

# Helping protect Reading and Caversham from flooding

The Environment Agency believes flood walls and temporary barriers are the most effective way to reduce the impact of flooding on homes and businesses in the town.

Reading and Caversham is the largest developed area in the Thames Valley at risk from flooding with no planned flood scheme.

As part of developing the proposals, the Environment Agency is keen to hear the views of people who live and work in the area.

A series of public events is being held in the next few weeks where residents can give feedback on what the agency has in mind.

Joe Cuthbertson, flood-risk manager for the Environment Agency in the Thames Valley, said:

"It's very easy to underestimate the damage and destruction flooding causes, both financially and on people's mental health.

"Reading has been lucky this winter, missing the very worst of the storms so far, but has suffered serious flooding before.

"In 2003 and 2014, homes and businesses in low lying areas of Caversham flooded and many more were surrounded by water. Another deluge hit Lower Caversham in 1947.

"Our plans would see north Reading and Lower Caversham better protected from flooding through a mix of earth embankments, flood walls and removable flood barriers.

"The option benefitting the greatest number of people would be built from Promenade Road to east of Amersham Road, north of the River Thames, and from Caversham Bridge to Reading Bridge on the south side."

Flood schemes have helped protect almost 100,000 properties across England in recent weeks.

A number of different options have been considered for the scheme, from a flood storage area to natural flood management measures such as woodland planting and wetland restoration.

The plans to reduce flood-risk include a commitment to improve the local environment. Trees would be planted to replace any lost during the building of the defences.