

Steeping River Community Update

November/December 2019



Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board
Water Management Consortium



Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future



This newsletter provides an update on the work of the Steeping River Catchment Steering Group and other activities that help manage flood risk in the catchment.

Thank you for attending our community events

In November, the community were invited to come along to see the results of the recent Environment Agency (EA) survey, learn what this information tells us and the next steps. 90 members of the community came to the events which were held at Batemans Brewery. A big thank you to Stuart Bateman and his staff for accommodating us.



The Steering Group are keen to share the survey findings and next steps on the action plan. Please find below some of the key information that was displayed at the events. More information can be found at: www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/flood2019.

Silt survey key findings

The EA commissioned a survey of the embanked Steeping River from Great Steeping to Burgh Sluice and the Relief Channels. It provides information on current silt levels. The EA and Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board (LMDB) have worked in partnership to review the information.

What does it tell us?

- Overall the amount of silt has reduced **by almost 20%** since the last survey in 2014.
- There are places where there is more silt and places where there is less silt.
- Dredging options will be investigated in targeted locations by the partnership and carried out where it will reduce the risk of flooding.

Catchment Action Plan

The partnership is producing a long term sustainable plan which identifies actions we could take in the catchment to further reduce the risk of flooding from the river. The action plan is exploring a range of options under four themes:

1. Improving conveyance in the system

- How we manage weed in the system
- Targeted removal of silt
- Reduce water entering the lowland system
- Optimise flow through the sluices
- Forecast driven pre-emptive water level management

2. A resilient community & infrastructure

- The risk of flooding can never be removed entirely
- Working with households, businesses, agriculture sector and infrastructure to help them understand their own risk and prepare
- Adaptation to future climate changes

3. Strengthening & maintaining defences

- Affordable improvements to flood defences that are resilient to climate change
- Optimal maintenance to flood defences

4. Flood water storage

- Looking at future options of how land is managed in the catchment

Next steps

- The partnership will complete the action plan and share with the community early next year after the election.
- Relevant Section 19s to be published early next year. The findings will be incorporated into the action plan.
- Funding is limited and we need to use it wisely, ensuring we get the maximum benefit for every pound we spend. We will continue to explore other funding sources.
- The partnership will confirm what dredging it will do as soon as the investigations are complete and a budget is in place.

Recent heavy rainfall

Lincolnshire has had more than twice its usual average autumn rainfall between September and November, resulting in heavily saturated catchments and high river levels across the county. A dedicated team of duty officers at the EA monitor river levels and weather conditions 24/7. The EA's incident room was opened to help manage main river flows. Burgh Sluice, Wainfleet Clough and Haven House sluices operated as required, to allow water to get out to sea.

The EA's lowest level Flood Alert for the River Steeping catchment was issued several times to let people know river flooding could affect low-lying land, roads, driveways or gardens. **This Flood Alert does not mean houses would be affected.** As the ground is still so saturated, this Flood Alert could be issued again with only small amounts of rain forecast. If river flooding was expected to affect houses, then the next stage of warning, a Flood Warning would be issued:

Flood warnings - know what to do?



**FLOOD
ALERT**

PREPARE

- Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents
- Visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk



**FLOOD
WARNING**

ACT

- Turn off gas, water and electricity
- Move things upstairs or to safety
- Move family, pets and car to safety



**SEVERE
FLOOD
WARNING**

SURVIVE

- Call 999 if in immediate danger
- Follow advice from emergency services
- Keep yourself and your family safe

The EA's Flood Warning Service helps to warn people of overtopping from the rivers or sea. Real-time flood warnings can be seen anytime at www.flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings. Alternatively, call their Floodline service on **0345 988 1188** to find out the latest information, or to check your registration. You can also check your flood risk and sign up online at www.gov.uk/flood.

Flooding investigations

An update on progress with investigations into flooding events experienced across Lincolnshire was reported at the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee on 25 November in Lincoln. At present there are over 140 separate investigations in progress across the whole county. This is unprecedented, and may increase should there be further intense rainfall in the next few weeks. The investigations can involve multiple properties and are also carried out where serious impacts are reported on public infrastructure. The Wainfleet investigation

is making good progress, and we are very grateful to residents, groups and farmers, for continuing to support it by sharing experiences, opinions and local knowledge. A large amount of information and data has been gathered and is currently being analysed. As it is a complex and thorough investigation, we expect the full report to be ready and published early next year. More information is available on www.lincolnshire.gov.uk.

LMDB culvert inspections completed

Contractors have completed surveys and jetting on nine culverted watercourses in the area. LMDB would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and patience whilst the work was carried out. Second cuts of weedgrowth have been undertaken on watercourses around Wainfleet. This is normal when weedcutting started early and/or where weedgrowth is excessive due to weather conditions. During the recent heavy rainfall, staff have been working around the clock clearing blockages and ensuring pumps continue to operate satisfactorily. This year, the pumps at Thorpe Culvert Pumping Station ran for 1,121 hours in June and 548 hours in October; the ten-year average is 102.1 for June and 112.9 for October.

Contact us

East Lindsey District Council:

Flood Link Recovery Worker - flood.recovery@e-lindsey.gov.uk/07776 462414
www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/flood2019

Environment Agency: 03708 506 506

LNenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

To report an incident please call (24-hour service) 0800 80 70 60

Lincolnshire County Council: 01522 552222

customer_services@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board: 01507 328095

enquiries@lmdb.co.uk.

Witham Fourth IDB: 01205 310088

drainage@w4idb.co.uk.

National Farmers' Union:

Philip Odling and Christian Ford (Spilsby) 01790 752843, Alistair Green (Boston and Wainfleet) 01205 363051, Regional Environment Adviser Simon Fisher 01572 824250.