - Dinner
- Use Vision as mechanism for funding?
- Flood Fair - % per sale from stalls - flood resilience items
- Grants
- Precept
- Thames Water to fund a pond – green asset?
- Sponsorship
- Approach all stakeholders e.g. social housing etc.
- Approach local businesses (large ones). Book a meeting/presentation to see how they can help
- Businesses, developers, S106, landlords
- Ask social landlords to put flood resistant doors as part of general maintenance
- Matched funding. Developers S106 funds. Get developers to build alleviation
- Insurance Premium donation (individual or company)

COMMUNICATION

- Distribute list of emergency numbers for flood victims – maybe a fridge magnet
- Photography competition
- Publicise website
- Story a month
- Sharing knowledge and experiences
- Sharing stories and experiences (insurance etc)
- Use language and real life stories that people can relate to
- Consider what motivates people to get involved
- Premium reductions
- Link up with WBC and the reports they are producing & tie in
- Communicate meaningful statistics that people understand
- Celebrate small wins
- Volunteer skills
- Inform of improvements
- Learning from others
- Website – Library of information – link to other orgs such as church
- Links to weather sites
- Website needs to be more visible
- Give people a list of small things they can do to protect themselves
- Media
- Newsletters
- Negotiate with TTC – page for flood forum in Newsletter
- Wraparound – Newspaper
- Marketing – Radio, TV when something interesting
- Event – getting message across
- Visit schools and community groups e.g. U3A
- Website must be up to date – Facebook, Twitter, radio, NWN
- More people – Volunteer Fair – stand, public events
- Website & Links, Newbury Weekly News, Schools (educating re. climate change)
- Find out from people what they are doing

Other

- Flood Forum to have an action plan to help people if floods do hit
- Multi use of pond area

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