

[Press release: Medway Flood Action Plan Launched](#)

The Medway Flood Partnership has today launched the [Medway Flood Action Plan](#), outlining how it will reduce the risk of flooding to 9,000 properties in communities along the River Medway in Kent.

The plan is owned by the Medway Flood Partnership and outlines how the members will work with communities to manage the risk of in the Medway catchment. This covers all land draining into the Rivers Medway, Beult, Teise, Bourne and Eden, as well their tributaries. During the December 2013 flood event, over 900 homes were flooded across the Medway catchment, devastating people and livelihoods.

Over the next 5 years, at least £19 million will be invested in the Medway catchment on projects that help to manage and reduce flood risk. Measures include increasing the capacity of the Leigh Flood Storage Area and providing property-level resilience measures to homes in Yalding, Collier Street and Laddingford. The Environment Agency will be spending about £1 million each year on maintenance of river channels and flood defences such as flood walls, sluices and weirs, to ensure they remain in good condition.

Many organisations have a role in managing and responding to flooding: parish councils, local authorities, national agencies, landowner representatives and local businesses. Reducing the risk of flooding in the Medway catchment is a complex problem, which can only be solved by working in partnership.

The Medway Flood Partnership was established in January 2017 to bring these organisations together to co-ordinate these activities. We have also developed a Medway Action Plan that sets out our shared objectives and priorities for the next 5 years and a vision for the next 25 years.

Together the partnership are looking at where they can build defences to better protect communities as well as where they can slow the flow of floodwaters and reduce flood levels through natural flood management. Where it is not possible to prevent flooding, they are working with local communities to help them be better prepared and resilient to flooding so that they can recover more quickly after a flood.

Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Manager, said:

The launch of this plan demonstrates our commitment to finding practicable solutions to manage flood risk. Over the next 5 years, fully funded schemes within the Medway Flood Action Plan will reduce the risk of flooding to over 1,700 homes along the River Medway. With our partners, we will also be exploring further opportunities for schemes that help to reduce flood risk and improve the local environment.

Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member at Kent County Council, said:

I'm delighted that the Medway Flood Action Plan has been launched and that we can finally get to work on flood defences in the area. During the winter 2013 to 14 floods, over 900 homes and businesses in Tonbridge, Yalding, East Peckham and other smaller communities were flooded from the River Medway. We are determined to reduce the risk of flooding to these communities. This is tremendous news for those communities affected and goes to show that the hard work we have put in with our partners has helped us secure the funding and draw up a robust plan to help manage and reduce flood risk.

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