

An aerial photograph of Birmingham, UK, showing the city center, including the Bull Ring and the city's skyline. A grey rectangular box is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing the title text.

Birmingham City Council  
Summary of the Local Flood Risk  
Management Strategy for Birmingham

# What is a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy?

Local Flood Risk Management Strategies must be produced by all Lead Local Flood Authorities as a requirement of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Birmingham City Council has a duty to maintain, apply and monitor the application of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in its area.

The overarching aim of the strategy is to ensure that local flood risk is understood and managed in a coordinated way in Birmingham. One of the main aims of the strategy is to make it clearer to the public who is responsible for flood risk, their level of flood risk and measures that can be taken to manage that risk. The strategy sets out seven objectives and twenty policies in relation to:

**Who does what**

**The type and level of flood risk**

**Who manages flood defences**

**How flood events are managed and investigated**

**How flood risk is managed**

### Environment Agency

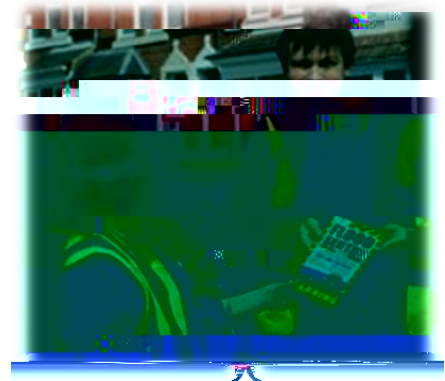
- Overview of all forms of flooding
- Managing risk from main rivers
- Giving permission for work on main rivers
- Ensuring safety works are undertaken at reservoirs
- Assessing planning applications in relation to flood risk from main rivers

### Severn Trent Water

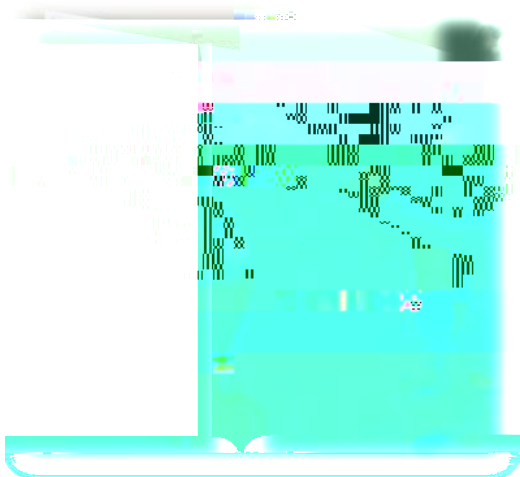
- Providing and maintaining sewers to receive domestic drainage and by agreement highway drainage
- Accepting new connections from development
- Responding to water/flooding emergencies

### Householders and Businesses

Landowners who own land bounding a watercourse are, under common law, riparian owners. Riparian owners have the right to receive a flow of water in its natural state, and the right to protect their property against flooding from the watercourse. Responsibilities include the



Flood risk management is the responsibility of everyone, not solely the organisations identified by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. No single body has the means to reduce all flood risk. Effective management will involve various bodies each with a range of relevant duties and powers together with individual householders and businesses.



### Partnership Working

Birmingham City Council and its flood risk partners work together to manage flood risk through a Three Tiered Flood Risk Management Structure, comprising the Strategic Flood Risk Management Board, Birmingham Water Group and Project Specific Partner Groups.

#### Policy 1:

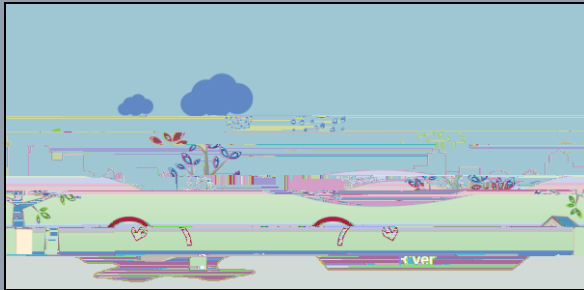
The City Council **will** operate a flood risk management governance structure to support a partnership approach to managing flood risk.

# The Type and Level of Flood Risk

Birmingham's location makes it susceptible to different types of flooding, from rivers, ordinary watercourses, surface water and groundwater, as well as flood risk from sewers, reservoirs and canals.

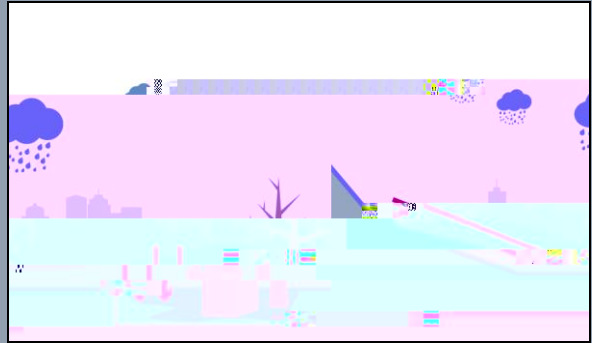
## Watercourse Flooding

Rivers flood when the amount of water in them exceeds the flow capacity of the channel. Most rivers have a natural floodplain into which the water spills in times of flood, however in an urban situation these floodplains have often been built on over time.



## Surface Water Flooding

Surface water is rainwater which is on the surface of the ground and has not entered a watercourse, drainage system or sewer. Surface water flooding occurs where high rainfall exceeds the drainage capacity in an area. Surface water cannot then enter the system or infiltrate into the ground and the drainage network overflows, with manholes surcharging. It is more difficult to predict and pinpoint than river or coastal flooding.

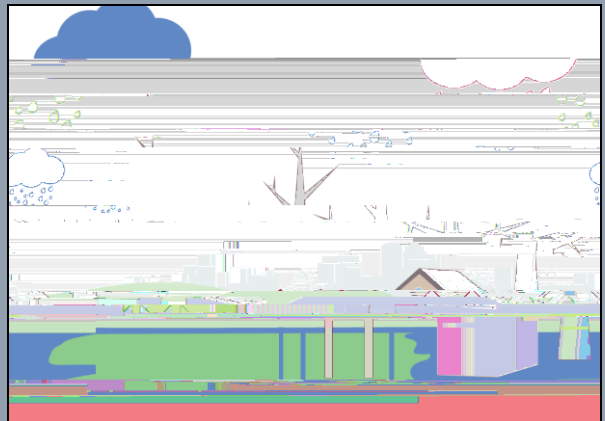


## Groundwater Flooding

Groundwater flooding 0 1 515.38 65.872.dC1

## Sewer Flooding

Sewer flooding occurs when sewers are overwhelmed by heavy rainfall or when they become blocked. The likelihood of flooding depends on the capacity of the local sewerage system.



There are a number of national and local sources of data that are available that may be used to assess where there is potential for flooding to occur from watercourses, surface water and groundwater.

### **Surface Water Flood Risk**

The Environment Agency has produced the



The City Council, as the Highway Authority, has a duty to maintain the public highway and this includes highway drainage, which typically comprises gullies draining into the sewer or highway drains. The City Council has entered into a 25-year contract with Amey for highway maintenance and management services (from June 2010). This means that maintenance of the city's highway infrastructure (including highway drainage) is carried out by a private sector partner (Amey). This

# Managing and Investigating Flood Events

Birmingham City Council has a role in responding to and investigating flooding incidents, however other groups and individuals have a part to play.

## Managing Flooding

When flooding occurs, or is threatened, people often look to the Council to take responsibility and take steps to prevent or reduce flooding. However, the Council does not have a statutory duty to prevent properties from flooding. The Council may undertake works in the general public interest but are not obliged to act.

The Council has a Corporate Emergency Plan that specifies how the Council will respond to any incident. As part of its contingency plans, the Council maintains a number of duty officers which ensure that a range of Council services can respond to emergencies.

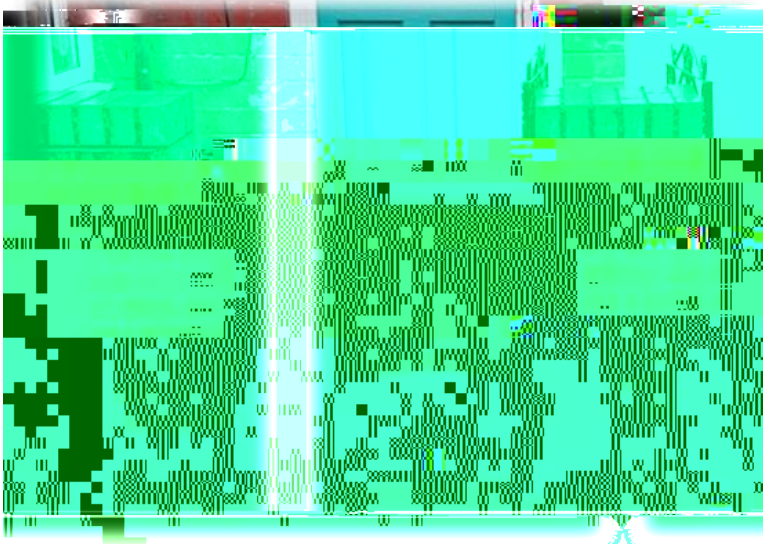
There is currently no reliable rainfall warning service, as such, the decision to send out resources will draw from pre-existing knowledge, history and conditions, weather forecasting, liaison with local partners and Flood Action Groups.

### Policy 9:

The City Council **will** ensure that there is appropriately qualified and experienced staff available to respond to flooding emergencies 24 hours a day every day.

### Policy 10:

The City Council **will not** deploy resources on the sole basis of weather forecasting; an escalating series of triggers will be used to identify when resources should be deployed.



### Provision of Sandbags

Sandbags are considered to be one of the first lines of defence in the event of flooding despite significant evidence of their limitations. In the event of widespread flooding there are insufficient resources available to despatch sandbags to individual properties that request them.

### Policy 11:

The City Council **will** provide sandbags in bulk deliveries to approved Flood Action Groups during a flooding event, sandbags **will not** be provided to individual properties.





# How Flood Risk Schemes are Prioritised

## **Funding**

The level of funding available for flood risk management is a real concern for the Council. The







## Considering the Environment

It is important that the actions adopted to manage flood risk achieve wider environmental benefits.  
The implementation of f