

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2724

Title: Surface-water flooding – basements campaign 2024

Executive summary:

In July 2022 and July 2023, under approval of Assistant Director Decisions (ADD) 2584 and 2648, a flash-flooding leaflet was distributed to 46,832 and 48,000 basement properties in London respectively. The leaflets contained key messages about the risk of flash-flooding, and what to do if such an event is forecast. This year we wish to repeat this exercise with additional addresses.

The leaflet will be distributed to around 50,000 residential basement properties in London. We intend to include a separate insert listing the actions by the boroughs, the Mayor, the Environment Agency and others to tackle surface-water flooding. As in 2023, when an additional 8,000 leaflets were circulated to community groups and hubs, we will also share the leaflets via trusted community hubs/groups. This campaign is planned for launch in mid-August.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment and Energy approves expenditure of up to £47,000 towards the basement leafleting campaign, including printing, enveloping and distributing leaflets to basement residents across London. It also includes funds for wider communications to Londoners, to target the most vulnerable to flooding – for example, older and disabled Londoners.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Catherine Barber

Position: Assistant Director
Environment

Signature:



Date:

01/08/2024

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 In July 2022, under approval of Assistant Director Decision (ADD) 2584, a flash-flooding leaflet was distributed to 46,832 basement properties in London, with key messages about the risk and what to do if a flash flood event is forecast.
- 1.2 In July 2023 a leaflet on the same topic, with more detailed information, was distributed to 48,000 basement properties; leaflets were also circulated to community groups and hubs at more grassroots level. This leaflet was accompanied by an insert detailing the collective action of the boroughs, the Mayor, the Environment Agency and others to tackle surface-water flooding. This year we would like to repeat this exercise, continuing the 2023 activity of including an updated insert and circulating the leaflet to community groups.
- 1.3 This year leaflets will be distributed again, particularly in line with support for the campaign demonstrated as follows:
 - The London Climate Resilience Review recognised the project to distribute leaflets in 2023 and gave it as an example of engagement that can be undertaken by the Mayor to engage with local communities and incentivise them to reduce their vulnerability.
 - The London Surface Water Strategy (LSWS) interim report, published on 25 July, emphasises the high flooding risk to basement properties and refers to the distribution of leaflets as a part of stakeholder engagement and public awareness campaigns. The LSWS interim report incorporates the ambition to ‘empower people’, which includes improving public awareness of surface water flood risk and empowering people to take individual action to protect themselves.
- 1.4 The leaflet will remain the same as last year’s, but the insert will be updated. The GLA’s climate adaptation team has led on updating the insert; but partners, including members of the surface-water flooding strategic group, have also been closely involved.
- 1.5 The leaflet and insert have been drafted with input from the Environment Agency, Thames Water, London Fire Brigade, London Resilience, the GLA Urban Resilience team, London Councils and the London Drainage Engineers Group (borough Lead Local Flood Authorities are represented on this group). The leaflet has been designed by the GLA’s design team using the Mayor of London branding.
- 1.6 The GLA’s print supplier CDS Ltd has provided a quote of £46,170 to print, envelope and distribute 55,000 leaflets to basement residents across London. The final number of addresses has not been confirmed but will be around 50,000. We will direct-mail the leaflet to these addresses; further leaflets will be distributed through other channels.
- 1.7 These other channels will target Londoners most at risk will be priority targets, such as older people, disabled people and those who have English as a second language. Among these channels we include community groups, faith groups and neighbourhood networks who can identify and share as appropriate with these communities in their neighbourhoods. We are working with other GLA teams to identify the most effective channels to target alongside a physical mailout/leaflet drop. These teams include the Environment communications team; External Relations; the Urban Resilience team; the Communities team and the Migration team (to consider the private rented sector and the specific needs of migrants in basement dwellings); and the London Resilience Group. We are also working with external partners; last year we worked with the National Flood Forum and British Red Cross, who have various channels where they can share the leaflet with Londoners. We aim to do the same again this year.

- 1.8 The basement properties have been identified through various data sources. In 2022, the Ordnance Survey AddressBase Plus dataset identified just under 30,000 properties. Working with Geoplace, the central source of information for all UK addresses and streets, we identified nearly 14,000 more addresses using energy performance certificates. Another 1,200 were identified from the GLA planning team's Datahub; and 1,900 were identified from the GLA's building stock model. In 2023, we identified up to 1,000 further addresses from an AddressBase Plus update that happened in March 2023. We also worked with partners to find additional addresses.
- 1.9 This year we have found a few more addresses from updated datasets. We also have several leaflets from last year that we plan to use, and are having more printed to distribute to community groups/hubs.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objectives of the campaign are to:
- raise awareness about the risk and what to do if a flash-flood event is forecast
 - reach as many basement properties as possible through this leafleting campaign
 - encourage individuals and communities to take low/no-cost actions before a flash-flood event, and explain what to do during a flood.
- 2.2 The expected outcomes of the campaign are:
- basement residents are more aware of their potential risk from flash flooding, and what to do if one is forecast in their area
 - Londoners generally are more aware of their risk from flash flooding through the wider communications work.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the Mayor of London must have 'due regard' of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic¹ and those who do not. This involves: having due regard to the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 3.2 Climate change will disproportionately affect those least able to respond to and recover from it. Poorer Londoners will find it more difficult to recover from flooding. Extreme events will have a greater impact on older people; very young children; socially isolated people; and people with existing health conditions and disabilities. This campaign aims to inform people of their potential risk and what they can do to help themselves.
- 3.3 This campaign is specifically trying to target those more vulnerable to the effects of flash flooding, and those living in basements. As part of the wider communications around the leaflet, the campaign will be targeting older and disabled Londoners to make sure they receive the information to help reduce their risk. As community groups and other organisations will have to request leaflets, we can monitor how many are distributed.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The key risks and issues for leaflet campaign are outlined in the table below:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Timeline slips as deadlines for leaflet design and delivery are tight (section 7.1.)	Medium	Medium	Working closely with the design team and CDS to make sure we are all working effectively and to the same date.	Amber
The leaflet is not received well by certain groups of people (e.g. those that have already been flooded).	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with community groups and flood action groups to make sure the wider communications around flooding are disseminated. There was no negative feedback in the last two years. 	Green
Boroughs get excessive calls after the leaflet delivery, and are not aware of the campaign.	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with London Councils to make sure all boroughs are aware of the campaign. This will also be raised to the Chair of the London Council Transport and Environment Committee. No boroughs fed back that they experienced this issue. 	Green

4.2 The basement leaflet campaign will contribute towards the following Mayoral strategies and priorities:

- London Environment Strategy Proposal 8.2.1.a: The Mayor will work with partners to increase awareness of all forms of flood risk across London and develop options for targeting areas at particular risk from surface water flooding.
- London Resilience Strategy Action A5: Community Risk Communication – Build resilience in communities by developing ways of communicating risks to the public.
- The recommendations in the Mayor’s Surface Water Flooding Roundtable Progress Report.

4.3 None of the GLA officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this form are aware that they have any conflicts of interest with the proposed programme.

4.4 The address data that will be used contains no personal information; no names are part of the address. The letter will be addressed to “basement resident”.

5. Financial comments

5.1. Approval is requested for expenditure of up to £47,000 towards the flash flooding basement leafleting campaign.

5.2. Expenditure will be funded from the Adaption budget within the Environment unit’s approved 2024-25 budget.

5.3. All expenditure will be incurred within the 2024-25 financial year.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

6.1. The project will be delivered according to the following timetable:

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of printing and delivery	w/c 12 Aug 2024
Leaflet delivery start date	w/c 19 Aug 2024

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Sabina Mohideen has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 29 July 2024.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:

Anna Gustaf

Date:

29/07/2024