



# Consultation on Revised Calderdale Flood Action Plan

November 2017

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# Foreword

The Calderdale flood action plan contains actions under four themes to reduce the risk of flooding and improve resilience across Calderdale. It was launched in October 2016, after consultation with the community, statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations. The Calderdale flood partnership made a commitment to review the plan after six months.

In March 2017 the Environment Agency started a light touch review of the plan with lead organisation and the four operations groups providing governance to the themes in the plan. As part of this review community consultation was scheduled for May 2017. In mid-April 2017 the calling of an unexpected general election resulted in the suspension of public consultation by government agencies leading up to the general election.

It was decided to continue with the plan review using the representatives of the four operations groups to ensure wider input before taking the revised plan to the Calderdale Flood Partnership Board in June 2017 for approval. The revised plan was approved and made available through gov.uk, 'Eye on Calderdale' and Calderdale council websites in early July 2017.

As 85% of the actions were updated and revised and more than 20 new actions added to the plan it was proposed and agreed that community comment on the revised plan would still be sought in autumn 2017. This report is a summary of the activity that was undertaken to raise the awareness of communities across Calderdale of the revised plan, progress made on delivery of the plan and get feedback on the plan.

# Executive summary

Consultation on the Calderdale flood action plan was originally scheduled for May 2017 as part of the process to review the Calderdale plan. It was re-scheduled to October 2017 as a result of the calling of the June 2017 general election. This meant that the community were asked their views on a revised flood action plan:

- to check awareness of the plan;
- to assess interest in regular updates;
- to ask whether there is anything we could be doing better;
- to gather any new ideas;
- to gauge interest in volunteering.

Stakeholder groups were targeted in a number of different ways to try and encourage and enable residents and businesses to give feedback on the revised flood action plan.

Approximately 200-250 people were spoken to on a one to one basis at the Piece Hall (Sept 30th and October 1st 2017), and a further 30 residents on October 20th through door knocking in Todmorden and Hebden Bridge.

314 individuals visited the flood action plan page on the Eye on Calderdale website from the launch of the consultation through to the end of October 2017.

A small number of people (14) followed through and gave feedback through a short online form which was also available as a paper form in eleven libraries and three information centres around Calderdale. It is difficult to derive significant trends from the small sample of people who completed the survey.

It is clear from the much larger sample of people who partners met at the Piece Hall and responses given on the feedback forms that a lot of people have not seen the Calderdale flood action plan and are not aware of the range of actions being delivered to improve flood alleviation, risk reduction and improved resilience. Whilst partners are using multiple avenues to disseminate activity to residents, a large proportion of the community have not seen the information partners currently communicate.

Specific feedback on questionnaires details items where there is room for improvement around communicating travel disruption, surface water flooding due to drainage blockages and the rationale for programme and project designs and timescales.

The response to partners at the Piece Hall also confirmed an interest in volunteering in Calderdale to support activities which could help address underlying flood problems.

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# 1. Consultation on the flood plan

## 1.1. How we consulted

An engagement plan was developed and discussed with the flood partnership engagement group. It was decided to gather comments back through a simple, universal feedback form, made available online at 'Eye on Calderdale' and through paper copies available in libraries.

The plan proposed using multiple avenues to engage with community representatives and members of the public including:

- Using an existing community event where there would be a guaranteed footfall to meet with members of the public. In this case the Piece Hall Landmarks and Watermarks People's Fair on the 30th September and 1st October.
- Making the consultation available online at the community 'Eye on Calderdale' website.
- Making paper copies of the information available through relevant libraries and information centres – 11 Calderdale libraries were identified and three information centres.
- Producing multiple accessible materials – slide displays giving an overview of actions delivered and ongoing across the plan, the fully revised plan, a short leaflet summarising the plan and a short focussed feedback form.
- Inviting delivery partners and flood warden groups to work with us to promote the plan at any events they were organising in October. Two groups – Slow the Flow and Treesponsibility supported the Piece Hall weekend engagement and Todmorden flood warden group invited us to share their space at Todmorden Information Centre for a display on their work.
- Sending a letter to Calderdale schools, care homes and registered social landlords, signed by the leader of Calderdale Council (CMBC) asking for feedback on the plan.
- Contacting ten Calderdale business support networks and asking for their support to promote the review to their members.
- Selective Environment Agency door knocking in Todmorden and Hebden Bridge at homes at risk of flooding on October 20th after the annual siren test and the Calderdale '17 exercise.
- Promoting the consultation through the offices of Customer Focus (through a short slide display in offices).
- Developing a briefing pack for councillors and MPs to make them aware of the consultation.
- Asking the Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group and Northern Rail to promote the consultation through their websites and twitter accounts.
- Using CMBC and Environment Agency newsletters, the CMBC website, press releases and twitter accounts to promote the review.
- Developing a poster and flyer to promote the review which were sent to partners in the four operations groups, communications and engagement groups and other local contacts and hand delivered to more than 50 local businesses in the Upper Calder Valley.

The cost of the consultation to the Environment Agency and partners was primarily in staff and volunteer time. Materials developed for the consultation were produced in-house by the Environment Agency.

## 1.2 Outputs of consultation

Table 1 below summarises the main areas of activity and the numbers of people who were targeted or responded to the consultation.

Table 1 – Numbers of People Engaged

Method	Numbers Engaged
<b>Peoples Fair (30th Sept – 1st October)</b>	200-250 people from across Calderdale, see Appendix 1: Visitors were resident across Calderdale, some made comments directly or had specific enquires which were followed up.  Treesresponsibility - 30 people logged interest in volunteering, some of whom have since volunteered in tree planting.  Slow the Flow. – 5 potential volunteers; 4 expressions of interest in projects/available land; 3 invitations to speak at community events.
<b>Visits to Eye on Calderdale flood action plan webpage (25th Sept -31st Oct)</b>	314 unique visits to webpage (165% increase from previous five weeks).  379 visits in total to page (includes repeat visits)  139 entered the website through this page (595% increase on previous five weeks)  Average time on webpage 2min 15 secs.
<b>Libraries: Walsden, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Halifax Central, Elland, Brighouse, Rastrick, Greetland, Ripponden, Kings Cross.</b>	Unknown number of plans taken away; Verbal reports of interest in displays.  Paper questionnaires completed: 2
<b>Information centres: Mytholmroyd flood information centre, Todmorden information centre, Hebden Bridge Town Hall.</b>	Unknown number of plans taken away;  Paper questionnaires completed: 1
<b>October 20th door knocking – Todmorden and Hebden Bridge; Online survey.</b>	30 people on the doorstep  27 people online
<b>Numbers of schools, care homes, RSLs contacted</b>	Sheltered Housing – 11 locations (including 4 Registered Social Landlords)  Secondary Schools - 4  Primary Schools – 24
<b>Promotion through local press coverage, newsletters and radio interview.</b>	Coverage in local newspapers - Halifax Courier, Todmorden and Hebden Bridge News.  Reminder tweets by the Environment Agency on six occasions and repeat tweets by partners including CMBC and CCG. (EA coverage 19, 973 followers across Yorkshire, CMBC 15,998)  Radio Pulse interview - October 20th.
<b>Completed Questionnaires – online</b>	11
<b>Completed paper questionnaires</b>	3
<b>Total Completed Questionnaires</b>	14

Table 2 summarises the feedback from the short questionnaire that we asked people to complete. All the comments made on the feedback forms and in some of the conversations at the Piece Hall are reported in Appendix 1.

Table 2 – Questionnaire Feedback

Question	Answer	Number of People Responding
<b>Have you seen the 2016 Calderdale Flood Action Plan or the revised plan from June 2017?</b>	Yes	9 
	No	4 
	Not sure	1 
<b>What do you think this plan is about?</b>		Please see below and quotes in Appendix 2
<b>Do you know where to get a copy of the plan?</b>	Yes	6 
	No	5 
	Not sure	3 
<b>Do you know where to get information on progress on the Action Plan?</b>	Yes	5 
	No	5 
	Not sure	4 
<b>Do you want regular updates on delivery of the Calderdale Action Plan?</b>	Yes	9 
	No	5 
<b>Would you like to receive our newsletter on delivery of the plan?</b>	Yes	9 
	No	5 
<b>Are there any actions where we could improve how we are working?</b>	Yes	7 
	No	4 
	Not sure	3 
		Details of responses in Appendix 2
<b>Do you want to make any general comments or do you have any new ideas for the Calderdale plan?</b>	Yes	7 
	No	7 
		Details of responses in Appendix 2
<b>Do you work or volunteer with any organisations working on delivery of the Calderdale action plan?</b>	Yes	3 
	No	11 
<b>For monitoring purposes only please can we ask you for your postcode?</b>		HX1; HX2; HX4; HX5; HX6; HX7; OL14; HD3; HD6

In response to question 2 some respondents had a very clear idea on what the plan was about: *'It's about reducing the flood risk in Calderdale over the next 25 years'*.

Others less so, responses to this question included:

*'Confusion';*

*'Assume councils response to what happened last time'.*

## 1.3 Summary

Between 350– 600 people are estimated to have engaged directly with the flood action plan consultation through: contact at the Piece Hall, 'hits' on flood action plan page on the 'Eye on Calderdale' website, spoken to in selective door knocking, completed questionnaires. It is impossible to know whether people visiting the 'Eye on Calderdale' website had also engaged through other direct contact and conversations with colleagues and partners. The number of people using the short feedback form to give feedback was only 14 in total.

The average time spent on the 'Eye on Calderdale' flood action plan webpage was 2 minutes 15 seconds, only 11 people followed through with completing the feedback form. Similarly people spoken to at the Piece Hall generally visited the stand for a few minutes; whilst some had much longer conversations, mostly they did not want to spend time completing a short survey.

The majority of the people spoken to at the Piece Hall had not seen the flood action plan before, some of whom had experienced flooding directly in Calderdale. Of those who completed the feedback form nine people had seen the plan before, but a third had not or were not sure. This is the first time that paper copies of the plan have gone into local libraries.

Of those who did complete the survey or gave verbal feedback there were concerns regarding:

- Transport disruption as a result of work being carried under the plan and how that was communicated;
- Efficiency and speed of work being done.
- Communication of the plan to those who are affected and to those who are not online.
- The re-numbering of actions in the revised plan was thought to be confusing.
- Surface water and blocked drains were raised by several people at the Piece Hall.

Reviews of the plan need to be transparent and trackable by the community. Each time the plan is reviewed it will change in terms of completed actions, revised actions and timelines, and potentially new actions, this raises challenges to ensure that the plan is accessible to everyone who wants to monitor delivery or be kept informed of progress.

## 1.4 Recommendations

1.4.1 More work is required to promote all the work that is being done across Calderdale to reduce the risks and impacts of flooding. The engagement with people at the Piece Hall demonstrated that most people had not seen either the original or revised flood action plan.

Work is currently underway by CMBC to analyse the use of the Eye on Calderdale website and CMBC is consulting on how it can be improved. A number of actions under community resilience are dependent on local engagement to improve how we engage and support residents, including addressing how we target more vulnerable residents, ensuring as many people as possible get flood alerts and warnings and working with local flood wardens and volunteers.

We need to assess what else the Calderdale flood partnership could be doing to improve communication and ensure visibility:

- How can we promote local 'word of mouth' to get information and key messages shared?
- The activity of our engagement group.
- Address both depth of information and regular progress reports.
- Improve communication with residents who do not have access to the internet.
- Information needs to be accessible and available when Calderdale residents want to access it.
- How we promote opportunities for volunteering and community support to deliver actions.

1.4.2 The partnership need to improve our communication and information sharing on more detailed aspects of the action plan. Some of the comments fed back indicate the need for greater transparency. We need to address concerns about:

- How the Calderdale flood partnership is prioritising projects.
- Partner expertise with respect to technical decisions: exploring options and design standards.

1.4.3 Major work in relation to strengthening defences and infrastructure will continue to cause some travel disruption in both the Upper Calder valley and other parts of Calderdale. The partnership is routinely reviewing how it communicates with communities on improvements that it make on:

- Signage and alerts to warn local communities;
- Warnings using social media;
- Contractor timing and work patterns for work that will cause disruption;
- Co-ordination between utilities and strengthening defences work.

1.4.4 Some actions in the plan have particular local significance and we should look at how we target particular localities with relevant information. For some schemes this is being tackled with local newsletters, community meetings and consultations and letters to individual householders and businesses. Specific issues and concerns raised included:

- Surface water flooding and what is being done to address this;
- Concerns about new housing in certain locations;
- Changes in proposed flood risk reductions schemes.

The redesign of Eye on Calderdale hopes to encourage more visits to the platform and provide easier access to detailed information such as the Calderdale flood action plan, allowing people to leave comments and questions on the plan. Work is also underway to map location specific actions in the plan which should also help facilitate interest in local concerns.

## 2. Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to all partners of the Calderdale Flood Partnership who provided materials for displays and promoted this consultation. Particular thanks to the Piece Hall Trust, Slow the Flow, Treesresponsibility, Todmorden Flood Group, CMBC Libraries, Hebden Bridge Town Hall, Mytholmroyd Information Centre and Todmorden Information Centre for supporting the consultation.

# 3. Appendices

## 3.1. Appendix 1 - Piece Hall Engagement

Home Location
Mytholmroyd
Halifax
Hebden Bridge`
Wyke
Sowerby Bridge
Rastrick
Ovenden
Midgeley
Cragg Vale
Copley
Southowram
Brighouse
Elland
Ripponden
Illingworth
Skircoat Green
Salterhebble
Luddendenfoot
Todmorden
Huddersfield
Bradford

## 3.2 Appendix 2 - Comments from Questionnaire and Piece Hall

### Responses to Question 2: What do you think this plan is about?

Flood prevention

Flood action plan to address and lower the risk of flooding now and in the future.

Assume councils response to what happened last time

Slowing the flow, treating cause and symptoms, protecting valley

Confusion

Wall too high, flooding fields not dug, and permission for building houses given. Clear the river and the drainage river is still running high since the 2015 flood.

All the flood alleviation work planned for Calderdale

I have not read it

Showing what has happened and what is happening. However no idea what is happening across from my house where there is no wall at road level.

It's about reducing the flood risk in Calderdale over the next 25 years

A range of projects to change the way we manage land and waterways to minimise the risk of flooding as much as possible

Available in Elland library only in last week of October 2017. Flood prevention reduction in Calderdale.

Flood resistance.

### Responses to Question 7: Are there any actions where we could improve how we are working?

There is still a degree of clarity needed on 2017 action 33 where the wording is sufficiently vague about flood risk reduction schemes stating "where feasible". Since the original list was produced 3 schemes have been added to this list which appear to be being progressed rather than the original list, in particular the flood risk management work at Park Road, Elland. This area suffered during the 2015 Boxing Day floods but previous comments were around the total spend required for the small number of properties that would benefit for the work. However, this work should be carried out before adding additional schemes onto the list!

Information on river levels and flood alerts if not signed up, online a lot less accessible than they used to be. Used to show trends on river level history, used to be rag status, lot more visual. Was involved in 2015 clean up, now wouldn't be aware. Used to ask for floods Calderdale.

No sign saying what we are doing where works happening, especially re disruption on roads, rail

The Action Plan should be a user friendly report which makes it easy to see how the actions are progressing. As such, the re-numbering of all but 3 of the actions and moving them to elsewhere in the action plan is massively confusing.

The demolition of the garage and Russell Dean seems lot more effective than VBA work

More visibility of the plan to residents that are not online. Maybe a six monthly doorstep drop of the plan to residents in flood zones.

More events where there are representatives to explain the plan and how it will affect the communities.

is there any where to go if my house shows signs of flooding my house seems ok but next door was flooded in there cellar, with a lot a water underground my home may not currently show signs of damp but may in the future

Timescale and specifics to each road/area so we know what is happening to each area.

1. Take note of and document local knowledge. 2. Try to work to relevant engineering standards and quality standards (ISO9001)

**Responses to Question 8: Do you want to make any general comments or do you have any new ideas for the Calderdale plan?**

Need to see it first but the proposals for housing in West Vale and Greetland is going to create problems. How is this being addressed?

Don't know enough about what's going on

Walsden, whole valley main road volunteers could have high viz jackets and signs asking cars to slow down when surface water flooding

Dig down the car park at the Community Centre then tarmac. Parking when fine water storage when flooding.

I'm generally happy with the plan and due to the work I do I know where to find the information.

I would like a detailed breakdown of where the money is going from the government and how much each project is receiving.

Ensure any revised waterways are correctly sized and beware of any downstream obstructions. Ensure that the design will work and is the best option. Check the design.

Could we please have a much, much larger amount of trees planted.

**Other Comments made at the Piece Hall**

'Don't spend money willy-nilly. Widening river and taking down houses at Mytholmroyd won't do much good'

'Why are we only testing sirens once a year?'

'Why have houses been built recently on the flood plain near the canal? There is also a single bed on the river bank which could cause a blockage in heavy rainfall.' (Copley)

'The drains at the side of the roads are not being cleared and would like confirmation that a programme of maintenance is planned.'

'Flood wardens have not received their training and equipment that they need. Is the Mytholmroyd hub the go to place in a flood? Concerned that water flow will still flood the church as the culvert has not been reopened.'

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