

Improving household and community flood resilience in St Denys



Southampton Pathfinder Project

Part of the Defra Community Flood Resilience Scheme



The Defra (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) Community Flood Resilience Pathfinder Scheme was set up in December 2012 to help 13 communities across the UK implement innovative projects to help protect homes and businesses from the increasing risk of flooding. Local authorities submitted bids for funding for projects that focus on supporting communities where there is a significant risk of fluvial, tidal, surface or groundwater flooding.

The Southampton Pathfinder Project

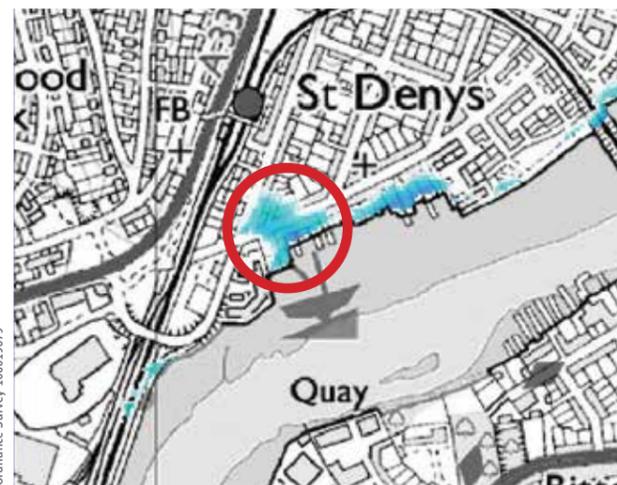
In April 2013, Southampton City Council secured a £472,000 grant to work with the community of lower Priory Road and Adelaide Road in St Denys to help mitigate flood risk.

The grant funding has enabled the set up of the Southampton Pathfinder Project to improve household and community flood resilience in St Denys – an area identified by the Southampton Coastal Strategy (2012) as being at risk of tidal flooding. The recommendations outlined in the strategy for managing the risk of flooding in this area include the delivery of individual property level protection (PLP) measures, which once installed, will reduce the potential damage caused by flooding.

The project will be delivered by Southampton City Council in close partnership with the National Flood Forum; an independent charity set up to support and represent flood risk communities. The project will run until March 2015.

What area does the project affect?

The project focuses on properties in the lower Priory Road / Adelaide Road area of St Denys, where flood risk is considered highest. A small number of properties within the significant flood risk area (highlighted on the map below) will be invited to get involved in the project and benefit from the installation of PLP measures.



Your property has been identified as being in the flood risk zone; therefore we encourage you to get involved in the project, to find out how together, we can help minimise the risk of flooding to your home.

What are the aims of the project?

The Southampton Pathfinder Project aims to:

- Raise awareness and improve understanding of flood risk in St Denys to help increase community preparedness to various types of flooding (including tidal, groundwater and surface water flooding).
- Carry out a property survey and install the required property level protection (PLP) measures to properties within the significant flood risk area, ensuring each household has the equipment required to reduce the potential damage caused by flooding.
- Provide residents with the necessary equipment (such as road closure signs) to enable the community to carry out local response actions in the event of a flood.
- Work with consultants and insurance brokers to try to help reduce insurance premiums by demonstrating the reduction in flood risk as a result of installing PLP measures.

What is property level protection (PLP)?

Property level protection (PLP) is a relatively new, fully-tested method of protecting an individual property from flooding. There are two types of PLP: resistance measures and resilience measures.

Resistance measures, such as flood doors, are designed to keep flood water out of a property, whereas resilience measures, like water-resistant plaster and solid tiled floors, make it quicker and cheaper to clean up if flood water does enter a property.

There are a variety of products available to help you adapt your home and be more prepared for a flood. It is important that products are certified with the Kitemark which means they have been tested and conform to The British Standards Institution. Many PLP products are designed for temporary use which means they are portable and can easily be removed for storage. Maintenance costs are also minimal. Members of the Southampton Pathfinder Project team will be able to offer advice on the most suitable products for your property, and the grant money will be used to install these.

How is the project being funded?

The project will be funded by the grant awarded from Defra which will cover the cost of consultations with residents and

landlords, individual property surveys, and the installation of PLP measures. Up to £290,000 of the grant is available for the installation of recommended PLP measures in properties identified as being at significant risk of flooding.

Residents and landlords will not be required to make any financial contributions to the project; however we do need local residents to contribute to the project by getting involved in any way they can. Whether it is a contribution of your time or local knowledge; we want to hear your views on how we can deliver the project in the best possible way, to meet your needs. We are encouraging members of the community to discuss the project and share their thoughts with us through the quarterly Residents Working Group meetings, or by email, telephone or face-to-face contact with the project team.

We are keen to involve you in the project so we can work together to make a significant and lasting improvement to your property and the local community's ability to protect itself in the event of a flood.

What are the benefits of being involved in the project?

Being involved in the Southampton Pathfinder Project presents several long-term benefits to you. Some of these are:

- After we have conducted a survey to assess the flood protection needs of your property, with permission from the property owner, your home will be kitted out with the appropriate PLP measures to improve the flood resistance and resilience of your property. These measures should reduce the risk of flooding to your home, offering you peace of mind knowing you are as prepared as possible in the event of a flood.
- Working closely with the National Flood Forum and representatives from the insurance industry, the project team will try and make a case for more affordable household insurance for those in flood risk areas - where steps have been taken to reduce the risk.
- Flooding to Priory Road / Adelaide Road can last just a matter of hours; however in the past, residents have reported that if a car is driven through floodwaters outside their property, it can mean their home becomes flooded. The provision of a store of equipment such as road closure signs at a central point in the community will enable appropriate local action to be taken by residents to help avoid this.

How can you get involved in the project?

Events

A range of events will be held throughout the project; these are likely to include dedicated workshops and drop-in sessions for residents in the flood risk zone who would like to discuss their queries with a member of the project team. We will also be holding community events to involve

people in the wider community to help them understand the local flood risk and how they can support residents in the event of a flood. Events may include:

- **Flood risk workshop** – talk to consultants about the flood risk in St Denys.
- **PLP demonstrations** – come and see what flood protection measures look like and how to use them before they are installed in your home.
- **Insurance workshop** – talk to insurance specialists to find out about insurance in flood risk areas.
- **Flood action planning** – find out how to design and implement a flood action plan for your home, and local community.
- **Flood trial days** – come and test PLP equipment and the flood plan to ensure you are comfortable using the products and able to install them correctly.

If you have any other ideas for future events or if you would like to be involved in the organisation of an event, please let us know (contact details are on the back of this document). We will keep you informed of all events and the progress of the project via our monthly newsletter.

Other opportunities

There will be lots of other opportunities for you to get involved in the project. Some of these will include:

- **Become a member of the Residents Working Group** – work with the project team and other residents to help steer the project by directly feeding in ideas from the community.
- **Become a Community Flood Champion** – share your past experiences of flooding so others can learn from you.
- **Volunteer Flood Warden** – learn how to help your community before, during and after a flood; for example by teaching vulnerable or elderly neighbours how to use their flood kit.
- **Contribute to the community 'think box'** – you and your neighbours are invited to send in suggestions and ideas to help the project progress.

How can you register your interest in the project?

Enclosed with this leaflet is a letter which includes a 'Register your interest reply form'. If you'd like to find out more about the project and how it could benefit you, please let us know by completing and returning this form. You can also let us know if you'd like to take a more active role in helping to deliver the project.

Alternatively, you can contact us using the details overleaf. We recommend you register your interest in the project at this stage as it is a great opportunity to find out more or be involved right from the start of the project. Please note if you register your interest at this stage, it does not mean you will be obliged to be involved later on.

Get in touch with us

The project team is on hand to answer any questions you may have about flood risk in your area and the Southampton Pathfinder Project. We will offer advice and support throughout the project. Please get in touch using the contact details below:

Southampton Pathfinder Project

Planning, Transport & Sustainability
Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY

Contact Alec Summersgill, Community Flood Engagement Officer,
National Flood Forum (based in Southampton):

Telephone **023 8083 4213**

Email alec.summersgill@floodforum.org.uk

National Flood Forum (Head Office)

Old Snuff Mill Warehouse
Park Lane
Bewdley
Worcestershire
DY12 2EL

Telephone **01299 403055**

Cover photographs are courtesy of Peter Taylor, a resident of St Denys.