

Owen Paterson MP
Member of Parliament for North Shropshire
By email: owen.paterson.mp@parliament.gov.uk

Our ref: 12821

Date: 16 November 2021

Dear Owen

Thank you for your email of 3 November 2021 and bringing to our attention the concerns of the residents and councillors of Kinnerley Parish regarding flood risk.

Mr Cruise-Taylor is correct, we are working with our professional partners to identify long-term sustainable solutions to flooding in Shropshire. We do update the local Flood Action Group with progress, so they can disseminate this to the community but would be pleased to update the Parish directly too. Updates outside of the group meetings are available on the website for the scheme <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/svwms/>. Alternatively, questions relating to the scheme can be directed to SVWMS@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The letter sent on behalf of the Kinnerley Parish Council makes reference of local suggestions to “*reduce levels of stored water now in a measured way to reduce the risk of larger volumes affecting the area in the ‘flood’ season, before the inevitable increase in volumes in the coming months due to winter rainfall.*” Whilst not specifically stated, I understand this relates to concerns the water released from Lake Vyrnwy and Llyn Clywedog reservoirs increases the risk of flooding to the parish.

We work with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Hafren Dyfrdwy to manage the water level of these reservoirs, together with United Utilities in the case of Lake Vyrnwy. Both function as public water supply reservoirs and both lower water levels from the autumn through to the spring to reduce the incidence of spill and provide some flood risk benefits downstream. These benefits are greatest closer to the reservoirs and reduce downstream as the proportion of the river catchment they represent becomes smaller.

Whilst the management processes at the reservoirs reduce the incidence of spill from the reservoirs, it cannot be avoided, especially during prolonged wet spells of weather, or at times of the year when the reservoirs are near full to ensure public water supply resilience. This is particularly the case with Lake Vyrnwy which was not originally designed with consideration to flood mitigation and where the natural inflows routinely exceed its release capacity.

On behalf of all parties, Natural Resources Wales is undertaking a review of the flood storage provision to assess whether any changes can be made without adversely impacting

the ecology downstream of the reservoirs or the reservoir's ability to support water resources. We will gladly update the Parish Council as this review progresses.

In terms of the current steps being taken to reduce flooding, our Asset Performance team has carried out a number of repair projects to argaes and outfall structures in the last two years under the national recovery programme following Storms Ciara and Dennis. They include a major rebuild of the argae at Crows Nest (Hendre), erosion repairs at Fisherman's Reach and Hilley Farm in Pentre, and repairs to outfall structures at Cae Howell for Meverley and Hilley Farm for Pentre. There is also a full topographic survey of the argaes scheduled to be conducted before the end of this year which will identify any areas for further repair or improvement. Again, we can share more on this work as it progresses.


If any residents or businesses would like to explore small-scale independent solutions to reduce flood risk, we suggest they investigate Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures for their properties. More information on PFR measures can be found at <https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/about-flooding/reducing-your-risk/protecting-your-property/>.

I would encourage all residents and businesses to sign up to the EA's Flood Warning Service in order to receive the latest updates about flooding in their area. This can be done at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> or contacting 0345 988 1188 via telephone or 0345 602 6340 via text-phone.

The EA's incident hotline at 0800 80 70 60 can be used to report any occurrences of flooding or blockages of main rivers. Shropshire Council also have a service through which to report flooding issues at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/drainage-and-flooding/report-a-flooding-issue/>

We welcome engagement with the residents regarding flooding concerns either through the local Flood Action Group meetings or Parish Council meetings. If any of the residents or councillors would like to discuss flooding concerns outside these meetings, I encourage them to contact enquiries_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely



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