



Rowers on the River Yare at Thorpe St Andrew © Jeremy Halls

Progress Newsletter

UPDATE TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

In this edition: 'Previously', 'Improving our understanding of saline intrusion', 'BFI present to the NSFA', 'Reclaim the Rain', 'What to expect this year'.

Previously...

In our previous edition as 2021 passed, we saw the completion and publication of the [BFI's strategic objectives](#) and a shift in focus towards the next phase in the development of the BFI strategy. The past weeks have now seen these plans come together and, in this edition, we will share more on what you can expect from the BFI over the coming year and detail on how you can help steer and shape the next phase in this important flood risk management strategy for the BFI plan area.

Also in this edition, we will be sharing updates on our saline intrusion studies, a piece from Norfolk County Council on the 'Reclaim the Rain project' and a brief update on our presentation to the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance.

Improving our understanding of saline intrusion

An important requirement for the BFI is to deal with the future impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Future sea level rise, together with anticipated changes in the amount of freshwater coming down our rivers will have an impact on the extent to which saltwater intrudes up the Broadland

river systems in both normal conditions and extreme events. Similarly, changes in how we manage flood risk in future may also affect the pattern of saltwater intrusion.

We are very aware that the extent of saltwater intrusion and likely future changes to this is a key concern for a wide range of our stakeholders, and especially the angling community.

Reflecting this concern, the objectives for the BFI includes the following: ***"The quality of surface waters is improved, with ongoing and sudden increases in the salinity of sensitive freshwater environments minimised as far as possible."***

This objective, together with others, will be used to test the suitability of different approaches to managing future flood risk.

So that we can better understand and predict how far and how much salt water currently intrudes into the Broadland rivers now and in future, we are proposing to develop a statistical model that relates the degree of intrusion to the main factors which cause it.

This statistical model will be based on the long record of salinity monitoring data collected by the Environment Agency together with other organisations and groups. With on-going monitoring and data collection, our ability to predict will further improve.

BFI present at NSFA

The BFI Team were recently invited to present at the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) to share information and provide a progress update. If you're not familiar with the NSFA it is currently led by Lord Richard Dannatt, and consists of Councils, Anglian Water, Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards, and other agencies.

Its broad aim is to combat local flooding issues in tranches of work that can be delivered collaboratively on the ground by the organisations involved.

With the BFI being already underway in its development as a flood risk strategy for the medium to long term future of the Broads and prior to the NSFA's existence, it is expected that the BFI will aid the NSFA's progression by supporting the group with the latest information and sharing of knowledge

and data. The BFI is also represented at the NSFA by a number of organisations; therefore, we will endeavour to develop good partnership working between the BFI and the NSFA to ensure that the aims and aspirations of both initiatives support and complement one another.

Reclaim the Rain Project

The Norfolk and Suffolk County Council's Flood and Water Management Teams have been successful in winning £6.4 million to implement innovative sustainable water management projects across both counties.

Both councils placed a joint bid into Defra's 6-year Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme and were one of 25 successful projects chosen to take part.

The joint project, named 'Reclaim the Rain' sets out to test new approaches to flood and drought resilience in at least six small rural communities across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Norfolk and Suffolk both face considerable surface water flood risk, while also being the driest region in the UK. The project will deliver beneficial flood water reuse by agriculture, industry, communities, and the environment combined with nature-based flood management solutions.

The project will involve both partner organisations and the community in the development of suitable flood water reuse schemes. The schemes will address the community's needs in terms of flood risk and water resource requirements.

Cllr Martin Wilby, Norfolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport, said:

"This initiative looks set to offer practical small scale local solutions to alleviate some of the widespread flooding issues so many people in Norfolk have experienced. This should complement the work already underway to build the

Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) partnership to ensure communities and infrastructure are safer and more resilient to the risks of inland and coastal flooding. We welcome this additional funding and would urge people to find out more about the Reclaim the Rain project and let us know what would help manage and reuse water in their area."

To find out more about Reclaim the Rain and how you can get involved, visit: www.reclaimtherain.org."

What to expect this year

One of the tasks this year will be identifying an initial long list of potential actions to manage future flood risk. Such actions could be traditional measures such as flood embankments and walls, or those which have been considered previously such as barriers and washlands.

In addition to physical structures designed to keep out flood water, some actions may be more about how we plan developments, use the land, or prepare for flooding so that impacts are reduced when it does happen. We will be using the latest research, policy guidance and data to help us make these decisions.

Equally, we will be looking for innovative ideas locally, tapping into the huge knowledge base of those that live in, work in, and visit the area on a regular basis. Our aim has always been, and will continue to be, to represent the voice of the communities that interact with the BFI plan area. Being able to cope with flooding is often described as being resilient. The BFI plan has a target to adaptively improve resilience, as expressed in our vision statement: "Together, we improve the resilience of people, and places and the environment to flooding, as we adapt to the changing climate". Alongside looking locally, we will also look further afield for novel suggestions and ideas from elsewhere in the UK and abroad.

So, what exactly are we asking of you? Well, during the second half of this year,

we will be wanting to hear your suggestions and ideas on what you would like to see as possible actions on the ground, what ideas have you thought of which could provide potential solutions to a local flooding issue? We want to hear from you on how you think we could increase our collective resilience to flooding. Once we have compiled the long list it will be screened to identify the most promising actions that will be subject to more detailed scrutiny.

This will be a blend of online exercises with feedback from previous public engagement telling us this is a convenient and popular method by which people wish to engage with us and give us their opinions. However, we are equally keen to seek opportunities to hear from our stakeholders face to face at points during the process.

This is an important step in the strategy's development, and we will be advertising in the coming months with news of when this next window of opportunity is open, so that you can put forward your thoughts as well as more detail on how you can get involved.

Please remember to visit our [webpage](#), there's lots of information on there about the strategy, its partners, aims and objectives, fantastic studies and interactive maps, as well as all previous digital newsletters.

We would like to close this latest edition with a thank you for the continued support of our readers, partners, advocates, and local communities who continue to help us develop and create the BFI strategy.

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