

Dear Clerk

Huntingdonshire District Council Flooding Review

I am sure you will share our concern at the increasing number of local flood events we have seen in Huntingdonshire over recent years. Whilst we are not the lead flood authority, which is a role that Cambridgeshire County Council hold, following the events of last Christmas, Huntingdonshire District Council convened a dedicated review of local flood arrangements with all key partners to ensure that all possible steps were being taken to prevent future flooding events and the significant impacts they have for our residents and communities.

With this review concluded we are writing to you today to outline what we have done since the flood events last Christmas, and to:

- a. update you on the recommendations that the Huntingdonshire District Council Flooding Review made, and in line with these recommendations:
- b. ask you to promote and publicise the key flooding advice and information through your own information channels.
- c. if you have not already, and if flooding is an issue for your community, to engage as a matter of priority with the County Council on their offer of support in establishing local flood groups, and a clear flood plan for your community.

The Flooding Review, which was Chaired by Councillor Darren Tysoe, involved key partners including Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Lead Flood Authority, the Environment Agency (with responsibility for major rivers), and Anglian Water as our local water company. It also built on the back of a series of local community flood events we ran with affected communities in the immediate aftermath of the Christmas events, which involved local Members, parish councils and other key stakeholders.

This process was of vital importance to us in our community leadership role as a District Council.

This is particularly important as unfortunately our powers, and therefore funding in relation to flooding, do not extend beyond responsibility for housing any residents who are unable to remain in their home during a flooding event, and the ongoing repair of water courses which we own, or which have been directly awarded to us.

The recommendations that the flooding group arrived at are listed below, but you can find a full copy of the report on our website. The Task and Finish panel recommended that:

- a) **links to flooding advice are publicised through the District Council's own communication channels and forwarded to all town and parish councils;**
- b) **the Council works with the County Council to support the establishment and running of local flood groups as a means to develop community resilience against future flooding and as an important additional source of information for forecasting flooding;**
- c) **a study be undertaken by a group of technical experts to understand fully the causes of floods linked to climate change, to look at the issue of cumulative impacts and to make a series of recommendations to feed into the next SPD document review, ensuring the refreshed document responds to changing realities and technology;**
- d) **the Council work with Cambridgeshire County Council and other partners to create a case conference system to evaluate technical advice on flood mitigation on those most complex applications;**
- e) **partners investigate the development of a joint drainage and wastewater management plan, and;**
- f) **that the Council support the County Council in its project to map local water courses and call for this mapping activity to begin with Huntingdonshire.**

Progress is being made on all of these, but there are two recommendations that we wanted to draw to your attention, and to seek your support on as a parish: firstly, awareness of information and advice, both in how to prepare for a possible future flood event, and in monitoring if one is imminent, were found to be critical factors in limiting the impacts of flooding events. The District Council's flood advice page has been updated and contains several useful links: <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/>.

Other information can be found in the links below, and we would ask you all to promote this information and make it available on your websites and via the other channels you have, to make sure your community is aware of the risks, and steps they can take to minimise these.

- How to plan for flooding - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/planahead-for-flooding>
- What to do in a flood - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/what-to-do-in-a-flood>
- What to do before, during and after a flood - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/403213/LIT_5216.pdf
- Prepare for flooding <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding/future-flooding>

In addition to this, we are determined as your District Councillors to ensure you are aware of the support that the County Council is offering to support communities to develop local flood groups and plans. If you have not already, please can we ask you to engage with this process, which will help your community to better understand the risks, how to address these, and to develop a plan that will enable your communities to minimise the impacts to your community and its residents in the event of a flood incident.

To accompany this, the County Council is offering a series of online training events over the course of October and November. These are aimed at those looking to form, or who have recently formed, a local flood group. Times, dates, and links to sign up can be found here:

12 October, 6:00-8:15 pm – Cambridgeshire: Incident Management - https://bit.ly/CambsCP_IM
 19 October, 6:00-8:15 pm – Cambridgeshire: Flood Volunteer - https://bit.ly/CambsCP_flood
 26 October, 6:00-8:00 pm – Cambridgeshire: CEV Coordinator - https://bit.ly/CambsCP_CEV
 3 November, 6:00-7:45 pm – Cambridgeshire: Crisis Recovery - https://bit.ly/CambsCP_recovery
 10 November, 6:00-7:45 pm – Cambridgeshire: Snow Volunteer - https://bit.ly/CPCambs_snow
 16 November, 6:00-7:45 pm – Cambridgeshire: Utility Volunteer - https://bit.ly/CambsCP_utility

We would strongly urge you to take advantage of these opportunities, and to pursue the opportunities to develop a local flood plan through your parish meetings.

Finally, we attach a summary of flood responsibility which has been a highly valuable resource throughout recent flooding events, and again we would encourage you to make this available to residents and your communities wherever possible. We would also like to alert you to the fact that the County Council is currently running a survey centred around riparian ownership.

The aim of this is to inform its new riparian ownership guidance document which is currently being prepared. If you would like to help shape the way in which the guidance is produced, then please feel free to take part in the survey here: <https://bit.ly/2VHgnZm>

We strongly appreciate the close working relationships we enjoy with our parishes, and flood response has been just one more area where we have been able to achieve more pulling together, than we could apart. Can we therefore thank you for your continued local support and leadership on these issues.

With best wishes,

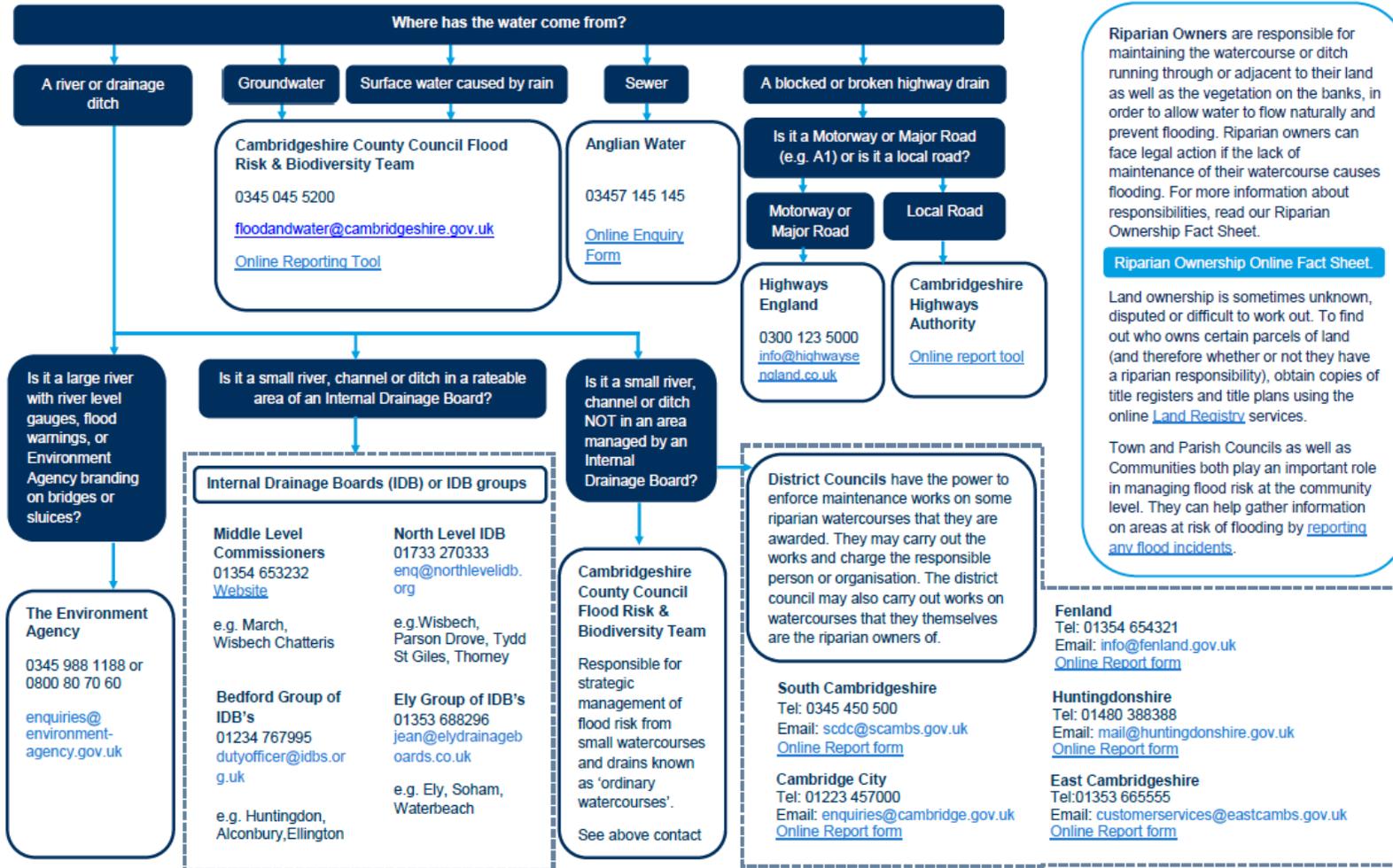


Councillor Jon Neish
**Executive Councillor for Strategic
Planning and Emergency Planning**



Councillor Simon Bywater
**Executive Councillor for
Community Resilience and Well-being**

Investigating and Regulating Flooding: Who manages what?



Riparian Owners are responsible for maintaining the watercourse or ditch running through or adjacent to their land as well as the vegetation on the banks, in order to allow water to flow naturally and prevent flooding. Riparian owners can face legal action if the lack of maintenance of their watercourse causes flooding. For more information about responsibilities, read our Riparian Ownership Fact Sheet.

Riparian Ownership Online Fact Sheet.

Land ownership is sometimes unknown, disputed or difficult to work out. To find out who owns certain parcels of land (and therefore whether or not they have a riparian responsibility), obtain copies of title registers and title plans using the online [Land Registry](#) services.

Town and Parish Councils as well as Communities both play an important role in managing flood risk at the community level. They can help gather information on areas at risk of flooding by [reporting any flood incidents](#).

District Councils have the power to enforce maintenance works on some riparian watercourses that they are awarded. They may carry out the works and charge the responsible person or organisation. The district council may also carry out works on watercourses that they themselves are the riparian owners of.

- Fenland**
Tel: 01354 654321
Email: info@fenland.gov.uk
[Online Report form](#)
- Huntingdonshire**
Tel: 01480 388388
Email: mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
[Online Report form](#)
- East Cambridgeshire**
Tel: 01353 665555
Email: customerservices@eastcambs.gov.uk
[Online Report form](#)

- South Cambridgeshire**
Tel: 0345 450 500
Email: scdc@scambs.gov.uk
[Online Report form](#)
- Cambridge City**
Tel: 01223 457000
Email: enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk
[Online Report form](#)