

Appendix A - Responsibilities for Flood Risk Management

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has overall responsibility for flood risk management in England. Their aim is to reduce flood risk by:

- discouraging inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.
- encouraging adequate and cost effective flood warning systems.
- encouraging adequate technically, environmentally and economically sound and sustainable flood defence measures.

The Government's Foresight Programme has recently produced a report called *Future Flooding*, which warns that the risk of flooding will increase between 2 and 20 times over the next 75 years. The report produced by the Office of Science and Technology has a long-term vision for the future (2030 – 2100), helping to make sure that effective strategies are developed now. Sir David King, the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Government concluded:

“continuing with existing policies is not an option – in virtually every scenario considered (for climate change), the risks grow to unacceptable levels. Secondly, the risk needs to be tackled across a broad front. However, this is unlikely to be sufficient in itself. Hard choices need to be taken – we must either invest in more sustainable approaches to flood and coastal management or learn to live with increasing flooding”.

In response to this, Defra is leading the development of a new strategy for flood and coastal erosion for the next 20 years. This programme, called *“Making Space for Water”* will help define and set the agenda for the Government's future strategic approach to flood risk. Within this strategy there will be an overall approach to the assessing options through a strong and continuing commitment to CFMPs and SMPs within a broader planning framework which will include River Basin Management Plans prepared under the Water Framework Directive and Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

We take the lead role in preparing Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs). We recognise that all key organisations and decision makers must work together to plan and take action to reduce flood risk. We have consulted with other authorities, organisations and groups so that the plan can be adopted as a way forward for flood risk management in the catchment.

The development of the CFMP has been supported by a Steering Group with representatives from the following organisations:

- Caradon District Council
- Cornwall County Council
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- National Farmers Union
- North Cornwall District Council
- Regional Flood Defence Committee
- Restormel District Council
- South West Water

Our Role in Flood Risk Management

Since it was set up in 1996, The Environment Agency has taken a lead role in flood risk management within England and Wales. We provide information via our internet flood maps on the chance of flooding. The map shows areas that would be affected by flooding from the rivers or the sea without defences. The flood extent shown on the Flood Map refers to Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 as defined in Planning Policy Statement 25; Development and Flood Risk (PPS25). A Flood Risk Assessment is required by Local Planning Authorities when a planning application is made within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

We must be consulted by law about development plans and other aspects of development control within the land use planning system. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued guidance in relation to flood risk and planning (PPS25), which stipulates a “risk based sequential search” for assessing development within the catchment. This guides how planning authorities allocate how the land is used and has a significant impact on development both locally and regionally. So it is essential that the CFMP fits with and supports this process. The CFMP does not replace a strategic flood risk assessment, which is a more detailed assessment of flood risk in relation to development and planning.

We are also responsible for flood warning. We provide an online Flood Warning Service for designated Flood Warning Areas in England and Wales that is automatically updated every 15 minutes. Flood warning makes an important contribution to reducing the impact of flooding and can be particularly effective where there is a great deal of confidence in the rising river levels that have been predicted, and there is enough time for both the public and emergency services to respond effectively. Our flood defence work aims to protect people and property and improve the environment. The Environment Act 1995 and the Water Resources Act 1991 give us certain powers to carry out flood defence work on ‘main’ river watercourses.