



E-Bulletin #1 The Project in 300 Words

Often the greatest challenge asked of an academic is to summarise their research succinctly, but here goes:

First the obvious: flood risk is important to people who live in Southwell. It has affected many residents personally and in recent memory. Traditionally, flood risk management is built on models of flood likelihood. Not only is this modelling often difficult for non-expert members of the community get involved in and understand, it only tells half of the story.

This is because flood *risk* is a combination of *likelihood* and *consequences*. In the area of flood consequences, local knowledge and first-hand experience of flooding comes to the fore, offering insights that can add value to the modelling of flood risk.

This project aims to bring together both experts and non-experts from the Southwell community, to build a conceptual model of flood risk based on their understanding of the issues. By using a novel technique called system dynamics (which I will introduce in a later bulletin), we will explore how different elements of flood risk, including the social elements that are often overlooked, are interlinked in a system of cause and effect.

The emphasis in system dynamics is on understanding how a system behaves (the system 'structure'), and then testing that structure under different scenarios. Several pieces of software exist to support the building of system dynamics models, that require no previous experience of modelling.

The model will be built over a series of five evening workshops, running on a roughly monthly basis from January 2015. Throughout the process, this e-bulletin will keep you informed of how the model is progressing, introduce (and hopefully clarify) new concepts, and most importantly ensure that the process, especially those elements that could be considered 'behind the scenes', are kept transparent.



The Research Group

With support from Southwell Flood Forum, we are putting together a research group to participate in this project. Over fifteen people have shown an interest in attending the first two workshops so far (dates below), but we are looking to involve even more.

Workshop One - Wednesday 21st January 2015

7:30pm - 9:30pm at Southwell Fire Station

Workshop Two - Weds 25th or Thurs 26th February 2015

Details TBC

Alongside Southwell residents, we will be inviting a range of representatives from a number of agencies including Nottinghamshire County Council, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Southwell Town Council and Nottingham Trent University.

Next Steps

If you are interested in attending the workshops, or you cannot attend but want to know more about the project, please get in touch. Agendas for Workshops 1 & 2, as well as background reading on the project, are available on request.

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