

## **Bewdley Community Flood Volunteers and Flood defences Report Full Council 11.01.21 .. 7.00 p.m.**

### **Bewdley Flood Group & BTC Flood Volunteers**

The Bewdley Resident's Flood Group and Bewdley Community Flood Volunteers Group met remotely with members of the Area Environment Agency Team Liz Fowler and Richard Henderson on December 16<sup>th</sup> 2020. There was a brief review of volunteer procedures moving forward and an update on the Beale's Corner permanent flood defence project. The group were also invited to provide local representatives at a forthcoming Stakeholders meeting with the Environment Agency in January 2021.

It was also confirmed that the Property Level Resilience programme, including amendments to some of the earlier defective installations, had been completed early December 2020.

### **Environment Agency Briefing with Local Councils.**

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> of January Bewdley Town and District Councillors, Anna & Roger Coleman and Cllr Edginton-White, District Councillor Niki Martin and County Councillors Fran Oborski and County Councillor Miller met with the Environment Agency Flood Alleviation Project Team. The presentation updated local members on the work undertaken and a provisional timeline as follows.

- Surveys – winter 2020 / spring 2021
- Planning and other permit discussions – winter 2020 / spring 2021
- Investigations to confirm how to tie into high ground – Jan 2021
- Preferred option selection – spring 2021
- Outline design development – spring 2021
- Outline Business Case – summer 2021

The Funding review to be aligned with OBC production based on preferred option costs

It was stressed that partnership with the local community would enable the EA to provide a strong evidence base and support the cost benefits analysis for the preferred option and the outline business case in the Summer 2021.

There will be a Stakeholder Planning Exercise with the EA to explore potential sources of local evidence on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January and local community representatives have been invited. The EA are also working on a Community Engagement Plan and it was emphasised that any evidence and local knowledge that can be provided to support the process of identifying the benefits of flood barriers at Beales's Corner to the wider Bewdley Community will help to meet the cost benefit calculation. As part of the community engagement it is hoped that some collecting and collating of local evidence can be done by local partners. The partnership funding for an identified scheme will be worked on alongside the preferred option and outline design.

### **Wyre Forest District Council Flood Review – Overview and Scrutiny 04.02.21.**

Wyre Forest District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reviewing progress with feedback from the Environment Agency on the 4<sup>th</sup> February at 6.00 p.m. This remote meeting will be streamed live on the WFDC web site via YouTube.

## **Bewdley Community Flood Volunteers – Flood Event December 2020**

Due to excessive rainfall and rising river levels the temporary flood barriers on Beale's Corner were deployed on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. The BTC flood co-ordinator contacted members of the Bewdley Flood Group and a small group of flood volunteers including the Mayor Cllr Anna Coleman, Cllr Calne Edginton-White, Martin Carter and Benjamin Edginton-White manned barriers at the junction of Stourport Road and Kidderminster Road to redirect the public while the Temporary Flood Barriers along Stourport Road were deployed. Demountable Barriers had already been deployed on Severn Side North and Severn Side South barriers were put in place after Beale's Corner later in the day. The Bridge was temporarily closed on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> while Severn Trent deployed pumps at Beale's Corner.

Resident volunteers and members of the Bewdley Flood Group arranged neighbour notifications and cars were moved to enable the EA to off load the equipment for the temporary barriers. The site manager commented that the volunteer input had led to an efficient deployment of the barriers.

Although the weather in December was very wet and there were a series of flood warnings along the Severn Valley the final flood levels were below 4 metres and there were no major issues for residents or the agency.

### **Conclusion.**

In summary there will be a number of partnership meetings and collaboration over the next few months to ensure that the best case and design for a permanent barrier is prepared. The objective is to provide benefit not only to the residents on Beale's Corner but also to businesses, the local economy and the wider community and that sufficient partnership funding is secured to complete the preferred scheme.

***Prepared by Cllr Calne Edginton-White: 11.01.21.***

***BTC Lead on Flood Defences and Bewdley Community Flood Volunteers Co-Ordinator.***