

## Broadland Futures Initiative Virtual Village Hall Event 24.03.2021 – Summary of Question and Answer session.

**Below is a summary of the questions received from the public for the Broadland Futures Initiative Virtual Village Hall event at 19:30pm on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

*Note: Questions and answers are paraphrased from those given verbally in the live event. For the full quoted responses from the event please view the published recording that will be made available to the public on the BFI webpage once the series of events has completed: <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/climate-change/broadland-futures-initiative>*

### **Can the automatic pumps be controlled remotely so that they don't automatically pump out the flood plain?**

Yes, pumps can be controlled automatically and most large, permanently sited pumps are programmed to function this way, when water levels reach a certain height. In certain locations the network of pumped drainage is as much about maintaining appropriate water levels for adjacent sensitive wildlife habitats.

### **How much did the BFAP cost. Elliot Morley MP originally said it was going to cost £25m**

The total expenditure for the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project (BFAP) has been approximately £143 million between 2001 and 2020. This has enabled the raising and strengthening of 240km of mainly clay flood embankments, together with the operation and maintenance of the overall network of embankments and other flood risk management structures for the 20 year period.

### **You have mentioned a hydrological model. When the last set of flood defences by BESL were devised and built, did the hydrological model used reflect what the previous model predicted?**

When BESL started work in 2001 they made use of a new hydrological model. The model developed previously for the 1990's Broadland Flood Alleviation Strategy was considered too coarse to be used for design purposes. The outputs of the two models were compared and discrepancies accounted for. More importantly however, is that as part of any model development there is a process of calibration and verification of the model's outputs against actual extreme fluvial or tidal events in order to confirm the model's predictive abilities.

### **Is there a risk that we think too long-term and don't take the action we need to take now?**

The Environment Agency is taking action now to manage flood risk. You can check your local flood risk at any time by visiting the Environment Agency website [www.gov.uk/floodsdestroy](http://www.gov.uk/floodsdestroy). Here you will find practical advice and steps you can take

before, during and after a flood. You can also sign up for free flood warnings either on the above website or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Flooding events over the Christmas period 2020 have also highlighted the vulnerability of the BFI plan area and unfortunately climate change will increase the risk of future flooding. We appreciate the distress and concern caused for some people and the desire to see immediate action in response. However, the factors influencing flooding within the BFI plan area are complex. Also it is a place with many valued features that are of importance locally, nationally and internationally. Working in collaboration with all those who have a stake or interest in the area we need to agree what the priorities are in seeking to manage flood risk. When considering different possible management interventions we need to understand what the likely effects of these will be in order to avoid unintended detrimental consequences that we would regret in future. Through this process we will identify possible actions for implementation in the short, medium and long term. We strongly believe having such a strategic approach to better manage and improve our collective resilience to climate change and flooding events can only happen when we work together, and that is why Initiatives such as the BFI are so important for our local communities now and in the future.

**Is it possible that the frequency of pumping the dykes back into the Main river system will be considered when Flooding initiatives are decided? When the rivers are high why are the marshes not allowed to flood? They are flood plains!**

There are approximately 60 pumps operated by the Internal Drainage Boards that provide day to day drainage and water level management for the low lying marshes. The pumps would also evacuate any flood water in the event of the river flood embankments being over topped. This network of pumps is represented in the hydrological modelling with respect flood evacuation of the marshes and the contribution of water to the rivers.

The idea of allowing certain marshes to flood in a controlled manner to prevent flooding elsewhere is an established practice, the term washland or flood storage area being used for such land. During the development of the 1990's Broadland Flood Alleviation Strategy one of the options considered for the rivers Yare and Waveney was the use of Haddiscoe Island as a washland. It was envisaged that half of the island would be used to store flood water on a frequent basis (i.e. several times a year), the remaining part of the island very infrequently (10% annual probability). A key consideration for washlands to work best is their location within the river system. The frequency of flooding will affect how the land can be used between times, but it may be an opportunity for creating new wetland habitats of ecological value.

**How will flooding initiatives affect the existing riverside properties that have the flood wall/ flood defences behind them? These include properties at Wroxham, Horning, Brundall, Potter Heigham and so on. These properties are on the flood plain.**

Managing future flood risk to properties, regardless of their location within the BFI plan area, is a key aim of our strategy. There is no one size fits all when it comes to flood risk and it is likely that a range of options will be required, in different places and circumstances.

The management of flood risk can be done in many ways. This could be through the construction of structures such as barriers, drains and pumps to hold back and remove water. But it can also be achieved through non-engineering means such as the way we use the land, build and maintain our homes (for example, through the use of [Property Level Resilience measures](#)) or forecast when flooding is likely. Therefore the BFI will suggest a wide variety of measures.

### **Elected members Forum. When was the election and who was allowed to vote?**

The Elected Members Forum comprises one appointed representative from each Local Authority within the Initiative study area, with an interest in flood and coastal risk management. Each Local Authority nominated an Elected Member through their own processes. The Broads Authority is also represented by one of their appointed councillors. The Elected Members Forum will elect its own chair and will be serviced by the Broads Authority for secretariat purposes.

The role of the Elected Members Forum is to provide a strategic steer, receive advice and recommendations, review Initiative progress and reach agreements based on financial, environmental and technical evidence presented by the Initiative Project Team. The Elected Members Forum will take back conclusions and seek formal endorsement from our Local Authorities, before final adoption by our Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC).

### **How will this affect planning application? Houses which were allowed in Falcon Lane, Ditchingham flooded in December**

We cannot comment on the specific example raised, but as a general point the BFI will take into account existing and new plans that will emerge and impact upon the BFI plan area. This includes the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance. This guidance states that new developments should not increase flood risk elsewhere and seek to mimic natural drainage as closely as possible. In addition, Norfolk County Council, (the lead local flood authority and BFI partner organisation) must be consulted on all major development planning applications and provides surface water advice to local planning authorities. Therefore, the BFI provides an opportunity to share a strategic approach to all sources of flood risk in the area, where partner organisations, including local planning authorities and the lead local flood authority, share a vision regarding the relationship between future development and flood risk.

The BFI is represented by a number of organisations each with their own plans and directives, therefore, through good communication, partnership working and sharing of knowledge we will ensure that these plans are taken into consideration when decisions are made. Our partner organisations are all keen to ensure their work is informed by the latest findings of the BFI. The BFI is pleased to endorse plans which support the aims of the BFI and help to deliver our objectives and aspirations.