

Newton Stewart Flood Protection Scheme – Summary of Public Engagement 1 Feedback

Total number of questionnaires completed: **57**

(107 people attended the event but many filled in questionnaires as a couple. Not all questions were completed in some instances which is why some of the response figures do not always total to 57).

Have you ever been flooded in your current or previous property?

Yes: **23**

(5 advised they had business premises, and 12 residential)

No: **33**

Do you want to see a Flood Protection Scheme provided in Newton Stewart?

Yes: **57 (100%)** No: **0**

Do you agree with the approach we are taking in developing a scheme?

Yes: **49 (86%)**

- I want to say how pleased I am with the information provided. I am very impressed with investigation work carried out.

No: **8 (14%)**

- Timing of flows down the 3 main rivers not considered. If one flow could be slowed this impact to town should be significant.
- We would like to see more involvement with the Forestry Commission to develop upper catchment large volume storage (even over the long term).
- Sparling Bridge should go back where it was. Footpath from the bridge is too narrow.
- Once again the pumping station built across the flood plain has been ignored as a cause of the excess flooding which has only occurred since the station was finished in 2012. The only answer we get when this question is raised is it cannot be lowered.
- Tell Forestry Commission to plant trees without trenches which lead to nearly immediate run off as against slow percolation run off.
- The scheme to protect the town by widening the A75 bridge capacity will not work as you have a narrow section of river above ie so increased flow cannot be greater than the flow at this point.
- Area below old bridge on Minnigaff side is narrow part of river. High water last week was eating into the Minnigaff side.
- If hard defences are to be used in Old Minnigaff they need to extend to bridge over Penkiln. Attention should be given to peninsula between suspension bridge pool and Penkiln Burn otherwise hard defences may be compromised.

Would you agree that all the available options to address the flooding have been included and considered?

Yes: **44 (77%)**

- They have now.
- It would appear so.
- I am pleased that all options have been looked at. Thanks for consultation.
- Looks good and great to see that the matter is being taken so seriously – good luck and well done D&G Council.

No: **13 (23%)**

- Would like to see consideration given to lowering height of suspension bridge pool.
- Upper catchment area needs to be dealt with to review management strategies.
- River catchment areas needed.

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- Area 100 metres north of Penkiln Bridge needs to be included.
- I think some of the stones and gravel at Cree Bridge should have been removed.
- At the moment a flood wall alone seems to be the only option. Has a combination of different solutions been assessed? I also think forestry is a critical element in the catchment because of the extent of cover.
- Dredging down Wigtown Bay past Creetown to clear silt built up since ships sailed up to collect granite.
- Would like to see more involvement of Forestry Commission. Remove large gravel berms. General river maintenance.
- I would expect several options not just one which smacks of 'This is what is going to happen'. This is the cheap option – a dam should be built upstream at Glenhapple Loch or The Ghyll. This proposed solution will not work.

Have you been kept up to date with the project?

Yes: **35** No: **18**

(Additional data was also gathered here about the communication methods people would like used which will assist the team in future. Email addresses were also left so we can contact people with updates direct).

Thoughts on the visit;

Venue was suitable and well located: Yes: **55 (96%)** No: **2 (4%)**

Staff were helpful and available: Yes: **56 (98%)** No: **1 (2%)**

Plans/boards were well presented and easy to follow: Yes: **54 (98%)** No: **1 (2%)**

Visit was informative and worthwhile: Yes: **55 (98%)** No: **1 (2%)**

Process and options chosen were well explained: Yes: **55 (98%)** No: **1 (2%)**

Positive comments:

- 'Tour' of presentation boards very informative and much appreciated. Thanks.
- Staff were very helpful and took plenty of time explaining the issues and also listened carefully to our concerns.
- Helpful staff to explain the boards.
- Example of proposed new Sparling Bridge aesthetically pleasing.
- Excellent & informative, thanks.
- The helpfulness and explanations were excellent – thank you and well done.
- I will attend further meeting and presentations after this.

Other comments:

- Might be an idea to do a shorter version if people don't want to read every single board and direct them to the most pertinent ones.
- A little too much information
- They did a good job of pushing a poor scheme that will not work.
- Only answers I could get were the official line and no one seemed interested in alternatives.

Additional comments

- Really miss the Sparling Bridge – impact on tourists and locals.
- Make scheme resilient to tide.
- How is river to be accessed and who will be responsible for deploying demountable defences.

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- Sparling Bridge should be a priority as it is a nightmare walking over the main bridge when the road is busy.
- Would have been good to see that Challoch had been included in the scheme as it is part of Newton Stewart and floods regularly.
- Walls seem to be the best option and one certainly better than being flooded.
- Bad flooding occurred in 1960's as hard core replaced gardens ie riverside road and car park - flooding then extended to streets. The history of the Cree needs to be looked at to hopefully succeed with decisions made for plans to be successful.
- Do hope this happens without delay.
- You need to go back to the drawing board and look at Dams to allow a progressive flow not the full force of water by tinkering.
- I feel that all the proposed solutions seem to concentrate on protecting the town by walls and faster flood release but I feel that these huge peak flows should be reduced much further upstream as the high flood levels could still be a danger to the town (eg damage/destroy the listed Cree Bridge).
- If walls are to be built it is important to still be able to see river as a tourist attraction and part of the town's visual appeal for both locals and visitors.
- I realise that walls will be an essential part of the flood defences but I hope they can be kept as low as possible for the look of the town. Possible use of glass and walls?
- Proposed floodwall stops short of protecting houses in old Minigaff (up to 20 houses). The floodwall is good but should be extended to tie in with the Penkiln Bridge which sits 5m high and provides an impairment in itself. This would save unnecessary objections and delay for the sake of an extra 100m extension. Otherwise floodwall a good idea.
- Forest could be better managed.
- I think removing Mill Island, dredging, and better forest management are good options.
- Could the new bridge provide less obstruction to flow? New location is less convenient. Forest management needs to be held responsible for their part in past floods – mass felling is not acceptable and best practise should be followed.
- Would like walls to be on both side to protect Mingaff.
- Need Sparling Bridge in 2018 and flood protection in place as soon as practicable.
- Impressive amount of work done and timescales are realistic.