Wansbeck flood reports

By Steve Rawlinson

Day 1, 5 January 2016

Your resident reporter can report that so far, despite hours of non-stop rain the River Wansbeck in Morpeth has so far behaved itself. The photos below show the situation at 11.00am - note in particular the strand line in relation to the hard engineering that has been built in response to the 2008 flood. Will a £26M scheme do its job?

The flood gates have been reclosed this evening. You can follow developments on https://twitter.com/morpethscheme

geography.org.uk
The white car was stranded in the car park when the river topped its banks in the early hours. The seats were also submerged.

Note the debris on the railings showing the water level reached
The hard engineering to protect the houses flooded in the previous inundation – note the strand line and trace it to the flood gate. Closing the gate was a wise precaution!

The long wall protecting the houses flooded in 2008. Note the flood gate.
The houses on the right were completely flooded in 2008. Thankfully a way to go this time around but it is still raining...

**Day 2, 6 January 2016**

Your intrepid reporter has been out for the second day - this time accompanied by a GA Past President - to survey the results of the overnight events.

The flood gates were closed last night and the upstream dam and holding tank employed to control the water flow. And it worked! The photos attached show that though the river level rose and was higher than yesterday - the strand line gives it away - there was no flooding of property. So the investment in hard engineering and **careful monitoring and management** appears to have paid off. Worth comparing the photos from yesterday and today to see the differences. It seems we have got through the worst of the weather now - rain likely to decrease over the next few days, so things should return to normal. The dog will pleased to have her one of her favourite walks across the stepping stones available again - though it will be a few days methinks before we risk this - See photos!

So though we have come through this obviously our thoughts must be with those other desperate areas who have not been so lucky to have a scheme like ours. I can only feel very saddened by their losses.
View downstream with water rushing over the weir.

Yesterday these railings had debris on them marking the height of the flow – today this has been washed away by the faster flowing and higher river.
Note the amount of sediment deposited overnight – and a GA Past President with his umbrella!

Confidence that the worst has past - the flood gate is opened. Notice the very high strand line showing the water got up to the flood defence wall. Without the wall?
There is a set of stepping stones beneath that white water!

GA Past President confident to stand by the open flood gate. Notice pattern of the strand line – the defence wall here is supplemented by an earthen bank which has clearly deflected the flow of the flood water as it came down from left to right.
One of the flood gates that have protected formerly vulnerable homes.

View upstream – river still high but being safely managed.