

April 2018 Newsletter

Devon's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was published in June 2014 and is supported by an annual Action Plan which prioritises improvements and investment for the relevant financial year. This newsletter update is intended to be issued twice a year to engage with and ensure that our Partners and local communities are fully aware of the work being undertaken in local flood risk management.

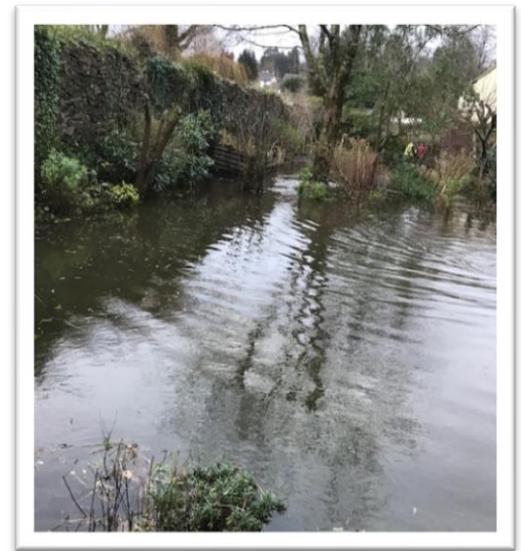
Flood Investigations

Storm Eleanor

Between the 22nd of December 2017 and 4th January 2018, Storm Eleanor brought some intense rainfall events, causing widespread flooding across many areas of the UK, including Devon. Four of Devon's eight districts experienced internal property flooding; East Devon, Teignbridge, South Hams and Torridge. In total 14 properties were flooded internally, with Ashburton being the worst hit with 6 properties flooding after a privately-owned wall collapsed into the watercourse.

North Devon

On 21st January 2018, an intense, localised rainfall event caused flooding across North Devon, with approximately 152mm of rain falling in the Exe catchment over a 24-hour period. 23 properties are thought to have experienced internal flooding, with Swimbridge and Landkey amongst the most affected areas. Several areas also experienced landslips – in Combe Martin, a JCB was used to remove 20 tons of debris from the highway. At this time, DCC is not aware of any other districts in Devon having been affected by flooding on this date.



Flooding to gardens in Ashburton, adjacent to the river. (Source: Davie Brothers Ltd)

Storm Emma

Storm Emma coincided with heavy snowfall across the country and hit the south coast of Devon on 2nd -3rd March 2018. Approximately 17 properties were flooded across Devon, the majority from the sea with extremely high wave heights recorded. The coastal area of Beesands was the hardest hit with at least 7 properties flooded and many other properties damaged from the waves. Torcross was also badly affected with 5 properties flooded. In addition to properties affected, significant damage was also caused to the highway at Slapton Line, where sections of the A379 and public carpark were damaged and washed into the sea, making the road currently unusable by car.

Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports

A flood investigation report under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 is currently being produced for each of the above flood events and once finalised will be available on [our website](#). The reports will detail the extent of flooding and include

recommendations for the relevant Risk Management Authorities to take forward. Where possible, quick win solutions will be identified, which can be easily implemented at relatively low cost. Any further investigations or detailed studies will then need to be prioritised in line with Devon’s Action Plan for future investment.

Natural Flood Management

DCC Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team is committed to the delivery of flood improvement works throughout the county and will continue to endorse Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures as part of flood improvement schemes. As part of this, DCC is currently working in partnership with the Environment Agency to progress Natural Flood Management pilot studies in a few selected locations across Devon.

A joint Natural Flood Management project between Devon County Council, Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) and Clinton Devon has seen the installation of several leaky dams in a number of minor watercourses in Torridge. Leaky dams have the main purpose of reducing downstream flood risk during high flow events, by allowing flows to be slowed and overflow into the floodplain, but not restricting baseflows under normal conditions. They can also have positive impacts for water quality and biodiversity. Due to this project being a part of the wider DWT freshwater pearl mussel project, the stretches of watercourses that were selected were those within close proximity to priority freshwater pearl mussel populations. The specific siting of the leaky dams was carefully considered so as not to cause a flood risk to any productive fields, tracks / footpaths or properties. DWT and DCC are committed to collaborating on NFM projects such as this into the future.



Leaky Dams – Torridge (March 2018)

On 31st October 2017, the Environment Agency launched a new Natural Flood Management evidence directory, titled *Working with Natural Processes to Reduce Flood Risk*. The purpose of the evidence directory is ‘to give flood risk management practitioners and other responsible bodies easy access to information which explains ‘what we know’ and ‘what we don’t know’ about the effectiveness of a range of different measures from a flood risk and ecosystem services perspective’. It is comprised of several documents, including an extensive literature review, one-page summaries for NFM measures and details of over 60 NFM case studies. See [here](#) for more information.

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management team would always welcome suggestions for any new areas which could potentially be good candidates for future natural flood management schemes. For more information on best practices to reduce the flood risk on your land and where to go for advice, please see our leaflet on land management, which can be found [here](#).

Action Plan approved and Defra Six Year Programme

To support the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Devon an Annual Action Plan is produced to identify the prioritised investment for that year, which will be delivered by the County Council's Flood Risk Management team. The new Action Plan for 2018/19, which can be viewed [here](#), was presented to DCC Cabinet in March of this year and approval was granted to the budget allocations set out in the Plan.

Schemes prioritised on the Action Plan will mainly focus on those that have been submitted onto the Defra 6-year programme for the period of 2015-2021 to draw down national funding and reduce the risk of flooding to significant numbers of properties in the high-risk areas. Local minor flood improvement works will also be included as well as flood studies that will inform future investment beyond 2021, after the current 6-year programme.

Flood Studies

DCC are currently undertaking a number of flood studies in order to better understand the level of flood risk. In accordance with the proposed 2018/19 Action Plan of the Local Strategy. Priority areas include Barnstaple, Broadhempston, Buckfastleigh Colaton Raleigh and Woodbury Salterton. These are to be progressed over the remainder of the financial year, as well as the ongoing investigations in Bishops Tawton, Exmouth, Kingsbridge, Ottery St Mary, South Pool and Ugborough. The results of the studies will help us produce future action plans and manage our resource going forward.

Flood Improvement Projects

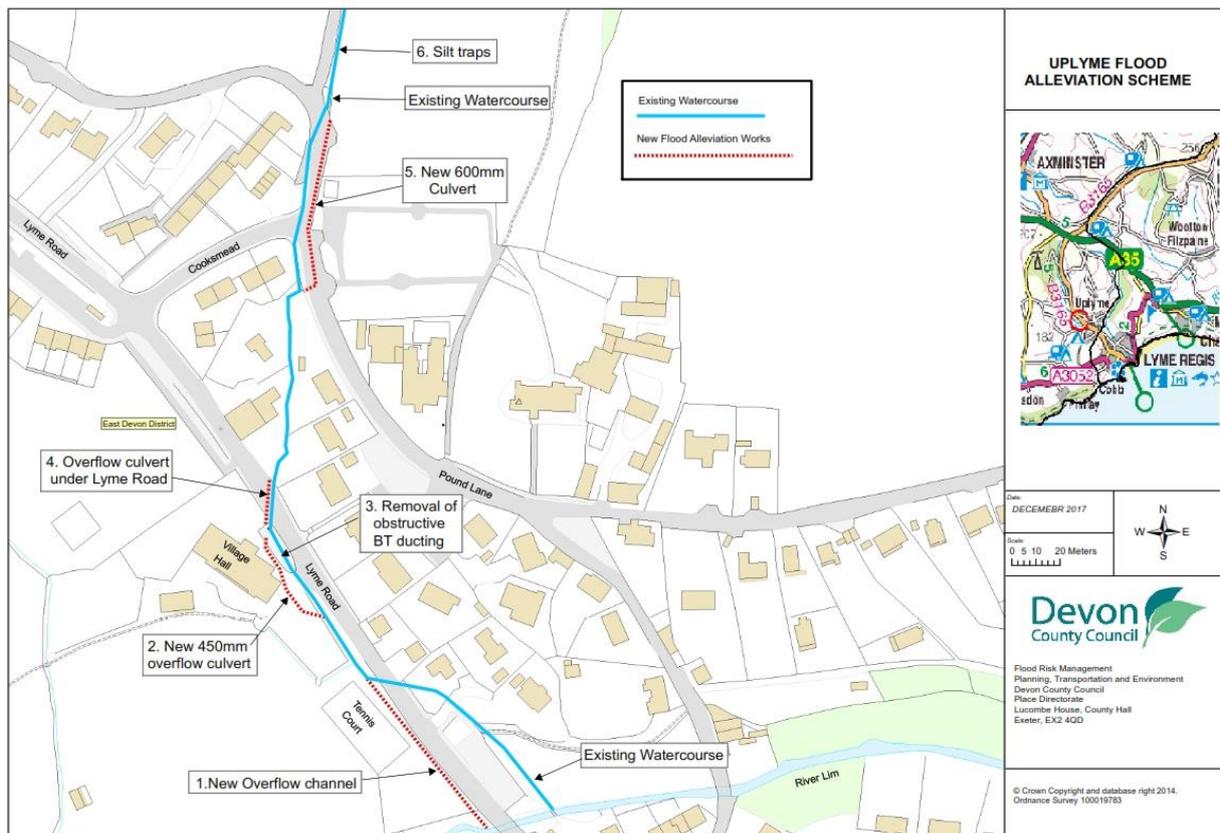
DCCs Flood & Coastal Risk Management Team has continued to develop a number of high priority flood improvement schemes, as well as the delivery of minor works and local resilience measures. These have been progressed in accordance with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and in line with the indicative funding allocations of the Defra 6 year programme. Where practical, a number of minor flood improvements and resilience measures have been delivered through local funding opportunities; however, the larger capital schemes have been included in Defra's 6 year programme to take advantage of national funding.

Uplyme

Flood improvement works in Uplyme are now underway. The scheme valued at £225k, was developed in house and will look to remove several pinch points in the watercourse system through the village. The works will offer a higher standard of protection to 12 properties as well as improving the resilience to the highway network locally.



Works onsite at Uplyme, April 2018



Flood proposals in Uplyme

The scheme is being paid for from a combination of DCC funding, a contribution from East Devon District Council, Local Levy and Central Government Flood Defence Grant in Aid. Works are due for completion by the end of May 2018.

Moreton Park Road, Bideford

Works are underway in Bideford to repair a collapsed culvert through the Moreton Park Road area of the town. The 600mm diameter culvert, some 4m deep and in extreme proximity to residential properties is being replaced, not only because of the hazard it presents to the households due to a large sink hole that has appeared, but also due to the significantly increased flood risk due to the collapsed pipe.



Images of the collapsed pipe and the fresh pipework waiting to be installed, April 2018

The works valued at £250k are being funded by DCC, Central Government Flood Defence Grant in Aid and a contribution from the property owners. Completion is expected in June 2018.

Modbury

Following the successful business case submission to the Environment Agency, full funding has now been obtained for the flood alleviation scheme in Modbury that will reduce the risk of flooding to 50 residential and 32 commercial properties up to the 100-year flood event, by constructing three large earthwork bunds to contain flood water, interception ditches and local drainage improvements. Final land owner permissions have now been agreed and the scheme will start on site early May 2018 with completion targeted by September 2018.



Flooding in Modbury 2012 and proposal for Back Street, Modbury

Braunton

Phase 2 of the Braunton Caen Street flood improvement scheme is now complete and fully operational. The project that includes the provision of much improved highway drainage and a small pumping station will offer the community a much-improved standard of flood protection.

The Devon Community Resilience Forum



The Forum are continuing to provide advice and support for communities in improving their resilience, through the development of Emergency Plans and facilitating community grants and public events.

Twitter: @DevComsTogether #devonresilience

Community Resilience Initiatives Grant

This grant scheme is available to support your community in emergency planning, to purchasing equipment or supplies that will result in a resilient community that is more aware and prepared for an emergency. For details and to apply, visit the Forum's [website](#).

Grant funding for emergency flood resilience

The Fund is open for community groups, flood groups, parish/town councils etc. but not for individuals. The Fund is available to groups with a community emergency plan or flood plan in place and made available through Devon Communities Together. If you do not yet have a plan in place you may still be eligible for a grant if you can show how the funding will support activity identified in a draft plan in development. For details and to apply, visit the Forum's [website](#).

The Forum's next event is scheduled for June 2018. Details will be available soon.

Property Level Resilience (PLR) Grant Scheme

Devon County Council is committed to increasing community resilience in Devon and is supported by Defra to deliver property level resilience measures. Working closely with a number of partners, DCC aims to help individual property owners be better equipped with the tools and basic defence measures they need to be able to deal with flooding. As such, a new PLR Grant Scheme has been established to enable home owners to apply for up to £5,000 to carry out a survey of the property, identifying the required resilience measures, and to purchase the recommended measures. Any additional budget requirements will be at the expense of the property owner.

There is limited funding, with an allocation to be made available each year by Defra, Local Levy and DCC. Applications will therefore be prioritised based on the criteria set out in DCC's PLR Policy in order to maximize the number of properties benefitting from this opportunity and to ensure those properties with the greatest need will receive the funding. There can be no guarantee of funding for all applications.

The PLR Policy and Application Form can be found on our website [here](#).

Since the last issue of this newsletter in October, various works have been carried out across the county to ensure an outstanding and resilient environment: 28 properties have been surveyed, the installation of recommended PLR measures has been completed for 10 properties and the installation works for 5 more properties are now progressing. DCC has invested about £58K in these works, to reduce the internal flood risk of these properties. This will not only help the property owners to fulfil their responsibility to protect their homes from flooding, but it will also benefit them economically as the cost of resilience repairs from flood damage could potentially be reduced by up to £450k. On average, the cost to recover a property from internal flooding at low level would be approximately £30K.

Throughout the last months 22 new applications have been also successfully approved and are now progressing through the scheme. In this new batch of applications DCC aims to reduce the flood risk of various properties, located at North Devon, in areas that have been recently affected by floods such as Combe Martin, Muddiford and Swimbridge.

SuDS News

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team continues to provide Local Planning Authorities across Devon with advice in relation to planning consultations, with the aim of promoting the most sustainable solutions to managing surface water resulting from development. The following types of above-ground features are encouraged to be implemented within developments:

- Swales - shallow, open, vegetated channels which are used to convey and treat surface water runoff, whilst also providing a useable public space with biodiversity benefits
- Detention Basins – depression features at the surface utilised to fill with water in a storm event. Usually dry and, dependent on vegetation coverage, can be used for other purposes
- Attenuation Ponds - features with permanent pools of water, the levels of which increase following rainfall, enabling the attenuation and treatment of surface water runoff
- Rain Gardens - shallow depressions at the surface containing vegetation. Usually utilised for small rainfall events, they can be bypassed or under drained for larger events
- Infiltration Basins – depression features at the surface used to store and release water into the ground (dependent on soil characteristics)
- Pervious Pavements - come in a variety of forms and allow water to permeate through the material and into the ground or drain. Forms include: Permeable Paving (including block); Grass Reinforcement (grass or gravel); Resin Bound Gravel; Porous Asphalt; Porous Concrete

Devon's Sustainable Drainage Guidance is available on our website [here](#), intended for use by the public, developers and Local Planning Authorities.



Addendums to the Strategy

The main Strategy document will be updated every 6 years with the next review in 2020. Any updates before this new publication will be shown as addendums on the [Flood Risk Management website](#). When these addendums are updated, key partners will be consulted, including members of the Flood Risk Management Partnership and Project Board.

What to do in the event of a flood

Your guide on who to call

In the event of a flood, there are many authorities available to help. Below outlines who should be contacted for the various types of flooding incidents and emergencies that occur. The local authorities rely on information reported to them to inform any investigations and prioritisation of investment.

If it is an **emergency** and there is danger to life as a result of flooding you should not hesitate to call **999**

To report flooding of the highway and blocked drains contact Devon County Council's Highway Customer Service Centre on **0345 155 1004** or visit www.devon.gov.uk/drainage. Office hours are Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm and Saturdays 9am – 1pm. For emergencies outside of these hours call **01392 383329**

For any flooding on major trunk roads (the M5 A30, A38, A35 and A303) contact the Highways Agency on **0300 123 5000** (24 hour service)

To report flooding from sewers and water pipes contact South West Water on **0344 346 2020** (24 hour service)

For enquiries about flood warnings contact the Environment Agency's Floodline on **0345 988 1188** (24 hour service)

For general enquiries about Main River or flooding from the sea contact the Environment Agency on **03708 506 506**

For all other flooding enquiries contact the Devon County Council Flood Risk Management Team on **0345 155 1015** or email floodrisk@devon.gov.uk

Preparing for a flood

Please refer to Devon County Council and Environment Agency web pages for advice on what to do before, during and after a flood. In the first instance of flooding and sandbag requests contact your local District or Parish Council to be directed to any local sandbag supplies that may be available.



FLOOD ALERT

Flood Alert: Flooding is possible. Be prepared.



FLOOD WARNING

Flood Warning: Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.



SEVERE FLOOD WARNING

Severe Flood Warning: Severe flooding. Danger to life

Warnings no longer in force: No further flooding is currently expected in your area.

Sign up to flood warnings: <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>