



Flood Risk Management Team - Planning, Transportation and Environment

Flood Risk Management Vision for Devon

To use viable, sustainable and cooperative approaches to better manage local flood risk for the benefit of the people, property, land and environment of Devon, both now and for the future.

Introduction

In line with the EU Floods Directive, the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 were introduced. Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Devon County Council are established as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). As a result the Flood Risk Management Team has been setup to fulfil a number of new responsibilities.

Duties and Responsibilities

Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)

Under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, Devon County Council has completed a PFRA report, available at www.devon.gov.uk/devonpfra.pdf

This is a high level screening exercise assessing the past, current and future flood risk to identify areas in Devon at high risk of surface water flooding. A number of communities were identified as most at risk including Exeter, Exmouth, Tavistock, Barnstaple, Teignmouth, and Ilfracombe. These areas are now being investigated further through a series of Surface Water Management Plans.

Co-operation and sharing information

Risk management authorities, such as County and District Councils, the Environment Agency, Water Companies and Internal Drainage Boards have a duty under the Act to co-operate and share information with other risk management authorities.

Develop, maintain and apply a strategy for local flood risk management

One of the key responsibilities is for DCC to produce a strategy (scheduled for summer 2013) for dealing with local flood risk. This will encourage more effective risk management by enabling people, communities, business and the public sector to work together to:

- Have a clear understanding of flood risk for business and communities;
- Effectively prioritise investment;
- Create links between local flood risk management and spatial planning;

Flood Investigations

On becoming aware of flood in its area, the LLFA must investigate which risk management authorities are responsible, and if they are responding or proposing to respond to the flood. Results of any investigation must be published and the relevant risk management authorities notified. DCC have produced a number of reports which are available to view at

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/floodriskmanagement/floodriskinfo.htm>



Asset Register and Record

A lead local flood authority must establish and maintain:

1. A register of structures or features which, in the opinion of the authority, are likely to have a significant effect on flood risk in its area, and;
2. A record of information about each of these, including ownership and state of repair.

Ordinary Watercourse Regulation

On 6 April 2012 the responsibility for Ordinary Watercourse regulation transferred from the Environment Agency to Devon County Council.

The Regulation consists of two elements:

1. The issuing of consents for any changes to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an Ordinary Watercourse.
2. Enforcement action to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse. DCC also has powers to ensure the free flow of water is maintained, enabling the county to serve notice on a landowner to remove a blockage.

Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)

It is to be the responsibility of the Lead Local Flood Authority to establish a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This will mean that all new SuDS, serving two or more properties will need to gain approval and be adopted by Devon County Council. This part of the Act is yet to be implemented. Current indications are that this is being considered for commencement in April 2014 at the earliest.

Funding

Defra Grant - Defra have committed to fund all net new burdens placed upon the LLFA following implementation of the Flood and Water Management Act. As a result, a Specific/Special Grant of £548k has been awarded to DCC for 2013/14.

DCC/LLFA - The County Council has also budgeted a further £200k for managing the new responsibilities. This funding is being used to employ dedicated flood risk staff, commission studies and contribute towards the practical delivery of flood defence schemes.

Local Levy – DCC can obtain local levy funds from the EA for carrying out any of the flood and coastal erosion risk management functions within their area.



Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) Funding – Capital funding requests submitted through the EA's annual Medium Term Plan (MTP) will be considered and prioritised at a National level.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Risk Management Authorities (RMAs)

The Flood and Water Management Act also places responsibilities on the other RMA's. The general RMA responsibilities in relation to flood risk and surface water management are outlined below:

The Environment Agency is responsible for managing the risk from the sea, Main Rivers and reservoirs and has a strategic overview role for all flood risk management.

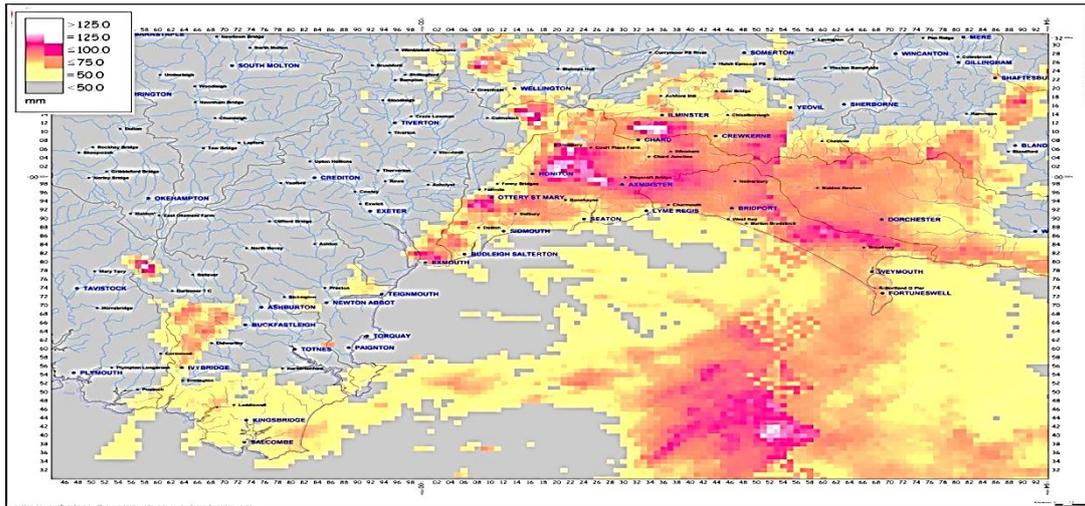
Devon County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority is responsible for overseeing the flood risk from Ordinary Watercourses, groundwater and surface water runoff.

Devon County Council as the Highway Authority is responsible for surface water on the highway and maintaining gullies and culverts to ensure effective highway drainage.

District Councils are classified as land drainage authorities with powers under the Land Drainage Act and the Flood and Water Management Act and Public Health Act.

The Highways Agency is responsible for managing, maintaining and improving the Motorway and trunk roads across England and any associated drainage and flood risk.

Land/Property Owners that have a watercourse in or adjacent to their land have riparian responsibilities on that watercourse.



Extent and Impact of 2012 / 13 Floods

The various storm events in 2012 caused internal flooding to around 937 properties in over 150 locations and considerable damage to the highway network. It is estimated that £12.2m was spent on emergency works to the highway in 2012.

The Authority experienced a number of other very significant impacts to its infrastructure and assets. The July storm resulted in a very major slippage at the redundant landfill at Knapp Copse in East Devon. The dramatic breaching of the Grand Western Canal during the November flood event resulted in major national (and even international) publicity. It was the speed and effectiveness of the immediate response (involving not only DCC staff and contractors, but also the emergency services and the local community) which prevented even more extensive damage and potential flood impacts. £3 million pounds has already been committed by the Authority to the repair of the breach and to future improvements to water management systems within the Canal, with this work already underway with the involvement of Jacobs.

The severe weather and flooding also had significant impacts upon other essential infrastructure, including the much publicised effects on our railway network, damage to flood defence structures and impacts upon other utilities such as water treatment facilities. Environmental impacts (i.e. beyond the breaching of the Grand Western Canal) include the loss of amenity resulting from the closure of many sections of the Coast Path and other public rights of way.

Flood Recovery Group

At the end of the immediate emergency response and relief phases of an emergency, where there is no longer threat to life and property, the responsibility for co-ordination of multi-agency response will transfer from the Police to DCC as lead Local Authority for the remediation and reconstruction of the community. This is in the form of a Flood Recovery Group. Members of the group include all relevant Risk Management Authorities including DCC, EA, the relevant district councils, the police and fire services, South West Water and Network Rail.

Devon County Council's Flood Risk Management Team

To speak to a member of the team contact 01392 382691/ 281897 or email floodrisk@devon.gov.uk