

FRS17192 SUPP -
SIMULATION WORKSHOP
BRIEFING PACK - CLIMATE
ACTIVIST

Contents

Welcome.....	2
1. Workshop format	3
The simulation.....	3
Debrief	4
2. How to participate in our online workshop.....	4
3. Detailed briefing – the scenario, the options and your role	4
A. The scenario.....	5
The setting	5
The problem.....	5
Flooding causes and issues	5
The Flood Exchange.....	6
Today’s meeting.....	6
B. Options to be considered	6
Options for flood risk management.....	8
Potential funding sources	10
C. Your role: Climate activist/founding member of Springhill Climate Action Group	11
Self-Introduction	11
Your views on the options	12
Your views on funding sources	14

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in participating in our online simulation workshop – we really value your time, commitment and inputs. The simulation exercise has been developed to explore ways in which communities can exchange views, build understanding and plan together to help reduce flood risk in the face of climate change predictions.

The simulation was originally developed as part of the project '*Working together to adapt to a changing climate: flood and coast*' (2019-21), which was funded by the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme (Environment Agency, Defra, Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales). A steering group of representatives from organisations in one of the project pilot areas (Caterham and Old Coulsdon, Surrey) supported the development of the exercise. This included community organisations, local authorities, a water company and the Environment Agency. A specialist engagement organisation, Icarus, coordinated the project and produced the final version of the simulation.

This workshop is a little different from a normal meeting. To encourage creative and ambitious ideas, participants will be invited to see the issues from a different perspective. We have created a scenario that will encourage you and the other participants to weigh up a range of options for flood risk management. You will be doing so from a perspective that is likely to be different from your own – we want to make sure that a range of different views are represented and considered, and to encourage some shared understanding of why people may feel the way they do about different options.

This pack includes a set of materials that we hope will help you prepare for our workshop:

1. A brief explanation of how the simulation will work and what you will be expected to do.
2. How to participate in our online workshop.
3. A briefing on the scenario, the options we will consider and your role within the simulation.

Please read through these materials in advance of our workshop. During the simulation itself, you will need to have the information about the options under consideration and the briefing about your role and preferences in front of you for reference.

We are looking forward to seeing you soon!

1. Workshop format

The simulation

A fictional but plausible scenario

We have created a fictional scenario of a place that is facing challenges of surface water flooding. The scenario is set in the near future, and we are asking you to imagine a meeting of key stakeholders that has been convened to discuss and recommend a set of potential options for flood risk management. For the full scenario, please see briefing under 3A. below. The options are explained in section 3B below.

Representing key stakeholders

Each participant will represent a particular stakeholder – someone who cares about what happens and who has a set of values, priorities and preferences. Your role is set out in detail in your confidential briefing in section 3C below. Please try your best to stay true to your role throughout the simulation, even if your own preferences are different from those specified in your role. Within the parameters specified in your role description, you can improvise. You may also change your mind in response to the arguments of other characters, but please stay true to your priorities.

Early in the simulation, you will be asked to introduce yourself in your role, and to give a brief statement on what matters to you (see role briefing).

Identifying priorities and possibilities

We will then identify each participant's priorities and take a look at the degree of consensus or disagreement on each option. Following this, participants will discuss different possibilities with each other and try to find a package of options that might be agreeable to as many participants as possible.

Weighing up potential funding sources

In a second step, you will then collectively weigh up different potential funding streams. As with the options themselves, there will be some difficult trade-offs involved.

Facilitation

Throughout, your discussions as a group will be supported by an independent facilitator who will encourage all participants to speak and express their views. We will also use visual aids to help us all see what is being discussed.

What we're trying to achieve

By the end of the simulation, the group will aim to be in a position where it can recommend a series of options. Depending on the dynamics of the discussion, this may or may not be possible. Overall, the process is as important as the outcome.

Please bear in mind that there is no one 'right' outcome of this simulation – different outcomes are possible and legitimate, and your group might even come up with new options and ideas. We are looking forward to seeing what emerges!

Debrief

After the simulation, we will reflect together on what happened and on our individual and collective learning from the process.

2. How to participate in our online workshop

This workshop will be held online. You will be able to access it via the following link you have been sent by email. We will also confirm the date and joining time via email.

You will need a device with the following capacities:

1. A screen large enough for you to see the other participants and visual aids that we will share with you.
2. A camera, so that facilitators and other participants will be able to see you.
3. A microphone and speakers or a headset.

If you have any accessibility needs, please get in touch with us as soon as possible to let us know. We will try our best to make participation as easy and enjoyable for you as possible.

3. Detailed briefing – the scenario, the options and your role

On the next few pages, you will find three key bits of information that you will need to read in advance to prepare for the simulation:

1. An overview of the scenario.
2. An outline of all of the options under consideration, including their costs and benefits.
3. An overview of your role, including your priorities and preferences.

When you join the online meeting, please have these materials in front of you so you can refer to them during the discussion – we are not expecting you to remember them all!

A. The scenario

The setting

The simulation is set in 2025, in a place called Springhill. Springhill has a population of close to 24000 people. The area is hilly, with many steep roads, and with homes and businesses both on the hills and in the valleys.

In recent years, the area has come under considerable pressure from government and developers to plan for new housing and commercial developments. In addition, there are always some existing homeowners seeking to make alterations to their properties – e.g. by building extensions and/or creating paved driveways in their gardens.

The problem

Springhill has been badly affected by flooding in recent years. This has affected an increasing number of households, businesses and public buildings, including schools and community facilities. Many residents, however, still do not know that they or their neighbours could be at risk, what is causing the flooding and what can be done about it.

Intense storms, often in summer, can deposit a huge amount of water in a very short time. To make matters worse, the water can overload sewers; this means sewage has entered people's properties. The destruction that flooding brings to Springhill takes many months to put right, and people who have already flooded live in fear of the next heavy rainfall. Flooding has also badly affected a number of local businesses, and some would not be able to survive another major flood.

In the last few years, flooding has become more frequent. The most vulnerable areas of Springhill were flooded in 2016 and 2021. A major summer storm on 15th July 2024 affected a wider area: it caused extensive flooding that devastated 250 local homes and 50 businesses, closed roads and saw sewage flowing above ground in parts of the town.

Last year's flooding was particularly shocking to residents and to the authorities responsible for managing flooding, not least because a number of flood management measures had already been taken in 2020/21. The increased intensity of the storm and the flooding that resulted overtopped much of the newly installed flood protection.

There is now a recognition that more needs to be done to mitigate the increasing impact on the local economy and the wellbeing of the community.

Flooding causes and issues

Across the country climate change is having increasingly dramatic consequences. The winters between 2019 and 2024 have been among the warmest and wettest on record. Springhill has also been hit by intense summer storms. The July 2024 flood in Springhill was caused by 60 mm of rain falling in a four-hour period.

Over the years the severity of surface water flooding has also been made worse by new housing, roads and commercial developments being built without sufficient drainage and water management measures installed. Existing houses that have built extensions or paved over driveways also add to the problem if drainage is not considered properly. More hard surfaces have contributed to less drainage and soak away capacity, more water running off, moving faster and, in heavy rain, causing flooding.

At the same time, periods of drought have increased too, putting a different kind of pressure on water management. Drought periods have been made more severe by there being a lack of water storage at a property and town level. Periods of drought can also make sudden flooding more likely. When the landscape is dried out, it is less able to absorb the large volumes of water deposited by summer storms.

The Flood Exchange

The 'Flood exchange' is a group that brings together representatives of flood action groups, community organisations, residents and the water company to consider options to reduce and manage flooding in Springhill and make recommendations to the local council as to the best way forward. It has been meeting on a regular basis since the major floods in 2024.

Today's meeting

Today's meeting of the Flood Exchange is tasked by the local council to make clear recommendations on a package of flood protection and prevention measures and on how these should be funded. The local council is very aware that:

- **If it does nothing, flooding in Springhill will get worse** due to climate change and development pressure.
- **It needs a clear flood risk investment plan now.** The longer this is delayed, the more costly it will be to tackle flooding and the greater the impact of future flooding.
- **There is not sufficient existing budget to do all that is needed.** This means that there are difficult financial decisions to be made.
- **All sectors of the community need to be involved** in assessing the options, costs and consequences of a flood protection investment plan, as spending on flooding could reduce budgets in other areas. There are potential options for increasing the size of the budget available for flooding, but these are likely to be controversial and would need the consent of enough of the local population to be viable.

The Flood Exchange meeting today is considering a range of options for flood risk protection and prevention in Springhill. The meeting is being asked to make recommendations on a package of measures that will command widespread support.

B. Options to be considered

There are two sets of decisions under consideration today:

1. Which options to pursue to help with flood risk management
2. How these can be funded.

Over the next few pages, you will find explanations of the options available under both of these headings. If you have any ideas not mentioned here that you think your character might support, please also feel free to suggest these to the meeting.

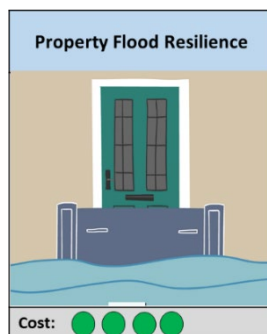
Options for flood risk management

In total, there are eight options under consideration at the meeting.



Do nothing.

Continue with 'business as usual' and do nothing additional to reduce flood risk and respond to the impact of climate change.



Property Flood Resilience.

Property Flood Resilience is about reducing the impact of flooding. The aim is to minimise damage and disruption. Measures are tailored to each property, such as fitting solid floors, flood-proofing wall and raising electrics. Barriers can be fitted to doors and windows and non-return valves installed on drains to prevent floodwater or sewage backing up. This makes ground floors more 'water resilient'.



Community Awareness Building.

A programme of activities and information to build whole community awareness of flood risk and the likely impacts of climate change. This would include the ongoing work of local flood and climate action groups, school projects, involving community groups, businesses and developers in discussions and practical activities to slow the flow.



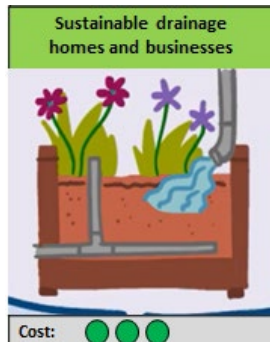
Community-based Flood Resilience.

Trained community or neighbourhood volunteers taking more responsibility for flooding on their local patch. This may involve a range of activities, including deploying temporary flood barriers when there is a warning of heavy rain, checking and reporting blocked drains, building neighbourhood awareness of the threat, and helping neighbours in an emergency.



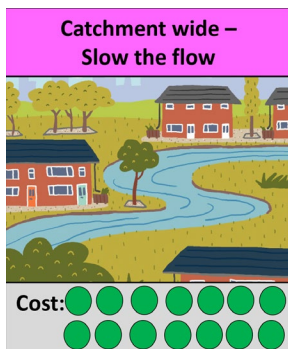
Repurpose Springhill Park for Water Storage.

Springfield Park (at the top of the catchment) is adapted to become a major water storage and ‘slow the flow’ area. This would involve constructing several ponds, extensive tree planting and the creation of wetland areas. It would mean around half of the park could no longer be accessed for conventional recreation and sports.



Sustainable Drainage for Homes and Businesses.

Water management that builds in more resilience to flood and drought conditions. The idea is to store and slow the flow of rainwater from properties, gardens and open spaces. This can help reduce flash flooding as the peak flow is reduced. Measures include water butts to catch rainwater from roofs, the diversion of roof downpipes into water storage or soakaways, green roofs, and making hard surfaces more permeable so that rainwater can soak through.



Catchment-wide Slow the Flow Scheme.

A large-scale remodelling of the catchment to catch and store water and ‘slow the flow’. This will draw on extensive catchment modelling. Measures such as attenuation ponds and large-scale water storage tanks, tree planting, the creation of porous urban surfaces, rain gardens, leaky dams on water courses, reprofiling of rivers and streams and more green space can all contribute to a landscape that is more able to absorb and slow the peak flow of heavy rain.

Please note: *The option of a catchment-wide scheme is likely to include the options of sustainable drainage and water storage in Springhill Park alongside other similar solutions across the catchment.*






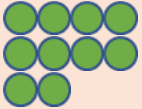



Remove Permitted Development Rights.

Permitted developments rights across Springhill would be removed. These rights relate to changes that householders can make to their properties, garden areas or outbuildings without planning permission. This would include new extensions and hard surface driveways. Any such change would now require an application for planning permission. Householders would have to show how they were complying with Sustainable Drainage Policy set out in the Local Plan.

Potential funding sources

The meeting has been asked to consider several potential sources of funding, most of which will be contentious. As a group, you will need to weigh up the money available under different funding streams and which of the flood management options this would enable you to fund.

Funding source	Funding available
Use existing local authority budget for flood risk management	
Increase council tax to pay for flood risk measures	
Reallocate budget from other areas of council spending – e.g. social services, recreation and public space	
Use the 'community infrastructure levy' (levied on new developments – funds can be used for community benefit projects)	
Government grants – time consuming and no guarantee of success <i>To pursue this option you need to allocate 1  . Later in the game you will find out whether or not uour funding bid is successful. You will only be able to allocate this budget if your bid is successful.</i>	
Self funded by residents, businesses or community projects	

C. Your role: Climate activist/founding member of Springhill Climate Action Group

You are very concerned about climate change and have felt an urgent need to become actively involved in putting it onto the agenda locally and beyond. Locally, flooding looks like the main immediate impact of climate change, and this seems a good way to reach a wider range of people.

Your partner is involved in a cooperative that runs a small wholefood shop in the town centre. When this was flooded in 2021, their landlord invested in flood resilience measures, including flood-resilient floors and walls, high electric sockets and high storage shelves. In 2024, these measures allowed them to reopen much more quickly.

Springhill Climate Action Group has helped you connect with other concerned residents, and there is a small but active core group as well as a growing but less active wider membership. Your actions and campaigns include 'Greening Springhill'. The Climate Action Group sees green space and the planting of trees as good for wildlife, air quality, recreation and people's health and fitness as well as reducing flooding and helping in drought situations.

You are campaigning to defend existing green spaces against development and engaging with Councillors and planners. Your group has formally objected to the planning application for a town centre business park. On small areas of public land, you have worked with the Council and the local Flood Action Group to install rain gardens. You have also undertaken a huge amount of work on Eastways Community Centre and its garden, showcasing a range of climate-friendly features.

You believe that if a majority of residents and businesses took small water and climate actions on their own properties, it would make a big difference to the speed with which water flows through the town in storm conditions. You have had some success with people who understand the benefits of these actions.

Despite these achievements, your message is still not reaching the majority. Too many people still seem indifferent and complacent towards the realities of climate change. Given the urgency of far-reaching change and the evidence from last year's floods that climate change impacts are increasingly affecting the area, you are determined to push for more significant measures. You feel it is no longer enough to tinker at the edges – you are in favour of enforcing some of the changes that are now necessary.

Self-Introduction

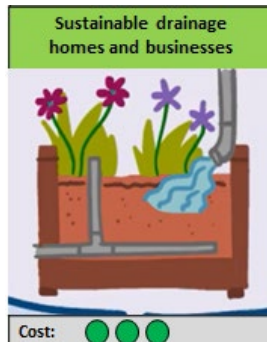
At the start of the simulation, you will be asked to introduce yourself and explain your key priorities. To help you get into the role, you can read out the introductory text below. If you are happy to make up your own introduction based on the information you have been given, please feel free to do so (but take care to keep it concise).

“Hello, I’m [insert your name], and I am here on behalf of Springhill Climate Action Group. I am really concerned about climate change and its impacts on Springhill, and I feel we need to get much more serious about tackling the causes and impacts. At the same time, I can see lots of potential benefits for the local environment and community, and I’m keen to support options that maximise those benefits.”



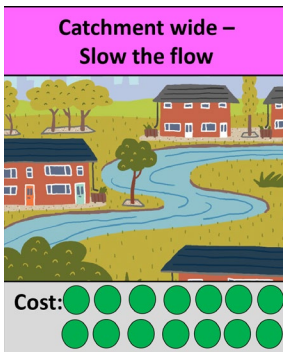
You support this option.

You are excited about making the most of the green spaces in and around the town to boost resilience to climate change in general and flooding in particular. A redesigned park would still have leisure value – e.g. as a wetland area with opportunities for local people to watch the wildlife and for children to learn about the value of healthy ecosystems and restorative practices. You would also like to see more trees that could absorb water and increase shade in hot summers.



You support this option.

You believe that all available options for reducing flood risk should be taken up, and this includes sustainable drainage across the town. You know that if designed well, this can include solutions that have multiple other benefits too, like rain gardens and planters that also beautify the town and attract beneficial insects.



You support this option.

This is an exciting option because it feels most like a holistic solution and is most likely to have the large-scale impact that is needed. Once put in place, this is a solution that would last for the longer term.

You are keen for this to be done in a way that also maximises other ecological benefits – e.g. via woodland restoration and new tree-planting as well as the creation of new wetlands and leaky dams.



You support this option.

You think that given the realities of climate change, people need to accept limits to their activities. You are not in favour of allowing any further green spaces to be paved over.

You also feel that levels of current car use are unsustainable, and that instead of increased parking, there should be collective investment in better public transport, cycle paths and safe walking routes.

Your views on funding sources

Use existing local authority budget for flood risk management



You want to use this funding source.

You want the existing budget to be fully used, though you are aware this will not be sufficient to fund the more ambitious ideas you would like to see realised

Increase Council tax to pay for flood risk measures



You want to use this funding source.

You feel that for many years, ecological damage and the costs of climate change adaptation have not been factored into people's choices and decisions. It is time to redress this balance now, even if this means sacrifices to the comfortable lifestyles that many people have got used to. You feel that Council tax is a good mechanism to raise extra funding because wealthier people (who generally contribute more towards climate change) will pay more.

Reallocate budget from other areas of Council spending



You are not sure about using this funding source.

You think that in the light of climate change, there is a case for reconsidering priorities, and that some activities are no longer sustainable. You want to make sure, though, that the budget is not reallocated from areas of spending that protect the most vulnerable. You see potential for funding to be used in ways that generate multiple benefits – e.g. by training young people to implement natural flood management measures or using the park for ecology education.


Use the 'Infrastructure Levy'



You do not want to use this funding source.

You do not want to support development activities that are unsustainable, and that you will contribute further to climate change. For you, these are part of the problem rather than the solution.

Apply for government grants

Minus  now with potential – but no guarantee – of significant funding later



You want to use this funding source.

Ideally, you want to see a whole range of ambitious measures to happen across Springfield. You know that there is not currently enough funding to do this, and you are not in favour of using the infrastructure levy. Instead, you would like to invest in putting together a strong case for government funding.

Self funding by residents, businesses or community projects



You want to use this funding source.

You do not feel it is fair for residents or businesses at risk to be expected to take on this extra financial burden on top of the emotional toll of flooding. You feel flood protection is the responsibility of public agencies and should be properly funded.