

# Project Wrap-Up

## e-Bulletin #18



In this bulletin I present the first of the research outcomes, which consists of two large banners which can be used to publicise and visually explain participatory modelling and our Hebden Bridge research approach. I also briefly describe a process of wrap-up interviews which I will be conducting with participants who attended two or more of the workshops.

In this bulletin:

- A sneak preview of the roadshow banners
- Next steps for wrapping up the research project in Hebden bridge

### Wrap-up interviews

In the first week of July, I am planning to run a series of interviews with people who took part in at least two of the workshops run in Hebden Bridge. The aim of these workshops is to investigate and record:

- What you felt was achieved in the workshops
- How it may have affected your thinking about flood risk and modelling
- What you thought were the most/least valuable bits
- How you think the process could be improved if it were to be used elsewhere

The interviews will be informal and semi-structured. This means that there will be a series of questions to work through, but time will be given for discussion. They will be conducted by myself and held somewhere that is local and convenient to you.

Some of the interviews may be video-recorded so we can promote the approach to other communities that are at risk from flooding.

### Banners for public display (each two metres tall)

Before heading off to Portland, I completed artwork for two large pull-up banners to showcase our research in Hebden Bridge. The first explains why we might want to use participatory modelling for understanding flood risk, and the second outlines the specific project we undertook in Hebden Bridge. The intention is that they are used together at conferences, public meetings and events to publicise our work. If you would like to borrow them for such an event please get in touch.

**Building a community understanding of flood risk**

**Involving the public,**

Active participation is more than just consultation. This project aims to:

1. Involve stakeholders in designing flood risk solutions at every stage of the modelling process
2. Enable models to ask the right questions by involving stakeholders in their design
3. Ensure people understand model assumptions and limitations by building them collaboratively

**valuing their expertise,**

Local knowledge is key to understanding risk. This project aims to:

1. Capture local knowledge and experience about the consequences of flooding
2. Emphasise that flood risk is a combination of likelihood and consequences
3. Value local knowledge as complementary to the expertise of professionals

**...and modelling the issues that matter.**

We need tools to structure and test that knowledge. This project aims to:

1. Trial techniques to see whether local knowledge can be structured into a meaningful model
2. Use techniques which have been widely applied to model complex systems around the world
3. Situate those techniques within a participatory approach, where stakeholders become modelers

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EPSRC, Environment Agency, The University of Nottingham

**Hebden Bridge The Journey**

**Preliminary work**

Preliminary work: Objectives  
Interviews are conducted with key stakeholders to enable identification of local priorities. These are refined and adapted after each interview until they become a comprehensive list of local objectives for achieving a reduction in flood risk across the catchment.

**The Workshops**

1. Workshop 1: Variables  
These are actions that can be taken to achieve the objectives, and the factors that influence their potential implementation and/or success.
2. Workshop 2: Structure  
These variables are then organised into a cause and effect structure that addresses the drivers, impacts and responses to flooding.
3. Workshop 3: States  
States are chosen for each variable. One should represent the current state and the other the 'ideal' state we would like to see achieved.
4. Workshop 4: Relationships  
The relationships between variables are defined by stating the likelihood of them being in each state, given the states of the other variables around them.
5. Workshop 5: Testing  
The stakeholders test what happens to their objectives when they experiment with the model, challenging whether the outcome makes sense.
6. Workshop 6: Future  
The model is tested under different future socio-economic scenarios to recommend the actions they think will have the greatest benefits.

**Dissemination**

Dissemination: sharing our findings with the general public  
Presenting the model and results to the general public and to the agencies responsible for managing flood risk in an accessible way is crucial. Given the complexity of flood risk problems, outcomes from the model need to be clear, concise and understandable. They need to demonstrate the uncertainty that surrounds the understanding of flood risk, whilst providing a clear direction for future work. The aim is to complement and support the work of agencies and professionals with input from local sources of knowledge.

### What's next?

The next major outcome will be a summary report of our findings, and this will include insights from the interviews described on the left.

Please can I encourage you to let me know your availability if you are willing to take part in the wrap-up interviews. The more viewpoints I can get, the more representative any publications and reports will be.

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