

# Devon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update

October 2021 Newsletter



Devon's revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was published in February of this year and is supported by the Annual Action Plan detailing improvements and investment for this current financial year. This newsletter is the second instalment for 2021 engaging with our Partners and local communities to inform of the work being undertaken in local flood risk management. A copy of [the full Strategy can be found on our website](#).

## Flood Risk Management Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is still a major concern for the residents of Devon and of course the staff within the Flood & Coastal Risk Management team. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of the team and those that we meet we are continuing to work from home where we are able to do so. Good lines of communication and working practices have been established and we believe we can continue to offer a high level of service in reducing the risk of flooding to people's homes and businesses across the county.

Where possible meetings are continuing to be dealt with virtually via video conferencing however, we recognise that at times there will be the need to visit specific locations and attend site meetings. These can be prearranged and will be conducted outside unless there is a specific need to enter a building. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to enable us to fulfil our responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

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.

## October Flooding 2021

Devon experienced two significant flood events in October which met the threshold for Section 19 Flood Investigation reports to be compiled. Once completed the reports will be available to be viewed in an accessible format on our website alongside previous Flood Investigations reports.

On the 4th - 5th October, high intensity rainfall events led to internal property flooding in communities across Devon. The affected areas include Exeter, Blackawton and South Huish with multiple properties flooded in each of these locations. On the 20th - 21st October, more heavy rainfall resulted in flooding to properties in communities including Seaton, Axminster and Woodbury.

The investigations into these flood events are ongoing and if you were affected by these events please log it on [FORT](#) which is our Flood Online Reporting Tool. For more information on who to contact in a flood event please refer to our website.

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

## Natural Flood Management (NFM)

### Ivybridge

Devon County Council (DCC) have installed a series of NFM features between Dinnaton and Stibbs Lane, working in collaboration with a local landowner. This includes a series of leaky dams along a section of a tributary of the River Erme and a timber leaky fence at the bottom of the field. The main purpose of the NFM measures is to intercept and attenuate flows during extreme weather to reduce flow rates downstream. The measures allow normal flows to run downstream, and temporarily store and steadily release peak flows. In addition to this, it looks to improve the performance and reduce maintenance liabilities of a recent flood alleviation scheme delivered in the area downstream. Furthermore, this work improves the natural processes and natural habitats in the minor watercourse.



Photos of the leaky dams installed in Ivybridge.

### Natural Flood Management Strategic Group

DCC has now had 3 successful NFM Strategic Group meetings with organisations from across Devon. This group was set up as an opportunity to learn and discuss all things NFM and really enhance a collaborative working approach to NFM projects across Devon. The group has explored a variety of topics including, Culm Grassland, woodland and NFM, beavers, and more. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2022.

### 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 in good time. Appropriate works can then be programmed and completed during the summertime window when river levels are low and there are less environmental impacts.

Find our Land Drainage Consent [guidance, application form and good practice guidance](#) on our webpages. You can now [apply for Land Drainage Consent online](#) using the form on our website.

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## Defra Six Year Programme 2021-2027

We are now in the first year of the Defra 6 Year programme 2021-2027 and working towards delivery of the high priorities set out in our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, which will go towards delivering the government's target of 336,000 better protected properties across the Country.

There are a number of projects still being delivered that were started in the last six year programme, which has provided a seamless overlap between programmes. Further information on these is detailed below. In addition to these projects, we have 15 studies in progress that will inform our Action Plans throughout the programme and further studies will be commissioned as required to maintain a constant investment in flood risk management.

## Flood Improvement Projects

DCC continue working on the delivery of flood improvements schemes to make Devon more resistance and resilient to flooding.

### Sidmouth – Knowle Flood Alleviation Scheme

The works relating to the new flood attenuation area at the Knowle, to the north of Sidmouth Town Centre are now complete. The scheme is set to benefit over 100 properties with 64 defended against the 100-year event. An opening ceremony was arranged for Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.



A key element of achieving planning permission for these essential flood attenuation scheme, was the requirement to make it a dual use space that could also be utilised as an amenity area for the local community when not in time of flood.



DCC are now continuing with the assessment of different options to implement other flood alleviation works, as a second phase of the project, in the town centre. This phase aims to better protect other 47 properties. At the completion of the two phases a total of 170 properties, including businesses, will be benefitting from reduction in risk.

### Ivybridge

Following on from the successful completion of the flood scheme in Claymans Pathway, a series of Natural Flood Management measures (woody debris dams and a leaky fence), and improvements to a grill and culvert inlet have been completed.



Inlet before improvements



Inlet after improvements

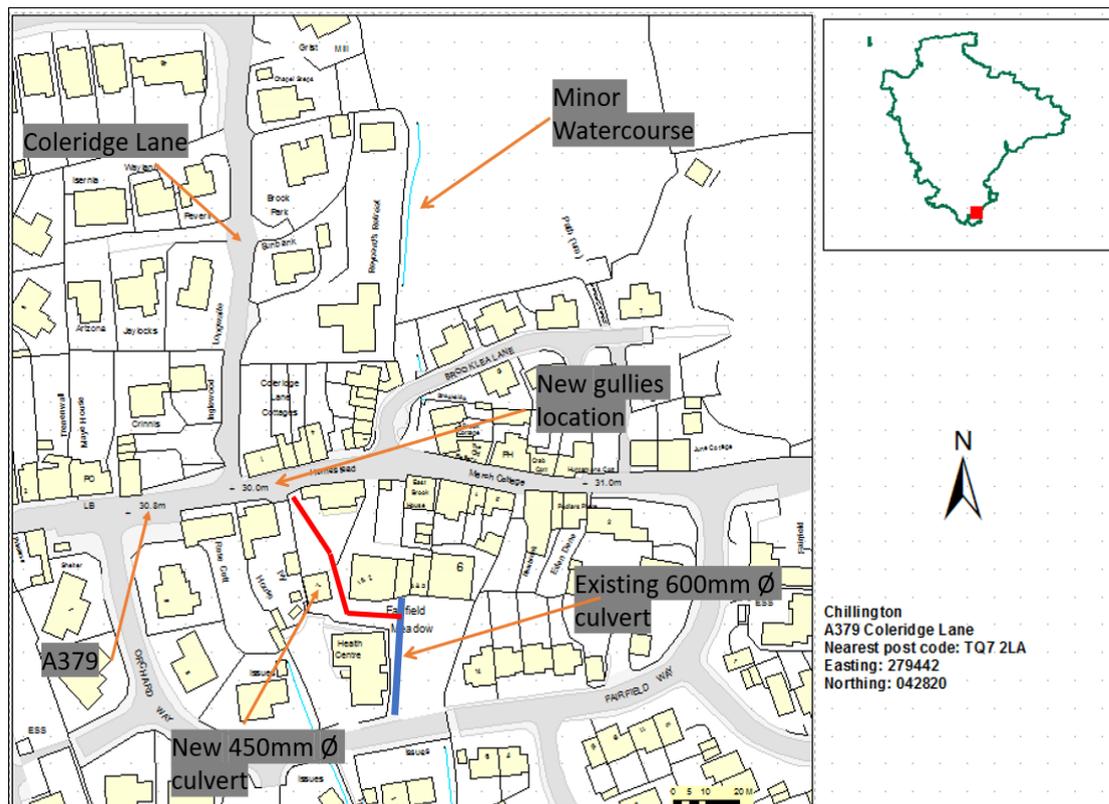
## Stokeinteignhead

The obtaining of Listed Building Consents for those properties requiring flood resilience products is progressing. DCC are now in receipt of 20 approved Listed Building Consents and Planning Applications as of last few weeks, with a further 7 due imminently. Once the consents have been received, DCC will be able to move forward with the order to manufacture of the PFR products and subsequently proceed with the installations.

## Chillington

The village of Chillington has suffered several repeat flooding events in recent years at the junction between the A379 and Coleridge Lane. These flood events have mostly been the result of overland surface water from the upper catchment. The floods impact not only on the properties in the area but cause significant disruption on this important A road.

DCC plan to carry out some works to install a new drainage system on the A379 to reduce the frequency of flooding. The new system includes a series of new double gullies and a new culvert to collect the runoff and transmit flow into an existing culvert as shown in the figure below.



Proposed works

DCC are now working on the program with the contractor. The works are most likely to start early next year; a closure of a section of the A379 in February will be required to complete the works on the highway.

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In addition to the main scheme, DCC also plan to undertake some improvements in a series of DCC Highway buddle holes, which are located along the upper section of Coleridge Lane. The improvements aim to reduce maintenance and blockages of the existing structures as well as reducing the volume of surface water in the lower junction between the A379.

For this additional work, DCC have obtained consent from one of the relevant landowners and the Estate Surveyor is working on the relevant deed. DCC hope to receive an agreement from the other Landowner in due course.

## Property Flood Resilience (PFR)

### South Pool PFR

Following discussions with South Hams District Council regarding the required listed building consent to carry out the PFR installations, applications have been submitted and are currently in awaiting decisions. Orders for bespoke products will be placed once the relevant consents are obtained.

### PFR Pathfinder

DCC have been a partner in a Defra-funded 'PFR Pathfinder' over the last couple of years, with this work led by Cornwall Council. Its purpose was to explore different approaches to PFR and ways in which these might be promoted and expanded, as well as conveying to the public the general message of ['Be Flood Ready'](#). The project is currently in its concluding stages.

### Harbertonford PFR

The scheme in Harbertonford is progressing and following the completion of property surveys, the homeowner agreements have been sent to the relevant parties. Once the agreements have been signed and returned, DCC will be able to move forward with the required listed building consents and installation of recommended flood products.

### PFR Funding Scheme

With recent flooding events it is possible we will receive an increased number of applications for funding to assist with the installation of Property Flood Resilience measures. The funding is limited but still available so will need to prioritise those that can be delivered this year. We have secured further funding from Defra and Local Levy for the next 4 years to enable Devon County Council to continue to deliver this initiative and support those individual properties that would not benefit from any other wider flood improvements.

The information below is has been maintained from the last newsletter and explains the PRF funding scheme. For more information on the PRF scheme and funding policy, and to download an application form please [visit our website](#).

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

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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.

## **Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme**

Devon County Council's initiative 'Managing Big Problems in Small Places' is one of 25 across the country to have successfully secured a share of £150 million funding from the Department for Food & Rural Affairs' Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP).

The six-year project, which is currently in its development phase, is due to launch next spring. The project focusses on rapidly responding catchments in a predominantly rural area, whilst also making linkages between rural spaces and urban risks. This is a multi-partner project, building on many pre-existing initiatives across the project partnership.

The project overall seeks to identify a range of replicable low-cost resilience actions that can be delivered and funded by local authorities or/and local communities of different sizes/settings where traditional flood defences are shown not to be appropriate or cost beneficial. The project seeks to identify what level of protection can be afforded to a community using nature-based interventions, tailored flood warning systems and Property Flood Resilience measures. The project will (also) encourage local communities to participate in the design of Nature Based Solutions and local monitoring to build trust and confidence in the resilience measures.

The project will also develop tools and guidance linking flood resilience measures to local spatial planning policy to protect further communities at risk from heightened run off as a result of increased climate change risks, pressures from new developments, and increased agricultural productivity.

The project will expand on locally developed methods of quantifying community resilience levels through producing baseline information, opportunity mapping in a central shared location through the production of a local Flood Resilience Hub. This will help to provide communities with the knowledge and tools they need to help themselves.

More information about the Devon project will be made available through the [Flood Risk Management website](#) as the project progresses. Further information about the overall National Programme is available at: [Flood and coastal resilience innovation programme – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

## **The Devon Community Resilience Forum**

The Devon Community Resilience Forum, supported by Devon Communities Together, continues to provide invaluable support and engagement to local communities ensuring they are prepared for the emergencies they could encounter. The Forum is well established

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

between Devon County Council, the Environment Agency, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue and Devon & Cornwall Police to help bring communities together and share their knowledge and experiences.

Due to the current pandemic virtual online events have been held to engage with communities and share vital information and best practice to support their emergency planning needs. The next forum event will be an all-day online event on Wednesday the 15th December 2021. There will be the opportunity to join the whole event or a selection of those topics that are of interest. An agenda will be published nearer the time and will be made available on the [Devon Communities Together website](#). If you are interested and do not receive any correspondence direct then please contact the Devon Flood Risk Management team at [floodrisk@devon.gov.uk](mailto:floodrisk@devon.gov.uk).

The funding opportunities are still available to support communities with developing their own emergency plans and the purchase of essential equipment to operate the plans and help make their communities more resilient. More information on the Grant Funding for Community Emergency Resilience can be found on the [Devon Communities Together website](#).



Twitter: @DevComsTogether  
#devonresilience

## Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT)

With the winter months upon us we would like to remind everyone of the Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT) that we have signed up to and use to gather information about significant flooding that has taken place, in particular when internal flooding of property has occurred. We are really keen for you to share this information and encourage those affected to fill in the details of the flooding that has occurred. Links to the relevant pages are listed below.



The Flood and Coastal Risk Management team are continuing to use FORT (Flood Online Reporting Tool) for recording incidents of property flooding. **Please note this was formerly 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](#)

[Record recent flooding](#)

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

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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

The SuDS team have devised a SuDS Pro Forma which is intended to help consultants understand our technical requirements when designing their drainage strategies to support planning applications. This is intended to be supplementary to our existing SuDS for Devon Guidance (2017), will hopefully lead to better quality submissions in the future thereby making the process more efficient.

We have also issued a Position Statement on SuDS in Flood Zones in conjunction with the Environment Agency, South Hams District Council and Teignbridge District Council. Essentially no above ground sustainable drainage feature should be located within Flood Zone 2 or 3 unless it is a conveyance swale discharging into a watercourse. The reason is that by siting SuDS in flood zones defeats the purpose of the attenuation feature as well as displacing potential fluvial flood volumes and altering flow paths.

The SuDS Pro Forma can be [downloaded here](#) and the Position Statement can be [downloaded here](#).

## Addendums to the Strategy

There have been no further amendments to the Local Strategy since publication and therefore no new addendums to report. Any future updates or revisions will be dealt with through addendums to highlight changes that have been made.

## Useful Information

The following documents provide useful information and guidance:

[National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#)

[Devon's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021-2027](#)

[NFM Guidance for Devon](#) (PDF) / Accessible version: [NFM Guidance for Devon Webpage](#)

[Living with Water Leaflet](#)

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

# 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 the [Roads and Transport webpage](#). 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

**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>

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