

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CASE STUDY: **WILLOW PARK, CARLISLE**

BACKGROUND

Many areas in Carlisle were flooded after Storm Desmond wreaked havoc in parts of the UK on the 5th and 6th of December 2015. Newground, on behalf of the Environment Agency, worked with the residents of Willow Park and their property management company to assist in the development of a community flood scheme to better protect their properties and a community flood plan to ensure residents are as resilient as possible. This was made possible through the flood resilience grant from Carlisle City Council and the flood grant from Cumbria Community Foundation.

Willow Park is a site of 40 semi-detached bungalows, for residents aged 55 and over. It is situated very close to the River Petteril and was affected by flooding from numerous sources, including the River Petteril over topping flood defences at Melbourne Park. Most properties flooded to a depth of approximately 1.35m.



Image: The Flood Hub People

CHALLENGES

The community flood scheme brought about a number of challenges that all needed to be addressed in order to secure funding. Some of the challenges included:

- Gaining agreement from all the residents for the scheme.
- Ensuring the flood protection equipment was suitable and easy to deploy.
- Securing enough funding for the large flood protection scheme / gaining permissions for the work.
- Ensuring the residents had a community flood plan in place to install flood protection measures and adequately protect themselves.

THE FLOOD HUB PEOPLE'S APPROACH

The Flood Hub People (TFHP) (previously Newground) supported the residents and worked with the site's freeholder to enable the flood protection scheme to move forward. TFHP were instrumental in liaising with the freeholder, The Environment Agency and Local Authority and provided support for the joint funding application to the Cumbria Community Foundation. In addition, TFHP attended a community meeting to discuss options for the flood defence scheme.

During the application process for the flood defence scheme, TFHP provided support to residents, which included providing winter ready packs to all residents to ensure they are signed up to the Environment Agency's Flood Warning Service and also information on household flood planning to give some peace of mind to residents whilst the scheme was being put in place.

TFHP assisted the residents with the formulation of a community flood plan by holding several community meetings and drawing on various expertise within the group. This has ensured that all residents feel more prepared for any future flood events. As some residents have health and mobility issues and require more support during a flood event, a comprehensive flood plan was vital for the scheme to be a success.

HOW WE MADE A DIFFERENCE

The community flood scheme successfully applied for over £228,000, which was funded through the Carlisle City Council flood resilience grant and Cumbria Community Foundation and included:

- Partial rebuilding and extension of the perimeter wall
- 1 x pedestrian flood gate
- Non-return valves
- External pumps for the site



Image: The Flood Hub People

A community flood plan has been developed for all 40 properties and all of the residents are aware of what to do in the event of a flood.

100% of the occupied properties at Willow Park were signed up to receive Environment Agency Flood Warnings.