

Devon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update

October 2022 Newsletter



Devon's revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was published in February of last 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 2022 engaging with our partners and local communities to inform them 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

Following the easing of government guidance on COVID-19, the Flood & Coastal Risk Management team are continuing to take a hybrid approach to work with most of the team working predominantly from home and some splitting their time between home and County Hall. 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 while taking this hybrid approach to work.

Team members can undertake site visits where necessary, however, there may be considerations when meeting indoors or sharing vehicles. Most of our meetings continue to take place via video conferencing. Safe working practices will be followed 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 later in this document.

Flood incidents

A Section 19 report will be published shortly for a flood event on the 4th June 2022 in Kingsbridge. This appears to be an isolated incident following a very intense rainfall event which saw thirteen properties flooded in the Kingsbridge area, with the town centre being the worst affected area.

The summer of 2022 was particularly dry in Devon, with the March to September cumulative rainfall totalling the ninth lowest on record. As a result, Devon did not experience much flooding during the summer. However, September had above average rainfall for the month compared to the long-term average and October has seen some flooding with individual properties flooded across the county, but no events large enough to require a Section 19 report.

If you have you have been affected by internal property flooding please report this on [FORT](#) which is our Flood Online Reporting Tool. For more information on who to contact during or after a flood event please refer to our website.

Flood Risk Management www.devon.gov.uk/floodriskmanagement

Natural Flood Management (NFM)

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.

Northern Devon Natural Solutions

We continue to work with the Environment Agency to support the Devon Wildlife Trust with natural flood management aspects of an ambitious project that focuses on a range of river catchments across North Devon and Torridge:

“This project will work with farmers and landowners to encourage them to think big and use natural solutions to create, restore and connect wild spaces for nature. This project will see new areas of woodland created, wildflower rich grasslands restored, rivers returned to their natural state to reduce flood risk, and rewilded areas of land that will help tackle the climate and nature emergency.”

Remember that any natural flood management in channel features will require land drainage consent. We have already approved several applications for 'leaky dams' and other features to slow down the flow of water in upper catchment areas.



Typical 'leaky dam' in situ as part of the Northern Devon Natural Solutions project. Source: DCC Flood and Coastal Risk Management

More information about Northern Devon Natural Solutions can be found on the [Devon Wildlife Trust website](#).

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Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Nature Based Solutions and Natural Flood Management Group

The expansion of the Natural Flood Management Strategic Group is now established as the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Nature Based Solutions and Natural Flood Management Group (DCIoS NBS & NFM Group). The aim of the group will continue to share knowledge and learning across organisations, but we are taking the opportunity to expand this sharing of information.

The group have had successful hybrid meetings combined with site visits with some really valuable learning from academic and industry experts.

The project board consists of the Environment Agency, Devon County Council and Cornwall Council. The next group meeting will be held in December 2022.



River Tamar Walkway and Wetland project: Site visit location for the DCIoS NBS & NFM Group.
Source: <https://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/river-tamar-walkway-wetland-project-update>

Are you carrying out works within a watercourse?

If you need to carry out works in an Ordinary Watercourse, then **please apply for Land Drainage Consent**. You can find information on the consenting process on our [Land Drainage Consent webpage](#) and you can now [apply for a consent online using this form](#) on our website.

Please note that works in watercourses are restricted from October through to the end of May to protect fish spawning, migration, and other biodiversity. Please ensure you apply for Land Drainage Consent in good time to allow appropriate works to be programmed and completed during the summertime window when river levels are low and there are fewer environmental impacts.



Atlantic Salmon migrating upstream. Credit Ann and Steve Toon / Alamy Stock Photo

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Defra Six Year Programme 2021-2027

The government has pledged £5.2bn to support the delivery of flood and coastal improvements to better protect 336,00 properties. Each year an allocation of this funding is provided to each region across the country in line with the national overview of investment and delivery priorities. An annual refresh is then carried out by the Risk Management Authorities proposing to deliver flood and coastal management projects to align their projects with the available funding. In some cases, projects are accelerated and others pushed back to reflect a more realistic delivery programme. The indicative allocation of funding for the South West was lower than expected for 2023/24, however following the refresh this has not affected Devon County Council's ambitions within the 6-year programme.

Flood Improvement Projects

DCC continue working on the delivery of flood improvement schemes to make Devon more resistant and resilient to flooding. At the time of writing DCC is working with our consultants to investigate and develop schemes in over 12 locations that, subject to funding, will be delivered over the coming funding window up to 2027.

Many of the schemes currently being progressed are property flood resilience (PFR) focused. The sector has experienced significant challenges in the last couple of years due to the availability and rising costs of materials and the increased demand. DCC have worked tirelessly to continue to progress these and to help overcome the challenges posed.



Photo of an installed flood gate in Stokeinteignhead

Stokeinteignhead

The manufacture and delivery phase of works in Stokeinteignhead is now almost complete. A final phase of works is due in Winter to complete the few properties remaining.

Harbertonford PFR

Agreements with relevant homeowners have now been reached and final measurements of the property resilience measures undertaken. Delays have unfortunately occurred, but the products are ordered and awaiting manufacture for installation.

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South Pool PFR

Planning permission has been obtained and the first phase of works have been completed in South Pool. Manufacturing of bespoke products is ongoing and upon completion a second phase of installation of PFR products will be able to commence.



Above photos show an example of the works undertaken by our contractor. On the left is a non-return valve fitted to a waste pipe to prevent water backing up into the property. On the right is an aluminium slot in flood barrier to prevent surface water and fluvial (river) flows entering the rear of a property.

Axminster PFR

A Property Flood Resilience scheme is progressing well for properties flooded in October 2021 from the Millbrook Stream. Many properties along the watercourse were able to escape flooding internally last October thanks to effective works undertaken by DCC in 2017 which included the upsizing of a large culvert. More details can be found in the October 2021 flood report on our website. A small number of properties experienced internal flooding and these properties have been offered PFR to help manage any residual risk if the flood defences are exceeded. Surveys have been undertaken and properties are due to have their measures installed this winter.

Seaton

As part of our ongoing investigations in Seaton, DCC will be undertaking some early engagement with the community. Here we will meet with representatives from the community flood group and other relevant stakeholders in a roundtable discussion in early November 2022 to receive feedback and local input on the initial model outputs and a long list of options from a study.

Ivybridge

Directly upstream of the newly created flood alleviation works in Stibb Lane/Claymans pathway in Ivybridge, a partially collapsed culvert was detected that threatened to call the scheme into action far more often than desired or intended. As a result, working with the landowners in question, DCC delivered a scheme to repair and replace the damaged culvert to ensure resilience for our Flood defence asset.

The works were completed to a tight programme ensuring they avoided Fish Spawning windows.

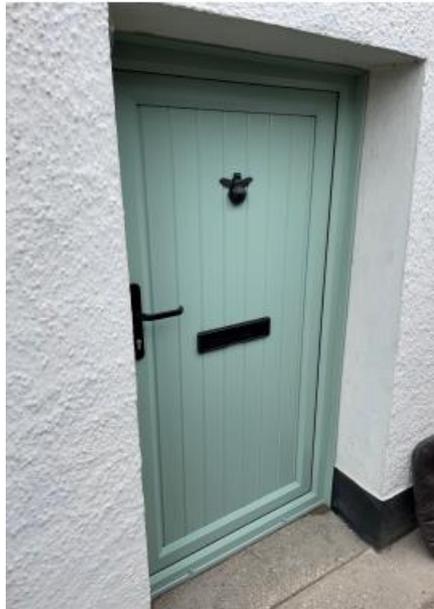
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Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Funding Scheme

The information below has been maintained from the last newsletter and explains the PFR funding scheme. For more information on the PFR 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 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 to maximize the number of properties benefitting from this opportunity and to



ensure those properties with the greatest need will receive the funding.

The picture above shows a flood door recently installed through our individual funding scheme on a resident's property in North Devon.

Devon Resilience Innovation Project

The Devon Resilience Innovation Project (DRIP) is one of twenty-five projects in the country funded by Defra as part of the flagship £150 million Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme to develop and test new approaches to flood resilience.



**Devon Resilience
Innovation Project**

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Devon County Council and eighteen partners have been awarded over £7 million of funding over a 6-year period (April 2021 – March 2027) to deliver thirty flood resilience pilot projects in rapid response catchments in Devon, including installing natural flood management measures, property flood resilience measures in

targeted community facilities and providing localised surface water flood warning systems. The project will also develop and test new spatial planning tools to ensure flood resilience is part of the decision-making process.

DRIP is an opportunity to work towards creating climate resilient places which are greener, cleaner, and more flood resilient. Overall DRIP will test and trial a range of replicable low-cost resilience actions that can be delivered by local authorities and communities in the future where traditional flood defences are shown not to be appropriate or cost beneficial.

Communities have been identified and selected by the project partners to become part of the project. Partners will start engaging with targeted communities to develop further the flood resilience interventions over the next 6 months. See Project Map here: [Devon Resilience Innovation Project \(DRIP\) - Flood Risk Management](#)

The Devon Community Resilience Forum

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



Twitter: @DevComsTogether
#devonresilience

The Forum will be holding a free online resilience event over three days and evenings from **Monday 14th – Wednesday 16th November 2022**. You can register for the various sessions on [Eventbrite](#). The programme will include presentations and workshops and is set to cover flood resilience for communities in addition to wider emergency planning, Devon's Climate Emergency, Healthy Communities, and funding for community projects. If you are unable to attend all the sessions that are of interest to you then by registering for them, you will gain access to a recording of that session to view at your leisure. Please therefore register for all those of interest.

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](#).

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Report flooding to your property on the Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT)

This winter, we would like to remind everyone to use the Flood Online Reporting Tool (FORT) to report current or recent flooding. We use this to gather and record information about flooding that has taken place, in particular when internal flooding of a property has occurred.



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. 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)

Flood Online Reporting Tool



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.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) News

With the release of the new climate change guidance, [Flood Risk Assessments: Climate Change Allowances](#), all new planning applications are expected to use the new peak rainfall allowances when designing surface water drainage strategies starting the 1st September 2022.

We are in the process of updating Devon's Sustainable Drainage Guidance and once it is ready, it will be made available on our website [here](#), for use by the public, developers and Local Planning Authorities.

The Association of SuDS Authorities held a conference in May 2022. The conference intended to: inform members of recent updates; educate members on technical aspects of drainage; allow for discussion with other members. One colleague from the FCRM Team attended the conference. They found it useful and updated colleagues.

Devon County Council continue to widen and improve the North Devon Link Road (A361). Where possible, DCC are also improving the surface water drainage of the road. Due to spatial constraints, the drainage cannot be restricted to greenfield runoff rates.

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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](#)

Meet the team

Flood & Coastal Risk Manager	Martin Hutchings
Flood & Coastal Risk Project Engineer	John Galt
Flood & Coastal Risk Officer - Projects	Vacant
Flood & Coastal Risk SuDS Engineer	Hock Lee
Flood & Coastal Risk Officer - SuDS	Joshua Lewis
Principal Flood & Coastal Risk Officer - Area issues and Land Drainage Consents	Jessica Bishop
Flood & Coastal Risk Officer - Area issues and Land Drainage Consents	Thomas Aldridge
Flood & Coastal Risk Officer - Area issues and Land Drainage Consents	Jago Burris
FCRIP Project Manager	Doe Fitzsimmons
FCRIP Project Officer	Gale Alexander
Environment Technician	Vacant
Graduate Flood & Coastal Risk Intern (North Devon, Torridge, West Devon & FCRIP)	Freya Money
Graduate Flood & Coastal Risk Projects Intern	Ruilin Jiao

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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.

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