



Medway Flood Partnership Action Plan Launch

The Medway catchment

The Medway catchment includes all land draining into the Rivers Medway, Beult, Teise and Eden as well their tributaries. Over 9,000 properties across the Medway catchment are at risk of river flooding.

The Leigh Flood Storage Area was built following the flood in 1968 to reduce the risk of flooding to 1,200 homes and businesses in Tonbridge. Hildenborough and East Peckham are also significant populated areas at risk of flooding from the River Medway. Yalding and Collier Street sit at the confluence of the Rivers Beult, Teise and Medway. This makes managing flood risk particularly challenging for these communities as they have the potential to flood from any or all of these rivers. Flooding is a frequent occurrence, for example an event giving flood depths of over a metre occurs in Yalding roughly every 10 years.

During the December 2013 flood event, approximately 965 homes were flooded across the Medway catchment, devastating peoples' homes and livelihoods.

Since the 2013 flood the Environment Agency and its partners have spent over £9.8million managing flood risk around the catchment. In addition, partners have been investing in maintenance of river channels and supporting community preparedness and capacity building.

Traditionally flood risk management has referred to investing in new or improving existing flood defences. Whilst engineered flood solutions have an important role to play, they cannot always prevent flooding and aren't always suitable. Equally, they are not the only way to manage flood risk. Natural flood management offers opportunities to slow the flow of floodwaters and reduce flood levels. And community resilience and preparedness can speed up the recovery time for individuals and communities after flooding.

This will require a joint, partnership approach to ensure we are prioritising and communicating with the relevant local stakeholders.

Medway Flood Partnership

To address this we established a Medway Flood Partnership in January 2017. The Medway Flood Partnership is bringing together local partners, national agencies, non-governmental organisations and community representatives to develop and deliver a Medway Flood Action Plan. The Partnership involves senior representatives and practitioners from all the partner organisations and is being chaired by Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Director for Kent, South London and East Sussex.

The Partnership members are:

Country Land and Business Association
Forestry Commission
Kent Association of Local Councils
Maidstone Borough Council
Natural England
South East Rivers Trust
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board

Environment Agency
Joint Parish Flood Group
Kent County Council
National Farmers Union
Sevenoaks District Council
Southern Water
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council



Map of the Medway Flood Partnership area

The Partnership has agreed the following objectives:

- Develop a shared understanding of the strategic challenges and opportunities within the catchment and the need for collaboration to address them
- Develop a shared action plan for the next 5 years, and a 25 year vision for the future
- Improve communications and engagement by adopting a joined up approach to engagement with communities, government and MPs
- Broker strategic solutions to problems identified through the partnership
- Identify the inter-relationships between partner projects and ensure coordination between them

The Defra Minister Dr Thérèse Coffey MP announced her support for the partnership in Parliament on 22 November 2016 at an adjournment debate attended by Tom Tugendhat MP and Helen Grant MP.

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03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
0345 988 1188
0845 988 1188

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Medway Flood Action Plan – key messages

- We are launching the Medway Flood Action Plan on 1 December 2017.
- It sets out a 5 year plan with funded and planned actions that partners will be committing to within the context of a 25 year vision for the future. It has three key work streams led by partner organisations:
 - Capital Investment and Maintenance – led by the Environment Agency
 - Community Resilience – led by Kent County Council
 - Natural Flood Management – led by South East Rivers Trust and Natural England
- The partnership is taking an integrated, catchment-wide approach to managing flood risk across the Medway catchment. In addition to improving existing flood protection and providing new defences, we are looking at ways to slow the flow of floodwaters and reduce flood levels through natural flood management. We are also seeking to improve community preparedness and resilience through emergency planning.
- Over the next 5 years, fully funded schemes within the Medway Flood Action Plan will reduce the risk of flooding to over 1,700 homes along the River Medway. Together we will also be exploring further opportunities for schemes that help to reduce flood risk and improve the local environment.
- The action plan is a ‘living document’ that will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Medway Flood Partnership to make sure that actions are delivered and new information and ideas are incorporated.
- The Medway Flood Action Plan is a milestone in addressing flood risk in the Medway catchment, but it is part of a longer journey with the partnership, communities and with individuals to build awareness and preparedness for flooding, and identify and develop more actions which can help to reduce flood risk.

Medway Flood Partnership - key messages

- Many organisations are involved in managing flood risk and communities also have a role. Reducing the risk of flooding in the Medway catchment is a complex problem that can only be solved by working in partnership.
- The Medway Flood Partnership brings many organisations together to take an integrated approach to managing flood risk across the Medway catchment.
- Our long term 25 year vision for the Medway Flood Partnership is: “to continue to reduce flood risk and create better places for people, properties and businesses.”