

## October 2020 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 Risk Management Response to COVID-19

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team are currently following government advice in the bid to help stop the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Most members of the team are still predominantly working from home and we are undertaking tasks as normal to the best of our ability. We are currently undertaking all meetings via video conference.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a challenging time for everyone, and we will continue to offer ongoing support to those at risk of flooding. During this time, we will be undertaking limited site visits for the safety of our staff, other professionals and the public to help prevent unnecessary interaction.

For information on our ongoing flood improvement projects and how they are being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, please see our flood improvement projects section.

### August Flooding 2020

Devon experienced two significant flood events in August, both of which met the thresholds for Section 19 Flood Investigation reports to be compiled. These are both currently being finalised before they are made available to the public.

Between the 13-15<sup>th</sup> August 2020, in total 25 properties were flooded internally with Feniton being the worst affected, having 10 properties flooded. The flooding was a result of intense rainfall over a short period of time and the drainage system was unable to cope.

On 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020, Barnstaple was significantly flooded. In total, 156 properties flooded internally in Barnstaple with a further 11 properties across Devon including Exeter, Holsworthy, Newton Abbot, Okehampton, North Tawton and Crediton. Again, this flood event was a result of intense rainfall over a very short period of time.

If you were affected during these flood events please log it on [FORT](#)<sup>1</sup> which is our Flood Online Reporting Tool. For more information about who to contact in a flood event please refer to our [website](#)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/report-flooding-to-property/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/who-to-contact-if-you-experience-flooding/>

## National and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Review 2020

The updated [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#)<sup>3</sup> was published in July this year and sets out a 'vision of a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100'.

Devon's local strategy has also been reviewed in line with the national vision and objectives and subsequently has been subject to an 8 week public consultation. The consultation closed on 15<sup>th</sup> October, however the consultation documents are still available to view on Devon County Council's [Have Your Say](#)<sup>4</sup> website.

We will now be gathering consultation responses and finalising the final documents to be published by January 2021.

The draft document, produced by DCC and partner authorities, outlines how the risk of flooding to property and infrastructure will be managed and reduced over the next six years, from 2021-2027. It also details the responsibilities of the risk management authorities in Devon and how they must work in partnership to coordinate local flood risk management.

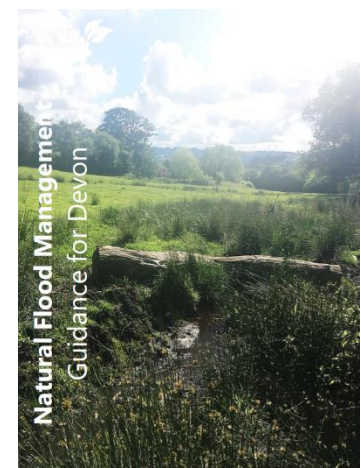
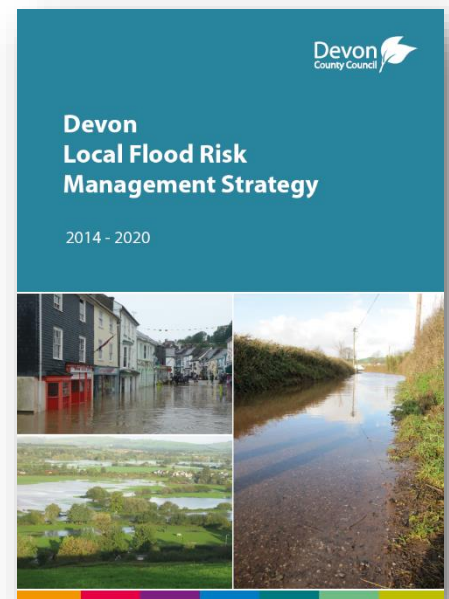
The strategy looks at how plans for flood alleviation schemes can be developed and how communities can increase their resilience against flooding and the impact of climate change.

Through partnership working and community engagement, investment is prioritised to target high-risk communities. Part 2 of the strategy document will list these prioritised high-risk communities to be considered for investment over the next 6 years. At all of these locations, natural and sustainable flood management measures will be promoted, where appropriate, in flood investigations and improvement projects, to reduce the scale, or need, of hard engineering solutions.

### Natural Flood Management

DCC's 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.

Devon County Council have produced a guidance document



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england--2>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/devon-local-flood-risk-management-strategy/>

explaining the benefits of Natural Flood Management, as well as detailing potential funding opportunities for NFM, putting NFM into a Devon context and exploring different environmental considerations which need to be taken into account for different NFM measures. The document is primarily aimed at landowners who are looking to further their knowledge of NFM, should they want to install such measures on their land. However, we also believe the guidance will be a useful tool for local organisations undertaking NFM through a more strategic role. The document, entitled 'NFM Guidance for Devon', is due to be officially launched in November.

We 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](mailto: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](#)<sup>5</sup>.

## Carrying out works in watercourses

Works in watercourses are restricted during the months of October through to the end of May in order to protect fish spawning, migration and other biodiversity. If you need to carry out works in an Ordinary Watercourse, please consider applying for Land Drainage Consent early in the new year so that we can process your application and appropriate works can be programmed and completed during the summertime window when river levels are low and there are less environmental impacts.



*Undermined bridge in need of repair*

Find our Land Drainage Consent [guidance, application form and good practice guidance](#)<sup>6</sup> on our webpages.

## Defra Six Year Programme 2015-2021 and beyond

There are now less than 6 months remaining of Defra's current 6-year flood & coastal erosion capital investment programme for the period of 2015 – 2021 and despite the effects of Covid-19 the national target to protect 300,000 properties remains achievable. Defra have also confirmed that all additional costs relating to Covid-19, such as demobilising, remobilisation and changes in safe working practices will be fully funded and therefore not a burden on local budgets.

All of Devon County Council's projects that were postponed or delayed have resumed and are on track to be delivered within the current funding period. Successful completion of DCC's current annual action plan, costing over £2.6million will benefit up to 350 properties.

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<sup>5</sup><https://devoncc.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/PublicDocs/Planning/FloodRisk/DCC%20Guidance/DCC%20Living%20with%20water%20leaflet%20-%202018.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=f0VpY0>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/land-drainage-consent/>



The government has announced a further £5.2 billion capital funding programme to better protect 336,000 properties from the risk of flooding for the period 2021-2027. In order to ensure Devon's high priority communities are included in this programme the Flood & Coastal Risk Management team has submitted a list of 25 projects aligned closely with the Local Strategy currently being revised for this new funding period. Total scheme costs for the next 6-year programme are estimated to be in the region of £16 million with the aim of drawing down almost £10 million of Defra funding. This investment will aim to protect over 3,000 properties in Devon.

## 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.

### Ivybridge, Claymans Pathway

The main elements of works are now complete with 76 properties receiving a flood benefit. Final site clearance and demobilisation is underway. Two areas upstream the main works have been identified to implement a series of Natural Flood Management measures. This includes leaky woody dams, leaky fence and check weirs in the possibility of stone leaky dams to slow the flow. Discussions with relevant landowners have recommenced to agree a way forward with delivering the proposed works.



*New 750mm dia. storm culvert.*



*Dual channel across Stoke Road*

### Property Flood Resilience (PFR)

Cullompton PFR – The delivery of PFR measures to 18 properties is now complete. Working methods and arrangements were determined between the contractor and each of the individual property owners to ensure safe systems of working could be achieved.

South Pool PFR – The contractor has been awarded the contract for the works and has carried out the initial assessment of each property. Some now require formal listed building consent to proceed and these discussions are now taking place with South Hams District Council. Those properties that do not require consent have been measured up and the bespoke products are now in the process of being manufactured.

DCC's PFR Funding Scheme – There are currently 24 properties benefitting from our funding scheme to provide up to £5,000 of property resilience measures for individual homes. A further 67 properties have already received protection via this initiative unique to DCC.

## **Stokeinteignhead**

The Highway drainage improvements have recommenced on site and are progressing. Following a further assessment of an existing culvert in Deane Road, a considerable length will be replaced to maintain the required capacity and future integrity. Additional gullies are also being considered in a number of low-lying depressions to help reduce the large areas of puddled water.



*New buddle holes installed on a key surface water flow path into the village.*



*Dual channel across Stoke Road*

Recent storm events in the area has proved that the main flow down the road is along the path of an existing cobbled area. Discussions with Teignbridge District Council (TDC) Planners are underway to obtain consent to install drainage features adjacent or in this area.

The contract for the PFR measures to protect up to 40 properties has been signed and the successful contractor is about to start liaising with the property owners over the type of products that can be installed. There are 18 listed properties that will need Listed Building Consent and the contractor will enter negotiations with TDC regarding the appearance of the proposed PFR measures to be installed.

Negotiations with upstream landowners for the installation of Natural Flood Management measures, including leaky dams and small wetland areas, have yet to commence due to the Covid 19 restrictions. It is hoped these will recommence shortly.



## Sidmouth

Surface water attenuation works have commenced at the Knowle in Sidmouth and are progressing well. The works incorporate an underground attenuation tank with an above ground amphitheatre, which will also serve as recreational area. The scheme will protect 86 residential and 68 non-residential properties from surface water.



*Amphitheatre storage area- Flood and Coastal Risk Management team visit*

Works to date have not been significantly affected by the pandemic, despite a slightly later start date. Construction on site is scheduled to be completed in November 2020.

## Chillington

An agreement has been reached with the key landowner to enable the installation of an improved surface water/flood relief culvert. Legal documents are now being prepared, which must be finalised before any access onto the land is permitted. DCC aim to complete this work within the current financial year 2020/2021, subject to Covid-19 restrictions.



DCC are also working with highways to improve a series of buddle holes along Coleridge Lane. Relevant parties seem to agree with the proposed works and DCC are now working with the parties on the preparation of legal agreements.

## Ugborough

DCC are continuing to progress with the delivery of the first 3 of 4 phases identified for Ugborough.

Following the implementation of Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures to a single property, and the installation of a relief culvert and a swale in Ware Cross. The third phase, which consists of Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures, is now complete. The measures include the installation of 8 leaky woody dams, which will enhance the relief culverts' performance and standard of protection by slowing the rate of peak flows. A total of £76K was funded by DCC to complete these 3 phases.

The fourth phase, proposed in the Lutterburn Street area, is likely to be implemented as part of a private housing development.



*NFM interventions- New leaky dams installed on areas where high flows will be stored and slowed.*

## The Devon Community Resilience Forum

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not feasible to hold an in-person Resilience Forum event in July. Instead, the July event was successfully held online, and included joint sessions from Devon County Council and the Environment Agency outlining how we are operating during the pandemic. A further online event is to be scheduled for November (date currently TBC).

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.

### Grant Funding for Community Emergency Resilience

There are two schemes available under the Grant Funding:

Scheme 1 (up to £250)



Twitter: @DevComsTogether  
#devonresilience

Devon's communities can bid for this fund to help form their own Community Emergency Planning group. A Community Emergency Plan helps to guide a community to organise a response to a local emergency, from flooding and snow to the completely unexpected. The fund is open to existing community groups and parish / town councils. This fund is not available to individuals.

### Scheme 2 (up to £1500)

This funding is available to communities to improve their own resilience with equipment and small-scale works. This may range from the provision of sandbag stores and other flood protection equipment, road signs, tools and personal protective equipment, to one off small scale works to reduce risk. The fund is open for existing community groups and parish / town councils with a Community Emergency Plan or Flood Plan already in place. Community Emergency Plans must specifically consider potential flood risk. (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).

More information on the Grant Funding for Community Emergency Resilience can be found on the [Devon Communities Together website](#)<sup>7</sup>.

## Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Funding Scheme

Devon County Council is committed to increasing community resilience in Devon and is supported by Defra to deliver Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures which help individual property owners be better equipped with the tools and basic defence measures they need in order to deal with flood events. The PFR scheme is available for residential property owners to apply for up to £5,000 worth of funding. With this, a property survey will be carried out and a list of recommended resilience measures produced, which will need to be purchased and then installed by a selected contractor. Any additional budget requirements over £5,000 are 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 PFR 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 PFR Policy and Application Form can be found on our [website](#)<sup>8</sup>.

The funding that DCC provides will not only assist property owners in protecting their homes from flooding, but it will also benefit them economically as, on average, the cost to recover a property from internal flooding at a low level would be approximately £30,000.

Community PFR projects are also being undertaken in locations where larger engineered schemes were found to be unfeasible.

## Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT)

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management team are continuing to use a new tool for recording information on flood incidents, known as FORT (Flood Online Reporting Tool). **Please note: this was formerly**



<sup>7</sup> <https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/grant-funding-emergency-flood-resilience>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/flood-resilience/property-flood-resilience-funding-scheme/>



known as **SWIM (Severe Weather Information Management)**. It is a straightforward, web-based system which allows members of the public, flood wardens and Flood Risk Management Authorities to enter details about property flooding in one place. The FORT project has been developed by the GeoWessex partnership and Dorset County Council Geographical Information Team, with support from colleagues from the Environment Agencies and several Local Authorities.



If flooding has affected your property, you can fill in the details of the flooding using one of the following options:

[Record current flooding<sup>9</sup>](#)

[Record recent flooding<sup>10</sup>](#)

[Update a record<sup>11</sup>](#) (you will need your FORT ID and access code to access an existing record you created)

For more general information on FORT please visit <https://swim.geowessex.com/devon/>.

**Please note: Although the name has changed from SWIM to FORT, the web address containing SWIM is still currently in use.**

Any information submitted as part of a FORT record will be used for **data collection purposes only**. If you require a direct response, please contact a member of the Flood and Coastal Risk Management team at [floodrisk@devon.gov.uk](mailto:floodrisk@devon.gov.uk).

## Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) News

We continue to be consulted on major planning applications by all the districts in Devon and the national parks. We are also providing our pre application service direct to consultants which saves time and resource later in the planning process.

### Water Quality

DCC require all new surface water drainage management systems to provide a comprehensive SuDS Management Train, which involves the use of a sequence of SuDS components to provide treatment of the runoff through different above ground SuDS before reaching a watercourse or water body.

The management train is adaptable and extendable offering a wide variety of options across different scales, see Figure 1. SuDS techniques can be used to treat runoff through degradation, filtration and interception of pollutants such as oils, metals, pesticides. SuDS can also be retrofitted which can lead to improvements in the water quality of runoff on new and existing sites.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://swim.geowessex.com/devon/Report/Splash>

<sup>10</sup> <https://swim.geowessex.com/devon/Report>

<sup>11</sup> <https://swim.geowessex.com/devon/Home/Update>

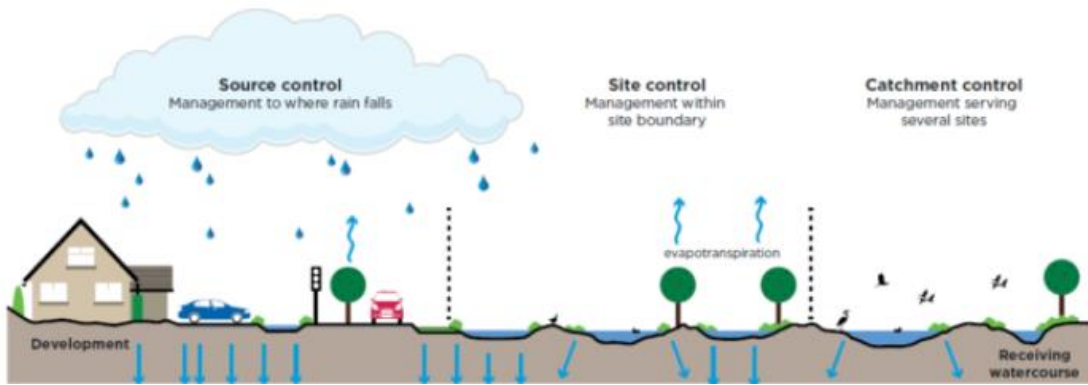


Figure 1: In order to reduce the concentrations of sediment-associated pollutants and contaminants within surface water runoff, the surface water drainage management systems provided on new development sites must comply with the SuDS Management Train. Credit: West of England Sustainable Drainage Developer Guide (2015), P.18.

## Addendums to the Strategy

As reported earlier in this update the main Strategy document is to be updated every 6 years with the next publication to be released at the end of the year for the period 2021-2027. Over the last 12 months we have been reviewing the content of the strategy to ensure it is still fit for purpose, relevant and a valuable tool in flood risk management. Key stakeholders have been consulted alongside the public consultation process.

Any updates before this new publication will be shown as addendums on the [Flood Risk Management website](#)<sup>12</sup>. When these addendums are updated, key partners will be consulted, including members of the Flood Risk Management Partnership and Project Board.

<sup>12</sup> <https://new.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement/local-flood-risk-management-strategy/action-plan/>



# 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](http://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](mailto: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:** Flooding is possible. Be prepared.



**Flood Warning:** Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.



**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>

**Flood Risk Management** [www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement](http://www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement)