

# Environment Agency: FCERM Stakeholder Update July 2023

## Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	2
<b>Flooding update and our flood services: January – July 2023</b> .....	3
<b>Flood events</b> .....	3
December 2022 – January 2023.....	3
May - June 2023 .....	3
Our response .....	3
<b>Flood services</b> .....	4
Industrial action and our flood warning service .....	4
Flood warning expansion project exceeds targets .....	4
Flood action campaign.....	4
Emergency alert system.....	5
Frequently flooded allowance .....	5
<b>FCRM capital programme update</b> .....	5
<b>Delivering the FCERM Strategy and Roadmap</b> .....	6
FCERM strategy roadmap update .....	6
<b>Updates on selected projects</b> .....	6
National flood risk assessment (NaFRA2) .....	6
Flood and coastal innovation programmes (FCIP).....	7
Property flood resilience (PFR) and build back better.....	7
Biodiversity Net Gain .....	7
<b>Working with FCERM stakeholders: January – July 2023</b> .....	8
Supporting flood and coast projects.....	8
<b>Events: January - July 2023</b> .....	9
<b>Innovation: January – July 2023</b> .....	11
<b>International: January – July 2023</b> .....	11
<b>FCERM publications and announcements: January – July 2023</b> .....	12
<b>Other publications and announcements: January – July 2023</b> .....	14
<b>Flood scheme openings and updates: January – July 2023</b> .....	16
<b>Other FCERM news: January – July 2023</b> .....	18
<b>Ways to keep in touch with our work</b> .....	19

## Foreword

Welcome to our latest Environment Agency flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) Stakeholder Update. You will not be surprised to hear that since we last updated you in December 2022, a huge amount of work has taken place across the whole of the flood and coastal risk management community.



We began the year reflecting on the [70<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) of the tragic East coast floods of 1953, where I was fortunate to attend the memorial service in Kings Lynn. These events, combined with the extreme weather events we sadly see happening on a regular basis around the world, really underpin why the work we do is ever more important.

Alongside our partner organisations we have made great strides during the first half of 2023 to deliver our [FCERM Strategy](#) and [Roadmap to 2026](#). Highlights include:

- progress with delivery of the current £5.2 billion FCERM capital programme, with around 60,000 properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion, this included 52 schemes that contain natural flood management techniques;
- the launch of a Property Flood Resilience (PFR) campaign ‘Be Flood Smart’ with FloodRe; and
- expanded coverage of our flood warning system, with over 1.6 million users now registered and the pilot Flood Action Campaign targeting Grimsby and Erewash.

The [Flood and Coast conference](#) held in June 2023 was a huge success, bringing together a wide range of domestic and international stakeholders. We have also attended a number of conferences and events to showcase our work. I also had the great privilege of speaking at the [Emergency Management Conference](#) in Melbourne on 4 July 2023, and highlighted our story on flood risk and incident management.

There is so much more work to be done on flood and coastal risk management in the coming year and beyond. I hope this update gives you a flavour of some of the steps we are all taking as we look at our long-term vision for a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.

We are currently looking into the way we communicate our FCERM work that best works for you, and would welcome your thoughts and feedback on this. To start this off we have a [short survey](#) that we would be grateful if you could complete.

### **Caroline Douglass**

Executive Director Flood and Coastal Risk Management  
Environment Agency

# Flooding update and our flood services: January – July 2023

## Flood events

### December 2022 – January 2023

Many parts of the country experienced heavy rainfall during late December 2022 and into January 2023. The main areas affected were the rivers in the Midlands and South West, including land in the Somerset Levels which experienced major flooding in winter 2014.



Parts of the North West, Yorkshire and the Thames valley also experienced high river levels and minor flood impacts. Groundwater flooding also affected areas of Southern England, with the greatest areas of concern being Dorset and Wiltshire.

165 properties were reported to have flooded across England, and we estimate that 5,548 properties were protected across the West Midlands, in the Southwest and along the Thames and in Somerset during the incident in January 2023. Local emergency response organisations, including the Environment Agency, declared a major incident in Somerset because of flood risk in the county.

### May - June 2023

Surface water flooding impacted parts of England after localised intense thundery showers on 9-10 May 2023. Areas affected included Somerset, East Devon and Essex, with an estimated 150 properties internally flooded.



A major incident was declared by Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum on 9 May 2023 following heavy thundery showers over East Somerset. Accumulated rainfall totals exceeded over 100mm in some areas, prompting evacuations. The river gauge at Weston Bampfylde recorded the highest ever recorded level (2.81m) on 9 May 2023.

There were also reports of surface water flooding across a number of areas due to intense thunderstorm activity between 9 -12 June 2023. Overall the impacts were minimal, with just a small number of properties affected.

## Our response

We worked collaboratively with partners, visited impacted locations, collected and shared valuable information, assessed impacts and causes, and provided guidance and support to affected communities. Throughout the incidents our teams were out on the ground, operating flood defences, putting up temporary and demountable barriers, closing flood gates, clearing trash screens, and reassuring local communities.



During the Dec 2022 – Jan 2023 floods we kept the government briefed. We also kept in touch with stakeholders, such as the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, National Flood Forum, National Farmers Union, Coastal Groups, Local Government Association and infrastructure organisations.

## Flood services

### Industrial action and our flood warning service

Like many public services, some of our staff are taking industrial action. Our priority is to continue to deliver the flood warning service (FWS) through any period of reduced staff availability through automating all flood alerts and flood warnings.

It is not possible for us to deliver the same level of service during periods of industrial action. Automation of the FWS has been developed as a mitigation measure. In periods where there is no industrial action, automation will be turned off and normal service levels will resume.

Automating the FWS means users will continue to receive messages and ensures we undertake our operational work, which includes putting flood barriers in place and closing gates. In response to public feedback, we have also made changes to the [GOV.UK pages](#). We have also put in place call back mechanisms for staff for significant incidents where there is threat to life.

As an innovative organisation we are always examining the use of emerging technology. If it improves the FWS we will continue to further explore through research, investigation and engagement how automation could be embedded to support our staff and benefit customers.

**Contact:** Pete Dobson, Service Manager in Flood Incident Management  
[Peter.S.Dobson@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.S.Dobson@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Flood warning expansion project exceeds targets

Our Flood Warning Expansion Project has closed after successfully delivering new flood warnings to over 78,000 homes. We exceeded the target set at the start of the project and helped the Environment Agency to fulfil an important FCERM Strategy measure.

In total, there are now over 1.6 million users registered to receive flood warnings. Over 180 communities can now get flood warnings in many places which were hard to reach.

### Flood action campaign

Our annual flood action campaign for 2022/23 was a great success. The campaign picked up significant mainstream media attention and was promoted through our partner organisations and on social media.



We also launched a [pilot campaign](#) to raise awareness, increase resilience and support communities in the flood risk areas of Grimsby (North East Lincolnshire) and Erewash (Derbyshire).

This ran from 16 January to 16 February 2023. Early results show that this campaign drove significant increases in awareness of living in a flood risk area and flood planning; and an increase in people believing their own property is at risk of flooding.

We are currently planning our flood action campaign for 2023/24, we will be able to share details on this shortly.

## Emergency alert system

The government launched the [Emergency Alert System](#) on 19 March 2023. A national test message was sent to mobile phones at 3pm on Sunday 23 April 2023.



As the government's experts on public warning and informing for emergencies, the Environment Agency has been a core part of the cross-government project team for the last 3 years.

We expect to use this new capability to complement some severe flood warnings where there is an immediate risk to life.

## Frequently flooded allowance

On 5 April 2023, Floods Minister Rebecca Pow announced the first communities in England to receive better flood protection as part of the government's £100 million [frequently flooded allowance](#).

The first 53 projects will be allocated more than £26 million in total, better protecting more than 2,300 households and businesses across the country. This ring-fenced funding is part of the record £5.2 billion investment in flood defences to better protect communities across England.

## Asset management strategy

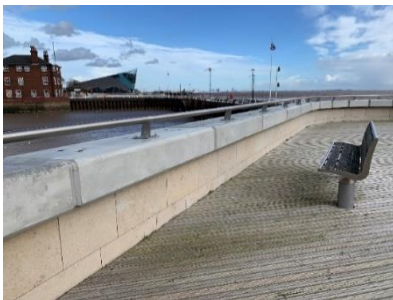
Our [new Asset Management Strategy](#) (AMS) for 2023 to 2033 was published in June 2023. The AMS vision is to have integrated asset management delivering a safe, reliable, and sustainable asset management service. It will consistently deliver on demand, enhance the environment, and help to create climate resilient places.



The improved AMS looks at outcomes for all our owned or maintained infrastructure assets. This is the first AMS to cover assets from Flood and Coastal Risk Management, Water, Land and Biodiversity, Navigation, Air Quality Monitoring, and Hydrometry & Telemetry.

## FCRM capital programme update

We are now into our third year of the current 6-year [£5.2 billion FCERM capital programme](#). Since the start of this programme in April 2021, and in partnership with other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), we have:

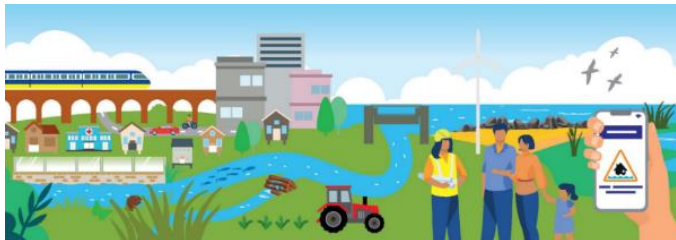


- better protected around 60,000 properties from flooding and coastal erosion
- delivered many wider benefits, including 52 schemes that contain natural flood management techniques
- protected 145,000 hectares of agricultural land
- enhanced/ improved 37 kilometres of rivers protecting 3,100 kilometres of road and rail
- successfully secured nearly £350m of partnership funding

## Delivering the FCERM strategy and roadmap

### FCERM strategy roadmap update

It is now 1 year since we published the [FCERM Strategy Roadmap](#). Together with our partners, we are continuing to make excellent progress against the commitments. We have produced **the attached document** to highlight some of the successes.



Our focus now and over the coming years is to achieve the ambitions and practical actions within the FCERM Strategy and Roadmap.

To do this we have a number of **priority projects**. Although each of these are projects within themselves, they are all connected and have one aim: to create a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change - today, tomorrow and to the year 2100. The projects are:

- **Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs)** – updating these sustainable management approaches for each stretch of the English coast and making them more accessible.
- **National Coastal Erosion Risk Maps (NCERM)** – updating the maps to include the latest climate change evidence coastal erosion predictions for England.
- **New National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA2)** – producing a new national assessment of flood risk (NaFRA2) in 2024 that will help places better plan and adapt to future risks.
- **Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes (FCIP)** - investing £200 million in 3 programmes to test and develop new ways to create a nation resilient to flooding and coastal change.
- **Property Flood Resilience (PFR) and build back better** - encouraging property owners to 'build back better' after a flood, and to use property flood resilience measures that reduces flood damage.
- **Mainstreaming Natural Flood Management (NFM)** – following the success of the NFM Pilots Programme, expanding NFM so that it is an everyday choice for all.
- **Long Term Investment Scenarios (LTIS)** – updating our LTIS to inform future policy and investment choices for delivering flood and coastal resilience.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)** – working with Defra and Natural England to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land, and ensuring the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.

**Contact:** [FCERMstrategy@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:FCERMstrategy@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Updates on selected projects

#### National flood risk assessment (NaFRA2)

In August 2024, national flood risk products will be updated following the development of our new national flood risk assessment (NaFRA2). This will result in significant improvements to: Risk of flooding from rivers and seas and surface water; Flood Zones, and the new 'Reduction of risk from flooding due to defences'.



NaFRA2 will provide an improved and wider range of flood risk information, including climate change scenarios for the first time. It will also make it easier for the Environment Agency to regularly update the flood risk information we share more easily in the future, making good use of continually improving models of flood risk.

**Contact:** [NaFRA2@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:NaFRA2@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Flood and coastal innovation programmes (FCIP)

On 17 May 2023 we launched our new magazine [Horizons](#). This online magazine shares insights into innovative approaches to flood and coastal risk management updates from our projects in our three [Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes](#).



The magazine allows you to discover the people behind the projects, and the 'what, where and how' of using a broader range of flood and coastal resilience actions to achieve climate resilient places.

The next edition is due in November 2023. You can subscribe [here](#).

## Property flood resilience (PFR) and build back better

On 22 May 2023, we launched a joint property flood resilience (PFR) consumer awareness campaign with Flood Re. The ["Be Flood Smart" campaign](#) highlights how property owners can incorporate flood resilience into their home improvements.



It is also another step towards encouraging property owners to 'build back better' after a flood, a focus within the [FCERM Strategy](#). You can read our blog [here](#).

A dedicated PFR demonstration centre was recently opened at HR Wallingford, as part of the government's £3 million investment into 3 PFR pathfinder projects.

## Biodiversity net gain (BNG)

The Environment Agency's [FCRM Strategy](#) and [Roadmap](#) set out a number of objectives for risk management authorities, to encourage environmental and biodiversity net gain (BNG) for new development to support resilience to flooding and coastal change. BNG is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land, and ensuring the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.



The government has set a statutory requirement for all development seeking permission under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) after November 2023 to deliver at least 10% BNG as measured by the biodiversity metric. This statutory requirement will apply to FCRM schemes being submitted for planning permission after November 2023. Regulations are expected to be laid before Parliament in autumn 2023, ahead of statutory BNG coming into force for most development after November 2023, and for 'small sites' in April 2024.

In February 2023 the government published its [response and summary of responses to the January 2022 consultation](#) on BNG regulations and implementation. This response leaves much to subsequent legislation, updated policy and guidance, which is still to come. We will be monitoring and interpreting this information between now and November 2023 to ensure we give clear guidance for [FCRM investment programme](#) delivery.

We will continue to update on BNG in the coming months. You can keep up to date with the latest BNG news on this [Defra blog](#).

## Working with FCERM stakeholders: January – July 2023

### Supporting flood and coast projects

On 24 April 2023 we relaunched our Investment & Partnership Funding SharePoint site as [Supporting Flood and Coast Projects](#). The purpose of the site is to make it easier for all RMAs and other partners to develop projects that improve resilience to flooding and coastal change. This site is a one-stop shop for all RMAs.

The relaunch marks the start of a programme of improvements that will simplify business case development and approval for smaller projects and make it easier to access funding. The changes being made are part of our ongoing programme of improvements to strengthen delivery of flood and coastal resilience projects and help achieve the ambitions from the [FCERM Strategy](#).

**Contact:** [FCRM\\_investment@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:FCRM_investment@environment-agency.gov.uk) or subscribe to our [SharePoint](#) site via [admin\\_FCERMprojectsupport@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:admin_FCERMprojectsupport@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Reservoir safety reform programme

The Environment Agency in partnership with Defra, are delivering the reservoir safety reform programme in response to the recommendations set out in the [Independent Reservoir Safety Review Report](#), led by Professor David Balmforth.

The programme will deliver the reforms that will be needed to ensure the regulation of reservoirs is fit for the future. Their [dedicated website](#) will provide you with all the latest information you will need on the progress of the programme.

**Contact:** [rsr\\_programme@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:rsr_programme@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### Partnership working on flood resilience

Government departments are delivering the [Greening Government Commitments](#) (which include plans for climate adaptation and delivering nature recovery) and are looking for opportunities to deliver these in partnership. We are working within government departments, including the Department for Education and Ministry of Justice (MoJ), to help our hospitals, schools, courts, prisons and other public bodies to plan for climate change.



We are assisting the MoJ in mapping current and future river, sea and surface water risks to their estate, and identifying partnership opportunities for risk reduction. We are also working with Anglian Water and the MoJ to develop a draft for a place-based approach to use public estate in partnership with water companies to reduce surface water flood risk. This builds upon the sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) in schools initiative with water companies.

For the April 2023 edition of CIWEM's 'The Environment' magazine, Paul Wyse (Environment Agency) published an article on ['How do we improve public-sector resilience?'](#)

Additionally, we are working with Barclays Bank's Aspire Programme on a 'Net Zero Flood Programme'. Barclays agreed to share our need to secure more partnership funding for our carbon, flood reducing, and biodiversity increasing schemes.

**Contact:** [Paul Wyse](#) Senior Advisor, FCRM, Strategic Partnerships Lead (Government Departments)



## National infrastructure assessment

On 9 June 2023 we responded to a survey request from the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on asset management and climate resilience. This forms part of the NICs [forthcoming National Infrastructure Assessment](#), due for publication on 18 October 2023.

The NIC would like to understand what infrastructure asset operators know about the costs of maintaining their existing assets despite climate change related risks by 2050. The NIC will use this information to make recommendations to government at national level on what it needs to do to prepare the UK's infrastructure for future climate change.

## National Audit Office study of resilience to flood risk update

The National Audit Office (NAO) has begun a study to consider how we and Defra are improving resilience to flood risk. This is part of their 4 to 5 year cycle of audits to assess our performance over the previous spending period. The NAO study considers whether Defra and the Environment Agency's approach to managing flood risk is likely to deliver value for money.

The NAO are currently gathering information and interviewing our staff. They are also liaising with other RMAs. The report is expected to be published in autumn 2023.

## Cambridge Centre for Smart Infrastructure's Carbon Code

Our application to the [Cambridge Centre for Smart Infrastructure's \(CSIC\) Carbon Code](#) has been assessed to be compliant to a "Champion" level. This is the highest level of compliance.



The Code provides a simple way for organisations to demonstrate their commitment high standards of carbon management to their clients or supply chain. We will be working with CSIC and Defra Comms to coordinate any media around the announcement.

## Events: January - July 2023

### 70th anniversary of the east coast floods: 31 January 2023

On 31 January 2023 we commemorated the tragic events around the [70th anniversary of the 1953 East Coast Tidal Surge](#). In January 1953, the coastline was hit by the worst flooding in living memory, with 307 people tragically killed, 24,500 homes damaged or destroyed and over 30,000 people evacuated.



A BBCR4 documentary '[learning from the Great Tide](#)' was broadcast featuring an interview with Caroline Douglass, Executive Director for Flood and Coastal Risk Management. Our East Anglia team joined a commemoration event at Kings Lynn, and many flood barriers were lit in green to help commemorate the anniversary and those that lost their lives.

## Coastal Futures Conference: 25-26 January 2023

Caroline Douglass and Chair of the Environment Agency, Alan Lovell spoke at the [Coastal Futures](#) conference from 25-26 January 2023.



Caroline spoke on the need for communities to adapt to a changing coastline, and Alan's speech covered the publication of the [State of the Environment Marine Report](#).

## Coastal Practitioners Conference: 7-8 February 2023

Between 7-8 February 2023 we brought together the annual Coastal Practitioners Conference in Portsmouth, and the final conference for the Anglo-French 'Promoting Adaptation to Changing Coasts' (PACCo) project. This was an important occasion to bring the coastal practitioner community together to network, share learning and develop new ideas.

## Keeping Our Rivers Flowing summit: 29 March 2023

Alongside the Association of Drainage Authorities, the Country, Land and Business Association and the National Farmers' Union (NFU), we convened and attended the [Keeping Our Rivers Flowing summit](#) on 29 March 2023. The conference sought to highlight the importance of river management across whole catchments throughout England, with the theme this year of 'Adapting to our Changing Climate'.

## Flood and Coast Conference: 6-8 June 2023

The [Flood and Coast](#) Conference 2023 took place from 6-8 June at Telford, attended by an estimated 2000 delegates. It was convened by the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM). The Environment Agency led the first day, with the second and third days led by the Rivers' Trust and Association of SUDs Authorities.



The themes for 2023 were: Day one - Flooding and coastal erosion risk management in a changing climate; Day two - Nature-based solutions: scaling up ambition, evidence and delivery; and Day three - Surface water management for people, places and the environment.

Caroline Douglass chaired the opening session, with Minister Rebecca Pow, and [Alan Lovell](#) giving keynote speeches, highlighting the progress made towards our FCERM Strategy objectives and the Strategy Roadmap.

Our interactive area known as the Innovation Hub received many visitors to a showcase of digital innovation such as Rivercraft, engineering excellence and community resilience and adaptation. We also had a bespoke programme for our international guests.

A highlight of the conference was the [Flood and Coast Excellence Awards](#) and Women in FCRM Awards ceremony.

## Innovation: January – July 2023

### Rivercraft 2: the game engaging young people on flood risk

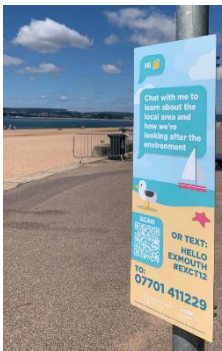
On 25 April 2023 we launched [Rivercraft 2](#) in partnership with Microsoft and developers BlockBuilders. Rivercraft 2 aims to engage young people on flood risk reduction, climate change and biodiversity. Rivercraft 2 is available on the Minecraft Education Edition, and comprises three games on: nature-based solutions; farming, irrigation and drought; and sustainable drainage systems.



It follows the success of the original games, rolled out in April 2022, which is based on the £54.7 million flood risk management scheme in Preston and South Ribble. The original games have been played by around 27,000 young people and teachers in the UK.

### Hello Environment Agency

We have been working with [Hello Lamp Post](#) on several engagement pilots in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (DCIS), and North East Areas. 'Hello Lamp Post' is an innovative technology platform designed to engage with the public in physical locations. It encourages signup to flood warnings and gathers feedback on schemes. a flood risk trail around the city of Newcastle.



The pilots demonstrated that using this technology can achieve significant savings in engagement and carbon costs. The platform has allowed us to engage with more people and reach a more diverse audience.

## International: January – July 2023

### 10th annual World Ocean Summit: 28 February 2023

On 28 February 2023, Caroline Douglass attended the [10<sup>th</sup> annual World Ocean Summit](#) in Lisbon. This annual global event aims to bring together a wide cross-section of the ocean community from business and finance to governments, national and international policy-makers, civil society and academia.

Caroline took part in a panel session on "How should cities engage with the ocean to mitigate climate change?" Caroline wrote a blog for the Summit on [Making England's coastline more resilient in the face of climate change \(economist.com\)](#).

### Emergency equipment to Ukraine: June 2023

On 15 June 2023 an emergency convoy of lorries carrying [donated flood equipment](#) left the UK for Ukraine, following the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka dam. Our donated equipment will offer a significant capability to pump water out of flooded areas and protect from further flooding in Southern Ukraine.



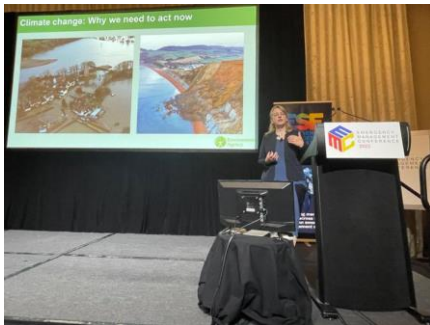
The equipment includes 3 high volume pumps, 6 mobile pumps that can be used to pump water out of affected areas, and 15km of temporary barriers.

Flooding from the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka dam is having an untold impact on over 42,000 people in the Kherson area. The floods submerged an estimated 100,000 hectares of agricultural area, important for grain and oil seed production.

The convoy, which left from Kent Fire and Rescue Service, included 19 rescue boats and more than 2,000 items of flood recovery equipment. This donation builds on the government's existing humanitarian support of £220 million, which is allowing partners, such as the Ukraine Red Cross, to help evacuate civilians affected by the flooding.

### Melbourne visit – flood risk and emergency management: July 2023

On 4 July 2023, Caroline Douglass delivered the keynote speech at the [Emergency Management Conference](#) in Melbourne. The conference theme was “Navigating risks and consequences: Emergency Management at the centre of global megatrends”.



Caroline's speech focussed on our story of flood risk and incident management, from the 1953 east coast floods to present day. You can watch Caroline's conference speech [here](#).

As part of the visit, Caroline also met a range of government organisations with a shared interest in flood risk and emergency management including: the Department for Energy, Environment and Climate Action and the Office of the Inspector-General for Emergency Management in Victoria.

### FCERM publications and announcements: January – July 2023

#### Working together to adapt to a changing climate - flood and coast

On 15 February 2023 we published a research project which explored how authorities can work with communities on future planning and decision-making to help reduce flood and coastal erosion risk in the face of climate change. You can view the 'working together to adapt to changing climate: flood and coast' virtual launch on [You Tube](#). The [Working together](#) GOV.UK page provides more information about the project.

#### Climate change and fluvial flood peaks

On 6 March 2023 we published a report on '[Climate change and fluvial flood peaks](#)'. This important project began in 2016 and generated new projections of how river flood peaks may change due to climate change. These projections were then used as the basis for the [peak river flow allowances](#) for use in flood risk assessments which were published in July 2021. The report is also referenced in the [Environment Agency's Chief Scientist's annual review 2022](#), published on 7 March 2023.

#### Scoping research to improve dam and levee breach prediction

On 22 March 2023 we published an [overview of levee and soil based dam breaches](#) to identify future research needs. This scoping study aims to improve dam and levee safety through better breach prediction.

## Identifying and managing risks arising from defence structure transitions

On 22 March 2023 we published [guidance](#) on how to identify, assess and manage the effects of transition zones on the performance of flood defences. This will help flood risk management authorities prioritise improvements to reduce flood risk.

**Contact:** Sign up to alerts on our [GOV.UK pages](#) to receive all the latest FCERM research news.

## Flood and coastal erosion risk management annual report 2021/22

On 17 March 2023 we published our latest [Flood and coastal erosion risk management annual report](#). This report is a summary of flood and coastal erosion risk management work carried out by risk management authorities (RMAs) in England.

The report describes the extensive work undertaken by all RMAs to manage the risks from flooding and coastal erosion, and to achieve the objectives of the FCERM Strategy. We aim to publish the 2022/23 report this autumn.

**Contact:** [FCRMNC@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:FCRMNC@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Environment and historic environment outcomes valuation guidance

The new Environmental and Historic Outcomes Valuation Guidance (EHOV) was [published](#) on 21 March 2023. This guidance shows you how to calculate the impact of your flood and coastal erosion risk management projects on the natural and historic environment. It also provides a tool to calculate a monetary value of the impact.

**Contact:** [fcrm\\_investment@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:fcrm_investment@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Water supply reservoirs - their role in flood risk management

On 28 March 2023 we [published](#) an operating framework on Water supply reservoirs: their role in flood risk management. The operating framework will help decide which water supply reservoirs can provide flood risk management benefits; enable consistent local decision making; and support engagement between the Environment Agency, water companies and other partners

## Collaborative delivery framework to continue

On 13 April 2023 we announced that the collaborative delivery framework (CDF) has been extended to 2027. Launched in 2019, the CDF formed new supplier arrangements and partnerships to increase efficiency, generate value for money and underline the green legacy of the £5.2 billion capital investment programme. The CDF will also support the delivery target of better protecting hundreds of thousands of properties from coastal erosion and flooding.

## Environment Agency newsletter

On 11 May 2023 we launched our [first edition](#) of the Environment Agency Newsletter. The [second edition](#) was published on 27 July. This new bi-monthly publication is designed to provide an overview of the Environment Agency's work. Over 900 stakeholders, including members of Parliament and Lords currently receive it.

Each edition will cover the latest news across all aspects of our work, including flood and coastal risk management, water, waste crime, and regulation. The first edition focussed on our role as a Category 1 emergency responder, and the second edition has a foreword from our new Chief Executive Philip Duffy.

You can sign up to the newsletter [here](#). Please share this through your networks and encourage others to subscribe.

## Current Magazine and Innovation Supplement

The new editions of Current Magazine and Innovation Supplement are now online and are free to read. They include articles looking closely at how the Environment Agency is responding to the Net Zero challenge through our projects.

Current Magazine, produced by the Environment Agency, features an introduction to incoming CEO Philip Duffy, a look at the extension announced for the Collaborative Delivery Framework and an article about the award-winning Rivercraft project.



Innovation Supplement shines a light on the ways our Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management teams are pushing the boundaries to deliver outcomes. Articles in this edition include a focus on the evolution of the Environment Agency's Net Zero Carbon Innovation Pathway Fund.

If you would like to access the Innovation Supplement and the sister Current Magazine and previous editions, please subscribe to our [LinkedIn Group](#).

## Other publications and announcements: January – July 2023

### Sustainable drainage systems: Enactment of schedule 3 of the Floods Act

On 10 January 2023, the government published [a review into the implementation of schedule 3 of The Flood and Water Management Act 2010](#). The review recommends that sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) be mandatory to new developments in England. This will reduce the risk of surface water flooding, pollution and help alleviate the pressures on our traditional drainage and sewerage systems.

### Environmental land management scheme

On 26 January 2023, Defra announced further details on the [Environmental Land Management \(ELM\) scheme](#). Key commitments include increasing resilience to flooding and drought through nature-based solutions. The update also highlights potential flood risk elements of existing schemes, such as restoring over 400 miles of rivers through the plans for the Landscape Recovery programme.

### Environmental improvement plan

On 31 January 2023 the government published its [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#) (EIP). The plan revises and builds on the [25 Year Environment Plan \(25YEP\)](#) and sets out the progress made against the government's 10 goals for improving the environment. The Environment Agency has a significant role in delivering the EIP, for example, the goal to deliver our investment plan to improve coastal and flood defences.

### Chief scientist's annual review

On 7 March 2023, the second [Environment Agency's Chief Scientist's Annual Review](#) was published. The review contains case studies highlighting the role of the Chief Scientist's Group and of science and evaluation across the Environment Agency's remit. Each is placed within the context of EA2025 to demonstrate how science supports our work, how we use data analysis and evaluation to improve decision making, and where we are looking to the future. Case Studies relevant to FCERM include research on flood risk, coastal erosion and impacts of future storm surges; an interactive tool to predict future flood risk and going global to understand extreme events.

## Plan for water: an integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water

On 3 April 2023, the government published its [new plan](#) for cleaner and more plentiful water. The plan sets out the actions the government will take to: transform management of the water system; clean up the water environment; and create a sustainable supply of water for people, businesses and nature. The actions include better integrating water and flood planning, targeting actions where they will deliver the greatest impact for water quality, flood management, and nature recovery.

## National lowland agricultural peat task force report

On 29 June 2023, the government [published a response](#) to the lowland agricultural peat taskforce (LAPTF) report – known as the Caudwell report. The report includes: the publication of the LAPTF report; the government response; and the successful grant applicants to the [Paludiculture Exploration Fund](#) (PEF) - a system of profitable farming of peat soils under wetter conditions often managed by raising the water table. Natural England are leading on the delivery of the PEF.

The report reflects the advice of many experts in the field including Julie Foley, Director of Strategy and National Adaptation. The report findings combined with further research and development provide useful support and incentives to farmers looking to transition to more climate friendly farming of peat soils. This is set out in our [FCERM Strategy](#) and [Roadmap](#).

## Reservoir safety biennial report

On 14 July 2023 we [published](#) our latest Reservoir safety biennial report. It sets out the actions we have taken to ensure compliance with the Reservoirs Act 1975 (the Act).

**Contact:** [reservoirs@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:reservoirs@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## National adaptation programme 2023 – 2028

On 17 July 2023 the government published its third [National Adaptation Programme \(NAP3\)](#). This sets out a strategic 5-year plan to boost resilience and protect people, homes, businesses and our cultural heritage against climate change risks such as flooding, drought and heatwaves. It follows the [national climate risk assessment](#) published last year.

The Environment Agency has provided technical advice to Defra and other government departments on the new programme, but ministers have decided its overall ambition and actions. The programme highlights the leading role that our work on flooding, water and nature plays in national climate resilience. Many of the prominent commitments in the programme are based on our work. The Environment Agency [set out its own climate risks and adaptation strategy](#) in 2021.

## The Fens – preserving the ‘breadbasket of Britain’

The Fens and Coastal lowlands, located across parts of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire is 5000km<sup>2</sup> hectares of historically swamp, marsh and wetland. It is managed by the Environment Agency and Internal drainage boards (IDB's). As the Fens and coastal lowlands are very low lying, continuous ‘flood risk management’ is required.

We are launching [Fens 2100+](#). This is a new programme of work to enable the Fens to adapt to the challenges of climate change both now and into the future. This work will look at the ‘adaptive approach’ needed to manage this catchment to balance the needs of people, the environment and agriculture for the next 100 years.

## Flood scheme openings and updates: January – July 2023

### Flood protection measures in York

In March 2023 the Environment Agency [announced](#) an investment of £1million to install Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures to over 100 homes and businesses in York which are at risk of flooding.



The scheme will install measures such as flood barriers, non-return valves, self-closing air bricks and pumps which help to reduce the risk of water entering people's homes during a flood. The installation of these products will run until December 2023.

### West Kirby flood alleviation scheme, Wirral

On 11 May 2023 the [final construction phase](#) of the coastal £19 million West Kirby flood alleviation scheme on the Wirral was completed.



The scheme is 1km long, with a 1.2m high sea wall (resembling a wave), and will protect 70 properties at risk of flooding now from extreme tidal events, and give more than 500 properties improved protection over the next century.

The scheme is a successful partnership between Wirral Council, the Environment Agency, Volkerstevin, and AECOM.

### Updated Thames Estuary 2100 plan

On 17 May 2023 we published an updated [Thames Estuary 2100 plan](#) following a full review. A stakeholder event was held at City Hall in London to launch the plan.

Our Chair, Alan Lovell, and Baroness Brown spoke at this event, outlining the plan's key messages.



The plan sets out how we aim to protect more than 1.4 million people and £321 billion of property from both the existing risks faced from tidal flooding, as well as the growing risks that climate change will bring.



## Matlock flood wall, Derbyshire

On 23 May 2023 a flood wall to better protect 50 homes and businesses from flooding from the River Derwent was [completed](#). It followed the collapse of a privately owned wall that was damaged after the February 2022 floods.



Over 200 cubic metres of low-carbon concrete has been poured to construct the Matlock flood wall, with approximately 8 tonnes of steel reinforcement.

The Environment Agency are working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council on this project.

## Perry Barr and Witton flood alleviation scheme, Birmingham

On 6 June 2023, the Environment Agency officially completed the £50 million [Perry Barr and Witton flood alleviation scheme](#).



The scheme will better protect more than 1,400 properties - including 950 homes - in the Perry Barr and Witton area of Birmingham.

This major project has seen the construction of a new flood storage reservoir at Forge Mill in the Sandwell Valley Country Park. Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council have supported the project.

## Padiham flood alleviation scheme, Lancashire

On 5 July 2023 the Environment Agency [completed](#) works on the flood defence wall behind the Town Hall in Padiham, Lancashire.



The improvement works will provide an increased standard of protection to Padiham.

The flood risk management scheme will better protect over 150 homes, businesses, public buildings and key infrastructure in central Padiham.

## Hexham flood alleviation scheme, Northumberland

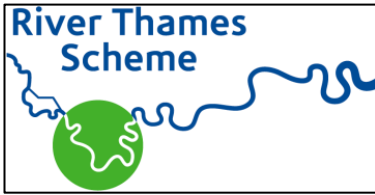
The £6.5 million Hexham industrial estates [flood alleviation scheme](#) is due to be completed during summer 2023. The scheme will better protect up to 90 properties from the flood risk posed by the River Tyne and Skinnersburn.



In a UK first, we have worked with, BAM Nuttall, Arup and Tarmac to successfully trial the use of two [low carbon concrete mixes](#). Using low carbon concrete will improve Hexham's resilience to the changing climate while also playing an important part of our steps towards net zero targets.

## The River Thames Scheme

The [River Thames Scheme \(RTS\)](#) is a landscape-based approach to reducing flood risk and delivering environmental improvements for communities in the largest area of populated but undefended flood plain in England.



A pioneering collaboration between the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council, the scheme redefines partnership working and, with the borough councils, will deliver for communities across Surrey and Southwest London.

## Other FCERM news: January – July 2023

### Consultation on regional flood and coastal committee (RFCC) membership and boundary change

In July 2021, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced the government's decision to take forward proposals to reorganise local authorities in Cumbria, North Yorkshire, and Somerset from April 2023. The changes mean a change to the Constituent Authority Membership of 3 RFCCs in: North West RFCC (covering Cumbria); Yorkshire RFCC (covering North Yorkshire); Wessex RFCC (covering Somerset).

The changes meant that new councils would come into existence in April 2023. There were no proposed changes to the number of LLFA members or independent members to the RFCCs, but we were required under legislation to consult on any potential changes.

We also consulted on proposed changes to correct an incorrect boundary for the English Severn and Wye RFCC. We consulted on the proposed changes between 27 September to 8 November 2022 on GOV.UK. The changes were approved by the minister of state. A [summary of the responses](#) has been published on GOV.UK

### RFCC acting chair appointment

On 19 April 2023 [Defra announced](#) the appointment of Robert Pearce as the new acting chair for the English Severn and Wye RFCC. This was following Shirel Stedman standing down after almost 15 years' service to the RFCC, formerly the Trent RFCC.

### 'Washed Away' play

On a cold and overcast weekend in March 2023, theatre production company 'Theatre Space' lit up Middlesbrough High Street with productions of 'Washed Away.' Commissioned by our north east flood resilience team, 'Washed Away' invited audience members to choose an item and experience the joy, the sadness and diversity behind each irreplaceable possession lost and damaged by flood water.



Alex Scaife, Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor said: "It's been incredibly exciting to work with Theatre Space to bring 'Washed Away' to the people of Middlesbrough. This ambitious production aims to challenge the audience and asks some important questions on how they would respond if a flood was forecast ... 'Washed Away' has people reflecting and debating on the steps they can take to Prepare, Act and Survive."

**Contact:** [Alex Scaife](#) Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor – North East

## Slow the flow films

Our 'Wild ideas about flooding' animations have won the Learn on Screen Educational Film Award. Made in collaboration with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and StudioDOK, the hand-crafted stop motion films highlight the benefits of natural flood management and how it can help protect homes, businesses, and farms.



The short films explain how we can slow the flow and help defend our communities from flood water. You can watch the films [here](#).

## Ways to keep in touch with our work

- FCRM updates on [GOV.UK](#)
- Follow on [Twitter](#)
- Follow on [Facebook](#)
- Follow on [YouTube](#)
- Follow on [Flickr](#)
- Follow on [Creating a better place blog](#)
- Follow on [LinkedIn](#)
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**Environment Agency**

**National FCRM Business and Stakeholder Management Team**

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July 2023