

Drainage & Flooding Team

The Drainage & Flooding Team carries out the functions of the Lead Local Flood Authority for B&NES

Background

The aim of Drainage & Flooding Team is to provide a single point of service to the authority and residents who may not be aware of the previous distinction between highway and land drainage services.

Highway Maintenance and Drainage Engineers work closely together to ensure that the Council's combined drainage function operates effectively.

The list below outlines the responsibilities and activities for local authorities arising from the Flood and Water Management Act. as a LLFA

- Take a lead role on flood risk management.
- Be responsible for local flood risk assessment, mapping and planning ordinary
 - 1 watercourses,
 - 2 surface run-off
 - 3 groundwater.
- Lead the production of local surface water management plans and agree associated programs of work.
- Responsibility for Consent to works on Ordinary Watercourses.
- Obtain information from other bodies to inform the above work.
- Map local flood risk assets and associated ownership.
- Take a lead role in planning and managing flooding events, including reservoir flooding, should they occur.
- Lead local partnerships.
- Have powers to designate features (natural or man-made) to help manage flood risk.

The requirements of the Act can be broadly divided into pro-active planning and re-active response activities. The emphasis of management should be prevention rather than a re-active response, which is reflected in the fact that many of the proposed requirements focus on improving knowledge of flood risk and forward planning. Knowing with some certainty where problems are likely to occur will inevitably improve planning for, and responding to, flooding events.

Knowledge of where flooding occurs is generated by unplanned events and planned research. Effective management of this knowledge enables the service to move its focus from unplanned activity into planned activity.

Management Structure

The emphasis is on routine maintenance, partnership working, the design and implementation of minor and major schemes to resolve or mitigate flooding problems.

To achieve this, we have set up a management structure which separates strategic and operational roles. The strategic activity is overseen by a **Strategic Flood Board** and the operational activity will be managed by **Operational Flood Working Group**. Local problems to which there are routine solutions (such as emptying gullies or clearing ditches, general maintenance) will be dealt with by the Area Highway Inspector. Local problems for which a designed solution is required will be dealt with by Land and Highway Drainage Engineers. Some problems within a town or parish may require the establishment of a Parish Flood Working Group, supported by Land and Highway Drainage Engineers which will engage with partner agencies as necessary. When complex problems cross town or parish boundaries, these will be referred to the relevant Operational Flood Working Group.

Strategic Flood Board

The Strategic Flood Board covers all of Bath and North East Somerset.

The Strategic Flood Board will be chaired by elected Councillors. Secretariat to the groups is provided by the Drainage & Flooding Team and reports back to them on programmes of schemes and budget expenditure. Stakeholder membership includes the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and Canal Trust are also members of the group.

The terms of reference of these Groups are to:

- Bring together all professional partners to consider issues relating to flooding and drainage within their respective river catchment areas.
- Identify lead authorities for each issue to better co-ordinate response and to target resources most effectively.
- Make recommendations and submit bids for funding for major schemes.
- Consider proposals for prioritising funding and programming of schemes.
- Influence the development of Bath and North East Somerset Council policy on drainage and flood management.
- Implement government legislation on drainage and flood management.
- Respond to community in respect of flooding issues.
- Encourage town and parish councils to adopt an “initial self help” strategy by developing flood plans and flood wardens.
- To publicise the work of the group to the wider general public and encourage homeowners to adopt a self help strategy by installing property flood defences and draft up individual flood plans.

Each group meets bi monthly, but this could vary according to workload.

Operational Flood Working Group

The membership of the Operational Flood Working Group will include representatives of the following Bath and North East Somerset Council Services:

- Highway Maintenance and Drainage
- Business Continuity and Emergency Planning
- Strategic Planning
- The Environment Agency
- Wessex Water

It can also include representation from a local flood rep who will explain in greater detail the flooding issue in their area...

The work of the Operational Flood Working Group will include:

- Developing, agreeing and communicating the Bath and North East Somerset Flood and Drainage Strategy.
- Monitoring the delivery of the Strategy.
- Overseeing the readiness for flood emergency response.
- Authorising major schemes and block resources for minor schemes.
- Receiving reports from the Operational Flood Working Groups.

Combined Action Plan

An Action Plan will be drawn up for communities most at risk of flooding as identified in the LFRMS and the SWMP to allow us to meet the objective set out in the documents.

Reported Highway Drainage & Land Drainage

Reported incidents are prioritised at monthly drainage meetings to produce a programme of works. The priorities are assessed against the following criteria:

- (i) Property flooding .
- (ii) Highway flooding / infrastructure.
- (iii) Land flooding.
- (iv) Agricultural land flooding.

Other Funding

The Drainage & Flooding Team regularly review proposed schemes with a view to applying to nationally available grants for flood mitigation work. Such as the EA administered Flood Defense Grant in Aid .

Outside Agencies

The Environment Agency and the Water companies have their own budgets for flood management.