

Broadland Futures Initiative

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2023

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Attendees

Marie-Pierre Tighe (Chair)- Broads Authority, Charles Blandy -Norfolk County Council, Giles Bloomfield- IDB, Peter Doktor- Environment Agency, Catherine Harries – Environment Agency, Nathan Harris- Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council, Kevin Hart – Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Mark Johnson- Environment Agency, John Jones- Norfolk County Council, Jane Locke- Norfolk County Council, Charlotte Rivett- Norwich City Council, Gavin Rumsey- Environment Agency, Rob Wise- NFU, Kylie Moos - Broads Authority (minutes).

1. Apologies for absence and welcome

Marie-Pierre Tighe (MPT) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from Julie Beeden, Victoria Egan, Matt Williams.

2. Impacts of flooding on mental health

Jane Locke Prevention Policy Manager, and Charles Blandy, Public Health Officer for Norfolk County Council presented the health impacts of flooding and coastal change. An Environment Agency (EA) Report in 2022 found that there is an inequality of social deprivation and flood risk exposure from all sources of flooding. This inequality is greater in coastal and rural communities. Rural and coastal areas with more sparse populations do not have the economic welfare benefits of more densely populated areas. There is a need to prioritise capital investment in flood mitigation measures in deprived neighbourhoods over others, to reduce inequality.

The Neighbourhood Flood Vulnerability Index (NFVI) is a measure of social vulnerability and the impact of flooding. A high NFVI score indicates that communities will experience a loss of well-being should a flood occur. 90,000 homes in Norfolk are in the 20% most vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Health inequalities and flooding

An estimated 2.5 million people in England live in high or medium flood risk areas. Homes built in struggling or declining neighbourhoods are more likely to have higher flood risk because of climate change. Vulnerable groups disproportionately inhabit flood prone areas due to social stratification and resources that limit locational choice.

Physical health impacts of flooding are often highly visible and include:

- Drowning
- Physical trauma and injuries
- Infection
- Loss or contamination of drinking water

Longer term physical health impacts include:

- Respiratory disease (from mould and damp)

- Rodent-borne disease

Mental health impacts

- Mental health impacts are often less associated with flooding.
- The depth and length of flooding has an effect on the ability to recover.
- Those directly impacted by flooding are six times more likely to have PTSD, depression, and anxiety.
- Those indirectly impacted by flooding also have increased mental health risk.
- A child's mental health can be significantly impacted by flooding.
- The costs of flooding on mental health are being evaluated, as per the table below. The amounts may be underestimated.

Flood depth band above internal floor level	Mental health losses per adult per flood event
0-30cm	£1,878
30-100cm	£3,028
More than 100cm	£4,136

Next steps

- Undertake research into psychological preparedness for climate change.
- Identify households and communities with higher vulnerability to flooding.
- Offer target and tailored intervention.
- Support social cohesion at local level – known to mitigate some of the mental health consequences of flooding.
- Ensure preparation and response activities reach those that need it.
- Work with Norfolk Resilience Forum to ensure appropriate actions in place following flood alerts and warnings.

Comments

One of the BFI objectives is to improve social environment. Jacobs are currently reviewing a number of indicators for this objective.

Two out of three people who live in flood risk areas do not believe they will be flooded and are unlikely to have the resources or the support to make sure they can recover. People need to be informed of the impacts of climate change in a way that does not panic them.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund have announced their 10-year strategy and increased the maximum grant amount to £10 million per project to allow for larger-scale investment. The fund could be an opportunity to apply for a grant for a flooding engagement project. Further information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/heritage-2033-our-10-year-strategy>

It is important to consider the different impacts that floodwater will have, and the depth of flood water is an important consideration.

It was useful to see the impacts of flooding on mental health at a local scale from the case study at Happisburgh in the presentation.

The evaluation of mental health costs is being carried out by Kate Kipling, Senior Scientist at the Environment Agency.

Any community may have vulnerable members and identifying them quickly is important, vulnerability is not just related to where you live.

A parallel was made with the global situation, where less developed countries are less able to recover after a flooding event.

3. Update of technical work

Peter Doktor (PD) provided an update on the technical work and outstanding activities for the current phase of work.

Make the objectives SMART (Product 22)

To identify one or two SMART indicators for each BFI objective that can be used to appraise how far the outcomes of different flood risk management actions meet the objectives. The IPT workshop on 19 April provided comment on candidate indicators. This work is currently on hold while Jacobs are focusing on some of the other products.

Agree possible priority of objectives (Product 23)

To investigate whether the BFI objectives can be ranked in a priority order the result of which would be reflected in the appraisal of possible flood risk management actions. This would not override any legal obligations or prescribed requirements for central government funding.

The Elected Members Forum (EMF) will attempt to determine the prioritisation. A background document has been sent to the EMF members with a link to an online prioritisation tool for individual completion by 16 June. There is an EMF workshop on 10 July to review individual results and produce a single prioritisation based on consensus.

Identify all possible actions (Product 21)

To identify the long list 'toolkit' of possible flood risk management actions. The IPT have reviewed the interactive document to be used for public consultation on the toolkit list. The document is finalised and used in the online public consultation (16 June –13 July).

Define the management units (Product 20)

To determine how the BFI study area is divided up into a number of smaller management units. Currently there are approximately 40 different compartments, this needs to be reduced to 10-12 compartments. This links to the appraisal of possible flood risk management actions and hydrological model development.

Implications of designated sites (Product 25a)

To investigate how we undertake at the strategic scale an assessment of the impact of different flood risk management actions on designated sites for nature conservation. There also needs to be an understanding of the legal obligations arising from designated sites, especially the need to take appropriate steps to avoid deterioration, and how that is interpreted with respect to climate change and sea level rise.

An inception meeting with Natural England took place on 9 June to review the scope of the investigation.

Potential use of social value (Product 25c)

To investigate whether it is feasible to include measures of social value in the development of the BFI plan. The draft report identifies five indicators based on existing data sets that could be used in the appraisal of possible flood risk management actions, and three indicators that could be used to monitor and evaluate the plan, some requiring primary data collection.

Today's presentation on the impacts of flooding on mental health and previous discussions with NCC public health team, has highlighted that there is shared interest. The second draft will be sent to the IPT, Jane Locke and Charles Blandy for comment.

Comments

The deadline for responses from EMF members for the online prioritisation tool has been extended to encourage more members to take part as there have not been many responses. John Jones (JJ) agreed to speak to the EMF Chair to see if they will contact EMF members encouraging them to fill out the survey. PD confirmed that there will still be time to go through the tool as a collective exercise at the workshop. Rob Wise (RW) questioned the statistical validity of the results if EMF engagements is low. PD responded, the responses from the EMF workshop and online prioritisation tool will be written up and shared with the IPT to confirm that they are comfortable with EMF response.

Product 25a is relevant to the work being carried out through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in the next 18 months. Norfolk County Council are working with Natural England to develop the vision and climate adaptations need to be factored into the proposal. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy and BFI need to complement each other. PD and JJ agreed to set up a meeting to discuss the timeline for the next 18 months, and to make sure that consultations timings are thought through.

Water resources and the supply of fresh water for designated sites could be brought together in a water level management plan.

Individual requirements on a granular scale need to be considered when defining the management units (Product 20).

4. Update on communications and community engagement

The BFI Toolkit to Reduce Flood Risk was launched on 16 June. The survey asks two main questions:

- Do you agree the possible actions shown should be in the 'BFI's Action Toolkit for Reducing Flood Risk'?
- In your opinion, are there any flood risk management actions missing from the image shown?

Supporting Actions

- Progress newsletter –raising awareness of the survey with our subscriber list (12th edition)
- Targeted emails at interest groups e.g., Angling Trust, Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association amongst many others.
- Social media promotion via Twitter and Facebook. We would be grateful if BFI partners could share this via their own organisations and re-tweet.
- BFI material will be at the Royal Norfolk Show on 27/28 June as part of the RFCC stand. A QR code will be displayed to take visitors straight to the survey.
- Supplementary interviews. Invited a range of stakeholders to have an interview with member of BFI IPT project team.

5. Elected Members Forum

There have been two new appointments to the EMF. GR and PD are arranging an induction with the members before the workshop on 10 July. A full list of members and their officers can be found below.

Authority	Member	Officer
Broadland District Council	Jan Davis (new)	Nathan Harris
Broads Authority	Matthew Bradbury (will change in July)	Marie-Pierre Tighe
East Suffolk Council	James Mallinder	Charles Krolik-Root
Great Yarmouth Borough Council	Paul Wells	Charles Krolik-Root
Norfolk County Council	Eric Vardy	John Jones
North Norfolk District Council	Harry Blathwayt	Charles Krolik-Root
Norwich City Council	Mike Stonard (TBC)	Charlotte Hounsell
South Norfolk Council	Richard Elliott (new)	Nathan Harris
Suffolk County Council	Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro	Matt Williams

6. AOB

The Broads Authority (BA) “Sustainable tourism action plan” is being drafted, with three key themes emerging:

Nature: Greening the Broads

- Looking after our natural resources – refreshing Green Tourism Business Scheme, promoting GHG emission reduction, green energy, sustainable transport, effective waste management, etc.; planning for climate change adaptation.

Place: Valuing the National Park

- Promoting why the Broads is important, National Park identity; Destination management – promoting the Broads for sustainable tourism, and the wider area; Visitor stewardship –promoting environmentally friendly, safe behaviour; providing good quality and well-staffed facilities / businesses.

People: Providing a landscape for all

- Creating opportunities for everyone – overcoming protected landscapes ‘exclusive club’ barriers; promoting the health and wellbeing agenda, particularly post-Covid; providing information and events/itineraries for different audiences/needs.

MPT asked the IPT to consider which actions could be included in the Sustainable Tourism action plan in relation to ways tourism businesses, BA, DMOs, visitors, etc. can promote adaptation awareness and practical action. The deadline for responding to MPT is mid-July.

The EA have previously engaged with the transient community on flooding high risk areas and have been raising awareness in caravan parks.

The British Tourist Board, Holiday Cottages, Angling community and The Caravan Club are all on their own journey to net zero. There are also a number of sustainability accreditation awards already running.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broadland Future Initiative is 7 August 2023.

Summary of progress

Outstanding actions	Meeting date	Assigned to
Create a document summarising BFI product and their outputs	19/04/2023	GR
Contact EMF Chair to discuss online prioritisation tool before the next EMF	19/06/2023	JJ