



Minutes of the flood resilience meeting held on

21st March 2019

I. Present/apologies for absence:

- **Present:** Ken Smith (Chair), Michele Bennett, Sue Wallace, Hendy Spence, Meg Duckworth
- Paul Laidlaw - Scottish Flood Forum (SFF)
- Malcolm Maccormick - Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust (LLFT)
- Maria Lucie - Flooding Manager Stirling Council
- Stuart Ballantyne - Trossachs Search & Rescue
- Councillor Graham Lambie
- 23 members of the public
- **Apologies:** P.C. Gary Martin – Community Police Officer

II. Introductions

- Ken Smith opened the meeting and introduced the members of the panel –
 - Maria Lucie (Flooding Manager Stirling Council). Maria explained that her team is responsible for community awareness, watercourse inspections and surface water management plans.
 - Paul Laidlaw (Scottish Flood Forum). Paul explained that the Scottish Flood Forum is an independent charity which supports individuals and communities at risk from flooding. They are mainly funded by the Scottish Government and do not charge individuals and communities for their services. There are two main strands to their work – recovery services and resilience services. They aim to help individuals and communities after flooding has occurred but also to help them be better prepared for flooding and to prevent flooding where possible. Their recovery programme offers support and advice for dealing with flooding and can help with dealing with insurance companies. Their resilience programme can offer training and support to community resilience groups and help with funding applications. Paul emphasised that flooding is the number one climate change risk – in 1984 there were 84 globally recorded floods, in 2004 there were 400.
 - Malcolm Maccormick (Loch Lomond Fisheries Trust). Malcolm explained that he had been made aware of the problems with flooding in Fintry when he was contacted by the farmer at Bogside Farm who is losing grazing land due to the Endrick Water changing its course. The farmer is aware that the Endrick Water is an SSI (Site of Scientific Interest) due to the presence of lamprey and Atlantic salmon so wanted advice on what could be done to strengthen the banks of the river. Malcolm reported that some parts of the river are too far gone but some areas can be stabilised naturally and quite cheaply although the method is labour-intensive.
 - Michele Bennett (Resilience Planning, Fintry Community Council). Michele has been seeking funding from several funding bodies including The Woodland Trust and The Prince's Countryside Fund. The Woodland Trust provides packs of trees which could be planted to help prevent some flooding. Michele mentioned The Prince's Farm Resilience Programme with regard to helping out

with the loss of agricultural land. Michele asked Maria if any funding was available from Stirling Council. **ACTION: Maria to find out if any funding is available.**

III. Questions and Answers

Ken then opened the meeting to the floor as a question and answer meeting.

It was noted that the last flood survey to be done in the area was in 2009 and does not show all the flooding which now occurs in and around Fintry, for example, the B822 Crow Road, near the Clachan.

- **Q:** A local landowner noted that many of the streams coming down from the hillsides become choked and although attempts are made to dredge them, it is a struggle to make any real impact. If streams further down are also blocked, this then leads to flooding. He also noted that a culvert on land behind his house is no longer deep enough to cope with the flow of water. Can any help be given?
- **A:** Malcolm confirmed that a lot of culverts are no longer the right size to cope with the amount of rain and that many become blocked and cause water to back-up. Paul gave examples of communities world-wide who have 'adopted' culverts in their area and have taken responsibility for keeping them clear. Some communities check the culverts regularly and report any blockages to their local council or have regular scheduled community days to clear them. He asked if Stirling Council has a policy for clearing culverts. Maria confirmed that over the last two years, Stirling Council has implemented a grill maintenance programme. Culverts have been mapped and a contract has been developed which highlights how frequently each culvert needs clearing. New culverts are continually being identified and new grills being fitted which prevent debris from getting in to the culverts. Maria said that the team would appreciate any information about the location of culverts and if they need clearing. Michele asked about the location of culverts in and around Fintry. **ACTION: Maria to find out where the known culverts are located and pass this information on to Michele.**
- **Q:** A resident pointed out that the Endrick Water creates a big problem. When it breaks it's banks, it floods the Sports Field, covers the B822, Kippen Road and floods both her front and back garden. Sandbags are permanently in position to try and stop the water entering through the air vents and coming up through the floor of the house.
- **A:** Paul said that Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SEN) have put Fintry on their list to be considered for a technology called RiverTrack. Water level sensors are attached to an agreed point on the river and this information is then transmitted to RiverTrack's display screen using a low power radio frequency. This provides constant reassurance about the state of current river levels. A trigger alert level is set by the user so that an alarm sounds if water levels reach a threshold of concern to them. Paul also highlighted that there are a number of actions which house owners can take to help reduce flooding of properties. The SFF can visit individual properties to make an assessment about how the property can be better protected.
- **Q:** A resident noted that the Endrick Water seems to have got wider over the years but now floods more frequently.
- **A:** Paul confirmed that at least 200,000 properties in Scotland and that the Scottish Government has recently invested additional funding to help with flood prevention. Malcolm confirmed that the river is getting wider and shallower but that it is unlikely the river could be dredged as it is an SSI. Engineering works can be very expensive (£3.4 million pounds was spent recently on 400 metres of a small burn to stop it from flooding) but there are several other options.
- **Q:** A local landowner mentioned a bend in the Endrick Water where gravel is building up but the landowner on that side of the river is not willing to allow any dredging to be done. He is worried that this will eventually lead to land being flooded. He also mentioned the flooding on the B818, Denny Road.
- **A:** Paul thanked the landowner for helping with flood management whenever he could and confirmed it was great to have landowners on board as much as possible. He also confirmed that a lot has changed since the 2009 flood survey and felt it would be useful

to schedule a walk around the area to look at the main pinch points. **ACTION: Michele to schedule a walk around Fintry involving as many groups as possible (SFF, SEPA, Stirling Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, LLFT).**

- **Q:** Several residents mentioned areas that now flood which either did not flood previously or where the flooding is getting increasingly more frequent – road resurfacing on the B822, Crow Road, near the church has altered the camber of the road and water now runs down the lane and around the house opposite the church; at the end of Menzies Terrace, water runs off the fields and floods the gardens – this is getting progressively worse; the Endrick Water backs up into the burn behind the houses on the north side of Main Street and floods the gardens; the same burn floods the Bowling Green. The frequency of this has increased massively in the last 30 years from once every five years to around five times a year. It was also noted that the water takes longer to drain away than it used to.
- **A:** Malcolm outlined a natural solution to strengthening river/stream banks. Stakes are hammered into the river bed and into the river bank. This is backfilled with soil and branches and held in place with wire. Although this will take a couple of years to bed in, it is a cheap and natural way to stabilise river banks and slow down erosion. Willow trees planted every metre or so along river banks will also help.
- **Q:** Does this approach require permission/licences from SEPA and/or SNH?
- **A:** Malcolm said that they need to be notified but are in favour of this approach. **ACTION: Paul/Michele to find out from SEPA what procedures should be followed by anyone thinking of doing this.**
- **Q:** Do landowners need any special permission to plant trees directly on the bank of watercourse?
- **A:** Paul did not think it would be a problem but thought it would be advisable to contact SNH to check.
- **Q:** A resident expressed concern about the water building up on B822, Kippen Road, opposite the Sports Field and the danger this causes with cars swerving to avoid the water and the problems that arise if the water freezes in the winter. He felt that this was being caused because ditches and drains are not being cleared and maintained properly.
- **A:** Paul hoped that this would be one of the problems highlighted by the walk around the village which is to be scheduled.
- **Q:** A resident noted that there is a lot of erosion of the river bank round the back of the Sports Centre.
- **A:** Paul reiterated that maintenance of the banks is a very important issue.
- **Q:** A resident pointed out that work done in the late eighties, early nineties in that area had caused a problem for residents further downriver and garden ground is being lost. Stabilisation that was put in place at the time now needs replacing but the resident did not think that SEPA would allow this to be done.
- **A:** Malcolm felt that SEPA would be prepared to listen and may be amenable to work being done if they were made aware of the location of the problem. Paul emphasised that nothing should be done without consulting SEPA.
- **Q:** A resident asked about house insurance as they had had a problem with their renewal.
- **A:** Paul had leaflets available with information about insurance companies who would be willing to help.
- **Q:** A resident expressed concern about the amount of water running down from the pond near the castle into the Menzies Estate and several residents were concerned about the impact of houses being built along the castle drive.
- **A:** Paul said that the building standards would need to be monitored closely but there was the possibility that if drainage work was done properly, it could have a positive effect on the Menzies Estate.

Councillor Lambie felt it was important that the resilience group is given as much information as possible and said that Stirling Council is willing to help communities as much as possible. He asked to be informed when the walk around the village was to take place.

Malcolm asked that residents inform LLFT if any beavers are spotted in the area.

IV. Date of next meeting

TBA