

Your voice where it matters

With the new government using its first weeks in power to set out its key priorities, the NFF is working hard to ensure that the voices and needs of those who live with the threat of flooding are properly represented to policy makers. Flood Action Groups tell us what matters most them, and here we set out five priority areas.

Planning

We understand the urgent need for more homes and what a huge priority affordable housing is for people nationwide. But with more and more development needed, we need to think carefully about where and how we build. We'll be calling on policy makers to ensure new homes are not sited in areas impacted by flooding, or with a significant risk of future flooding. We'll be asking what controls the Government will put in place to make sure that developers abide by this. This is particularly important because new homes are not protected by the Flood Re scheme that helps to ensure insurance is available to homeowners and makes the flood cover element of household insurance policies more affordable.

Schedule 3

Past Government promises of tackling the automatic right to connect and ensuring sustainable drainage solutions for new developments faded away and the promised consultation on the implementation of Schedule 3 water management proposals has not happened yet. We'll be calling on the new Government to step up and deliver, making sustainable drainage systems mandatory for all new developments in England and Wales. New approaches including soakaways, grassed areas, permeable surfaces and wetlands that ease the burden on sewers and overflows are essential to tackling surface water flooding and we need action now.

Insurance

Flood Re has been a financial lifeline for many homeowners since its launch in 2016. It has also given people the peace of mind that adequate insurance cover for their homes and possessions brings. But it has limitations. No home built after January 2009 qualifies. And importantly, the scheme is due to wind up in 2039. We're already hearing from people who are being impacted by this end date in terms of mortgage applications. We'll be monitoring this situation carefully and making sure that our concerns are raised. Please let us know if you've been affected in any way.

Our ageing infrastructure

Antiquated sewerage systems in our towns and cities are struggling to cope with the demands of urban expansion and density of housing. We have already seen a huge increase in surface water flooding. We'll be actively engaging with policy makers and other key bodies to raise our concerns and lobby for a more secure future for those who live with flood risk.

Fairer Flood Defence Grant in Aid

We will continue our fight for fairer Flood Defence Grant in Aid criteria. The current system is weighted towards densely populated areas with high value housing, leaving many rural and some urban communities with no hope of a scheme to reduce their flood risk.

RECOVERY

Local Authorities and Environment Agency - do you know the NFF can provide local recovery services to support your flooded community.

FLOOD ACTION GROUPS

We have worked with more than 450 Flood Action Groups, each enabling better outcomes for communities.

HELPLINE

Our helpline is available 365 days a year for all your flood queries.
Tel: 01299 403055 or
Email: info@floodforum.org.uk

Flood Action Group Research

Research is vital to our work and helps us attract funding and wider support. We're currently working with Liverpool John Moore's University to see how we can increase the lifespan and impact of Flood Action Groups. Please complete Sophie's survey to help us.

PhD student Sophie Laidlaw's research project focuses on Flood Action Groups. A questionnaire is the first step of her three-stage in depth research project.

This aims to help her establish the key success factors for Groups. It will also inform the design of the second stage of her project. This will take the form of mini workshops with Flood Action Groups that will dig deeper into findings. To take part, simply follow the link, scan the QR code or email the NFF directly at info@floodforum.org.uk

Sophie is studying at Liverpool John Moores University and her PHD project is titled Establishing resilient community groups to reduce flood impacts in England.



The poster features a dark blue header with the Liverpool John Moores University and National Flood Forum logos. The main title is in large, bold, black letters. Below the title is a dark blue button with white text. Two light yellow boxes contain details about the project and what is involved. A blue arrow points from the 'TO TAKE PART' section to the QR code. The footer includes contact information for Sophie Laidlaw and the NFF, along with a QR code.

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY **National Flood Forum**

WANT TO HELP IMPROVE THE LONGEVITY AND IMPACT OF YOUR FLOOD ACTION GROUP?

Take part in our research project!

What is the project?

- ✓ A PhD project aiming to understand and improve the longevity and impact of Flood action groups.
- ✓ Improve relationships between stakeholders and groups!

What is involved?


- ✓ Short online questionnaire
- ✓ Chance to be involved in mini-workshops.

TO TAKE PART:

FOLLOW THE LINK:

<https://tinyurl.com/dpmd8yx9>

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW:



For more information please contact:

Sophie Laidlaw:
S.M.Laidlaw@2017.ljmu.ac.uk

Or the NFF:
01299 403 055

Flood Action Focus - Newent

When just before Christmas 2020 homes and businesses in Newent were devastated by surface water flooding, the local community was astounded to find that there was no single point of accountability for water management.

It was not the first time the town had been hit by flooding, and a small group of residents was keen to understand its root cause and do their best to help minimise the risk of future flood events. Under the banner of the Newent Neighbourhood Flood Association - known locally as the Flood Club - the group approached Gloucestershire County Council (GCC).

The GCC flood lead played a pivotal and galvanising role, supporting the Group's engagement with stakeholders and local authorities. Importantly, he also put them in touch with the NFF.

The Group speaks highly of the NFF's Flood Action Group approach – the model followed by the Newent Flood Club – and the support they received from Community Engagement Manager Katia Sanhueza-Pino. They single out the multi-agency meeting (MAM) format as central to the progress they have made.

Chair Nick Escritt highlights the using the MAM as a collaborative forum as key, allowing them to jointly identify and understand water flow through the town.

“The key piece of advice for us was to take a more collaborative approach and put the emotion to one side,” he says. “We have always tried to remain focused on group goals, approaching meetings in a structured and positive way.” Strong open relationships with the district and local council, along with key bodies including Severn Trent and the Highways Agency, have been key to understanding the area's two main watercourses and the catchment areas that supply them, as well as collating valuable local knowledge from landowners and long-term residents.

This knowledge has been critical, informing a holistic approach that includes mapping Newent's complex drainage system, CCTV surveys, culvert surveys, gully clearance, and identification of riparian landowners.

Action taken to date includes clearance of road drains and culverts, mapping and clearing surface water drains, and new Natural Flood Management activity. Their understanding of the local environment also meant the Group had ideas and projects ready to go when GCC appointed a natural flood manager.

The Group has also been proactive with Newent Town Council. Although the Council has no direct responsibility for watercourses and flooding, it now includes flooding in its emergency plan and has improved its flood warden scheme.

The Group remains active and recently achieved ambitions include the improved location and connectivity of the town's Early Warning Device.

Reflecting on what they have achieved so far, current Flood Club Chair Keith Urch advises:

“Joining up the information, knowledge and interested parties is key. In Newent it was working with the NFF model that gave us focus and direction.”

newentflood.org

**Natural flood
management getting
underway**

