

**SOUTH JOINT COMMITTEE****25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**Subject: Flood Risk Management**  
**Lead Officer: Steve Haresnape**  
**Contact on 01789 260854**

**Lead Member/  
Portfolio Holder: Councillor S Jackson**

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**Summary**

To provide the Joint Committee with an update on the work being undertaken by the Environment Agency and other agencies following the July 2007 floods and to seek the Committee's views on what additional information would be required.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**That, in light of the information presented, the Committee determines whether any specific aspect of flood risk management activity should be the subject of a future report.**

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**1. Background/Information**

1.1 This report brings together updates from the Environment Agency, the Warwickshire County Council, Severn Trent Water and the District Council on action being taken to reduce the risk in flooding in the district since the July 2007 floods as follows:

**1.2 Environment Agency**

The following is an extract from a briefing paper issues by the Environment Agency in June 2008:

Our role in Flood Risk Management

We are the lead agency for providing flood risk management and warning of flooding from 'main' rivers. Other bodies are responsible for the standards and maintenance of smaller watercourses, culverts, drains and sewerage systems. During and following floods we

- maintain and repair flood defences
  - monitor river levels and rain gauges
  - gather information from flood events to improve forecasting model and mapping
  - raise awareness of flood risk and how to prepare for flooding
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- provide flood warning services

#### Review and recommendations from the Government Review

After every major flood we conduct a review to identify lessons and good practice. Our review was complete in December and fed into the Government Review led by Sir Michael Pitt. The final report from Sir Michael is expected in June 2008 and will examine both the emergency response to the floods in June and July 2007 and how to reduce the risk and impact of floods in the future given that climate change is making such weather events more likely.

We are pleased that the government will consult on legislation (Floods and Water Bill) to implement the recommendations of the Pill Review.

We particularly welcomed Sir Michael's interim review and recommendations on:

Environment Agency taking the lead strategic role on all flood risks. We believe that this would provide welcome clarity and provide the framework for local authorities and other partners to plan locally and work together to manage urban flooding from any source.

Providers of critical public services, including electricity and water companies, need to take their role safeguarding their services from flooding more seriously. They should have a duty under the forthcoming Climate Change Bill to take account of climate change impacts when providing their services. We are working with Ofwat to develop a framework for assessing critical asset resilience to flooding to inform water companies business plans. Severn Trent have already carried out a flood risk assessment of their critical infrastructure and prepared a business case and bid for Ofwat. We have worked with the Energy Networks Association on a report to Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Ministers on substations resilience to flooding.

Develop flood warnings. Providing surface water flood warnings to individual homes and properties is likely to be technically challenging and costly. The Met Office and ourselves are examining what broader warnings about severe weather and potential floods can be provided.

We support Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Select Committee (Efra) and Sir Michael Pitt's suggestion of a full opt-out flood warning service for communities. We are working closely with British Telecom and Ofcom to progress efforts to transfer data from the Emergency Services Database to Flood Warnings Direct. We can't stop flooding, so we need to ensure that the public, businesses including farmers and our professional partners receive and act on flood warnings.

#### Building in flood plains

We have a legacy of building on flood plains, so more houses are at risk of flooding, and we have built over more of the land where water could have drained away. We welcome the government planning policy (PPS25) on 'development and flood risk' which directs development to lowest flood risk areas first and seeks to reduce flood risk overall.

Since 1 January 2007 if local planning authorities over-rule Environment Agency flood risk advice on major development applications this can be referred to Government Office, who can decide if this should be called in for determination by central government. We need to make sure homes

are built in a safe place, and that people and the environment are protected.

#### Funding for flood risk management

The increase in government funding for flood risk management is a welcome move in the right direction. Climate change models predict an increased flood risk due to more extreme rainfall. Consequently commentators agree that funding should continue to steadily increase over successive government spending reviews.

Recent flood events have highlighted the urgency of adapting to the potential effects of climate change to protect lives, property, the economy and the environment. The Environment Agency is on the frontline of managing and adapting to the effects of climate change such as flooding.

#### Specific Work Programme affecting the Joint Committee's area

The attached fact sheets contain summaries of the specific work being undertaken within the Joint Committee's area.

### 1.3 **Warwickshire County Council**

A number of medium sized capital schemes totalling £220k will be completed within the next 12 months.

The rolling programme of minor highways drainage schemes has been doubled.

A new guide, in consultation with NFU — 'Farming and the Public Highway' - has been published. Resulting in more ditch clearing by farmers and installation of overflow flood spillways, such as in Brailes.

A small number of landowners are being pursued for enforcement action.

Schemes at Wootton Wawen to provide a new storm water culvert and Long Compton to provide flood relief works to the village are to be commenced.

### 1.4 **Stratford-on-Avon District Council**

£281k has been given to residents who suffered internal flooding last July as a direct grant.

£60k has been granted to Environment Agency as joint funding for the Alcester scheme.

£60k has been granted to Warwickshire County Council to joint fund two drainage schemes at Wootton Wawen and Long Compton as referred to in 2.5 above.

Various improvements and enforcement during Autumn 2007 to Spring 2008:

- Dredging watercourse on Council owned land in Studley.
- Enforcement work to ditches in Quinton, Wixford, Rushbrook, Salford Priors and Ladbrook.

£50k capital and £37k revenue funding is being spent on the Land Drainage Improvement programme, initially for alleviation measures at

- Ladbroke £2.1k;

- Aston Cantlow £13.5k;
- Long Compton £25k;
- Long Marston £30k;
- Quinton £5k.

Schemes for Marlcliff, Wellesbourne, Brailes, Ilmington and Gaydon are costed and awaiting funding next year.

£100k is available for Town/Parish Council grants for small schemes, these are currently being evaluated.

The Council's Environmental Quality and Climate Change Panel will be looking at the updated Land Drainage Improvement Programme at its next meeting.

#### 1.5 **Severn Trent Water**

Sewer jetting and root clearance in Alcester.

### **2 Options available to the Committee**

- 2.1 The Committee, in light of the information now presented, is asked to determine whether there are any specific aspects of flood risk management activity that it wishes a report to be presented to a future meeting.

### **3 Members' Comments**

- 3.1 None received.

### **4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Legal/Human Rights Implications

None.

4.2 ***Financial***

The Council's financial costs are as detailed under Section 1.4.

4.3 ***Environmental***

Section 1.4 above outlines the Council's environmental implications.

4.4 ***Corporate Strategy***

None.

4.5 ***Equality Impact Assessment***

None.

Robert Weeks  
HEAD OF Environment



# fact sheet

## Summer floods 2007

We have had an extensive work programme one year on from summer 2007 widespread flooding here and across England and Wales. We have inspected our flood defences and completed investigations and maintenance along main rivers. This is a summary of our work in this area.

### Shipston-on-Stour

Up to 80 properties flooded in the Shipston-on-Stour during the summer 2007 floods. Flooding was caused by water overtopping river banks and combining with surface water run-off to flood homes and businesses.

#### What have we done since then?

- we have looked at the feasibility of building a flood defence at Shipston, but indications are that this will not be viable.

#### What else are we planning to do?

- when looking at the possibility of a flood defence scheme, we found that flooding starts to occur from some low points along the river before the bridge capacity is reached. We will be undertaking channel maintenance and local desilting to increase the capacity around the bridge;
- we continue to work closely with partners through the Warwickshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and establish a flood sub-group and produce a countywide flood plan;
- we will be producing a new model of the River Stour and the pre-feasibility study;
- we are also looking to do some tree and bush clearance along the channel through Shipston.

### The summer 2007 floods in Shipston-on-Stour

A deluge of heavy and persistent rainfall fell over central and southern England on 20 July. In Shipston, gauges recorded rainfall of 139mm. Overall, almost three times the long term average for the Shipston area was recorded.

As a result of this intense rainfall, Shipston river levels not only increased very quickly, but reached some of the highest levels ever recorded. Water overtopped river banks and this combined with surface water run-off to flood homes and businesses. We estimate that about 80 properties flooded in Shipston town centre including the public library and other properties on Church Street and Telegraph Street. We estimate that 50 properties flooded from the river flooding, and a further 30 from surface water that could not get away down the drainage system.

customer service line

08708 506 506

incident hotline

0800 80 70 60

floodline

0845 988 1188

River levels at Shipston were 4.3 metres, the highest level that the gauge can record. We estimate that, at its peak, the river reached nearly 5.0m above normal summer levels. In the floods of April 1998 the river peaked a metre below this at 3.98m above summer levels, which is a metre higher than the floods in April 1998.

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### Stratford-upon-Avon and surrounding area

About 80 properties flooded in the Stratford-upon-Avon during the summer 2007 floods. Flooding was caused by water overtopping river banks and surface water run-off which affected homes and businesses in the area.

#### What have we done since then?

- we have completed survey work to enable us to extend the existing hydraulic model of Racecourse Brook and investigate the possibility of flood attenuation.

#### What else are we planning to do?

- in addition we need to replace the trash screen at the Birmingham Road culvert as this is deemed unsafe for operatives to clear. As part of this replacement the screen will be redesigned, changing its aspect to the flow and helping to reduce the risk of flooding;
- funding has been allocated in the 2008/9 programme for this work;
- we continue to work closely with partners through the Warwickshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and establish a flood sub-group and produce a County wide flood plan.

### The summer 2007 floods in Stratford-upon-Avon

Heavy rainfall on 20 July led to surface water run off and river water overtopping banks. This caused major traffic disruption and property flooding in and around Stratford-upon-Avon. Thirty barges became stuck in the canal and one barge was united before it became trapped under a bridge and later sank.

As a result of the heavy rainfall, river levels rose at extreme rates to some of the highest levels ever recorded. The River Avon in Stratford reached a peak of 36.50m on 21 July at 07:00 (in 1998, the level peaked at 36.71m), which overwhelmed the banks causing water to spread out over the floodplain and into homes and businesses.

A Flood Watch for the River Avon in Warwickshire was issued early on 20 July, followed by a Flood Warning for the River Avon from Stratford to upstream of Evesham at 17:36 and at 19:17 a Severe Flood Warning for the same area.

Approximately 75 properties were flooded in Stratford-upon-Avon. Since the flooding ended we have held a drop-in surgery in Stratford-upon-Avon on 4 September to gather information and provide advice and assistance to the public on any flood-related enquiries.

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incident hotline  
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floodline  
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**782 – Young Enterprise – South Warks Area**

Copy of HSBC bank statement supplied as at 17<sup>th</sup> June 2007 showing a balance of £245,425.03. (Application originally made in 2007/08 when no funding was available)

Copy of accounts supplied as follows:

	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
	£	£
Turnover	890,668	726,538
Surplus/(Deficit)	80,674	147,079
Cash at bank/in hand	362,641	304,485

It is intended to fund the project as follows:

	<b>£</b>	<b>Successful ?</b>
Own cash contribution	8,250	Yes
Stratford Town Trust	8,000	Yes
Local Clubs & Businesses	1,000	Pending
SDC	4,000	
<b>Total funding proposed</b>	<b>21,250</b>	

**Financial Services Recommendation:**

Figures were only provided for two years of accounts. However, in both years a healthy surplus of unrestricted funds was created. The project proposed is only for 2007/08, funding may need to be sought in future years.

There are sufficient funds in the bank to cover the funding, the financial criteria of the grant has therefore been met.

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