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**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

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**Farrington Gurney, Rush Hill and Pitway Lane:  
Flooding Incident 17 June 2016**  
Flood and Water Management Act, Section 19 Flood  
Investigation Report

July 2016

## Farrington Gurney Flooding Incident June 2016

Flood and Water Management Act, Section 19 Flood Investigation Report  
Prepared by Bath and North East Somerset Council

June 2016

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## 1. Executive summary

This Flood Investigation Report has been completed by Bath & North East Somerset Council (BANES) under its duties as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA).

### **Flood and Water Management Act 2010: Section 19**

Local Authorities: Investigations

- 1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate –
  - a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
  - b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
- 2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must –
  - a) publish the results of its investigation, and
  - b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

*Flood and Water Management Act (2010), S.19, c.29, London: HMSO*

A Section 19 investigation will be initiated by Bath & North East Somerset Council where any of the following flooding scenarios occur:

- five or more dwellings at an urban location experience internal property flooding;
- two or more dwellings at a rural location experience internal property flooding;
- where the event resulted in a loss of life: or
- where critical infrastructure (e.g. power station, pump station, electricity supply, critical transport route) was affected by flooding for a significant period of time.

### 1.1 (Flood) Risk Management Authorities

Certain organisations were defined in the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) as Risk Management Authorities and given specific responsibilities around flooding. This includes both new responsibilities from the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), and longstanding ones from previous legislation such as the Highways Act (1980), and the Land Drainage Act (1991).

Within the Bath and North East Somerset region, Risk Management Authorities include:

- Bath & North East Somerset Council;
- the Environment Agency;
- Highways England;
- Bristol Water; and
- Wessex Water.

Table 1.1 below lists the Risk Management Authorities and their responsibilities in terms of flood risk management. For more details see Bath & North East Somerset Council's [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy](#).

**Table 1.1: Risk Management Authorities in the Bath and North East Somerset area**

Flood Source	Responsible Risk Management Authority				
	Environment Agency	Bath & North East Somerset Council	Bristol Water	Wessex Water	Highways England
Main River	✓				
Surface Water		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Surface Water (on or coming from the highway)		✓ (as the Local Highways Authority)			✓ (for A4 and A36)
Sewer Flooding				✓	
Ordinary Watercourse		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Ground Water		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Reservoirs	✓		✓		

This investigation report will summarise the flooding incidents and identify which Risk Management Authorities are responsible for the flood incident.

This report also includes recommendations for flood risk management actions that could be undertaken to address and reduce the risk of flooding.

## **2. Incident summary**

### **2.1 Summary**

During the afternoon of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June, intense rainfall fell over the Rush Hill area immediately to the south of Farrington Gurney. The resulting overland flow was channelled from the surrounding land onto the A37 Rush Hill; the water flowed down hill and overwhelmed the highway drainage system resulting in flooding of the highway.

The overland flow continued from Rush Hill and was directed west along Pitway Lane, the drainage being overwhelmed and combining with overland flow the local watercourses.

9 properties in the area have confirmed and reported internal flooding. We believe a further 4 properties may have also had flooding but this is yet to be confirmed.

### **2.2 Probable causes**

We believe the cause of the flooding was due to the exceptional levels of rainfall. Reports from residents in the area are that the rainfall has never been as severe and the resultant flooding has not been witnessed in this location before. The existing drainage system and watercourses could not cope with the high volumes of water in the short duration of the downpour. Wessex Water confirmed the exceptional nature of this severe storm event.

## 2.2 Evidence gathering

### Flooding reports

Reports of flooding came from the local highway inspector; property flooding reports were not made by the residents. A letter sent to the residents was used to gather the necessary information.

Wessex Water was asked for any reports of property flooding that occurred on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June.

### Rainfall data

Wessex Water supplied radar based rainfall data for the area; it suggested the storm event on 17<sup>th</sup> June equated to a return period of 1 in 252 years. This has been estimated to be about 40mm of rain falling over the half an hour period of the storm.

### Initial investigation/ interviews

Representatives of Bath & North East Somerset Council's Drainage and Flooding team visited flood affected locations in the week following the incident and spoke to homeowners, where available.

It should be noted that this report is based on the information brought to the attention of Bath & North East Somerset Council through its professional partners and the public and where further investigation by the authorities have identified additional flooded properties. Therefore, it cannot be guaranteed to contain an exact or exhaustive list of affected communities during this reported period.

### Historic incidents

Bath & North East Somerset Council's [Surface Water Management Plan](#) was reviewed for any previous recent flooding incidents in the locations.

### **3. Appropriate Risk Management Authority**

Flooding of homes and highways in the area was due to surface water runoff from rural hillslopes and highways.

As such, the Risk Management Authority with responsibility for these types of flooding is Bath & North East Somerset Council in its capacity as:

- Lead Local Flood Authority
- Local Highways Authority.

Wessex Water will also be involved to assess interactions with the existing surface water sewer, foul sewer and highway drainage.

## 4. Recommended actions

Further investigation is required to ascertain what, if any, action can be taken to reduce the future flood risk.

Work should be undertaken to keep overland flow within the carriageway of Pitway Lane..

Reports from local residents suggest that the existing culvert was once damaged and this should be surveyed to discover whether there is truth to this.

The issue will be discussed at the next Operational Flood Working Group to discuss potential partnership working with other RMAs.

## 5. Next steps

Bath & North East Somerset Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority investigate and pass on the recommended actions to the identified responsible Risk Management Authorities. Bath & North East Somerset Council will prioritise the actions and monitor, whilst working in partnership with the local communities affected.

There is an expectation from Bath & North East Somerset Council of itself and its partners that all authorities involved will cooperate and work together to, wherever possible and financially viable, improve the flood risk in the vulnerable areas identified in this report by completing the recommended actions.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority, Bath & North East Somerset Council has a responsibility to oversee the delivery of these actions.

Where minor works and quick win schemes have been identified, these will be prioritised in line with other commitments and subject to available funding and resources will be carried out as soon as possible by the relevant authority or landowner. Any major works requiring capital investment will be considered through the Council's Highway Maintenance and Drainage Capital programmes budget.