

Press release: Opportunity to shape plans to reduce flood risk in Otley

Following the creation of a digital model of the river, and testing options in the model, a team from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, and consultants WSP have now come up with four options that they would like the community's views on.

Residents and business owners can come and talk to the team at:

- The Core Otley, Unit 11 Orchard Gate, Otley LS21 3NX on Thursday 21 June between 4–7pm

The shortlist of options and supplementary works on show include using flood defence walls, flood defence embankments, maintenance including vegetation clearance and riverbank realignment.

Otley suffered flooding on three occasions between November and December 2015, which saw 74 properties affected. In the Autumn Statement 2016, Government announced £2 million to invest in a scheme to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses.

The scheme is being led by Leeds City Council working closely with the Environment Agency.

Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

We are very pleased to now share with people the progress we and the Environment Agency have made on the plans for flood prevention measures for Otley with these shortlisted options we are now considering and developing further. These measures are all deliverable and would make a real difference in providing reassurance to local residents and businesses against the threat posed by flooding, so we would encourage as many people as possible to come and see what we have in mind and tell us what they think.

John Woods, flood risk management advisor at the Environment Agency said:

After much work we are now approaching a really crucial stage in the project to select a final option for Otley. We'd encourage anyone with an interest in the scheme to look at the potential options and come along to discuss their views with the team. Residents views are really important in helping us to reach a preferred option for the town.

Catchment-wide approach

The Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme is one of several schemes that is adopting a catchment-wide approach. This means the entire River Wharfe catchment area is being considered to help reduce flood risk. This approach looks at a combination of natural processes and engineered options to help slow the flow and catch water further up the catchment so that flood peaks are reduced further downstream.

After the drop-in event, a preferred option will be chosen and developed into the outline design phase, where the community will get another chance to comment on the proposals.

The team is aiming to submit a planning application in winter 2018 and subject to planning approval, construction on site will start by autumn 2019.

For those who can't make it to the drop-in, the shortlist of options are also available to [view online here](#) and if anyone has any comments they can be sent by email to FRM@leeds.gov.uk