

**REPORT ON THE MAYOR'S NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT OPEN EVENING OF MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

The Natural Flood Management Open Evening organised by the Mayor and her chosen charity Slow the Flow, and funded by the Climate Emergency Committee, took place in the Ballroom of the Town Hall on Monday 1st November.

An audience of 82 people came to hear presentations from representatives of six organisations central to flood resilience/natural flood management action in the Calder Valley. Each presenter also provided an exhibition stall with information on the support and services they offer to residents of Todmorden. Time was given during the event for the audience to meet with the speakers and learn more about these services.

The speakers and the titles of their presentations were as follows:

- Sally Kelling, Environment Agency  
*'Natural Flood Management in Calderdale – part of the big picture'*
- Sarah-Jayne Robins, Todmorden Flood Group  
*'Why Todmorden Floods & the Role of the Todmorden Flood Group'*
- Stuart Bradshaw & Adrian Horton, Slow the Flow  
*'How does Slow The Flow support our community to reduce flood risk'*
- Christina Hooley, Treesresponsibility  
*'Five ways that trees can help mitigate flood risk'*
- Dr Jane Rowling, Calder Rivers Trust  
*'The multiple benefits of healthy soils'*
- Ben Fenton, Calderdale Council NFM Team  
*'The Natural Flood Management Landowner Grant Scheme'*

Although audience members were not required to register, it was apparent on the night and in feedback since the event, that the majority were from Todmorden. Feedback from audience members and presenters suggests that the event was extremely well received locally and that it has stimulated discussions about potential NFM projects in Todmorden.

At the request of the Climate Emergency Committee, the Mayor used this opportunity to launch the CEC's Climate Pledge initiative and again this was well received from within Todmorden and beyond; our new Climate Officer was able to collect 27 signed pledges and the Mayor received the following email from a Flood Warden from Sowerby Bridge.

***Dear Madam Mayor***

***Thank you ever so much for hosting and presenting last night at the NFM Open Evening. It was great to have such a wealth of knowledge, experience and enthusiasm in such a short space of time.***

***I came along because as a flood warden Sowerby Bridge I appreciate that NFM is***

***going to inform any strategy for flood alleviation in and around our town and I wanted to get a better understanding of what was involved and available before the focus is directed towards us. I also thought that, with the weather; clocks going back; Covid etc, the event wouldn't be well attended - I really misjudged Todmorden folk there!***

***If it's readily available would it be possible to email me a copy of the excellent Todmorden Climate Emergency Pledge so I can share what you're doing on social media here and to our town board so that we can hopefully change behaviour to becoming more sustainable. I appreciate a lot of the ideas are universal but they can sometimes impact more strongly when we see a neighbour doing it rather than an anonymous figure further away. If it's not available would you mind if I scan my copy and share it?***

***Thank you again for a really useful and encouraging event.***

Overall, this was a successful event in terms of promotion, the Town Council and participating organisations were able to deliver a well-integrated and coherent campaign that drew in an audience whilst setting expectations for a Covid-safe event; the quality of the speakers gathered, and the utility of the information disseminated. Thanks to funding from the Climate Emergency Committee, a film of the event has been recorded and will be made available online shortly ensuring that the value of the event will be extended and information shared on the night will reach an even wider audience.