

Flood and Coastal Management

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

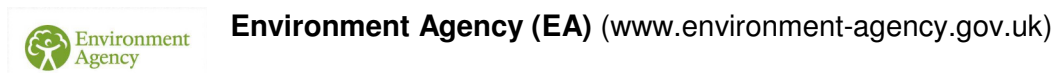
Outlined below is a brief summary of the roles and responsibilities of the main bodies and authorities involved in flood and coastal management nationally, regionally and locally. The management of the coast is complex and there are a large number of organisations involved many set down by statute. More information is available from the organisations directly and their contact details are provided.



Defra is the lead Government body and sets the overall national policy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. Defra provides Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid funding, through the Environment Agency, to local authorities and the Minister continues to confirm the “sanctioned list” of projects for the forthcoming year. Defra does not build or manage flood or coastal erosion defences and does not direct any authorities on which specific projects should be undertaken.



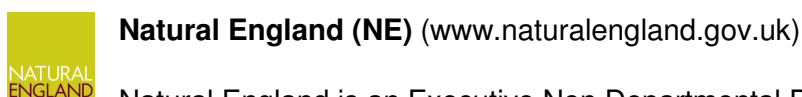
CLG sets the policy on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue. It provides funding to local authorities through the revenue support grant. It is responsible for the creation of development planning policies and building regulations. It is also the lead government department on helping communities to recover from flooding.



The Environment Agency is an Executive Non-departmental Public Body responsible to and sponsored by Defra. Its principal aims are to protect and improve the environment and to promote sustainable development. It plays a central role in delivering the environmental priorities of central government through its operational and regulatory functions. This includes; pollution prevention and control, waste management, water quality, land quality, air quality, water resources, navigation, conservation, nuclear regulation, recreation and fisheries.

The EA is the principal flood and coastal risk management operating authority in England. It is also a Flood Risk Management Authority and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authority, as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. As well as managing flood risk from main rivers and the sea, it has an overarching strategic overview role to manage flooding from all sources and coastal erosion. At a local level, the Environment Agency leads on emergency planning for flooding from main rivers, reservoirs and the sea; carries out flood risk management works as appropriate according to its powers; and issues consents for others to carry out flood risk management works.

The EA is responsible for allocating and administering Defra’s Grant-in-Aid budget for individual projects and maintenance activities for both its own assets and schemes and local authority schemes under the 1949 Coast Protection Act



Natural England is an Executive Non Departmental Public Body responsible to and sponsored by Defra. It is the Government’s advisor on the natural environment. Included in its responsibilities is the management and notification of designated sites, such as National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). It also advises on the designation of internationally important sites, including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites, and Marine Conservation Zones and Reference Areas.

Natural England takes an interest in flood and coastal risk management works in terms of how they can benefit and enhance the natural environment and to ensure they don't have an adverse impact on domestic or international designated sites. Natural England's role is to develop consents and assents with landowners and competent authorities who wish to carry out works on these designated sites. They are also a statutory consultee for responsible authorities who seek their advice on planning permissions, marine and coastal works, and all other developments affecting these designated sites.



Marine Management Organisation (MMO) (www.marinemanagement.org.uk)

The MMO is an Executive Non Departmental Public Body, created by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and responsible to and sponsored by Defra. Its main responsibilities are to implement a new marine planning regime to integrate use of the marine environment; to implement a new marine licensing mechanism to improve licensing decision making; to manage the UK fishing fleet; and to work with Natural England and the JNCC to create and manage new marine conservation zones.

Where flood and coastal erosion risk management works are proposed to take place below the mean high water mark, a marine licence is needed from the MMO.



Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (www.jncc.defra.gov.uk)

JNCC is the statutory advisor to the government on UK and international nature conservation. It contributes to maintaining and enriching biological diversity, conserving geological features and sustaining natural systems. It designates internationally important sites, including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites, and Marine Conservation Zones and Reference Areas.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

English Heritage (EH) (www.english-heritage.org.uk)

English Heritage is an Executive Non Departmental Public Body sponsored by and responsible to the Department for Media, Culture and Sport. It is the English Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment. It works in partnership with central government, local authorities, voluntary bodies and the private sector to conserve and enhance the historic environment.



The Crown Estate (TCE) (www.thecrownestate.co.uk)

The Crown Estate manages all the tidal land owned by the Crown. This includes most of the seabed within the 12 nautical mile limit and around half the intertidal foreshore around the UK including many beaches in Suffolk and large parts of the Blyth, Alde (not the Ore, Orwell or Butley rivers), Deben and Stour estuaries. The surplus revenue (profit) is paid to the Treasury for the benefit of the nation every year.

Objectives, which are laid down by Parliament under The Crown Estate Act 1961, include enhancing the value of the estate and the revenue it produces. The responsibilities of TCE are to maintain and enhance the value of the estate and its income over the long term and to do this having regard to good management. In 1999 The Crown Estate established its programme of Marine Stewardship to provide funding to support practical projects, relevant research, and other initiatives that improve the status and management of the marine estate.

Since 2011/12, TCE funds the Coastal Communities Fund which coastal communities may bid for funds connected with regeneration, job creation and the like.


Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)

(www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

Regional Flood & Coastal Committees bring together councillors appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and EA appointees with relevant experience. Their role is to approve the annual programme of work ensuring there are coherent plans for risk-based investment that optimises value for money and benefits for local communities in flood and coastal erosion risk areas. They approve the EA's proposed Grant-in-Aid funding allocation to projects in their area each year, and also agree a levy against Council Tax for their constituent LLFAs.

The RFCC is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 for three purposes:

- To ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
- To promote efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that optimises value for money and benefits for local communities
- To provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to engender mutual understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area.

 **Suffolk County Council** County Councils (e.g. Suffolk County Council – SCC)
(www.Suffolk.gov.uk)

Upper tier authorities, (county and unitary authorities) are defined as Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. LLFAs are responsible for developing, with partners, a local flood risk strategy to manage flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (local flooding) and the interface with flooding from main rivers and the sea, and with coastal erosion where appropriate.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires all new development to seek drainage approval from the LLFA and transfers Land Drainage Act duties in respect of consenting and enforcement on ordinary watercourse to the LLFA (except in IDB districts). Full details of the LLFA duties and the local flood risk management strategy are available on www.suffolk.gov.uk/floodrisk. LLFA provide local flood defence levy funding, a potential source of partnership funding for all local flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes.

Suffolk County Council's Rights of Way and Highways teams within county authorities need to be notified if any flood and coastal erosion risk management works are proposed which will require, for example, the re-routing of a Right of Way, or affect the highway surface.



District Authorities (e.g. Suffolk Coastal District Council – SCDC and Waveney District Council)

(www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk / www.waveney.gov.uk)

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010, identifies a district council that is next to the sea as Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authority, as well as a Flood Risk Management Authority, with powers to designate local flood and coastal risk management structures and a duty to act consistently with national and local flood risk strategies. Responsibilities include:

- Shoreline Management Planning in conjunction with the Environment Agency.
- Delivery of coastal erosion risk management activities.
- Working alongside the Environment Agency to develop and maintain coastal flood and erosion risk information.
- Maintain a register of assets and other features that help to manage coastal risks.
- Implement, manage, maintain and monitor shoreline management plans to understand and manage coastal flood and erosion risks.
- Assist communities in planning for the future and taking appropriate steps to adapt to changing coastal erosion risks
- Have powers under the Act to control third party activities on the coast, such as the construction of private defences or the removal of beach material.

In 2 tier areas, District Councils are also Local Planning Authorities responsible for producing a Local Development Framework (LDF), which incorporates a Strategic Flood Risk Assessments

(SFRAs) and Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs), and must have regard to Integrated Coastal Zone management. The LPA is responsible for deciding whether a development should go ahead or not and must ensure that development only takes place in areas of lowest flood or erosion risk, so far as practicable.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils have incorporated their Coastal Management function, including coast protection into a new joint Planning and Coastal Management service.

Internal Drainage Board (IDB) (www.ada.org.uk)

An Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is a public sector operating authority, empowered under the Land Drainage Act 1991 in areas of special drainage need in England & Wales to carefully manage water levels within defined drainage districts for land drainage, flood risk management, irrigation and environmental benefit. IDBs operate in water catchment areas not by local authority boundaries, and undertake routine maintenance of drainage channels, ordinary watercourses, pumping stations, and other critical water control infrastructure under permissive powers, the overall responsibility for maintenance being with the riparian owner. IDB resources will assist where possible in any post flood remedial and clearance operations

IDBs can also bring forward water level management schemes through the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, and will work with lead local flood authorities and local communities to shape schemes which respond to local flood risk priorities.

Sub-committees of local landowners living/working within the IDB area are responsible for the care of pumping stations and drainage on their lands. They support the main IDB to carry out river wall maintenance. The East Suffolk IDB Board's members include representatives from each of the main river areas, and members from local district councils.

East Anglia Coastal Group (EACG) (www.eacg.org.uk)

Coastal Groups are technical partnership groups principally comprising of coastal managers from maritime district councils, county councils, Ports Authorities and the Environment Agency. They exist to share information and coastal management best practice at the strategic regional level. The Coastal Group Chairs participate with RFCC Chairs, the Environment Agency, government departments and other national stakeholders to discuss and share information on coastal management issues across England and Wales. They seek to influence government policy development through responses to consultations and attendance at meetings. They oversee the preparation and implementation of Shoreline Management Plans and the regional strategic coastal monitoring programmes.

The East Anglia Coastal Group covers the coast from Gibraltar Point (on the NW coast of The Wash) to the Thames Barrier.



Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)

The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated in 1970 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949). It covers 150 square miles, including wildlife-rich wetlands, ancient heaths, windswept shingle beaches and historic towns and villages. Most of the Suffolk Coast is within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The statutory purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. All relevant authorities (including those listed above) have a duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty in exercising or performing any function in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the AONB. Relevant local authorities also have a duty to prepare and publish a plan that formulates their policy for management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it. A small AONB Unit supports the relevant authorities in their duties as described above as well as undertaking a number of project activities that themselves conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.