

STAFFORDSHIRE LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2024 Update

Action Plan

FINAL VERSION

This action plan sets out both County wide measures and specific actions which we will pursue to mitigate and reduce the risk of flooding within Staffordshire.

Our ability to deliver these actions will be influenced by the availability of funding from government and other sources. To mitigate this risk, we will continue to explore opportunities for further collaborative working within Staffordshire County Council and with other Risk Management Authorities and organisations.

We have taken a proportionate approach to focus effort and investment to deliver actions where they will be most effective. Some measures will be most effective where they are developed over the long term and delivered across the whole county. For example, policy or education measures work best at this scale. Some measures, however, may be location specific and will work best when delivered at a ward, parish, or community scale.

Table 1 describes the general, long term or policy measures that we have put in place to achieve the five objectives. There are several measures already being delivered that will reduce or manage flood risk, and these have been indicated in the table. The Action Plan sets out how and when we will deliver these actions and an annual monitoring report will be produced.

The Action Plan includes:

- Objective: the relevant LFRMS objective
- Actions to be taken to deliver our objective
- Partners to deliver the action
- Status:
 - **Continue** to carry out existing role in the future
 - **Develop** and expand upon existing roles or increase existing service area
 - **Establish** a new role or service area
 - **Achieved**: action is already achieved
- Timescale for delivering the action

The activities mentioned in this plan will be reviewed every 12 months by Staffordshire County Council Officers, and who will publish an annual statement about how the LFRMS is being implemented.

Table 1: Actions to be taken to deliver the five main Local Flood Risk Management Strategy objectives

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
1. Improve our understanding of flood risk and be prepared for flood events	Identify key communities at risk by using an approach that aims to map communities at various appropriate scales to their flood risk	Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to lead	Establish	Ongoing – to complete in 2024
	Investigate flooding incidents, working with all RMAs and local communities. Keep flood incident data up to date and share this information with other RMAs	LLFA to lead	Continue	Ongoing
	Extend Section 19 investigations to include frequent internal property flooding to one or more properties	LLFA to lead	Establish	Complete
	Produce a refined procedure to allow a fairer approach to triage flood investigations	LLFA to lead	Develop	To complete in 2024
	Produce local flood risk management plans for high priority locations that identify the key partners, the levels of flood risk and what actions can be taken at a local level. Each plan to have own Habitats Risk Assessment.	LLFA to lead	Establish	To be developed in line with Objective 4

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	<p>Improve evidence, information, and mapping and modelling tools to better understand the risks of flooding and support improved decision-making and greater resilience. Make flood risk information more accessible, taking account of social and technological change and opportunities, such as the increasingly widespread use of social media</p>	<p>Environment Agency to lead for Main River LLFA to lead for surface water, Ordinary Watercourses and groundwater</p>	<p>Develop</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Work with the Environment Agency to implement the Humber Flood Risk Management Plan and Severn Flood Risk Management Plan and update the Staffordshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment</p>	<p>LLFA to lead on PFRA LLFA to work with Environment Agency on Humber FRMP</p>	<p>Develop</p>	<p>Expected to be published by EA in 2024</p>
	<p>Work with the Staffordshire Local Flood Resilience Forum to increase flood preparedness, response and recovery planning, including the delivery of strategic and operational flood exercises where practical. This also includes working with partners to improve communications and advice given during a flood event</p>	<p>LLFA, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, United Utilities</p>	<p>Continue</p>	<p>Ongoing and monitored through a joint LLFA work plan with regular meetings</p>
	<p>Support the Local Resilience Forum to plan for, respond to, and recover from flood events. The Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) co-ordinates all partners that have a role in preparing for, responding to, and recovery from emergencies, including flooding. Their work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the Multi-Agency Flood Plan (MAFP) • Producing Tactical and Community Flood Plans • Using flood risk data from LLFA and EA to risk assess flooding in Staffordshire and publicise on Staffordshire Community Risk Register (reviewed quarterly) 	<p>Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum</p>	<p>Continue</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency exercising of response to flood events – currently biannual Supporting actions of LRF partners to prepare for and respond to flood events (ongoing) and Providing warning and informing to the public (as and when appropriate) 			
	<p>Work with local communities to develop Local Flood Action Plans, seeking community involvement in local monitoring and maintenance of assets. This includes engaging with communities to raise awareness of the drainage assets in their area to ensure they are better prepared for future flood events. Each Plan to have own Habitats Regulation Assessment.</p>	LLFA	Continue	Timescales linked to FAIR project (Objective 4).
	<p>Maintain, and where possible, seek to improve accuracy of flood forecasting and warning where these services currently exist. Investigate the feasibility of expanding the forecasting and warning service in communities at high fluvial flood risk where no service currently exists</p>	Environment Agency	Develop	Long term. Links to FAIR Project (Objective 4).
2. Manage Flood Risk and new development in a sustainable manner	<p>Ensure that plans are put in place once the thresholds, processes, timescales, and scope relating to the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 are known</p>	LLFA	Establish	2024 pending SAB announcement
	<p>Consider, and if necessary, publish another revision to the Strategy if Schedule 3 of Flood and Water Management Act is to be implemented</p>	LLFA	Establish	2024 pending SAB announcement
	<p>Support the development of sustainable rural communities by helping to make businesses more resilient to flooding and supporting the Staffordshire Rural Strategy</p>	LLFA	Continue	Ongoing

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Seek the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) wherever possible within new developments, by developing the resources, processes, systems, guidance and documents needed as Statutory Consultees on surface water drainage	LLFA to lead, working with Local Planning Authorities and other consultees including the Environment Agency, IDB and water companies	Continue	Ongoing
	Keep the SuDS handbook up-to-date and ensure developers and their agents comply with this. Link to this: Staffordshire SuDS Handbook	LLFA	Continue	Ongoing
	Regarding SuDS, respond to planning applications within 21 days as Statutory Consultee and encourage developers, statutory consultees and local planning teams to work closely with the LLFA from the outset since sustainable drainage systems will have a bearing on site layout	LLFA	Continue	Ongoing
	Regarding river flood risk, respond to planning applications within 21 days as Statutory Consultee to avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood and coastal erosion risk and seek opportunities to reduce existing and future flood risk through new and future development plans	Environment Agency	Continue	Ongoing
	Work with Local Planning Authorities to assist with the development of planning policies, site allocations and identification of future infrastructure needs. Ensure both restraints and opportunities are considered	LLFA, Environment Agency, United Utilities, Severn Trent, IDBs	Continue	Ongoing, Local Planning Authorities in Staffordshire are at different stages in developing these
	Work with local communities to support the development of Neighbourhood Plans	LLFA, Environment Agency	Continue	Ongoing

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Work with developers and Local Planning Authorities to secure appropriate connections to the sewer network, taking account of sewer flooding issues	Severn Trent, United Utilities	Continue	Ongoing
	Respond as a non-statutory consultee to planning applications where relevant and where resources allow	Sow and Penk IDB	Continue	Ongoing
	Work with Highways Partners through the Strategic Infrastructure Plan to ensure flood risk and sustainable development are incorporated and integrated with wider County interests	LLFA	Establish	Ongoing
3. Seek and secure funding for flood alleviation schemes and work with partners	Work in partnership with other RMAs to deliver flood alleviation schemes on a six-year rolling programme. Each scheme to have own Habitats Regulation Assessment and an initial desk-based ecological assessment.	LLFA, Environment Agency lead	Continue	Ongoing
	Maximise external fundraising opportunities for all projects allowing for more flood risk management projects to be delivered in the long term. This includes contributing to local strategic growth initiatives such as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This can be developed through a funding strategy for each scheme.	LLFA, Environment Agency	Establish	Ongoing relating to scheme progress in the six-year programme
	Work with local communities to develop Flood Alleviation Schemes, where feasible, that meet local needs and integrate wider benefits where possible for the community e.g. environmental enhancements, supporting the rural economy. This will be developed through a Communication Plan for each Flood Alleviation Scheme	LLFA, Environment Agency	Continue	Ongoing relating to scheme progress in the six year programme

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Work with other RMAs in partnership where there are interactions with the sewer network to deliver schemes on a five-year rolling programme through the Asset Management Plan cycle (currently AMP7 2020-2025)	Severn Trent, United Utilities lead	Continue	Ongoing
	Raise awareness of the roles of all RMAs Authorities and work in partnership with others to take a joined up and risk-based approach to flood risk management	LLFA, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, United Utilities, Sow and Penk IDB, District and Borough Councils, Highways Authorities	Develop	Ongoing
	Support the delivery of the County Council's Climate Change Strategy and work with other RMAs to support the delivery of their climate change objectives	LLFA	Develop	Ongoing
	Work with Infrastructure Plus, the Councils Highways Delivery Partnership to integrate programmes of work	LLFA	Develop	Ongoing and monitored through a joint work plan with regular meetings
	Work with professional partners and ensure activities mitigate and enhance environmental aspects. Such activities should have due reference to the SEA & HRA accompanying the Strategy summarised in Appendix B.	LLFA, Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England	Continue	Ongoing
	Work with partners to understand opportunities for better natural flood management (NFM)	LLFA, Environment Agency, Natural England, Severn Trent, United Utilities	Continue	Ongoing
	Work with landowners, communities, Parish Councils, Wildlife Trusts, the National Farmers Union (NFU), Country Land and Business Association (CLA) and other similar organisations to promote changes in agricultural land management practices, which can improve water	LLFA, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, United Utilities	Develop	Ongoing

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	<p>quality, reduce the impact of flooding, and provide opportunities to incorporate ecological benefits.</p> <p>This can be undertaken on a case-by-case basis, through specific RMAs work programmes and seeking to deliver a Staffordshire Natural Flood Management (NFM) Project.</p> <p>Any plans or projects arising from this work to have own Habitats Regulations Assessment.</p>			
4. Work with others to ensure communities are more aware, informed, and resilient to flooding	<p>Support communities at risk in fast responding catchments prone to flash flooding through identification of Rapid Response High Risk Surface Water Catchments and Rapid Response Catchments for River Flooding and follow up actions</p>	<p>Rapid Response High Risk Surface Water Catchments led by LLFA</p> <p>Rapid Response River catchments led by Environment Agency</p>	Continue	Ongoing
	<p>Support the development of sustainable rural communities by helping to make businesses more resilient to flooding and supporting the Staffordshire Rural Strategy</p>	LLFA	Develop	Ongoing
	<p>Engage with communities to raise awareness of the drainage assets in their area to be better prepared for future flood events.</p> <p>Encourage communities to take a more pro-active role in flood monitoring and maintenance works</p>	LLFA	Develop	Ongoing
	<p>Work with flood risk partners to engage local communities on sewer misuse (which causes many sewer flooding issues)</p>	United Utilities, Severn Trent, LLFA	Continue	Ongoing

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Work with Parishes and Councillors to improve understanding of flood risk and to assist with community resilience and wider stakeholder engagement	Parishes, Councillors	Develop	Plan to be scoped in 2024
	Work with partners to deliver a joined-up programme of Property Level Resilience measures where viable	United Utilities, Severn Trent, LLFA, EA	Continue	Ongoing
	Trial rainfall alerts in certain areas linked to community plans that enable communities to be better able to prepare and respond to flooding	LLFA	Establish	Ongoing
	Secure central government funding for FAIR innovation project	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	Complete
	Agree and implement the board structure for FAIR Project (Strategic and Operational Board)	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	Complete
	Develop a web interface for all sources of flood risk that covers Staffordshire	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	Beta website complete and to be developed in 2024/2025.

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Scope options to improve communications for flooding from all sources	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	To be completed in 2024
	Actively engage with key communities at risk in Staffordshire to bring about innovative solutions working with communities and relevant organisations to make them more resilient	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	Started 2023 and complete in 2027
	Trial surface water forecasting in certain areas	LLFA, other LLFAs, and Environment Agency	Establish	To start 2024 and complete by 2027
	Expand Community Flood Plans working particularly with the CCU to ensure this work aligns with their tasks to establish community flood plans and tactical flood plans	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	To start in 2023 and complete in 2027
	Install Machine Learning linked to forecasting to improve automation of flood risk activities linked to debris screens	LLFA to lead with Environment Agency, Civil Contingencies Unit, other LLFAs, third sector, universities.	Establish	To start 2024 and complete by 2027
	Recruit new Flood risk Engagement and Delivery team	LLFA to lead with other LLFAs working with third sector and universities	Establish	Completed
5. Promote effective management of drainage and flood defence assets	Use permissive powers to manage the watercourse network, by consenting to works, taking a risk-based approach to enforcing landowner responsibilities, and raising awareness about these responsibilities. Any plans or projects arising from this work to have own Habitats Regulation Assessment.	LLFA, Environment Agency, Sow and Penk IDB, District and Borough Councils, Highways Authorities	Continue	Ongoing

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Update and improve the Asset Register, establish regimes to share information with other RMAs. Gain an improved understanding of the interactions between the various drainage systems and the condition and location of historic assets, particularly culverted watercourses. The register should integrate into existing Council systems and be used to work with local communities and other RMAs to inform future inspections, maintenance, and investment needs	LLFA	Continue	Annual updates to Project Plan
	Minimise the risk of flooding to properties by maintaining current levels of flood risk management within areas at risk of flooding from Main Rivers that already benefit from river flood defences, subject to available funding. Continue appropriate levels of river and watercourse maintenance, subject to available funding	Environment Agency	Develop	Ongoing
	Maintain the public sewer network. The water companies maintain their system on a planned and cyclical basis and also respond reactively where there are issues, such as blocked sewers	Water Companies (Severn Trent, United Utilities)	Develop	Ongoing and monitored through a joint work plan with regular meetings
	Maintain the Ordinary Watercourse network in the Sow and Penk IDB area around Stafford as appropriate	Sow & Penk IDB	Develop	Ongoing
	Work with the Staffordshire Local Flood Resilience Forum to inform flood preparedness, response, and recovery planning, including the delivery of strategic and operational flood exercises where practical. This also includes working with partners to improve communications and advice given during a flood event	LLFA, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, United Utilities	Continue	Ongoing and monitored through a joint LLFA work plan with regular meetings

Objective	Actions to be taken to deliver our objective	Partners	Status	Timescale
	Work with others to better understand the flood risks from reservoirs.	LLFA, Environment Agency, Severn Trent, United Utilities, District and Borough Councils, Local Resilience Forum, Civils Contingency Unit	Establish	Ongoing