

Flooding Update: West Wolds Slow the Flow

By the time you read this, we will just have set up a website at:

www.WestWoldsSlowTheFlow.org.uk

It is very early days, so there will not be much content, but this is an important step forward to help us communicate with landowners, farmers, residents and Agency partners.

Since the April-May issue came out, we have held another virtual meeting with Environment Agency, East Riding Council Flood Risk and representatives from Newbald, South Cave and Ellerker Parish Councils. The next meeting is in early June and will include Brantingham Parish Council.

Unfortunately, Covid 19 seems to have prevented North Cave Parish Council from being able to communicate. Despite considerable willingness and enthusiasm by one councillor, NCPCC has been unable to confirm her position as the link with WWSTF. Hotham PC has also been difficult to get in touch with for the last month, but we look forward to working with them before too long.

I certainly hope that we can get prompt involvement from our local parish councils in the catchment, as things are starting to move forwards. A meeting with representatives from Hull and East Riding Catchment Partnership (HERCP) has looked at the ways in which WWSTF can be affiliated to HERCP. Importantly, this may bring access to funding.

Mapping

EA and ERYC are in the process of sharing GIS data with us, which will help in the design and communication of subsequent 'projects'. A first-draft Google Map is here:

<https://www.westwoldsslowtheflow.org.uk/mapping/g/WestWoldsMap.htm>

At present there are just three layers: Surface Water, Catchment boundary and Projects, which can be toggled off/on with the check-boxes at the top of the page. An 'Issues' layer is to be added to give a sense of the flooding effects that are driving the need for the projects.

If anyone knows of any graphic or web designers who would like to help, please get in touch. Equally, we could use the talents of a JavaScript programmer to improve the mapping page. Please ask around and, if you know of anyone who might volunteer - at least a little advice - please let us know.

As per the statement on the map page, there are 'Projects for North Cave Parish only thus far: Newbald, Hotham, South Cave, Ellerker, Brantingham to follow.' We have started with North Cave because that is what we know, based on discussions with local residents. There will be plenty more to follow and we will set out ways for people to submit their suggestions. Photos of flooding problems or opportunities are also always welcome.

It is not the intention to force any solutions on anybody - as stated on the map: 'All proposals are subject to design, evaluation and agreement with agencies, landowners/farmers and residents.' This is vitally important. The partnership model is the key to success, and we are really looking forward to in-depth discussions and design processes. These are likely to yield far more than we can imagine at this point and, critically, not impact on anybody's well-being or income. Obviously Covid-19 is not helping at the moment, but this is a long-term project which needs the involvement of all local stake-holders.

To close, here is a link to **BBC R4's Costing the Earth** from 12th May 2020:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000j22g>

It focuses on Kendal, but the lessons are clear. Importantly, Dr Paul Quinn, Catchment Hydrologist at Newcastle University, states that (at around 12:30 minutes in):

In small catchments, it [Natural Flood Management] can make a big difference. "It works very well in small areas, even with big floods, because it really is the intensity of the storm that makes a difference. So if you can just kill the energy, in the flood wave, you can protect small towns."

"Slow the Flow" (the principle) gets multiple mentions, so WWSTF well 'on-topic'. It also starts to tackle the issues around working effectively with landowners and farmers.

It is frustrating that JCBs are not rolling already – a storm could come along at any time. But it was heartening to hear Victoria Aitken's comment in our last meeting, that we are making good progress and laying a strong foundation for the work to come.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions, or would like to be on the circulation list for email updates, or possible future Zoom meetings, please get in touch: flood@villagelink.info