

Who's responsible for managing flood risk?

Property owner

The property owner is responsible for private drainage and surface water up to the boundary of the property. They may also want to consider property flood resilience (PFR) measures to protect their property from flood damage.

Watercourse (riparian) ownership

You own a watercourse if it runs adjacent to, through, or under your property. This includes both main rivers, and ordinary watercourses such as streams, culverts and ditches. You are responsible for maintaining the natural flow of water and reporting incidents such as blockages and flooding.

Main river and coastal flooding

The Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for managing the risk of main river and coastal flooding. Main rivers are those which are designated as such on the EA's Main River Map. To report incidents and flood risk issues, call the Incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60. To sign up for flood warnings, call Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Groundwater flooding

The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) are responsible for managing the risk of groundwater flooding. This can occur when periods of prolonged rainfall cause the water table to rise and emerge in basements or above ground.

Public sewers and utility pipes

Water companies (e.g. United Utilities) are responsible for managing the risk of flooding from public sewers and utility pipes. This includes shared sewer pipes where they meet between properties before joining the public sewer.

Highway gullies and drains

Highway roads, footpaths, drains and gullies are the responsibility of the local highway authority which will be either the County Council or the Unitary Authority.

Major roads and motorway drainage

Responsibility of Highways England.

Surface water flooding

The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) are responsible for managing the risk of surface water flooding. This can occur when the capacity of drainage systems on land or roads is exceeded by heavy rainfall.