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# Flood Risk Management Strategy

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Summary Document  
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Development, Transport & Public Protection  
Communities & Environment

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**Prepared by:**

Gateshead Council  
Development, Transport & Public Protection

**For further information, please contact:**

Highway & Flood Risk Management Team  
Communities & Environment  
Civic Centre  
Regent Street  
Gateshead  
NE8 1HH

**Tel:** 0191 433 3125

**Email:** [flooding@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:flooding@gateshead.gov.uk)

**Online:** [www.gateshead.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/flooding)

**Cover Image:** Ryton Willows by Carl Hodgson

## Revision Table

Version	Date	Amendments
Version 1	13/01/16	Amended for internal consultation
Version 2	22/03/16	Amended following comments from internal consultation and policy advisory group
Version 3	24/03/16	Layout & grammar amendments for public consultation
Version 4	02/02/17	Final strategy adopted as approved by Council

## Introduction

Since the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) Gateshead Council as the lead local flood authority (LLFA) has a responsibility for managing flood risk within the borough.

The flood risk management strategy (FRMS) outlines the Council's responsibilities as the LLFA and how these are to be delivered through a number of policies. The document also outlines the responsibilities of other risk management parties including Northumbrian Water, the Environment Agency, the highway authority and landowners.

## Policies and Legislation

The FRMS takes into consideration national legislation such as the FWMA and the Land Drainage Act 1990 in addition to regional and local policies including the council's Vision 2030 and Core Strategy documents.

While national framework outlines legal responsibilities and duties of LLFA's and others, local documents must also be considered to ensure flood risk does not have a detrimental affect on the borough.

## Responsibilities of the LLFA

As the LLFA there are six main duties the council must perform, these are to give a strategic overview of flood risk management and ensure any incidents, or works to reduce the risk of flooding are planned and coordinated between responsible parties:

*a duty to produce a flood risk management strategy;*

*a duty to cooperate with other RMA's;*

*a duty to maintain a register of flood risk assets;*

*a duty to promote sustainable drainage;*

*a duty to investigate flooding incidents;*

*power to consent works in ordinary watercourses.*

In addition to these duties the LLFA are also a statutory consultee of the local planning authority.

## Other Council responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities the Council has as the LLFA, there are a number of other responsibilities related to flood risk as the highway authority, planning authority and also responsibilities related to emergency planning. These are outlined in the full document and have been taken into consideration when developing the policies within the document.

## Other responsible parties

In addition to the Council there are others with responsibilities related to flood risk management, while other risk management authorities such as the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water have similar responsibilities as the LLFA, landowners also have rights and responsibilities summarised below.

### Northumbrian Water (NW)

Northumbrian Water is the regional water company responsible for the supply of water and management of the public sewer network within the

region and has a responsibility to manage flood risk relating to these.

### Highway Authority

The highway authority has the responsibility to drain surface water from the highway. While the majority of adopted highway is the responsibility of Gateshead Council, trunk roads such as the A1 and A194(m) are the responsibility of Highways England.

### Environment Agency (EA)

The Environment Agency is the main body for improving and protecting the environment nationally, including the management of flood risk and the strategic overview of all forms of flooding. They are responsible for the management of flood risk from main rivers and coastal flooding.

### Landowners

Landowners are responsible for managing watercourses, surface water and groundwater through their land. They have a duty to accept natural flow of these and must not deliberately discharge water through channeling or hard standing areas.

## Objectives of the Strategy

To meet the responsibilities of the LLFA and Council policies, eight main outcome measures have been identified giving clear direction for the delivery of the strategy and what is required from the Council:

*Work with local communities, stakeholders and developers to deliver sustainable, good value solutions through a variety of funding sources to reduce the risk of flooding.*

*Take a proactive approach to investigating flooding incidents, raise awareness of the risks and responsibilities associated with flooding.*

*Develop and sustain a knowledge base on flood risk and sustainable drainage to provide a point of expert advice for local residents, businesses, stakeholders and developers.*

*Obtain and share information on existing drainage and flood risk assets by developing and maintaining a register of such, ensuring existing infrastructure is correctly maintained and functional.*

*Work with key partners involved in flood risk in the borough and neighboring authorities to develop sustainable and practical medium term plans.*

*Ensure flood risk poses minimal impact on critical infrastructure or potential economic growth opportunities.*

*Ensure Flood Risk poses minimal negative impact on the local and natural environment, encouraging enhancement wherever possible.*

*Ensure new developments do not have a detrimental effect on the drainage network, encourage sustainable drainage systems and further mitigation measures where required*

## Strategy Policies

To deliver these outcomes there are a total of twenty two policies within the strategy, these fall into four main sub categories and summarised below.

### Informing and Investigating

These policies outline how the Council will raise awareness of flood risk and investigate reported flooding incidents. They have strong involvement with the local community and set a standard for the investigation process:

*Develop Council website and explore the use of social media to give good management information, advice and support*

*Develop a flooding investigation protocol with a clear and defined reporting system*

*Undertake work with local communities to raise awareness of flood risk and mitigation methods*

*Promote proactive flood mitigation approaches and offer informal advice through local media, events and Council buildings*

*Work with partners to ensure infrastructure and properties are protected against flooding*

*Raise awareness of flood warning systems, Met Office warning systems and other toolkits available to those potentially at risk from flooding*

*Ensure Council officers, members and other Council services are aware of the responsibilities of the LLFA and processes*

*Develop internal knowledge on flood risk management, mitigation methods and other relevant training to deliver a high level of service*

### Managing Risk, Infrastructure and Assets

The following policies develop a proactive approach to infrastructure related to flooding and critical risk areas. They involve working with other authorities and help to identify areas most at risk from flooding:

*Work with resilience and emergency services to integrate flood risk into the emergency planning process*

*Develop a flood asset register, determining the ownership responsibility condition and risk of critical infrastructure*

*Work with other risk management authorities, riparian owners and other responsible parties to develop asset management plans and maintenance cycles*

*Work with other risk management authorities, riparian owners and other responsible parties to develop asset management plans and maintenance cycles for water courses*

*Develop a reactive sandbag policy which conforms to the needs of the local resilience forum*

## Planning and environmental opportunities

These policies support the LLFA's role in the planning process and outline how a proactive approach to reducing flood risk and improving the natural environment will be taken for all sizes of development.

*Integrate sustainable drainage into the new development process to a level which exceeds current standards*

*Work with developers and the Council's planning service to ensure that drainage and flood risk are considered throughout the development process*

*Develop a process to manage and reduce private hard standing areas having a negative impact on drainage systems*

*Investigate opportunities to open up culverts and restore natural banks when changing waterways, providing flood defenses or as part of new development*

## Joint working and medium term mitigation

The following policies look at future opportunities for areas with a flooding history or known flood risk, working with others can give opportunities to fund major flood risk schemes and other initiatives.

*Identify funding opportunities for householders and businesses to prepare their properties against the risk of flooding*

*Share information with other RMAs on flooding incidents to develop and maintain a flood incident register*

*Develop a medium term plan for surface water management and*

*flood mitigation schemes where there is a flooding history*

*Work with other RMAs to identify potential joint working opportunities to reduce flood risk*

*Ensure external funding opportunities are known and applied for where possible*

*Work with neighboring local authorities to take a regional and consistent approach to flood risk*

## Delivering the strategy

Following the implementation of the strategy annual overviews will be published on the Council website, these will provide information on flooding incidents in the borough, completed or proposed mitigation works and how we are delivering our duties as the LLFA.

In addition to this a number of documents will also be produced to support the strategy, these at present include:

*Sustainable drainage supplementary planning document;*

*Flooding investigation protocol;*

*Flood asset protocol;*

*Customer information on flood risk management*