



River Thames Scheme

Walton Bridge to Richmond (downstream of
the proposed flood channel)

Workshop Summary

November 17th 2016

About the workshop and this report

Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to hear from local residents, businesses and organisations to understand their views and gather their knowledge on the best solutions for Walton Bridge to Richmond, the area downstream of the proposed new flood channel. Views from all participants, representing a wide range of interest groups, were recorded on the day and will be taken into consideration.

About this report

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to enable stakeholders who took part in the deliberative workshop to communicate the outcomes with their community, organisation or interest. It draws out key points made in the workshop.

What it is based on

We have endeavoured to select out key points in a fair way. We do not rely on our own impressions as workshop facilitators to do this. Instead, we first process everything said in the workshop and cluster similar points from within a conversation together. This 'word for word' report can be consulted to see the details of each conversation.

Given the wealth of comment and ideas shared in the event we are unable to summarise it all in a few short pages. Instead we have aimed to pick out the main points from each conversation.

We know that all humans see and notice things that match up with their own interests and way of seeing things (psychologists call this confirmation bias). So it may be that as you look at this summary it does not include things that stood out for you during the workshop.

Please be assured that the basis for further discussion is the full workshop report not this summary.

1 Vision

Its 2030 and you are chatting with people about how much better things are now if a flood happens. Why what pleases you most?

People are living where they want to live and can get to work and enjoy their homes. They have confidence in flood planning and they can see the flood channels and defences working.

There is a better local understanding of natural processes and resilience to flooding for residents. A robust system of communication has been established that gives advice to residents and helps warn them of floods.

There is robust flood risk assessment in planning applications, resulting in rigour for planning in flood plains.

2 Sharing Knowledge

The weir options

Opinions vary about canopies – but there was a consensus view that there should be a canopy at Molesey and not at Sunbury or Teddington. There were questions raised about river flow rates, transport access and fish passes.

Information

The information that people would like to know included channels, river levels and lock gates, also property flood risk and opportunities for increased energy production.

Participants would like to see the modelling validated – that would give them greater confidence in the solutions that are being created for the downstream areas. They also expressed feeling an increased confidence due to workshops and would like to see case studies of other rivers.

Sources of 2014 flooding

Increase in water mass and fluvial flow, absence of culvert clearance and drains flooding were cited as the sources of the 2014 flooding.

Flood maps

People were then asked to look at the flood maps and asked to document whether they accurately represent their experience of flooding.

Mapping communities

Participants were asked what criteria should be considered when creating flood communities – and they outlined communities particularly affected by surface water flooding, environmental groups, schools and river user groups.

Flood Storage on the Ham Lands

Increased habitats for wildlife, an understanding of functional wetland and recreation opportunities were seen as benefits with the disadvantages cited as a loss of space and amenity value.

3 Community Resilience Measures

The areas that people would like more information about included timescales and community engagement, temporary defences and risk areas. They would like detailed information about what work is being done and the impact on households.

The information that participants are able to provide include safe places and emergency response systems, including contact numbers. There is a wealth of local knowledge, including knowledge from past floods. Lock keepers were cited as key people at times of flooding. Information about vulnerable people needs to be passed on.

The things that people felt need to be factored in when considering the location of defence options included issues around access, guidance given to planning authorities, the impacts elsewhere (both upstream and downstream) and the aftermath of flooding.

4 Community flood plans

People see the benefits of having a community flood plan as a pyramid of communication, which can coordinate action, raise awareness and help protect vulnerable people. Resources can be prepared, information shared and people can be empowered to be prepared.

If there is not a flood plan, people felt there could be chaos and panic, a threat to health and life, uncoordinated actions and wasted resources.

The things that people would like to be covered in a flood plan include safe areas and evacuation routes, flood information, emergency contacts and warning systems. Information for boat owners and information on resilience equipment were also seen as areas that should be covered in a flood plan.

The support people would like in creating flood plans included templates and examples of other plans, including the mechanisms to share flood plans and learn from each other. Advice about insurance companies and organisations that can help develop a plan would also be welcomed.

5 Enhancements

Participants examined the enhancements maps and gave their thoughts on current ideas about enhancements and other benefits. Please see the word for word document for details.