

October 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.

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 either as standalone projects or within larger flood improvement schemes to future proof against the effects of climate change. To progress this, DCC is currently working in partnership with the Environment Agency to deliver Natural Flood Management pilot studies in a few selected locations across Devon.



Hollocombe Moor - Devon Wildlife Trust

Devon County Council is also working in partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency and the University of Exeter on the Culm Grassland Natural Flood Management project. Culm Grassland (or Rhos pasture) is a nationally important type of purple moor grass and rush pasture, of which a large proportion of the UK's total is in the Culm National Character Area in North Devon (covering the Torridge, Taw, and parts of Tamar and Exe catchments). Despite significant conservation efforts, Culm Grassland is still under threat; however, understanding is increasing about the benefits of Culm Grassland to society, for wildlife, water management, carbon storage and more.

The Culm Grassland project has four key aims - to learn more about how Culm Grassland can help reduce flood risk; to increase public understanding about the value of Culm Grassland; to work with landowners to restore and re-create Culm Grassland sites; and to share learning across the South West, the UK and Europe. Based on flood risk data provided by Devon County Council and the Environment Agency, sites have been identified and targeted for where Culm Grassland could provide the most flood risk benefit. Devon Wildlife Trust is continuing to engage with landowners and would welcome landowners to get in touch if they would be interested in managing Culm Grassland on their land. For more information about the Culm Grassland project, please see [here](#).



Bursdon – Devon Wildlife Trust

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. Additionally, DCC are currently building a database of NFM projects across Devon. If you are working on or know of an NFM project that you would like added to the database, please contact floodrisk@devon.gov.uk.

For more general information on best practice 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](#).

Defra Six Year Programme 2015-2021

The current programme is now over half way through its six years. A recent announcement from Defra indicated that the outstanding value of works across the country is in the region of £200 million greater than the available budget, due to a number of large projects requiring additional investment above their estimates and for unforeseen works. As a result, the allocations for each area of the country over the final 2 years of the programme have had to be reduced. This had an initial impact on all of Devon County Council's projects, however through the Local Choices process of the South West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, most have been reinstated for completion before 2021; subject to cost beneficial schemes being justified for funding through the preparation of robust business cases. This includes projects at Sidmouth, Exeter, Ivybridge and Stokeinteignhead

Flood Studies

Flood studies at Barnstaple and Broadhempston are nearing completion and others, in partnership with the Environment Agency and South West Water, including Kingsbridge, Exmouth and Bishops Tawton are ongoing. Due to the availability of Defra funding detailed above, it is unlikely that any works will be considered until after 2021 beyond the current programme. Such locations are therefore being highlighted for inclusion in the next programme of flood improvements, whatever form this is likely to take.

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

The main flood improvements for Uplyme were completed in the spring of this year, including the upsizing of culverts to increase conveyance through the village area. However, due to the very mobile watercourse upstream, which causes a large volume of stone and rocks to be transferred downstream, DCC are developing further works to enhance the scheme and reduce regular ongoing maintenance.



Works in progress



Debris that will be captured by new silt traps

A variation was submitted to the Environment Agency, which has been approved, for a series of check weirs/silt traps to be installed upstream. The design is complete, and quotes are now being obtained. All works will be complete within 2018/19.

Modbury

The construction of the main bunding works in Modbury is now nearing completion as programmed. Once the main works have been completed, attentions will move to the remaining elements of the scheme including surface water interception features above the town to divert the flows into the new bunds, removal of pinch point throttles at the Exeter Inn and improved drainage in the town centre to cover the residual risk of localised surface water. All works will be completed within the current financial year ending 31st March 2019.



Looking south towards the substantially completed Area 1 lower bund.
Grass seeding, flow control and grill to be fitted.



Looking east in Area 2 with the main bund taking shape.



Looking south in Area 2, 2.5m tall with another 2.5m to be added to reach final crest level.

The Devon Community Resilience Forum



Twitter: @DevComsTogether
#devonresilience

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.

At the most recent meeting of the Resilience Forum on 14th June 2018, Devon County Council and the Environment Agency gave a joint presentation on riparian ownership. This included information on what constitutes being a riparian landowner, what the rights and responsibilities are if you have a watercourse running through your land, and the potential

requirements for a Land Drainage Consent or Environmental Permit should you wish to undertake works within the watercourse channel. For more information and advice on riparian ownership, please contact floodrisk@devon.gov.uk.

Community Resilience Initiatives Grant

This grant scheme is available to support your community in emergency planning, for 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](#).

Upcoming Resilience Forum meeting

The next meeting of the Devon Community Resilience Forum will be 22nd November 2018 at Broadclyst Victory Hall. For full details see the Devon Communities Together [website](#).

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. The PLR Grant Scheme has been established now for two years to enable home owners to apply for up to £5,000 to carry out a survey of the property, identify the required resilience measures, and to purchase/install 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 maximise 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 even if an application does meet all the criteria.

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

Since the last issue of this newsletter in April, work has continued to be carried out across the county to ensure an outstanding and resilient environment: 24 properties have been surveyed, the installation of recommended PLR measures has been completed for 10 properties and works are underway at a further 12. DCC have invested a total of £55K already this financial year to reduce the flood risk to these properties. This will not only help the property owners to protect their homes from flooding, but it will also benefit them economically. On average, the cost to recover a single property from internal flooding at low level would be approximately £30k.

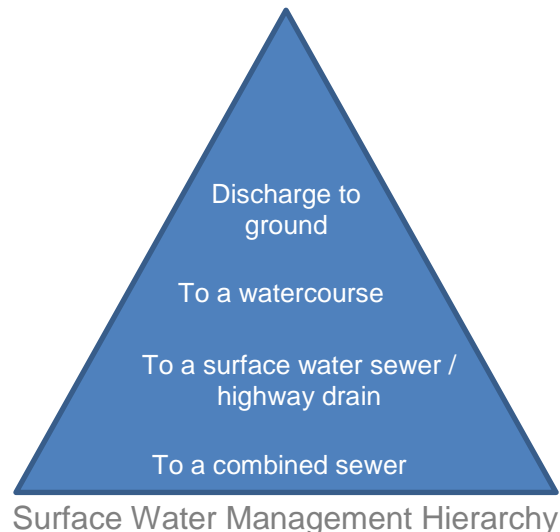
At the last review, 4 new applications were successfully approved and are now progressing through the scheme currently awaiting property surveys. 11 properties from the village of South Pool have also been approved on the grant scheme and are progressing as a community project.

SuDS News

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team has launched a pre-application service for developers wanting specific sustainable drainage or flood risk advice on major developments. Early engagement regarding sustainable drainage and/or flood risk matters can improve the quality of subsequent planning applications for the benefit of all parties. Further information is available on Devon County Council's Flood and Coastal Risk Management website [here](#).

DCC are continuing to provide advice to local authorities and have been consulted on 264 applications between 1st April 2018 and 1st October 2018.

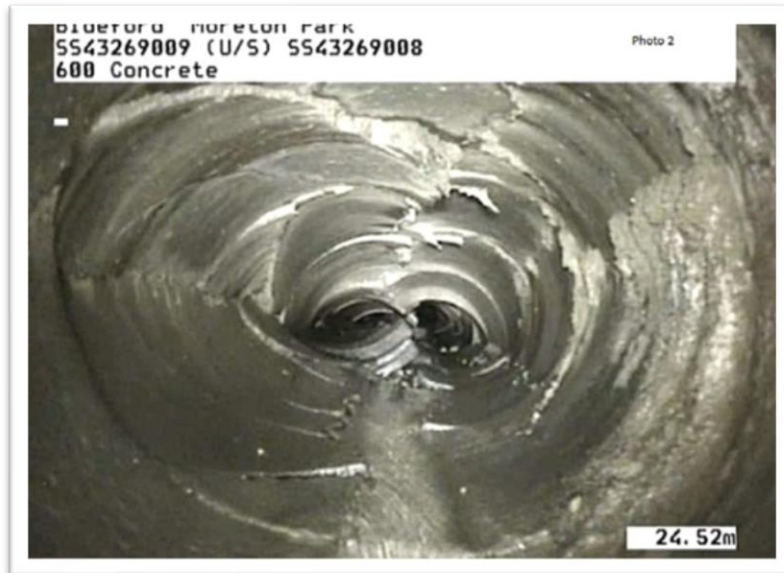
When reviewing applications, DCC check that the surface water drainage strategy follows the principles of the surface water drainage hierarchy which stems from Building Regulations Part H3 (2015) and is also reflected in the Planning Practice Guidance (2014).



The aim is to discharge as high up the hierarchy as possible with infiltration being the preferred method of surface water disposal, where proved viable via on site infiltration testing. The next option is discharge to a watercourse, where the watercourse lies on land which is within the applicant's ownership or where the applicant has permission from the relevant land owner. The next option is discharge into a surface water sewer where permission in principle has been sought from South West Water or discharge into the highways drain subject to agreement from Devon County Council Highways. The last option is discharge into a South West Water combined sewer which would also require agreement in principle.

Case Study – Moreton Park Road, Bideford

In 2016, following a foul water flooding incident in Moreton Park Road, Bideford, investigations were undertaken by South West Water to determine the source. These investigations led to the discovery of a significant section of collapsed culvert that conveyed a local watercourse through the residential area.



Condition of culvert prior to works commencing

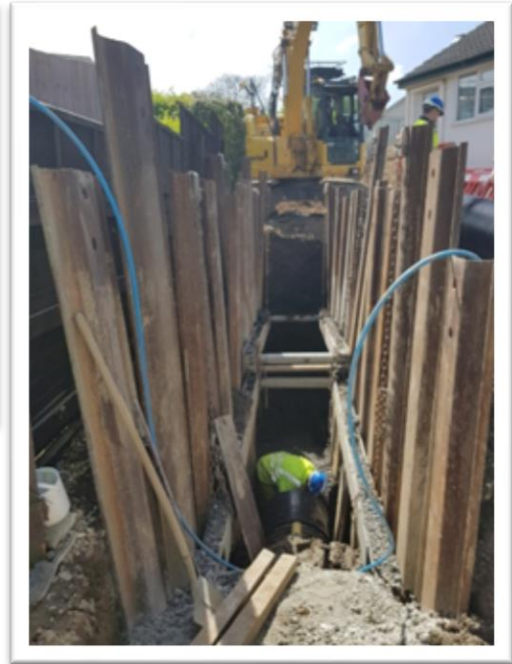
Following an initial review, it was clear that a piece meal repair of individual collapsed sections was not desirable - not only was there a potential for future issues to be passed downstream, but the depth of the culvert and its proximity to the properties would require a carefully designed solution. Subsequent meetings between the affected land owners, who were ultimately responsible for the collapsed culvert, and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) resulted in DCC taking the lead in the project, despite this not being a DCC responsibility. Ultimately, it was recognised that DCC taking the lead would give the best chance of a safe and cost-effective scheme being developed.

Using in house expertise including the graduate engineer on a DCC engineering placement scheme, the design was developed and discussed with contractors on the Minor Works Framework. It was soon apparent that the best and safest solution for delivery would also be costly. As DCC had taken the lead on the project, the requirement of obtaining the necessary budget for funding the works was their responsibility. In order to consider funding opportunities, it was essential to investigate how the collapse of the culvert would impact on flood risk in the area. Following the study, it was identified that 25 properties were at increased risk of flooding. This information was used to compile a business case, which was then submitted to the Environment Agency to request Defra Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) funding. This was successful and together with an insurance claim from one of the affected residents and a significant contribution from DCC, the £270,000 budget required to deliver the scheme was achieved.

It is important to remember that the responsibility for these works is generally the riparian landowner. However, as there were other properties at risk as a result of the collapsed culvert, DCC acted on behalf of the residents for the good of the area.



Reinstatement after completion of works



Deep excavations on site

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>