

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy – Non-technical summary

As Lead Local Flood Authority, Herefordshire Council’s aim is to continually improve the way in which flood risks are managed throughout the county to reduce the impacts of flooding on lives and livelihoods. The Roles and Responsibilities of key flood risk management authorities in Herefordshire are outlined below:

Roles and Responsibilities:

Table 1: Responsibilities of key flood risk management authorities in Herefordshire

Source of flooding	Environment Agency	Herefordshire Council	Welsh Water and Severn Trent Water	Internal Drainage Boards
Main Rivers	✓			
Ordinary Watercourses		✓		✓*
Surface Water Runoff		✓		
Highway Assets		✓		
Public Sewerage System			✓	
Groundwater		✓		
Reservoirs	✓			

*IDB maintained watercourses

A detailed summary of Flood Risk in Herefordshire is available through review of the Environment Agency’s Indicative Flood Map and the Council’s [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) and [Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment](#) (PFRA).

The [Environment Agency](#) (EA) is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion throughout England which includes operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers and reservoirs, also for flood forecasting and flood warning. The [Environment Agency](#) is also responsible for issuing levies to local authorities to support the implementation of flood defence schemes and managing the allocation of funding for flood defence and flood resilience schemes.

As Lead Local Flood Authority, [Herefordshire Council](#) is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from local sources of flood risk, namely surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (any watercourse that is not designated as a main river). The Council are also responsible for managing the flood risk associated with highway assets in the Council’s ownership (excluding any trunk roads managed by Highways England).

The Council is also the main Land Drainage Authority and is therefore responsible for issuing consents for altering, removing or replacing certain structures or features on ordinary watercourses that are not under the responsibility of the relevant IDB. The Council also play a lead role in emergency planning and recovery after a flood event.

The water and sewage authorities (in Herefordshire’s case, [Welsh Water](#) and [Severn Trent Water](#)) are responsible for managing the flood risks of flooding from surface water, foul or combined public sewerage systems that serve more than one property.

Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) (for Herefordshire, [River Lugg IDB](#) and [Lower Severn IDB](#)) are responsible for the maintenance of the land drainage assets within the low-lying land with their respective catchments. They are responsible for issuing consents for altering, removing or replacing certain structures or features on ordinary watercourses within their districts.

Landowners which own land through which an ordinary watercourse or main river flows are the responsible riparian owners for the watercourse. The Environment Agency have developed a guide entitled '*Living on the Edge*' that provides specific advice regarding the rights and responsibilities of riparian landowners. Herefordshire Council has also published a useful guide of riparian ownership responsibilities named '*Ditch Guidelines*', which is available on the Council website.

Other Local Stakeholders (*Highways England* and *Network Rail*) are responsible for managing flood risks that are associated with or may affect their assets.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out how the Council are approaching flood risk management to meet the **5 key objectives**. The measures set out by Herefordshire Council within this local Strategy are compatible with the Environment Agency's National Strategy.

Objective 1: Understand Flood Risks in Herefordshire

In order to continue to improve the understanding of flood risk throughout the county, the Council will continue to record and investigate flooding events as well as continue to improve understanding of flood risk through the completion of flood management studies.

The Council proposes to improve the way in which flooding events are recorded to meet the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act. The Council also proposes to improve the sharing of data between key flood risk management authorities.

The Council proposes to investigate all 'significant' flood events that occur within Herefordshire in line with the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act to better understand the causes and effects of flooding and identify the need for further action. The investigations completed by the Council will be made available to other flood risk management authorities, stakeholders and the public.

Objective 2: Manage the likelihood and impacts of flooding

The activities required to meet this Objective comprise a mixture of maintaining current asset management practices and flood management works, as well as proposed improvements to these existing systems.

The Council will maintain regular communication with relevant Council departments and other flood risk management authorities. The Council will also maintain the register of assets that are within the Council's ownership and strive to include assets within private ownership which are considered to have a significant effect on a flood risk, in addition to continuing to undertake both proactive and reactive maintenance of these assets. The Council will also develop a clear method of prioritising those communities that are considered to be at greatest risk and prioritise the most appropriate measure for managing flood risks.

The Council will implement a clear and transparent system for the prioritisation of areas that are considered to be at greatest risk of flooding or that may experience the greatest consequences should a flood event occur. This will take into consideration the vulnerability of those at risk, multifaceted opportunities to coordinate with other flood risk management authorities, and the support of the local community.

Objective 3: Help the Community Help Themselves

Local communities play an essential role in the management of flood risk, thus raising awareness of community responsibilities and opportunities is an essential part of the Council's Strategy for flood risk management throughout Herefordshire.

Responsibilities and opportunities that can be explored to achieve the aims of this objective will include:

- Raising awareness of riparian ownership responsibilities;
- Encouraging local communities that are at risk of flooding to form, join or support a local Community Resilience group;
- Raise awareness of what to do in the event of a flood and how flooding events should be reported;
- Raise awareness of how local communities can better protect their properties.

Objective 4: Manage Flood Warning, Response and Recovery

Herefordshire Council will continue to implement existing processes for flood warning, response and recovery in collaboration with other relevant organisations and authorities.

The Council will also seek ways to improve their own activities prior to, during and after a flood event to reduce the risk to Herefordshire communities both now and in the future. This will include investigation of initiatives such as improved communication during a flood event through better use of the council and national websites, and comparing river gauge data with anecdotal evidence to better predict local issues.

Objective 5: Promote Sustainable and Appropriate Development

A risk-based approach must be taken when selecting sites for development and deciding on the type of development that would be considered acceptable. To promote sustainable and appropriate development, the Council will utilise the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plans to ensure that local and national policies are taken into account within the planning application and approval process (including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems).

All development can assist in the reduction of flood risk, either to the development itself or to people and property elsewhere. The Council encourage all new development to go beyond what is considered 'minimum requirements' and instead explore opportunities for 'best practice'.

Herefordshire Council will work collaboratively through the Natural Flood Management Partnership for the River Lugg and Wye to deliver the Wye Nutrient Management Plan and influence land use and management practices to reduce the risk of flooding and to deliver wider environmental benefits.

In addition the Council will work with landowners, communities, Town and Parish Councils NFU, CLA and other similar organisations to promote changes in agricultural land management practices, which can reduce the impact of flooding and provide opportunities to incorporate wider benefits.