

Hemmel Burn

Welcome to the first newsletter from the organisations that are working together to help reduce the risk of flooding from Hemmel Burn in central Haltwhistle.

Background to the scheme

Hemmel Burn is a small watercourse which flows through Haltwhistle, from the Haltwhistle Community Campus Lower School, to its confluence with Haltwhistle Burn adjacent to the Household Waste Recovery Centre. For the majority of its route through the town, Hemmel Burn is culverted (flowing in pipes below the ground), with one short open reach east of St James' Lane. There have been numerous incidents of flooding in recent years and the Hemmel Burn culvert has been identified as a cause of this. There has also been flooding from Haltwhistle Burn, in the Town Foot area, but this is not connected with the flooding on Hemmel Burn and as such, would need a separate solution. From records of previous floods, it is clear that there are a number of factors contributing to flooding in Haltwhistle.



Flooding at the junction of Aesica Road, Westgate and Main Street

In 2014, Northumberland County Council engaged Atkins to begin a study which involves flood modelling to better understand the flow routes and extents of the flooding. This study aims to develop and design a scheme to manage flood risk in Haltwhistle.

What work has been carried out so far?

Preliminary computer modelling has been undertaken to investigate the maximum extent of flooding from Hemmel Burn. This has concluded that there is sufficient potential risk to attract central government funding for an improvement scheme. Furthermore, it has

demonstrated that Hemmel Burn is only one source of flooding in Haltwhistle, with surface water systems and sewers also contributing to flood risk. This combined flood risk requires further investigation.

Next Steps

Over the coming weeks Northumberland County Council and Atkins will be carrying out further investigations into the combined flood risk from Hemmel Burn and the drainage systems. One task is to add more detail to the computer model so it includes Hemmel Burn and elements of the surface water systems and sewers. The computer model will then be used to assist the selection, development and design of an improvement scheme.

Information derived from the computer model will be used to apply for funding of the scheme, which will be submitted in autumn 2015. Once funding has been approved, design work can continue, allowing construction work to begin in spring or summer of 2016.

Data used and required

So far, a variety of data have been used and more will be required for future stages of the investigations. Ground levels for computer modelling have been established using both aerial survey and more traditional ground-based topographic survey. Information on rainfall and river flows has been provided by the Environment Agency. Northumbrian Water has provided their sewer model and other information to support the development of the computer model.

The computer modelling relies on records of previous flooding to verify the results. We are therefore asking for information on previous flood events which the public may have. Please get in touch using the contact details at the end of this newsletter if you have any of the following:

- Photographs of outdoor flooding – please include the date and location (if you send prints we will take a colour scan and return the originals to you promptly)
- Depths of any internal property flooding – please include the property address, a property description (e.g. 3 bed terrace house, or the type of business) and the depth which flood water reached inside, measured above your doorstep.

It would be most useful if you could provide this by the **end of June**, so we can compare it to information we already hold and model results from our work to date.

Who is reducing flood risk in Haltwhistle?

There are a several organisations working together to reduce the risk of flooding, namely:

Northumberland County Council

Northumbrian Water

The Environment Agency

Atkins Ltd

Home Group housing association

Have your say

We understand you may have concerns or questions. Once we have done the modelling and considered the options we will be holding public consultation and a drop-in event. Details of this event will be advertised nearer to the time.

We'll be staying in touch

We will keep you updated via further information and local media as the scheme develops further.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please contact us, by phone, email or letter.

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