



Norfolk County Council

via e-mail

C/o
Community and Environmental Services
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich, Norfolk
NR1 2DH

Date: 14th May 2021

Email: water.management@norfolk.gov.uk
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Dear Colleague,

I am writing to update you on the progress of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) which was set up in February this year after significant surface water flooding issues in Norfolk in December 2020. In these latest floods over 260 properties were flooded and 120 settlements effected. As you know Norfolk has considerable flood-related challenges when we have extreme weather events, and these are occurring more frequently as our climate changes. There are a large number of organisations who hold responsibilities to do with flood and water management within the county. Creating a coherent and joined up approach is without doubt the key contribution the Alliance can make, and is an objective that is supported across all partners. To date we have held three board meetings attended by over twenty organisations and set up a number of working groups looking at specific issues.

Drafting a new flooding strategy for Norfolk

A draft strategy is currently being developed to reduce flood risk and improve water management. It articulates the purpose of the Alliance as partners working together so that *Norfolk communities and infrastructure are safer and more resilient to the risks of inland and coastal flooding, and better placed to ensure adequate water supplies during droughts*. Inland and Coastal tactical groups are being established to support the work of the Alliance and are building on existing partnerships, such as Coastal Partnership East and Water Resources East, where possible. The strategy will be supported by a detailed action plan setting out dates and lead organisations against each action.

Improving emergency response to flooding

As well as coalescing around strategic matters, the group has also spent some time examining how we can improve our collective response when flooding occurs. Norfolk

County Council (NCC) has agreed to launch a flooding hotline that will be staffed 24/7 to ensure residents know where to go to get help in an emergency. We aim to have this new service up and running by the end of May. NCC will sending out a leaflet to every household in Norfolk advertising the new number with advice on how to prepare for extreme weather, as well as using social media and an improved online offer giving information and advice. The group has also been working with Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) to establish better ways of working in an emergency. The NRF has committed to work with Parish Councils providing training to help improve local resilience and assistance in updating local emergency plans. Lastly, at the request of the NSFA, the NRF will carry out a flooding exercise in the Autumn to ensure the improvements to flood response are working.

Funding

Once the strategy is finalised and agreed by all partners, it will be used to build a clear and unified case for increased funding for flood mitigation and water management projects in Norfolk. As part of this the Alliance is drawing up a prioritised list of places that suffer from persistent flooding problems that have historically been unresolved. Alliance members have agreed to work together to identify technical solutions and the cost of these schemes will be built into the funding case.

I hope you will agree that the Alliance has made considerable advances in a short time. If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Dannatt

General The Lord Dannatt GCBCBE MC DL
Chair, Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance