



News and updates

Bulletin December 2018

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CALLING ALL FLOOD ACTION GROUPS - DID YOU KNOW ...

The National Flood Forum has a National Flood SuDS Action Group [CLICK HERE](#) linked to our [Facebook](#) page. On this group Flood Action Groups are having conversations and putting points of view across about development, drainage infrastructure, and surface water flooding. If you haven't joined us yet please consider it and we look forward to welcoming you.



WEAK ENFORCEMENT AND FLOODING – CALL FOR EVIDENCE ...

A group of researchers are carrying out an in-depth investigation of the impacts of deregulation and weak enforcement on social and environmental well-being in the UK. The team is looking for your story and pictures of the impacts of the enforcement gap around the country. The researchers are also interested to hear from anyone who suffers from weak enforcement and the impact that has on your community. In your experience how much of this seems to be due to funding cuts to flood risk managements prevention and mitigation? We look forward to hearing and forwarding your responses – info@floodforum.org.uk



HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM US ALL AT THE NATIONAL FLOOD FORUM ...

All the NFF staff & Trustees would like to convey seasonal greetings to all our readers, Flood Action Groups, Flood Risk Management & NGO partners, and all we know and meet. May Christmas be Merry & Bright and to all at risk a quiet 2019!



The Great Flood 1953/2018 and North Sea Region Funding (INTERREG) funding

Great Yarmouth and the East coast of the UK were severely affected in the 1953 surge. It still has a great impact on both those that lived through the great flood and residents today. My mother's family have lived in Great Yarmouth since the 1700s and as I was growing up they talked a great deal about the flood and passed down memories. Many homes were severely affected and it remains difficult to purchase some homes and obtain insurance. Where ever you go you are reminded of the 'Flood'. Many of the properties still have marks on the walls to denote the height of the floodwater. The local media have regular news articles describing the personal and community tragedy of that day.



Photograph courtesy of BBC archives.



Saturday 31st January 1953 for most residents started out as a normal wet cold evening but soon became a nightmare they were never to forget. It is referred by locals as 'The Flood'.

The floods were due to a combination of winds, atmosphere pressure and high tides coming together to cause surge water to rampage down the East coast of the UK and western Europe. The surge of water hit the north-east coast and travelled down to Kent over the evening. It hit Great Yarmouth at approximately 9.00 pm. Because of the lack of modern communication methods, residents and authorities were unaware of the disaster until it hit, many not until the next day. There was no early warning system.

More than 80 people died on the coast of northwest Norfolk that night. It was recorded that in Walcott a 4,000-ton coaster sat adrift on the beach. A resident in Sea Palling explained how tragically he lost his new born baby, wife and two children by drowning and hypothermia.

It is estimated that 10 people died in Great Yarmouth and 3,500 homes were destroyed. The mental health impacts and deaths caused by depression, loss of family friends and belongings has not been measured.

During the evening and several days afterwards, the weather was bitterly cold with strong winds and rain. This hampered rescue efforts and caused those without electricity, warmth, food and water to struggle to survive. Most homes were flooded up to their first-floor windows and the water slowly went down to the top of the ground floor windows during the next 48 hours. There was a lot of suffering that evening, yet communities worked together to help those stranded, wet, cold and hungry. That strong community feeling remains in the Great Yarmouth area today. The community supports each other during present day flooding.

The North Sea floods took over 307 British lives, yet the Netherlands lost 1,800. Great Yarmouth experienced another severe flood the following year. Great Yarmouth sits on a medieval sand bank and much of the area is below sea level, prone to flooding. The great flood disaster was the start of the reinforcement of the British and Dutch sea defences, countries both working to help prevent such a tragedy again.

Residents today in the Great Yarmouth area continue to experience the threat of sea surge flooding; 2014 and 2017 were potential devastating years but thankfully the sea defences stood tall, reducing the flooding significantly. Once again this resulted in a £28.6m sea defence scheme in Great Yarmouth.

Today flooding rarely comes from the sea. Most is the result of surface water. 2006 and 2016/17 had particularly heavy rainfall, causing devastating flooding.

Countries around the North Sea are working together once again, such as through the INTERREG IV North Sea Programme FRAMES project. The National Flood Forum is working on just one of the initiatives in partnership with Norfolk County Council &

Anglian Water in the Great Yarmouth and Gorleston areas where modelling has identified that these areas could potentially see a reduction to the risk of flooding by the retrofitting of Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS).

We have been meeting with residents, schools & businesses in Bradwell, Gorleston-on-Sea and Great Yarmouth to understand the surface water flooding issues and look for opportunities where installing water storage features may help to reduce the risk.

A couple of these storage initiatives are 'leaky' (slow release) water butts and special raised flower beds that catch water from roofs when it rains and then slowly releases it giving control to the flow of water on to the roads. The offer will have a range of different sizes shapes and designs, so if you are from these areas and interested, we would be pleased to hear from you.



In Partnership with



FLOODING IS A CONSTANT WORRY EVERYDAY ...

The flooding in our area is not caused by the sea or the river, it is caused by rainfall. Just 15 minutes of heavy rain or a day of constant rain and we are flooded in our front and back gardens. But, what makes it worse, it is not just rain water it is sewerage also so we then have to clean up other people's excrement and sanitary products. The smell is disgusting and that is inside the house and outside.

It makes you paranoid about rain.

So, every morning noon and night we keep a check on the weather reports, so the TV is on all day, every day. If we go out shopping or just for a day out, if it starts to rain we immediately head home for fear that we are getting flooded again, even though we couldn't stop it if we were home. When we are on holiday we keep a check on the weather in our home area, we have a constant fear and anxiety even when it's not raining.

What makes it worse for us is that we have a child who has mental health problems and our home is his safe place, so when we flooded and had to move out and live in bed and breakfast for months his mental health really deteriorated, which in turn then placed added pressure and stress on all family members.

Then there is the damage and cost of flooding, the loss of sentimental and irreplaceable family items.

We have had our house rewired so hopefully if we flood again it won't affect the electrics, we have had to replace our front wall as that started to fall over, our driveway has started to sink in places and the tarmac has significantly degraded due to soil erosion, we just wonder if the next thing will be the house subsiding due to this soil erosion! We also have soakaways in our back garden, but they can't always cope with a deluge of rain and sewerage that runs down the road into our garden.

Then you have to deal with the insurance companies. Well what can I say about them except it's like pulling your hair out! Awful, they don't seem to do anything fast.

As for the water company, you might see them 3 or 4 days after it happened, they turn up with a little lemon disinfectant and spray your paths, power wash the driveway which in turn degrades the driveway further, when in reality they need to upgrade the infrastructure. Things in our area will not get better as the council has given the go ahead for hundreds of new homes to be built which will only add to the pre-existing problems we have.

Both the council and the water company try to blame each other, or they both try to say it is climate change when in reality if it is climate change then it is up to both council and water companies to update and replace all infrastructure that they are in charge of as we pay for the use of their services. So, we worry, stress and suffer anxiousness every single day - Writing this was not as easy as I thought it was going to be. - **Lyn, resident**

Friends of the National Flood Forum – Make your voice count

The Let's Talk About Flooding events highlighted the power of people getting together to discuss the serious flooding issues they face.

To bring about real change we need to demonstrate that this is something that hundreds and preferably thousands of people feel strongly about.

Join the Friends of the National Flood Forum to support our campaign for change

Friends of the National Flood Forum

Flooding destroys lives - Campaign for Change



The Friends of NFF is free to join.

[If you are in a Flood Action Group or part of a community group please ask everyone to sign up.](#)

Let's Talk About Flooding

The National Flood Forum, supported by Flood Re, has launched a 'Let's Talk About Flooding' campaign. Two events have been held so far, in Birmingham and Tonbridge in Kent, with two more planned in North West England and North Wales, followed by a national event in 2019.

The events bring people together to share experiences and to identify the issues that they would like the national conference to address, the things that could really change peoples' lives in the future. It's going to be fascinating to see whether people across the country come up with the same priorities.



SHIPSTON AREA FLOOD ACTION GROUP

350 NOT OUT!!

2018 has been the most productive year for South Warwickshire based Shipston Area Flood Action Group (SAFAG) since its formation in 2014. By the end of September planning consent had been secured and more than 350 natural flood alleviation measures had been installed, across 23 estates and farms, through which Knee Brook and Pig Brook flow. These water courses account for some 50 per cent of the volume which feeds into the River Stour at Shipston, so it was an obvious priority.

As we head into the winter months the physical work will cease, but SAFAGs planning and fund raising will continue. A further £50k has been committed by the Environment Agency, with whom the group work closely, so planning for the next phases in the east and southern parts of the catchment is already underway. Completing these elements will allow further installations to commence in Spring 2019.

2018 has brought other benefits to SAFAG, such as interest and recognition of the group's work leading to numerous visits from Directors and senior members of various government agencies from all around the UK. It has also resulted in even more requests for the Chairman and General Secretary to speak about the groups work and experiences at National and Regional Flood Seminars. We are also active in assisting the formation of new flood groups across Warwickshire.

So, is SAFAGs work effective? Well the group believe so, backed up by a condition of the government funding that regular monitoring of the installations takes place. This is done remotely by solar powered cameras which feed directly to the Environment Agency at times of heavy rainfall so that they can monitor the impact the alleviations are having. This is a cost to SAFAG of circa £15k from the funds raised. Members of the group also undertake visits to the sites themselves to validate this information, filming and recording their findings.

Importantly the use of natural materials to create flood defences is also designed to improve water quality, biodiversity and create natural wildlife habitat. We are delighted to report the return of Snipe and Lapwings to areas of the catchment where our work has been undertaken.

GIVE US AN UPDATE....

If you are one of our affiliated Flood Action Groups, have there been any changes in your details? We would love to get an update from you with any news or activities from your Group.

Drop Jean a line here at the Bewdley office

Jean.timmins@floodforum.org.uk



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 2019

On the weekend of January 26th and 27th

NFF staff and members of the 10:10 Climate Action Team will be joining volunteers and local residents for some tree-planting climate action in the Village of **WOLVERLEY**, North Worcestershire!

The trees planted will help protect the village from future flooding and they'll play a part in tackling climate change too.

Come along.

You are invited to join **one or both** of the community planting days. Come along and get your hands dirty, learn all about trees and make a difference in Wolverley and beyond. **Let us know you are coming by registering at <https://action.1010uk.org/page/s/join-our-community-tree-planting-day>**

Date: Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th January

Time: 10am-4pm

Meet at Wolverley Church Hall, DY11 5TH

A Celebration of Community Resilience

Open conference – March 30th & 31st 2019

A major community flood resilience conference is being planned in Hebden Bridge in March 2019 to showcase Natural Flood Management (NFM) processes, strategies and the innovative ideas that came out of coping with the devastating Boxing Day floods of 2015 in the Calder Valley.

Hebden Royd Town Council and award-winning flood alleviation charitable organisation Slow the Flow Calderdale have joined forces to stage this unique conference designed exclusively for people living with flood risk in their own communities.

The conference organisers would like to encourage representatives from other flood affected communities from around the UK to attend this conference. They will learn what can be achieved by utilising NFM methods and harnessing the abundant enthusiasm of volunteer groups to build resilience and community partnerships.

Tickets for the Calder Valley Community Resilience Conference are £25 for the weekend (for delegates with a non-profit community interest) and tickets for the Ceilidh at £10 can be booked here - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-celebration-of-community-resilience-tickets-51674429610?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Please note that capacity is limited to 100 people. Tickets are available to community groups and interested individuals throughout the UK, so they are expected to be booked up quickly.

For more information, or to discuss grant options for delegates from embryonic community groups with minimal funds, please email secretary@slowtheflow.net

FCRM UPDATE

National news

As we go to press it is not at all clear where we will be with regard to Brexit. However, whatever the outcome there are implications for people at flood risk. For example, how we manage the land in our river catchments will affect our long term futures and the [Agriculture Bill](#) currently going through Parliament is central to that.

Some things of course have nothing to do with the EU. Our planning system plays a huge role in how we manage water and as more houses are built this will become ever more important. [The National Infrastructure Commission](#) has recently produced an assessment that recommends:

The Commission recommends that government should set out a strategy to deliver a nationwide standard of resilience to flooding with an annual likelihood of 0.5 per cent by 2050 where this is feasible. A higher standard of 0.1 per cent should be provided for densely populated areas where the costs per household are lower. To deliver the strategy:

- *By the end of 2019, government should put in place a rolling 6-year funding programme in line with the funding profile set out by the Commission. This should enable efficient planning and delivery of projects and address the risks from all sources of flooding.*
- *The Environment Agency should update plans for all catchments and coastal cells in England before the end of 2023. These should identify how risk can be managed most effectively using a combination of measures including green and grey infrastructure, spatial planning and property level measures.*
- *Water companies and local authorities should work together to publish joint plans to manage surface water flood risk by 2022.*
- *The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and planning authorities should ensure that from 2019 all new development is resilient to flooding with an annual likelihood of 0.5 per cent for its lifetime and does not increase risk elsewhere*

Challenging recommendations that the Government has said that it will respond to in 2019.

Quite a few Flood Action Groups and individuals have been involved in the England Flood and Coastal Erosion Strategy review that should set the long-term framework for flood risk management for the next 25 years. A consultation document is due to be published in January, with a policy statement from Government following later in the year. We will be asking for your views and will also encourage you to submit responses directly. The final strategy is due to be placed before Parliament in the summer so that it can be signed off by the end of the year. Similar reviews are taking place in Wales and Scotland.

Finally, the launch of the [UK Climate Change Projections 2018](#) was rather overshadowed by Brexit. These new projections will be used to shape our planning system, how flood risk schemes are designed and built and how infrastructure projects are developed.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE NATIONAL FLOOD FORUM

Our purpose is to give support and help to grassroots communities at risk of flooding, we are committed to giving our time, energy and focus to these communities. Unfortunately, because we are not supported by any core funding we are always struggling to survive as a charity. We really appreciate any support that can be given, maybe in the form of a fundraising event, or donations or any other ideas that you may have. We do have in place some ideas already as follows:

1. We now have a fundraising pack with lots of ideas on how people can raise funds.
2. The Give-as-you-live facility allows you to make a donation to the National Flood Forum every time you shop online, at no cost to you. What is more, we can use the funds to match against some of the other projects we are working on and double up the value. To sign up, please click on the link in the graphic below ...

You can also text **RAIN07 £5* to 70070** to donate via your mobile directly or through our website at www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk Suggested donation. Your chosen amount comes from your pre-paid credit or is added to your bill and the National Flood Forum receives 100% of the donation

Buying for Christmas?



Leaving a gift in your Will, no matter how big or small, could help The National Flood Forum Charity to give people who are struggling the support they need, far into the future.

If you do already have a will and want to leave a gift to us, contact your solicitor and let them know your intentions. You can work with them either to (a) make a new will or (b) a shorter and less expensive "codicil".

Please ensure they use our full name The National Flood Forum, and Charity Number 1121642