

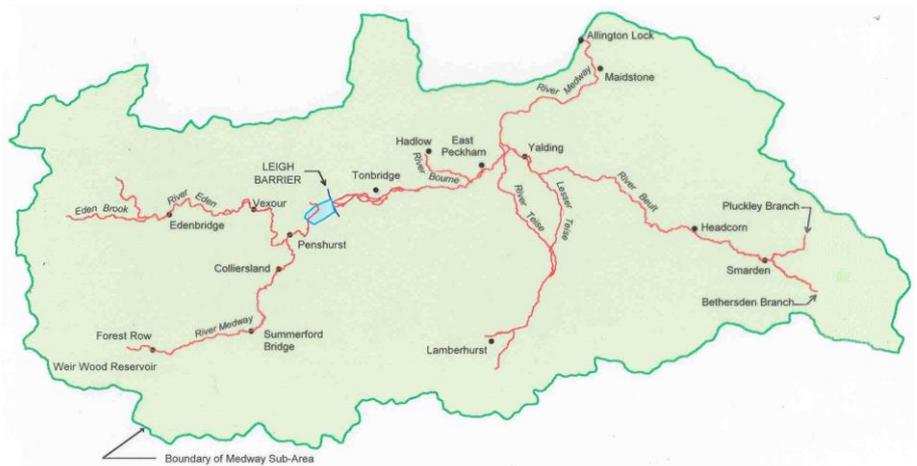
Medway Flood Partnership

January 2017

Background

Reducing the risk of flooding in the Medway catchment is a complex problem that can only be solved by working in partnership. There is a wide variety of work to do in the catchment to help manage the risk of flooding, including investing in new and improved traditional engineered flood defences; natural flood management measures that slow and store floodwater; and community and property level resilience measures that reduce the impact of flooding on communities.

The Medway Flood Partnership was established in January 2017 and is bringing together local partners, national agencies, non-governmental organisations and community representatives to develop and deliver a Medway Flood Action Plan. Support for the partnership was announced in Parliament by the Defra Minister Dr Thérèse Coffey MP, on 22 November 2016.



The partnership will focus on immediate collaborative actions and long term strategies to reduce the risk of flooding from non-tidal rivers and surface water in the Medway catchment, which includes all the land draining into the rivers Medway, Beult, Teise and Eden as well as their tributaries.

Partnership objectives

- Develop a shared understanding of the strategic challenges and opportunities within the Medway catchment and the need for collaboration to address them.
- Develop a shared action plan for the next 5 to 10 years, and a 25 year vision for the future.
- Improve communications and engagement by adopting a joined up approach to engagement with communities, local partners and government.
- Broker strategic solutions to the problems identified through the partnership.
- Identify the inter-relationships between projects and ensure coordination.

Partnership members

Country Land and Business Association
Forestry Commission
Kent Association of Local Councils
Maidstone Borough Council
Natural England
South East Rivers Trust

Environment Agency
Joint Parish Flood Group
Kent County Council
National Farmers Union
Sevenoaks District Council
Southern Water



Each member organisation will be represented by a senior executive lead responsible for strategic decision making, and a practitioner lead. The Environment Agency will provide the secretariat support for partnership meetings and the production of the Action Plan.

Partnership themes of work

The Medway Flood Partnership members have agreed to develop and launch a Medway Flood Action by the end of the year, but there is already a great deal of work already underway.

The Action Plan will have three themes of work:

1. Capital projects and maintenance

This theme of work includes traditional, engineered flood defence projects which help to reduce the risk of flooding to people, property and businesses in an area. It also includes maintenance of flood risk assets, such as sluices, to ensure they are in good operational condition and the maintenance of river channels which includes ditch and highway gully clearance, weed cutting, tree and debris removal and desilting of river beds. The Environment Agency will take the lead for this theme, working in close collaboration with other risk management authorities.

2. Natural flood management

This theme of work examines the role that natural flood management could play in helping to reduce the impacts of flooding in conjunction with engineered solutions. There are a wide range of potential techniques to reduce the risk of flooding by slowing and reducing flows, whilst achieving other environmental and social benefits. Measures include re-meandering rivers, targeted woodland planting, and techniques to hold water temporarily on the land. Natural England with the South East Rivers Trust will take the lead for this theme working in close collaboration with the Medway Catchment Partnership and other local partners.

3. Community resilience

This theme of work considers a range of options to improve community resilience, which not only aims to reduce the impact of flooding on communities, but also helps them to continue to function during a flood. This might be by ensuring that the power supply is uninterrupted or by managing traffic to prevent properties flooding from road wash. The Medway Flood Partnership will bring together a wide variety of organisations responsible for community resilience including local authorities, the Environment Agency, water and energy companies, communications providers and other infrastructure suppliers. Kent County Council will take the lead for this theme, building on the existing work of the Kent Resilience Forum.

For further information about the Medway Flood Partnership, please contact:

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