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Bootle Flood Alleviation working group

Meeting notes 27th November 2017

**In attendance:**

Caitlin Pearson (CT) West Cumbria Rivers Trust

Gavin Murray (GM) Cumbria County Council

Sam Townend (ST) Environment Agency

Dave Becchelli (DB) Copeland Borough Council

Russell Kenworthy (RK) Bootle Parish Council & Community member

**Apologies:**

Neil Harnott – Cumbria Wildlife Trust Neil Watkins - Iggesunds

**Ongoing work and Scoping:**

The Environment Agency currently have consultants undertaking an appraisal of possible capital investment schemes for Bootle (technical feasibility, environmental impact, cost-effectiveness). It is expected that engineering works will not be viable and further scoping will be necessary to look at smaller scale measures such as water storage areas.

***Action: ST to share summary from consultants when report is finalised.***

The Parish Council set up a Flood Resilience Group following the 2016 floods. Resilience packs have been provided together with flood prevention bins which include a number of sandbags. Gavin Muray (Cumbria CC) spoke at a meeting about issues around dredging and when gravel management is appropriate. Joint EA, CCC and Community walkover surveys identified potential measures on Kinmont beck including removing stones causing erosion, creation of woody dams in Kinmont woodland, overflow and water storage area down old mill race. County Council permits are now in place for this work and the flood resilience group plan to go ahead with the work late spring next year. In order to precise the potential storage and works at High Mill a topographical survey is to be completed by the group and CCC unless LIDAR data is available at sufficient resolution.

***Action: ST to share LiDAR data for this area. Completed***

***Action: GM to determine if LiDAR data is sufficient or whether a manual survey is still required for this area.***

Parish Council group are also planning gravel management through the village to increase capacity. Need to get EA permit for this work.

***Action: ST to share information and examples on main river permitting.***

West Cumbria Rivers Trust also carried out surveys on the same day and identified other possible measures.

**Further scoping required:**

Peter Allan has estimated that 82,542.2m3 of short term retention water upstream of Bootle is required to take the peak out of any flooding event, and ensure that Bootle doesn’t flood during a 1 in 100 year plus 35% for climate change event. Measures going ahead next year are estimated to store ~10,000 m3.

Further scoping is needed for catchment-wide Natural flood management measures to attain this retention value. This would include Kinmont beck, Annas upstream of Kinmont beck and the smaller ordinary watercourses (see attached map).

ST informed the meeting that the initial stage of Environment Agency’s appraisal process is to look at water storage areas but not woody dams, tree planting or peat restoration. It was agreed that woody dams, tree planting/peat restoration and natural watercourse management could be the most cost effective solution over hard engineering and that an assessment to this determine which is most appropriate and in which areas is required.

***Action: ST to look into the potential for funding initial scoping work for these measures from appraisal money***.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust have identified large areas of degraded peat on Corney and Bootle fell which could be restored to increase water storage. Ground surveys are needed to confirm erosion and initial investigation would map areas of erosion and bare peat before restoration would seek to stabilise and revegetate those, and block any drains found. Estimate that initial scoping would cost £2,000, planning a further £10,000 and capital works £150,000.

All agreed that a meeting for landowners to explain what we are trying to achieve and potential economic benefits would be a good place to start. Farmer Network, working with WCRT, may be best placed to deliver this. RK noted that based on initial conversations that some of the landowners would be keen to explore further tree planting schemes.

***Action: CP to speak to Farmer Network, Woodlands Trust and Iggesunds.***

**Possible funding:**

Bootle has been identified as an area for possible local levy funding, if it does not meet threshold for a capital investment scheme.

Other possible sources for consideration along with the EA for funding of the initial scoping work for natural flood management could be: Heritage Lottery Fund, Copeland Community Fund, Cumbria Community Foundation, Lake District National park community fund, Bootle Parish Council.

***Action: CP to investigate other funding sources if EA cannot provide all the necessary funding.***

**Next Steps:**

Next working group meeting to be arranged when there is an update from EA consultants. This is considered likely to be early 2018 and could possibly be combined with a potential site visit to Kinmont Wood and existing tree planting areas.

It was noted that the Parish Council public meeting would be in April 2018 and that the aim would be to bring options for public consultation at this meeting.

Caitlin Pearson

30th November 2017