

Guidance Notes: FLOOD REPORTING AND ENQUIRY INVESTIGATION

If you are unsure about anything within these notes, then please contact the Flood Risk Management (FRM) team using the details at the end of this document.

The extent to which a particular flood enquiry is investigated by Derbyshire County Council's FRM team is determined by a risk-based approach considering factors such as size and scale of a flood incident and historical flood events.

An enquiry will result in two distinct approaches:

- Formal investigation - when a flood event has triggered thresholds set out in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS).
- Informal investigation – reports from members of the public who request help to mitigate or manage a flooding issue.

Formal flood investigations

One of the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) key duties under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA, 2010) is to investigate flood events that occur within its area, as it deems necessary. Section 19 of the FWMA states:

“On becoming aware of a flood in its area, the County Council must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, identify:

- *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 a flood event.”*

Although the FWMA does not specify that the LLFA must resolve the flooding issue, the conclusion of any flood investigation findings will try to identify actions or measures which may mitigate or reduce the likelihood of similar events and their impacts. The LLFA must investigate the cause, publish the results of the investigation, and notify any of the identified Risk Management Authorities.

In some circumstances, a reported flood enquiry in Derbyshire triggers a 'formal investigation' and the trigger for a formal investigation is when the enquiry meets or exceeds following locally agreed criteria (highlighted in the box over the page).

Criteria agreed by the County Council's Strategic Flood Board.

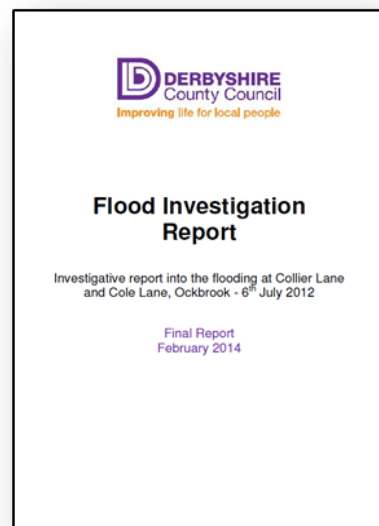
- an event where five or more residential properties, or two or more non-residential (industrial/commercial) have been internally flooded;
- an event where a flooding problem is recurring and is supported by records or anecdotal evidence as having occurred more than once in a ten-year return period for any given location;
- an event where threat to life and/or threat of injury or harm has occurred;
- an event which affects an area or community with a concentration or high proportion of vulnerable people;
- an event which impacts on critical infrastructure (water, sewage treatment, electricity/gas distribution, telecommunications, and the strategic transport network) for in excess of twelve hours before restoration of service; and
- an event which impacts on essential services (emergency services, NHS, Local or Central Government services) in excess of twelve hours before restoration of service.

A formal 'Flood Investigation Report' undertaken by the LLFA may include the following content:

- all available background information and associated historical flooding data;
- a summary of the FRM team's understanding of the event;
- relevant Risk Management Authorities responsibilities;
- a summary of findings; and
- recommended actions.

Responsible Risk Management Authorities in Derbyshire include:

- The County Council and associated Highways Authority
- Highways England
- Yorkshire Water
- Severn Trent Water
- United Utilities
- Environment Agency
- Borough and District Councils



A Section 19 report

Following the conclusion of a formal investigation, a 'Flood Investigation Report' will be completed and published on the County Council's website. The findings of the investigation will be communicated to the affected community and key stakeholders, often at a public meeting.

Our Guidance Notes for "**Roles and Responsibilities**" may be useful.

It should be noted that if a flood event is perceived to have a 'known' cause and a Risk Management Authority acknowledges that cause, no formal investigation will be undertaken.

Informal flood investigations

The majority of reported flood incidents do not trigger a formal flood investigation. The County Council's FRM team receives a large volume of flooding enquiries and is unable to commit to investigate all the informal enquiries it receives. However, the FRM team will always try to acknowledge a reported flood enquiry either by email, phone, or letter.

Prioritisation

To ensure resources are targeted towards those that need it most, the FRM team prioritise responses using a risk-based approach.

Our Guidance Notes for "**Communication, Strategy and Prioritisation**" may be useful.

All enquiries where there is reported internal flooding or where there is a very high risk of internal flooding to a number of properties are classed as a high priority.

Please note that flooding to a non-habitable building e.g.: garage, shed or other outbuilding is not considered to be a high priority.

The remaining enquiries are prioritised using parameters such as vulnerability, historic flood events, size, and scale of the flooding. If your enquiry fits into one of the following incidents then the FRM team is likely to conduct further investigations which may involve a call back, a site visit, reference to guidance notes and potential mediation with landowners including written letters, etc.

Incidents likely to trigger further investigation by the FRM team:

1. Two or more properties at risk of internal flooding.
2. Vulnerable resident.
3. Involves unconsented works on an ordinary watercourse.
4. Relating to a sustainable drainage system (installed post 15 April 2015 and as part of a planning related development).

5. Relating to the function of a land drainage system such as a culvert, ordinary watercourse, ditch, or dyke which threatens to cause internal flooding.

Based on the nature of your enquiry, and/or the level of resources available, you may only receive standing advice or be directed to Guidance Notes available on the website at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/flooding/strategy.

Please note that the FRM team tries to investigate as many flooding enquiries as possible, however, it is not possible to investigate all.

Site Visits



A site visit in Derbyshire

The FRM team undertakes a review of existing data before establishing whether a site visit is appropriate. Consequently, telephone discussions may take place before a commitment to a site visit is made. If the enquiry is regarded as requiring a site visit, this will be done by means of prioritisation and clustering and consequently, it may be some time before a site visit can be arranged in your area depending on the likely risk, current service demands and resources at the time.

The FRM team can offer residents Flood Sax and empty sandbags, and also further advice as to how to develop your own protection or personal resilience for your property or business.

Public reporting of flooding incidents

Where a flood incident relates to an ordinary watercourse, surface water or groundwater, the public can report the incident to Derbyshire's FRM team by using any of the following methods:



Surface Water



Ordinary watercourses



Ground Water

Email: flood.team@derbyshire.gov.uk

Post: Flood Risk and Transport Asset Management team, North Block (Room 199C), County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG

Online: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/environment/flooding

Call Derbyshire: (01629) 533190

If the problem is either an emergency or requires urgent attention, the emergency services should be contacted in the first instance.

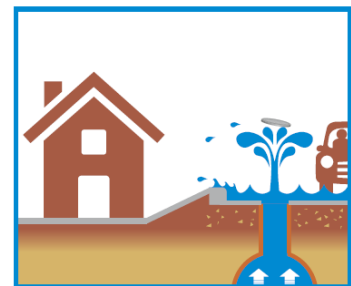
The County Council provides an emergency planning service that can also assist during a serious flood event.

The Emergency Planning team can be contacted via **Call Derbyshire (01629) 533190**

Email: emergency.planning@derbyshire.gov.uk.

Where flooding relates to the **public sewer system** you should contact your local water provider: (to identify your water service provider please refer to your water utility bill)

- Yorkshire Water (0345) 124 24 24
- Severn Trent Water (0800) 783 4444
- United Utilities (0345) 672 3723



Sewer Water

Where the flooding relates to the **Highway or a blocked gully** you should contact the Highways Division at the County Council via:

Call Derbyshire: (01629) 533190

Online: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport-roads/roads-traffic/road-maintenance/road-maintenance.aspx>



Highway Water

Where the flooding relates to a **large watercourse (Main River) or reservoir** you should contact the Environment Agency.



Main Rivers



Reservoir Flooding

Phone: (03708) 506 506

Email: general.enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Where flooding relates to a **private sewer system** this is a private matter and you should liaise with the landowner; often this will be a neighbour or commercial enterprise.

Where the flooding relates to a **motorway or trunk road** you should contact **National Highways**

Phone: (0300) 123 5000

Email: info@nationalhighways.co.uk



Highway Water



Canal Flooding

Where the flooding relates to a **Canal** you should contact the relevant navigating authority (Canal and River Trust or the County Council).

**Phone: Canal and River Trust (0303) 0404040
Call Derbyshire (01629) 533190**

The importance of flood reporting

If you experience flooding, you are advised to contact the relevant organisation to report the incident. You may be nervous about reporting flooding for insurance or data protection reasons. However, it is important that the relevant responsible organisation is made aware of the incident so that this data can help support future work. Any data held by Derbyshire County Council is managed in accordance within the General Data Protection Regulations.

It is important that you report any flood incident to the correct authority.

For example: It is particularly important that you report sewer flooding incidents to the water company. Water companies are privately owned companies which are monitored by OFWAT (the Water Services Regulation Authority) particularly on how they invest their money. Water companies keep records of properties impacted by flooding and use the records to develop their future maintenance and capital works programmes. If they are not made aware of any problems, then addressing your concerns may not be their priority. Due to data protection, the FRM team or even your neighbour is unable to report flooding on your behalf for it to be formally recorded.

Frequently asked questions

I reported flooding to my garden weeks ago. Will the Council contact me?

The FRM team logs all enquires relating to flooding and prioritise responses as soon as possible. If you have reported the flooding during a particularly busy period (i.e., just after a flooding event) then it is likely that contact will be delayed, particularly as garden flooding is classed as a lower priority. You may wish to visit our website where there are a number of other Guidance Notes which may assist you in the meantime. Please visit:

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/flooding/strategy.

Water is flowing off the road onto my property. Can the County Council stop this?

An enquiry of this nature would be dealt with by the Council's Highways Division and should be reported as described above.

Will my flooding problem be resolved; a lot of time has passed?

Depending on the nature of your enquiry, it may mean that resources have been diverted to other enquiries that are a higher priority (i.e., internal property flooding). Your enquiry may also be complex and require extensive data analysis and engagement with multiple stakeholders which can take time. Unfortunately, not all flooding enquiries are within the scope of the County Council to resolve.

I am about to flood internally. Will the Council's Flood Risk Team come out to me now?

The County Council's FRM team is not an emergency responder, this means that the FRM team does not go to site to assist during periods of bad weather.

During periods of bad weather, the FRM team will be collating data and liaising with other internal teams to best prioritise resources.

The County Council's Highways Division offers a limited reactive service to deliver sandbags across the entire County for Highways related emergencies. Its availability for assisting homeowners is limited and therefore members of the public are advised to look for ways to become more self-resilient.

You may also wish to contact your District/Borough Council who may be able to assist you further.

Please also refer to the **Before, During and After a Flood Guidance Notes** available online at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/flooding/strategy.

Derbyshire County Council
Flood Risk Management Team
County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG
Call Derbyshire: (01629) 533190
Email: flood.team@derbyshire.gov.uk