

Sustainable drainage regulations come into force

The mandatory regulations introduced by the Welsh Government will help reduce flood risk and improve water quality.

The regulations will also help to ensure that environmental standards are maintained and improved in a post-Brexit world, with the issue of flooding addressed in an environmentally friendly way through sustainable methods.

Further benefits from the regulations include improving the surrounding wildlife and biodiversity and helping to reduce pollution on new housing developments through the use of effectively designed and constructed SuDS.

SuDS work by making use of landscape and natural vegetation to control the flow of surface water and reduce the risk of flooding. Designs can include ponds, permeable paving and swales, which slow down the discharge of surface water more than conventional piped drainage.

Surface runoff water can also be a major source of pollution, both directly and from overwhelmed sewers discharging into rivers. SuDS are designed to reduce surface water runoff and improve water quality while being more resilient and longer lasting than conventional drainage.

Around 163,000 properties in Wales are at risk of surface water flooding and employing sustainable drainage systems is estimated to reduce flood damage by up to 30%.

Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, said:

“Flooding can have a devastating impact on home owners and it is important that every effort is made to protect houses and limit the damage caused by surface water flooding.

“Last year saw several instances of severe flooding in Wales highlighting the importance of introducing measures to combat the challenges faced by climate change.

“We hope that these regulations will have a positive impact for future generations and help ensure Wales maintains its high environmental standards post-Brexit.”