

# North Yorkshire Partnerships

Working together

## Workshop 3: Adapting for the changing climate

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### Description

Our climate is changing. We have seen hotter summers impacting on health and the environment, alongside wetter winters which make flooding more likely. Climate adaptation enables organisations, communities, businesses and individuals can adapt to prepare for climate change to reduce exposure, cope and recover better. Developing approaches to local energy security, food supply chains, flood defence groups and transport and care services for vulnerable community members are examples of adaptations. The workshop will look at the issues, consider risks and vulnerabilities and consider the solutions which can be developed.

### Notes

Focus on looking at the NY Climate Change Strategy.

Reflection on Mayors presentation and that prevention is better than cure approach. Aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Lots of examples given around the room of mitigation of effects during introductions. Agreed targets need to remain to ensure focus. Recognition that internationally they will not be achieved and that it is different in different places globally. Main aim is to try and keep global temperatures down which will result in hotter, dryer summers, drought and sea level rises.

Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission developed Pam's Story as a "Toolkit" which projects to 2048 based on mid-level modelling.

Group listened to two versions of life in 2048 according to 'Pam'.

### First version feedback:

#### What struck you the most (Group 1)

- Inequality and that Pam felt punished for doing the right thing.
- Community tension and breakdown was evident bordering on panic.
- Generally scary and depressing with little hope for the future.

- Where was the council's emergency support, little evidence of this in clip?

#### What problems did Pam describe?

- Impact on the community overall, flooding, lack of insurance and potential homelessness.
- Long term anxiety and stress over events on wider and personal impact.
- She described the council as over-relying on community support volunteers to help out.

#### Who could this be bad for?

- Everyone, but in particular older people and children, or those who are vulnerable due to illness. Also mention of issues with respiratory and breathing due to a decline in air quality from wildfires (COPD, asthma etc).
- Huge impact on health services overall and how they would cope with increased demand.
- Mention of increase in illness resulting from flooding and contamination risks associated with this.
- Mental health of those impacted also mentioned.
- Sense of being in crisis generally and survival mode, impact on general wellbeing and living conditions due to heat, flooding and other linked issues.
- Humidity and use of air conditioning adding to the issue, plus increase in legionella from air conditioning units. Reliance of fans that use electricity and other means to cool down.
- Possible water restrictions could impact health overall and general quality of life.

#### What constituted as an emergency?

- Group felt like most of the issues mentioned could result in an emergency.
- Access to regular and clean water seen as an emergency, as was flooding as a risk to life, loss of home and safe environment. Demand on medical and emergency services could pose further risk.

#### **Second Version Feedback:**

#### What struck the group the most?

- This version was far more positive, with a general feeling of pulling together (blitz-like) in the face of wider community issues.
- Evidence of community-based support and structure in place resulted in improved coping through a crisis.
- Use of Green Rooms was an interesting concept.
- Use of solar for air conditioning evidenced longer term planning in place.
- Also mention of a Community Heat Action Plan was good evidence of community widespread approach to the issue.

- Planning and building projects incorporating trees and flowers in the street to cool areas, well thought out pedestrianised areas that had surfaces that could absorb water and improved drainage to cope with these changes in weather.
- Encouragement to stop driving and use public transport and reduce car use was seen as positive. Good public transport systems to support this measure would be needed.

#### Problems described?

- Similar to V1 but due to pre-planning measures in place, impact wasn't as negative or as destructive generally, communities better able to cope.
- Able to work with the positives of the changes due to improved response to issues and planning.
- Generally the feeling of communities being kinder to each other and more supportive due to background support in place from council/government approach. Reliance on social cohesion at infrastructure level to ensure this approach works
- Still issues but more positive about how to deal with overall.

#### Who could it be bad for?

As with V1, impact of weather changes could be particularly bad for elderly, children and people who are vulnerable, but impact reduced due to plans in place to mitigate as much as possible.

#### Risks for Pam's community?

Risks reduced dramatically due to mitigation and positive approach to addressing the issues.

#### Emergency?

Reduced emergency potential due to mitigation put in place.

#### **General feedback discussion on the exercise:**

- Needs to be a dispersed approach, not just with a town focus.
- Awareness raising is a must as the majority of people are totally unaware of what is needed.
- If top down, people don't always understand why change is needed, need a bottom-up approach also. If bottom-up then sharing best practice and buy in more likely to work.
- What works elsewhere? Then utilise this information and knowledge in preparing own communities.
- NYC could use their rurality to their benefit, working with local community groups and taking advantage of what we have as a county. Smaller communities could be more productive together.
- New builds appear to exacerbate the flooding issue (observation)

- Concern worldwide of the greater impact of climate change and so much can be done now! Need to engage with young people, communities of tomorrow. Plans needs to be built into council and government strategy.
- This is still everyone's problem as we will all feel the impact in the next 20+ years, it is not just a young people's issue though.
- Important not to scare people into thinking it is too late to make positive changes and promote how little changes can still have a positive impact.
- NYC could use planning rules to impose requirements such as renewable energy being mandatory for new premises and look at grey water systems.
- Downside is reliance on government policy and if implemented could drive up house prices which could impact communities in other ways.
- Recognition it is a challenging situation to get the balance right.