News

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
At the end of December, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) hosted the inaugural meeting of the Local Authority expert SuDS panel to listen to concerns about implementation and to discuss how to collaboratively move the policy forward. Defra will now be arranging a follow-up workshop with a broader group of stakeholders with a view to establishing Task and Finish Groups to resolve issues of concern.

Once commenced Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 establishes a SuDS Approving Body and amends the automatic right to connect surface water to the public sewer. Given the time needed to effectively work through the issues raised in the consultation and to provide lead-in time to implementation Defra is aiming to implement in April 2014, subject to Parliamentary approval.

Flood Risk Management Plan consultation update
Under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFSAs) and the Environment Agency are required to produce Flood Risk Management Plans by December 2015 in England and Wales.

The Environment Agency led public consultation on the approach to producing these plans closed at the end of October 2012 over 80 responses were received from national organisations, risk management authorities, private companies and individuals. We would like to thank all those who responded to this consultation. We are currently looking at the responses and sharing the views with Defra and the Welsh Government.

Flood Risk Management Plans are important because they set out how risk management authorities and communities can reduce the potential adverse consequences of flooding. We wanted to raise awareness of the planning requirements and to get views on the possible approaches to delivering FRMPs for this first cycle and future cycles.

Feedback received from the Working Together Consultation on how we coordinate consultation on the River Basin Management Plans and Flood Risk Management Plans will also be considered.

Flood Incident Management Plan update
The Environment Agency is preparing a new Flood Incident Management Plan to set the future direction for flood forecasting, warning and response. The project will review future investment needs in flood incident management and produce a series of options on how we achieve the Flood Incident Management outcomes set out in the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategies for England and Wales.

Between August and October 2012 we talked with stakeholders in England and Wales, seeking initial feedback on what works well now and what a Flood Incident Management service should look like in 10 years time. We received over 90 responses to our informal consultation and are now using this feedback to help shape the future plan and look at options for implementation.

In Wales, these options will be taken forward by Natural Resources Wales once vested.

We will be producing a summary of the feedback received which we will share with stakeholders in the new year along with an outline of our next steps. We would like to thank those who shared their views with us on this important area of work.

Environment Agency update on flooding
Successive bands of heavy rain moved across England and Wales during December causing further
flooding and significant travel disruption. Despite a calmer period of weather for most of the Country, on the 9 January 2013 there were still seven flood warnings and 45 flood alerts in force across England and Wales.

During the December flood even, temporary flood defences were installed to protect properties from flooding in Ironbridge, Bewdley, Shrewsbury and Oxford. Mobile pumping equipment was used in locations such as Purley, Devon, Humberside and on the River Derwent.

The Environment Agency deployed a team to Wallington in Hampshire to reinforce a flood wall which had shown signs of cracking. Havant Borough Council evacuated 85 properties as a precaution.

Latest figures show that approximately 540 properties have flooded since Wednesday 19 December. The Environment Agency has sent over 115,000 warnings to people at risk of flooding. Flood defences have protected more than 21,600 properties across England and Wales. To sign up for flood warnings click here.

Update from Defra: Additional funding for flood risk management schemes
£120 million in new funding will speed up the delivery of flood defences that could protect up to 60,000 homes and deliver up to £1 billion of economic benefits.

£60 million of the funding will be targeted at areas where flood defences can unlock new opportunities for development and growth, helping our country compete and thrive in the global race. Investment will be focused on areas where it will have the greatest economic impact. A further £60 million will help speed up the delivery of up to 50 flood defence schemes already in train and prioritised by the Environment Agency.

In total, Defra estimates that this will support schemes which could improve flood protection for up to 60,000 homes and achieve up to £1 billion of economic benefits. This additional funding comes on top of over £2 billion already set aside to tackle flood and coastal erosion risks over the course of the Spending Review. The Government is on course to deliver better protection to around 145,000 homes by March 2015.

- The additional funding will be phased over 2013/14 and 2014/15 with a total of £35 million in 2013/14 and £85 million in 2014/15.
- Within the total, £60 million over the two years will be reserved for flood defence schemes that meet a set of growth, value for money and delivery criteria. Sponsors of the five schemes above will be invited to apply. Funding criteria will be published by Defra shortly. The confirmed set of schemes will be announced early in the New Year. All allocations will be dependent on local co-funding arrangements being confirmed. Unused elements will be added to the Partnership Funding allocations.
- The Environment Agency will allocate the remaining £60 million through the standard Partnership Funding framework, with allocations confirmed in February 2013.
- Partnership Funding is a new system, introduced in 2011, which boosts co-funding from businesses, developers, Local Authorities and other sources. This approach is enabling up to a third more schemes to go ahead and giving communities a greater choice about flood protection levels in their area.

The funding was announced when the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander visited Leeds on the 30 November and formed part of the Autumn Statement announced by the Government on 05 December.

REMINDER: FloodAlerts now available on Environment Agency website and Windows 8
Following the launch of the world’s first flood warning service on Facebook, the Environment Agency and one of our approved data re-sellers, Shoothill Ltd, has also developed a live flood warning map that can be viewed on the Environment Agency website. This new service shows where current flood alerts and warnings are in force across England and Wales.
The Environment Agency has also worked with Shoothill Ltd to create a Windows 8 Version of FloodAlerts which is now available from the Windows App store. The most exciting feature of a Windows 8 version of FloodAlerts is that the service will feature ‘alerts near me’. This means a user can be alerted when travelling through an area where flood alerts or warnings are in force. For more information contact Frazer Rhodes: frazer.rhodes@environment-agency.gov.uk, Programme Manager, Environment Agency.

REMINDER: Are you aware of the Met Office Hazard Manager?
You may be registered with the The Flood Forecasting Centre (FCC) hazard manager, but did you know about the Met Office web access Hazard Manager, which contains a wealth of information on flooding and other natural hazards, which may be of interest to you. If you have not looked at the Met Office hazard manager please visit the following link.

Events

CIWEM Rivers and Coastal Group Annual Conference (Delivering Flood Schemes Funding, Partnerships and Opportunities – Emerging lessons) – 30 January

Concession for Local Authorities & IDBs – with capacity building funding from Defra a concessionary price of £80 + VAT is available for Local Authority and IDB staff. 2013

Coasts, Marine Structures and Breakwaters 2013 – 16-20 September 2013

Job Vacancies

Arun District Council
Drainage and Coastal Engineer
£22,221 – £26,276 pa (Quote ref: 4033)
Full-time, 37 hours per week

Working in a small Engineering Section involved with Coast Protection revenue works and assessing drainage proposals for planning applications. This will include reviewing and assessing the suitability of SUDS and other drainage designs submitted as part of proposed developments.

You will also be involved with investigation of land drainage and flood related problems and also be involved with management and supervision of the Coast Protection revenue works.

For an informal discussion please contact Brian Holland on 01903 737815.

To apply, please visit www.arun.gov.uk/jobs

Closing date: 30 January 2013.

If you would like to advertise a local authority job vacancy here please contact Jo Allchurch: jo.allchurch@local.gov.uk. There is currently no charge for this service but we can only advertise up to 3 vacancies each month.

New Publications

CIRIA guidance on the management of landfill sites and contaminated land on eroding and low lying coastlines

The Environment Agency has been working in partnership with CIRIA and other funding organisations to publish a new guide for the management of landfill on eroding and low-lying coastlines.

The guide is for people with responsibilities for managing risks from coastal erosion and sea flooding affecting landfill sites or areas of land contamination. In particular, coastal managers faced with issues associated with the release of waste from sites and also to inform site managers about the risks posed by erosion and sea flooding.
**Environment Agency – Managing flood and coastal risks in England – annual report**

**River restoration guide for planners, landscape architects and developers – coming in February 2013**

The River Restoration Centre (RRC) are a not-for-profit organisation which exists to promote, facilitate and support best practice in river, watercourse and floodplain management across the UK. They aim to provide a focal point for the exchange and dissemination of information and expertise relating to river restoration and enhancement.

As part of an EU LIFE+ funded project, RESTORE, they are working with the Environment Agency, Wetlands International and a number of other organisations as part of a European wide project, covering 22 countries. One of the deliverables is a river restoration guide aimed at planners, landscape architects and developers which will include approaches, considerations, benefits, issues with showcase best practice examples from across Europe. The link for the guide will be included in a future bulletin.

**Consultations and research**

**Defra:** Streamlining procedures in the Land Drainage Act 1991 – ends 18 March 2012

**Defra:** Tackling water pollution from the urban environment – ends 8 February 2013

**MSc thesis** – Communicating risk of surface water flooding

**Useful links**

LGA Flood Risk Portal
A gateway to information, networking and learning for local authorities and partner organisations (supported by the EA and Defra).

**Capacity Building**

Alongside the Defra/EA Capacity Building workshops which have taken place in 2011, the EA has developed a series of e-learning modules for local authorities and their partners to increase knowledge and skills. The modules are available on the [EA website](#) and include property level protection; consenting and enforcement; and local flood strategies.

**Online forum for flood risk practitioners (FlowNet)**

With over 1000 members, this [online group](#) is for all those interested or involved in flood risk and water management. The group aims to help each other by engaging with key issues and new developments, and through sharing ideas, challenges, good and innovative practice. The group encompasses all aspects of FCERM, from local flood risk management (including FWMA 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations) and SuDS and SABs, to spatial and emergency planning related to flood risk (including reservoirs). It only takes a few minutes to register.

**Framework for developing a local strategy for flood risk management**

To assist flood authorities with their new statutory duty to produce and implement a local strategy for flood risk management, the LGA has produced a [Framework for the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#).

**Flood and water Management Act**

For information on the Flood and Water Management Act, including details of which provisions have been commenced, please see the [Defra website](#).

**Flood Risk Regulations**

[The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (SI 2009/3042)](#)
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