



Community Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 16 October 2025

Flood Risk Update

Report of the Director - Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. On 17 October 2020 the Communities Scrutiny Group received a report and series of presentations providing the latest picture on flooding events in the Borough, and the roles and responsibilities of a range of key agencies involved in flood assessment, drainage/mitigation work and how they respond to flooding incidents and work with communities. Since that report, and despite significant work being undertaken in a range of locations across the Borough to reduce the likelihood, the risk of flooding remains a concern for many households and local communities. This report and presentation by Nottinghamshire County Council, who are the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), will reflect on the latest flood risk data for the Borough including new data sources for mapping surface water flood risk as such incidents are becoming more prevalent.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) scrutinise the contents of the report and presentation; and
- b) provide feedback to the Lead Local Flood Authority on the latest flood risk profile for the Borough.

3. Supporting Information

Flood risk within Rushcliffe

- 3.1. The Borough is at risk from both fluvial river flooding and pluvial surface water flooding. The rivers, classed as 'main' rivers, that run through the Borough are the Trent, Soar, Smite and Devon. All of these rivers have Environment Agency flood alerts and warnings available on them. The flood warning service was created for the public to sign up to and have alerts and warnings directly text or phoned through to them 24/7. These rivers also have river gauge level readings available online via gov.uk. These give accurate daily readings and, in the case of the rivers Trent and Soar, also give a 24hr prediction of expected river levels.

- 3.2. However, a growing source of flooding in the most recent years has been pluvial surface water flooding. Such flooding is less easy to predict due to the nature of the weather systems that generally cause these events which can create heavy sudden downpours that can see a months' worth of rain fall in one day. Combined with often saturated or frozen catchments, this leaves the water with nowhere to go and excessive run off can occur in both urban and rural areas. Although predicting where the rain will fall can't be accurate, there are communities in Rushcliffe that we know from experience are more prone to surface water flooding issues. This can be due to several reasons including topography and geology. More recently, the Environment Agency have released a national searchable surface water flood risk map which show the areas that are at the greatest risk <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map>. In addition to using real life feedback, the mapping tries to identify areas that are naturally susceptible to water collecting as water often follows the natural flow path or low points in these areas. This information should allow residents and businesses to consider their flood preparedness measures and potentially make their properties more flood resilient and such action is further guided by the existing and broader post code flood risk tool <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/postcode>.

Significant recent flood incidents

- 3.3. Since the last scrutiny report in 2020, there have been a number of flood events which have had a significant impact on local communities, including:
- a) **18 – 24 January 2021 Storm Christoph** – Prolonged heavy rain saw river levels rise with flood risks to riverside properties and communities on both the Trent and Soar. Communities affected included Barton, Thrumpton and Radcliffe on Trent
 - b) **20 – 25 October 2023 Storm Babet** – Delivered 3- 4 days of continued heavy rain and severe flooding across parts of Nottinghamshire. This created saturated ground and full catchments. 9 communities were affected with internal flooding of at least 27 homes and 2 businesses in the following key areas Gotham, Edwalton, West Bridgford, East Leake, Ruddington, Tollerton, Cropwell Butler and Radcliffe on Trent
 - c) **December 2023** – Although not a named storm isolated heavy rain caused localised surface water flooding with impacts particularly seen in Cropwell Butler and Bingham
 - d) **2 January 2024 Storm Henk** – This storm had a significant impact on Nottinghamshire, causing widespread flooding and damage. Over 100 properties were evacuated due to flooding after a major incident was declared, many roads were closed and communities were cut off. The flooding was severe enough that the impact would be felt for many months afterwards. In Rushcliffe, 17 communities were affected by flooding which included 131 homes and 13 businesses in the following key areas Barton in

Fabis, Costock, Cotgrave, Cropwell Butler, East Bridgford, East Leake, Flawborough, Gotham, Normanton on Soar, Radcliffe on Trent, Ratcliffe on Soar, Shelford, Sutton Bonnington, Edwalton, Thrumpton, Tollerton and Zouch

- e) **January 2025 Operation Cleves** – This was not a named storm however very heavy localised rainfall caused significant surface water flooding across north Leicestershire and Rushcliffe followed by elevated river levels on the Soar (causing Zouch to be cut off) and then the Trent. Once again, many homes were internally flooded particularly in the Zouch and East Leake areas and impacts were also seen in Sutton Bonnington, Thrumpton, Barton in Fabis, Kingston on Soar and Normanton on Soar.

Key stakeholders

- 3.4. The main risk management authorities involved in flood assessment and drainage work are as follows:
- Nottinghamshire County Council (Lead Local Flood Authority)
 - Rushcliffe Borough Council
 - Environment Agency
 - Severn Trent Water
 - Internal drainage board(s).
- 3.5. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 require these Risk Management Authorities to:
- Co-operate with each other
 - Exchange information
 - Act in a manner that is consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and the local flood risk management strategies developed by Lead Local Flood Authorities.
- 3.6. The following provides a further brief summary of their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.7 **Nottinghamshire County Council** are the Lead Local Flood Authority. They have permissive powers and statutory duties to manage and co-ordinate local flood risk management activities in Nottinghamshire. Local flood risk means flooding from surface water, groundwater and smaller watercourses (known as Ordinary Watercourses).
- 3.8. Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, they are required to publish a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy including an action plan and to report on flooding incidents under Section 19.
- 3.9. A Section 19 Report outlines what happened during a flooding incident and whether the relevant Risk Management Authorities have exercised or will exercise their responsibilities, but it does not identify specific measures to prevent future flooding. A Section 19 report is initiated when there have been

five or more properties internally flooded in any one area. Many of the storm events detailed in paragraph 3.3 resulted in Section 19 reports being prepared.

- 3.10. As the Highways Authority Nottinghamshire County Council also have responsibility for the public highways including highway drainage assets.
- 3.11. Nottinghamshire County Council are also a category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means they must have plans in place to respond to emergencies, and control or reduce the impact of an emergency. They deliver this responsibility through their emergency planning team.
- 3.12. **Rushcliffe Borough Council** carry out flood risk management works on minor watercourses in their ownership (outside of Internal Drainage Board areas). They work in partnership with Lead Local Flood Authorities and other Risk Management Authorities to ensure risks are managed effectively. This also includes taking decisions on development in their area. Rushcliffe, as with the County Council, has an emergency planning responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act. This is delivered under a service level agreement with the County Council. The most obvious example of this activity is the targeted delivery of sandbags to home owners at risk of flooding and the provision of temporary accommodation for those made homeless.
- 3.13. The **Environment Agency** are responsible for flood and coastal erosion risk management activities on main rivers and the coast, regulating reservoir safety, and working in partnership with the Meteorological Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings.
- 3.14. The **Internal Drainage Board** operate within a defined area, which is known as a drainage district. They are responsible for managing water levels in low lying areas. They are the land drainage authority within their districts and their functions include supervising land drainage and flood defence works on ordinary watercourses.
- 3.15. **Seven Trent Water** manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure.

Partnership working to manage Flood Risk

- 3.16. All these organisations work together through the Local Resilience Forum and, during the planning phase of flooding, they sit on a formal Flood Board which is chaired by the LLFA. Specific flood plans are in place, including for high risk locations such as reservoirs. There is a Rushcliffe Local Flood response plan which is an operational document that focuses on the details of flood risk communities.
- 3.17. In the stage before flooding occurs, all partner agencies receive Meteorological Office weather updates, flood guidance statements and flood alerts and warnings as well as having access to the river gauge level readings. This data

allows all agencies to have accurate information and be in a position to effectively plan and prime resources to be ready to tackle any flooding. If an alert is issued at amber level, then the Environment Agency hold a flood advisory service teleconference to update partner agencies on the situation and to facilitate the exchange of information. The Borough Council is represented on this through the Nottinghamshire County Council emergency planning team.

- 3.18. It may become necessary, due to the scale or impact of the flooding, for the police to chair a multi-agency Tactical Coordinating Group. This facilitates information exchange and provides access to multi agency support and resources.
- 3.19. Unfortunately, in the case of surface water flooding, it is often the problem that heavy rain is predicted for the region but the certainty of where it will occur is low. As a result, the flooding event can happen rapidly in a very isolated and concentrated manner with little time for communities to prepare as they would for fluvial events which was the case with Operation Cleves as set out in paragraph 3.3.

Working with Communities

- 3.20. For those communities at risk of flooding there are several engagement projects undertaken by partner agencies to help communities prepare and be resilient.
- 3.21. Nottinghamshire County Council and the Environment Agency run a Flood Warden Scheme for communities in both main river and surface water communities at risk of flooding. This scheme also links into a community road closure initiative that allows communities under permission to close designated roads in times of flood to help protect properties from further damage from bow waves from passing traffic. Most recently during Operation Cleves the A6006 through Zouch was quickly closed by wardens and this helped to protect some homes from bow wave flooding.
- 3.22. Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council emergency planning staff work with communities to encourage them to have community emergency plans in place for their highest risks. This allows for key community representatives to be identified, along with resources and those who are vulnerable and more likely to require support.
- 3.23. In addition to providing a range of advice and information on Rushcliffe's website covering flooding risks and resilience, the Council also administer a grant scheme, created in 2015, to assist communities to have flood resources directly in their communities. The flood resilience store grant allows for up to £2,000 to pay for a suitable store and flood protection equipment. Allowing the community to self-help and deploy flood equipment quickly when needed.

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

The Council has a Service Level Agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for a shared Emergency Planning Officer (at a cost of £31k per annum) who deals with and coordinates the Council's response to such events.

Due to the unknown nature and frequency of flood events, the Council does not provide specific budgets for flood recovery activity. Staffing, temporary accommodation and equipment costs incurred during flood recovery are generally contained within existing budgets. In some circumstances if the Government activates the Bellwin Scheme, the Council could recover 100% of eligible costs above a set threshold. Any capital expenditure related to flood prevention will be incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council has provided additional funding from the Flood Grant and Resilience Reserve for the Flood Resilience Store grant scheme which can be accessed by parish and town councils to support the creation of flood resilience stores. The balance on this reserve was £22k at 1 April 2025.

4.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

4.3. Equalities Implications

There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

4.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

The Council will work closely with the Police through the Local Resilience Forum to ensure any community safety issues are addressed before, during and after a flooding event.

4.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

5. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	It is widely acknowledged that climate change is having an impact on the frequency and nature of weather events that can cause flooding. It is therefore vital that we understand the changing nature of flood risk and continue to support the development of flood resilient communities through the work of all key agencies
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Quality of Life	The creation of flood resilient communities is an important factor which underpins the maintenance of a high quality of life within the Borough
Efficient Services	A number of services contribute to the delivery of flood prevention and response services and it is important that each are delivered in an efficient and effective manner
Sustainable Growth	Provision of effective drainage systems to minimise surface water flood risk is an important requirement through the planning and building control regulatory frameworks

6. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) scrutinise the contents of the report and presentation; and
- b) provide feedback to the Lead Flood Authority on the latest flood risk profile for the Borough.

For more information contact:	Dave Banks Director – Neighbourhoods 0115 9148438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk Chevalier Douglas Emergency Planning Officer 0115 9148399 CDouglas@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Report to Community Scrutiny Group - Flooding and Drainage Wednesday, 7 October 2020
List of appendices:	None.