

# Devon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update



## October 2015 Newsletter

Devon's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was published in June 2014, alongside Devon's Action Plan, prioritising investigation and investment for the following financial year. This is the second newsletter update, 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. This edition gives a brief update on Devon's Lead Local Flood Authority Role since the last update in April 2015 in addition to how Devon and its Partners are fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as Risk Management Authorities.

### DCC Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team

As of 1st October 2015 Devon County Council's Flood Risk Management Team has taken the lead on coastal policy matters relating to the County Council and will become the Flood and Coastal Risk Management Team. The various roles have been shared amongst the team to maintain a level of coastal input and ensure continued representation at the different coastal groups. Devon County Council recognises the importance of the coast and seas around Devon to its communities and will continue to support discussion, leading to action, with key players both here in Devon and further afield.

### DCC Action Plan and Defra 6 year programme

The annual Action Plan and entries on the Defra's 6 year programme as part of the Local Choices process has allowed us to align our future priorities with potential funding from the Local Levy, administered by the South West Regional Flood and Coastal committee (SWRFCC). This will allow us to maximise Partnership Funding in order to give our business cases for flood hit communities the best chance of success. The current DCC Action Plan can be found [here](#).

### Partnership working



Axminster Phase 1 works

Partnership working forms a large part of successful development and delivery of Flood Improvement Schemes throughout Devon. With this in mind we are continuing to work closely with a number of partner organisations on a variety of schemes throughout the county. A recent study to understand the level of flood risk for future development opportunities in Barnstaple was undertaken in partnership between DCC and North Devon Council. This has highlighted the need to adopt a strategic approach for achieving the required funding, through various sources, such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and enable future development aspirations to be unlocked. Other examples include joint working with South West Water to investigate flood risk in Exmouth, Old Feniton and Stoke Flemming and also Network Rail and the Environment Agency as part of the Axminster Phase 2 flood improvement scheme.

Similarly, there is ongoing progress in the delivery of the Exeter Flood Scheme through our partnership with the Environment Agency and Exeter City Council; here, tenders are shortly to be sought for the phase 2 works. Through our collaboration with the Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area, consideration is being given to the use of land management practices to reduce flood risk.

## Flood Improvement Projects

We have been working closely with colleagues in the Devon County Council Engineering Design Group to develop flood improvement schemes for Braunton and phase 2 of the Axminster scheme. These are two projects that we are actively pushing forward to start on site early 2016 with detailed design, negotiation with stakeholders and funding bids for Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) currently being developed and finalised. Collectively, both schemes aim to reduce the risk of flooding to over 250 properties, which would be a significant outcome.

Other schemes including Modbury, Ivybridge and Stokeinteignhead are currently being progressed in order to ensure that a robust solution can be found to maximise the standard of protection that can be offered.

A quick win has also been installed in Stokeinteignhead in the form of a new silt trap that will reduce the amount of stone entering the highway drainage system. This stone has historically blocked the system and exacerbated the flooding, so its interception should give an immediate benefit to the area.



Braunton – December 2012 floods

## Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP)

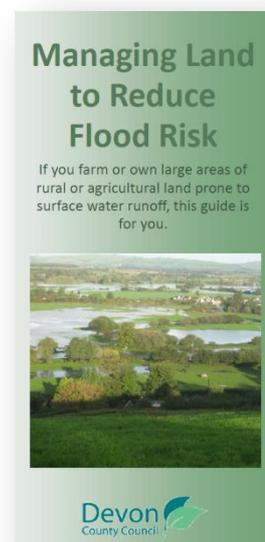
The final draft of the SWMP for Ilfracombe is under review for its imminent publishing and the final draft for Exeter is due by the end of October. The completed Braunton SWMP has formed a substantial part of the business case for scheme development and similarly the recently completed SWMP for Sidmouth will be used to develop improvement proposals in that area.

New surface water drainage assessments, as recommended in the Devon strategic SWMP, are being commenced in Ottery St Mary, Teignmouth, Shaldon and Newton Abbot. These will be targeted in specific areas and not on the same scale as a full SWMP.

Copies of the completed SWMPs can be found on our [website](#).

## Managing Land to Reduce Flood Risk

The Strategy document outlined flood risk issues associated with soil conditions where erosion and surface runoff can cause localised flooding and pollution. A handy leaflet has now been produced summarising how land owners can work with their land to reduce flood risk and also gives information on where to go for advice. This is also accompanied by a supporting document to expand on these issues. Both include best practice methods for reducing soil erosion and runoff, in addition to managing and slowing down overland flows through the use of ponds, planting woodland and vegetation amongst other soft engineering methods. These will be available [here](#) on our website and the leaflet will be available as a hard copy to distribute to local Councillors, Parishes and land owners.



## Devon's Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) Role

After Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act was repealed in April 2015, Devon County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, is now the statutory consultee for new major developments which have surface water drainage implications. Two members of the team are now dedicated to address this responsibility and have so far commented on nearly 200 planning applications. Their aim is to ensure that all major developments are designed to sustainably manage surface water and alleviate flood risk whilst providing benefits to water quality, biodiversity and public amenity.

The team has also begun to write local SuDS guidance for the public, developers and District Council Planners, and will run training sessions for the local authorities to ensure that a baseline understanding of SuDS is achieved across Devon. This is a very important time for the team as it represents an opportunity to make a real change to the design and appearance of major developments across the county and to ensure that flood risk is considered by applicants from the outset.

On July 10th a developer day was held at Exeter Racecourse, attended by over 120 people including housing developers, consultants, specialist suppliers, Planning Officers and Engineers. This event was used to provide an update to the recent changes in legislation and present our draft SuDS Guidance which sets out our expectations for the design, construction and maintenance of SuDS. Presentations were given by Highways, the Environment Agency and South West Water which outlined their approach to SuDS. The event was closed with a presentation from Royal Haskoning DHV on a strategic SuDS solution in North Somerset where 'super ponds' have been utilised in an area prone to flooding to open up development land opportunities.

The latest DCC SuDS guidance can be found on our [website](#).



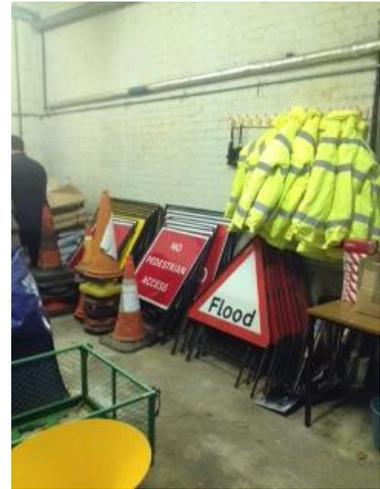
SuDS – The Devon Way: DCC SuDS Developer day, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

## Devon Pathfinder project Final Report

The Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder final report is now available on the [DCC website](#).

The DEFRA funded project was delivered as a partnership between Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council, Torbay Council and was supported by the Environment Agency. The funding went towards a package of measures to improve local community resilience so that they are better prepared against the risk of flooding. Quite often simple actions by householders and communities can significantly reduce local vulnerability and the level of any damages from flood events.

- The project helped 26 communities small and large across Devon as can be seen on the displays at the back.
- The project helped create 14 new flood groups. 17 community flood plans or emergency plans were drawn up and tested by the communities themselves.
- All of the 26 Pathfinder communities now receive flood warnings either from a community owned local flood warning system or from the Environment Agency Flood warning service. The project paid for the installation of 31 flood warning systems in the form of telemetered river or rain gauges. Half of them are actually community owned and the associated local flood groups have been trained on how to use them.
- Finally 18 communities have now trained flood wardens which equates to about 120 people in total.



Through working together with the support of local agencies and authorities, communities have been empowered to take action for themselves. These communities have been able to work with flood risk officers from DCC, highways officers, emergency planning officers, district engineers, the Environment Agency and the emergency responders.

The project has witnessed incredible community spirit as people worked together to make their neighbourhoods more resilient to flooding.

As part of the legacy of the project, DCC together with the Police, Fire Service, Environment Agency, Plymouth and Torbay Councils, District Councils, Devon Communities Together and the Devon Association of Local Councils have joined forces to form [The Devon Community Resilience Forum](#). The aim of the Forum is to work with communities and individuals to harness local resources and expertise, to help plan how to prepare, respond and recover from events such as flooding.

## The Devon Community Resilience Forum

Key agencies and organisations across Devon: the Police, Fire Service, Environment Agency, Devon County Council, Plymouth and Torbay Councils, District Councils, Devon Communities Together and the Devon Association of Local Councils have come together to form The Devon Community Resilience Forum.

The aim of the Forum is to work with communities and individuals to harness local resources and expertise, to help plan how to prepare, respond and recover from events such as flooding either alongside the Emergency Services, or in the absence of Emergency Services

due to abnormal conditions. The forum is also bringing together community representatives and practitioners to consider key resilience issues and provide communities with advice and support.

Devon Communities Together because of its wide experience of working with local communities and a wide range of resilience issues are managing the Forum and are hosting its website which provides supporting materials, such as a Community Emergency Plan template, guidance and case studies.

For more information please go to The Devon Community Resilience Forum link.

There will be two Devon Community Resilience Forum events every year, comprising talks, workshops and a marketplace for resilience products you will be able to seek from the opportunity to network with fellow communities, to share ideas, lessons learned and mutual support.

All town and parish councils, community groups and interested individuals are welcome.

The first event will be on the 10th November 2015, 9am to 5pm at FINGLE GLEN GOLF RESORT, TEDBURN ST. MARY, NR. EXETER, EX6 6AF. To book a place: call 01392 248919 or [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)

## Devon Community Resilience Forum



### 28 September 2015- Councillors Event - Working towards Community Flood Resilience

County and District Councillors met at Devon County Hall on the 28th of September to discuss Community Flood Resilience issues and how to disseminate the message and mobilise communities. Understanding flood risks, the need for flood resilience and how it can work at a community level is key and was the focus of the event. DCC is keen support this effort and hoped to equip councillors with additional knowledge regarding the role of various agencies and emergency services and understanding the recovery process. It was also an opportunity to share the learning from the DEFRA funded pathfinder project working with 24 Devon communities. A wide range of flood related professionals were there to answer your questions such as Fire & Rescue Service, DCC Emergency Planning, Highways and the Flood Risk Management team.



Working towards Community Resilience event at County Hall, Exeter

## 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.

## Case Study: Barnstaple Flood Defence Improvements

Flood Risk Management has taken the lead on a joint study between DCC, North Devon Council and the Environment Agency to evaluate the current and future flood risks in Barnstaple.

The aim of the study was to evaluate how the production of a flood defence improvement strategy could be developed for the next 60 to 100 years that could enable future redevelopment of housing and employment sites that are currently situated on land blighted by future flood risk due to climate change and rising sea levels. This would in turn promote economic development and raise employment opportunities as well as revitalising and regenerating the northern part of the town.

Following the tender process JBA Consulting was commissioned by Devon County Council to investigate potential solutions to address future flood risk in Barnstaple. The following six month study has assessed future flooding over the lifetime of development, which is 60 years for commercial uses and 100 years for residential uses.

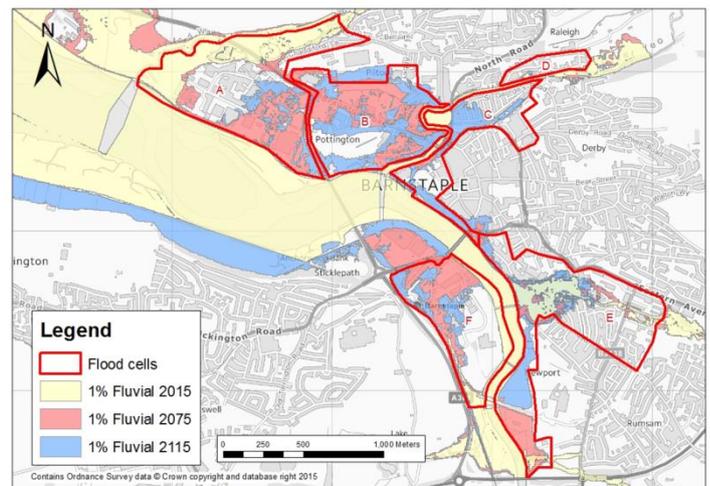
The study has explored a variety of conceptual options and determined preferred option(s) for different flood cells within the town. These included the raising of existing embankments and flood walls, raising of the highway on the north side of the Taw bridge and alterations in the alignment of the River Yeo through Pilton Park.

Estimated cost of the options were then weighed up against the potential benefits in the reduction of flood risk in order to give a time line of when measures should be implemented.

The study drew to a close in early July following a presentation made to County and District Councillors up in Barnstaple. The next steps are to agree a strategy in order to raise the funds required to allow the improved defences to be built when needed over the coming 100years.

The project has been a great example of DCC taking the lead and working in partnership with other local government authorities.

***We have included a case study detailing a local project in this issue and intend to do so in future editions. If you would like us to include your local community in any future case studies, please contact us with further information.***



Existing and future flood risk for Barnstaple

# 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 sandbag supplies.



Longbrook Street, Exeter, October 2014