

CASE STUDY: BRIDGE STREET CLOSE, COCKERMOUTH

BACKGROUND

Many areas in Cockermouth were flooded after Storm Desmond wreaked havoc in parts of the UK on the 5th and 6th December 2015. Newground on behalf of the Environment Agency worked with residents of Bridge Street and Bridge Street Close to explore options for a community flood scheme to better protect their properties. This was made possible through the flood resilience grant from Allerdale Council and the flood grant from Cumbria Community Foundation. Although Bridge Street and Bridge Street Close are very close to the River Cocker, it was surface water coming from the Main Street that caused flooding. Most properties flooded to a depth of 18 inches.



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 all residents had applied to Allerdale Borough Council for property level protection.
- Ensuring the flood protection equipment was suitable, temporary and easy to deploy.
- Formation of the residents association and gaining affordable public liability insurance for Bridge Street Close Residents Association (BSCRA).

THE FLOOD HUB PEOPLE'S APPROACH

The Flood Hub People (previously Newground) supported the residents and worked through various options to enable the flood protection scheme to move forward. The Flood Hub People was instrumental in liaising with the Environment Agency and Local Authority and provided support for the joint funding application to Cumbria Community Foundation. In addition, The Flood Hub People met the supplier of the temporary roll out barriers along with the residents to ensure this type of equipment was suitable for Bridge Street Close.

The Flood Hub People ensured all residents are signed up to the Environment Agency flood warnings service and worked through the formulation of a community flood plan, drawing on various expertise within the group. TFHP assisted with BSCRA when they carried out training days so that the group was aware of how to deploy the equipment.

HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

All properties have now utilised their £5,000 per property flood resilience grants and installed property level flood protection including flood barriers, automatic airbricks, non return valves, on pipework and Sump pumps.

The community flood scheme cost just over £17,000 and was funded through Cumbria Community Foundation and included:

- 2 x roll out flood barriers
- 2 x diesel pumps
- 4 flood barriers for garden gates

The residents from the 14 properties in BSCRA now feel that they are better protected and have a much better understanding of flooding in the Cockermouth area. As a constituted group they feel they will be able to communicate better with external agencies and will be able to work together to reduce the impact of flooding on their properties.

BSCRA now have a fully developed community flood plan which was developed in November 2017 and continues to be developed and tested by the community to ensure it is kept up to date.



Image: The Flood Hub People