

## Yate and Chipping Sodbury flood study

### Public consultation: feedback September 2017

#### Yate and Chipping Sodbury Flood Alleviation Options Appraisal

The Environment Agency wants to reduce fluvial flood risk in the Yate and Chipping Sodbury area by increasing the standard of protection. It is considering different options to achieve this.



The Environment Agency held a public exhibition at Chipping Sodbury Town Hall on 1 March 2017. This public consultation event involved key local stakeholders. Over 100 people attended and we thank all of you for your time. Using the feedback you provided we are considering the options as explained below.

#### Current preferred option

Following a detailed inspection of the river, discussions with residents and appraisal of options, the Environment Agency arrived at a preferred option. This is a combination of a flood storage area and property level measures.

This combination of options provides the highest standard of protection, at a total cost of around £4 million.

#### Potential improvement options

At the public exhibition we presented the following options:

- Flood storage area: build an embankment dam to hold flood water in storage upstream to the East of Chipping Sodbury in an existing rural flood plain of two tributaries to the River Frome.
- Channel widening: widen the existing river along St. Johns Way to create a two-stage channel and increase flood flow capacity.
- Property level measures: make the most vulnerable properties more resilient with very localised defences or property level measures, specifically for isolated properties in Nibley, downstream of Yate.
- Environmental improvements: being considered alongside the flood risk management solutions, including modifications to the existing weirs to improve fish passage.

The posters we presented at the public exhibition can be viewed at:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/606000/WAP\\_Yate\\_CS\\_PublicExhibition\\_Presentation\\_23Feb17\\_logo.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/606000/WAP_Yate_CS_PublicExhibition_Presentation_23Feb17_logo.pdf)

Further information on our work can be viewed at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/yate-and-chipping-sodbury-reducing-the-risk-of-flooding/yate-and-chipping-sodbury-reducing-the-risk-of-flooding](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/yate-and-chipping-sodbury-reducing-the-risk-of-flooding/yate-and-chipping-sodbury-reducing-the-risk-of-flooding)

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## Feedback summary

The Environment Agency received over 40 responses from paper questionnaires. This has helped us to better understand the river flooding problems in the area and local issues that may affect the options under consideration. There is general support to reduce flood risk, and all options we proposed are more or less equally supported, with a small preference for a flood storage area.

A concern expressed by many residents related to plans for housing development to the east of Chipping Sodbury and how this might conflict with the location identified for the flood storage option. From our initial investigations, we think our project would be compatible with the proposed development and might go some way towards funding the flood storage scheme. However, we are aware of the various planning reasons why the proposed development at this location may not go ahead, so our project is being progressed independently at the current time.

Another concern advised by some stakeholders is that the channel widening option could increase flooding downstream. We consider that the option may be feasible in combination with the flood storage option to avoid such adverse effects.

Other issues connected with the channel widening option include the need to protect and enhance the Frome Valley Walkway (a very popular route) and the potential loss of habitat along the river corridor and future maintenance of the river channel. These are all very valid points we are considering.

You told us about past river flooding problems, including:

- River flooding affecting St Johns Way, Manor Way, Vayre Close, Grace Close, Wickham Close, Bennetts Court, Hatters Lane, Ross Close and Brook Street.
- Flooding in the St Johns Way area on 5 occasions over 10 years (1995 to 2005).
- Flooding over the railway line on one occasion.

You also told us that:

- High river levels can cause drains to back-up leading to problems, e.g. at St Johns Way.
- Bridge constrictions on the River Frome can cause localised flooding (Yate, Chipping Sodbury).
- Surface water and sewer flooding also cause problems, e.g. at Badminton Road (Old Sodbury).

Many of you expressed concern about the high cost of home insurance attributed to flood risk. More information is available here, including a link to FloodRe which can help with insurance in flood-risk areas: [www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding/get-insurance](http://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding/get-insurance).

## Next steps

The Yate and Chipping Sodbury scheme is still in its early stages. The Environment Agency's main challenge is securing other sources of funding before selecting a preferred option. We can apply for DEFRA Flood Defence Grant in Aid and Local Levy funding but, due to the funding criteria, currently there would still be a considerable funding shortfall before we could deliver the preferred option.

In view of the shortfall we cannot say when a scheme could be implemented. This will depend on being able to secure the necessary funding from Government and other sources. We welcome any further feedback from the community and local stakeholders on how the funding gap can be found.

Due to the funding challenges for the preferred flood scheme we are considering carrying out modifications to the existing weirs to improve fish passage in advance, as sufficient funding may be available for this.

If you have any queries or comments, please contact the Environment Agency Project Manager: Chris Smith ([Chris.Smith4@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Smith4@environment-agency.gov.uk)) or Flood & Coastal Risk Management Adviser: Colin Taylor ([colin.taylor@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:colin.taylor@environment-agency.gov.uk)).