

# Poynton Flood Update Newsletter

April 2020

Dear Resident of Poynton

Since our last newsletter in January we wanted to provide you with a further multi-agency update on the work which has been carried out since the flooding of Poynton in July/August 2019. This includes updates from Cheshire East Council, United Utilities, Environment Agency, Poynton Flood Group, Poynton Working Group and further advice and information which can be found on the Floodhub.

As you are aware, we are currently in unprecedented times with the global outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Following government advice we are clear that the safety of everyone is our priority. We are also clear that much of our work has been identified as essential by the government and they are keen for us to continue to do much of this, where it remains safe to do so.

Our key priorities are to protect the health, safety and well-being of our own staff, the public and the businesses and partners we work with; to prevent loss of life and serious harm to the environment; and to keep our critical operations running.

Please could residents ensure that flooding incidents are reported to the appropriate agency, numbers are at the foot of the newsletter.

We wish to reassure you that work is continuing in Poynton to further protect the communities from future flood events. We hope that you are all staying safe and well during this time.

## Cheshire East Council Update

### Section 19 Report

Cheshire East Council's role is to undertake the formal flood investigation which is called the section 19 report, which is a requirement of section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010.

The purpose of a formal flood investigation is to record:

- Which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
- Whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.

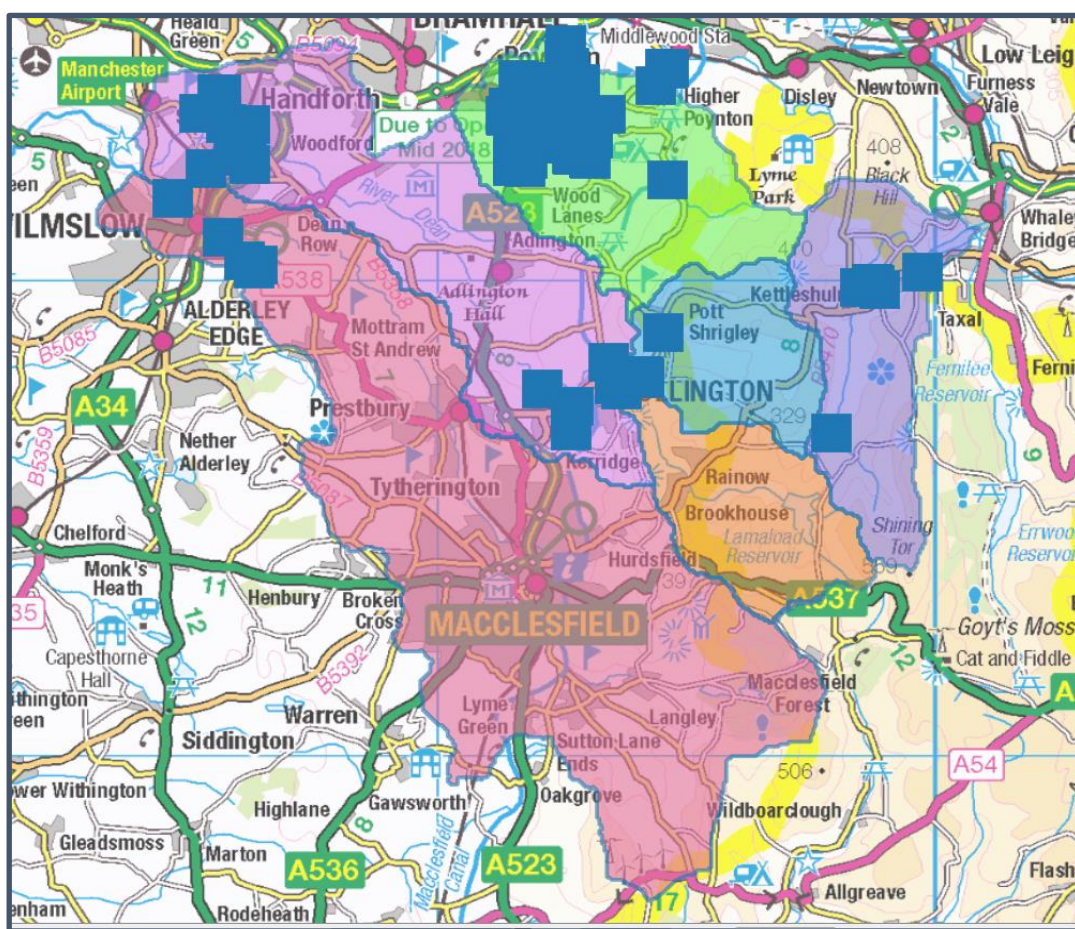
The risk management authorities who have recommendations for actions have been notified which have formed the basis for some of the activities on-going since July 2019. The notification of these recommendations is not dependent upon the publication of the report.

The draft has been reviewed by the Environment Agency and United Utilities. It will be reviewed by the other risk management agencies involved and final approval for publication will be sought by the Council. The timeline for publication may be delayed by the recent outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) as all formal meetings of committees and member bodies have currently been cancelled at the Council. When available, the approved report will be published online here: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/flooding/floods-and-flood-risk/flood-investigations.aspx>

To report internal property flooding to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) please email: [Flood.Investigation@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Flood.Investigation@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or call 0300 123 5500.

### Properties reporting flooding between 28th - 31 July 2019

Green area highlights the Poynton Brook catchment.



### Planning applications and strategic planning sites in Poynton

All sites have been re-reviewed and all planning application files are available to view online: [https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/view\\_a\\_planning\\_application/view\\_a\\_planning\\_application.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/view_a_planning_application/view_a_planning_application.aspx)

Members of the public can submit their comment, and any supporting evidence such as photographs or videos via email, or letter. Please see the online guidance for further details.

Sustainable surface water management is a material consideration for all planning applications. This means all development proposals must include a site-specific surface water drainage strategy following sustainable urban drainage guidelines (SuDS).

- On Greenfield sites, surface water run off must be managed to achieve at least no increase in run-off rates. Where possible, there should be a reduction in rates.
- On previously-developed sites, run-off proposals should demonstrate a reduction in rates in line with the non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (2015) (or any later replacement standards).

### Highway drainage investigations completed, systems freely draining:

Highway gullies are designed to drain the highway during average rainfall events. Gullies predominantly drain into surface water sewers, with some gullies draining to combined sewers and in more rural locations into highway drains or drains on private land.

### A555 Handforth (Dog Bone Roundabout) – Flooding at underpass

Following the investigation the attenuation tank, storage tank No.6 and interceptor by Spath Brook have now been cleansed, the non-return valve has been replaced and storm pump repaired.

### Highway gully clearance

- Cheshire East Highways have completed the additional programme of gully emptying in the north, of the 10,251 identified 8,961 gullies have been emptied since the flood event, this is in addition to routine maintenance activities.
- To report an issue: <https://www.cheshireeasthighways.org/report-it-general.aspx>

### Privately owned surface water sewers

- A number of privately owned surface water sewers have been discovered across Poynton, these are sewers that drain water from properties into local watercourses.
- All privately owned systems remain the maintenance responsibility of the property owner.
- Where a number of properties connect to such a system residents will share maintenance responsibilities.
- Cheshire East and United Utilities are continuing to support residents who have identified such systems.
- Cheshire East has, without prejudice, cleansed and CCTV surveyed the surface water sewer that runs down Melrose Crescent. The results of the survey will be shared with the residents who retain the responsibility for maintaining this system.

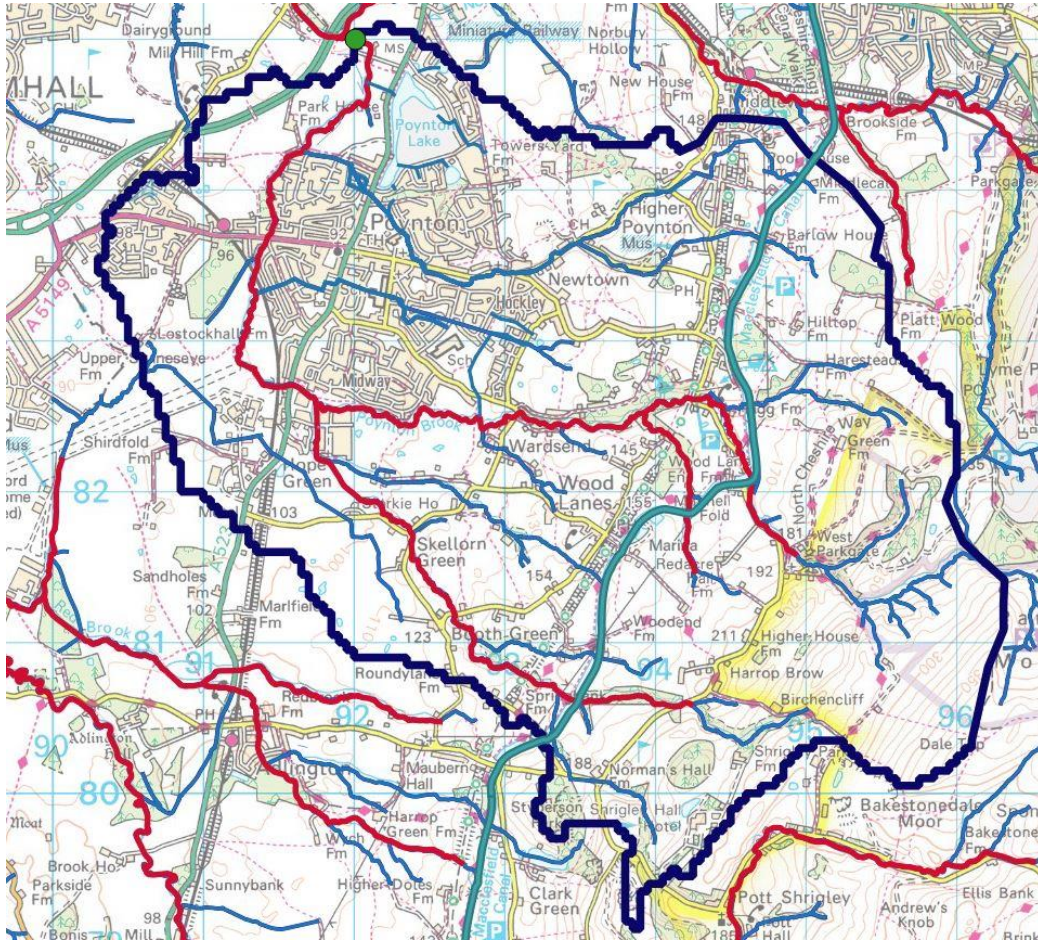
### Ordinary watercourses

- Park Lane stream: Cheshire East has, without prejudice, cleansed the culverted watercourse directly upstream of Glastonbury Drive, removing silt and debris. The results of the survey will be shared with the residents who retain the responsibility for maintaining this system.
- Like all ordinary watercourses, the maintenance for this system lies with the riparian owners.
- Any faults on the system will be raised with the appropriate riparian/property owners.
- Coppice Stream: Localised issues have been discussed on site with local residents and local landowners.
- Survey work is planned, without prejudice, by Cheshire East and United Utilities to CCTV a section of ordinary watercourse associated with Coppice Stream, the affected riparian owners have been notified of this in writing.





**Watercourse within Poynton: ordinary watercourses shown in blue, main rivers shown in red. Dark Blue line shows approximate watershed of the Poynton Brook and Both Green Brook catchment. All water falling within the dark blue line will flow through Poynton towards Lady Brook in the North Northwest of the image shown as a green spot.**



### Main River (shown in red)

A main river is usually a large stream or river, such as Poynton Brook. However, locally important smaller watercourses can be designated as Main Rivers. The Environment Agency has authority, powers, rights and responsibilities for managing Main Rivers in England and Wales.

### Ordinary Watercourse (shown in light blue)

An ordinary watercourse is any river, stream, ditch and culvert not defined as Main River. Ordinary watercourses are the responsibility of the riparian owner. A riparian owner is the person, or people, with watercourses on, next to or under their property. If you own a property boundary contains a watercourse this means that you are a riparian owner, as such you are responsible for maintaining this watercourse under the Land Drainage Act, 1991.

### Macclesfield canal (shown in teal)

The canal is owned and maintained by the Canal and River Trust

### Riparian ownership

In summary if you are a riparian owner, you have responsibilities for the stretch of watercourse you own. These include, but are not limited to letting the water flow naturally.

You must let water flow naturally.

You may have to remove blockages, fallen trees or overhanging branches from your watercourse, or cut back trees and shrubs on the bank, if they could:

- Obstruct or affect a public right of navigation – ask your navigation authority for advice.
- Reduce the flow or cause flooding to other landowners' property – you may have to pay damages if they do.

You should:

- Leave all other trees, branches and shrubs - they can help prevent flooding by varying the shape and flow of the channel, and reduce erosion.
- Keep any trash screen, weir, mill gate or other structure clear.

Don't go inside a culvert. You could get trapped or poisoned by gases.

Cheshire East Council does not have a responsibility to undertake works on an ordinary watercourse, but they do control work carried out in and around watercourses.

For example:

- You have the right to protect your property from flooding and erosion, but you must:
- Get permissions to build anything in or around the watercourse.
- Not build anything which could divert water and increase flood risk to other people's property, or you may have to pay damages.

You must obtain consent before you:

- Change, remove or build any flood defence on your land.
- Do any work within 8 meters of a watercourse.

For more details on being a riparian owner, please visit the following site: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>

## Natural Flood Management

Options being reviewed to slow the flow and hold water flood waters upstream by multi agency partners in conjunction with the National Trust and other local land owners.

- Cheshire East attended the public meeting that was held on 3rd March 2020 at St Martins Church 18 Shrigley Rd N, Poynton, Stockport SK12 1TE with local landowners to explore options for slowing the flow within the Poynton Brook catchment.
- Cheshire East organised a walkover of the upper catchment of the Park Lane Stream was undertaken by a multi-agency team on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- Works to slow the flow on Coppice Stream are being reviewed, along with works on the highway/footway to reduce local flooding to this area.

## Wards End Bridge (retaining wall adjacent to the bridge) – Poynton Brook

Work is progressing well and consultations have undertaken with all relevant parties. Water pipes and gas pipes both cross this bridge. United Utilities have diverted their water main to enable works to progress in the area of collapse.



## Trash Screen/culvert clearance on ordinary watercourse

Cheshire East Highways clear the screens on a monthly basis along with ad-hoc clearance following periods of high rainfall:

- Middlewood Road
- Park Lane (Willow Close)

To report an issue: <https://www.cheshireeasthighways.org/report-it-general.aspx>

## Cheshire East Covid 19 Advice/Guidance

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_information/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx)

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_information/media\\_hub/media\\_releases/cheshire-east-launches-covid-19-information-hub-and-support-network.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/media_hub/media_releases/cheshire-east-launches-covid-19-information-hub-and-support-network.aspx)

## United Utilities

United Utilities are the statutory undertaker for water and wastewater services and have carried out investigations into flooding which was reported to them.

- United Utilities have been in discussions with the National Trust and the Cheshire Wildlife Trust to support work in the land above Poynton to slow the flow of surface water runoff.
  - Sustainable surface water management in the upstream catchment is likely to be a large factor in preventing repetition of the devastating impact as a result of the extreme events weather events such as we have seen in the last few years.
- We supported the landowner drop-in session arranged by the Environment Agency to promote the above natural flood management.
- We have met with local residents to explain their local drainage arrangements and responsibilities.
- We have also been working with Cheshire East Council to agree works to work together to divert surface water discharges from Parklands Way via a culvert into Poynton Lake, thereby reducing the volume of water passing forward via the Park Lane Stream through the Mayfair Close / Covell Road / Tulworth Road culvert systems.
  - This work will involve some manhole improvements and some without prejudice cleaning of the culverted watercourse.
- We have an approved scheme for replacement of 2 surface water outfall headwalls to Poynton Brook.
- Work continues on the drainage area study.

It should be noted that some of the above activities may be inhibited due to government restrictions and personnel availability as a result of the coronavirus emergency.

At United Utilities there is no change as to how we would respond during a flooding event. The procedure to call United Utilities' integrated call centre should you experience sewer flooding is still correct.

Any work that is to be carried out as a result of a sewer flooding incident would still be considered essential by United Utilities therefore we would still attend site to support, clean up, collect data and arrange any repairs which may be required.





On reporting the incident to United Utilities' call centre, customers will be asked whether they are self-isolating or are displaying symptoms of Covid-19. United Utilities will still attend in response to customer calls but for those customers who are self-isolating or displaying symptoms the United Utilities team will be provided with enhanced PPE to protect customers and employees.

UU are monitoring work force levels as people are self-isolating and / or sick, so if there is any impact on response times the customer will be told this at the time of reporting the incident.

### Think before you flush

Around 1,000 homes and 6,000 gardens are affected by sewer flooding every year across the North West. Many of these terrible flooding incidents are preventable, caused when sewers become blocked with wet wipes and other items which should never be flushed. United Utilities is seeing an increase in blockages during the coronavirus pandemic as customers are struggling to buy toilet paper and flushing alternative products instead, such as wipes, kitchen roll and tissues, none of which break down in the same way as toilet paper does.

As it's more important than ever to keep our toilets flushing, blockage free and to reduce the chance of sewer flooding, please help by only flushing the three Ps – pee, poo and paper (toilet paper only). Please do not flush any kitchen roll, wet wipes or tissue down the toilet.

For further information please visit

<https://www.unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/wastewater-services/thinkbeforeyouflush/>



A recent blockage found in the UU sewer network – a mixture of cotton buds, wipes and kitchen roll. Only flush the 3p's!

### Priority Services – extra help for those who need it most

If you or any of your family and friends have particular health issues and haven't yet registered for United Utilities' Priority Services, then please visit [unitedutilities.com/priorityservices](https://www.unitedutilities.com/priorityservices) for additional support with your water services. If you know someone who isn't online then you can register them on their behalf.

### Environment Agency

The Environment Agency arranged a meeting with local landowners in Poynton on 3rd of March to discuss Natural Flood Management upstream of Poynton. It was well attended by local landowners who were all really keen to help, and this workshop session helped us identify the land they own, and what interventions people would be willing to consider. Our next step is to engage with these landowners, visit sites and see what would be the most effective ways to slow the flow down to Poynton. To deliver this, we are also commissioning Natural Flood Management intervention delivery works in partnership with Mersey Rivers Trust, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and National Trust.

We would like to thank all landowners who attended. If you were unable to attend and you would still like to help please email [FloodResilienceGMMC@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:FloodResilienceGMMC@environment-agency.gov.uk).



Following site visits with the community, Environment Agency contractors have undertaken significant conveyance improvement works on Poynton Brook around Wigwam Wood. These works were undertaken in preparation for storms Ciara and Dennis. Further works to keep the floodplain clear and to allow space for floodwater have just been completed. This illustrates that it's not always a case of slowing the flow, in this high-risk location, we also need channel capacity to get the flood flows away.

### Wigwam Close



Before clearance works



After clearance works

The Environment agency are currently working with the Poynton Working Group and the Poynton Flood Group with the support of Newground. As a result we have visited several residents to give help and support with flood resilience.

The Environment Agency is always focussed on protecting lives, livelihoods and the environment. Our commitment to this does not change while dealing with the effects of coronavirus, but we have to take into account the national situation. During this crisis, our priorities are as follows:-

**Protect our staff's health, safety and wellbeing** We will protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all our staff. We will ensure the resilience of incident responders, equipment and critical suppliers.

#### **Sustain our critical activities**

**Protection of lives and livelihoods** – Our role is a Category 1 Incident Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means we continue operate 24/7 to respond to flooding and other environmental incidents alongside our partners.

**Preventing serious harm to the environment** –The Environment Agency will continue work to provide the appropriate level of regulation and services to ensure the environment is protected. We have agreed ways of working for our field teams to reduce the risk of contracting Coronavirus.

**Warning and informing the public about flood risk;** we continue to operate and maintain our existing flood defences; and construct new ones.

We have taken action to ensure that we can sustain these vital services. While of course we always need to prioritise our work, we remain fully operational.



## Poynton Flood Group

Poynton Flood Action Group was formed in August 2019 by a small group of local residents, in response to the flooding experienced in Poynton in June & September 2016 and July 2019. The data that has been collated since the last flood shows that nearly 200 Poynton properties were affected by internal flooding.

The group continues to push awareness and plans for long-term flood reduction in the village. Activities have included walking and mapping watercourses, open dialogue with the various agencies and councils, and resident awareness of flood causes and responsibilities.

The Group held a 'Flood Smart' event in January to bring together the various agencies to tell us about how they are planning for future flood resilience. We had speakers from many of the agencies involved in understanding the causes of flooding in Poynton. We have identified that the water arrives in Poynton from 3 sources.

- Heavy rain falling on the land above Poynton which is unable to absorb it and so causes vast quantities of surface water to run down into Poynton.
- A drainage and sewer system that is unable to cope with the quantity of water
- Waterways such as Poynton Brook and various culverts that overflowed.

We took feedback from all the residents attending the event and their concerns generally fall into the following areas.

- Outputs from the Flood Smart event have now been shared with the wider partnership working group for further considerations and action.
- Drains, identifying blocks and having them cleaned (United Utilities were able to tell us that they have identified 'pinch points' in the system which they are addressing.)
- Land management and in particular concern about the impact of new developments.
- Maintenance of waterways.
- Residents want to see the agencies coming together to make a plan.

The National Flood Forum would have helped us in our aim to get agencies together and involve residents. However we have not been able to gain funding for NFF support.

David Rutley attended the event and has since met with Rebecca Pow, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to discuss the flooding in Cheshire East, to see if we could have government support for flood recovery. Our flooding is considered to be 'localised' and as such Local Authorities are expected to have well established contingency arrangements in place. The flooding in November affected North Midlands and South Yorkshire and it was the scale of this that triggered the Flood Recovery Framework, for that area.

David Rutley followed this up with a letter to Cheshire East who referred him to the draft Section 19 report, informing him that many of the actions are either underway or completed.

The Flood Action Group have held a virtual meeting and we plan to take forward a request to meet with all the agencies involved, to understand what work has been done and what is planned. We need to know what the response plan will be, should we flood again, in this current COVID crisis.

You can access updates from this group on Facebook 'Poynton Flood Action Group'. Please also continue to report blocked drains when you are out and about for your daily exercise ration.

[https://www.cheshireeasthighways.org/report-it-general.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0AYtKY8GpAFwBb1af4jQXLV1YwR72KGQu0M\\_iLbrLIMqXXSYwA\\_upnf34](https://www.cheshireeasthighways.org/report-it-general.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0AYtKY8GpAFwBb1af4jQXLV1YwR72KGQu0M_iLbrLIMqXXSYwA_upnf34)

In the meantime, please be aware that flooding can happen any time. Be prepared, have a plan. If you need help with this contact Flood Hub; New Ground; National Flood Forum.

The Flood Action Group will continue to work as a collective until a long-term reduction in flooding has been achieved.



## Poynton Working Group Update

The Flood Working Group was established by the Town Council in response to the floods of the 31st July 2019. As well as reviewing the recent flood events it is also reviewing what actions were taken following the 2016 floods. The Group has collected evidence on properties affected in order to ensure that Cheshire East and the Environment Agency have a comprehensive understanding of all the properties affected in 2016 and 2019. It is currently reviewing watercourse, culvert and drain maps. The Flood Working Group have met with the Flood Risk Authorities to gain an understanding of the floods and what action can be taken. More recently the Working Group have engaged with the National Trust Riverlands project to look at higher catchment issues. Going forward the group will look to ensure that any recommendations are undertaken in a timely manner.

## Flood Hub - <https://thefloodhub.co.uk/>

The Flood Hub website is a joint initiative by Newground, the Environment Agency, United Utilities, and the Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire Strategic Flood Partnerships. It is funded by the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC), and it launched on 5th November 2018.

The website aims to be a one-stop-shop for providing flood resilience advice and information for householders, businesses and communities. Using our online digital capability we keep users up to date with the latest flood news, events and information resources available in order to stay flood aware and increase their own resilience.

## Useful links

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

