

Press release: Opportunity for residents and business to find out more about plans to reduce flood risk in Otley

Otley residents and businesses are being invited to come along and meet the team at a drop-in event on Tuesday 17 October.

Visitors to the drop in will have an opportunity to meet representatives from Leeds City Council, Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and WSP (consultants undertaking survey and investigation work). It will also be a chance to find out more about plans to reduce the risk of flooding in the historic market town and provide feedback, which the team hopes to use in the early stages of the programme to develop the Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The drop in will be held at The Core Otley, Unit 11 Orchard Gate, Otley LS21 3NX, on Tuesday 17 October between 4pm and 7pm.

The town 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 firmly committed to taking a whole catchment and citywide approach to flood prevention in Leeds, which is why the plans for the Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme are so important to help provide confidence and reassurance to our communities who currently live in areas of flood risk. We would encourage as many people as possible to attend the drop-in session to find out more and give us their views, as local people have a key role to play in helping us to get this right.

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

We're committed to keeping the people of Otley updated on progress around the development of a flood alleviation scheme for Otley. The drop-in event not only serves as a way for residents to meet the team, but also as a means for us to gather their feedback to help us develop the best possible scheme for the town.

Work to pull together data to better understand the potential paths of flood water as well as collating historic and recent flood information began earlier this year. The information from these investigations, carried out by consultants, WSP, will be used to update an existing digital model of the River Wharfe which can then help form potential options for a scheme.

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 will be 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.

Press release: Badsey Brook flood scheme open day

The open day will be held on Wednesday 25 October between 2pm and 6pm at:

West End Lane (access via site entrance)
Broadway

It will give visitors the opportunity to see the construction works in action and the progress made so far. Members of the Environment Agency project team will also be available to provide information and answer questions people may have.

Broadway, Childswickham and Murcot were severely flooded in 2007 following record-breaking rainfall across the area. The £4 million flood storage area in Broadway will be able to hold up to 135,000 cubic metres of water during times of flood and will only allow a set amount of water to flow downstream at times of intense and high rainfall. This will reduce flood risk along the Badsey Brook downstream of Broadway.

The scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding to around 290 homes and businesses, is due to be completed in spring 2018.

Dan Wilkinson from the Environment Agency said:

This is a significant scheme for residents living in Broadway, Childswickham and Murcot who know only too well the devastating impact flooding can have. The open day will give them an opportunity to see the work in action and see for themselves how, once completed, the scheme will help reduce the risk of flooding.

Councillor Barrie Parmenter, Chairman for Broadway Parish Council, said:

Broadway Parish Council are delighted that the project is progressing well and which when completed, will improve the lives and alleviate the worries of many residents of Broadway and the surrounding area.

[Press release: Statement by the British Ambassador to the UAE, Philip Parham](#)

Foreign Office staff around the world work hard to support British people who need our help. You can talk to a member of the consular team 24/7 by calling the Foreign Office, or the local Embassy number. Our consular network helped more than 23,000 people last year as well as continuing to help those with long-running cases from previous years. I am proud of the contribution which our consular team in the UAE makes to this global effort.

More than 100,000 British people live in the UAE and another 1.5 million visit every year. Fortunately, most stays in the UAE are trouble-free. The nature of consular work means that our team become involved when something has gone wrong. These can be highly distressing cases. Our team is there to provide support to the individuals and their partners and families. This support can include issuing emergency travel documents, visiting British people in hospital or in prison, or providing advice when they have fallen victim to crime. For people in detention our staff are there to support them and take an interest in their welfare. In 2017 so far there have been 213 new detainee cases (in 2016 there were 281).

There are, however, limits to the support we can provide. We cannot interfere in the legal processes or prison systems of other countries (just as we would not allow other governments to interfere in ours). But we do make representations if we have good grounds to believe that, for example, the host country's own laws are not being properly followed, or a British person is being held in conditions which fall short of international standards. More information on what we can and cannot do can be found [here](#).

[Our travel advice for the UAE](#) explains that local laws and customs are very different to those in the UK and that there may be serious penalties for doing something which may not be illegal in the UK. Both our travel advice and our Embassy's many public awareness-raising campaigns cover some of the specific issues which may arise from differences in laws and customs.

We recommend that people make an effort before they travel to familiarise themselves with local laws and customs, and respect them while abroad. The Foreign Office doesn't promote any country as a holiday destination. We do publish travel advice on 225 countries or territories to help British people make better-informed decisions about their foreign travel. No foreign travel can be guaranteed safe, but our advice is one source of useful information to help people make well-informed decisions – and take responsibility for their choices – when they are travelling. But we understand that, regardless of how prepared we all are, British people can still find themselves in difficult or distressing situations, and we are ready to help on those occasions.

More detail on how we put together our travel advice is available [here](#).

Press release: Director scamming small businesses hit by large ban

Sarah Elizabeth White, also known as Sarah Regan, has been disqualified from acting as a director following an investigation by the Insolvency Service.

She was director of Manchester-based Harrison Black Associates Limited, which, together with the London branch Hayden Moss Associates Limited, promised small business owners that for a fee of up to £3,000 it would reduce their business rates.

Business owners were led to believe they were guaranteed a reduction in their rates or they would received a full refund. Following various complaints, the Insolvency Service opened an investigation into the company under powers set out within the Companies Act 1985.

Both companies were then wound up at Manchester District registry last year. A number of small business owners were left out of pocket by over £34,000.

Commenting on the disqualification, Cheryl Lambert, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

Sarah White was purporting to offer a service she knew the company could not, and did not, provide. She took no steps to ensure that Harrison Black did what customers had paid for and what had been promised within a contract.

Taking action against her should serve as a warning to all directors that if they are abusing their position we will remove them from the marketplace.

The Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted an undertaking from Sarah Elizabeth White on 11 September 2017. The disqualification is from 2 October 2017.

Notes to editors

Sarah Elizabeth White (aka Sarah Regan) is of Audenshaw, Manchester and her date of birth is January 1985.

Harrison Black Associates Ltd (Company Registration No.08978150) was incorporated on 4 April 2014. Its registered office was 83 Ducie Street, Manchester, M1 2JQ, United Kingdom. It traded, at various times, from the registered office and 345 Chester Road, Manchester

Harrison Black Associates Ltd was subject to an investigation by Insolvency Service and, following an application to wind it up in the public interest, was placed into liquidation on 1 March 2016 (Manchester District Registry 3328 of 2015).

The Insolvency Service investigation established that:

- Misleading information was provided to customers regarding the potential benefits of the Company's services
- Customers were shown misleading documents in order to induce them to make payments
- Customers were wrongly led to believe they were guaranteed a reduction in their rates or they would receive a full refund
- White informed customers payment was required to instruct a surveyor and 31 of the 33 customers made a payment and received no such visit
- There is no evidence of any rate reduction appeals have been made on behalf of customers or any refunds made

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Contact Press Office

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: River transfer project gives local communities more say

A project designed to give local organisations and communities more say over the management of local watercourses has entered a new phase with the launch of public drop-ins in four pilot areas throughout October 2017.

The project is exploring the potential to re-designate several sections of selected 'Main Rivers' as 'Ordinary Watercourses,' (a process known as 'de-maining') where – in agreement with the Environment Agency – partners such as Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) or Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) are keen to take on the lead role of local watercourses.

The project is piloting these changes in 5 locations. 4 of these locations are now approaching the consultation stage of the process and drop-in events will be held in:

- areas of Norfolk and Suffolk
- Stour Marshes in Kent,
- The Isle of Axholme in the East Midlands
- South Forty Foot Catchment in Lincolnshire

The final pilot at Wormbrook and Allensmore Brook in the West Midlands will be running to a different timeline.

The project aims to bring significant benefits to local communities, allowing those who know the layout of their land to take control of their local watercourses, and could help pave the way for further de-maining opportunities throughout England.

For the Environment Agency, the project will also ensure resources are prioritised where the greatest impact on reducing flood risk can be achieved.

Rachael Hill, Flood and Coastal Risk Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

We are working with local organisations to strengthen local decision-making. Internal Drainage Boards and Lead Local Flood Authorities are very much on the ground in communities so giving them responsibility over their own watercourses is a win-win situation that will ensure that the right people are managing the right watercourses in the right places.

We welcome the launch of the community drop-in sessions and we look forward to working together on this project to benefit people and the environment.

Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of the Association of Drainage Authorities

(ADA), added:

This is an unmissable opportunity for local communities to have their say on how they would like to see their local watercourses managed in the best way to make use of the funds available, whilst improving the quality of those watercourses, the environment and community wellbeing associated with healthy, maintained rivers and streams.

The drop-in sessions are an ideal way to find out more about the plans, help allay possible concerns and, very importantly, to provide support for these trials so please do try and find time to come to one of them.

Gaining local support for the transfer of watercourses through engagement and consultation is essential for the success of the project. The public drop-ins will be an opportunity for local communities and interested parties to ask questions and influence the proposals.

This will be followed by a formal consultation on GOV.UK currently scheduled for December 2017 which will seek further views on the proposals. If there are no objections, changes to the watercourse will take place in July 2018.

Drop-in sessions:

East Midlands:

Date	Time	Location
26 October	2pm-5pm	Haxey Chapel- Stephen Jones Community Hall, DN9 2LA
31 October	10am-1pm	Coronation Hall, DN9 1RL

Lincolnshire:

Date	Time	Location
9 October	1pm-6pm	Rippingale Village Hall, PE10 0TA
11 October	1pm-6pm	Billingborough Village Hall, NG34 0QH
18 October	1pm-6pm	Helpringham Memorial Hall, NG34 0RJ

Norfolk and Suffolk:

Date	Time	Location
16 October	2pm-7pm	Kettlestone Village Hall, NR21 0AU
19 October	2pm-7pm	Dereham Memorial Hall Meeting Room, NR19 1AD
24 October	2pm-7pm	Halesworth Methodist Church, IP19 8LR
26 October	2pm-7pm	Wymondham Central Hall, NR18 0QB
27 October	3pm-7pm	Hunstanton Community Centre, PE36 5BW
31 October	2pm-7pm	Sea Palling and Waxham Village Hall, NR12 0US

Stour Marshes:

Date	Time	Location
4 October	2pm-7pm	Minster Village Hall, CT12 4BU
19 October	2pm-7pm	Little Chart Village Hall, TN27 0QB
25 October	2pm-7pm	Great Mongeham Parish Hall, CT14 9LL