

Community Questionnaire

Scotland's flood risk management in the past and its future

The Scottish Flood Forum (SFF) has been asked to speak at the 2019 Flood Risk Management Conference on the 5th and 6th February 2019. This annual conference tends to have an audience made up of Scottish government, local authority representatives, SEPA flooding staff and some consultancies and academics.

The theme of this year's conference focuses on the fact that 2019 is the 10th anniversary of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act and all topics will have a focus around this theme.

We have been asked to pull together a "*view from communities*" which will include an overview of achievements and progress made in the last 10 years, examples of flood risk community experience, things that could have gone better/could be improved and finally to give three to five big "Asks" – things we and the communities we support, would ask are focused upon over the coming years.

As part of the talk we will be sharing examples of our own work supporting flood risk communities, and will be sharing the stage with one or two community representatives. However, we also want to ensure that the views of volunteers and community groups are reflected at the conference. Over the next 6 weeks when we are meeting with community groups we will be asking people to take part in a short video interview on Scotland's flood risk management past and its future. As we will not be able to visit every group we are also providing people with the opportunity to give their views by completing the short questionnaire below.

From your replies we will pull together a summary of key achievements, the top 3-5 things that have gone well /improved over the last ten years and the top 3-5 things that should be focused upon going forward.

If you would like your/your group's view included please complete all or some of the following questions and return to me by 11th January.

Flood Risk Management Past:

Question 1: Tell me when and why your group started?

In January 2016 Storm Frank caused extensive flooding in Kemnay. This particularly affected two riverside communities, Milton Meadows and Kembhill Park. In both cases a number of houses were flooded with considerable damage done to both houses and personal possessions. The Kembhill Park Flood Group was set up as a direct result of this incident with the general aim to improve flood defences and help prevent further flood events in the future.

Question 2: What are your group's biggest achievements / things you are most proud of?

The group's work has resulted in Aberdeenshire Council investing in a temporary flood prevention solution called Watergate and have provided a contract for its deployment in the event of another similar event. KPFG members have been in constant contact with the Council local and national politicians to raise awareness of the vulnerability of our community in respect of the risk of a future flood event. We believe that as a result of this work that our community has been kept as a focus for attention which has resulted in local investment and also recognition that Kemnay should be designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area (PVA) in the most recent flood risk assessment exercise carried out by SEPA.

Question 3: What from your perspective are the biggest changes you have seen in flood risk management in the last ten years?

Since the 2016 flood there seems to be much more awareness about flood risk. This has resulted in much more discussion about how to prevent any future flood. There was no such discussion prior to the January 2016 flood. There is also now much improved awareness in the community about the legislation that underpins the provision of flood prevention measures in any community. This has allowed groups such as KPFG to direct efforts to lobby officials to gain support for implementing flood defence and prevention measures. The law restricts the manner in which flood defence projects can be taken forward with a need to base any permanent solution on a flood risk study which takes account of the impact of flood defences on locations both up and down stream. Achieving the status of PVA for an area seems to be a pre-requisite to attracting government funding to conduct the necessary flood risk study before any permanent defence solution can be designed and deployed.

Question 4: What, from your perspective, are the biggest issues you have seen in flood risk management in the last ten years?

In order to progress work to improve flood defences it seems necessary to work within the legislation which governs this area of work. Knowing the general principles that govern work in this context is a major factor in helping to direct efforts in the correct direction governing organisations that can actually make a difference. Developing knowledge in this context has been an essential basis for all our efforts to have work done to develop improved flood defences.

Scotland's Flood Risk Management Future:

Question 5: How do you see the role of your group in the future?

Kemnay has just been granted PVA status but we still have no permanent plan in place to implement improved flood defences in our area. KPFG will continue its efforts until a flood defence solution which is fit for purpose has been designed and deployed. We will continue our efforts to maintain a high priority for our community to achieve this general goal.

Question 6: What do you see as the three big things that need to be dealt with as a priority over the next 5 - 10 years?

- 1 Implementation of a flood risk assessment in our area.
- 2 To secure agreement to design and deploy a flood defence solution which will protect both Milton Meadows and Kembhill Park from the risk of future flooding
- 3 To see an effective solution deployed in a reasonable time scale – this needs to happen as soon as possible and we need to secure priority over other potential projects in our local government area to achieve this goal.