

CCATCH the Solent - Upper West Itchen and St Denys

Issue 1, Winter 2012/13



What is the Coastal Communities Adapting to Change Project?

We are helping the community on the West bank of the Itchen (between Horseshoe Bridge and Mansbridge) prepare for coastal change, in particular sea level rise. The project is being run by Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council and the Solent Forum with the aid of a European Union grant. The aim is to work with you so that you are aware of and able to manage possible future risks.

What contact with the community has happened so far?

We first contacted the community in August 2012 and delivered a letter and leaflet to 271 properties identified by Southampton City Council as being at risk of tidal flooding (all properties at risk of flooding in any one in 200 year event). A total of 45 people responded, and subsequently these respondents were invited to a public meeting at the Riverside Club on Priory Avenue on 8th November 2012.

This meeting was attended by 29 people. The Project team introduced themselves, Heather Shepherd from the National Flood Forum gave a presentation on the need to develop local resilience, and then the community worked in groups to share information on local flood risk and list the key components that may be needed if the community were interested in developing 'a community flood plan'. A report on the meeting was produced but in summary the community identified the following actions:

Public Meeting - November 2012 - actions requested by the community

- Become part of a community group to discuss further action - 16 people.
- Help produce Emergency Plan - 9 people.
- Be involved in long-term design of coastal defence scheme for area - 11 people.
- Receive newsletter - 19 people.

A number of people at the meeting were interested in visiting the Portswood Wastewater Treatment Plant on Kent Road. As a result Southern Water organised a site visit to which 5 people attended. If anyone is interested, further meetings can be arranged.

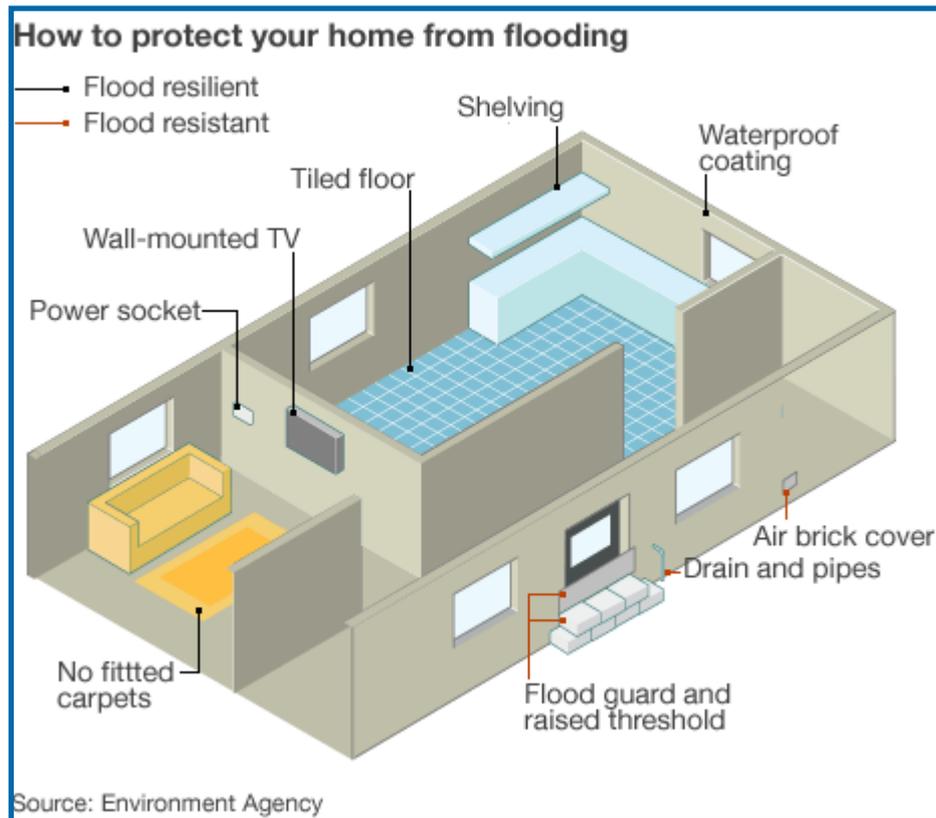
A smaller meeting was held on 11th December 2012 for those properties at higher risk of flooding (one in 50 year probability of flooding). This meeting established interest in installing property level protection in a demonstration house, as well as to talk specifically about a small community flood plan for the area close to lower Priory Road near Horseshoe Bridge. It is hoped that two houses in the highest risk area will have property level protection installed as part of this project and this can be used to demonstrate the products to others. Southampton City Council are applying for funding to help install Property Level Protection to all the houses in the area that are at greatest risk from flooding.



Photo courtesy of Clare Diaper.

Property Level Protection

A range of measures to reduce the impact of potential flooding to your property including flood gates, and airbrick covers. Measures can be classified as 'resistance' (this includes measures to prevent flood water entering a property) or 'resilience' (this includes measures to help minimise damage from water should it enter a property).



What else has been going on?

At an early stage we have identified a number of technical questions about flood risk and the Southampton area. As a result we have started to produce a Technical Fact Guide which is available via the project website.

A small group of residents at Oliver Road have produced a basic technical webpage which could serve the community. Essentially it shows the Southampton tidal data and links it to the BBC weather forecasting system, so that the community can at a glance see when high spring tides may occur and whether storm conditions may also be forecast. It also gives an opportunity for the community to upload data to the system.

A number of residents have produced reports on their flood experience (Lower Priory Road and Pettinger Gardens), and a photo library of flood information has been collated, both are held by the Solent Forum. If you would like to see these reports or photos please contact the Solent Forum.

Confidentiality and insurance

The community are sensitive about doing anything that might devalue their property or make it expensive to get insurance. Insurance companies and property purchase searches are all based on existing Environment Agency data. The data used for this project has been taken from the Southampton Flood and Erosion Risk Strategy 2012. This shows less risk than the Environment Agency data, and therefore there is little likelihood that Insurance premiums would rise and for this reason, in fact with the right flood protection in place premiums may fall. Despite this, it is recommended that any sensitive data from this project are kept for the local group only and that any webpage containing sensitive local technical data is password protected to local people and the Project team.

The first Community Group meeting is planned for 24th January 2013

In response to your interest we will launch the Southampton Itchen Community Group at an evening meeting on Thursday 24th January. At this meeting we would like to develop how you can work together as a community group in the future and work specifically on some of the most important issues to you. To set the scene we have asked the Environment Agency to come and provide a presentation on how to produce a Community Flood Plan, and after this we will have time to work in groups developing ideas that you have prioritised.

What will happen after the January meeting?

Following the meeting we will produce a report and we hope work will continue amongst the working groups (with the help from the project team if required). A further Community Group is likely to take place after this to explore medium to long term actions and how the Community Group can continue to work together in the future.

We then hope to launch all the local project outputs at an event late summer/early autumn and this may include: the final technical factsheet; a community action and flood plan on living on the waterside; any tidal installations in the area; technical website information, and finally any demonstration of property level protection.

How to keep in touch

The Solent Forum are coordinating the project and you can get in touch with us by phone or e-mail. We have also developed a website (see address below) and have a specific page for Southampton Itchen.

A further Newsletter is planned for Autumn 2013. Should you wish to place any articles in it please let us know.



Photo courtesy of John Pope.



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More Information

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