

# Keeping you informed

## Flood Risk Management - Our work in Calderdale, current situation April 2016

*The flooding on 26 December 2015 followed an extremely wet November and December where rainfall was more than twice the monthly average. Rivers rose rapidly because the ground was already saturated from previous heavy rain. Many of the Environment Agency's measuring stations recorded the highest river levels ever seen.*

### What happened?

Over Christmas and Boxing Day, Pennine areas had over 60mm rainfall in 24 hours and some locations had over 100 mm. Many of these locations had over twice their usual amount of rainfall in December and many locations along the River Calder saw highest ever recorded river levels.

Our incident room was open 24/7 over the Christmas and New Year period, issuing warnings and deploying staff across Yorkshire. Figures collected by Calderdale Council from their community hubs indicate that 2,781 homes and 4,416 businesses were affected. In addition to this a number of substations, schools, roads and bridges were also affected. Unlike previous floods, communities further down the valley including Sowerby Bridge, Elland and Brighouse were also badly affected.

### What we have been doing since the 2015 floods

- Since Boxing Day our field teams and Flood Incident Support Officers have worked in all of the communities affected by flooding, checking and repairing assets and visiting communities.
- A total of £8.7M has been approved to repair assets and channel clearance. We have checked over 3000 structures on the River Calder, repairing 20 in Calderdale as emergency work. 82 more structures are in preparation/progress for repair and work will be repaired by the end of September 2016. Some work is also being referred to landowners or third parties for action.
- Our flood risk management staff and Calderdale Council staff have attended meetings with other interested parties, including elected members, Yorkshire Water and Canal and Rivers Trust.
- We have attended a series of five roadshows across the valley to gather information on the

recent flooding, and have also asked for feedback on what future plans should consider.

- We attended Calderdale Council's Flood Commission sessions
- We are currently working with Calderdale Council who as a Lead Local Flood Authority are preparing a report into the causes of the flooding
- We are currently developing an engagement approach to keep people informed and involved in the planning and delivery of activities that will be ongoing in Calderdale.

### Since the previous devastating floods in 2012 we have been working on the following:-

- **Upper Calder Flood Risk Reduction Scheme (phase 1)** target works for the highest risk areas. It is a joint programme between the Environment Agency and Calderdale Council. Construction of the first phase commenced in March 2015 with an expected completion date of April 2016. These include works at Shop Lock and Bacup Road near Todmorden, and Nutclough in Hebden Bridge.
- The third phase of the **Todmorden flood defence scheme** was completed in 2014 at a cost of £11 million and reduces the flood risk for 658 homes and businesses in the town
- In the 6 months following the June 2012 flooding in the Upper Calder Valley, **£1.4m was spent by the Environment Agency repairing damage caused to the existing flood defences** - in total 120 separate repairs.
- **Channel clearance/maintenance** carried out to remove debris. Over 1,300 tonnes of stone and gravel were removed from watercourses in the valley.

### Working together

- A Catchment Partnership approach will be adopted for Calderdale, similar to the one announced recently for Cumbria, and this will build on the work of existing partnerships but will also take a fresh look, taking account of the December flooding. A Local Flood Recovery and Resilience Partnership already exists in Calderdale following the flooding in 2012, and it is being built on to meet this need. The

Partnership will produce an Action Plan specific to Mytholmroyd by the end of May 2016 and for the whole of Calderdale by the end of October 2016.

### The Calderdale Catchment Plan

- Will identify projects and ways of working to reduce flood risk and increase resilience in Calderdale. Informed by the members of the Calderdale Flood Partnership and wider community, the plan will incorporate a list of short, medium and long term measures and determine the potential of catchment scale options to reduce the risk of flooding.
- It will build on work done to date, and will include the different sources of flooding and options for the short and long term reduction in flood risk for the valley that are acceptable and achievable.
- Work has already commenced on scoping this plan which will be completed by October 2016. The plan will consider many issues including land use and the use of reservoirs in the upper valley. One expected output is a Calder Catchment Project, a programme of natural flood management and flood resilience measures throughout the valley, to complement the programme of more traditional flood alleviation schemes.

### We are also working on:

- Design & build for the next 3 schemes within phase 1 of the **Upper Calder Flood Risk Reduction Schemes** will commence in summer 2016 and will focus on Burnt Acres, Woodland View and Erringden Hillside near Hebden Bridge.
- **Planning and Delivery of Flood Risk Reduction Schemes (Phase 2)**  
We are currently working with Calderdale Council to plan the second phase of flood risk reduction schemes. This work will be informed by the developing Calderdale Catchment Plan and our ongoing review of the December flooding. At this stage we are unable to give more detail, but we will provide this information as soon as we have better developed our programme of works.
- **Mytholmroyd Action Plan and Scheme Delivery**  
Work has already commenced on an action plan for flood defences for Mytholmroyd and will be completed May 2016. We are

investigating viable options that will reduce flood risk.

We expect that construction work would start in Mytholmroyd by the end of 2016. At this stage, we would anticipate the construction taking 18 - 24 months, with a completion date of winter 2018. This date will be confirmed as we finalise our plan and understand the works to be undertaken.

- **Hebden Bridge Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The outline business case is being developed which will investigate the feasibility of a range of options including flood defence walls, works to improve flow at the confluence of the Calder and Hebden Water, natural flood management and upland reservoir storage. The outline business case is expected to be completed by early 2017 with construction starting in summer 2017. At this stage, we would anticipate the construction taking 12 – 18 months, with a completion date of winter 2018. These dates will be confirmed as we finalise our business case and understand the works to be undertaken.

*This work will include input from a number of partners, interest groups and with the local community.*

### Funding

An additional £35m will be invested in the Calder Valley to better protect 1,600 properties. This will include schemes in Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd. A feasibility study for the Calder Valley is already underway with an action plan for Mytholmroyd due to be published in May and a plan for the whole Valley by this autumn. This is in addition to the £17m of work planned by 2021 in the Calder Valley.

### Getting in touch

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#### Calderdale Council

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