Readiness assessment: tools and techniques

Working together to adapt to a changing climate: flood and coast

FCERM Research & Development Programme

Research Report

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This report is the result of research commissioned and funded by the Joint Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme. The Joint Programme is jointly overseen by Defra, the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government on behalf of all risk management authorities in England and Wales: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-research-and-development-programme

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If you have any comments or questions about this report or the Environment Agency's other scientific work, please contact research@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Dr Robert Bradburne
Chief Scientist

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Introduction

About this document

This document introduces a set of tools for measuring how prepared authorities, partnerships and wider communities are to engage in conversations, planning and action for climate adaptation, particularly in relation to flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM). It was created as part of the research project 'Working together to adapt to a changing climate: flood and coast'.

This report is aimed at anyone who is interested in ways in which communities, authorities and other stakeholders can assess and build readiness to plan together to help reduce flood and coastal erosion risk in the face of climate change predictions. It should be particularly useful for engagement staff in risk management authorities and third sector organisations. It may also be of interest to individuals and community groups interested in or concerned about future planning and decision-making on these issues in their local area or beyond.

The purpose of this document is to:

- give an understanding of the readiness assessment process
- provide methods for carrying out readiness assessment at individual, partnership and community levels
- help define how to interpret and use the results[1]

Where this document has come from

This document is a final product of the action research project 'Working together to adapt to a changing climate: flood and coast'. The project was funded by the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme (Environment Agency, Defra, Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales) and implemented by the research and engagement company Icarus.

The research is a response to concerns about the impacts of climate change and the likelihood of significantly higher levels of risk to communities due to increased flooding or coastal erosion. It aimed to explore how authorities can engage effectively with

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[1] Nothing in this report implies (a) any additional duty on the Environment Agency, Defra, Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales to engage with or consult authorities, partnerships, or wider communities or (b) any requirement for, or undertaking by, the Environment Agency, Defra, Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales to carry out engagement or consultation in accordance with the methods in this report.

communities on these issues, particularly where options for addressing increased risk may be complex or contentious.

The project is providing evidence for the implementation of the new Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for England. Findings from the evidence review are featured in the strategy, along with a measure to share learning from the project. The research also addresses aspirations to make people and places central to decision-making and increasing local resilience to climate change.

The action research project included 3 phases:

1. a review of evidence on community engagement on climate adaptation (2018), to inform:
2. designing and implementing an innovative community engagement programme (2019 to 2021). Local communities and organisations were invited to apply to take part, and **2 pilot locations** were selected:
    - Caterham on the Hill and Old Coulsdon, Surrey and London Borough of Croydon - experiences surface water flooding
    - Hemsby, Norfolk – experiences coastal erosion and storm surges
3. bringing together, reflecting on and documenting learning and practice (2021 to 2022)

Co-design and collaboration were integral to the project. This included setting up steering groups in each pilot location made up of authorities and residents. The steering groups helped to develop and trial a local engagement programme. The project took an action research approach, documenting learning throughout and adapting the work programme accordingly. Two-way learning was also instigated through quarterly webinars with a group of almost 200 FCERM practitioners. A project board, including representatives from the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and local authorities helped to steer the project throughout.

It is worth noting that different participants had different levels of involvement and influence throughout the project. Icarus led the project implementation and wrote these reports. The use of 'we' refers to the authors unless otherwise specified.

There are a number of products from the project that reflect on the research findings and learning and provide detailed information about the tools developed and tested. These are available on the [project webpage](#).

Document structure

Section 1 explains what readiness assessment is and the 6 dimensions of readiness that we developed for this project.

Section 2 explains how to use this guide.

Section 3 contains the tools for assessing readiness. This is split into subsections covering 3 different levels of assessment: individual readiness; readiness of a

partnership/group of stakeholders; and readiness of the wider community. Each subsection contains a table which is the basis for conducting the readiness assessment. There are also suggestions of methods to carry out the assessment at each level (for example, through a partner workshop, community survey, or individual/group reflection).

Section 4 considers 'what next'. It offers questions to consider when looking at the results and suggestions of how they could be used.

Appendix 1 explains how questions from the community survey correspond to the dimensions of readiness. **Appendix 2** shows how survey results can be translated into levels of readiness. **Appendix 3** provides a template to use to record readiness assessment findings.

1. What is readiness assessment?

Readiness assessment is a process for measuring how prepared risk management and engagement practitioners, local stakeholders and partnerships and wider communities are to engage in conversations, planning and action for climate adaptation in particular areas. In the context of increasing flood and coastal erosion risks due to climate change, planning for the long term is becoming more important and urgent. However, not everyone is equally well-prepared, for example, because they lack information about how climate change might influence flood and coastal erosion risks (and other aspects of life); because the options for adaptation are not clearly defined or understood; or because people have not yet developed the interest or capacity to engage in conversations about future scenarios and adaptation choices, some of which might be complex and contentious.

Understanding how prepared different stakeholders are to work together to adapt to a changing climate can help to ensure that engagement and decision-making processes are matched to the level of readiness in a given area. For example, 'low readiness' might mean that it is necessary to spend time improving knowledge and building capacities before moving into planning and decision-making. Interventions that do not take account of levels of readiness are more likely to encounter challenges, perhaps especially in the context of climate adaptation work where there are significant complexities and uncertainties.

It is important to note that it is not only community members that will have varying levels of readiness. Risk management authority (RMA) practitioners will also feel more or less ready for this work, and their readiness may vary significantly across different dimensions. For example, a member of staff from the Environment Agency or another risk management authority (RMA) may be a technical expert, but lack confidence in dealing with conflict; an engagement specialist may be good at handling emotions, but not feel confident about their knowledge of climate adaptation. And for many RMA staff, regardless of training and expertise, long-term climate adaptation and the challenges of facing an uncertain and less benign future are largely uncharted territory.

Readiness assessment is also a tool for participatory engagement with communities and other stakeholders facing the prospect of change. Used as part of a series of engagement steps, it aims to:

- generate collective knowledge about what people most value in their area, how they understand risk, and what they consider 'adaptation' to mean

- support the development of adaptation strategies that are appropriate to local contexts and conditions while being scientifically robust

- make effective use of limited resources by ensuring that engagement and other interventions reflect local conditions, including existing skills and capacities, local knowledge and emotions

- strengthen capacities to engage constructively with conflicts and disagreement and enhance sensitivity to differences and inequalities in stakeholders' experiences and readiness to adapt

- encourage a wider range of stakeholders to become involved in finding solutions to long-term adaptation challenges

- build better understanding and cooperation between different stakeholder groups

- help emerging or established partnerships to identify and tackle challenges that might prevent effective collaboration

- increase capacities for informed deliberation on complex issues and choices

When is readiness assessment helpful?

Pilot application of the readiness assessment tools has shown that the tools can generate reflections and conversations among a range of people involved in climate adaptation and resilience-building work, and that they are helpful in thinking through what is needed to enhance and support this work. Readiness assessment can be helpful both prior to beginning an engagement process and as a way of trouble-shooting problems in an attempt at collaboration that has stuck or become conflictual.

Depending on the context, readiness assessment can fit into a process of formulating and refining proposals for particular funded projects (for example, in the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation (FCRI) Programme, where it fed into outline business cases), into reviewing governance arrangements (in the FCRI programme and current work on Readiness Assessment for the Adaptation Pathways Project), into the design of future stakeholder engagement strategies (as in Hemsby and also in the 2 funding projects mentioned earlier), or into identifying and addressing staff development needs (for instance among teams of FCERM practitioners). The questions asked and the methodologies used can be adapted to these different contexts.

Who should do readiness assessment?

Readiness assessment can take different forms, including individual or small-group self-assessment, larger-scale surveys of a wider community, and assessment by independent researchers or facilitators. In each context, it is important to consider which of these options and associated tools is likely to be most helpful.

In 2 separate projects funded by Defra and the Environment Agency – the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation (FCRI) Programme and the Adaptation Pathways Programme – a different, consultant-supported version of readiness assessment was developed specifically for partnerships setting out to manage complex resilience/adaptation projects over several years. In line with the needs of those

programmes, this version includes a greater focus on governance[2] and the readiness of project proposals alongside community and stakeholder engagement. For more information on how this was developed, carried out and evaluated, see Appendix 3 in the readiness assessment learning report.

Dimensions of readiness

The dimensions of readiness here are derived from the evidence review and cover a range of factors that influence how prepared people might be to engage in climate-sensitive planning related to flood and coastal erosion risks. They cover not just knowledge dimensions – what people know and understand about climate change – but also attitudes and competencies that are important for engagement in constructive adaptation planning.

Please note that depending on your location and focus of work, some might be more relevant than others. The headings and questions are not, therefore, intended as a definitive list, but as a set of suggestions that can be adapted to the needs of specific contexts.

- **Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities:** What do stakeholders know about climate change and how this might interact with flood/coastal erosion risks? How much do they already know about possible options for adaptation and risk management? How well do practitioners and stakeholders know this place, including any features of the local environment and/or culture that have a bearing on options for climate adaptation?
- **Climate sensitivity:** To what extent do existing policies, processes, initiatives and personal behaviours/decisions already take account of climate change projections? Do stakeholders actively pursue climate sensitive policies and decisions?

- **Attitudes and emotions:** What level of concern do stakeholders have about climate change and how this might affect their community/area? How strongly do people feel about where they live and the prospect of unwanted change? What emotions - potentially including anxiety, anger, grief and care - are likely to affect their willingness and/or capacity to be involved in climate adaptation planning? Do authority staff understand their own relevant emotions, and do they feel confident in handling emotions?
- **Sense of agency:** Do practitioners and stakeholders feel empowered to make changes that would help in the management of risks, and/or to make a difference to policies or decision-making processes? To what extent are resources – people, expertise, funding – available to support climate adaptation efforts?
- **Conflict and disagreements:** What disagreements, divisions and/or conflicts exist in this place? What is the nature of these conflicts? How might they affect

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[2] Also informed by an FCERM governance research project [Understanding effective flood and coastal erosion risk governance in England and Wales](#)

capacities for climate adaptation? How prepared are people to engage constructively with conflict?

- **Collaboration and trust:** To what extent are practitioners and stakeholders able to collaborate effectively with others who have relevant expertise and/or who have a high stake in what happens regarding climate adaptation in this place? Is there enough trust to allow for effective collaboration?

2.   How to use this toolkit

Levels at which readiness can be assessed

Readiness can be assessed at different levels, all of which are important to build up as full a picture as possible.

- **Individual readiness:** This is about how 'ready' particular people feel to engage in the work of climate adaptation. It is a way of gauging individual levels of knowledge, capacities, experience and confidence across the different dimensions.
- **Readiness of a partnership or group of stakeholders:** This is an assessment of levels of readiness at a more collective, systemic level. It is the bigger picture that emerges when we consider what individual levels of readiness and patterns of interaction mean for a larger group. It is a way of making visible the opportunities and/or obstacles that emerge at the level of a partnership or among a group of stakeholders who already work together or who might collaborate on climate adaptation in the future.
- **Readiness of the wider community:** This considers the range of experiences and perspectives that exist within the wider community, including people who are not currently involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management or climate adaptation efforts.

Who are you asking?

For each of the levels of readiness, you can document:

- your own perspective and assumptions

- the perspectives and assumptions of leading partners or stakeholders

- the perspectives and assumptions of the wider community

The overview in section 3 shows which of the tools and processes are appropriate for these different possibilities. For each combination, it includes the main questions you may need to answer (in bold*)* and the tools and processes you could use to respond to those questions.

3. Readiness assessment tools and their uses

	Individual readiness	Readiness of a partnership/stakeholder group	Readiness of the wider community
Asking: Myself	**Main question: How ready do you feel you are?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 1 - for self-assessment	**Main question: What are your assumptions about the readiness of this partnership or stakeholder group?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 2 - used to document your assumptions	**Main question: What are your assumptions about the readiness of this community?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 3 - used to document your assumptions
Asking: Main team members, stakeholders or others who know the area well	**Main question: How do stakeholders or partners feel about their personal readiness?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 1 - used in interviews or workshops for individual self-assessment	**Main question: How do stakeholders or partners perceive levels of readiness within the partnership/stakeholder group?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 2 - used in interviews or workshops for collective self-assessment	**Main question: How do stakeholders or partners perceive levels of readiness within the wider community?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 3 - used in interviews or workshops to document assumptions about the wider community

	Individual readiness	Readiness of a partnership/stakeholder group	Readiness of the wider community
Asking: The wider community	**Main question: How do survey respondents feel about their personal readiness?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Table 1 - used in interviews or workshops for individual self-assessment • Survey - questions about individual readiness • Table 3 - can be used to summarise data	**Main question: How do survey respondents perceive any existing partnerships?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Survey - questions about existing partnerships	**Main question: How do survey respondents perceive levels of readiness within the wider community?** **Appropriate tools and methods to respond to the question:** • Survey - questions about community readiness • Table 3 - can be used to summarise data

Figure 1: Overview of tools and methods for readiness assessment

In deciding how to carry out a readiness assessment for your particular situation think about what is needed and what is feasible with the resources you have. Self-assessing your own readiness and documenting your existing knowledge and assumptions about partnerships and wider communities are relatively quick but important first steps, while interviews, workshops and/or surveys will take much more time and resources. In making these decisions, bear in mind that the more long-term, complex and contentious climate adaptation in a particular place is likely to be, the more important it becomes to gather a wider range of perspectives.

Assessing individual readiness

Table 1 is intended as a tool to help assess individual levels of readiness to lead or engage effectively in climate adaptation and/or resilience-building processes in relation to flooding and coastal erosion. It is designed to capture people's own felt levels of readiness to engage in this work. Importantly, this includes your own readiness as an engaged resident or member of a flood action group, as a member of staff in a risk management authority (RMA) or other organisation involved in climate adaptation work.

You could use this table in several ways:

- **On your own, as a way of capturing your own levels of readiness.** We would strongly recommend this self-assessment as a first step for anyone using this tool – not least because it might help you identify how 'ready' **you** are to engage in readiness assessment with others. This might highlight personal or professional development needs that you may want to discuss with colleagues, line managers, mentors or people independent of your immediate context.

- **In one-to-one conversations/interviews with others,** for example, colleagues, existing partners or known stakeholders. You could ask them to fill in the table and explain their responses to you. If appropriate, you could also talk through your own responses with them. If using it in this way, please be aware that this will only generate an honest assessment if there is sufficient trust between the people involved. Where there is low trust or existing conflict, it is worth considering whether you can draw on people from outside your setting who can act as impartial assessors.

- **In a workshop setting, to build a more collective sense of individual levels of readiness and a basis for further discussion.** In a face-to-face workshop, this could be used in a number of ways. For example, a version of this could be enlarged, and each participant could be invited to place sticky dots in the boxes they feel best represents their individual readiness. For online workshops, the table could be shared on a screen, with participants using the annotation feature to indicate their self-assessments. Once a collective picture starts to emerge, this will help to identify areas of convergence and divergence, and to prompt discussion on what might be needed to develop levels of readiness across the group of people involved.

- **As questions in a survey.** The questions and responses represented in this table can also be adapted into multiple choice survey questions. This will allow you to gather a much wider range of responses more quickly.

In working with this table, we suggest the following steps (individually or in groups):

- Read through the questions and descriptions for each dimension of individual readiness.
- Tick the boxes that best reflect where you feel you are in relation to each of these dimensions.

- Consider what it might take for you to move towards higher levels of readiness. What personal or professional development opportunities and/or support might you need?
- If working in a group, note areas where readiness looks very uneven. What might explain this? Are there ways in which those with higher levels of readiness could support those with lower levels?
- Take a note of any other questions or concerns that arise as you do this.

Table 1: Individual readiness

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities How well do you understand flood and/or coastal erosion risks facing the area and how climate change might affect these risks? (Bear in mind that knowledge has different dimensions, including both scientific/technical expertise and local knowledge.)	I have no meaningful knowledge or understanding.	I have limited and/or confused knowledge or understanding.	I am well-informed on some aspects of flood/coastal erosion risks and the likely impacts of climate change, but my knowledge of other aspects is limited.	I have significant knowledge and understanding and know where to access information on any current gaps in my knowledge.	I have significant knowledge and understanding of all dimensions of flood and/or coastal erosion risks, and of how climate change might affect these risks in the future.
Climate sensitivity To what extent are policies or decision-making processes that you or your organisation are involved with already taking account of current climate change science, likely scenarios and their implications for FCERM?	Any policies or decision-making processes I am involved with are not at all informed by or responsive to climate change science and scenarios.	Any policies or decision-making processes I am involved with have a minimal awareness of or response to climate change science and scenarios.	Some of the policies or decision-making processes I am involved with are taking climate change science and scenarios into account, but most are not.	Climate change science and scenarios are increasingly being embedded into policies and decision-making processes that I am involved with, with good evidence of progress.	Climate change science and scenarios are informing all of the policies and decision-making processes I am involved with; climate sensitivity is integral to everything I/we do.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Attitudes and emotions What emotions come up for you when you think about flood and coastal erosion risks, and about how climate change might affect those in the future? How might your emotions - potentially including anxiety, anger, grief and attachment to place and community - bear on your willingness and/or capacity to engage with others in conversations about difficult adaptation choices?	I have never considered emotions as relevant to this work.	I can see how emotions – my own and those of others – might bear on climate adaptation processes, but I do not currently feel equipped to handle this aspect of the work. Mostly, I tend to leave emotions out of what I do.	I have recognised and reflected on some of the emotions that come up for myself and for others when looking at flooding, coastal erosion and climate change, but I feel nervous about naming them or incorporating this dimension into my work with others.	I am aware of how emotions can affect my own and other people's participation in difficult conversations around flooding, coastal erosion and climate change. I feel fairly confident that I would be able to engage with emotions constructively as they come up in such conversations.	I have reflected deeply and regularly on the emotional dimensions of work on flooding, coastal erosion and climate change adaptation. I have experience of engaging in difficult conversations around these questions and feel confident in supporting others in naming and processing their own emotions in this area as appropriate.
Sense of agency Do you feel empowered to make changes that would help in the management of risks and vulnerability in the context of climate change, and/or to make a difference to relevant policies or decision-making processes? Do you have access to the resources you would need? Are you clear about what actions you can take yourself, and which ones are the responsibility of others?	I do not feel that I can make a difference at all. I do not have access to the resources I would need to do so. I have no idea who is responsible for what.	I find that any contributions I try to make are often side-lined or ignored. I am not able to make the kinds of changes that I think are needed. It is unclear to me where responsibility lies for different areas of flood or coastal risk management.	I have had a mixed experience. I have sometimes but not always been able to feed into policies or decisions. I have some understanding of who is responsible for what, but there are gaps in my knowledge.	Often, my contributions make a tangible difference. Most of the time, I can access the resources I need to participate effectively and/or to implement decisions. I know where I can act myself and where I need to work with others to make change. I am becoming more confident at leading efforts for change if needed.	I can instigate or support others to make changes that might be needed to increase our collective capacity to manage risks. I know where to access the resources needed to implement change and am able to do so. I feel confident to take on leadership roles where that is helpful.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Conflict and disagreement How do you respond to conflict, divisions, inequalities or disagreements that you come across in your work on flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate adaptation? Do you feel able to engage with such conflicts or divisions constructively?	I try to avoid conflicts and disagreements wherever I can. If they do come up, I am most likely to withdraw from the situation. AND/OR I am experiencing major conflict with others working in this area and see no way of resolving this.	I try to avoid conflicts, disagreements or divisions in this work. Wherever I can, I seek to work with others who have a similar outlook and set of preferences. AND/OR I am in conflict with other stakeholders and am not confident that this conflict will be resolved.	I recognise that work in this area can often be conflictual, and I think that it is important to engage with this. Still, I often feel nervous about naming and handling conflict or disagreement myself. AND/OR I am experiencing some conflict with others working in this area but am trying to find ways of resolving this.	I generally feel willing and able to name and engage with conflict/disagreement/division constructively, but I recognise that there is scope for me to develop my skills in this area further. AND/OR I am not currently in conflict with others working in this area, but would know what to do if a conflict arises.	I have significant experience in working with conflict and disagreement, including in situations where they are longstanding, entrenched, and/or rooted in social divisions and inequalities. AND/OR I am not currently in conflict with others working in this area, but feel confident that any conflicts that may arise will be handled constructively.
Collaboration and trust To what extent are you able to collaborate effectively with others who have relevant expertise and/or who have a high stake in what happens regarding climate adaptation in this place? Is there enough trust to allow for meaningful collaboration?	I mostly feel that my work is invisible and not taken into account by others. There is not enough mutual trust for me to collaborate effectively with others.	A few partners recognise my work and the contributions I could make, but there is little effective collaboration to date.	I am developing my capacity to collaborate with others and building relationships of trust, but this is very much work in progress.	I am becoming increasingly visible and recognised as a partner in collaborative work. I feel that increasing mutual trust is enhancing our ability to collaborate.	I have an established track record of effective collaborative working with a range of stakeholders. I am being trusted to do this work well and trust others to do the same.

Assessing the readiness of existing partnerships

Table 2 is designed to support an initial, broad-brush assessment of readiness at a partnership level. It captures people's perspectives on the collective readiness of a wider group of partners or stakeholders. You could use this table in several ways:

- **As a way of documenting your current assumptions about a partnership or working group that you know well.** Doing this is helpful, both to make your own assumptions visible and to identify any uncertainties or gaps in your knowledge. Please note that your assumptions may or may not be accurate – it is a good idea to test these via the additional processes suggested.

- **As a way of capturing the bigger/collective picture that emerged in a series of interviews or a workshop using Table 1.** For example, once you have asked a group of people to indicate their individual readiness, you could translate the results into Table 2. If individual assessments span the range from 'low' to 'advanced' readiness, the bigger picture is one of 'uneven readiness'. If, on the other hand, most of the individual assessments are in one category, collective readiness is likely to be in that category too.

- **In one-to-one conversations with others who know the partnership well.** These are most likely to be people who are already working together. In conversations with others, ask for their sense of which boxes best describe this partnership and listen to their explanations of why they would tick a particular box. A series of such conversations would help you to check your own assumptions and experiences of the partnership against those of others you are working with.

- **In a workshop setting, to build up a more collective sense of a partnership and a basis for further discussion.** In a face-to-face workshop, a version of this could be blown up, and each participant could be invited to place sticky dots in the boxes they feel best represent levels of readiness in this partnership. For online workshops, the table could be shared on a screen, with participants using the annotation feature to indicate their assessments.

In working with this table, we suggest the following steps (individually or in groups):

- Read through the questions and descriptions for each dimension of partnership readiness.
- Tick the boxes that best reflect where you feel the partnership is in relation to each of these dimensions.
- Consider what it might take for the partnership to move towards higher levels of readiness. What kinds of inputs, processes or support would be helpful?
- Take a note of any questions or concerns that arise as you do this.
- Identify areas of disagreement, uncertainty or gaps in your knowledge. What else could you do to check your understanding or to fill in any gaps?

Table 2: Partnership-level readiness

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities How well do we as a partnership understand flood and/or coastal erosion risks facing the area and how climate change might affect these risks? (Bear in mind that knowledge has different dimensions, including both scientific/technical expertise and local knowledge.)	We currently do not have the knowledge and understanding we need to plan for climate adaptation, and we are not able to access the information we would need.	Some of us have a degree of knowledge and understanding, but this is not sufficient to help us plan for longer-term climate adaptation.	We have relevant knowledge within our partnership, but this is not shared among all participants. This is making it difficult to have an informed conversation.	Most of us have sufficient knowledge and understanding, and this is being shared within the group and allowing us to make informed judgements. There are some gaps in our collective knowledge, but we are working to close these.	All partners have significant knowledge and understanding, both of relevant science and of the characteristics of this place.
Climate sensitivity To what extent are existing policies, processes and decisions already taking account of current climate change science, likely scenarios and their implications for FCERM? To what extent is climate sensitivity built into our work within this partnership?	The work we do as a partnership on managing flood and/or coastal erosion risks is not at all informed by or responsive to climate change science and scenarios.	The work we do as a partnership on managing flood and/or coastal erosion risks is only minimally aware of or responsive to climate change science and scenarios.	Some of the policies or processes we are working on for managing flood and/or coastal erosion risks are taking up-to-date climate change science and scenarios into account, but most are not.	Within our partnership, there is a clear intention to embed climate change science and scenarios seriously into policies or processes for managing flood and/or coastal erosion risks, with good evidence of progress.	Climate change science and scenarios are already embedded across our work within and beyond this partnership and are shaping policies or processes for managing flood and/or coastal erosion risks; climate sensitivity is normal.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Attitudes and emotions How and to what extent do we as a partnership take account of the emotional dimensions of flooding, coastal erosion and climate change? Do we understand how emotions might affect ourselves and others in this area of work?	We have never considered emotions as relevant to our work.	We are aware that some people express strong emotions when it comes to flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change, but we do not think this has any bearing on our work as a partnership.	We recognise that flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change can provoke strong emotions in people. We do not, however, feel confident at handling these emotions.	We are aware of the range of emotions that can arise in experiences of and conversations about flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change. We are trying to build this awareness into our work and developing our capacity to handle emotions constructively.	We recognise the role that emotions can play in climate adaptation, and this is an integral dimension of our work. We feel confident in our collective ability to engage constructively with the full range of emotions that might arise.
Sense of agency To what extent does our partnership feel empowered to make the changes that would help us manage risks and address vulnerabilities in the context of climate change? To what extent are we able to access resources – expertise, funding – to support climate adaptation efforts? Are we prepared to exercise collective leadership?	We are feeling completely disempowered and unable to make a difference.	At this moment, we do not feel that we can make a tangible difference. We lack the resources we would need, and/or the bigger picture we are operating within is not conducive to effective climate adaptation. We do not yet have the collective capacity to lead on climate adaptation.	Some of us in this partnership are able to draw on expertise, resources and connections that might enable us to influence how risks and vulnerabilities in this area will be managed in the context of climate change. Others are much less influential and are feeling frustrated at not being able to make more of a difference.	There is an increasing sense that the initiatives we are collectively working on are making a tangible difference to climate adaptation in this place. As a partnership, we are feeling increasingly visible and able to lead on climate adaptation within this area.	Our partnership has an impressive track record at making the kinds of changes that are needed for effective climate adaptation in this place. We feel confident in our ability to influence levels of decision-making above this partnership where needed. We are exercising collective leadership where needed, and this is creating an enabling and supportive atmosphere for others.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Conflict and disagreement Are there any disagreements, divisions, inequalities and/or conflicts that affect our work as a partnership? What is the nature of these conflicts? How might they affect our capacity to work together on climate adaptation? How good are we at constructive conflict engagement?	There are significant unresolved conflicts or divisions within this partnership and in the wider community that make it impossible for us to cooperate on climate adaptation. We do not know how to name or engage with these conflicts.	There are conflicts or divisions within this partnership and/or in the wider community that make effective cooperation difficult for us. Capacities for constructive conflict engagement are low.	We recognise that there is some conflict/disagreement within our partnership and/or in the wider community. We know we need to work through this, but we are not confident in our collective ability to do so constructively.	There is limited conflict, disagreement or division within our partnership and in the wider community. If and when needed, most of us in this partnership are willing and able to tackle conflict/disagreement/patterns of inequality constructively.	Any major conflicts, disagreements and inequalities within this partnership have been tackled, and most of us have the capacity to respond constructively to any future conflicts or disagreements. Conflict sensitivity and an awareness of inequalities informs everything that we do.
Collaboration and trust To what extent are stakeholders able to collaborate effectively? Is there enough trust to allow for meaningful collaboration? Is this partnership being trusted by the wider community?	Trust within this partnership is very low, and there is no effective collaboration. The wider community does not trust us.	There is little meaningful collaboration. Some partners trust each other, but many don't. There is low trust in this partnership from the wider community.	Collaboration and trust within this partnership is developing, with scope for further development. Some stakeholders within the wider community trust us, but others don't.	We work together effectively, and we trust each other to work in the best interests of this partnership and the wider community. This is increasingly being recognised by others within the community.	We have an established track record of effective partnership working. We trust each other and are trusted by the wider community, and this is enhancing our ability to collaborate with each other and with stakeholders across the community.

Please note: For a more detailed readiness assessment at the partnership level, you may also want to consider the readiness assessment tools developed for the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme ('Readiness self-assessment: advisor's handbook' available on gov.uk). If partnership governance is of particular interest, you might also want to look at a partnership governance self-assessment framework developed as part of the FCERM governance research project.

Assessing the readiness of a wider community

Table 3 is designed to support an assessment of readiness at the level of a wider community. This includes a wide range of people, including both known stakeholders and those not currently involved in work on flooding, coastal erosion or climate. Please bear in mind that the definition of 'stakeholders' here, is deliberately broad, including "any individual, group or organisation that believes they could be affected by, interested in or could affect or influence the project or issue".

You can use this table in several ways:

- **As a way of documenting your current assumptions about the wider community.** Doing this is helpful, both to make your own assumptions visible and to identify any uncertainties or gaps in your knowledge. Please note that your assumptions may or may not be accurate – it is a good idea to test these via the additional processes suggested.

- **In one-to-one conversations with others who know the community well.** This could include others who have worked with this community, stakeholders, and people who may not be involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management or climate adaptation, but who have good knowledge of the community. It is also worth identifying and seeking out perspectives that are currently under-represented. In conversations with others, ask for their sense of which boxes best describe this community or partnership and listen to their explanations of why they would tick a particular box. A series of such conversations would help you to check your own assumptions and experiences of the wider community against those of others. These conversations might also draw your attention to questions or experiences that need to be explored further.

- **In a workshop setting, to build up a more collective sense of a community and a basis for further discussion.** In a face-to-face or online workshop, participants could be invited to rate levels of readiness in this community.

- **Table 3 can also be used to summarise findings from a wider [community survey](#).**

In working with this table, we suggest the following steps (individually or in groups):

- Read through the questions and descriptions for each dimension of community readiness.
- Tick the boxes that best capture the wider community in relation to each of these dimensions. Consider different groups within the community as you do so.
- Consider what it might take for the community to move towards higher levels of readiness. What kinds of inputs, processes or support would be helpful?
- Take a note of any questions or concerns that arise as you do this.
- Identify areas of disagreement, uncertainty or gaps in your knowledge. Which groups within this community do you know least about? What else could you do to check your understanding or to fill in any gaps?

Table 3: Community readiness

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities How well do stakeholders understand flood and/or coastal erosion risks facing the area and how climate change might affect these risks? (Bear in mind that knowledge has different dimensions, including both scientific/technical expertise and local knowledge).	Stakeholders have no meaningful knowledge or understanding.	Stakeholders have limited and/or confused knowledge or understanding.	Some stakeholders are well-informed, but the majority indicate a partial or fragmented knowledge.	Most stakeholders have significant knowledge and understanding.	All major stakeholders across this community have significant knowledge and understanding.
Climate sensitivity **To what extent do existing** policies, behaviours and choices in this area already take account of current climate change science, likely scenarios and their implications for flood and/or coastal erosion risks? Do stakeholders actively pursue climate sensitive policies and decisions?	The actions and decisions of stakeholders in this place are not at all informed by or responsive to climate change science and scenarios.	Most stakeholders have a minimal awareness of how climate change science and scenarios might influence their policies, decisions and/or behaviours.	Some stakeholders are taking climate change science and scenarios into account in their policies, decision-making processes and behaviours, but most are not.	Many stakeholders are consciously embedding climate change science and scenarios in their policies, decision-making processes and behaviours, with good evidence of progress.	Climate change science and scenarios are already embedded in the policies, decisions and/or behaviours of most stakeholders; climate sensitivity is normal.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Attitudes and emotions What level of concern do stakeholders have about flood and coastal erosion risks, and about how climate change might affect those in the future? How might emotions - potentially including anxiety, anger, grief and attachment to place and community - bear on their willingness and/or capacity to be involved in resilience-building?	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are not recognised as issues of concern or are the focus of active denial/resistance.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are hardly recognised as issues of concern. There are only sporadic expressions of anxiety, connection to place and community, or other relevant emotions.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are recognised as issues of concern for some stakeholders but not others. Some of the emotions that are being expressed are motivating people to engage in climate adaptation efforts while others are counterproductive.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are widely recognised as issues of concern and priority. There are increasing expressions of and conversations about a range of emotions, and these are beginning to motivate action.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are widely recognised as issues of concern. People are expressing and processing related emotions together, and this is generating mutual support and tangible actions.
Sense of agency Do stakeholders feel empowered to make changes that would help them manage risks and address vulnerabilities in the context of climate change? Do they feel responsible for doing to? To what extent are they able to access resources – expertise, funding – to support climate adaptation efforts? Is effective leadership present where needed?	There is a strong sense of disempowerment, and no visible leadership on climate adaptation efforts. There is no sense of responsibility for action.	Many stakeholders feel that when they do try to engage, they are not listened to or able to make a difference. Many lack the resources to take part in climate adaptation efforts. Very few people are actively taking responsibility. Leadership is weak and/or not trusted.	Only some stakeholders feel that their contributions are listened to and/or that they can make a difference, while others do not. Some are starting to take responsibility within their own spheres of influence. There are some efforts to lead on this work, but these are not yet widely recognised or effective.	There is an increasing sense that suggestions and initiatives by stakeholders are making a tangible difference. Many are participating, and some are developing their own initiatives for change. Where needed, leadership is becoming more visible and effective.	Stakeholders across the community have an effective voice and/or feel empowered to act on their own initiative to make a tangible difference. There is effective leadership where needed, and this is creating an enabling and supportive atmosphere for all.

Dimension of readiness	No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Conflict and disagreement What disagreements, divisions and/or conflicts exist in this place? What is the nature of these conflicts? How might they affect capacities for climate adaptation? How prepared are people to engage constructively with conflict?	There are significant unresolved conflicts and/or divisions within this community that make it difficult to cooperate on climate adaptation. Some stakeholder groups feel excluded from this community.	There are conflicts and/or divisions that make effective cooperation difficult. Capacities for constructive conflict engagement are low. There are patterns of inequality and discrimination against some stakeholder groups.	There is some recognition of conflict, disagreement and/or inequality. Some stakeholders are willing and able to work through this, but others are acting in ways that exacerbate or sustain conflict.	There is either limited conflict, disagreement or division, or most stakeholders are willing and able to tackle conflict/disagreement/division constructively. There are deliberate efforts to overcome patterns of inequality and discrimination.	Major conflicts, disagreements and inequalities have been tackled, and most stakeholders have the capacity to respond constructively to any future conflicts or disagreements.
Collaboration and trust To what extent are stakeholders within this community able to collaborate effectively? Is there enough trust to allow for meaningful collaboration?	Trust is very low, and there is no collaboration.	There is little meaningful collaboration. Some stakeholders trust each other, but many don't.	Collaboration and trust are developing, with scope for further development.	There is promising collaboration among stakeholders, and this is currently gaining momentum. Trust is being built.	There is a track record of effective collaboration involving the majority of stakeholders. Stakeholders trust each other and work well together.

Community surveys

Your work with Table 3 might well generate a recognition of gaps or uncertainties in your understanding of community-level readiness. For example, you might conclude that there are sections of the community whose views are currently unknown because they have not been involved, or it might be that different participants in a workshop had diverging interpretations of community readiness.

To broaden and check your understanding of readiness among a wider community, you could consider carrying out a survey. As part of our work in the 'Working together to adapt to a changing climate: flood and coast' project, we developed a survey in collaboration with local partners in Hemsby, Norfolk (available on gov.uk). Alongside questions specific to Hemsby, the survey included a range of generic questions to gauge readiness. You can find more information on the different stages of carrying out a survey in the 'Developing tools for readiness assessment: review of learning' report.

Some considerations when using a survey:

- Community surveys should not be used as a standalone activity, but as part of a longer-term process. Communication with the wider community is important throughout so that people have a good sense of how their inputs have been used and what other opportunities there are to get involved.
- In launching a community-wide survey, it is important to think carefully about where and how it will be described/explained as well as where and how it will be publicised. Inclusivity and transparency are crucial to making this work well.
- It may be helpful to offer incentives to maximise participation, for example, a prize draw (check whether your organisation allows this).
- Ensure you have procedures in place to deal with personal data. If you have asked for personal details (for example, name, telephone, email/postal address) with the intention of following up with individuals after your survey closes, you need to make sure that you meet your obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), implemented by the Data Protection Act 2018. This includes making sure that data is held securely, it is not shared with third parties and is deleted after a certain period of time. Further information can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website. Your survey introduction will also need to explain clearly to people how you will use the data you are collecting, who will access the data, and you will need to provide a summary of, or a link to, your organisation's privacy policy.
- If, as part of your survey, you will need to share any of the data (personal details, responses) with a third party, for example, because you are working on a project jointly with another organisation, you will need to make sure you have appropriate agreements in place for sharing, storing and handling data.
- Consider what else is happening in this community. Is the timing right for a survey? Could it overlap with another community-wide initiative, and is there potential for synergies and collaboration?
- Large-scale surveys can generate significant volumes of data, and analysis and follow-up can be time-consuming. Think carefully about your capacity, time and resources before committing to a whole-community survey. It is easy to

underestimate the time needed. This does require social research skills – you'll need to check that you have the time and skills to do this or you might want to commission an expert to help.

- Closed and open questions both have benefits and limitations. The former will allow you to generate an overall picture relatively quickly, while the latter can draw attention to important things you may not yet have thought of. In our experience, a mix worked well, but including open questions increased the time it took to analyse the data.

- Take care not to reinforce a sense that people are not being listened to. Communicate clearly about how the survey will be used and what will happen with the results.

- General surveys can be one way of 'discovering' people who may not yet be involved in climate adaptation or resilience-building work, but who are keen to become involved. Consider including questions that will allow these people to step forward. If you do, make sure you have the capacity to follow up with them. This could include both follow-up conversations and an invitation to get involved in local working groups or other relevant initiatives.

In working with the data generated by a survey, we suggest the following steps:

- Work through each dimension in turn.
- Look through the responses that are relevant to the dimension you are looking at (these may be quantitative or qualitative and will often include responses to more than one question). You may find it helpful to refer to Appendix 1 which 'maps' the questions in the generic version of the community survey to the different dimensions of readiness.
- Most online survey systems will provide a summary and/or charts for quantitative data. Some also allow you to categorise qualitative responses or produce word clouds, identifying themes within open text responses. You will still need to review the findings in detail though to come to a view on the level of readiness for each dimension. There is more information on how we analysed the survey data in Hemsby in section 2.7 of the readiness assessment learning report.
- On the basis of this data, make a considered judgement on which box in Table 3 best describes the wider community's level of readiness. Appendix 2 provides an example, illustrating how survey results were translated to levels of readiness for one of the dimensions.
- In many communities, this is likely to be 'uneven readiness'. While this may be predictable, the more nuanced data that will emerge, for example, in relation to divergences in perceptions among different groups and/or in written responses, will generate additional insights into particular issues that need attention in order to develop inclusive community-wide engagement strategies.
- If you have not got an independent and experienced researcher to do this work, it is a good idea to ask two or three people to look at the data independently of each other, and to compare their assessments. This will increase the validity and reliability of your assessment.

4. What next?

Once you have carried out your readiness assessment at any or all the levels, spend some time looking at the picture that has emerged and planning next steps. To help consider the overall picture, you could start with producing a summary analysis of each of the 6 dimensions of readiness. An example template for this initial analysis is contained in Appendix 3.

- To what extent do the results confirm or challenge your prior assumptions?

- What new insights has the process generated?

- What does your readiness assessment suggest about dimensions of readiness that need to be built up before meaningful work can take place? How might you do so?

- What priorities emerge? For example, do you need to spend time and resources on…

    o professional development for staff?

    o public education to enhance understanding?

    o conflict analysis or mediation?

    o dialogue to increase trust and/or enhance mutual understanding of salient emotions?

    o capacity-building and skills development?

    o something else?

- How might these processes be sequenced? What synergies are there – is there potential to increase several dimensions through the same activity?

- If readiness is uneven, which individuals or groups need most attention? Who could share skills or expertise?

- Are there stakeholders that you had missed and who have become more visible because of this process (for example, via a community survey)? What could you do to include them more fully?

Once the summary analysis is complete, it will be necessary to integrate the findings into ongoing personal or professional development, partnership work and/or wider engagement in this community.

Glossary

Adaptation to flooding and coastal change – Anticipating appropriate action to prevent or minimise the likelihood and consequences of flooding and coastal change, both now and in the future.

Authority – An organisation with official responsibility for a particular area of activity. This particularly includes government organisations.

Climate adaptation – Changing lifestyles, economy, infrastructure and local places to make us more resilient to the future consequences of climate change.

Closed questions – A question with pre-determined response options.

Community – Residents, businesses and groups living or based in a particular area.

Flood and coastal resilience – The capacity of people and places to plan for, better protect, respond to, and recover from flooding and coastal change.

Framing – A way of structuring or presenting a problem or an issue.

Open questions – A question that requires a descriptive answer.

Partners – Individuals, groups and organisations that help to carry out a particular area of activity. This includes private and third sector organisations.

Practitioners – Individuals working within authorities.

Qualitative data – Written responses that give insights into respondents' reasons, thoughts, opinions or motivations.

Quantitative data – Numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics.

Readiness – How prepared people, communities and organisations are, in this context, to engage in conversations about and planning for the long-term response to increasing flood and coastal erosion risks due to climate change.

Readiness assessment – A tool for measuring how prepared you/your organisation and local stakeholders are for engaging in conversations, planning and action for climate adaptation in particular areas.

Risk management authority (RMA) – Organisations that are responsible for managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. This includes public and private sector organisations.

Stakeholder – Any individual, group or organisation that believes they could be affected by, interested in or could affect or influence the project or issue.

Appendix 1: Mapping of survey questions to dimensions of readiness

Note: If you have amended the generic version of the community survey, you will find that the question numbers below may no longer match the questions in your survey. Figure 1.1 therefore includes the question number and the detail for each question to help with you with your analysis.

Background/contextual questions

Responses to these questions provide background information on who has responded to the survey. However, some of these responses are also important to help with the interpretation of responses, such as differences in responses across different age groups, or proximity to areas of high risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

1) Living and/or working in x.
   a) Do you live in or own a holiday home in x?
   b) Do you own a business, or are you employed in x? This includes part-time jobs and servicing your own holiday property(ies) if they are rented out

2) If you live in x how long have you lived there? If you have a holiday home in x, please tell us how much time you spend in x each year.

3) If you are employed in x, please tell us a little about what you do and how long you have worked there.

4) Questions on proximity to areas of risk, for example, from flooding and/or coastal erosion.

5) Your age.

6) Please tell us your gender.

7) How would you describe the community in x?

8) What do you most like about living and/or working in x?

9) What is your favourite place in x - and why?

10) What do you see as the top 3 priorities for x in the next 5 years?

11) Do you think the priorities for x are likely to be the same or different for the longer term (20 years+)?

Figure 1.1: Survey questions linked to readiness dimensions

Dimensions	Questions
Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities How well do stakeholders understand flood and/or coastal erosion risks facing the area and how climate change might affect these risks? (Bear in mind that knowledge has different dimensions, including both scientific/technical expertise and local knowledge). How much do they already know about possible options for adaptation and risk management?	13) Do you believe that climate change is happening – in other words, that global warming because of human activity is causing changes to weather patterns, rising sea levels, increasing flooding? 14) How would you rate your level of understanding about the potential effects of a changing climate on x? 15) In what ways do you think x might be affected by climate change in the next 50 years? 22) How would you rate your level of understanding about the potential effects of flooding/coastal erosion on x?
Climate sensitivity To what extent do existing policies, processes, initiatives and personal behaviours and choices in this area already take account of current climate change science, likely scenarios and their implications for flood and/or coastal erosion risks? Do stakeholders actively pursue climate sensitive policies and decisions?	This dimension is not explored directly in the community survey, but if you do some interviews with individual stakeholders, it will be picked up as part of those conversations.

Dimensions	Questions
Attitudes and emotions What level of concern do stakeholders have about flood and coastal erosion risks, and about how climate change might affect those in the future? How might emotions - potentially including anxiety, anger, grief and attachment to place and community - bear on their willingness and/or capacity to be involved in resilience-building? How strongly do people feel about where they live and the prospect of unwanted change?	16) How would you rate your level of concern about the effects of climate change on coastal erosion and/or flooding in x? 23) How would you rate your level of concern about coastal erosion and/or flooding in x? **Note: This question in particular is one you may want to cross reference in relation to responses about location (proximity to main risks), age and levels of reported knowledge/understanding about climate change to see if there are any patterns for correlations. The questions asking people about their favourite place (Q8) and how they'd describe their community (Q9) are also relevant here.** Other questions that are relevant to this dimension in include responses that relate to: - Perceptions of actual or potential conflict People's priorities for x both now and in the longer-term as these can also result in strong emotions and anxieties.
Sense of agency Do stakeholders feel empowered to make changes that would help them manage risks and address vulnerabilities in the context of climate change? Do they feel responsible for doing so? To what extent are they able to access resources – expertise, funding – to support climate adaptation efforts? Is effective leadership present where needed?	17) What kinds of actions or initiatives are already happening (by you or by others) that will help x adapt to increased coastal erosion/increased flooding because of climate change? 18) What additional actions or initiatives do you think are still needed (by you or by others) to help x adapt to increased coastal erosion/increased flooding because of climate change? 21) What might encourage you or others in the community to take a more active role to help x adapt to climate change?

Dimensions	Questions
	24) What kinds of actions or initiatives are already happening (by you or by others) that will help x adapt to increased coastal erosion/increased flooding? 25) What additional actions or initiatives do you think are still needed (by you or by others) to help x adapt to increased coastal erosion/increased flooding*?* 28) What might encourage you or others in the community to take a more active role to help x adapt to coastal erosion/flood risks in x? **Note: It may be useful to cross reference responses between the question about levels of concern and whether people are currently involved in initiatives to help plan for a future shaped by climate change.**
Conflict and disagreement What disagreements, divisions and/or conflicts exist in this place? What is the nature of these conflicts? How might they affect capacities for climate adaptation? How prepared are people to engage constructively with conflict?	This dimension requires a more general review of your survey responses to pull out where there are differences of opinion. For example, is there evidence of disagreement about the nature of the risks posed by climate change; the measures that might be needed; who should take the lead in helping a place adapt to climate change. **Note: You may want to cross reference views with age or location (proximity to risk) to see if there are any patterns or correlations.**
Collaboration and trust To what extent are stakeholders within this community able to collaborate effectively? Is there enough trust to allow for meaningful collaboration? Is there enough trust to allow for effective collaboration?	19) In your view, which people or organisations are most responsible for helping x plan for a changing climate? 20) Which statements best describe your view of current action to help x adapt to a changing climate? 26) In your view, which people or organisations are most responsible for helping x respond to coastal erosion and flood risks?

Dimensions	Questions
	27) Which statements best describe your view of current action to help x adapt to coastal erosion/flood risks?

Appendix 2: Translating survey results to levels of readiness - An example

What follows is an extract from the readiness assessment report we wrote for Hemsby. This extract relates to the dimension of attitudes and emotions. As you will see, it summarises responses to both closed and open questions in the community survey.

The graph (Figure 2.1) indicates that the largest number of respondents feel 'some' level of anxiety about climate change or its impacts, but do not yet see it as a top priority in comparison to other issues. Coupled with responses that indicate climate change is a minor concern or of no concern, around two-thirds of responses downplay the importance of climate change. Only 5% of respondents indicate that they are affected in a significant or consistent way by anxiety related to climate change.
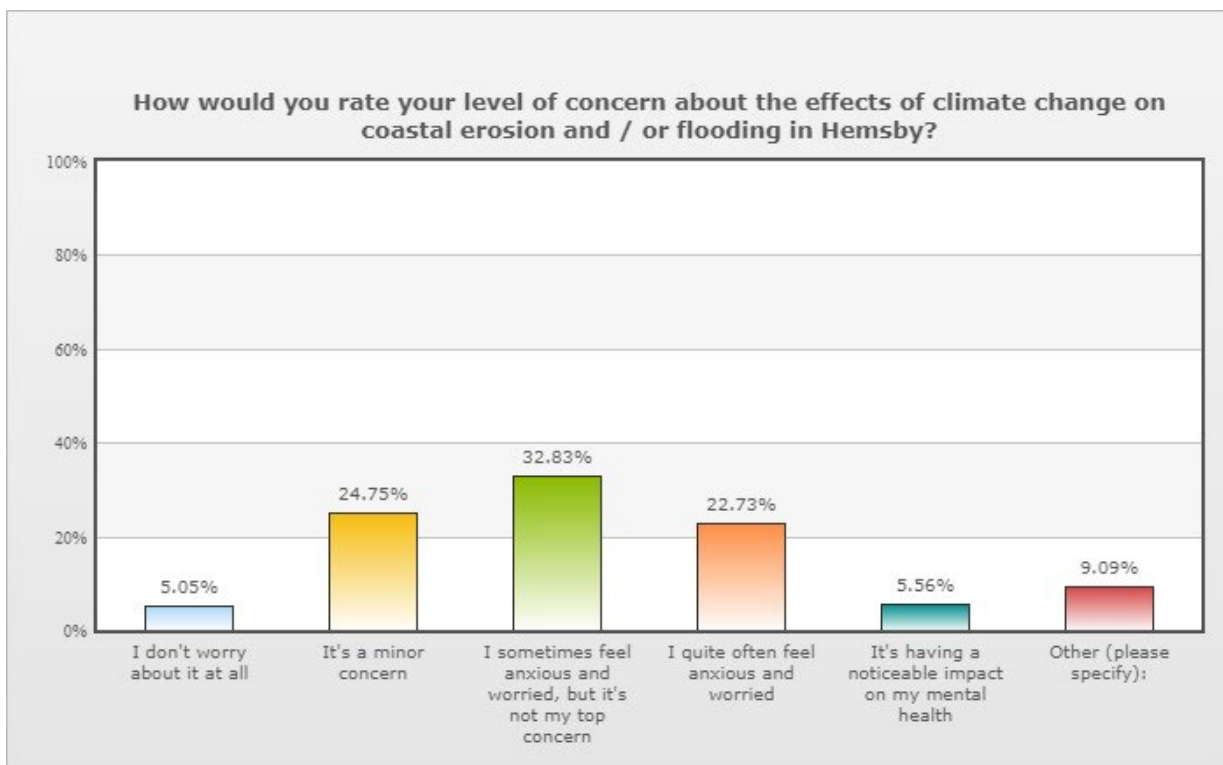

Figure 2.1: responses to the Hemsby community survey question on levels of concern about climate change and coastal erosion/flooding

When asked to explain their answer, common themes included those who:

- are concerned because they live closer to a problem (erosion or flooding)
- are not concerned because they are not directly affected
- are not directly affected but are concerned on behalf of others/of the village in general
- think climate change won't make a difference in their lifetime, so don't worry about it much

- think climate change will have a significant impact on their lives and those of future generations
- think coastal/environmental change is natural and/or beyond human influence, so don't worry about it
- think the risks of coastal erosion were known to those who bought houses in at-risk areas, so have little concern for their future
- hold the authorities responsible for their concern/anxiety, rather than the larger processes that put them at risk

We cross-referenced survey responses to this question in relation to responses about residential location, age and levels of (reported) knowledge to see if there were any clear patterns or correlations. Our finding is that there is a lot of variation within these sub-categories which makes interpreting the data more complicated:

1) **Cross-referencing responses to proximity to risk** (how close people lived or worked to the coast) showed that those who live in closer proximity to known risks – like coastal erosion and flooding – tend to have higher levels of concern, but there is also interest and concern among community members whose property or business is not directly affected. The suggestion, before doing the survey, that only those on the 'frontline' were concerned about environmental risks was not supported by the data.

2) **Comparing age and levels of concern** does not indicate any clear pattern. The highest numbers of 'high concern' responses are clearly among those in middle-age, but there are also many 'low concern' responses from this age group. There are a number of statements by respondents along the lines that 'I won't be around to see the impacts of climate change, so it is not my concern', but many older people have also responded that they 'often feel anxious and worried' about climate change. Further analysis would be needed to understand the variation within, as well as across, age-categories.

3) Similarly, **cross-referencing of reported levels of knowledge and concern** does not suggest clear correlations or patterns. In the survey, those who consider themselves 'quite well informed' (the largest category overall) report quite similar levels of higher and lower concern respectively. Similarly, those who 'understand a fair amount' report high variation in levels of concern, with choices distributed fairly widely across the responses. Again, further information and analysis would be needed to understand this variation, but the variation itself is quite a clear finding.

In relation to attitudes, emotions and levels of concern, another aspect that comes across from the survey and follow-up interviews is that issues other than those directly related to climate change and/or coastal erosion also provoke strong emotions and anxieties. The qualitative responses connected with the question on priorities for the next 5 years and beyond indicate, for example, that for some people, fears around an expansion in housing are closely connected with the village's identity as a community. For others, the lived experience of not being able to afford suitable housing and/or being able to find or access secure employment understandably generates greater emotional investment in change, including the development of additional housing and infrastructure. As a result of this analysis, this community was assessed as having 'uneven readiness' for the dimension of attitudes and emotion. This means that flooding, coastal erosion and climate change are recognised as issues of concern for some stakeholders, but not yet as a top priority; there

are emerging expressions of anxiety and/or calls for action. This score is also shown in Figure 2.2.

No readiness	Low readiness	Uneven readiness	Developing readiness	Advanced readiness
Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are not recognised as issues of concern, or are the focus of active denial/resistance. There are few expressions of anxiety or responsibility for action.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are hardly recognised as issues of concern. There are no expressions of anxiety and/or responsibility for action.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are recognised as issues of concern for some stakeholders, but not yet as a top priority. There are emerging expressions of anxiety and/or calls for action.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are widely recognised as issues of concern and a priority for action. There are clear expressions of anxiety and/or calls for action.	Flooding, coastal erosion and/or climate change are widely recognised as issues of concern. People are expressing and processing related emotions, and this is generating mutual support.

Figure 2.2: Example from Hemsby of scoring uneven readiness for the attitudes and emotions dimension of the readiness assessment

Appendix 3: Review of readiness assessment findings for X - example template

Dimension of readiness	Current level of readiness (enter the level of readiness for this dimension based on your findings)	Need identified to increase readiness (based on a review of all the work you've done)	Openings for engagement *(what did people ask for in the survey/interviews)*	Potential engagement activities/considerations
Knowledge and understanding of risks and vulnerabilities How well do stakeholders understand flood and/or coastal erosion risks facing the area and how climate change might affect these risks? (Bear in mind that knowledge has different dimensions, including both scientific/technical expertise and local knowledge).	Example: **Uneven readiness:** Some stakeholders are well-informed, but the majority indicate a partial or fragmented knowledge.	Example: - Enabling people to understand technical information so they are able to take part in discussions - To engage with people's needs/ beliefs/values to help them/us understand different perspectives and why people hold those perspectives. - To understand the wider impacts of climate change on x To understand the full range of potential options for adaptation	*Example:* Survey respondents want to know more about the potential impacts of climate change and what adaptation options could be considered.	Example: - Dialogue/deliberative activity to help better understanding of different views - Activities to improve knowledge, but also actively involve community in reviewing/refining different adaptation options - Framing engagement activities in ways that connect with existing concerns/priorities Deliberative activities about different adaptation options/trade-offs

Dimension of readiness	Current level of readiness (enter the level of readiness for this dimension based on your findings)	Need identified to increase readiness (based on a review of all the work you've done)	Openings for engagement *(what did people ask for in the survey/interviews)*	Potential engagement activities/considerations
Climate sensitivity To what extent do existing policies, behaviours and choices in this area already take account of current climate change science, likely scenarios and their implications for flood and/or coastal erosion risks? Do stakeholders actively pursue climate sensitive policies and decisions?				
Attitudes and emotions What level of concern do stakeholders have about flood and coastal erosion risks, and about how climate change might affect those in the future? How might emotions - potentially including anxiety, anger, grief and attachment to place and community - bear on their willingness and/or capacity to be involved in resilience building?				

Dimension of readiness	Current level of readiness (enter the level of readiness for this dimension based on your findings)	Need identified to increase readiness (based on a review of all the work you've done)	Openings for engagement *(what did people ask for in the survey/interviews)*	Potential engagement activities/considerations
Sense of agency Do stakeholders feel empowered to make changes that would help them manage risks and address vulnerabilities in the context of climate change? Do they feel responsible for doing to? To what extent are they able to access resources – expertise, funding – to support climate adaptation efforts? Is effective leadership present where needed?				
Conflict and disagreement What disagreements, divisions and/or conflicts exist in this place? What is the nature of these conflicts? How might they affect capacities for climate adaptation? How prepared are people to engage constructively with conflict?				

Dimension of readiness	Current level of readiness (enter the level of readiness for this dimension based on your findings)	Need identified to increase readiness (based on a review of all the work you've done)	Openings for engagement *(what did people ask for in the survey/interviews)*	Potential engagement activities/considerations
Collaboration and trust To what extent are stakeholders within this community able to collaborate effectively? Is there enough trust to allow for meaningful collaboration?				

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