

Cumbria Strategic Partnership

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)

Partnership Handbook

2024-2025

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Mission Statement:

Working together to manage the risk of flooding across Cumbria.



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council

Foreword

A warm welcome to the Cumbria Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership

As a member of the partnership, you play an important role in helping to manage the risk of flooding and coastal change across Cumbria. Our partnership is a collective, comprising of the main risk management authorities, who have a statutory duty to manage flood risk and coastal risks in our area, together with a wide range of strategic partners who represent the groups and communities with involvement and responsibility for flood risk management.

We come together to:

- take an overview of flood and coastal erosion risk management across Cumbria.
- identify priorities and steer the use of our resources.
- vote on changes to the Local Levy, and
- support investment which is good value for money, benefits our communities and the natural environment.

This handbook contains key information about the Cumbria FCERM Partnership including:

- An overview of the statutory responsibilities of risk management authorities
- The work we do beyond this as a Partnership, set out in our Business Plan
- Practical information on being a member of the Partnership, such as local governance arrangements and Terms of Reference.

We hope you enjoy being a valued member of our partnership and we look forward to working with you in managing flood and coastal erosion risks in Cumbria.

Cumbria FCERM Partnership Councillors



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Westmorland and Furness Council

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Contents

Foreword	2
Introduction to the handbook	4
Legislative Framework	5
RMA Roles and Responsibilities	8
Partnership Structure and Governance	14
Strategies & Plans	19
Funding Provisions	29
Annex 1 – Terms of Reference	36
Annex 2 - Glossary of Terms and Acronyms.....	45

Introduction to the handbook

The Handbook has been created to help support Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) and partners who make up the Cumbria Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Partnership. The handbook will detail the ambitions for Cumbria as one of five Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnerships within the North-West. The handbook refers to the recently revised National FCERM Strategy and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) Business Plan, which explains the core ambitions over the period 2021 – 2027.

Under Section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) must produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy which reflects the National FCERM Strategy.

This handbook is a guide and support to the partnership outlining the purpose and importance of working collectively to achieve the actions set out in the Cumbria Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022 to 2027. Partners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this handbook and the business plans as this will outline the challenges at a local and national level.

Legislative Framework

The main legislative framework we operate under as risk management authorities sets out the roles and responsibilities Local Authorities have in managing flood and coastal risks.

Flood Risk Regulations (FRR) 2009

These regulations transpose the EU Floods Directive into UK law and made County and Unitary Councils Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) with primary responsibility for managing local flood risk. Additionally, they imposed duties on the risk management authorities to co-operate to:

- Prepare preliminary assessment reports about past floods and identify areas of significant risk.
- Prepare flood risk maps and flood hazard maps for any areas identified as having a significant risk of flooding.
- Prepare flood risk management plans, to include objectives for managing the flood risk and proposals for how this will be achieved.

Flood & Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010

The FWMA aims to improve both flood risk management and the way water resources are managed. It creates clearer roles and responsibilities through defining flood 'risk management authorities' and instils a risk-based approach to flood and water management. The Local Authority has a lead role in managing local flood risks, with the Environment Agency having a strategic overview role of all flood risk.

Section 13 of the FWMA places a duty on relevant authorities to cooperate with the flood risk management authorities in the exercise of their functions. The way in which we deliver this is through working in partnership. The Cumbria FCERM Partnership is the forum through which this is facilitated.

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In April 2015 planning legislation was amended to make LLFA's statutory consultees for all major development proposals with surface water implications. This applies to development within any flood zone.

The Environment Agency is a statutory consultee for major development proposals within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3, and for developments in Flood Zone 1 within an area defined by the Agency as having critical drainage problems.

Land Drainage Act (LDA) 1991 (as amended by the FWMA 2010)

On 6 April 2012, Schedule 2 (Sections 31, 32 and 33) of the FWMA amended the Land Drainage Act 1991 and transferred powers for the regulation of ordinary watercourses to the

Council as LLFA. The powers of the LLFA to regulate ordinary watercourses broadly consist of two elements; the issuing of consents for any changes to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an ordinary watercourse, and enforcement powers to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse.

Coast Protection Act 1949 (as amended by FWMA 2010)

This Act gives permissive powers to maritime local authorities (Coast Protection Authorities) to manage the risks associated with coastal erosion and flooding from the sea. The Act also defines the boundaries of “the sea” which impacts on funding arrangements for capital works.

Highways Act 1980

Section 41 of the Act requires the Highway Authority to maintain the highway at public expense. The Council is responsible for maintaining adopted highways and Highways England are responsible for maintaining major trunk roads.

A Highway Authority is under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice. It was determined in a test case that this also includes flood water.

Climate Change Act 2008

This requires a UK-wide climate change risk assessment every five years accompanied by a national adaptation programme that is also reviewed every five years. This legislation gives the Government power to require public bodies and statutory organisations, such as water and sewerage companies, to report on how they are adapting to climate change.

Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) (WFD)

This is a European Directive which aims to protect and improve the water environment. It is implemented through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs), and establishes a legal framework for the protection, improvement, and sustainable use of water bodies across Europe. WFD applies to all water bodies, including rivers, streams, brooks, lakes, estuaries and canals, coastal waters out to one mile from low water, and groundwater.

Water Industry Act 1991

This legislation relates to the water supply and the provision of wastewater services in England. It sets out the main powers and duties of the water and sewerage companies and defines the powers of the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat).

Local Government Act 2000 & Localism Act 2011

Overview and Scrutiny Committees are established under the Local Government Act 2000 to develop and review policy and make recommendations to the council. The Localism Act 2011

amended the Local Government Act 2000 by inserting Section 9FH and Section 9JB. This amendment requires local authorities operating an 'executive' system to have Overview and Scrutiny Committees in place, including for duties relating to flood and coastal risk management.

Environment Act 2021

An Act to make provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment; for statements and reports about environmental protection; for the Office for Environmental Protection; about waste and resource efficiency; about air quality; for the recall of products that fail to meet environmental standards; about water; about nature and biodiversity; for conservation covenants; about the regulation of chemicals; and for connected purposes.

RMA Roles and Responsibilities

Risk Management Authorities (RMA) are defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and include the Environment Agency, lead local flood authorities, highways authorities and water and sewerage companies. District councils and internal drainage boards are also RMAs although there are none within Cumbria. It is important to understand the roles and responsibilities of risk management authorities in relation to flood and coastal risk management activities.

Environment Agency responsibilities

The Environment Agency has a national strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion (as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010) in England. This is achieved through the establishment of regional flood and coastal committees. The LLFAs in Cumbria are represented at the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NW RFCC).

The Environment Agency's remit includes the following actions:

- Develop the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy to deliver long-term flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes. Monitor and report on application of this strategy at a national and local level.
- Establish regional flood and coastal committees in England, including the NW RFCC which is attended by a representative for the Cumbrian LLFAs.
- Allocate national government funding to projects to manage flood and coastal erosion risks from all sources.
- Undertake works to manage flood risks from main rivers and the sea, and changes to the coastline.
- Work with risk management authorities to prepare and deliver Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) and Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)
- Regulate the operation of large, raised reservoirs, and activities that may affect the risk of flooding from main rivers through environmental permits. Undertake enforcement action as appropriate.
- Work in partnership with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings.
- Operate as a Category 1 Responder during flood incidents.
- Provide planning advice as a statutory consultee during preparation of local plans and when determining planning applications in Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- Providing evidence and advice to support others. This includes national flood and coastal erosion risk information, data, and tools to help other Risk Management Authorities and inform Government policy, and advice on planning and development issues.

Local Authority Responsibilities

Cumbria is served by two unitary authorities, Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council. Unitary authorities are a risk management authority for their roles as the

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and Highway Authority. This section outlines the local authority roles and responsibilities in this capacity.

Lead Local Flood Authority LLFAs are required to oversee and participate in the management of local flood risk, which includes the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and from ordinary watercourses, whilst the Highways Authority are required to provide and manage highway drainage including some roadside ditches and ensure flood risks are not increased through highway activities.

Further information on specific Local Authority Functions has been provided below:

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)

Section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires the LLFA to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS). LFRMS must set out how local flood risks will be managed, who will deliver them and how they will be funded.

The LFRMS identifies flood risks within the local authority area and provides a framework in which to deliver local improvements needed to manage those risks.

Working in partnership is central to the success of the strategy. By encouraging and enabling people, communities, businesses, and the public sector to work together we can develop a more holistic understanding of flood risk and be better placed to manage that risk more effectively.

The Flood Risk Management Strategy for Cumbria was originally published in 2015, with a refresh completed in 2022.

Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports -

Incidents of flooding reported to the LLFA are recorded and a quarterly flood incident report is submitted by the LLFA to the NW RFCC.

LLFAs have a duty to investigate flood incidents in their area, although the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 allows the extent of flooding that triggers a formal (section 19) investigation to be set locally. The investigation triggers in Cumbria are:

- Where there is ambiguity surrounding the source or responsibility of a flood incident.
- Internal flooding of one property that has been flooded previously.
- Internal flooding of five or more properties during a single flood event.
- Where a risk to life has been identified.

Section 19 reports must be published and made publicly available by the LLFA.

The LLFA is not required to take action to resolve flood problems, where this is identified to be the responsibility of one of the other risk management authorities, the land or property owner. However, all RMAs must work together to resolve flood problems within their jurisdiction.

Flood Risk Asset Register and Record

LLFAs are required, under Section 21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, to collate the following information:

- A public register of structures and features which are likely to have a significant effect on flood risk in their area. This register is called the **flood risk asset register**.
- Information about those registered structures and features, notably in relation to their ownership and state of repair. This is called the **flood risk asset record**. There is no requirement to make this information publicly available.

Together the flood risk asset register and records enable LLFAs to collate important information about assets which may help inform better local flood risk management in the long term.

Designation of Flood Risk Structure and Features

About two thirds of physical flood risk management assets, such as walls, embankments, and other raised features, are neither owned nor operated by public risk management authorities.

Under Schedule 1 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the Environment Agency and LLFAs, have delegated powers to formally designate a structure or feature which it believes may influence flood or coastal erosion risk.

A designation is a legally binding notice served by the designating authority to the owner of the structure or feature and the notice is a Local Land Charge. Once designated, these structures and features cannot be altered, removed, or replaced without permission from the designating authority. Designated features are included on the flood risk assess register.

Delivering Sustainable Development

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires flood and coastal erosion risk management authorities (that did not previously have such a duty) to aim to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development when exercising their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions.

The Flood and Water Management Act also requires the Secretary of State to issue guidance on how those authorities are to discharge their duty, including guidance about the meaning of sustainable development. The [guidance for England](#) was published in October 2011.

Sustainable development in the context of flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) includes:

- taking account of the safety and wellbeing of people and the ecosystems upon which, they depend
- using finite resources efficiently and minimising waste,
- taking action to avoid exposing current and future generations to increasing risk, and
- improving the resilience of communities, the economy, and the natural, historic, built, and social environment to current and future risks.

Ordinary Watercourse Consenting and Enforcement

An 'ordinary watercourse' is a watercourse that does not form part of a main river and includes rivers, streams, ditches, drains, cuts, culverts, dikes, sluices, sewers (other than public sewers within the meaning of the Water Industry Act 1991) and passages, through which water flows.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 provides LLFAs with powers to regulate ordinary watercourses. These regulations broadly consist of two elements:

- The issuing of consents for any changes to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an ordinary watercourse.
- Enforcement powers to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse and repair bridges and other structures.

Sustainable Drainage Systems and Planning

The LLFA is a statutory consultee for 'major' development proposals (10 properties or more) in all flood zones. This means that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consult with the LLFA prior to determining a planning application and that the LLFA must provide the LPA with a 'substantive response' providing an informed view on development proposals which have surface water implications within 21 calendar days, unless otherwise agreed.

The LLFA may also wish to ask the LPAs to consult them in non-statutory circumstances, or vice versa; for example, because the LLFA has identified such circumstances as having the potential to impact on local flood risk or the management of local flood risk carried out by the LLFA. This is agreed through local arrangements with the LPAs.

A new approach to drainage through the implementation on Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 is expected in 2024. This will ensure sustainable drainage systems are designed for all new developments to reduce the impact of rainfall through the use of features such as soakaways, grassed areas, permeable surfaces and wetlands, reducing the amount of water that ends up in sewers.

Coast Protection Authorities (CPA)

As Westmorland & Furness Council and Cumberland Council are adjacent to the sea, they are designated as Coast Protection Authorities, working closely with the Environment Agency to manage coastal erosion risk management activities in their area. CPAs are responsible for developing and delivering Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) and coastal strategies which provide a long-term holistic framework for managing the risk of coastal change on their section of the coast.

Overview and Scrutiny committee

The Local Government Act 2000, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, permits Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise risk management authorities in relation to their flood and coastal risk management work. They could, for example, use these powers if there were a flooding event in the area and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee wanted to

undertake a review of the event or to review current arrangements for local flood risk management in the area.

Section 9FH of Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on risk management authorities to comply with a request for information by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Local Authorities should ensure that adequate Overview and Scrutiny arrangements are put in place for flood and coastal risk management work. This includes arrangements to review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the Local Authority's area.

Highway Authority Responsibilities

Highways Authorities (Highways England and Local Authorities) have the lead responsibility for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches on land acquired for new road building under the Highways Act 1980. The owners of land adjoining a highway also have a common-law duty to maintain ditches to prevent them causing a nuisance to road users.

They must co-operate with the other RMAs to ensure their flood management activities are well coordinated and ensure that road projects do not increase flood risks.

Water and Sewerage Company Responsibilities

Water and Sewerage Companies manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure. United Utilities owns and maintains the public sewerage system in Cumbria.

The main roles of water and sewerage companies in managing flood and coastal erosion risks are to:

- Ensure systems have the appropriate level of resilience to flooding and maintain essential services during emergencies.
- Maintain and manage their water supply and sewerage systems to manage the impact and reduce the risk of flooding and pollution to the environment.
- Ensure the area they serve is effectually drained. This includes drainage of surface water from the land around buildings as well as provision and maintenance of foul sewers.
- Provide advice to LLFAs on how Water and Sewerage assets impact on local flood risk.
- Work with developers, landowners and LLFAs to understand and manage risks – for example, by working to manage the amount of rainfall that enters sewerage systems.
- Produce a drainage strategy and input to local and national strategies, including the local plan.
- Work with the Environment Agency, LLFAs and Local Authorities to coordinate the management of water supply and sewerage systems with other flood risk management work.

Where there is frequent and severe sewer flooding, sewerage undertakers are required to address this through their capital investment plans, which are approved and regulated by Ofwat.

Every 5 years there is a price review where Ofwat set out their determinations for water companies to respond to consumer needs in an increasingly challenging environment. The latest review was completed in 2019, with the final determinations applying from 1 April 2020. This included £1 billion to reduce the impact of flooding on communities across England and Wales.

New Ofwat codes for adoptable sewers came into force in England from April 2020. Ofwat approved new design and construction guidance from Water UK became effective from 1 July 2022. These must be used by developers when planning, designing, and constructing foul and surface water drainage systems intended for adoption under an agreement made in accordance with Section 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

The adoption code is significant as it requires developers to follow a hierarchy of connection for surface water, with connection to sewer as a final resort. It also provides the mechanism by which water companies can secure the adoption of a wide range of SuDS components that are compliant with the document. There are however some notable exceptions to the adoptable components including green roofs, pervious pavements, and filter strips. These components may form part of the drainage design but will not be adopted by the Water and Sewerage Company.

United Utilities Water published a Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan in May 2023, which sets out how they will ensure delivery of robust and resilient drainage and wastewater services in the North-West.

New Appointments and Variations (NAVs)

NAVs are limited companies which provide a water and/or sewerage service to customers in an area which was previously provided by the incumbent monopoly provider.

New appointments are made when a limited company is appointed by Ofwat to provide water and/or sewerage for a specific geographic area. A new appointee has the same duties and responsibilities as the previous statutory water company.

Variations are where existing appointed companies ask Ofwat to vary its appointment so it can extend the area it provides service to.

Partnership Structure and Governance

Partnership Working

Under Section 13 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Risk Management Authorities (RMA) must work co-operatively in the exercise of their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions.

The structure of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Governance is established through the groups and committees, strategies, business plans and action plans from a national through to a local level.

A governance structure chart, detailing all the groups and committees relevant to Cumbria has been provided in Figure 1. An overview of these groups and how they interact and work together is provided in this section, with details the current strategies and plans that are in place at National, Regional, County and Local levels have been provided in the subsequent section of this handbook.

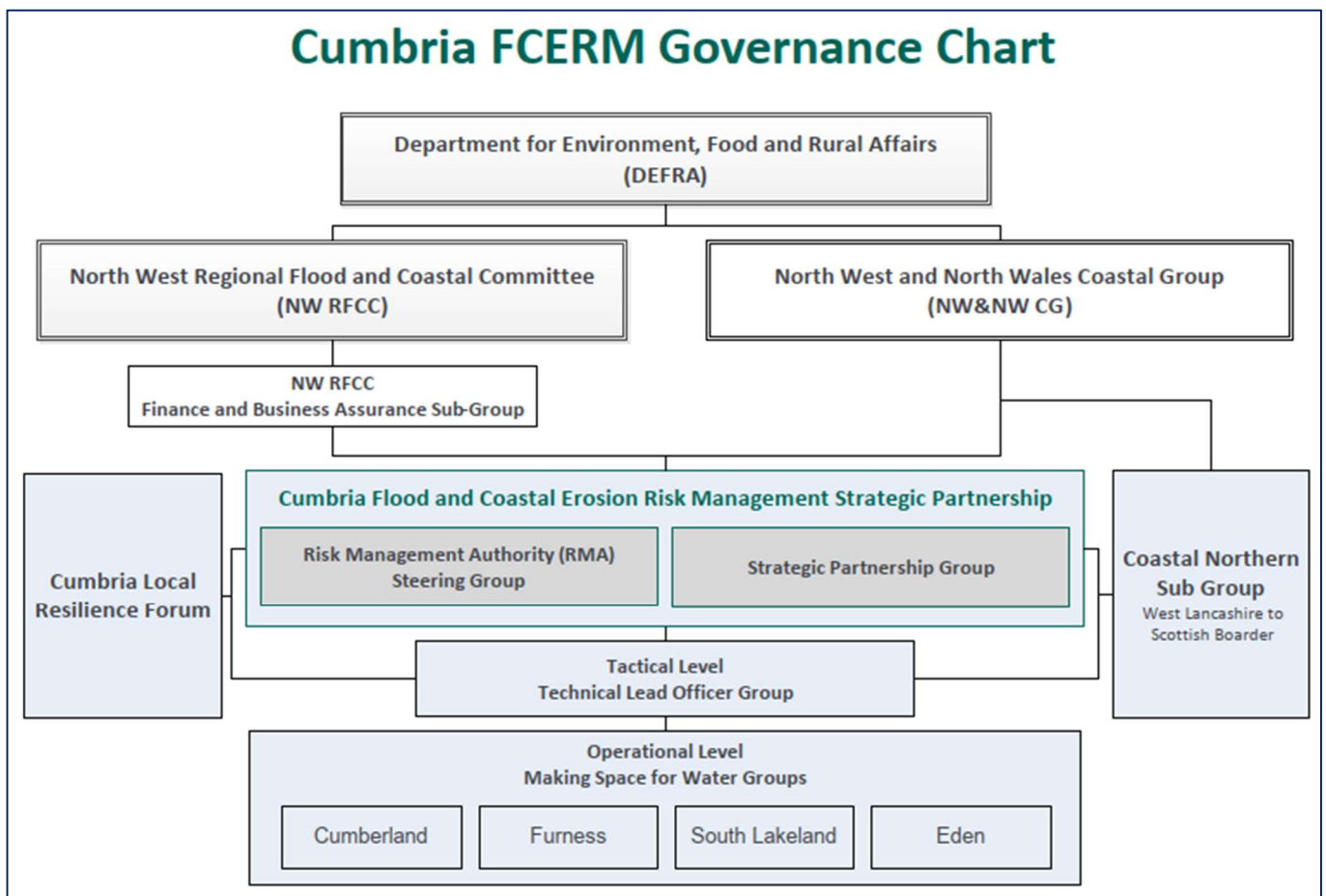


Figure 1: FCERM Governance Chart for Cumbria

Northwest Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (NW RFCC)

Chair: Adrian Lythgo

The Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NW RFCC) is one of twelve RFCC's established in England by the Environment Agency under Section 22 of the Flood and Water Management Act. The group has three key purposes:

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

The quarterly RFCC meetings are run by an independent Chair, appointed by the Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience.

The NW RFCC has a Business Plan for 2022-2025 which provides more information about the Committee and its work.

NW RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group

Chair: Neville Elstone

The NW RFCC Committee is supported by a Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group which provokes more detailed discussion and consideration of financial aspects of Committee business. This group meets quarterly, typically two or three weeks before the main committee meeting and is chaired by an independent member of the NW RFCC.

North West and North Wales Coastal Group

Chair: Carl Green

Whilst operating under different legislation and governance, this Group effectively forms another strategic partnership in addition to the five sub-regional Strategic Partnership Groups.

The coastal group brings together the organisations who manage the coastline from Great Ormes Head in Llandudno to the Soloway Forth on the border between Cumbria and Scotland. The group examines the social, economic, and environmental issues that arise along the changing coastline and seek to find the best policies to address these matters.

The group is supported by two sub-groups: one for Liverpool Bay and a Northern Sub-Group covering the Lancashire and Cumbrian coasts. Representatives from our Coast Protection Authorities – Westmorland & Furness Council and Cumberland Council - attend sub-group meetings held twice a year along with other partners including the Environment Agency and United Utilities.

Cumbria Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 created the role of Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) to take on the responsibility for leading on the coordination of flood risk management. Under Section 13 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, flood risk management authorities are required to work in partnership and cooperate to help holistically manage flood and coastal erosion risks.

The Cumbria Partnership is one of 5 sub-regional FCERM Partnerships in the North West, alongside Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire Mid-Mersey. These partnerships report to the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC), administered by the Environment Agency as part of their role to provide a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion.

As a collective the Partnership guides, steers and leads the delivery of the management of local flood risk (from surface water, ground water and ordinary watercourses) at strategic, tactical and operational levels though the groups shown on Figure 2 below.

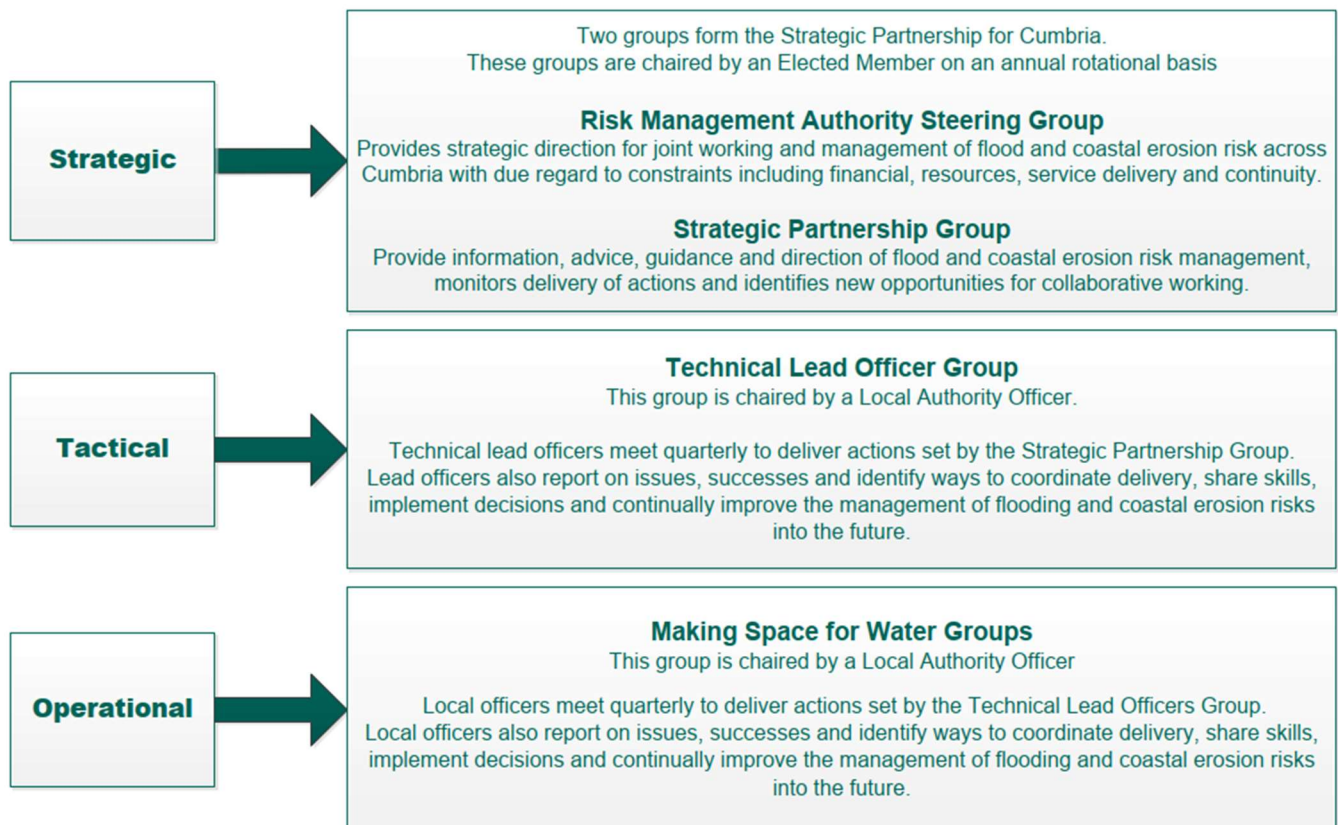


Figure 2: Overview of strategic, tactical and operational partnership groups in Cumbria

The Partnership also considers the interactions between all sources of flood and coastal risks to provide a basis for a wider holistic approach to risk management in both Westmorland & Furness and Cumberland.

Cumbria FCERM Strategic Partnership

Since 1 April 2023, Westmorland and Furness Unitary Authority and Cumberland Unitary Authority have replaced Cumbria County Council as the designated Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) for Cumbria under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The Cumbria FCERM Strategic Partnership consists of two groups:

- **RMA Steering Group**

Risk management authorities (RMAs) as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, that must work together to deliver an integrated and collaborative approach to manage flood risk.

- **Strategic Partnership Group**

Partners Agencies and Interested Parties that have not been defined in statute as RMA's but who have local or specialist interest in flooding and who support strategic decisions by providing information, advice and guidance on matters relating to flood risk management.

These two groups operate alongside each other to deliver the following actions:

RMA Steering Group Actions	Strategic Partnership Group Actions
Deliver the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.	Be a forum to share flood information, best practice and knowledge.
Ensure efficient delivery of statutory flood risk duties.	Celebrate scheme successes and communicate lessons learned.
Identify and agree investment priorities.	Increase awareness of flooding issues across Cumbria through stakeholder engagement.
Support the delivery of the NWRFC Business Plan Ambitions and Actions.	Develop shared opportunities to deliver flood risk management activities at a local level.
Co-ordinate the response to flood incidents and flood recovery programs.	Facilitate communications and engagement with communities at risk of flooding.

Table 2: Strategic Partnership Group roles and responsibilities

More detailed information on the partnership, its membership and group administration is contained within the Terms of Reference in Annex 1.

Cumbria Tactical FCERM Partnership

Regular meetings take place with different stakeholders to ensure funded schemes are delivered on-time and within budget. These groups also provide an opportunity to discuss live flooding issues, response to incidents, new funding opportunities and future programme planning.

Current Meeting Schedule includes:

- Cumbria LLFA / EA Partnership – Monthly progress meetings
- Cumbria LLFA / EA Coastal Partnership – Monthly progress meetings
- Cumbria LLFA / UU Tactical Partnership Meeting – Quarterly meeting

Cumbria Operational Groups - Making Space for Water (MSFW)

The Making Space for Water Groups in Cumbria serve as operational groups where technical officers meet to discuss current projects and schemes, and current flooding incidents. These are multi agency meetings, attended by RMAs and other partners that work together to deliver the FCERM programme. The meetings are held quarterly for specific geographic locations as detailed below:

Westmorland and Furness Council

- South Lakes MSFW Group - Chaired by Colin Parkes
- Eden MSFW Group - Chaired by Stuart Taylor
- Barrow and Furness MSFW Group - Chaired by Katie Hall

Cumberland Council

- Carlisle MSFW Group - Chaired by Joanne Ghorst
- Copeland MSFW Group - Chaired by Paul Telford
- Allerdale MSFW Group - Chaired by Mike Robinson

Please note – In January 2024, a single MSFW Group for Cumberland is being held on a trial basis.

Strategies & Plans

This section details the current strategies and plans that are in place at National, Regional, County and Local levels. Figure 3 provides an overview of the hierarchy of these documents.

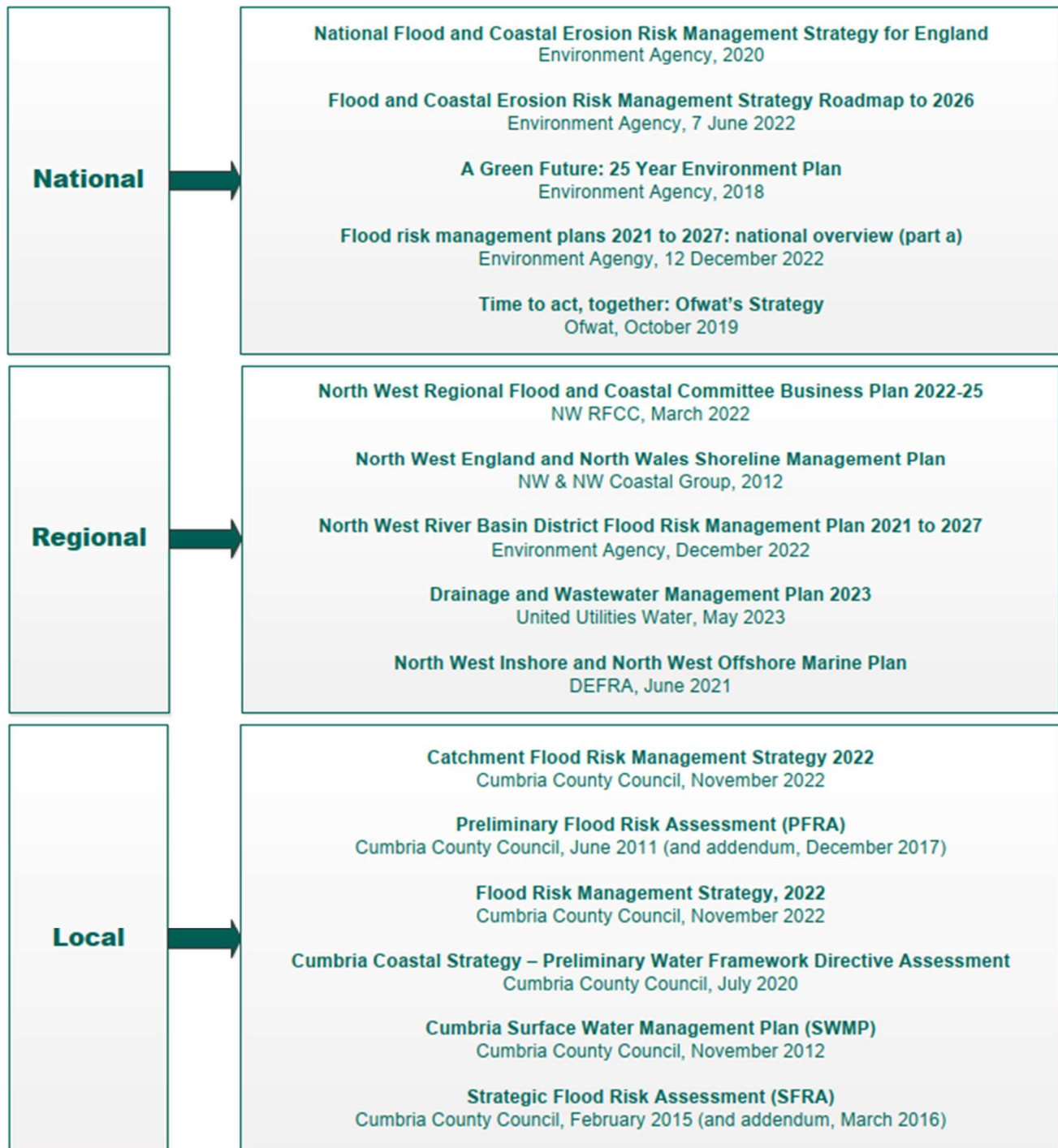


Figure 3: Overview of current strategies and plans

Relevant Authorities who make up the Cumbria FCERM Partnership must work collaboratively to deliver the business plans for each authority. A summary of the aims and ambitions of each plan has been provided below with a link to the full documents is embedded in the thumbnail image of each document. It is the responsibility of each RMA to read each business plan and strategy and deliver the actions assigned to them.

National Strategies and Plans

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy Environment Agency, 2020

This strategy sets out national objectives to manage flood risk and coastal erosion in England for the next 10 to 30 years, together with actions RMA's should complete at a local level. The three ambitions set out in the strategy are:

- Climate resilience places
- Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate
- A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change.

It recognises the need to ensure nature's power is part of the solution and to support farmers and land managers to take a more integrated approach to flood risk managed from the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).

The Government has committed funding £5.2 billion to support delivery of FCERM actions, and £200 million to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion between 2021-2027

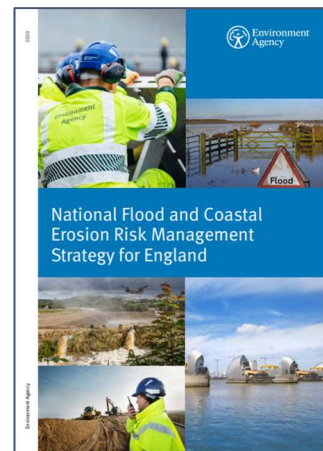
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy Roadmap to 2026 Environment Agency, 7 June 2022

This document sets out the actions required to achieve the three long-term ambitions set out in the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. The actions include using nature-based solutions to store or slow the flow of flood water; avoiding inappropriate development in the floodplain and better preparing and responding to flood and coastal incidents through timely and effective forecasting, warning and evacuation.

A Green Future: 25 Year Environment Plan Environment Agency, 2018

The 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP) sets out government plans to improve the environment within a generation, leaving it in a better state than it was found. Amongst the 10 environmental goals is a commitment to reduce the risk of harm to people, the environment and the economy from natural hazards including flooding, drought, and coastal erosion.

Policies with linked actions have been developed to achieve these goals. One of the actions is to use and manage land sustainably. This includes reducing the risks from flooding and coastal erosion by expanding the



use of natural flood management solutions, putting in place more sustainable drainage solutions and making at-risk properties more resilient to flooding.

Flood Risk Management Plans 2021 to 2027: national overview (part a) **Environment Agency, 12 December 2022**

Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP) are statutory plans required by the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 to address significant flood risk in nationally identified flood risk areas (FRA), alongside wider flood risk across river basin districts. FRMPs support strategic working and planning across administrative boundaries.

Part A provides a national overview of FRMPs providing context, legislative background and an overview of national flood risk management. A FRMP helps to deliver the ambitions set out in the National FCERM Strategy for England by identifying actions that:

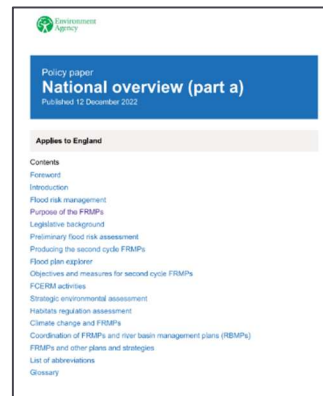
- reduce the likelihood and consequence of flooding,
- improve resilience,
- work in partnership to deliver actions, and
- plan and adapt to climate change.

In this second cycle of FRMPs, FRAs have been identified for surface water, main rivers and the sea (the first cycle was surface water only). No FRAs have been identified for reservoirs or groundwater. FRMPs set out how risk management authorities will work with communities to manage flood and coastal risk over the period 2021-2027, whilst ensuring the plans are:

- strategic - the plans aim to focus on nationally identified areas where there is significant risk of flooding from surface, river and sea
- accessible - the plans aim to be more inclusive and easier to use for our stakeholders and the public through use of the [Flood Plan Explorer](#) website. This is an online map-based tool that shows proposed flood risk management measures at a national and local scale.

Time to act, together **Ofwat's strategy, October 2019**

This strategy set out the ambition for the water sector to meet customer needs for affordable, reliable and safe water whilst maximising opportunities to improve the environment and improve life through innovation, new thinking and technology. These long term challenges will be met through increased collaboration and partnerships with customers and communities.



Regional Strategies and Plans

North-West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Business Plan 2022 – 2025 NW RFCC, March 2022

This business plan set out a shared vision to ensure the North-West is ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.

The ambitions set out in the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy have been translated into five strategic aims for the Northwest reflecting regional priorities. These are:

- Accessing investment and funding
- Building community resilience
- Managing water at a catchment scale with nature
- Achieving climate resilient planning, development and infrastructure
- Increasing risk management authority capacity and collaboration

An action plan has been produced to deliver these strategic aims, with actions allocated to specific partners or partnership areas to progress. Progress against these actions is reported at the NW RFCC quarterly meetings.

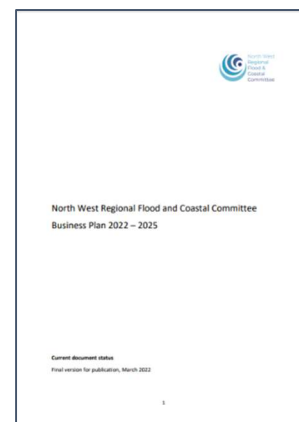
The Cumbria Partnership is contributing to Action 9: Whole catchment approach, which aims to develop a whole catchment water management approach within a selected river catchment area, to reduce flood risk alongside wider environmental benefits.

North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan North West & North Wales Coastal Group, 2012

A Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is written by the Coast Protection Authorities for the plan area and provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal evolution and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic, and natural environment in a sustainable manner.

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is the key priority that the Coastal Group will oversee the delivery of. It assesses the coastline and makes one of four maintenance options recommendations:

1. **Hold the Line** - maintenance of coastal defences should continue as they are at present.
2. **Advance the Line** – introduction of new defences on the seaward side of the original defences.
3. **Managed Realignment** – introduction of new defences on the landward site of the original defences or measures to reduce erosion.



4. **No Active Intervention** – no investment in coastal defences and cessation of any active maintenance.

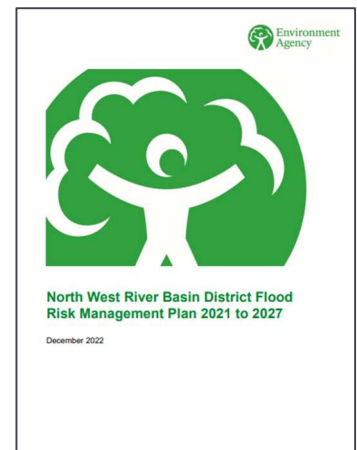
Walls and embankments are often designed to protect against both flooding (flood defence/sea defence) and erosion (coast protection).

In 2020, a refresh of the suite of SMPs in England was completed to ensure they are still relevant and up to date with the latest plans, policies, and government criteria.

North West River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027 Environment Agency, December 2022

River basin management plans (RBMPs) describe the challenges that threaten the water environment and how these challenges can be managed and funded. River basin management plans (RBMPs) will summarise the billions of pounds that will be invested in the water environment to 2027.

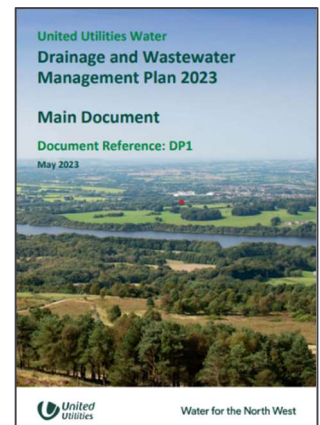
Current Plans were updated in December 2022. The Environment Agency have coordinated the preparation of the RBMPs with draft FRMPs to encourage better join-up in the management of flood risk and the water environment.



Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs) United Utilities Water, May 2023

The DWMP is a long-term plan which looks to understand the long-term risk to drainage and wastewater management in the North West and activities required to mitigate the risk. It is led by the water company but involves input from many stakeholders involved in the water cycle.

To date work has focused on understanding what the long-term risk is to a number of key performance indicators when factors such as climate change and population growth are taken into account through the Baseline Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (BRAVA). The results of these assessments have been shared through the SPGs. Key findings of BRAVA include:

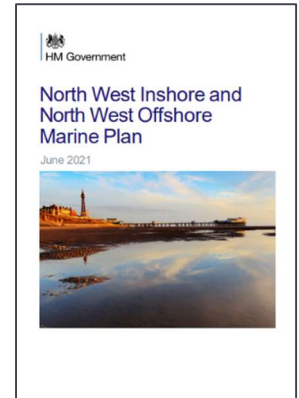


- Internal flood risk is projected to increase by 41% by 2050 if no interventions are undertaken
- Using the 1 in 50 year storm measure approximately an additional 480,000 properties will be at risk by 2050 if no interventions are taken

North West Inshore and North West Offshore Marine Plan DEFRA, June 2021

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is an executive non-departmental public body of DEFRA who regulate and licence marine activities including marine construction, deposits and dredging that may have an environmental, economic or social impact.

The North West Marine Plan covers around 7,100 kilometres of inshore and offshore waters stretching from the Solway Firth border with Scotland to the River Dee Border with Wales.



There are thirteen objectives listed in the North West Marine Plan, including objective 6 – the use of the marine environment to benefit society as a whole, contributing to resilient and cohesive communities that can adapt to coastal erosion and flood risk, as well as contributing to physical and mental wellbeing. This objective supports policy codes NW-CC-1 and NW-CC-3

It is a legal requirement for marine plans to be considered in all decisions that affect England's marine area, now and into the future. Some coastal flood activities will require a marine licence, issued by the MMO, alongside additional consents depending on the nature and location of works being undertaken. A summary of the responsible authorities is provided in figure 4.

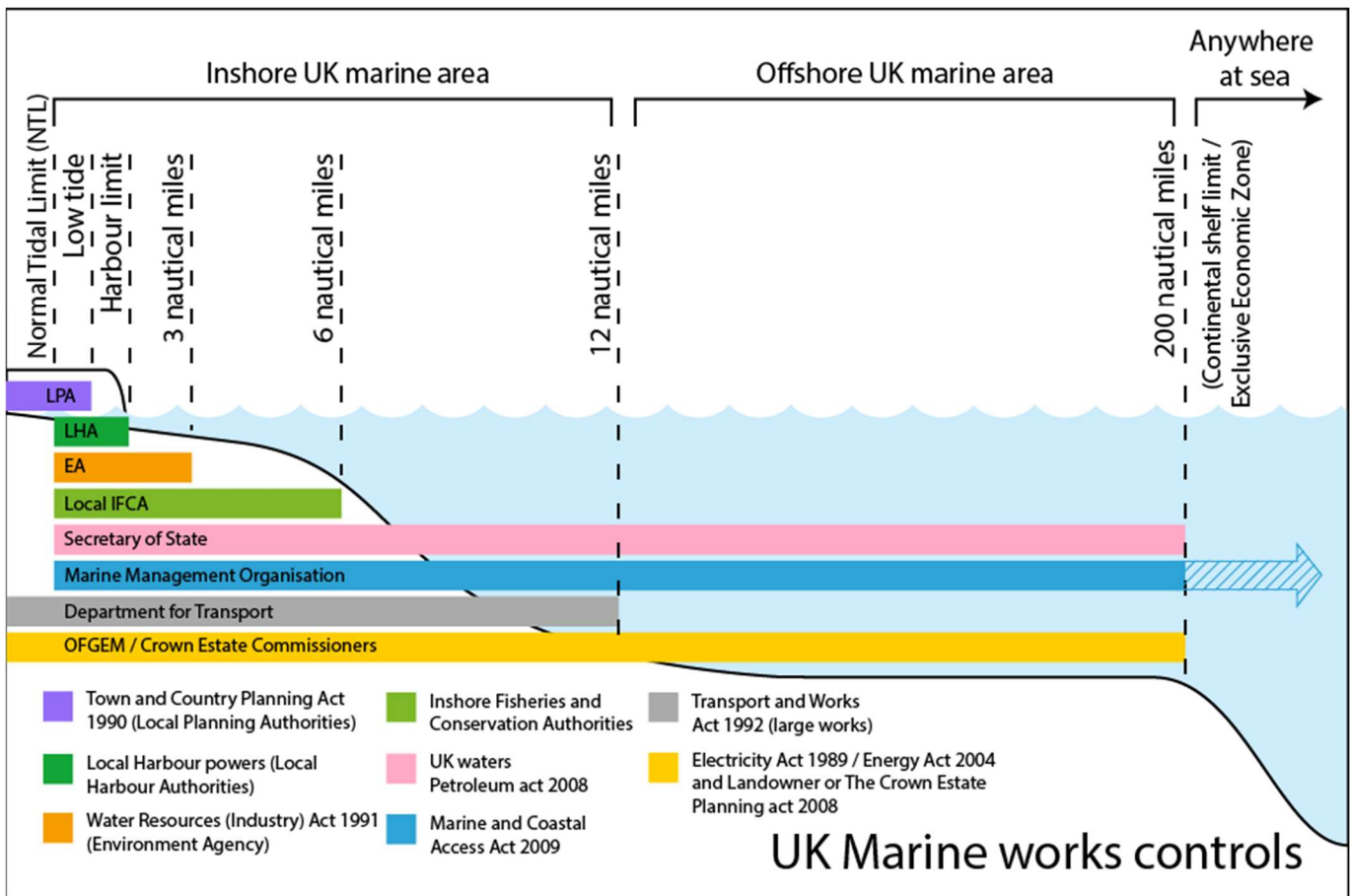


Figure 4: UK Marine Works Controls

Local Strategies and Plans

Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP) Environment Agency, December 2009

Catchment flood management plans (CFMPs) aim to establish flood risk management policies which will deliver sustainable flood risk management for the long term across a catchment. CFMPs consider all types of inland flooding, from rivers, groundwater, surface water and tidal flooding. Shoreline management plans consider flooding from the sea.

CFMPs help RMAs plan and agree the most effective way to manage flood risk in the future. They also consider:

- the likely impacts of climate change
- the effects of how we use and manage the land
- how areas could be developed to meet our present day needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

The management catchments are grouped by river basin district. Most management catchment areas in Cumbria fall within the North West River Basin District, with some catchments in the north of the County falling within the Solway Tweed River Basin District and the Northumbria River Basin District. A summary of the management catchments has been provided in Table 3 below, with hyperlinks to the CFMP Summary Reports.

River Basin District	Management Catchment
North West River Basin District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent and Leven • South West Lakes • Derwent • Lune
Solway Tweed River Basin District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eden
Northumbria River Basin District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tyne

Table 3: Summary of Catchment Flood Management Plans in Cumbria

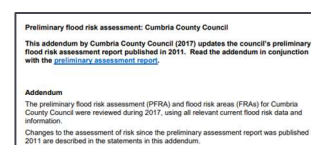
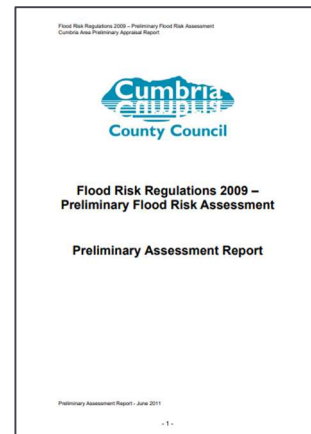
More detailed information on catchment areas, including operational catchment areas and water bodies, can be obtained using DEFRA's [Catchment Data Explorer](#).

Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) Cumbria County Council, June 2011 (amended by addendum, December 2017)

LLFAs are required to produce a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) under Section 10 of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009.

A PFRA is an assessment of historical flooding and potential future flooding. It considers flooding from surface water runoff, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses. They aim to identify areas, referred to as 'flood risk areas'(FRAs), that are at risk of significant flooding. PFRAs include:

- a summary of information on significant historic floods.
- a summary of information on future flood risks based primarily on the Environment Agency's national datasets.
- a spreadsheet containing information for reporting to the European Commission.



Cumbria's first PFRA was produced in 2011. There is a requirement to review the PRFA and flood risk areas every six years. The first review was completed in 2017, with an addendum to the PRFA subsequently published.

The current 'flood risk areas' have been identified using guidance produced DEFRA. These are 'clusters' of areas where flood risk is significant and where 30,000 people or more live.

In Cumbria, this process identified two flood risk areas:

- Kent valley
- Kendal.

The LLFA must work closely with the Environment Agency in these areas to produce a revised Flood Risk Management Plan for the North West.

Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022 Cumbria County Council, November 2022

The Flood Risk Management Strategy for Cumbria provides the framework for delivering local flood risk management in Cumbria. It contains a 5-year plan to deliver the local flood risk management actions by 2027.

To deliver the strategy for Cumbria efficiently, effectively, transparently and in a way that is coordinated with our partners and communities a business plan has been developed to steer and focus our actions.



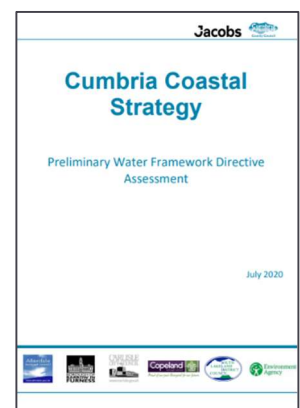
It sets out the key risks and challenges facing Cumbria in relation to flooding and coastal change, and the opportunities and our priorities we will focus on and address through action - 2021 to 2027.

Through the Business Plan we will:

- Prioritise our resources in a way that responds to local risks, challenges, and needs.
- Maximise opportunities to attract investment and involvement from wider stakeholders.
- Increase awareness of flood and coastal erosion risks.
- Work together to deliver multiple benefits to maximise outcomes wherever possible.

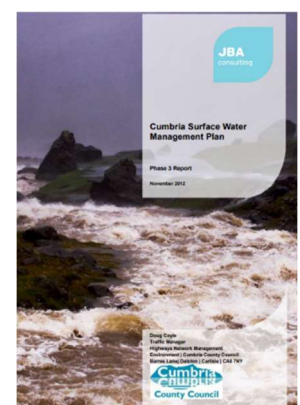
Cumbria Coastal Strategy – Preliminary Water Framework Directive Assessment Cumbria County Council, July 2020

A coastal strategy is a plan that sets out how we will manage the risks related to coastal flooding and erosion along our coastline over the next century. It is also needed for us to get approval from the government for future flood and coastal risk management schemes and to help get national funds to contribute to the cost of defences. This strategy forms a key step in setting out our future approach to managing risks and will feed into our local plans. It builds upon the policies set in the North West Shoreline Management Plan, which was adopted in 2010, and will decide on the best approaches to carry out those policies. In some places a change in Shoreline Management Plan policy has been recommended.



Cumbria Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) Cumbria County Council, November 2012 *Has this document been updated?*****

The development of the Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for Cumbria has been completed in three phases. Phase 1 is a County wide strategic risk assessment, that use surfance water flood maps, historical incidents and density of receptors to provide a strategic overview of surface water flood risk. Phase 2 is a more detailed assessment of the areas of risk identified by Phase 1. This includes the mechanisms of flooding, identification of hot-spot areas and potential flood risk management options including critical drainage areas. Phase 3 is a targeted options apraisal of potential flood schemes, their costs and their benefits.



The outputs from these phased assessments were developed into a SWMP Action Plan. This has since been updated and a revised SWMP Action Plan is included in Annex D.4 of the Cumbria Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

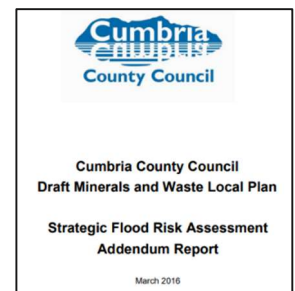
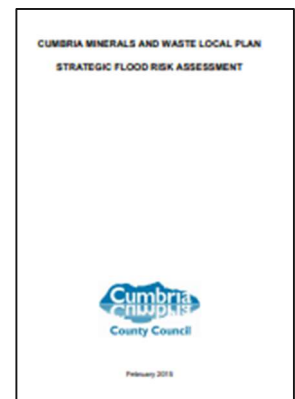
Cumbria County Council, February 2015 (Addendum Report, March 2016)

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is a study carried out by one or more Local Planning Authorities to assess the risk to an area from flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking account of the likely impacts of climate change, and to assess the impact that land use changes and development in the area will have on flood risk.

The SFRA is used by the Local Planning Authority to:

- Understand the extent and severity of flood risk from all sources.
- Assess the cumulative impact that development of changes in land use has on the risk of flooding.
- Understand how the effects of climate change impact risk.
- Identify opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding.
- Identify land required for flood risk management.

The 2016 addendum report includes additional and updated flood risk assessment information to that contained within the February 2015 report.



Whilst there are differences between the strategies and plans detailed in this section, such as timescales, governance and outputs, there are fundamental similarities. All the plans consider the effective management of water in the environment taking account of current issues and future challenges. The delivery of actions in one plan often overlap or benefit another plan. The Cumbria FCERM Partnership will continue to work hard together with the RFCC to exploit these cross-cutting benefits to maximise environmental benefits and reduce costs through:

- Alignment of communications – parties responsible for the development of plans to regularly review key upcoming engagement to try and align messaging and look for where there may be overlap
- Sharing of knowledge – we share findings and data to look for areas of overlap between the different plans, developing joint measures or options where appropriate. For example, EA river level data has been used to help understanding of the impact of outfall locking for the DWMP
- Continuous improvement – focus on how we could work together better in the future and develop the capability to do that through developing tools such as the DWMP geospatial platform to aid data sharing. Combining the output from the DWMP Strategic Planning Group discussions helps understand what proposals could best support the delivery of which FRMP and RBMP measures.

Funding Provisions

National FCERM Investment Programme 2021-2027

Whilst it is not possible to eliminate the risk of all flooding and coastal change, the nation's investment in flood and coastal defences aims to better protect properties and reduce the impacts of flooding on people's lives and livelihoods.

In the 2020 Budget, the government committed to expenditure on flood and coastal risk management of £5.2 billion between 2021 and 2027, which is double the £2.6 billion investment made between 2015 -2021. This level of spending will better protect circa 200,000 properties as well as avoid wider economic damages to the nation. Out of the national target of circa 200,000 properties to be better protected, the North West has secured funding to better protect a regional target of 43,377 properties.

In addition, as part of the 2020 Budget, the government provided £200 million between 2021 and 2027 for a flood and coastal resilience innovation fund, which has funded the Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR) programme and Our Future Coast, which is developing nature-based solutions to increase coastal resilience at 14 sites on the NW coast.

The Government announced in July 2022 that £100 million of the £5.2 billion budget was being ring-fenced for a frequently flooded allowance to benefit communities that suffered repeated flooding. The funding is targeted at communities where 10 or more properties have flooded twice or more in the last 10 years.

Most recently in September 2023, DEFRA announced £25 million funding for improving flood resilience through a new NFM programme.

Scheme Funding Options

There are various funding sources that allow the LLFA to reduce flood and coastal erosion risk through the delivery of projects:

Grant in Aid (GiA)

The Government, through DEFRA, provides most of the funding for flood and coastal risk management projects that are consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England in the form of Grant in Aid (GiA). Projects or studies that manage coastal erosion, surface water flooding, groundwater flooding and improve property flood resilience are eligible for funding. Sewer flooding (unless this has been caused by increased rainwater) and flooding caused by burst water mains are excluded from funding.

Distribution of GiA funding is administered by the Environment Agency. A partnership funding calculator is used to determine how much GiA funding the FCERM project is eligible for, and the additional partnership contributions that are required. To be eligible for funding, the project must cost more than £5,000 and meet certain criteria including:

- Building new flood and coastal defences and structures, refurbish or improve existing defences and structures, where this extends their original design life.
- Produce natural flood management measures.
- Improve preparing for, responding to and recovering from flood events.
- One-off channel dredge and de-silt projects.
- Beach management works including recycling work to counteract longshore drift.
- Legally required projects to protect or enhance the natural environment.

There is also the opportunity to apply for funding to progress flood or coastal erosion risk reduction strategies through future projects for connected areas.

The amount of Grant in Aid available to each capital scheme is calculated by the Outcome Measures delivered by the project. Outcome Measures reflect financial, environmental and FCERM benefits.

There is a formal process for applying for funding and reporting on progress requiring the submission of prescribed forms at designated project stages. The gateway and funding timeline has been shown in figure 5, with an overview of the GiA funding forms in Table 4.

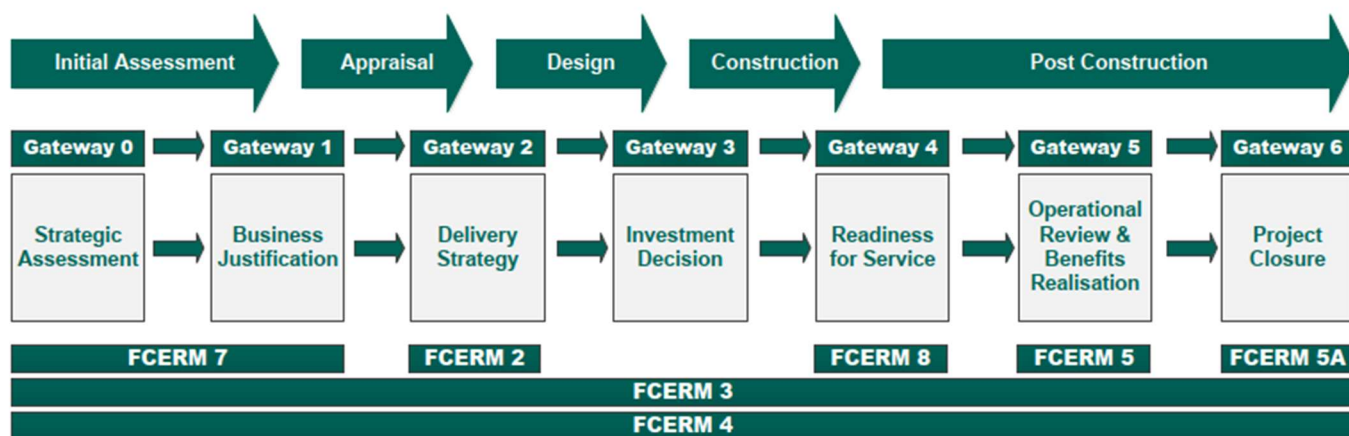


Figure 5: FCERM Project Gateway and Funding Timeline.

Form	Description
FCERM 7	Application for approval of preliminary studies and strategies
FCERM 2	Flood Defence Schemes: application for grant.
FCERM 3	Application for interim payment of grant funding.
FCERM 4	Application for prior approval of variations of approved schemes / studies
FCERM 5	Final statement of account for projects or studies on site
FCERM 5A	Final statement of account for outstanding land purchase and compensation claims
FCERM 6	Grant eligible claim profile.
FCERM 8	Project closure report.

Table 4: GiA funding forms and returns.

There is an annual cycle for allocation of capital funding. The 2023/24 cycle has been shown on Figure 6 below, however the same cycle is repeated for subsequent years. RMAs are required to meet funding deadlines for new bids, review and refresh of consented projects, and allocations. The outcomes of these are reported at the quarterly RFCC meetings.

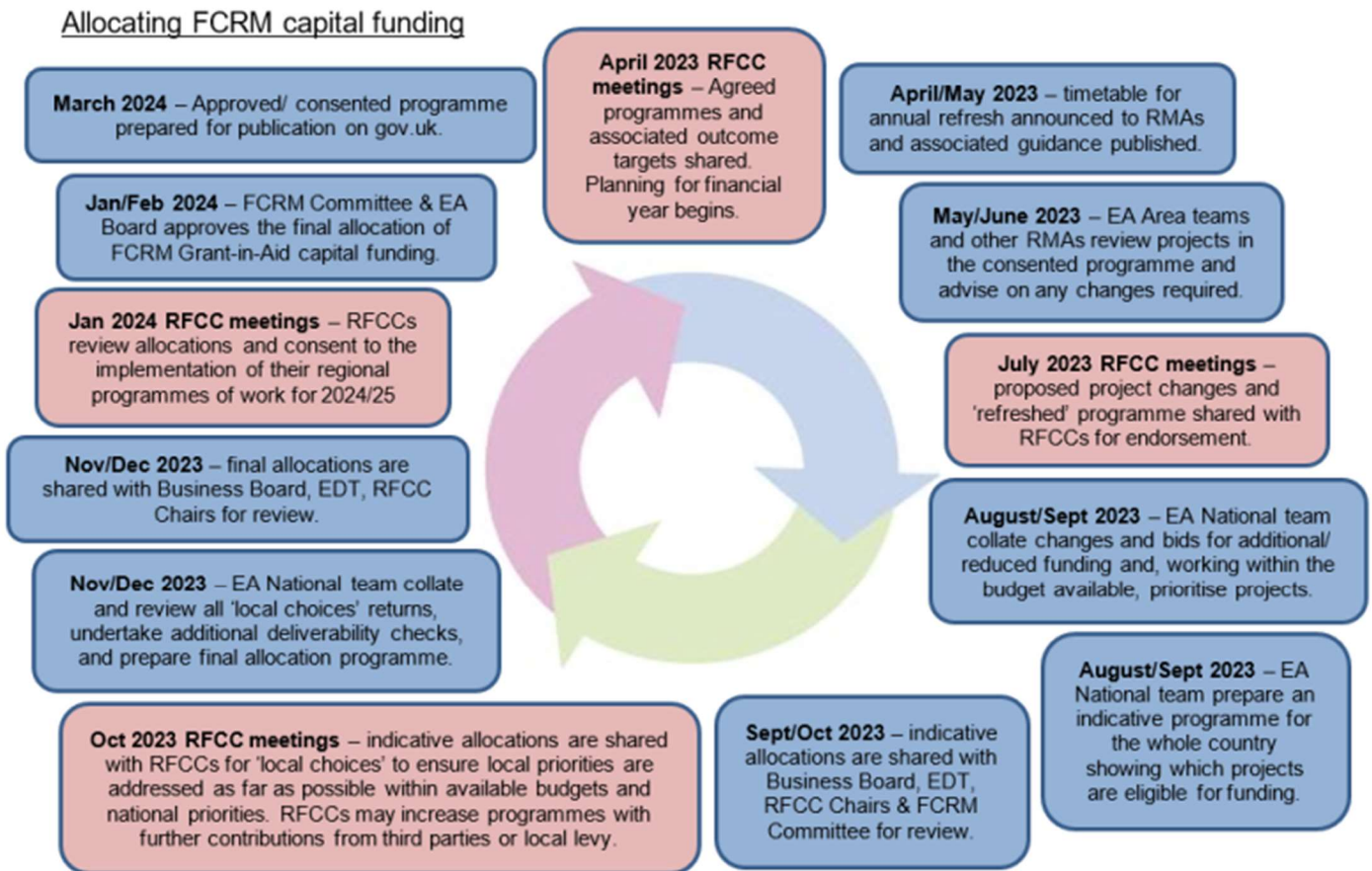


Figure 6: Process for allocating and approving capital GiA funding for 2023/24

Where there is a shortfall in GiA, alternative funding contributions are required for project delivery. Further information on FCERM funding is available on [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk).

Local Levy Funding

Whilst a lot of flood and coastal erosion risk management work is funded through central government Grant in Aid (GiA) funding, some schemes may miss out on nationally prioritised funding and require additional funding from other sources. Local levy is a local source of funding with spending criteria agreed regionally, allowing greater flexibility. The NW RFCC can choose to support projects that are either not eligible for GiA, or to support projects where there is a shortfall in GiA by the allocation of Local Levy.

Unlike many other public finances, local levy balances can be carried forward across financial years and earmarked for use in future years, providing flexibility to respond to evolving needs and programme changes, and to maximise other sources of funding when available.

Under Section 17 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, The Environment Agency may issue levies to the lead local flood authority for an area [in England] in respect of the Agency's flood and coastal erosion risk management functions in that area.

Each year RFCCs raise a local levy from their Lead Local Flood Authorities which is used to fund work by flood risk management authorities to reduce flood risk and to increase climate resilience.

Each Local Authority pays a fixed rate for every Band D property that lies within their boundary and within the RFCC boundary. This mechanism is set out in the Environment Agency (Levies)(England and Wales) Regulations 2011. The figures for the 2023/24 financial year have been provided in Table 5.

Local Authority	2023/24 Council Tax Base (Band D Equivalent)	2023/24 Local Levy Raised
Cumberland Council	88,329	£173,378
Westmorland & Furness Council	86,991	£170,753

Table 5: Local Levy Contributions for Cumbria Authorities

In September each year, the NWRFCFCC proposes a range of increases in the local levy to mitigate for inflation. The amount of increase is decided between the councillors from each Local Authority. Each Councillor will put forward a Local Levy % increase that is supported by their respective Local Authority, followed by a consensus vote for the Cumbria Partnership. The representing Councillor votes on behalf of Cumbria at the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee in October.

Any change to the Local Levy is then agreed by the RFCC by a simple majority vote given by Elected Members from all five sub-regional Partnerships and the Environment Agency (EA) Board will subsequently issue the agreed levy for the next financial year. The figures for recent financial years have been provided in Table 6.

Year	Levy raised by NWRFCFCC	% increase on previous year
2021 / 2022	£4.179m	2%
2022 / 2023	£4.283m	2.5%
2023 / 2024	£4.412m	3%
2024 / 2025	£4.544m	3%

Table 6: Additional local levy raised and agreed % increase for current and previous years.

Local levy funding can be used in a variety of ways including:

- Partnership contributions to capital schemes which reduce the risk of flooding, such as building new flood defences.

- Funding natural flood management projects which reduce the risk of flooding by slowing the flow of water.
- Delivery of the NW RFCC Business Plan actions including:
 - The Flood Hub website – an online platform for flood and coastal risk in the North West.
 - Projects that trial new and innovative approaches to overcome barriers to flood resilience including the development of tools and sharing best practice.
 - Additional resource and capacity to support risk management authorities to work collaboratively in delivering their strategies, plans and investment programmes. This includes funding, wholly or partially, a number of posts including the Local Authority Partnership Co-ordinators, Capital Projects Advisors and Capital Programme Co-ordinator posts.
- ‘Quick Win’ funding for small scale interventions. £100k per year is allocated to the Cumbria Partnership which is split equally between Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council.

Innovation and Change Fund

The Innovation and Change Fund is a component of the North West RFCC Local Levy Fund. It was introduced in Sept 2020 as part of the Local Levy Strategy. It was funding earmarked to support the innovative actions identified in the Business Plan, alongside the significant contributions to capital schemes that consume most of the Local Levy funding.

Partnership Funding

Where GiA and/or Local Levy does not fully support the delivery of a project, LLFA can provide additional funding through their own contributions or by seeking external contributions from local communities or partners who may benefit from the project.

- Public Contributions

This is funding provided by the Local Authority or Internal Drainage Board

- Private Contributions

This is funding received through private organisations or individuals, for example a business that will benefit from the construction of a flood alleviation scheme.

Other Government Departments (OGD)

Other Government Department funding supports the delivery of FCERM outcome measures by contributing financially to schemes which benefit wider infrastructure but have an affordability gap and would otherwise not be 100% GiA funded.

The £400 million OGD element of GiA was secured as part of the March 2020 Budget, recognising the benefits that investment in the flood programme has on the resilience of other government department’s assets (e.g. hospitals, schools, road and rail networks etc). The OGD prioritisation score is calculated from a count of the OGD assets within a benefit area shapefile, multiplied by a weighted score for each asset type.

Asset Replacement Allowance (ARA)

The ARA is Grant in Aid funding that is only available for Environment Agency led projects and assets. It was introduced by the RFCC due to some assets (e.g. culverts) needing significant repair or replacement, presenting a significant flood risk but only to a small number of properties. This meant the work would only qualify for a relatively small amount of GiA when put through the partnership funding calculator and yet the costs could often be considerable, but with very low potential for contributions from other partners. The ARA is a special fund for these types of cases where constructing a funding package would never be feasible, but where there's a flood risk that needs addressing urgently.

Flood and Coastal Resilience & Innovation Programme (FCRIP)

In 2021, DEFRA provided £150 million through the [Flood and Coastal Resilience & Innovation Programme](#) (FCRIP) to fund 25 projects supporting local areas in becoming more resilient to flooding and erosion. This included funding the following projects that exist in Cumbria:

Our Future Coast

Working with nature to safeguard coastal communities from climate change across the northwest. This project will test and implement nature-based solutions at 14 sites on NW Coast (WHERE ARE THESE LOCATED – Carl Green Programme Manager) to create natural buffer strips to:

- increase coastal resilience of vulnerable hot-spots to reduce flood risk,
- reduce coastal erosion,
- increase biodiversity and water quality,
- capture carbon and
- wider recreational and well-being benefits.

Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)

Investigating flood resilience with rural communities. Small rural communities in Cumbria have suffered repeated flooding in the last two decades. These small communities are not eligible for funding for traditional flood defences and new ways to protect them and prepare for flooding need to be developed. This includes:

- Natural flood management – where predictive modelling can demonstrate a meaningful difference to flood risk is likely to be achieved. This will develop knowledge on the circumstances where natural flood management has the greatest impact.
- Local engagement – with dedicated officers to work with farmers, land-owners and local communities to develop and fund natural flood management intervention that benefit the wider community.
- Flood preparedness – recognising it is not possible to eliminate the risk of flooding, community resilience to future flooding must be developed through shared knowledge and experience.
- Blended finance – working together to fund natural flood management schemes and achieve community flood resilience.

Natural Flood Management Programme (NFM)

In September 2023, DEFRA announced £25 million funding for improving flood resilience through a new NFM programme. This programme aims to promote greater use of nature-based solutions by:

- Reducing local flood risk using NFM.
- Providing wider benefits to the environment, nature and society.
- Accelerate new and existing opportunities for NFM delivery and financing.
- Further improve evidence of NFM by filling knowledge gaps.

A number of bids for projects within Cumbria have been submitted, the outcome of which is expected in early 2024.

More information on investment in FCERM can be found in the North West RFCC Business Plan (available on [The Flood Hub](#)) and statistics can also be found on [Defra's webpage](#).

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Terms of reference for the Cumbria Strategic FCERM Partnership have been produced and were adopted by the RMA Steering Group at the inaugural RMA Steering Group meeting on 26 January 2024.

A copy of the approved document is contained in this Annex.

The Terms of Reference will be subject to an annual review and update at the start of the incumbent Chairs leadership.

Cumbria Strategic Partnership

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)

Terms of Reference

2024-2025

Version Control

26/01/2024	Document approved at RMA Steering Group meeting
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Mission Statement:

Working together to manage the risk of flooding across Cumbria.



Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council

Introduction.

This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Partnership for Cumbria and associated sub-groups both as a whole and of its members.

The Cumbria Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership is one of five partnerships that report to the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC), administered by the Environment Agency as part of their role to provide a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. In Cumbria, the strategic partnership is made up of two groups. Strategic Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, that must work together to deliver an integrated and collaborative approach to manage flood risk; and strategic partners who support strategic decisions by providing information, advice and guidance on matters relating to flood risk management.

Since 1 April 2023, Westmorland and Furness Unitary Authority and Cumberland Unitary Authority have replaced Cumbria County Council as the designated Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) for Cumbria under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. As LLFAs Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council have a statutory duty to develop, maintain, apply, and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management across Cumbria.

The Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022 for Cumbria details how risks associated with flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses will be managed. Whilst this strategy was written prior to the formation of the new Unitary Authorities, its content remains relevant in the management of flood risk across the County.

The strategy recognises the contribution of other RMAs in the management of flood risks. The Environment Agency manages risks from flooding on main rivers, reservoirs, and the coast. As the water and sewage company for Cumbria, United Utilities are responsible for flooding of their water supply and sewage facilities, including ensuring resilience to flooding and risks from failure of their infrastructure. Both national and local highways authorities are responsible for providing and managing highway drainage.

Whilst each RMA has specific responsibilities for flood risks, it must be recognised that flooding is often complex and interconnected, with overlapping roles and responsibilities requiring complex multi-faceted solutions to effectively manage flood risks. There are many partner agencies that contribute to delivery of the strategic aims, including river catchment management groups, landowners, and community groups, many of which have established flood action groups with considerable local knowledge and dedication to manage flood risks at a local level.

The Cumbria Strategic Partnership recognises the need to promote enhancements to the natural environment as an integral component of flood risk management where feasible.

Role of the Strategic FCERM Partnership.

The objective of the strategic partnership is to deliver the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy efficiently, effectively, transparently and in a way that is coordinated with our partners and communities.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy must reflect the strategic aims and ambitions documented within the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Business Plan 2022-2025.

Cumbria's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out the following aims:

- To coordinate the resources available in the flood risk management authorities to maximise a reduction in local flood risk;
- To promote a wider understanding and awareness of flooding in Cumbria;
- To explain how everyone can play a part in reducing flood risk.

An action plan has been developed to steer and focus actions.

In addition to these aims, the Strategic Partnership commits to take account of future climate predictions in our strategies and policies.

The Strategic Partnership will respond to requests of support and clarification of priorities from the Tactical Flood and Coast Partnership and will provide strategic direction to the programme delivery at a tactical level.

The Strategic Partnership will support the delivery of regional actions set out by the NWRFC. Within the 2022-2025 Business Plan, the Cumbria Partnership is supporting the 'Managing water at catchment scale with nature' aim by contributing to Action 9: Whole catchment approach. This requires a wide range of partners to work collaboratively across a river catchment to reduce flood risk and achieve wider environmental benefits including improved water quality, soil health and biodiversity.

Membership.

Group membership is differentiated between core members, who are the RMAs who have a statutory duty to collaborate, and strategic partner agencies and interest groups. Strategic RMA meetings are held quarterly and chaired by an appointed Councillor on a rotational basis and attended by elected members from both LLFAs and senior officers from the RMAs. The strategic partnership group will meet collectively on an annual basis.

Core Membership

The RMAs that within the Cumbria Strategic Partnership are listed in table 1 below. These authorities form the RMA Steering Group detailed on the organisational structure in Figure 1.

Risk Management Authorities (RMA)	
Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Local Flood Authority • Coastal Protection Authority • Highways Authority 	Environment Agency United Utilities National Highways

Table 1: Core Strategic Partnership Members

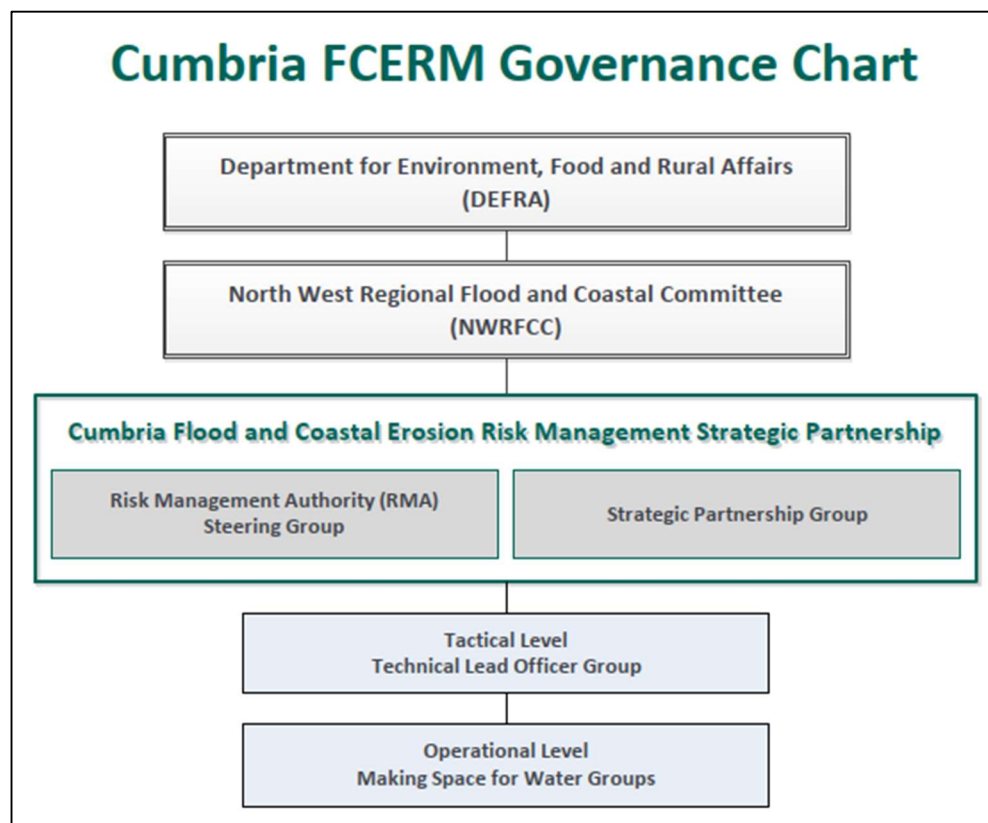


Figure 1: Cumbria strategic partnership organisational structure

The flood management roles and responsibilities of Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) are set out in Table 2 below:

RMA	Role and Responsibilities
Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of the National FCERM Strategy. • Allocation of national funding for flood projects. • Managing flood risks from the sea and main river flooding. • Support in the development of Flood Risk Management Plans including community engagement. • Provision of flood data, advice and guidance on best practice.
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Westmorland and Furness Council Cumberland Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the risk from surface water run-off, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. • Lead on development and implementation of a local flood risk management strategy. • Flood investigations and reports • Coastal Protection Authority • Local Planning Authority
Water Company United Utilities Northumbrian Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and manage their water supply and sewerage systems to reduce risk and impact of flooding and pollution. • Produce a drainage strategy and input to local and national strategies. • Address frequent and severe sewer flooding through capital investment plans, regulated by Ofwat. • Ensure resilience to flooding and maintenance of essential services in emergencies. • Provide advice to LLFA on impact of water company assets on flood risk.
Highway Authority National Highways Westmorland and Furness Council Cumberland Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Highways are responsible for motorways and trunk roads and the Local Authorities are responsible for all other highways. • Provision and maintenance of highway drainage.

Table 2: Roles and Responsibilities of RMAs

The core members are required to provide strategic leadership for flood risk management across Cumbria. At least one representative from each organisation will attend the strategic partnership meeting, providing accountability for delivering actions.

Other strategic partners may attend the RMA Steering Group by invitation as required.

The RMA Steering Group will be responsible for the following actions:

- Deliver and develop the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- Ensure efficient delivery of statutory flood risk duties.
- Identify and agree investment priorities.
- Support the delivery of the NWRFCC Business Plan Ambitions and Actions.
- Co-ordinate the response to flood incidents and flood recovery programs.
- Take account of future climate predictions in our strategies and policies.

Strategic Partners

Partner Agencies and Interested Parties are not defined in statute as RMA's but have a local or specialist interest in flooding. The following partners have been identified in Cumbria:

- Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
- Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC)
- Town and Parish Councils
- Community Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)
- Rivers Trust Catchment Groups (Eden, West, South, Lune and Tyne)
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Electricity Northwest
- Coal Authority
- Lake District National Park
- Yorkshire Dales National Park
- Cumbria Rivers Authority Governance Group (CRAGG)
- Locality Boards / Community Panels
- Cumbria Farmer Network / National Farmers Union (NFU)
- Emergency Planning and Resilience
- Marine and Maritime Organisation (MMO)
- Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Partner agencies are key to delivering the actions within the local flood risk management strategy by providing information, advice, guidance and direction on flood and coastal erosion risk management matters but are not responsible for strategic decision-making. These authorities form the Strategic Partnership Group detailed on the structure in Figure 1.

The Strategic Partnership Group will contribute to the following actions:

- Be a forum to share flood information, best practice and knowledge.
- Celebrate scheme successes and communicate lessons learned.
- Increase awareness of flooding issues across Cumbria through engagement with stakeholders.
- Develop shared opportunities to deliver flood risk management activities at a local level.
- Facilitate communications and engagement with communities at risk of flooding.

Group administration.

The Chair

The Strategic Partnership meetings are chaired / vice-chaired by the elected members (Councillors) who have been appointed as portfolio holders for the committees responsible for flooding. For Cumberland Authority this will be the Executive Member – Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places, and for Westmorland and Furness Authority this will be the Cabinet Member for Climate and Biodiversity.

The inaugural meeting in January 2024 will be chaired by Cumberland Council who will continue to chair the meetings until 31 March 2025. Thereafter, the Chair will rotate on an annual basis, changing roles on 1 April each year as detailed below.

Start Date	Chair	Vice Chair
26 January 2024	Cumberland Council Executive Member – Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places	Westmorland and Furness Council Cabinet Member for Climate and Biodiversity
1 April 2025	Westmorland and Furness Council Cabinet Member for Climate and Biodiversity	Cumberland Council Executive Member – Sustainable, Resilient and Connected Places

Table 3: Pattern of rotation of Chair / Vice Chair

The Chair will also represent Cumbria LLFAs at the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NWRFCC) and the NWRFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group, supported by the Partnership Co-ordinator and Lead Flood Authority Officers.

Meeting Agenda, Minutes and Actions

Agenda items should focus on strategic priorities for flood risk management work programmes across Cumbria. A pre-meeting, facilitated by the Partnership Coordinator, will be used to agree the agenda. Both the Chair and Vice Chair will be involved in this process as the Vice Chair will be expected to deputise for the Chair in the event of absence.

Items for the agenda should be submitted via the Partnership Coordinator. The finalised agenda, with any supporting papers, will be circulated by the Partnership Coordinator in advance of the meeting.

Agreed actions of the Strategic Partnership will be documented on an Action Log updated by the partnership co-ordinator and circulated together with the minutes of the meeting within 7 days.

Meeting Dates

The RMA Steering Group will hold quarterly meetings in advance of the NWR FCC Meetings to ensure timely project updates and to raise awareness of local and emerging issues prior to these meetings.

The Strategic Partnership Group will hold annual meetings in a conference and workshop format to provide the best opportunity for information exchange given the large numbers of partner organisations.

RMA Steering Group and Strategic Partnership Group meeting dates will be finalised once the RFCC main meetings and Finance and Business Assurance sub-group meeting dates have been published. The confirmed dates for 2024/25 are provided below:

RMA Steering Group	RFCC Finance Sub-Group	RFCC Main Meeting
26 January 2024	5 January 2024	19 January 2024
21 March 2024	12 April 2024	26 April 2024
20 June 2024	5 July 2024	19 July 2024
19 September 2024*	4 October 2024	18 October 2024
11 December 2024	10 January 2025	24 January 2025

* The meeting in September will be a dual meeting with both the RMA Steering Group and Strategic Partnership Group meeting being held on the same day.

Except for the dual RMA Steering Group / Strategic Partnership Group meeting held in September which will be a face-to-face event, all RMA Steering Group meetings will be held virtually.

Annex 2 - Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management is associated with an array of terminology that has bespoke meanings and is often abbreviated. The following pages provide a glossary of terms, their acronyms, and their meanings.

Term	Meaning
Annual Event Probability (AEP)	See SoP /Standard of Protection
Aquifer	A source of groundwater comprising water bearing rock, sand or gravel capable of yielding significant quantities of water.
Assets	Structures or a system of structures used to manage flood risk
Building Regulations	The UK Building Regulations are rules of a statutory nature to set standards for the design and construction of buildings, primarily to ensure the safety and health for people in or around those buildings, but also for purposes of energy conservation and access to and about other buildings.
Catchment	The area contributing surface water flow to a point on a drainage or river system. Can be divided into sub-catchments
Catchment Based Approach (CaBA)	Collaborative working at a river catchment scale to deliver cross-cutting improvements to our water environments.
CERT	Combined Efficiencies Reporting Tool
CDEL	Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit – money that is spent on investment and things that will create growth in the future. Capital in nature; creates an asset.
CLA	Cumbria and Lancashire Authorities. This abbreviation is often used in RFCC documentation.
Climate Change	Long term variations in global temperature and weather patterns caused by natural and human actions.
Combined Sewer	A sewer that drains both rainwater and foul water.
Consequence	A condition or occurrence traceable to a cause e.g. the flood was an inevitable consequence of the prolonged, heavy rains.
Culvert	A covered structure under a road, embankment etc, to direct the flow of water.
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Discharge	The discharge of a river is the volume of water, which flows through it in a given time. It is usually measured in cubic meters per second (m ³ /s).

Term	Meaning
Drainage Authorities	Organisations involved in water level management, including IDBs, the Environment Agency, and Regional Flood Defence Committees.
Environment Agency (EA)	Is a UK non-departmental public body of Defra with the principle aim of protecting and enhancing the environment to make a contribution towards the objective of achieving sustainable development. The Agency has principle responsibility for river (fluvial) flooding.
EL	Efficiencies Leads
Flood	A flood is defined as when water covers land that is normally dry.
Flood mitigation	Methods of reducing the effects of floods. These methods may be structural solutions (e.g. reservoirs) or non-structural (e.g. land- use planning, early warning systems).
Flood zones	<p>Flood zones reflect the probability of river and sea flooding.</p> <p>Flood zone 1 – land with a low probability of river or sea flooding (less than 0.1% annual probability)</p> <p>Flood zone 2 – land with a medium probability of river or sea flooding (between 0.1% and 1% annual probability of river flooding; or between 0.1% and 0.5% annual probability of sea flooding)</p> <p>Flood zone 3a – land with a high probability of river or sea flooding (greater than 1% annual probability of river flooding; or greater than 0.5% annual probability of sea flooding)</p> <p>Flood zone 3b – functional floodplain (land with greater than 3.3% annual probability of flooding, that is designed to flood from rivers or the sea with any existing flood risk management infrastructure operating effectively).</p>
Fluvial flooding	Flooding from a main watercourse (brooks, streams, rivers and lakes etc) that occurs when the water features cannot cope with the amount of water draining into them, from the land. When rainfall is heavy and / or prolonged, a large amount of run-off reaches the rivers and eventually causes them to overtop their banks.
GMMC	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire. The abbreviation is often used in RFCC documentation.
Groundwater	Water that is below the surface of ground in the saturation zone.

Term	Meaning
Groundwater flooding	Occurs when water levels in the ground rise above the natural surface. Low-lying areas underlain by permeable strata are particularly susceptible.
Highway Authority (HA)	A local authority with responsibility for the maintenance and drainage of highways maintainable at public expense
Infiltration	The passage of surface water through the surface of the ground / the entry of groundwater to a sewer.
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	Local Authority responsible for taking the lead on local flood risk management.
Ordinary Watercourse	Any watercourse that does not form part of a main river and is not classified as a main river.
PCM	Programme and Contract Management
Pluvial Flooding	Flooding that results from rainfall generated overland flow before the runoff enters any watercourse or sewer. It is usually associated with high intensity rainfall events. Also referred to as surface water flooding.
Pollution	A change in the physical, chemical, radiological or biological quality of a resource (air, water or land) caused by man or man's activities that is injurious to existing, intended or potential uses of the resource.
Prevention	Site design and management to stop or reduce the occurrence of pollution and to reduce the volume of runoff by reducing impermeable areas.
Probability	The statistical probability of a flooding episode (event) occurring.
Protection	The flood event return period above which significant damage and possible failure of the flood defences could occur.
Public sewer	A sewer that is vested in and maintained by a sewerage undertaker.
Recovery	The process of rebuilding and rehabilitating the community following an emergency.
RDEL	Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit – money that is spent on day-to-day resources and administration costs. This includes the running of the services that they oversee such as schools or hospitals, and the everyday cost of resources such as staff.

Term	Meaning
Reservoir	A natural or artificial lake where water is collected and stored until needed. Reservoirs can be used for irrigation, recreation, providing water supply for municipal needs, hydroelectric power or controlling water flow.
Resilience	The ability of the community, services, area or infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident.
Risk	Measures the significance of a potential event in terms of likelihood and impact. In the context of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the events in question are emergencies
Risk assessment	A structured and auditable process of identifying potentially significant events, assessing their likelihood and impacts, and then combining these to provide an overall assessment of risk, as a basis for further decisions and action.
Risk Management Authorities (RMA)	Organisations that have a key role in flood and coastal erosion risk management as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). These are the Environment Agency, sewerage undertakers, lead local flood authorities, district councils where there is no unitary authority, internal drainage boards, water companies, and highways authorities.
Run-off	Water flow over the ground surface to the drainage system. This occurs if the ground is impermeable, is saturated or if rainfall is particularly intense.
Sewer	A pipe or channel taking domestic foul and/or surface water from buildings and associated paths and hard standings from two or more curtilages and having a proper outfall.
Sewerage undertaker	A collective term relating to the statutory undertaking of water companies that are responsible for sewerage and sewage disposal including surface water from roofs and yards of premises
Significant	Defined threshold of flooding consequence

Term	Meaning
Standard of Protection	The standard to which an area is protected against flooding. This is generally expressed as a Annual Event Probability (AEP). For example, an SoP of 10% means an area is protected against a flood with a 10% probability of occurring in any given year. An SoP of 0.5% AEP means an area is protected against a flood with a 0.5% probability of occurring in any given year. The flood with a 0.5% AEP has a lower likelihood of occurring than a flood with a 10% probability, but will be greater in severity (higher water levels). A 0.5% AEP standard of protection is therefore higher than a 10% standard of protection.
Sub-catchment	A division of a catchment, allowing runoff management as near to the source as is reasonable.
Surface water flooding	Occurs when the level of rainfall overwhelms the capacity of the drainage system to cope
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	A sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques.
Water and Sewerage Company (WaSC)	Water and Sewerage Company. In Lancashire there are two; United Utilities and Yorkshire Water for a small area in Pendle.
Wastewater	This is 'used' water arising from homes and businesses and includes water from sinks, toilets, bathtubs, washing machines and dishwashers – any water that has to be drained, including storm water.
Watercourse	<p>A term including all rivers, streams ditches drains cuts culverts dykes sluices and passages through which water flows.</p> <p>Watercourses are split into two classifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Main river' – Environment Agency are the responsible risk management authority • 'Ordinary' – LLFA is the responsible risk management authority
Water Framework Directive (WFD)	EU Water Framework Directive