

Appendix A

Responsibilities for flood risk management and associated activities

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has overall policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk in England. Defra funds most of the Environment Agency's flood management activities in England and provides grant aid on a project by project basis to the other flood and coastal defence operating authorities.

The Environment Agency performs the lead role in providing flood risk management, with permissive powers to carry out flood defence works on main rivers and sea defences across England and Wales. It is our responsibility to supervise, carry out general operations and undertake capital maintenance works on coasts and main rivers. Flood warning is provided by the Environment Agency as a duty, set out in the Agency Charter, 2001.

However, reducing flood risk calls for collaboration with local planning authorities, landowners, local communities and professional partners in order to:

- understand current and future flood risk
- plan for the likely impacts of climate change
- prevent inappropriate development in flood risk areas
- deliver more sustainable measures to reduce flood risk and
- explore the wider opportunities to reduce the sources of flood risk, including changes in land use and land management practices and the use of sustainable drainage systems.

Therefore, while the Environment Agency have taken the lead in preparing this CFMP, we have worked in conjunction and consultation with other authorities, organisations and groups, in order that all these parties can adopt the plan as a way forward for flood risk management in the catchment.

Our partners have a crucial role to play in reducing risks associated with flooding from rivers, surface drainage and drainage systems and in emergency response, awareness raising and education. For example, while we have powers to undertake flood management work on 'main' river, similar powers for 'ordinary' watercourses lie with the Local Authorities. During a flood, they are also the emergency body responsible for providing guidance and assistance to householders.

Riparian owners have the right to protect their property from flooding and their land from erosion but also a responsibility to accept flows through their land and maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse, including clearing debris.

Water Companies supply water and sewerage and have responsibilities to prevent flooding arising from their operations. Highway Authorities have powers to clear the highway, drain the highway and keep water off the highway.

Influencing land use planning to prevent inappropriate development within the floodplain is clearly a major thrust of both Government policy and Environment Agency's flood risk management objectives. Defra cites "*Discouraging inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding*" as one of their top three mechanisms for flood risk reduction, and the Environment Agency is seeking to become statutory consultees on flood risk by Autumn 2006.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has issued guidance in relation to flood risk and planning (entitled PPG25, to be replaced by PPS25 in Summer 2006), which stipulates a "risk based sequential search" for assessing the location of development within the catchment. This philosophy steers the approach of planning authorities to land use allocation, and has a significant impact on development at both local and regional scale. It is therefore essential that the CFMP is compatible with as well as supportive of this process.

It should be noted however, that the CFMP does not replace a strategic flood risk assessment, which is a more detailed assessment of flood risk in relation to development and planning.

The CFMP is a critical building block in the framework for flood risk management, being driven by Government goals and objectives, the Environment Agency's vision for the future, and local and regional planning structures and requirements. The aspirations set out within the CFMP will be derived from these Government and European statutory and moral obligations.