



Digital flood histories

Project Summary SC130036/S1

Increasing understanding of flood risk and the impacts of flooding is a key challenge in improving community resilience to flooding. Demonstrating the impact of previous floods through photographs and stories is known to improve public awareness and acceptance of flood risk. It is thought that peer-to-peer learning, whereby flooded communities pass on their experiences to non-flooded communities may also result in improved flood risk understanding.

A knowledge exchange project by the University of West England has created a suite of resources aimed at demonstrating flood impacts and enabling peer-to-peer learning.

The project has produced 21 short videos on the public's stories and experiences after being flooded. The videos are hosted on the University of West England's YouTube [channel](#).

In the videos, residents of Gloucestershire describe their experiences of previous floods, each focussing on different aspects of the floods. There is a story of a couple who reflect on what possessions they lost during the 2007 floods. Another lady uses a short video to describe how she saved her settee and armchair by putting them into large flood bags; big and robust enough to accommodate large items of furniture.

The project produced videos which reflect both the negative aspects of flooding, such as a home owner being away during the flood and coming home to her flooded property, and positive aspects of flooding, such as communities coming together to help each other.

There are videos that document the impact of the floods in 2007 through flood markers, photographs taken from vantage points and through an individual family's response to the flood to stop water entering their home.

One story includes a video taken by a home-owner of water flowing through his home after the river rose higher than the level of the flood gate he uses to protect his property during smaller floods.

The project also produced two stories which tell the story of the flood in Gloucestershire in 1947, where residents

compare their response to those responses witnessed during more recent flood events.

The videos are available for use by flood risk authorities and by the public to demonstrate flood impacts, to consider ways of reducing impacts and coping with floods and to discuss ways that a community can positively respond to reduce risk in the future.

This summary relates to information from an Economics and Social Research Council funded knowledge exchange project entitled '*Sustainable Flood Memory: Trialling digital storytelling as a form of adaptive learning and knowledge exchange for resilience in 'at risk communities'*'. Additional outputs can be found on the University of West England's [website](#).

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