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SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday 30 November 2022

10.00 am Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton

To: The members of the Scrutiny for Policies, Environment Committee

Cllr S Ashton, Cllr A Boyden (Vice-Chair), Cllr A Bradford, Cllr B Clarke, Cllr M Dimery (Chair), Cllr H Hobhouse, Cllr M Kravis, Cllr M Martin, Cllr H Munt, Cllr K Pearce, Cllr T Power, Cllr J Roundell Greene and Cllr A Wiltshire

All Somerset County Council Members are invited to attend.

Issued By Scott Wooldridge, Head of Governance and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer - 22 November 2022

For further information about the meeting, please contact Jamie Jackson JAJackson@somerset.gov.uk or Democratic Services on democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda and is available at (LINK)

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers

Are you considering how your conversation today and the actions you propose to take contribute towards making Somerset Carbon Neutral by 2030?

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AGENDA

Item Scrutiny for Policies, Environment Committee - 10.00 am Wednesday 30 November 2022

****Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows in the agenda annex****

1 **Apologies for absence**

To receive members' apologies.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

Details of all Members' interests in District, Town and Parish Councils can be viewed on the Council Website at County Councillors membership of Town, City, Parish or District Councils and this will be displayed in the meeting room (where relevant).

The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected via request to the Democratic Service Team.

3 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th October 2022**

Minutes to follow.

4 **Public Question Time**

The Chair will allow members of the public to ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda for this meeting. These questions may be taken during the meeting, when the relevant agenda item is considered, at the Chair's discretion.

5 **Scrutiny, Policies Environment committee work programme** (Pages 9 - 12)

To receive any updates from the Governance Manager, Scrutiny and discuss any items for the work programme.

To assist the discussion, attached are:

- The Committee's Forward Work Programme
- The Scrutiny for Policies and Place Forward Work Programme
- The Forward Plan of Executive decisions can be viewed on the website here: Somerset County Council

6 **MTFP Budget update - Month 6 report** (Pages 13 - 60)

To consider and comment on the budget update report as considered at the Executive meeting on 16 November 2022.

7 **Phosphates issues: Overview and actions agreed from Phosphates Summit** (Pages 61 - 66)

To consider and comment on the report.

8 **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty update - Quantock Hills** (Pages 67 - 70)

To receive a presentation and to consider and comment on the update.

9 **Local Nature Recovery Strategy update** (Pages 71 - 76)

To consider and comment on the update.

10 **Chard and Ilminster Section 19 (Flooding) Report Findings** (Pages 77 - 228)

To consider and note the contents of the draft reports and provide feedback on any factual inaccuracies and upon any of the recommendations contained therein prior to their finalisation and publication, as required by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010).

11 **Any other urgent items of business**

The Chair to raise any other urgent items of business.

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Guidance notes for the meeting

1. **Council Public Meetings**

The former regulations that enabled virtual committee meetings ended on 7 May 2021. Since then, all committee meetings need to return to face-to-face meetings. The requirement is for members of the committee and key supporting officers to attend in person, along with some provision for any public speakers. Provision will be made wherever possible for those who do not need to attend in person including the public and press who wish to view the meeting to be able to do so virtually.

2. **Inspection of Papers**

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk or telephone 01823 357628.
They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers.
Printed agendas can also be viewed in reception at the Council offices at County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY.

3. **Members' Code of Conduct requirements**

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: Code of Conduct

4. **Minutes of the Meeting**

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

5. **Public Question Time**

If you wish to speak, please contact Democratic Services by 5pm 3 clear working days before the meeting. Email democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk or telephone 01823 357628.

Members of public wishing to speak or ask a question will need to attend in person or if unable can submit their question or statement in writing for an officer to read out.

After entering the Council building you may be taken to a waiting room before being taken to the meeting for the relevant agenda item to ask your question. After the agenda item has finished you will be asked to leave the meeting for other members of the public to attend to speak on other items.

A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been agreed. However, questions or statements about any matter on the agenda for this meeting may be taken at the time when each matter is considered.

At the Chair's invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about any matter on the Committee's agenda – providing you have given the required notice. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit. The length of public question time will be no more than 30 minutes in total (20 minutes for meetings other than County Council meetings).

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with many people wishing to attend the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, to three minutes only.

In line with the council's procedural rules, if any member of the public interrupts a meeting the Chair will warn them accordingly.

If that person continues to interrupt or disrupt proceedings the Chair can ask the Democratic Services Officer to remove them as a participant from the meeting.

Provision will be made for anybody who wishes to listen in on the meeting only to follow the meeting online.

6. **Meeting Etiquette for participants**

- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Switch off video if you are not speaking.
- Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)

- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.
- Switch off your video and microphone after you have spoken.
- There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called turn on live captions which provides subtitles on the screen.

7. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask Participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed.

8. **Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording, and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting.

Please contact the Committee Administrator or Democratic Services on 01823 357628 or email democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk if you have any questions or concerns.

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Environment Scrutiny Work Programme (November 2022- March 2023)

November

- Phosphates Issues Overview and Actions agreed from Phosphates Summit - Colin Arnold Service Manager Development and Planning
- Nature Recovery **-** Jon Doyle Strategic manager Community Infrastructure Commissioning, Climate Change and Flood and Water Management
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty overview -Iain Porter of the Quantock Hills AONB services
- Chard and Ilminster Section 19 (Flooding) Report Findings – Jon Doyle Strategic manager Community Infrastructure Commissioning, Climate Change and Flood and Water Management
- Revenue budget monitoring report Month 6 – Christian Evans Strategic Manager Finance Business Partnering NEW

December

- Interreg 2 Seas- End of Project Progress Report - Steve Dury Project Manager Coast Catchment Levels and Moors
  Peat- Update on work with DEFRA on the future of Peat Workings- Colin Arnold Service Manager Development and Planning
- Estates decarbonisation – our programme and progress – Abigail Lamberti Energy Manager Property Services
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty overview - Jim Hardcastle of the Mendip Hills AONB

January

- Update on SRA Key Decision regarding SRA Funding and SCC Hosting role - David Mitchell Service Manager SRA
- An introduction to the work of Scientific Services - Darren Clark Service Manager Scientific Services
- Asset Management Plan and Disposals - Ollie Woodhams Head of Property Services and Victoria Goscomb Governance and Performance Property Services

February

- Severn Tidal Commission - Paul Hickson Strategic Manager Economy and Planning

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Scrutiny for Policies & Place Committee Work Programme
2022-2023

Overarching themes	Committee meeting dates / proposed agenda items		Lead Officer/Item Lead
6 December 2022 @ 10am			
~~Insurance~~	~~Insurance Policy Contract Award – property, public liability, motor fleet, crime~~		~~Mendip District Council Deputy Section 151 Officer – Duncan Moss~~ ~~Strategic Manager – Commercial & Procurement, Finance & Governance - Paul Skuse~~
Economy	Somerset Futures Assessment Economic Growth and Business Opportunities		Service Manager, Economy & Planning - Paul Hickson
Information items	Cultural Strategy – link to report		Arts & Entertainment Manager, SSDC – Adam Burgan Service Manager, Library & Registration Services - Sue Crowley
HR	Complaints Policy		Customer Experience & Information Governance - Rebecca Martin
Finance	Budget Monitoring Report – Month 7 (October)		Service Manager, Finance Business Partnering – Christian Evans
10 January 2023 @ 10am			
Libraries	Libraries Update		Service Manager, Library & Registration Services - Sue Crowley
Revenues & Benefits	Income & Arrears Management Policy Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Scheme		Assistant Director – Customer, Somerset West and Taunton Council - Richard Sealy
Highways	A358 Taunton to Ilminster Upgrade		Strategic Manager, Infrastructure Programmes Group- Andy Coupe
HR	Complaints Policy		Service Manager, Customer Experience & Information Governance Customers & Communities - Rebecca Martin
Finance	Budget Monitoring Report – Month 8 (November)		Service Manager, Finance Business Partnering – Christian Evans
7 February 2023 @ 10am			
Highways	Award of Professional Services Contract for Place Services (core highways, transport and wider place services)		Strategic Commissioning Manager - Highways and Transport, Mike O'Dowd-Jones

Scrutiny for Policies & Place Committee Work Programme
2022-2023

Finance	Budget Monitoring Report – Month 9 (December)		Service Manager, Finance Business Partnering – Christian Evans
Finance	Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 – Jason Vaughan		Director of Finance & Governance – Jason Vaughan
7 March 2023 @ 10am			
Finance	Budget Monitoring Report – Month 10 (January)		Service Manager, Finance Business Partnering – Christian Evans

Note: Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of Somerset County Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Sarah Wright, Democratic Services (01823) 357628 sarah.wright@somerset.gov.uk who will assist you in submitting your item.

Revised 11.11.22

Decision Report – Executive Decision
Forward Plan Reference: FP/22/06/17
Decision Date – 16/11/22

2022/23 Budget Monitoring Report – Month 6 – End of September

Executive Member(s): Cllr Liz Leyshon – Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member on Finance and Human Resources
Local Member(s) and Division: All
Lead Officer: Jason Vaughan, Director of Finance and Governance
Author: Jason Vaughan, Director of Finance and Governance
Contact Details: Jason.vaughan@somerset.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

This is the second quarterly report and supplements the usual monthly revenue reporting with updates on the overall delivery on savings, transformation, and additional income plans, capital, treasury management, and risks. This ensures that the Council reflects national best practice and meets the requirements of the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

After taking into account all service expenditure and contingencies the projected outturn position is £405.5m against a net budget of £383.3m. This gives an £21.2m adverse variance which represents a variance of 5.5%. Overall, there has been a favourable movement of £0.8m since the Month 5 position. This continues the down trend from Month 4 which was a forecast overspend of £23.9m for year. The action plan approved by the Executive in Quarter 1 is clearing having a positive impact albeit against a very challenging financial environment.

Table 1 provides a summary of budget, projections, and variances on a service-by-service basis with further detail and mitigations being taken by the responsible director outlined in the body of the report.

The significant variances are:

- Adult Services has a £12.7m adverse variance against their budget (7.9% of service budget); an improvement in position of £0.3m from month five. The improvement mainly relates to home care/supported living, as several placements within Supported Living have come to an end.

- Children's Services has a £16.8m adverse variance against their budget (15.9% of service budget); a deterioration of £0.3m from month five. Most of this pressure is seen in the children's social care budget (external placements) which is forecasting a £12.1m overspend due to increased complexity and several very high-cost placements, as well as an increase in unregulated care placements.

- Economic & Community Infrastructure (ECI) has a £0.2m favourable variance against their budget (0.3% of service budget); a strengthening in position of £0.3m from month five. This improved position is due to some additional rental income and cost savings.

- Corporate Costs has a £3.9m favourable variance mainly due to an increase in investment income following interest rate increases.

- Corporate Contingency is a favourable variance of £3.3m after taking account of the potential additional costs of the national pay award at an average of 5.5%.

The 2022/23 Budget included over £5m of savings, income generation, and transformation savings with £1.1m achieved, £2.3m on track, £1.1m at risk, and £0.6m unachievable.

Current estimates are that the year-end position of the Capital Programme will be £148.7m against an overall budget of £174.1m, giving a £25.4m total variance. £16.1m of this variance will be reprofiled into future years with a £9.3m underspend projected.

2. Recommendations

a) Note the forecast overspend of £21.2m (**section 12**) and the key risks, future issues and opportunities detailed in the report which will be closely monitored and updated throughout the year.
b) Note the forecast position of the capital programme and potential underspend at the end of the current programme.
c) Approve the removal of £1.1m of borrowing approval from the capital programme for Adult Social Care, noting this funding is now surplus to requirements.
d) Note the additional external funding that has been added to the capital programme in this quarter.

3. Reasons for recommendations

To ensure that the Council continues to maintain tight financial control over its budget.

4. Other options considered

No other options were considered as continuing to monitor the budget on a monthly basis is considered best practice.

5. Links to County Vision, Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2021-24 set the funding for the County Vision and the use of those funds is then monitored, via this report and others throughout the year to ensure delivery of Council objectives and actions within the resources available.

6. Consultations and co-production

The main report has been prepared by the Finance Team based upon the information and explanations provided by Directors. The detailed services variances, explanations and comments have been provided by the Directors and are set out below.

7. Financial and Risk Implications

Any variance at the end of the financial year will have an impact upon the level of reserves. In addition to General Reserves of £27.1m, there are Earmarked Resilience Reserves of £34.6m and further details are provided in Section 28 of the report. There is a relevant Strategic Risk ORG0057 Sustainable MTFP and its current score is:

Likelihood	5	Impact	5	Risk Score	25

8. Legal and HR Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

9. Other Implications:

Equalities Implications

There are no specific equalities implications arising from the contents of this report.

Community Safety Implications

There are no community safety implications arising from the contents of this report.

Sustainability Implications

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety Implications

There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

Health and Wellbeing Implications

There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Social Value

There are no Social Value implications arising from this report.

10. Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

This report will be presented to Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee, on 8 November 2022; comments arising will be made available to the Executive at the subsequent meeting.

11. Background

Full Council approved the 2022/23 Budget in February 2022. Budget monitoring is delegated to Executive and Scrutiny and revenue service reports will be presented monthly with a full overview of revenue, capital, and reserves quarterly. This report outlines the forecast year-end position of services against the current

2022/23 budget of £383.3m (the current budget includes carry forwards and reserve movements) as at the end of September 2022.

Revenue

12. Forecast Outturn Position

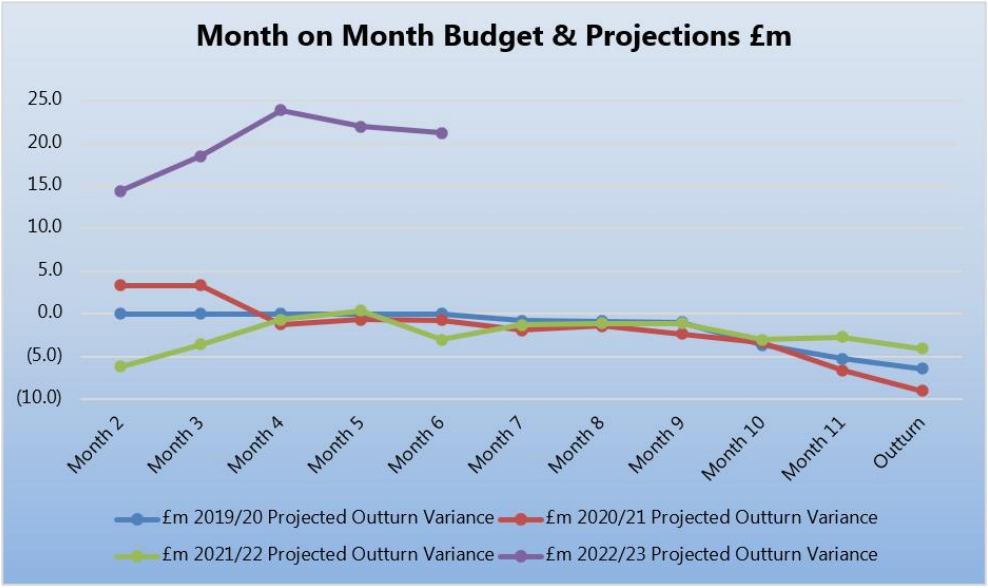
Table 1 shows the forecast outturn position against the current budget. Further information for each service is shown below, along with details on movements, actions to be taken, future risks and opportunities.

Table 1: 2022/23 Budget Monitoring Report as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

2021/22 Outturn Variance	Service Area	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
(0.2)	Adult Services	159.7	160.0	172.7	12.7	A	(0.3)	↑
4.2	Children's Services	105.0	105.4	122.2	16.8	A	0.3	↓
0.0	Public Health	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	-	0.0	→
(1.7)	Economic & Community Infrastructure	71.9	74.6	74.4	(0.2)	(F)	(0.3)	↑
2.3	**Direct Services Position**	**337.9**	**341.3**	**370.6**	**29.3**	**A**	**(0.3)**	↑
(0.2)	Customers, Digital & Workforce	16.9	17.0	16.9	(0.1)	(F)	0.0	→
0.0	Finance and Governance	12.1	13.5	13.5	0.0	-	0.0	→
0.0	Accountable Bodies	4.3	4.4	4.4	0.0	-	0.0	→
(2.6)	Corporate Costs	1.5	1.1	(2.8)	(3.9)	(F)	(0.5)	↑
0.0	Trading Units	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	A	0.0	→
(0.5)	**Total Service Position**	**372.7**	**377.3**	**402.8**	**25.5**	**A**	**(0.8)**	↑
(3.6)	Corporate Contingency	6.0	6.0	2.7	(3.3)	(F)	0.0	→
(4.1)	**Total after Contingencies**	**378.7**	**383.3**	**405.5**	**22.2**	**A**	**(0.8)**	↑
0.0	Reserves	(8.3)	(12.9)	(12.9)	0.0	-	0.0	→
0.0	Council Tax	(279.9)	(279.9)	(279.9)	0.0	-	0.0	→
0.0	Business Rates	(84.1)	(84.1)	(85.1)	(1.0)	(F)	0.0	→
0.0	Revenue Support Grant	(6.4)	(6.4)	(6.4)	0.0	-	0.0	→
(4.1)	**Total Month 6 Position**	**(0.0)**	**0.0**	**21.2**	**21.2**	**A**	**(0.8)**	↑

Arrows show movement from the previous month:

↑ Favourable movement → No movement ↓ Adverse movement



13. Adult Services Director Mel Lock, Executive Lead Member Cllr Heather Shearer

- 2022/23 net budget £160.1m, projected adverse variance £12.7m, favourable movement £0.3m.
- 2021/22 net budget £146.2m, outturn favourable variance £0.2m.

Table 4: 2022/23 Adult Services as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area		Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Adult Social Care - Physical Disability/Sensory Loss/65 Plus							
	Residential & Nursing	40.2	46.5	6.3	A	0.2	↓
	Home Care	24.8	24.3	(0.5)	(F)	0.3	↓
	Direct Payments	10.7	12.0	1.3	A	(0.2)	↑
	Staffing Costs	10.2	9.2	(1.0)	(F)	(0.1)	↑
	Other	3.0	3.4	0.4	A	0.2	↓
	sub total	**88.9**	**95.4**	**6.5**	**A**	**0.4**	↓
Mental Health							
	Residential & Nursing	11.0	13.4	2.4	A	(0.5)	↑
	Home Care/Supported Living	4.5	5.1	0.6	A	0.1	↓
	Staffing/Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	4.5	4.5	0.0	-	0.0	→
	Other	1.0	1.5	0.5	A	0.1	↓
	sub total	**21.0**	**24.5**	**3.5**	**A**	**(0.3)**	↑
Learning Disabilities							
	Residential & Nursing	20.6	21.8	1.2	A	0.4	↓
	Supported Living/Home Care	25.1	26.7	1.6	A	(1.1)	↑
	Direct Payments/In Control	9.1	9.6	0.5	A	0.3	↓
	Day Care	3.5	5.0	1.5	A	(0.1)	↑
	Discovery	29.8	28.2	(1.6)	(F)	0.0	→
	Other	8.2	8.6	0.4	A	(0.1)	↑
	sub total	**96.3**	**99.9**	**3.6**	**A**	**(0.6)**	↑
Commissioning							
	Commissioning	13.0	13.0	0.0	-	0.0	→
	Better Care Fund	(34.7)	(34.7)	0.0	-	0.0	→
	LD Pooled Budget Income	(24.4)	(25.3)	(0.9)	(F)	0.2	↓
	sub total	**(46.1)**	**(47.0)**	**(0.9)**	**(F)**	**0.2**	↓
Adult Services Total		**160.1**	**172.8**	**12.7**	**A**	**(0.3)**	↑

Adult Services - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Adult Social Care - Physical Disability/Sensory Loss/65 Plus

This area of Adult Social Care spend is currently projected to be £6.5m overspent. There remains a cost pressure against both Residential and Nursing placements as the need to use more beds than budgeted for continues, resulting in a projected overspend of £5.1m. We are projecting £1.2m for potential home closures across Somerset due to difficult financial stability within the current market.

There continue to be a number of interim placements as the service works with the NHS trusts to ensure a timely discharge for people from hospital. These placements are currently funded from the Intermediate Care budget but could have a longer-term impact on the social care budget as evidence shows that 48% of people going into interim beds end up going into permanent care, compared with 27% who go from our pathway bed base.

Home Care delivery has increased this month, due to an increase in capacity being created within the market. We are projecting home care to be £0.5m underspent.

As we continue to offer choice and have a varied market that includes micro-providers, we are projecting overspend of £1.3m. This is mainly due to an increase in one off payments and ongoing packages due to additional demand.

Mental Health

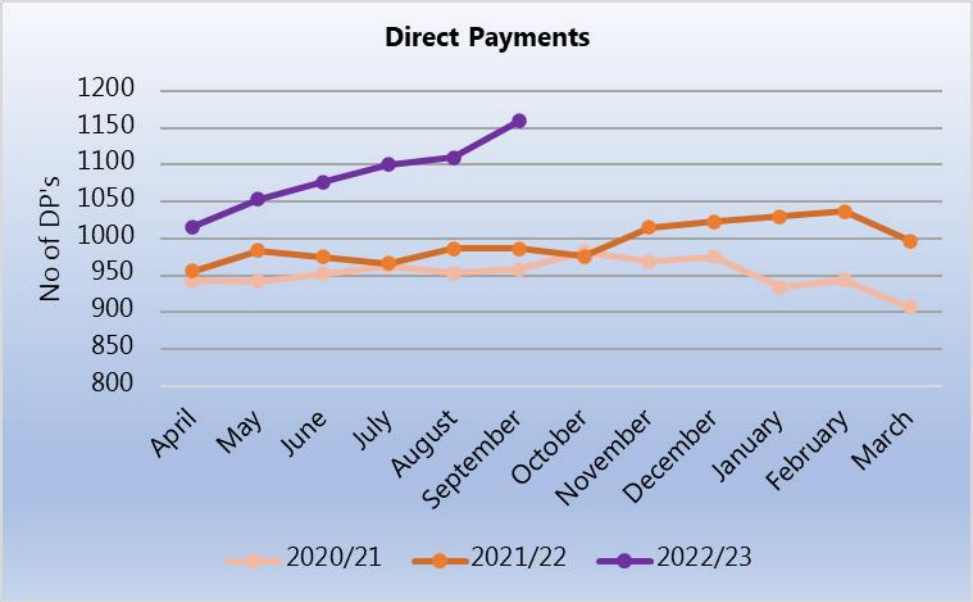
The Mental Health budget is projected to be overspent by £3.5m. Residential and nursing continues to be a pressure for the service due to a combination of increasing numbers and high unit costs. This budget includes individuals who have a diagnosis of dementia.

Learning Disabilities

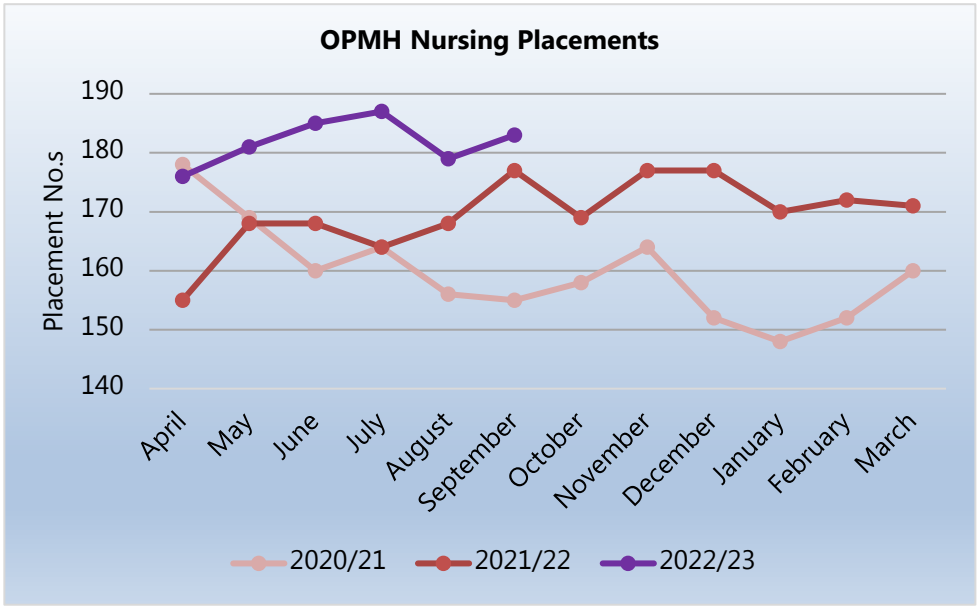
Overall, the cost of Learning Disabilities is projected to overspend by £3.6m. We are currently projecting an overspend of £1.6m within Supported Living and homecare, due to market sustainability. Supported Living is in the best interest of people but is an area where unit costs can be high, this month we have seen a number of placements within Supported Living come to an end due to a number of reasons.

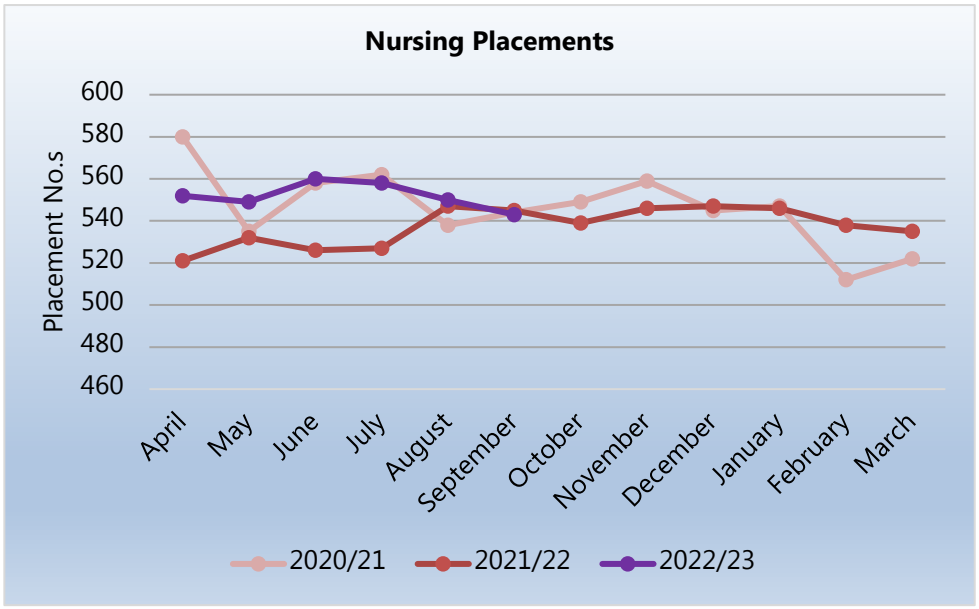
As families feel more self-assured of living with Covid they feel more confident of using day services as an option for a carer's break/respite. Consequently, we are seeing increased need and subsequent spend. Therefore, resulting in a current projected overspend of £1.5m.

Adult Services - key performance cost drivers



Since month 5, we have seen an increase in the number of people receiving a Direct Payment, with total packages increasing from 1,110 to 1,160. The currently weekly average cost of a Direct Payment is £287.73 per package, compared to £289.06 within month 5.





The number of Older People Mental Health (OPMH) Nursing placements has increased by four since month 5 from 179 to 183. The current weekly average cost for OPMH Nursing is £832 per placement, compared to £810 within month 5.

Nursing placements decreased by seven since month 5 from 550 to 543. The current weekly average cost for Nursing is £759 per placement, compared to £723 within month 5.

Adult Services - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Adult Social Care had £7.2m of one-off money last year the budget therefore came in underspend. ASC has seen significant additional funding this year, however the inflation uplift, increase in demand post covid and the increased cost of living has resulted in this projection.

90% of the ASC budget is spent on individual placements purchased through the market via block and spot placements. Therefore, there is a significant risk that this budget will continue to overspend. This is due to increase demand, the cost-of-living rise, particularly the increase in petrol, gas, electric, and food. Alongside this our neighbouring authorities, due to lack of supply in their areas, are wanting to purchase additional beds in Somerset at significantly higher cost than we currently purchase these beds. We have therefore built into this budget £5.4m amount to stabilise and have sufficiency in the market.

When we consider the market spend on supporting people to remains independent at home, we need to take into consideration the spend on Home Care and Direct Payments you will see increase in both these areas.

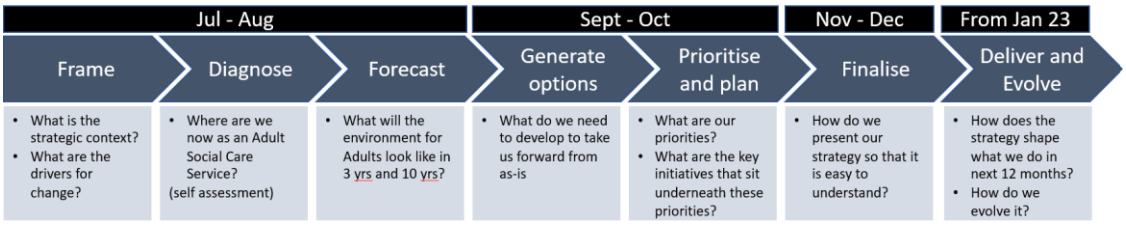
We have several system changes that should begin to impact on the overspend position in month 6 alongside the additional funding agreed to stabilise the market which will begin to have an impact in September.

Adult Social Care Transformation Q2 Update

ASC Strategy Development:
We need to develop a refreshed Adult Social Care Strategy that is informed by

- the views and experiences of staff, service users and other key stakeholders,
- reflects the context within which we are working
- clearly sets out our key ambitions and vision for the future

We have agreed the plan and approach with SMT which will focus on the following areas:



We have identified existing strategies being delivered within the system to ensure connection, avoid duplication, and understand how all these components contribute to the wider strategy that needs to be developed.

We have worked with leaders in the service to map the strategy content. Capturing the views of all key partners in this process remains important, and a comms and

engagement action plan has been drafted for October so that all our key stakeholders have a chance to influence what our revised Strategy looks like.

Co-production
In Somerset, we know that we need to make significant improvements with how we co-produce changes with people, so they have a voice in shaping our services. We are currently forming our ambition with this project.

Operational Restructure
Further options for the ASC Operational restructure are currently being developed and costed as a result of budget restrictions. A phased approach has been agreed and detailed within the Business Case and job profiles being drafted and going through job evaluation.

Assurance and Inspection Readiness
New Policy, Performance and Assurance Service Manager now in post and successfully appointed a Policy & Assurance Lead Officer
First draft of the Self-Assessment shared with SMT and is being used to inform strategy development. Liaison with North Somerset and other LA areas to share ideas and progress in relation to assurance and inspection readiness. TriX ASC Procedures contract starting 29 August 2022 – initial implementation meeting scheduled early September 2022.
A final draft of the Local Authority Assurance inspection framework was shared by CQC to support preparation activity. This is pending sign off by Secretary of State in 2023.

Liberty Protection of Safeguards
Somerset County Council has formed and submitted its response to the national consultation to the codes and practice. We are expected to hear the outcome of the consultation in by the end of 2022.

Charging Reform
The Government issued their response to the consultation on the operational guidance for implementing reforms. There is greater clarification on many points of detail, and a delay for the ability of self-funders already in residential care to request placements at Local Authority rates.

We have also received the detailed technical specification for the care cost calculator. This will enable us to begin to plan the implementation of the software and business processes that will support the cap on care costs.
The cost of care exercise concluded in August with over 30% of home care providers contributing which is a great result and in line with national expectations. This information will contribute to a Market Sustainability Plan that will be submitted to DHSE in October.

The team has also been busy looking at different self-assessment tools available that will form part of our solution to managing the additional demand that reforms will bring. Consultation is now open concerning the options for government

distribution of funding to support implementation of the charging reforms. Business case and non-key decision paper draft to support the award for the financial self-assessment tool.

Homecare Recommissioning
We have identified a number of challenges and opportunities with our Homecare market, and with the contract due for renewal from April 2024, we are taking the opportunity to revisit our model and what we commission. This project will look to understand and deal with the current challenge this section of the market faces, whilst looking to transform the model in the future.

PAMMS
This project is working on embedding a regional market management toolkit to support the coordinate measurement of quality, spend and activity within commissioned services at the request of SW ADASS. We are piloting the QA module with volunteer care providers from September 2022, with weekly regional project meetings to monitor implementation.

14. Children's Services – Director Claire Winter, Executive Lead Member Cllr Tessa Munt

- 2022/23 net budget £105.3m, projected adverse variance £16.8m, adverse movement £0.3m.
- 2021/22 net budget £101.8m, outturn adverse variance £4.2m.

Table 5: 2022/23 Children's Services as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Children's Social Care						
Prevention	5.7	5.9	0.2	A	(0.1)	↑
Fostering & Permanence	12.8	12.2	(0.6)	(F)	0.2	↓
External Placements	27.4	39.5	12.1	A	(0.3)	↑
Fieldwork	8.9	9.9	1.0	A	0.3	↓
Disabilities	3.6	3.8	0.2	A	0.2	↓
Partnership, Audit & Quality	2.6	2.5	(0.1)	(F)	(0.1)	↑
Safeguarding	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	→
Children Looked After	4.4	5.1	0.7	A	(0.1)	↑
Leaving Care	2.0	2.1	0.1	A	0.1	↓
Residential Homes	2.2	2.0	(0.2)	(F)	0.0	→
Central	0.6	0.8	0.2	A	0.1	↓
sub total	**70.2**	**83.8**	**13.6**	**A**	**0.3**	↓
Commissioning						
Commissioning Services	10.8	10.9	0.1	A	0.0	→
Supporting Families	(0.4)	(0.4)	0.0	-	0.0	→
Central	0.7	0.7	0.0	-	0.0	→
sub total	**11.1**	**11.2**	**0.1**	**A**	**0.0**	→
Education Partnerships and Skills						
School Improvement	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	→
Education System Development	0.9	0.9	0.0	-	0.0	→
Early Years	0.5	0.5	0.0	-	0.0	→
Schools Statutory	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	→
sub total	**1.5**	**1.5**	**0.0**	**-**	**0.0**	→
Inclusion						
Inclusion Services	5.0	5.3	0.3	A	0.0	→
Home to School Transport	10.9	12.3	1.4	A	0.0	→
SEND Transport	6.6	8.0	1.4	A	0.0	→
sub total	**22.5**	**25.6**	**3.1**	**A**	**0.0**	→
Children's Services Total	**105.3**	**122.1**	**16.8**	**A**	**0.3**	↓

Children's Services - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Children's Social Care

Children's Social Care services are forecasting an overspend of £13.6m. Much of this pressure is seen in the external placements budget (for children looked after) which is forecasting a £12.1m overspend, a decrease from month 5 of £0.3m. This is due to a slight decrease to the number of placements and a reduction in timescales for an unregistered placement.

At the end of September 2022 there were 589 children in care (595 in month 5). This equates to a rate per 10,000 of 52.9 (53.5 in month 5). The rate for Somerset's statistical neighbours is 59.5 and the England average is 65.4. Somerset has a consistently low rate of children in care largely due to the effective early intervention

and community services which work to keep children with their families whenever it is safe to do so.

External Placements

The net pressure for external placements for last financial year (2021/22) was £1.6m which included £3.3m of one-off Covid funding to mitigate the overall pressure. The greatest areas of budgetary pressure for this financial year are in the residential and unregistered sectors.

There are currently 71 children (as at the end of September) in residential care (compared to 68 at the same point last financial year). The cost of the 71 children in residential care this financial year is projected at £19.7m compared to 68 children projected at £19.1m at the same point last year. The impact of the pandemic has been that children entering the care system have had more complex needs and therefore their care needs are higher costs in their own right. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had already taken account of likely increases in residential care and these costs are approximately in line with our assumptions.

Therefore, most of the pressure we are seeing in this year's budget relates to the cost of 9 children in unregistered care (compared to 1 at the same time last financial year), with a net projection of £11.5m. It is worth noting that 4 of these are in short-term placements, with plans in place to move on over the next few months. Unregistered placements began in Q2 2021 with 1 child, increasing to 6 children at the end of Q3 and Q4, and 9 in Q1 2022. These children have such complex needs predominately in relation to self-harm and complex mental health presentations that no registered provider locally, regionally, or nationally, have offered to provide care despite weekly requests. 7 of these children are joint funded with the NHS, with the NHS contribution projected at £1.9m (already included in the net projection of £11.5m).

These are national issues which have been highlighted by independent reports commissioned by central Government and published in 2022, from the Competition and Markets Authority and The Care Review.

Our strategic partnership with The Shaw Trust is mobilising well, and 2 homes have been purchased, with recruitment well underway. Subject to planning and Ofsted registration, these homes will be operational from the end January 2023, offering homes for up to 6 of our most complex children in care. A further 2 homes are planned to open for up to 4 children in Spring 2023. Based on average costs of the most complex children in residential placements, cost avoidance of £0.3m has been included in the projection to be achieved in Q4 during 2022/23.

If it were possible to match the children in unregistered placements to these homes, cost avoidance in 22/23 from January 2023 would be between £0.6m and £1.9m. Full year effect in 2023/24 would be between £2.7m and £8.2m in reducing the reliance on unregistered provision during that time.

Partnership funding is regularly agreed to offset costs of more complex children, as part of the Multi-Agency Complex Care Needs Panel (MACCNP). There are currently 55 children with funding agreed between partners, with forecast income of £10.8m in 2022/23 from NHS and the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block (this includes £1.9m of NHS income for the unregistered children already mentioned above).

The service continues to work with individual children and their families to identify the best long-term home for them. Our Step Forward scheme helps children living in residential care to move to a foster home where this is in their best interest and a suitable foster home is available. This scheme also reduces costs within the external placements budget. Currently 6 young people are placed with Step Forward foster carers, with cost avoidance of £0.5m estimated to be achieved during the year.

The other areas of unanticipated increased spend are:

- semi-independent placements for 16–17-year-olds (£3.4m pressure); and
- the extension of timescales for parents and children in assessment placements together due to backlogs in the Family Proceedings Court (£0.6m pressure).

Disabilities

The Children with Disabilities (CWD) service has increased pressures, caused by the extension of costly support packages for children with very high needs in court proceedings. This has resulted in a pressure of £0.4m against the CWD External Placement budget.

There is also an increased number of direct payments (payments made to families to source care services directly) being made. 223 children received payments in August 2022, compared to 181 in the same month of 2021. This has also resulted in a financial pressure of £0.4m. There has recently been an agreed uplift of 15% for direct payments to bring children's rates in line with adults to maximise the availability of suitable carers for children which has contributed to the change in variance of £0.2m.

Due to the extremely vulnerable children supported by the service, £0.6m Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) funding has been utilised in this area to mitigate pressures in year.

Fostering and Permanence

Fostering & Permanence is forecasting an underspend of £0.6m for fees and allowances. This is a reduction of £0.1m from month 5, due to a recently agreed increase in the fostering allowance rate from September 22 to support and retain our foster carers. Whilst the renewed recruitment drive has not yet had a significant impact the work of the restructured fostering service has enabled 14 additional children to be cared for by our existing foster carers

Transport

Transport costs across Children's Social Care for families and children looked after is currently forecasting an overspend of £0.4m. This is mainly due to the increased reliance on external providers since the COVID-19 pandemic, following a reduction in the availability of volunteer drivers (50% in 2018/19 compared to 17% in 2022/23). The current national fuel crisis will also be contributing to these pressures, with providers raising costs to cover the increase in fuel prices. The increased complexity of children coming into care, as mentioned above, is also resulting in the reduction of suitable volunteer drivers, with many children requiring specialist assistants to accompany along the route.

Fieldwork

Several support packages are currently in place across the county to provide 24/7 support to families, with the aim of reducing the likelihood of children coming into care. This has resulted in a projected pressure of £0.9m. Court delays have extended the period of support; however current costs will be less than if those individuals were brought into care.

The pressure within fieldwork has increased by £0.2m since month 5. This is due to the forecast extension of court ordered independent assessments in the context of a large backlog within the court timetable to final hearings.

Inclusion

Home To School Transport

The cost of transporting children and young people to their place of education continues to be an area of pressure in 2022/23 with a total forecast adverse variance at month 6 of £2.8m across Home to School and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) transport.

Contractual inflation of 5% was built into the 2022/23 budget, however, following rising fuel costs, driver hourly rates and other related costs, some contracts are being retendered by up to 30% more than the original contract rate.

In addition, the increase in children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) who require transport has also had a contributing factor to the overspend.

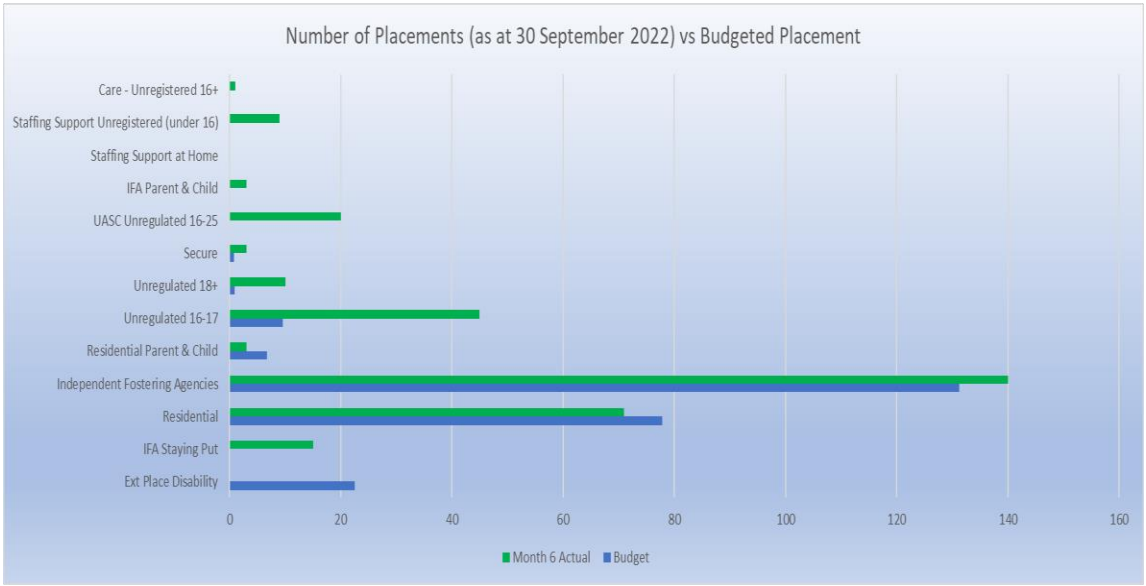
To control costs through the year the service has robust policies in place that only provide the basic statutory transport entitlement. Following an internal audit of Home to School Transport, a programme of work is underway to address the findings and improve assurance around the practices and commissioning of transport.

Inclusion Services

The month 6 adverse variance in Inclusion Services of £0.3m has arisen from the statutory duty to provide equipment and other disabled facilities for children with

social care needs. This equipment and the other facilities enable children to live at home with their families.

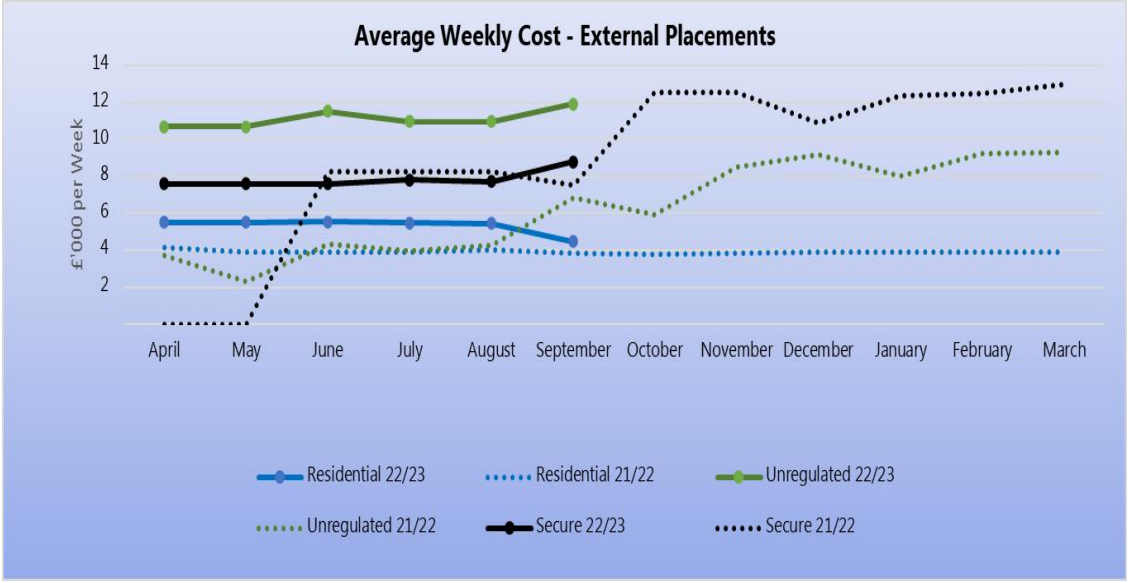
Children's Services - key performance cost drivers



The majority of external placements are in Independent Fostering Agencies (140), Residential (71), Semi-Independent 16/17 (45) and IFA Staying Put (15).

The currently level of demand is 74 more than was built into the budget for the year, the most obvious variance being in Semi-Independent 16-17 (35 more than assumed).

The number of placement days projected to be provided for the year is higher than at any point in 2021/22, currently at 112,771. This is an increase of 1.2% compared to the anticipated level of placement days at the end month 4 (111,566). Demand is 29.8% higher than the level estimated in the budget. This is largely due to longer than expected parent and child assessment placements and fostering and residential placements, for children in care proceedings due to a backlog in the family court system.



Average weekly costs across external placements remain high – see narrative above for details.

Children's Services - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Demand for Children's Services, especially those with complex needs, continues to increase reflecting - increasing poverty amongst Somerset families, impact of COVID measures on children, and contextual safeguarding issues. The corporate performance report demonstrates the demand on early help services.

Compared to other local authorities, overall need for social work intervention and care placements are significantly lower, due in part to the Council's investment in Family Safeguarding and the Family Intervention Service (SCCs Early Help Service).

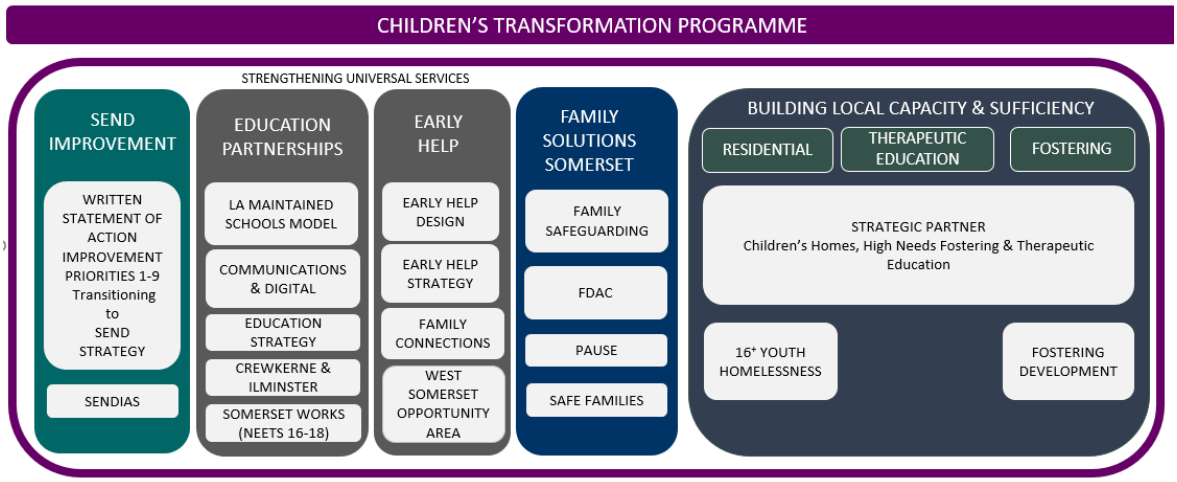
However, the increasing number of children with complex needs is putting a significant capacity and resource strain on the service. This is due in part to increased need but also changes in the nationally in the provision of care to those children with the most complex needs, these include:

- Regulations which came into force in Autumn 2021 prohibiting the use of unregulated (i.e., not registered with Ofsted) provision for under 16s – this had unintended (but predictable) consequences of putting even more pressure on an already saturated residential care market.
- Changes in access to Tier 4 CAMHS provision (not consulted beyond the NHS) – restricting access to children with a diagnosed mental health disorder who require inpatient treatment.
- Secure Estate – issues about the quality of care have led to restrictions to this provision, resulting in children who would have entered the secure estate requiring other residential care provision
- Residential Care Staffing – longstanding recruitment and retention issues in the sector have further deteriorated post pandemic.

These are national issues which have been recently highlighted by independent reports commissioned by central Government from the Competition and Markets Authority and an independent expert report – The Care Review. The former has highlighted the profits from private care companies.

Local proposals to improve the availability of local high-quality care placements are being progressed, specifically through the mobilisation of the Strategic Partnership as described above.

The Children's Transformation Programme continues at pace; working with families to deliver sustainable change, enabling them to reduce reliance on statutory services and to achieve excellent outcomes.



The Strategic Partnership (with Homes 2 Inspire and the Shaw Trust) is developing into a strong partnership model which will increase our capacity for providing high quality Somerset homes for our most complex young people, reduce our reliance on unregulated provision and enable improved long-term outcomes.

Recruitment and retention challenges for both Foster Carers and Children's residential staff reflect the national picture, but the development of an innovative partnership career pathway offer has started to generate positive results.

Recent benchmarking undertaken against national and southwest trends has evidenced that the Family Safeguarding service is holding off the rise in numbers of younger children coming into care. Interim evaluation of the multi-disciplinary staffing model has evidenced positive feedback from staff and families, who feel supported and empowered to lead their own change. Learning from this model is influencing how we work with partners and agencies to build successful integrated teams.

Colleagues in the Economic and Communities Infrastructure directorate are exploring innovative approaches to address rising Home to School Transport costs.

15. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) – Director Julian Wooster, Executive Lead Member Cllr Tessa Munt

- 2022/23 total DSG allocation is £468m before recoupment and deductions.
- 2022/23 allocation after recoupment and deductions, and excluding individual school budgets, is £103.9m, projected adverse variance £5.9m, adverse movement £0.2m.
- 2021/22 allocation after recoupment and deductions, and excluding individual school budgets, was £93.4m, outturn adverse variance £4.3m

DSG cumulative deficit as at the 31 March 2022 is £20.1m
Table 6: 2022/23 DSG Allocation

DSG Block	Allocation (before recoupment and deductions)	Recoupment and Deductions (Academy/ NNDR)	Allocation (after recoupment and deductions)
High Needs Block (HNB)	76.3	9.0	67.3
Central School Services Block (CSSB	5.6	0.0	5.6
Early Years (EYB) *	29.1	0.0	29.1
Schools Block (SB) **	357.0	233.3	123.7
Total DSG	**468.0**	**242.3**	**225.7**

In July, the Department for Education (DfE) issued a funding adjustment to the Early Years Block to account for the January 2022 census which increased funding for this block by £0.9m to £29.1m.

** The Schools Block allocation after recoupment and deductions is £123.7m which is then delegated to Local Authority (LA) maintained individual school budgets and to the growth fund for new and growing schools. £1.9m is then de-delegated back to the LA for services that are delivered by the LA to our LA Maintained Schools – this can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7: 2022/23 DSG as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

DSG Block	Current Budget (£m)	Full Year Projection (£m)	Month 6 variance (£m)	A/(F)	Movement from Month 5	Direction from Month 5
High Needs Block (HNB)	67.3	73.3	6.1	A	0.1	↓
Central Schools Block (CSB)	5.6	5.6	(0.0)	(F)	(0.0)	↑
Early Years (EYB)	29.1	28.9	(0.2)	A	0.1	↓
De-delegated	1.9	1.9	0.0	-	(0.0)	→
Total	**103.9**	**109.7**	**5.9**	**A**	**0.2**	↓

DSG - key explanations, actions & mitigating controls

The significant adverse variance within the DSG is in the High Needs Block (£6.1m) with the main areas contributing to this being:

1. Independent & Non-Maintained Schools (INMS) (£4.2m adverse variance) - the service is experiencing a significant increase in new INMS placements being agreed through the LA's Placement and Travel Panel including some placements that have been ordered by the SEND Tribunal. In part this is due to insufficient availability of maintained specialist provision for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs. Increasing numbers of inflation-driven fee increase requests, increasing case complexity and the agreement of existing placement extensions aligned to key education stages has increased placement costs beyond the expectation within the budget.
2. Special Schools External Placements for Children Looked After (£0.50m adverse variance) – demand, linked with the increases seen in the number of Children Looked After, has exceeded the budget assumptions.
3. Mainstream Maintained Schools & Academies (£0.80m adverse variance) the current increase in the number and cost of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and related costed packages was not anticipated within the budget. The service is continuing to review packages to limit the overspend.
4. Direct Payments (£0.33m adverse variance) – the increase in the number of Direct Payment recipients in the second half of 2021/22 was not incorporated into the budget for 2022/23 because it was assumed that the increase was temporary, but this has not been the case and numbers have remained higher than expected throughout 2022.
5. Pupil Referral Units (£0.53m adverse variance) – The forecast reflects a 40% reduction in the expected income. This is due to the high number of exclusions from schools and the corresponding reduction in the number of places available which can be recharged to schools.

DSG - key risks, future issues, & opportunities

In November 2021, the local authority was required to develop and submit a DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP) to the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This DMP was designed to help manage in year and future DSG spend, particularly in the High Needs Block.

Following the development of the DMP, and as a result of continuing high levels of demand and rising costs, in March 2022 the local authority commissioned IMPOWER Consulting to develop and pilot interventions designed to improve the early identification and the support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and to explore further opportunities to ensure that children and their families receive the right support at the right time.

Two focused pilots (Valuing SEND tool and the SEND advice line) were trialled between April and July 2022 which both demonstrated that significant impact could be achieved for children & young people from scaling up this work.

In August 2022, the DfE invited the Council to participate in the Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND Programme. This programme aims to provide dedicated support and funding to help 55 local authorities with substantial, but less severe, deficit issues (than those who are part of the DfE Safety Valve Programme) to reform their high needs systems. The aim is to put more LAs on a more sustainable footing so that they are better placed to respond to the SEND Review reforms. Colleagues from the service, finance and business intelligence have attended DBV SEND training and, in conjunction with both the DfE commissioned consultants, Newton CIPFA, and IMPOWER Consulting, are developing a new strengthened approach to identifying opportunities for improvement and service performance management.

The service has identified two key risks:

Provision of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) support

There is currently insufficient SEMH provision in Somerset with the only provider currently operating significantly below capacity. This has been caused by a poor Ofsted rating for this provider. In addition, the opening of a new special SEMH free school in South Somerset has been delayed until in April 2024. These issues result in SEMH needs being met by higher cost INMS providers. Partly in response to this situation, proposals are being developed to establish specialist therapeutic education provision as part of the Council's strategic partnership with the Shaw Trust.

Proposed removal of the statutory override for DSG deficits

In 2020, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) introduced a statutory override that separated DSG deficits from local authorities' wider finances. This statutory override is due to conclude at the end

of the 2022-23 financial year. DLUHC is currently consulting local authorities about the impact of removing the override on their financial positions. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, there is a risk that the DSG deficit may need to be incorporated back into the Council's finances from 31 March 2023.

16. Public Health – Director Trudi Grant, Executive Lead Member Cllr Adam Dance

- 2022/23 net budget £1.3m, no projected variance, no movement.
- 2021/22 net budget £1.7m, no variance at outturn.

Table 8: 2022/23 Public Health as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Public Health Grant	21.9	21.9	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
S.C.C Budget	1.3	1.3	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Grant Income	(21.9)	(21.9)	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Public Health Total	**1.3**	**1.3**	**0.0**	**-**	**0.0**	⇨

Public Health - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

The Public Health budget is currently projected to be on budget for both the ringfenced grant and the Somerset County Council budget.

Public Health - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Both the Public Health Grant and the SCC funding managed by public health are under pressures caused by inflationary increases and increasing demand for services due to a deterioration in health and wellbeing following the pandemic. The Public Health Team are working hard to control the budget and keep it on target. Development work to improve the populations health is now largely funded through applications for external funding, as previous national cuts to the grant and a lack of inflationary increase has meant development funding has had to be diverted in order to pay for budget pressures.

Improvements in whole population health are not achievable within the constraints of the public health budget. A new operating model for public health is required to focus the activity of the Public Health Team towards influencing policy, commissioning and spend right across the Somerset system towards improving health and tackling inequalities.

17. Economic & Community Infrastructure – Director Paula Hewitt, Executive Lead Members Cllr Mike Rigby, Cllr Ros Wyke, Cllr Frederica Smith-Roberts, Cllr Val Keitch, and Cllr Sarah Dyke

- 2022/23 net budget £74.6m, projected favourable variance £0.2m, favourable movement £0.3m.
- 2021/22 net budget £76.6m, outturn favourable variance £1.7m.

Table 9: 2022/23 Economic & Community Infrastructure as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Economy & Planning	2.5	2.5	0.0	-	0.0	→
Highways & Transport Commissioning	1.9	2.0	0.1	A	0.0	→
Community Infrastructure Commissioning	1.2	1.2	0.0	-	0.0	→
Civil Contingencies	(0.1)	(0.1)	0.0	-	0.0	→
ECI Management	0.4	0.4	0.0	-	0.0	→
Transporting Somerset	9.4	8.9	(0.5)	(F)	0.0	→
Registration Service	(0.2)	(0.4)	(0.2)	(F)	0.0	→
Library Service	4.2	4.3	0.1	A	0.0	→
Infrastructure Programme Group	0.4	0.4	0.0	-	0.0	→
Highway Operations	12.9	14.1	1.2	A	0.0	→
Business Support	0.9	0.8	(0.1)	(F)	0.0	→
Heritage Service	1.6	1.6	0.0	-	0.0	→
Traffic Management	1.2	0.9	(0.3)	(F)	(0.1)	↑
Somerset Waste Partnership	31.9	30.9	(1.0)	(F)	(0.1)	↑
SCC Waste	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	→
Strategic Property	6.2	6.7	0.5	A	(0.1)	↑
Commissioning Development	0.1	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	→
Economic & Community Infrastructure Total	**74.6**	**74.4**	**(0.2)**	**(F)**	**(0.3)**	↑

Economic & Community Infrastructure - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Economic & Community Infrastructure is currently forecasting an underspend of £0.2m at outturn, this is a favourable movement of £0.3m since month 5.

There are three favourable variances of £0.1m from month 5 as follows:

- Traffic Management – Traffic Regulation Order income forecasts have improved by a further £0.1m.

- Waste – disposal tonnages for the year to date continue to be lower than budgeted resulting in a favourable adjustment of £0.1m to the full year forecast.
- Property – the forecast has improved by £0.1m largely due to reduced energy usage during the County Hall B Block building works.

The most significant variances to budget are as follows:

Favourable variances:

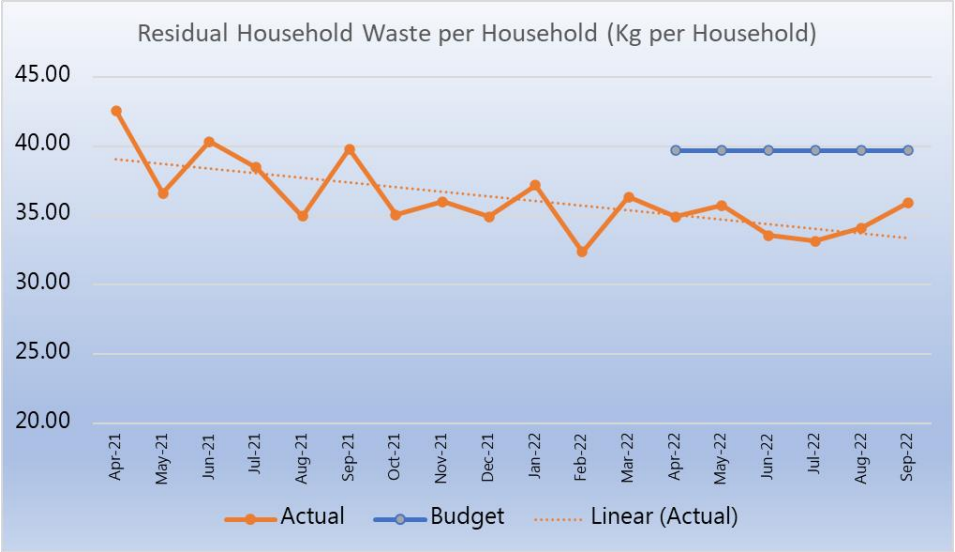
- **Waste -** £1.0m Favourable. Recycle More has performed much better than budget with reduced tonnages being sent to landfill due to increased recycling rates at the kerbside (budget £0.3m saving; forecast £1.2m saving). The remainder of the variance largely relates to adverse variances on inflation on the waste disposal contracts, which is estimated when the budget is prepared.
- **Transporting Somerset -** £0.5m Favourable. This is due to several factors: additional rental income at the Gateway Park & Ride being identified and cost savings across the services in accessible transport and concessionary fares.

Adverse variances:

- **Highway Operations -** £1.2m Adverse. There are forecast overspends in energy costs of £0.3m due to energy price increases in 2022/23 and signing and guarding costs of £0.8m. Signing and guarding costs are part of an ongoing review with our contractor, and we hope to show an improvement to the forecast over the coming months.
- **Strategic Property -** £0.5m Adverse. £0.3m of the adverse variance relates to energy price increases. A further £0.1m relates to delays in completion of the Saltlands Energy Park resulting in a delay in income compared to budget.

Economic & Community Infrastructure - key performance cost drivers

The graph below shows residual household waste (kg per household) since April 2021. With all Districts now on Recycle More 3-weekly refuse collections, the positive results can be seen. From April 2022, the budgeted average waste per month is also shown, demonstrating that for the current year there is a significant saving compared to budgets. This saving is forecast at £1.2m for the full year.

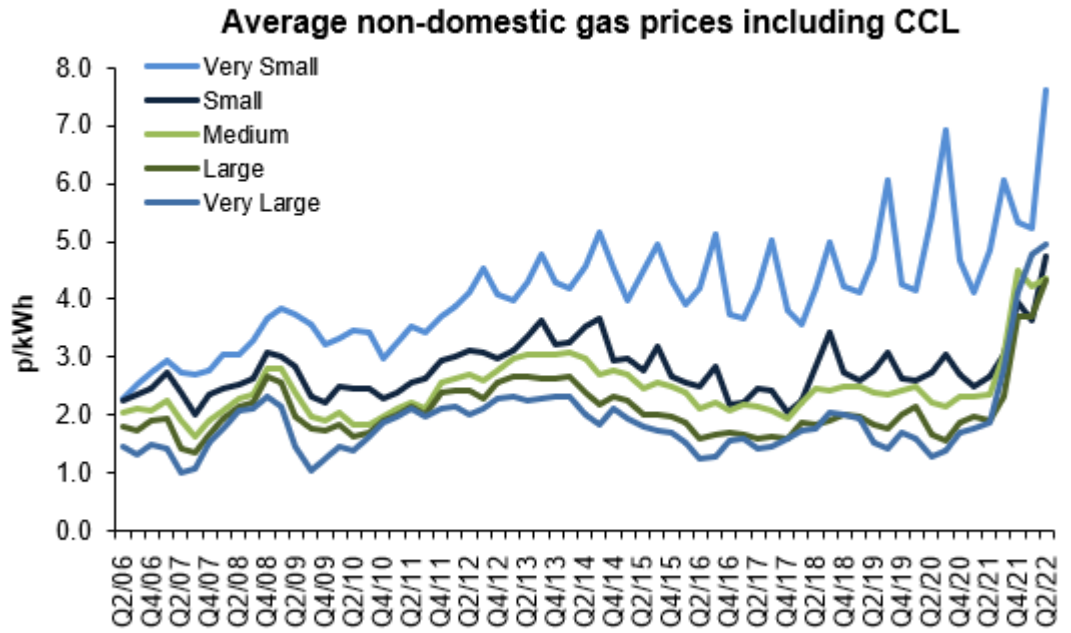


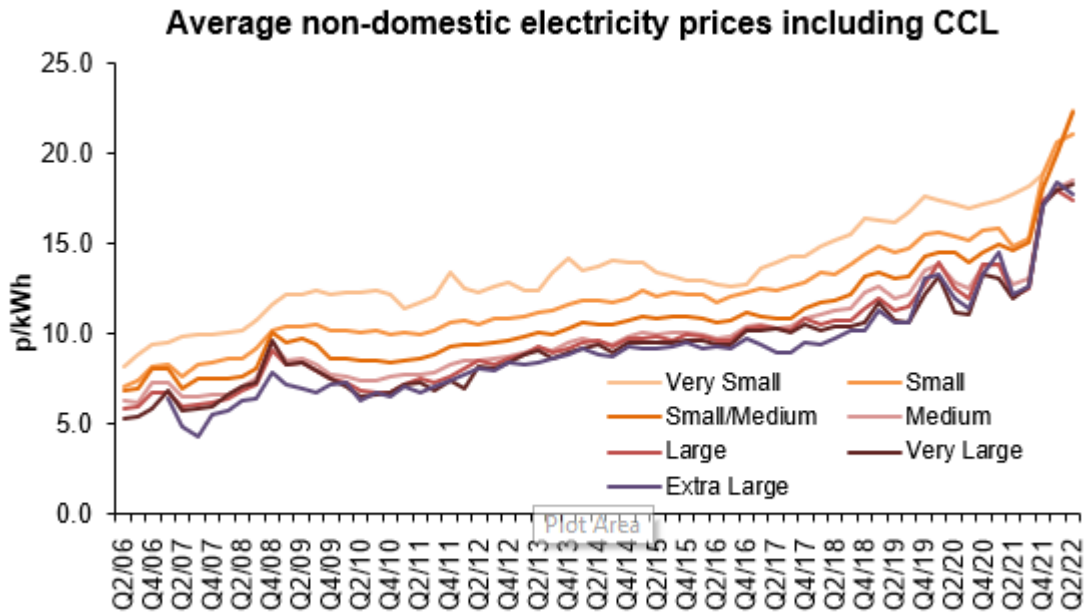
Energy

Energy is procured centrally for the Council and costs are recharged to services to allow each service to manage usage appropriately. Energy is purchased in advance of delivery over several tranches and volumes are aggregated with other public sector consumers. This approach provides best value and mitigates risk in a volatile market.

We are forecasting an overspend of £0.6m to budget within Highways and Property, an increase of approximately 3% from budgeted cost.

The graphs below have been taken from a report published by Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which shows the continuing increase of gas and electricity costs purchased by non-domestic consumers in the UK. The source information can be found via the link below. This shows that average gas and electricity prices (including the Climate Change Levy) have increased by 62% and 39% respectively over the last 12 months.





https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1086583/table_341.xlsx

Economic & Community Infrastructure - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Due to the current economic climate, there are several key risks and future issues that need to be taken into consideration.

- **Energy Costs** continue to rise, and with a further increase anticipated due to a further increase to the price cap it is possible that the current projected spend will increase further. It is important to note that some services are currently

projecting to be able to absorb the energy increases however this is reliant on other external factors beyond the control of the service. External contractors have also raised concerns with regards to the pressures this is causing on them and the impact it may have on scheme delivery.

- **Fuel costs**. It is currently difficult to forecast increases in spend on fuel due to the continuing fluctuation in fuel costs. This is having an impact on internal and external transport operators. At present Transporting Somerset is supporting operators with a small increase to contract payments, however, as increases in fuel continues this may not be enough to stop operators handing back contracts as they are no longer financially viable.

- **Scheme delivery** is also being impacted by the cost and supply issue of raw materials. Costs are increasing significantly, with a recent article in CIPFA's Public Finance suggesting increases of 89% for sawn wood, 73% for structural steel, 21% plastic doors and windows, and 18% for paint over the last year. Economic and Community Infrastructure will aim to absorb this increase within existing budgets, however it may be viable to delay projects or non-statutory services to be able to do this.

- **Contract inflation** is applied at different times throughout the year, as the increase in contract could be led by RPI or CPI it is currently difficult to predict accurately what the impact for each contract might be.

- **Impact of cost-of-living crisis**. As costs continue to rise, spending habits may change therefore it is possible that services across Economic and Community Infrastructure will see a decrease in income budgets

- **Staff vacancy levels.** Staff vacancies and difficulties in recruitment across ECI continue to impact on the ability to deliver services.

Economic & Community Infrastructure continues to work within their budget constraints to provide services effectively. Work is ongoing across the service to look at new ways of working and works that can be delayed.

18. Customers, Digital & Workforce – Director Chris Squire, Executive Lead Members Cllr Liz Leyshon, and Cllr Mike Rigby.

- 2022/23 net budget £17m, projected favourable variance £0.1m, no movement.
- 2021/22 net budget £16.7m, outturn favourable variance £0.2m

Table 10: 2022/23 Customers, Digital & Workforce as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Communications	0.5	0.4	(0.1)	(F)	0.0	⇨
Customers & Communities	3.5	3.5	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
ICT	8.6	8.6	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Transformation & Change	1.5	1.5	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Human Resources	2.9	2.9	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Customers, Digital & Workforce Total	**17.0**	**16.9**	**(0.1)**	**(F)**	**0.0**	⇨

Customers, Digital & Workforce - Revenue Summary - Key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Customers, Digital & Workforce is projecting a favourable variance of £0.1m, nil movement of £0.0m to the position reported month 5. Communications is reporting a projected underspend of £0.1m due to savings within the staffing budget. All other services areas are currently reporting on budget.

All MTFP savings assigned in 2022/23 are on target or achieved except for income generation within HRAP from further new business which is highlighted as at risk due to being unknown at this point.

Customers, Digital & Workforce - key risks, future issues & opportunities

There is a key risk around the recruitment of some specialist roles due to higher salaries paid elsewhere. This may lead to some interim staff recruited at a higher cost.

A number of academies are moving to multi academy trust status which could have a negative impact on the income received for payroll services.

There is a potential pressure within the Communications budget in future years regarding the funding of the Head of Communications position.

19. Finance and Governance – Director Jason Vaughan, Executive Lead Member Cllr Liz Leyshon

- 2022/23 net budget £13.5m, no variance, no movement.
- 2021/22 net budget £9.8m, no variance at outturn.

Table 11: 2022/23 Finance and Governance as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Democratic Services	3.8	3.8	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Legal Services	5.1	5.1	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Finance	3.4	3.2	(0.2)	(F)	0.0	⇨
Commercial and Procurement	1.2	1.4	0.2	A	0.0	⇨
Finance and Governance Total	**13.5**	**13.5**	**0.0**	-	**0.0**	⇨

-

Finance & Governance revenue summary - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

The overall Finance & Governance budget is projecting a nil variance at month 6, and there is no movement to what was reported at month 5.

The projected overspend in Procurement from cross cutting MTFP saving is offset by a projected underspend within Finance. Reviewing opportunities to generate further income to reduce the overspend by year end is continuing within the Procurement Team.

Finance & Governance key risks, future issues, & opportunities

Capacity across all areas is currently stretched and LGR will further impact on this going forward.

The increased service demands and recruitment issues within Legal Services supporting Children's Services is a significant risk and actions are being taken to try and recruit staff to address this. However, this is a common pattern across local government.

20. Accountable Bodies – Director Paula Hewitt, Executive Lead Members Cllr Mike Rigby, Cllr David Woan, and Cllr Mike Stanton

- 2022/23 net budget £4.4m, no projected variance, no movement.
- 2021/22 net budget £7.4m, no variance at outturn.

Table 12: 2022/23 Accountable Bodies as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Somerset Rivers Authority	2.6	2.6	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Local Enterprise Partnership	1.0	1.0	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Connecting Devon & Somerset	0.8	0.8	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Accountable Bodies Total	**4.4**	**4.4**	**0.0**	-	**0.0**	⇨

Accountable Bodies - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) is forecasting to be within budget in 2022/23, at present there is no need to draw or contribute to the reserve.

The Heart of the Southwest Local Enterprise Partnership is forecasting to be within budget at outturn for 2022/23 this includes a contribution to the reserve of £0.7m which is favourable movement of £0.1m since month 6.

Connecting Devon & Somerset (CDS) is forecasting to be within budget at outturn. Following a review CDS has reduced the need to draw on reserves. CDS are now forecasting to add £0.2m to reserves at outturn. Due to movements in timelines, assurance works will now be completed later than originally forecast.

Accountable Bodies - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Somerset County Council (SCC) acts as the accountable body for the Heart of the Southwest Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), providing a service across the core functions of the LEP and its programmes. This is in the context of an assurance framework for this programme funding meeting Government principles and expectations. In performing these functions, SCC works closely with the LEP core team, and the services SCC provides are specified and resourced via a service level agreement between the LEP and SCC.

LEP performance is subject to periodic assessment and an annual formal review by Government; the most recent of these for 2021/22 recognised the LEP's performance as good and likewise commended SCC's accountable body services to the LEP.

LEPs have been reviewed by Government and in April 2022 a LEP integration letter was issued by Government setting out routes over time for the integration of LEPs into local democratically elected institutions. LEP integration plans need to be prepared by SCC and the Devon LAs by early 2023 and will have implications for the future role of SCC as accountable body as this transition is planned and implemented.

21. Corporate Costs – Director Jason Vaughan, Executive Lead Member Cllr Liz Leyshon

- 2022/23 net budget £1.1m, projected favourable variance £3.9m, favourable movement £0.5m.
- 2021/22 net budget (£5.2m), outturn favourable variance £2.6m.

Table 13: 2022/23 Corporate Costs as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Local Government Reform	6.9	6.9	0.0	-	0.0	
Contributions	0.9	0.9	0.0	-	0.0	
Corporate Costs	10.7	9.6	(1.1)	(F)	0.1	
Financing Transactions	18.5	16.0	(2.5)	(F)	(0.6)	
Special Grants	(35.9)	(36.2)	(0.3)	(F)	0.0	
Corporate Costs Total	**1.1**	**(2.8)**	**(3.9)**	**(F)**	**(0.5)**	

Corporate Costs - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Corporate Costs
The favourable variance of £1.1m mostly relates to the current uncommitted Resilience for Business-as-Usual budget which is available to ensure business as usual is maintained whilst delivering LGR and the implementation of the new Business Support System. The forecast also includes a projected favourable variance of £0.1m within the Discontinued Services budget due to reduced costs in the Teachers Pensions element of the budget. The adverse movement of £0.1m from month 5 relates to a redundancy, including pensions strain costs, attributable to the Central Redundancies budget.

Financing Transactions
The favourable variance of £2.5m, and favourable movement of £0.6m from month 5 for Financing Transactions relates to an increase in income from strategic and comfund investments, with interest rates achieved higher than budgeted.

Special Grants
The favourable variance of £0.3m for Special Grants is due to receiving confirmation that the Extended Right to Free Travel grant will be higher than budgeted. The grant determination was received after the budget setting process.

Corporate Costs - key risks, future issues & opportunities

A key risk is the ability to accurately forecast interest rates. The impact of the recently announced base rate increase of 0.50% to 2.25% from October 2022 forms part of the latest forecasting.

The opportunity to this budget is maximising returns through strategic investments.

22. Trading Units – Director Julian Wooster, Executive Lead Member Cllr Tessa Munt

- Trading units are required to set a net nil budget with full costs offset by income generated.

Table 14: 2022/23 Trading Units as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Dillington	0.0	0.2	0.2	A	0.0	↓
Support Services for Education	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	→
Trading Units Total	**0.0**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**A**	**0.0**	↓

Trading Units - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Trading units are required to set a net nil budget with full costs offset by income generated. Any over/underspends at year-end will be transferred to the services reserve.

Dillington

Dillington House is currently forecasting a deficit of £0.550m, this is an increase of £0.049m from month 5.

Salaries across the hospitality sector have significantly increased since the pandemic and Dillington's staff costs have had to increase to ensure we can recruit and retain staff needed to carry out the weddings, adult education courses and conferences. The figures have also been updated to take into account the proposed pay award for 2022/23. Operating costs continue to increase, particularly food and drink and estimated costs for utility bills have also increased significantly and will be reviewed monthly along with other ways that we might be able to reduce our expenditure.

Income levels across some activity areas were lower than forecasted for the first six months, due to the ongoing impact from Covid and financial pressures on customers.

We are reviewing future forecasts and continue to look at ways to increase future income and make savings against the budget.

Support Services for Education
Support Services for Education (SSE) are forecasting an overall pressure of £0.5m which will be offset against SSE reserves. This overspend is due to a projected shortfall in traded income across a small number of services, as well as the impact of inflation. Work is underway to try and reduce the pressure.

23. Contingencies – Director Jason Vaughan, Executive Lead Member Cllr Liz Leyshon

- 2022/23 allocation of £6m, £3.3m is uncommitted.
- 2021/22 allocation of £16.8m, approved use of £13.2m being utilised, leaving £3.6m unallocated.

Table 15: 2022/23 Contingencies as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Original Budget £m	Contingency movements £m	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Corporate Contingency	6.0	0.0	6.0	2.7	(3.3)	(F)	0.0	⇨
Contingencies Total	**6.0**	**0.0**	**6.0**	**2.7**	**(3.3)**	**(F)**	**0.0**	⇨

Contingencies – key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

Corporate Contingency
When setting the 2022/23 budget, it was clear that there were significant uncertainties and to mitigate against this a Corporate Contingency budget of £6m was approved. The 2022/23 assumed a pay award of 2.5% but the latest offer by the employers of £1,925 would be equivalent to a 5.5% increase. The uncommitted contingency balance is now £3.3m.

Corporate Contingencies 2022/23	£m
Original Budget	6.0
2022/23 Pay Award	(3.4)
Reduction in National Insurance	0.7
Remaining Balance	**3.3**

24. Core Revenue Funding – Director Jason Vaughan, Executive Lead Member Cllr Liz Leyshon

- 2022/23 net budget (£370.4m), projected favourable variance £1.0m, no movement.
- 2021/22 net budget (£332.5m), no variance at outturn.

Table 16: 2022/23 Core Revenue Funding as at the end of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Full Year Projection £m	Month 6 Variance £m	A/(F)	Movement From Month 5	Direction From Month 5
Council Tax	(279.9)	(279.9)	(279.9)	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Business Rates	(84.1)	(84.1)	(85.1)	(1.0)	(F)	0.0	⇨
Revenue Support Grant	(6.4)	(6.4)	(6.4)	0.0	-	0.0	⇨
Core Revenue Funding Total	**(370.4)**	**(370.4)**	**(371.4)**	**(1.0)**	**(F)**	**0.0**	⇨

Core Revenue Funding - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

There is a favourable variance of £1m against business rates which is additional financial benefit of being in the business rates pool for 2022/23.

Core Revenue Funding - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Any collection fund deficit during this year will impact on next year's budget and is being monitored as part of the ongoing Medium Term Financial Planning activity.

25. Transformation, Savings, and Income Generation Proposals

The Council's 2022/23 revenue budget includes £5m of approved MTFP transformation, savings, and income generation proposals (TSIGP). As at the end of quarter two, it is forecast that 67% will be delivered against this target.

Table 17 shows the forecast achievement of TSIGPs against the original approved amounts. Services monitor these monthly based on their achievement to date and the forecast profile for realising the savings over the year. Any over or under achievement is reflected in the forecast outturn position.

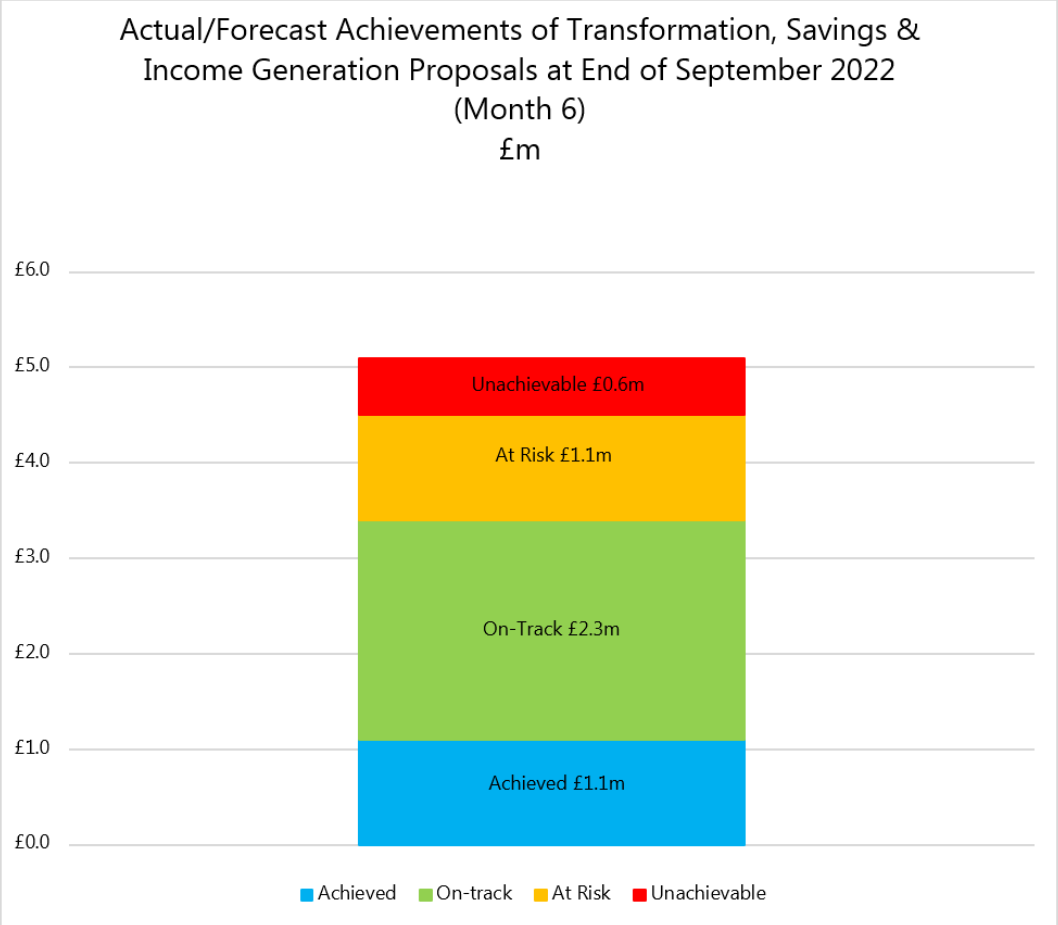
Within the overall profile, £3.4m (67%) are either achieved or on-track to be delivered.

Table 17: Performance of Agreed Transformation, Savings, and Income generation Proposals as at End of September 2022 (Month 6)

Service Area	Approved TSIGP	Achieved	On-track	At Risk	Unachievable
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Services	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0
Children's Services	2.1	0.0	1.1	1.0	0.0
Public Health	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Economic & Community Infrastructure	1.2	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1
Customers Digital & Workforce	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0
Finance & Governance	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Corporate Costs	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.5
Total	**5.1**	**1.1**	**2.3**	**1.1**	**0.6**

At risk savings total £1.1m (22%) and include:

- Children's Services – Total savings £2.1m, £1.0m at risk.
    - Family Safeguarding £1.0m at risk. Family Safeguarding savings were over-achieved for the last financial year, but targets this year are challenging following recent increases in CLA numbers. Analysis on fluctuations, trends, and alignment with York Consulting evaluation findings to be undertaken to establish whether there is any long-term impact on savings targets.
- Economic & Community Infrastructure - Total savings £1.2m, £0.2m at risk/unachievable.
    - Property Services have an MTFP saving of £0.1m that is currently unachievable as not being achieved due to Saltlands Energy Park not being completed in 2022/23, this therefore will not generate any income. It is currently anticipated that the saving will be achieved in 2023/24 onwards.
- Customers Digital & Workforce - Total savings £0.4m, £0.1m at risk.
    - The at risk saving of £0.1m relates to anticipated income being received when onboarding clients to a replacement payroll system. Unfortunately, uptake has been lower than anticipated and this saving was not achieved in 2021/22. It is therefore likely that uptake in this financial year will also be lower than expected, therefore it is likely that this saving will not be achieved again this year.



26. Capital

The following sections of the report provide information on the Council's capital programme, its forecasted outturn position, and any risks identified or key achievements during the first quarter. It also provides an update on the funding status of the capital programme.

Capital Programme Forecasts and 2022/23 Outturn Position

Services have provided forecasts for their overall programmes, as well as a projected outturn position for 2022/23. These can be found in **Table 19** below.

2022/23 Outturn Position

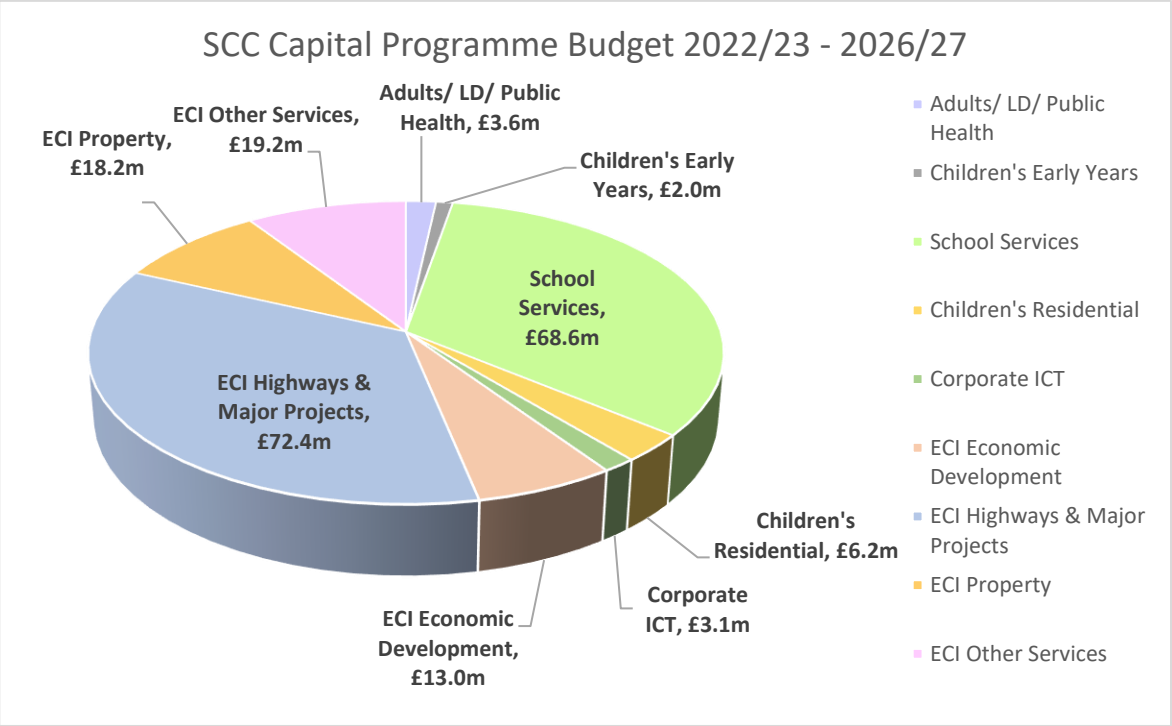
An overview of the Council's programme indicates that £110.6m of capital expenditure is forecasted in 2022/23. This is £19.4m less than originally budgeted. The majority of this is due to slippage in the forecasts, details of which can be found further down in the report.

The Overall Programme

Over the life of the programme, the report shows that £197.0m of capital expenditure is forecast against a total budget of £206.3m, leaving a projected underspend of £9.3m.

The below chart provides an overview of the county council's capital programme budgets by service area, totalling £206.3m.

Capital Programme Budgets by Service Area



Accountable Bodies

The capital programme of the Accountable Bodies indicates that £38.1m of capital expenditure is forecasted in 2022/23. This is £6.0m less than originally budgeted.

Over the life of their programmes, £62.5m of capital expenditure is forecast, with an on-budget position expected.

Table 19: Capital Programme Forecasts and Projected 2022/23 Outturn Position

Scheme	Current Year Budget			Overall Scheme Budget		
	2022/23 Budget	Forecasted Outturn for 2022/23	Year End Variance	Total Scheme Budget	Predicted Total Expenditure	Estimated Scheme Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Services, Learning Disabilities and Public Health						
Adult Social Care				3.2	2.0	(1.2)
Learning Disabilities	0.3	0.2	(0.1)	0.4	0.4	
Children and Young People						
Childrens Residential	3.3	4.2	0.9	6.0	6.0	
Special Education Needs	0.2	1.1	0.9	4.8	4.8	
Schools Access Initiative	0.6	0.7	0.1	1.3	1.3	
Community Services	0.1	0.1		0.2	0.1	(0.1)
Early Years	0.9	0.1	(0.8)	2.0	1.2	(0.8)
Schools Services	30.1	27.4	(2.7)	62.5	61.7	(0.8)
Corporate and Support Services						
Corporate ICT Investment	2.8	2.9	0.1	3.1	3.1	
Economic and Community Infrastructure - Economic Development						
Business Growth Fund	1.7	1.7		3.5	3.5	
Taunton Digital Innovation Centre	5.7	5.7		7.7	7.7	
Bruton Enterprise Centre	(1.2)	(1.2)		(1.2)	(1.2)	
Chard Grow On Spaces	2.5	2.5		2.5	2.5	
Other Schemes	(0.1)	(0.1)		0.5		(0.5)
Economic and Community Infrastructure - Highways						
Bridge Structures	3.6	2.7	(0.9)	6.7	6.6	(0.1)
Road Structures	28.8	28.0	(0.8)	31.8	31.6	(0.2)
Traffic Control	5.4	5.1	(0.3)	6.0	6.0	
Traffic Management	0.7	0.3	(0.4)	0.3	0.3	
Active Travel	0.4	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.4	
Integrated Transport	3.2	2.2	(1.0)	3.1	3.2	0.1
Small Improvement Schemes	3.5	2.5	(1.0)	3.5	3.5	
Highway Lighting	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.2
Rights of Way	1.4	1.1	(0.3)	1.4	1.4	
Economic and Community Infrastructure - Highway Major Projects						
M5 Junction 25 Improvements	2.3	0.9	(1.4)	2.4	1.4	(1.0)
Toneway Corridor Capacity Improvements	5.3	4.6	(0.7)	5.3	5.3	
Trenchard Way Residual Works	0.8	0.8		0.8	0.8	
Major Road Network	1.7	1.6	(0.1)	2.0	2.0	
A38 Chelston Link	5.7	0.5	(5.2)	5.7	5.7	
Various Other Schemes	0.2	0.9	0.7	1.4	1.5	0.1
Economic and Community Infrastructure - Property						
Property Services	12.6	7.1	(5.5)	18.2	18.2	
Economic and Community Infrastructure - Other Services						
Countryside and Canals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Fleet Management	3.8	2.0	(1.8)	3.8	3.7	(0.1)
Bus Service Improvement Programme		1.2	1.2	8.2	8.2	
Heritage Services	0.1	0.1	(0.1)	0.1	0.1	
Library Services	0.5	0.3	(0.2)	0.9	1.0	0.1
Somerset Waste Partnership	2.5	1.2	(1.3)	6.2	1.2	(5.0)
Total SCC Capital Programme	**130.0**	**110.6**	**(19.4)**	**206.3**	**197.0**	**(9.3)**
SCC Accountable Body Status						
Broadband Project (CDS)	6.0	3.0	(3.0)	24.3	24.3	
HoTSW Local Enterprise Partnership	37.8	35.0	(2.8)	37.9	37.9	
Somerset Rivers Authority	0.3	0.1	(0.2)	0.3	0.3	
SCC Accountable Body Status Total	**44.1**	**38.1**	**(6.0)**	**62.5**	**62.5**	
Total Capital Programme	**174.1**	**148.7**	**(25.4)**	**268.8**	**259.5**	**(9.3)**

Capital Programme – key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

The following narrative has been provided to explain any variances within the 2022/23 budget position. It includes any risks individual programmes are facing and possible recommendations required to mitigate them. It also details opportunities that have arisen and will highlight achievements, such as completed schemes, as we progress through the year.

Adults Services
A review of the current Adults Residential Programme has presented an opportunity to report an underspend of £1.1m. This will have no impact on the delivery of the programme or the projected outputs.

Recommendation 2c is for member to agree to the removal of £1.1m of borrowing funded approval from the capital programme.

Schools
Start on the site of the new Comeytrowe Primary School has been delayed due to the requirement for the developer to drop overhead power cables before construction starts on the school. This has led to £2.1m of expenditure slipping back to 2023/24.

Two school projects, Polden Bower Special School and Somerton King Ina are currently forecasting a combined underspend of £0.8m. These will be monitored during the final stages of the projects with a view to providing a robust position in the next quarter.

Early Years
Final costs for part of the Early Years condition programme have now been confirmed, resulting in an underspend of £0.8m. These funds are currently surplus to requirements and will be reviewed with a view to providing members with a recommendation in the next report.

Highways and Traffic Management
The Bridge Structures team are forecasting slippage into next year. This is due to a large and complex programme, including three major projects. Additional staffing resource has been recruited and it is hoped this will allow the programme of works to accelerate during the year.

The Traffic Signals Recovery Programme is a complex programme of individual projects across Somerset. The start dates of some schemes have changed since the last report, resulting in slippage of £0.3m into 2023/24.

Highway Lighting are reporting an overspend of £0.2m on their capital programme. Funding for this has been found within the overall Highway capital approvals, with Road Structures currently forecasting a £0.2m underspend.

Integrated Transport and Small Improvements Schemes
It is anticipated that Safety schemes within the Small Improvements programme will not commence until the end of this financial year, with the bulk of works to be carried out in 2023/24.

Major Highway Engineering Projects
The M5 Junction 25 Improvement project has been completed. However, some post construction costs remain which will filter into the next financial year.

The Toneway Corridor Improvements scheme is due for completion in Autumn 2022. Although some of the post construction costs are likely to slip into 2023/24.

The A38 Chelston Link project, which aims to replace the old concrete road between the M5 and Chelston Roundabout, is due to commence later this year. The majority of the works are programmed for 2023/24, which has resulted in slippage of £5.2m from the original forecast.

Property Services
The Saltlands Solar Park has seen a shift in the forecast of £3.1m from 2022/23 into 2023/24 due to delays caused by commercial negotiations and applications for grid connections. As a result of this, the window for construction has slipped to Spring/ Summer 2023.

Fleet Management
Following the delays to the procurement of new vehicles as part of the 2021/22 programme, it is likely that the 2022/23 programme will suffer the similar issues. The 2022/23 programme also includes the purchase of electric vehicles and their associated infrastructure, which will take longer to plan and implement.

Somerset Waste Partnership
With the fleet replacement programme completed last year, and depot improvement works due to be completed this year, Somerset Waste Partnership is currently forecasting a £5.0m underspend within their capital programme. Some of which will be used by District Councils to purchase their recycling containers.

Capital Programme - key risks, future issues & opportunities

Forecasting capital programme expenditure can be difficult, with reliance on contractor activity, impact from adverse weather and capacity within the Council's providers to design and support the programme. The detail within the programme is fully developed as individual projects are finalised and specifically programmed from the generic programmes. It is at this stage that a more accurate estimate of the profile and timing of expenditure is made.

There are two key risks to the capital programme. Firstly, a shortage of materials within the construction industry (cement, steel, timber, etc.) which, not only has an impact on timescales for projects, but also has the potential to increase costs.

Secondly, the rise in inflation brought on by the demand for materials along with current economic conditions.

Projects currently underway all have contingency built into their budgets to deal with unforeseen costs, but the Council needs to carefully look at projects currently being commissioned to ensure they remain affordable and can be delivered on time.

Changes to the Capital Programme Approvals in Quarter Two

Recommendation 2d is for members to note the addition of external funding contributions to the capital programme approvals since the Outturn report:

- £8.161m of grant funding from the Department for Transport towards the Bus Service Improvement Programme.
- £0.271m of contribution funding from various sources towards School projects.

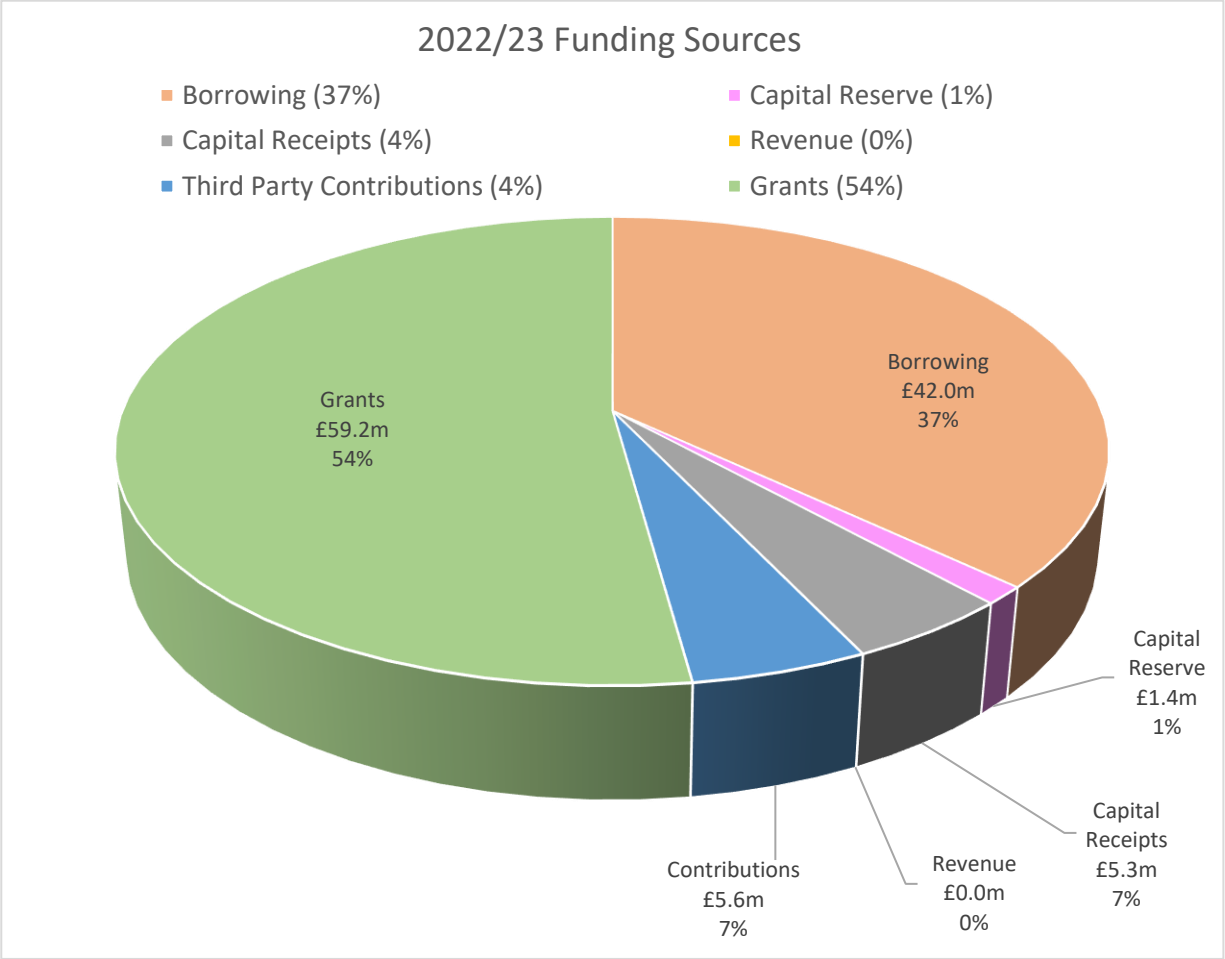
A number of virements (budget transfers) have also been processed in the quarter. Virements are the movement of approvals between budget lines. Virements are examined to identify their purpose; they do not require formal ratification by members as they are classed as technical changes. Virements are undertaken to enable the effective management of generic approvals by creating individual projects as detailed proposals are developed and cost estimates become available.

All cross service virements relate to the funding of claims made to the Local Enterprise Partnership from SCC projects.

Capital Programme – Funding Sources

The capital programme is funded by a variety of sources. Where possible external funds, such as grants and contributions, are utilised to limit any additional revenue costs as result of borrowing requirements to complete the programme. The chart below indicates the proposed funding sources for the 2022/23 capital expenditure.

SCC Capital Programme Funding sources for 2022/23 Expenditure



Borrowing for the Capital Programme

The capital programme is approved fully funded. This means that the Council have approved the use of borrowing to ensure that resources are available to enable delivery of the capital programme. The timing of taking borrowing from the external market is part of the Treasury Management activity.

Within the £42.0m of borrowing required to fund the 2022/23 programmed expenditure, £41.2m of this will be internal borrowing and the remaining £0.8m relates to historic borrowing that has already been taken

27. Treasury Management

Average investment balances for Q2 2022-23 were over £12m higher than the equivalent period last year.

No further investment has been made in pooled funds during the quarter, we have maintained the £15m maximum in each of the 3 chosen funds, £45m in total. We are not currently actively sourcing any further funds.

Outside of pooled funds the investment rate environment has improved considerably through the first six months of the financial year, with Bank of England base rate

increasing from 0.75% in March to 2.25% at period end. Further rises are expected in the next quarter despite the likelihood of an imminent recession. Supply and demand dynamics have kept local to local rates subdued relative to base rate, but rates offered by banks have adjusted to the rate rises fairly quickly. The Comfund return stood at 1.86% at the end of September 2022, and it should be possible to increase rates further even without further base rate rises.

A summary of investment balances and movements during the last three months is shown in **Table 20** below:

Table 20: Investment Balances and Movements for Quarter 1

	Balance as at 30-06-2022 £m	Balance as at 30-09-2022 £m	Movement £m
Short-Term Balances (Variable)	49.8	10.3	-39.5
Comfund (Fixed)	245.0	255.0	+10.0
Pooled Funds	45.0	45.0	+0.0
Total Investments	**339.8**	**310.3**	**-29.5**

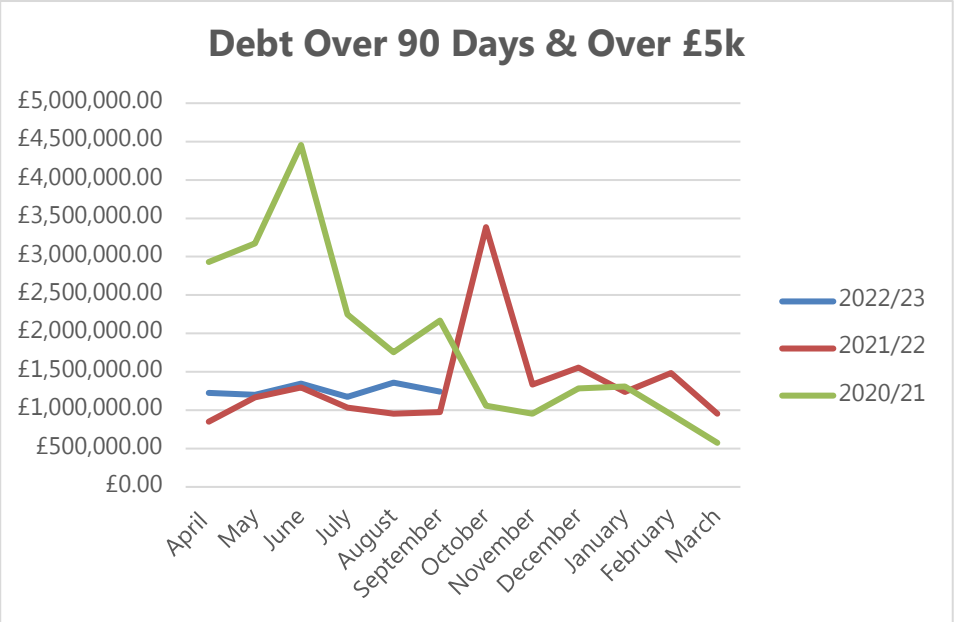
The Council is currently managing the cost of borrowing through its Treasury Management activities, as set out in the approved Treasury Management Strategy, by utilising cash funds available rather than taking external debt. This is known as internal borrowing and the council has utilised this strategy over the past three years.

External borrowing stands at £324.5m. The cost implications of this borrowing are factored into the revenue budget. All our current long-term debt is fixed rate and so there is no impact on interest costs from the increases in Bank of England base rate.

28. Debtor Management

As of 30th September 2022, the total outstanding debt reported on the Accounts Receivable system stood at £9m. This compares with £16.2m at the end of the previous quarter. The debt over 90 days as of 30th September 2022 was £2.3m, this was £2.2m at the end of the previous quarter. Of this, the debt over £5K are detailed below.

Debt over 90 days & over £5k by month for each of the last three years



Exchequer Services - key explanations, actions, & mitigating controls

The value of outstanding debt over 90 days and over £5k reported on 30th September 2022 is less than reported at the end of the previous quarter. The decrease is due to:

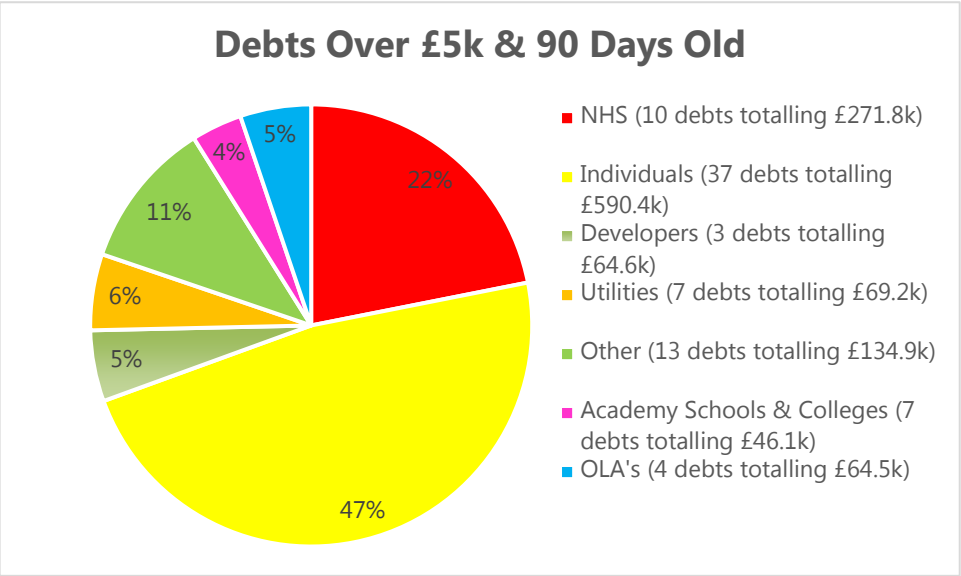
- Other debts - 13 debts outstanding for £134.9k. These have decreased in value and compares with 10 debts from last quarter totalling £197.7k. The 2 debts relating to Defra in excess of £102.7k were paid and cleared during August 2022.
- OLA's (Other Local Authorities) - 4 debts outstanding for £64.5k. This compares with 7 debts totalling £236.5k from last quarter. The decrease in part relates to debt for Sedgemoor District Council for £60.2k being credit noted in September 2022 due to recharges being paid on 18 March 2022 and allocated to codes. Debts for Swindon Borough Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Dorset County Council and Wiveliscombe Town Council totalling £121.8k have also been paid and allocated since this report was run.
- Individual debts in value have decreased since last quarter – 37 debts outstanding for £590.4k. This compares with 38 debts from last quarter totalling £638.8k.
- NHS CCG (Clinical Commissioning Groups) at the end of previous quarter had 6 debts outstanding totalling £144.6k. This is significantly lower than the current position where there are 10 invoices totalling £271.8k unpaid, however two CCG invoices in excess of £30.2k have been paid and allocated since report was run.

All Finance staff responsible for chasing debt are asked to provide confirmation that debts are being chased and referred for further enforcement action, in line with the Income Code of Practice (ICOP, updated January 2022), and all actions are

expected to be completed within 60 days. The Accounts Receivable Team are currently monitoring all debt over 90 days old on a monthly basis.

An E-Learning module for the Income Code of Practice went live in February 2022 for signposting to finance staff who are debt chasers and will be mandatory for new starters with this role.

The majority of the debt over 90 days is expected to be collected and not expected to become irrecoverable debt. The following chart highlights the more significant debts over 90 days by sector theme.



96 debts have been written off in the past 3 months totalling £16.9k. This is due to the following themes:

- £2k – Not cost effective to pursue
- £1k - All debt recovery options exhausted
- £11.9k - Unenforceable
- £2k - Other

Exchequer Services - key risks, issues & opportunities

If debt is not recovered quickly and efficiently the likelihood of the debt being recovered in full is significantly reduced. If debt is not recovered in full it increases write off levels, hinders cash flow, reduces sales income, and gives a false representation of income, causing inaccurate financial projections. It also heightens the risk of debts becoming unenforceable due to time elapsing between actions.

The 'individuals' category accounts for 47% of the debts above, 35 of the 37 debts relate to Adult Social Care. This category continues to take up the vast percentage of debts over 90 days old and over £5K due to their nature and our duty of care as an Authority. One of the other debts under this category relate to Dillington House for wedding which is with the Legal Debt Recovery Officer for legal action to be taken as per ICOP. (Income Code of Practice).

29. Reserves

The Council holds reserves in two forms:

- The General Fund to mitigate against unforeseen spends or major unexpected events.
- Earmarked reserves which are amounts set aside for specific purposes. For each reserve established the purpose and usage must be clearly defined.
    - Resilience reserves are held to mitigate against future known or predicted liabilities and resilience.
    - Other earmarked reserves are held for specific purposes. This may be purposes agreed by the Council or grants which have no return conditions and where expenditure has yet to take place.
    - Funds held by other bodies do not have SCC as the lead decision making. An example of this reserve are funds held by the Somerset Rivers Authority.

Table 21: Forecast Reserves Position as at End of September 2022 (Month 6)

Reserve Balance	General Fund Reserves	Earmarked Resilience Reserves	Other Earmarked Reserves	Total Reserves Held by SCC	Funds Held by Other Bodies
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Balance as at 01/04/2022	(27.1)	(34.6)	(62.0)	(123.7)	(60.9)
Additional Movements Approved In-year	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	(0.8)
Balance as at 30/06/2022	**(27.1)**	**(34.6)**	**(61.9)**	**(123.6)**	**(61.7)**
Forecast In-Year Movements	0.0	11.2	20.8	32.0	11.4
Proposed Balance as at 31/03/2023	**(27.1)**	**(23.4)**	**(41.1)**	**(91.6)**	**(50.3)**

Overall, the total balance of reserves held by SCC has remained the same since the start of the year.

It is currently forecast that by 31 March 2023 the total reserves held by SCC would decrease by £32m. This reduction includes draws from the Economic Recovery Fund, Corporate Priorities, the new Somerset Council Finance System, the Collection Fund, Budget Equalisation and Funding Volatility. The forecast outturn level of reserves held is £91.6m, however the forecast overspend of £21.2m will decrease this level of reserves at the end of the financial year.

A correction has been made to the SCC Waste budget which was set in February 2022 showing that a payback of £1.755m to the Recycle More reserve was due. However, the payback was achieved in 2021/22 and the contribution to the reserve is no longer required which has been included in the table above.

Report Sign-Off

		Signed-off
Legal Implications	Honor Clarke	04/11/2022
Governance	Scott Wooldridge	04/11/2022
Corporate Finance	Jason Vaughan	02/11/2022
Human Resources	Chris Squire	04/11/2022
Property	Paula Hewitt / Oliver Woodhams	04/11/2022
Procurement / ICT	Claire Griffiths	03/11/2022
Senior Manager	Jason Vaughan	02/11/2022
Commissioning Development	Sunita Mills / Ryszard Rusinek	03/11/2022
Local Member	All	
Executive Member	Cllr Liz Leyshon - Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member on Finance and Human Resources	03/11/2022
Opposition Spokesperson	Opposition Spokesperson – Finance and Human Resources – Cllr Mandy Chilcott	07/11/2022
Scrutiny Chair	Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee - Cllr Gwil Wren	04/11/2022

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Somerset County Council

Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee

30/11/2022

Phosphates Issues Overview and Actions agreed from Phosphates Summit

Lead Officer: Colin Arnold

Contact Details: colin.arnold@somerset.gov.uk

Lead Executive Member: Cllr Ros Wyke

Division and Local Member: n/a

1. Summary

1.1 This paper is designed to show the work that the combined Councils and partners have undertaken to date on the phosphate issue and a way forward that we can work together to address this challenging situation

1.2 As noted below it is an issue that has far reaching impacts on planning decisions and the economy and society as a whole.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1 On 1 November 2022 Members and Officer undertook a phosphate workshop on the issue. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a shared understanding of the problem, review progress to date and then to consider next steps and priorities.

2.2 It was agreed to set up a Member/Officer working group involving members and officers of both the Districts and the County – and this is the recommendation of this paper.

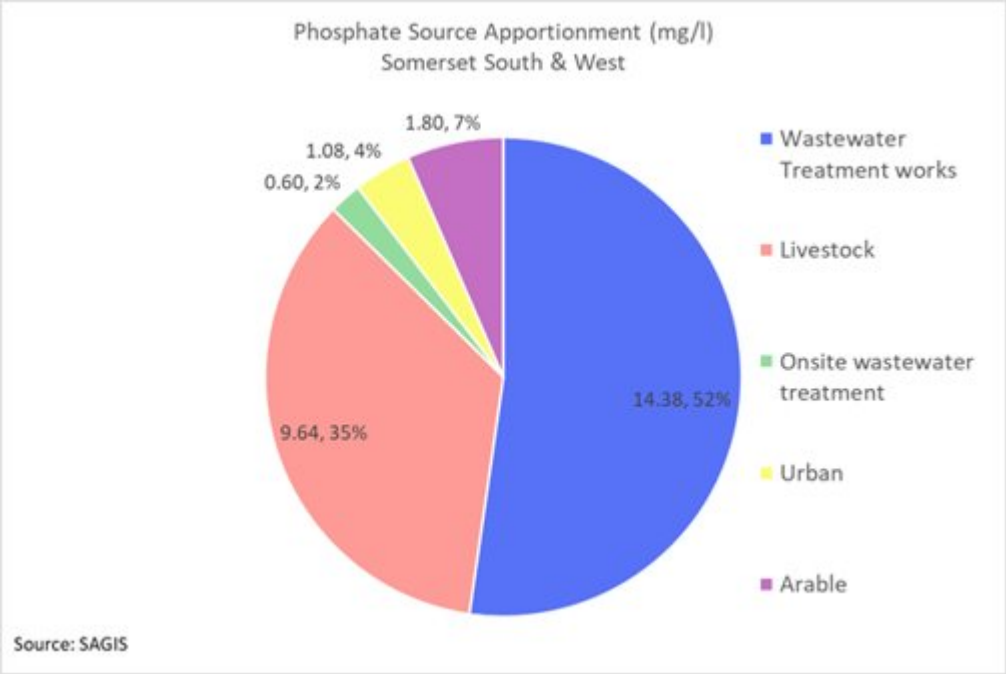
2.3 The Member/Officer Working Group will need to work up a term of reference for its purpose. This should include how we work together as a unified group providing solutions. It was discussed at the workshop on 1 Nov that the membership of the Working Group would be cross disciplinary and consist of a cohort of Members and Officers with detailed understanding of the Planning System and that were able to input on the Planning, Economic and Environmental issues and impacts.

3. Background

3.1 Phosphates make their way into the water systems from our use of the surrounding land. Agricultural sources such as the use of fertilisers and wastewater from housing result in the increase of phosphates.

3.2 High levels of phosphates causes eutrophication - the dense growth of algae which adversely affects the balance of flora and invertebrates. Green algae mats grow in the water, and deplete the oxygen needed by other plants and animals.

3.3 The chart below shows where the sources of phosphates come from in Somerset



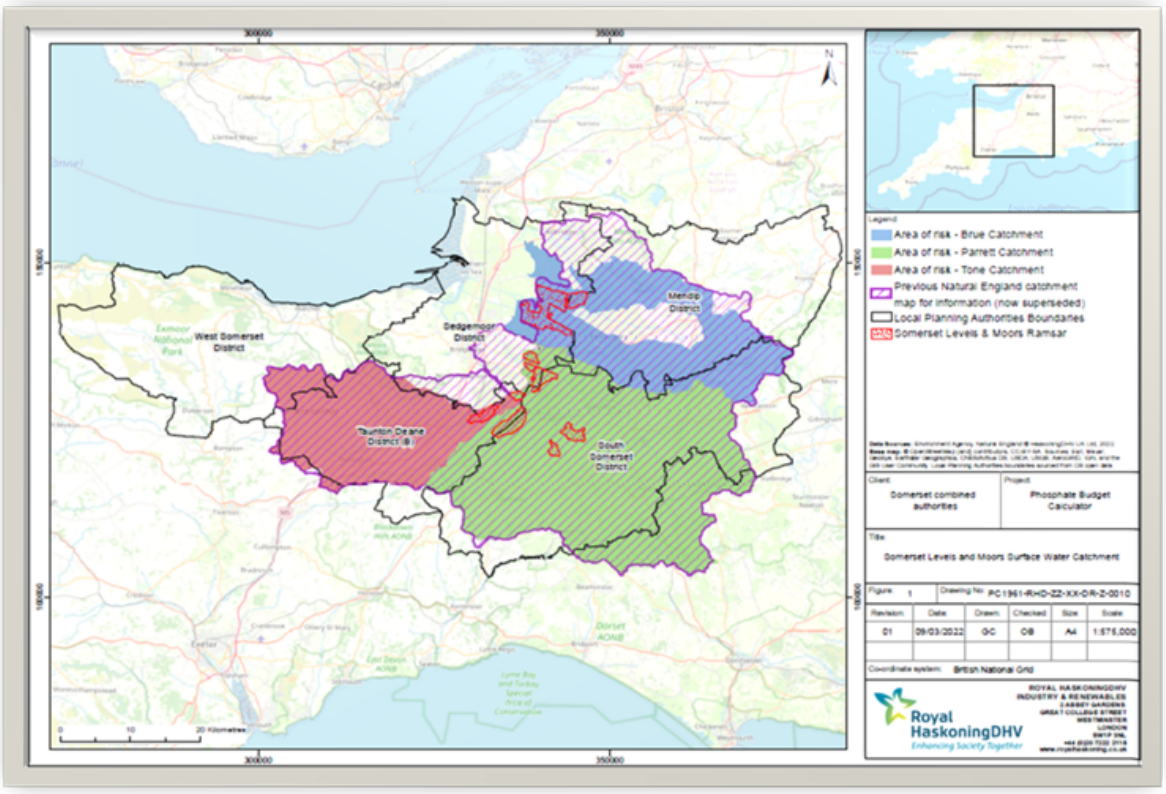
3.4 In August 2020 Natural England advised on the unfavourable condition of designated habitats on the Somerset Levels and Moors due to these phosphates and stated that these areas were now in unfavourable declining status due to these levels. Developments which impact upon the protected wildlife area is subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

3.5 Due to a court judgement known as the Dutch Nitrogen case – development is only permissible if the proposal is nutrient neutral and most not contribute to any additional nutrient loading.

3.6 The main impact areas are in river catchments which have a foul or surface water link to the wetland SSSIs which make up the RAMSAR.

3.7 Natural England have advised that the developments listed below add to phosphate loading: New housing development, Commercial developments (with overnight accommodation) Agricultural development – additional barns, slurry stores etc, proposals likely to lead to an increase in herd size and Major tourist attractions.

3.8 The map below shows the relevant catchment areas



3.9 There are approximately 18,000 residential units on hold due to this issue in Somerset. It is a countrywide issue though with the House Builders Federation stating that the figure is 100,000 nationally.

3.10 Somerset was one of the first areas in the country to be affected and as can be seen from the timeline below since before informed by Natural England in 2020 it was 16th March 2022 when DEFRA released its policy paper on nutrient pollution. Work has been undertaken between time including the production of the phosphate calculator.

3.11 In terms of collaborations and work undertaken so far, the timeline is as below:

‘Nov 2018-2019 Dutch 'Nitrogen Case', Revised government legal position. Hampshire letter 2019
August 2020 Natural England letter relating to development on Somerset Levels and Moors
December 2020 – Somerset Authorities joint letter to government (+July 2021) and July 2022

Jan 2021 – Wessex Water - position statement (updated July/Oct 21)
Jan 2021 - Wessex Water Entrade - discussions start on Somerset catchment market (Tone/Parrett)
Feb/March 2021 - Somerset Authorities - Phosphate Calculator launched & briefing
April 2021 – Somerset Authorities - commissioning of solutions report/ technical work
November 2021 Somerset Authorities - Solutions Report / revised Risk map published
March/April 2022 Natural England advice
launch of national nutrient neutrality calculators, toolkit & NN principles, more LPAs impacted and advice on continued use of Somerset calculator
16th March 2022 DEFRA Policy paper on nutrient pollution covering support for LPAs, Initiatives and targets for water industry, environment Act targets
May 2022 - £100k awarded for Somerset phosphates work (SWT acting as lead authority)
25th July 2022 DEFRA Water Pollution – policy announcement
new legal duty on water companies to upgrade treatment works
Natural England Nutrient Mitigation scheme - more details expected this ‘Autumn’

4. Consultations undertaken and outcomes

4.1 In terms of how the districts and county council are working together on this we have produced a guidance note for Somerset recently on the use of new and upgraded Package Treatment Plants (PTPs) and Septic tanks as phosphate mitigation. This was achieved through joint working with Natural England, the Environment Agency and all Somerset authorities. We have also produced sustainable drainage guidance. There is a webpage on each of each Councils websites with guidance, NE letter and FAQs

4.2 We are developing a consistent approach to dealing with planning proposals and we have regular fortnightly meetings with NE to keep up to date with the latest approach.

4.3 We are working together to establish interim solutions and some councils are looking to utilise their own land to facilitate solutions. We are actively lobbying government for wider investment solutions to reduce phosphates. This includes promoting agri-tech/AD plants and other solutions to reducing phosphates.

4.4 There is a need to engage more fully with organisations such as Wessex water with their target to remove 303.8tpa phosphorous by 2027 by upgrading their facilities.

5. Implications

5.1 There simply isn't a 'do nothing' approach that can be undertaken in this issue. The table below shows the impacts of an effect of a reduction in building new properties:

Type of Economic Benefit		Past Completions	Effect of reduction in building		
			10% Reduction	25% Reduction	50% Reduction
Number of dwellings		4,727	473	1,182	2,364
Net Capital Expenditure	Acquiring or upgrading physical assets to support day-to-day operations	£23.8m	£2.4m	£6.0m	£11.9m
Economic Output	Builders, their contractors and suppliers	£822.6m	£82.3m	£205.6m	£411.3m
Employment	Direct	5,200	500	1,300	2,600
	Indirect	4,000	400	1,000	2,000
	Induced	5,900	600	1,500	2,900
	Total	15,100	1,500	3,800	7,600
UK Public Finance Revenue	Stamp Duty Land Tax Receipts	£8.5m	£849,000	£2.1m	£4.2m
	Corporation Tax Incurred	£34.6m	£3.5m	£8.7m	£17.3m
	NI and PAYE Contributions	£16.8m	£1.7m	£4.2m	£8.4m
Local Authority Revenue	New Homes Bonus payments	£31.6m	£3.2m	£7.9m	£15.8m
	Council Tax Receipts	£5.5m	£548,000	£1.4m	£2.7m
Local Community Benefits	S.106 Contributions	£18.2m	£1.8m	£4.6m	£9.1m
	Community Infrastructure Levy Payments	£4.1m	£407,000	£1.0m	£2.0m
	New Resident Expenditure	£153.7m	£15.4m	£38.4m	£76.8m
Affordable Housing	Value of affordable housing sales	£90.9m	£9.1m	£22.7m	£45.5m

5.2 There are also implications for a disproportionate impact on small and medium size enterprises as well as the effect it has on 5-year housing supply for the district councils, and it could push development to other areas.

5.3 As previously mentioned it is proposed to start an officer/member working group to address the issue in a joined-up manner. At present the co-ordinated work by the 5 LPAs to date has been admirable given the individual constraints and in the affected areas there is no common or single Somerset-wide mitigation solution which can be implemented.

5.4 If as a joint group we can 'speak with one voice' for instance lobbying government and other interested groups (e.g. Defra, Natural England, local water companies) our voice will be much stronger

6. Background papers

6.1 There are no associated background papers

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny Committee
– 30 November 2022

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) Overview – Quantock Hills

Lead Officer: Jonathan Doyle, Strategic Manager, ECI Commissioning
Author: Iain Porter, AONB Manager, Quantock Hills AONB
Contact Details: iain.porter@somerset.gov.uk
Cabinet Member:
Division and Local Member: n/a

1. Summary

1.1. The county of Somerset has a vast range of special landscapes including a number of Protected Landscapes. These include two thirds of Exmoor National Park, the Quantock Hills AONB and parts of the Mendip Hills and Blackdown Hills AONB. There are also small areas of Dorset and Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONBs to the east of the county. The Protected Landscapes deliver or enable delivery across diverse workstreams including climate change adaptation / mitigation, nature recovery, engagement and economic development all influenced by the character of the landscape. The Quantock Hills and Mendip Hills Services are hosted by Somerset County Council.

1.2. The purpose of the report and presentation is to:

- Introduce / update the Committee on the purposes and duties of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Update the Committee on outcomes of the Landscape Review (2019) and implications for AONB Partnerships, Services and local authority partners
- Showcase delivery by the Quantock Hills AONB

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. Members are asked to consider and note the update.

3. Background

3.1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – AONBs – are a landscape designation created by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are areas of countryside in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that has been designated for conservation due to their significant landscape value. AONBs have the same level of protection to inappropriate development as national parks but unlike national parks do not have their own planning powers, with the duty being discharges through the constituent local planning authorities.

3.2. The Purpose of AONBs is to conserve and enhance the landscape, with landscape including the scenic landscape, flora & fauna, geology, historic and cultural importance. Currently there are two secondary aims, to meet the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside and to have regard for the interests of the local communities living and working within AONBs.

3.3. In 2000 the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) increased regulation and protection of AONBs. Under the Act there is now a requirement for all local authorities with an AONB within their area to produce a management plan and to review the plan at a period not exceeding five years. The Act also placed a requirement that local authorities and other statutory undertakers make sure that all decisions have regard for the purpose of AONBs, including potential effects within and outside of AONB boundaries.

3.4. The Gower and Quantock Hills were the first AONBs designated on 9th May 1956, with Gower confirmed by Secretary of State 2 weeks before the Quantock Hills. There are now 46 AONBs in Britain, 33 in England, 4 in Wales, 8 in Northern Ireland and 1 which straddles the English / Welsh border. AONBs vary greatly in size, type and landuse. The smallest is the Isles of Scilly at 16km^2 (6.2 sq mi) and the largest is the Cotswolds at 2,038km^2 (787 sq mi). Together AONBs cover around 15% of England's land area.

3.5. In 2019 the Landscape Review was published Landscapes review: National Parks and AONBs . Commissioned by Government in 2018 the review aimed to assess the value and role of National Parks and AONBs in the 70th anniversary year of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. The report concluded that while protected landscapes are delivering much which is good, it falls short of what can be achieved and what society requires. The review recognised that the network of AONBs has different purposes from National Parks, vastly less money but in many cases greater pressures and yet cover areas that are more visited, more biodiverse and are just as beautiful. The review contained 27 proposals ranging from greater funding for AONBs, revised governance, strengthening purposes and powers, increasing the accessibility to all parts of society and connections with nature and wellbeing.

3.6. In January 2022 the Government responded to the Landscapes Review. The response highlighted the will of Government to unlock the potential of AONBs by

- Renaming AONBs as National Landscapes
- Creation of a National Landscapes Partnership – to ensure existing partners (National Parks England, National Association for AONBs, National Trails and National Parks Partnership) work together more effectively.
- Reviewed or new purposes, specifically in relation to nature recovery and supporting access with specific reference to health & wellbeing.
- Provision of sustainable funding
- Robust governance
- Strengthen the role of AONBs in planning

It is likely that renaming of AONBs and launch of the National Landscapes Partnership will happen during 2023 though it is at a very early stage with uncertainty over the timescale for the other proposals.

3.7. The Quantock Hills AONB was the first AONB designated in England. At 99km2 (38 sq mi) it is one of the smaller AONBs. However the narrow upland plateau, based on sandstone rocks, towers imposingly over the surrounding lowland

plains and within its boundary it contains;

- 2,686Ha (27%) of land is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its habitat and species importance. This includes lowland and upland heath and sessile oak woods – which are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation).
- 3,276Ha (33%) of land within the AONB are classed as priority habitat and taken with the non-priority habitat land use the AONB's total carbon stores is estimated at 1,850,899 tonnes. 2,922Ha (29.5%) of the AONB is woodland with 72% of this being mixed deciduous woodland.
- The Quantock Hills is important for a number of priority and threatened species – with significant breeding populations of nightjar, Barbastelle bats, dormice and Dartford Warbler.
- Over 3,000Ha of Open Access land with 250km (150miles) of Public Rights of Way, 80% of which are bridleways. Over 6km of the English Coast Path National Trail winds its way along the northern AONB.
- The AONB contains 51 Scheduled Monuments, 205 listed buildings, 3 Scheduled Parks and Gardens. The Quantocks comprise one of the few remaining moorland landscapes in southern Britain of national importance for the legible survival of monuments dating from the Neolithic and especially the Bronze Age. These include numerous cairns resulting from land clearance and bowl barrows dating from around 2400 – 1500 BC, extensive crop mark evidence for settlement and land use and large-scale dramatic examples of Iron Age hill forts and smaller defended enclosures such as Dowsborough Hillfort and Ruborough Camp
- Significant geological interest from the hard frits of the hilltops to the internationally recognised fossil-rich Jurassic exposure of the coast with its limestone / shale banding producing nationally important fossils.
- Cultural and artistic contributions include inspiring Coleridge and Wordsworth when they lived on the Quantocks at the end of the 18th century and launched the romantic style of poetry which sets the tone of our current approach to natural landscapes.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. AONBs are managed through partnerships or committees. The report and presentation provide information on AONBs and an update on the Landscape Review.

5. Background papers

5.1. N/a

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Somerset County Council
Scrutiny Committee
– 30 November 2022

Update on Local Nature Recovery Strategy
Lead Officer: Jonathan Doyle
Author: Jonathan Doyle
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Cabinet Member: Cllr Sarah Dyke
Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

1.1. This report is to update the Environment Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS); a new policy instrument of the Environment Act (2021), for which, in Somerset, Somerset Council will be the 'Responsible Authority'.

1.2. The purpose of LNRS's is to help reverse the ongoing decline of biodiversity in England by driving greater consideration of and planning for the action needed for nature to recover; providing the foundation of a national Nature Recovery Network

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. Members are asked to consider and note the update.

3. Background

3.1. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits.

The requirement to develop these Strategies was established upon the passing of the Environment Act (2021).

3.2. The area covered by each Local Nature Recovery Strategy is be set by the Defra Secretary of State, who is also responsible for appointing a "Responsible Authority" for each to lead its preparation. Somerset County Council will act as the initial Responsible Authority, which will then revert to Somerset Council upon vesting.

The Defra Secretary of State is yet to produce regulations on the process for preparing, publishing, reviewing and republication of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and guidance on what each Strategy should contain.

3.3. It is envisaged that Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be a powerful new tool that will help the public, private and voluntary sectors work more effectively

together for nature's recovery and enable collective effort to be focussed where it will have most benefit. Key to achieving this will be creating genuine local collaboration with a partnership of organisations and individuals working closely with each "responsible authority".

3.4. Each Strategy will, for the area that it covers;

- agree priorities for nature's recovery,
- map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.

The production of each Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be evidence-based, locally led and collaborative, to create a network of shared plans that public, private and voluntary sectors can all help to deliver.

This will provide a locally owned foundation to developing and underpinning the Nature Recovery Network; identifying the places which, once action has been taken on the ground, will enable the Network to grow over time. This in turn will help achieve wider environmental objectives (like carbon sequestration to mitigate climate change or managing flood risk) and contribute to green economic recovery objectives.

3.5. As the leads for the development and delivery of the Natural Environment and Farming and Food sectors of the Climate Emergency Strategy, it was thought that the Somerset Local Nature Partnership (LNP) would be best placed in supporting taking forward preliminary work on the LNRS and a bespoke sub-group of the LNP was convened to take the initial work forward.

Membership of this group consists primarily of organisations with environmental responsibility and expertise relevant to Somerset, alongside officers from both the County and District Councils, including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Exmoor National Park.

3.6. Although definitive guidance for the content and process of the development of the LNRSs is still awaited from DEFRA and Natural England, work is progressing based upon the ambitions set out within the Act and also building upon the models and learning of the initials pilots that were run in Cornwall, Cumbria, Buckinghamshire, Greater Manchester and Northumberland run between August 2020 and May 2021

3.7. A small amount of funding has been received by Somerset County Council as the designated Responsible Authority via a Section 31 grant (£16,304.35) – these monies are being used to fund this initial work.

3.8. Although we are still awaiting guidance on the content of the Strategy, Natural England have given advice on what LNRSs are <u>not</u> expected to do;

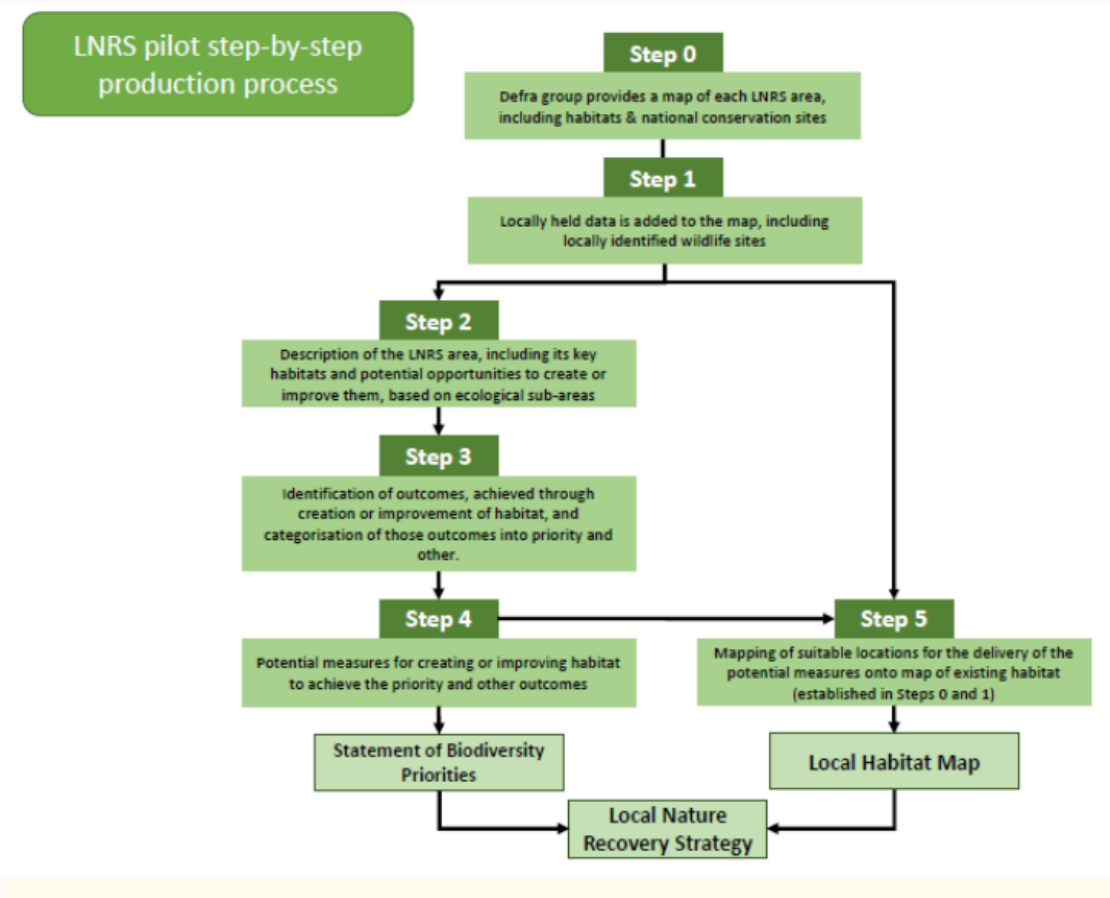
- Not be delivery plans but a mechanism through which other measures and interventions may be delivered
- Strategy and proposed actions are not be binding – Responsible Authorities must prepare a LNRS but are not required to deliver the opportunities identified. They must, however, be reviewed and republished to enable progress on delivery to be monitored and allow reflection on what has been achieved
- Not have binding lines on maps that confer any level of protection or prevent land uses such as intensive farming or development. They do however indicate areas of opportunity that will guide and inform planning and nature recovery activities
- Do not give permission to create habitat without consulting specialists in Historic Environment, Landscape, Access etc.

3.9. There will however be measures that will encourage LNRS delivery. These include, for example;

- Mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain with a possible (but not yet confirmed through regulation) uplift in the calculation of biodiversity units providing an incentive to focus on sites identified by the LNRS
- A new, strengthened duty on public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity which includes a requirement to 'have regard' to relevant LNRSs
- Clear signposting from Government to explain the role of LNRSs in planning
- LNRSs are expected to play a role in the spatial prioritisation of the LNR scheme (part of the ELM Future Schemes)
- Peat Strategies – funding through Nature for Climate Fund, targets to deliver 35,000 hectares of peatland restoration over the next 5 years nationally
- Tree Strategy – funding through Nature for Climate Fund. Prioritising sites for tree planning and forest restoration with over £600M allocated to tree planting (beyond ELM) nationally
- Flood Resilience Fund – working with local flood authorities to deliver natural flood management and coastal realignment.

3.10. Outline Approach

Although definitive guidance has yet to be received, an outline approach to the development of the LNRS has been produced by DEFRA as part of the pilot programme. Work has commenced on the draft Somerset LNRS based upon the principles of the delivery of the two overarching themes.



3.11. Progress

Led by the LNP, work has commenced on the habitat mapping and biodiversity priority identification under a number of themes and these two elements will be closely interlinked in the final output.

Timelines are yet to be fixed due to the lack of guidance but it is anticipated that the thematic groups will have completed much of the scoping work by April 2023 in order to allow time for final consultation, prioritisation and sign off – assuming the original deadlines for completion are adhered to (end 2023)

3.12. Local Habitat Map

The first step of developing a habitat map has been largely completed by staff at Somerset Environmental Records Centre and Somerset Wildlife Trust. This includes National Conservation sites, Nature Reserves, other areas of particular importance for biodiversity and areas where biodiversity recovery could contribute to other environmental benefits.

A draft map is available and is under consultation by the dedicated sub-group to ensure it is as comprehensive as possible. It will in due course be a living, updateable and interactive resource available to the public and other interested parties - there has been discussion around how to engage stakeholders with the mapping resource to ensure that it will be accessible to a range of different audiences for different purposes.

3.13. Statement of Biodiversity Priorities

A key action for the LNRS development is to describe the strategy area and its biodiversity, identify and propose opportunities for nature and biodiversity recovery, prioritise those opportunities and point to measures that relate to the delivery of priorities.

The process of priority identification commenced with a stakeholder workshop at the end of September 2022 attended by environmental professionals and groups from across the county as well as Natural England representatives. Workshop attendees were asked to identify outcomes and environmental benefits or services that they would like to see as a result of this exercise for each of the theme areas. Activities to help delivery of the strategy were also suggested by participants. The output of the workshop is currently being analysed and will be provided to each thematic group as a starting point for further consultation and expansion.

3.14. As mentioned above, guidance from Natural England and DEFRA is still awaited with regard to the regulations, statutory guidance and timeline of the Strategy development and adpotion. Officers from the Somerset Local Authorities alongside members of the LNP recently met with an officer from Natural England who was unable to provide any assurances around the timescales, however, it is still envisaged that the Strategies will need to be in place by the end of 2023.

The delays are due to the inability of DEFRA to get the regulations and guidance before parliament due to the recent turnover of the Ministerial Team; whilst they were unable to confirm exact timescales "*the team are continuing to work at pace to get the national framework, including regulations and statutory guidance, in place as soon as possible.* "

3.15. A brief update will be provided to this Committee upon the confirmation and receipt of the regulations ang guidance.

3.16. Other Considerations

Local Authority officers are acutely aware of the potential competing demands for land in Somerset and the outputs of the LNRS must feed into the overall planning

to enable informed and strategic decisions for future land use.

The need for nature recovery, food security, flood risk management, renewable, sustainable energy production, economic and housing development, nutrient neutrality issues and Biodiversity Net Gain from development must be considered holistically and the development and outputs of the LNRS must not be thought of in isolation.

Officers involved in the development of the LNRS must and will be involved in the development of the new Local Plan for Somerset Council to ensure that all of the above considerations are transparent, understood and taken into account.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. A wide-ranging, multi-agency, cross-authority group has been established and engaged in the development work so far.

Representatives from organisations such as Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset Environmental Records Service, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Somerset Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Somerset District Councils, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, the RSPB, FWAG South West, the NFU have all been involved in the scoping work, habitat mapping and biodiversity prioritisation work.

5. Background papers

5.1. N/A

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

Somerset County Council
Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee
– 30th November 2022

Section 19 Investigations – Chard and Ilminster
Lead Officer: Jon Doyle
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Cabinet Member: Sarah Dyke
Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

1.1. This report is to update the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the draft Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports that were developed as a result of severe weather events and subsequent flooding in and around Chard and Ilminster during the summer and autumn of 2021.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. Members are asked to consider and note the contents of the draft reports and provide feedback on any factual inaccuracies and upon any of the recommendations contained therein prior to their finalisation and publication, as required by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010).

3. Background

3.1. In June and October 2021 extreme weather events in South Somerset resulted in extensive flooding to properties, roads and land in and around the areas of Chard and Ilminster.

The internal flooding of 5 or more properties resulted in the requirement for the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) at Somerset County Council to undertake a Section 19 Flood Investigation Report – a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

3.2. Under this duty, upon becoming aware of a flood in its area, an LLFA 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.

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.

3.3. The threshold for triggering a Section 19 report is set by each LLFA under local policy; SCC's current policy defines this trigger as 5 or more properties flooding internally.

There is no statutory timeline for completion of an investigation, nor a requirement to include or implement any recommendations for resolution of the flooding issues however, our s19 reports often do include lessons learned, some potential recommendations and possible next steps.

3.4. Chard June 2021

Flooding was widespread across Chard and surrounding villages on 28th June 2021. Chard itself was extensively flooded, especially across the centre of the town, the Furnham Road area, Glynswood, and roads on the western side of the town.

The flood waters were deep enough to prevent traffic moving around the town, especially in the High Street and around Furnham Road, and many houses and businesses were flooded internally. Elsewhere Forton, Tatworth, Wambrook and Higher Wambrook, Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas, and Scrapton Lane were all affected by property flooding. Whitestaunton also suffered road damage, as did Scrapton lane.

3.5. Homes and businesses have seen property damaged and belongings destroyed. Businesses have been prevented from trading and are now finding insurance hard to secure. Some people found themselves in life threatening situations or in fear of personal harm. Many were recovering when another flood incident occurred the following October (this will be covered in a separate report – this is still in development and will be tabled at a later date).

3.6. The overarching problem was the sheer volume of rainfall. This was well beyond what any residents of the area had seen in their lifetimes. This combined with the topography of Chard to funnel large volumes of water across Chard and down through many villages and hamlets at great speed and depth.

3.7. As is statutorily required, the attached report examines the response of the Risk Management Authorities and the sources and causes of the flooding, how the infrastructure coped with the exceptional volume of rainfall and provides recommendations for what can be done to reduce the effects of extremely high rainfall events in future.

3.8. A number of Recommendations and next steps are included within the report, these include:

- Working with the community to ensure that Riparian responsibilities are

fully understood
- The provision of multiple Control Centres in Chard due to the risk of flooding bisecting the town
- Review of communications protocols to ensure clarity for communities of who to contact during a flooding event
- The auditing by the Highways Authority of gulley and drain-management regime to ensure maximum effectiveness of infrastructure
- Continue analysis of possible flood mitigation and alleviation measures in Chard and surrounds
- Develop protocols for mill and sluice gate owners to follow to manage water and reduce the risk of flooding in effected areas more effectively
- Auditing of a number of gullies and culverts to ascertain ownership and condition

3.9. Ilminster – October 2021

Severe flooding took place in Ilminster and Sea on the 20th of October 2021. High rainfall on the back of previous wet weather created high river flows and overland surface water flows in the area.

The residential park home developments on the west of town were particularly hard hit. Residents, many elderly, had to be evacuated, and some have lost everything. Some people found themselves in life threatening situations or in fear of personal harm.

3.10. The overarching problem was a combination of the very high rainfall and the already wet ground conditions following recent rain in the preceding period, making October a very wet month overall. This is combined with a relatively impermeable underlying geology and soils, which would have had very little moisture deficit to absorb more rain. Hence the Isle experienced it's highest water level in 30 years gauge history.

3.11. The resultant flooding was well beyond what any residents of the area had seen in their lifetimes, and flows on the river Isle were the highest recorded. This created two issues – the Isle coming out of its bank and flooding areas to the west of town, and rainwater accumulating in North Street, Ditton Street and Shudrick Lane.

3.12. This report examines how the infrastructure and stakeholders coped with this very high volume of rainfall, examines the response of the Risk Management Authorities, the sources and causes of the flooding and provides recommendations for what can be done to reduce the effects of extremely high rainfall events in future.

3.13. A number of Recommendations and next steps are included within the report, these include:

- The formation of a Local Resilience Group and the development of a Local Resilience Plan in conjunction with the Town Council and Environment Agency
- Improved lines of communications between residents and Risk Management Authorities and improved use of Emergency Duty Team
- Information needs to be distributed more widely about how to prepare for flooding.
- Greater clarity and transparency for residents of who to contact with different concerns e.g. blocked drains, overgrown ditches etc.
- Liaison with local landowners regarding Riparian responsibilities and land management issues
- Recently undertaken surface water risk modelling be expanded to include fluvial risks and the interaction between the two
- The auditing by the Highways Authority of gulley and drain-management regime to ensure maximum effectiveness of infrastructure

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. Chard

In the immediate aftermath of the event, a number of consultations and site visits were undertaken by the LLFA to gain intelligence and evidence to inform the investigation.

A multi-agency emergency meeting was held on 29th June 2021 attended by the LLFA, the Environment Agency, South Somerset District Council, Chard Town Council, Wessex Water, the Devon and Somerset Fire Service to gather intelligence on the event and to ascertain the Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency and multiple stakeholder responses during the event

Visits to Forton and the Glynswood area of Chard occurred in June to meet affected residents was followed by further visits to Combe St Nicholas, Scrapton Lane, Wadeford, & Furnham Road, Chard on 13th August.

Public meetings were held in Combe St Nicholas and in Chard during August and December 2021 respectively to gain further intelligence.

Iterations of the Draft report have undertaken reviews coordinated by the Chard Area Resilience Group, the South Somerset Area West Committee, Wessex Water and the Environment Agency

4.2. Ilminster

A multi-agency emergency meeting was held on 10 November 2021 attended by

the LLFA, the Environment Agency, South Somerset District Council, Chard Town Council, Wessex Water, the Devon and Somerset Fire Service to gather intelligence on the event and to ascertain the Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency and multiple stakeholder responses during the event

A drop-in session was held in Ilminster on the 17th November 2021 to gain personal testimony from residents effected by the flooding to gain intelligence on the sources and impact of the extreme weather event.

Iterations of the Draft report have undertaken reviews coordinated by the Ilminster Flood Group (hosted and led by the Ilminster Town Council), the South Somerset Area West Committee, Wessex Water and the Environment Agency

5. Background papers

5.1. Section 19 Reports

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Section 19 Investigation Report

As the Lead Local Flood Authority for Somerset, we have a duty to investigate flood incidents as outlined within Section 19 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010.

Date of Incident	28th June 2021	**Date of Report Version –** 5.4 21.09.2022 **Status** all corrections added
Site / Catchment Location:	Chard, Combe St Nicholas / Wadeford, Wambrook, Nimmer, Tatworth & Forton, Chaffcombe	

Contents

Introduction

The function of a Section 19 report is to gather information on the happenings during a particular flood event. They are known as a Section 19 report because they are required under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The legislation says:

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.

In addition, a Section 19 report will often detail any ongoing work with regards to flooding in the area, and will signpost additional work that should be considered, usually in the form of investigations to be done.

It is not the function of a Section 19 to provide concrete solutions for flooding. This requires far more detailed technical work, liaison with landowners, and decision making about schemes in concert with the public and other stakeholders, although the Section 19 report can help in deomstrating the need for this work and securing future funding. Also, it is impossible to prevent absolutely *all* flooding in *all* circumstances – rainfall events vary widely in intensity, and whatever drainage systems or flood mitigation schemes are put in place, there is always the possibility, however remote, that an extreme rainfall event will overwhelm them. We can, however, plan for the vast majority of rainfall events, and in the course of doing so, make exteme events less impactful. Even a small difference in the final height or path of flood water can be the difference for some between their homes flooding and not, so even small schemes can have value in an extreme rainfall event.

The usual way to describe the severity of rainfall events is to talk in terms of '1 in X years'. If we take the example of a 1 in 100 year event, this is an event of a size that will be equalled or exceeded *on*

average once every 100 years. This means that over a period of 1,000 years you would expect the one in 100 year event would be equalled or exceeded ten times. But the distribution of events is not even over the 100 years - several of those ten times might happen within a few years of each other, and then none for a long time afterwards. This report deals with a rainfall event of 1 in 300 year intensity, so the flooding in terms of extent and depth was much worse than that resulting from a 1 in 100 year event, which is shown on Environment Agency flood maps.

The appendices to this report show selected photographs sent in by residents showing flooding in progress, and maps showing more detail of the area. We are grateful to residents for the information they have provided which has enabled the compilation of this report.

Area Information

Chard is a town of approximately 13,000 people in south Somerset. It sits on the eastern edge of the Blackdown Hills, and as such has steep slopes to the west and north/west. It sits on a watershed, a ridge of land which seperates water flowing to different rivers, with most the drainage in the town heading towards the River Isle, but some drains are connected to the River Axe.

There are a number of surrounding villages, many sitting along the route of the River Isle and other watercourses. Several of these, especially Wadeford, were badly affected by the weather event

This report covers the heavy rainfall incident on 28th June 2021, and the subsequent flooding in Chard and surrounding villages and hamlets.

Figure 1 - Site Plan of Chard Town showing neighbourhoods

Maps of the villages around Chard and their important features can be seen via the following link:
Link – Maps of villages

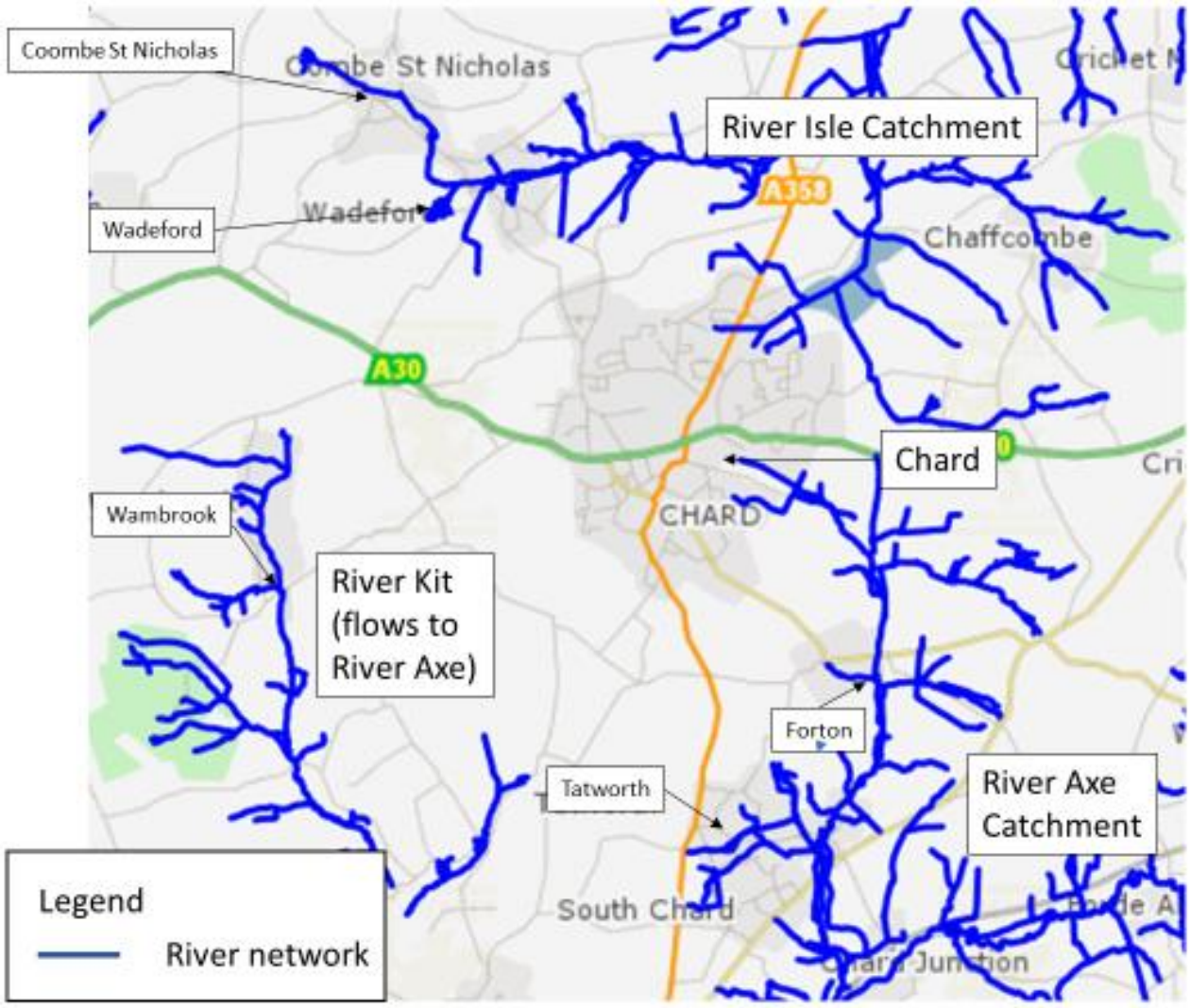
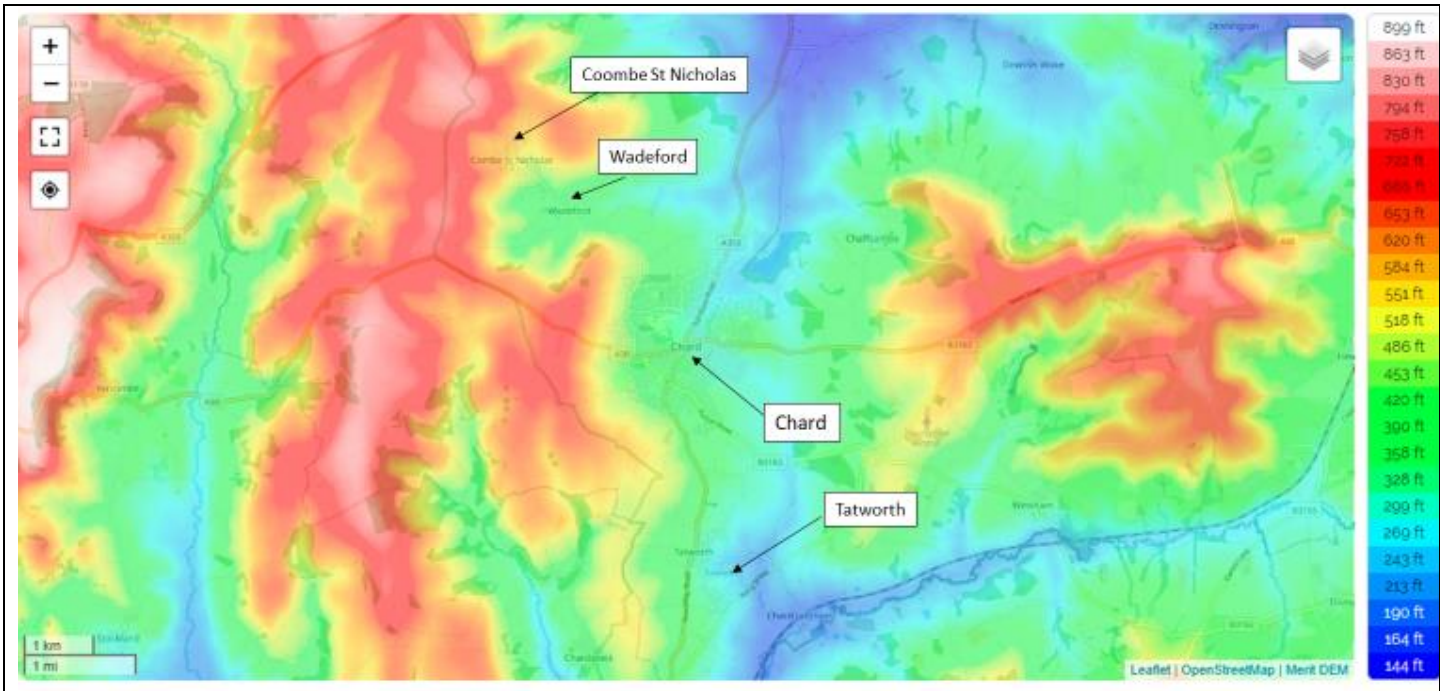


Figure 2: Detailed river network

This map shows the river network around Chard and surrounding villages. The villages labelled are some of those affected by the flooding. There is a short stretch of main river, heading northwards from Chard Reservoir, towards Ilminster. Main rivers are those under the responsibility of the Environment Agency in terms of maintenance and improvement. The other rivers and streams shown are ordinary watercourses. These are usually the responsibility of the riparian owners – those who own property which is next to the watercourse or has the watercourse run though it – unless there are legal documents which state otherwise.



Chard, South Somerset, Somerset, South West England, England, TA20 1QE, United Kingdom (50.87367 -2.95974)

Figure 3: Topography.

This shows the form and, most importantly, height of the land surrounding Chard. Pink and red land is the highest, with blue at the lowest points. From this we can see that there are substantial hills to the west and east of Chard (the Blackdown Hills), and very steep slopes down into the low points around Chard reservoir and Tatworth.[1]

[1] [1] Chard topographic map, elevation, relief (topographic-map.com)

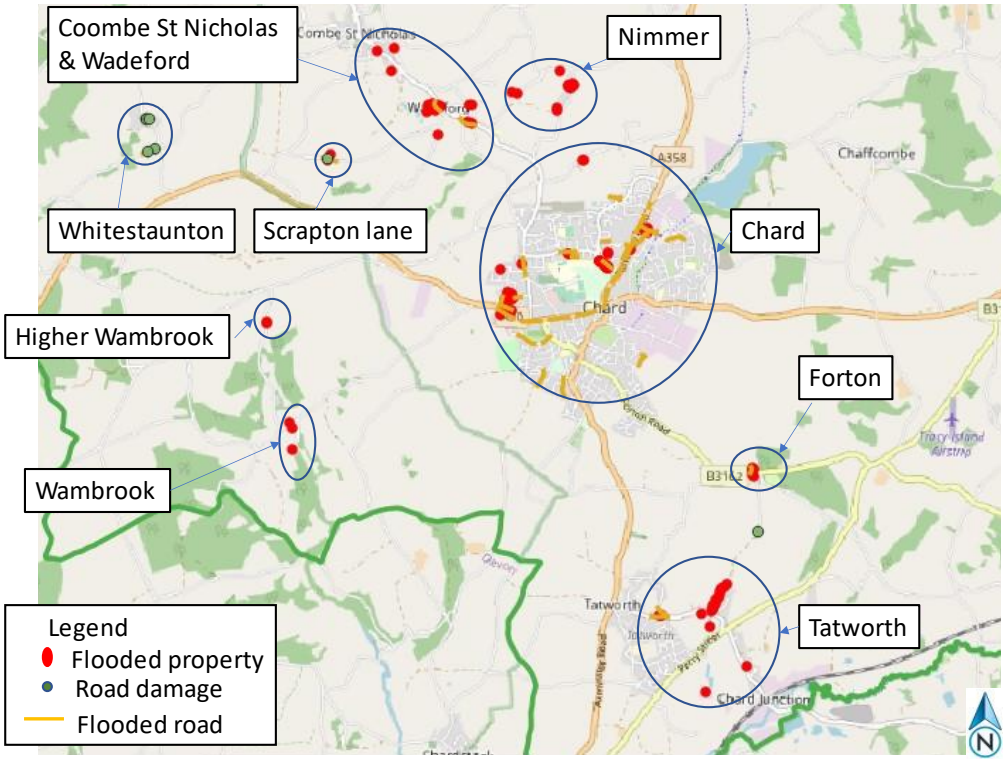


Figure 4: Areas Affected by flooding in June 2021

These are the main areas reported as being affected by flooding in June 2021. Flooded farmland or forestry is not shown.

Impact and Extent of Flooding - Summary	Flooding was widespread across Chard and surrounding villages on 28th June 2021. Chard itself was extensively flooded, especially across the centre of the town, the Furnham Road area, Glynswood, and roads on the western side of the town. The flood waters were deep enough to prevent traffic moving around the town, especially in the High Street and around Furnham Road, and many houses and businesses were flooded internally. Elsewhere Forton, Tatworth, Wambrook and Higher Wambrook, Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas, and Scrapton Lane were all affected by property flooding. Whitestaunton also suffered road damage, as did Scrapton lane. The effect on many has been devastating. Homes and businesses have seen property damaged and belongings destroyed. Businesses have been prevented from trading and are now finding insurance hard to secure. Some people found themselves in life threatening situations or in fear of personal harm. Many were recovering when another flood incident occurred the following October (this will be covered in a separate report). The overarching problem was the sheer volume of rainfall. This was well beyond what any residents of the area had seen in their lifetimes. This combined with the topography of Chard to funnel large volumes of water across Chard and down through many villages and hamlets at great speed and depth. This report will examine how the infrastructure coped with this exceptional volume of rainfall, and question whether anything can be done to reduce the effects of extremely high rainfall events in future.

Impact and Extent of Flooding	Over the 28th June 2021, flooding was extremely widespread in Chard and the surrounding area. In an incident of this nature, it is difficult to collate exact numbers of properties affected, and whether flooding was internal, or external. From reports, we know that at least 100 properties were affected. The main cause of flooding in Chard was the high volume of rain, and the resultant overland flow of rainwater. This entered Chard from several locations, coming in from high ground to the west and north in particular, and working its way east to accumulate in the topographical low points at the north-east and south-east of town. When overland flows from the fields above Crimchard reach the edge of the town they are swelled by runoff from the urbanised parts of Crimchard. These flows continue downhill into the town, with the urban contribution becoming more significant lower down the catchment. This water then continues through streets and gardens, with much of it heading toward the area around Holyrood Community School at the bottom of this catchment. A variety of agencies were present on the night of the event, fulfilling their statutory duties. The Fire Brigade were attending life threating emergencies, the Police were out closing roads and assisting with emergencies, South Somerset District Council and The Civil Contingencies Unit had duty officers out who opened a flood relief centre and organised the distribution of sandbags. Members of Town and Parish councils were out helping residents to protect their homes and get to safety. They were also unblocking drains around Church Street, Old Town, Holyrood Street and Millfield. Highways had no statutory duties as regards to emergency response, but teams were out trying to clear drains wherever possible. Over the following days they visited various sites where debris has been washed into the road, to clear up and identify road areas which needed repair. The Environment Agency fulfilled their statutory duty on the night by issuing flood warnings on main rivers. Furnham Road, Furnham Road Industrial Estate, and parts of Glynswood were badly flooded. Furnham road was particularly badly flooded outside B&Q. Furnham road suffered particularly deep flooding, believed to be over a metre in depth. Flooding around the High Street was shallower, but fast flowing on the highways. There were reports of houses flooding in the High Street but which ones has not been firmly ascertained.

	Flooding around Crimchard Road was shallow, but flowed with sufficient speed and force to carry rocks and debris down the road. Water came down past Park Cottages and Catchgate Lane, from the direction of Wadeford and Foxdon Hill. The main access route across Chard – consisting of the High Street and Furnham Road, was closed by Police as being too dangerous to try and traverse by car. The flooding along this route caused issues for the emergency services, as the route could not be crossed by normal emergency vehicles. At Glynswood there was some fluvial flooding. A stream which runs across the open area bordering the leisure centre and Holyrood Academy, enters a culvert at the eastern end of Glynswood. This culvert, which has a trash screen, was reported to have been blinded due to the volume of debris coming though and may have contributed to flooding downstream. Many road drains also became blocked during the event, as debris was swept in from the surrounding area and from damage to roads and property. The high volumes of water also overwhelmed the drainage system – they are not designed to cope with an event of this unusual intensity Areas where detail is known: At **Snowdon Heights,** some properties have been flooded externally, or placed under threat of flooding, by considerable surface water flows coming down the hill to the west of Chard. Flows progress down Cotley Lane, some go down the High Street, and some cross the field and impacts houses on Snowdon heights. Local topography will make this difficult to tackle effectively. It was reported that gullies were blocked prior to the event particularly on Cotley Lane. Again, these drains would have been overwhelmed by the sheer volume of water had they been clear and free running. At **St Marys Close**, surface water ran across fields and into houses and gardens. It mostly came through a hole in the hedge adjacent to 29A St Marys Close in which water runs off from the adjacent fields and directly onto the highway. It was reported that the bungalows in the central block of the Close were most badly affected, but specific numbers and addresses were not provided. The properties shown as flooded on the map are a 'best guess' taking the topography into account. Previous flooding led to a recommendation to install a flood alleviation feature approximately across the back of numbers 21 to 28 St Marys Close. During

	a site visit, it was found that a breach in a bund at St Marys Close allows flows to enter the road. During the site visit, a local resident reported that the breach had been cut to mitigate the risk of flood waters overtopping the bund and spilling into the properties behind. **Laurel gardens** - the bridlepath has been identified as a flow path for surface water emanating from farmland. There are four relatively new highways gullies in situ, but they appear to have been overwhelmed during the incident by the sheer volume of water. These gullies have been seen by residents to function appropriately during normal and severe events. The area around **Furnham Road Industrial Estate, Beeching Close Industrial Estate** and Chard reservoir saw extensive flooding. The businesses in Furnham Road Industrial Estate were flooded internally. It is uncertain whether certain units in Beeching Close were flooded internally or externally. Local topography drains water down Furnham Road, and also across Glynswood and down Furnham Road, into this area, meaning that water entering this area has originated from rural hills to the west and north. There is also considerable overland flow from Coker Way, a residential area adjacent to Furnham Road Industrial estate. This area is hydrologically complex due to the presence of the reservoir, the remains of the old Chard canal and the decommissioned railway, a piped exit from an old sewage works, no longer in use, and a high groundwater table, as well as private drainage from the industrial estate. **Cuttesford Door** is an area where surface water flows off the surrounding hills to cause flooding. Issues with highways drains were reported here. **Crimchard** had large amounts of stones swept onto the highway by the force of the water. Surface water sweeps into Crimchard mainly from the Catchgate Lane area, having come down from Wadeford and Foxdon Hill. **Silver Street**, in Chard town centre, experienced fairly deep flooding, blocking/entering the access to a block of flats and the neighbouring Red House. This area is a low point in the local topography, and the entrance to the flats is lower than the road. Water ran into this area from all sides, both down the high street and from the south west. In **Glynswood** there is a length of open channel across the school grounds, which then continues through a trash screen and then into a culvert. It was reported that

	the trash screen became blinded with debris during the storm incident and may have caused water to back up, flooding part of the open space adjacent to Academy and leisure centre. The condition of this culvert is not known, and it apparently runs into the sewerage system. Surface water drained into this area from Elizabeth Way. Responsibilities here are complex and not firmly known and the potential divided responsibility may make solving the flooding problems here tricky. Another property in Glynswood reported flooding to a height of about 2 feet against their back door, and surcharging from the foul sewage manhole cover in their back garden. On **Bews Lane**, near the Redstart School, there was a flow of water along the road and across the school site. It was reported that there is a drain, culvert, or similar structure just off Bews Lane which may have been blocked and/or overwhelmed by the amount of water. At **Millfield** a property was flooded internally as a result of water flowing in a North bound direction around the bend just prior to the Chard Police Station. *Link – photographs from Chard* People living in Mill Lane, Bryer Close, Furnham Close, Alun Rees Way, Furnham Road, St Mary's Close, Bewley Court, Wadeford Hill, High Street, Gillingham Court, Coker Way, Glynswood, Oak End Way, Lower Touches, Crib Close, and Furzehill were all affected.

Figure 5: Flooded properties in Chard

Link: Photos from Wadeford

Link: Flooded properties in the villages and outlying areas.

Several properties in **Nimmer** flooded, mostly around the tributaries of the River Isle which runs through the village. Again, the main flooding mechanism in Nimmer, as reported by the Parish Council, was the overland flow of surface water from nearby fields to topographical lowpoints. Residents near the river explicitly stated that they were flooded from overland flow, not from the river rising. Blocked drains and the blocking of a culver have been implicated as contributing to the problem, as water could not flow away effectively. It was stated that the culvert was installed by 'the council' (it is not clear which one) in 2009, and that residents are constantly having to clear it out. However, the engineer for the installation stated that a culvert had been installed in the late 1990's under MAFF Grant Aid. It should

	be checked whether there are one or two culverts and whose responsibility they are. Gullies in the area were reported as not draining, and may have been blocked, or overwhelmed by the amount of water. There is also a stream in the area which has become overgrown and needs clearing. The Lane to **Nimmer Mill** was flooded. There is a SCC flood alleviation scheme there which many have been bypassed or overwhelmed. Highways have agreed to place a 'sleeping policeman' type of installation to try and divert water away, but this is not yet in place. Several houses were flooded in **Wadeford**, and **Combe St Nicholas**. The houses flooded in Wadeford were all near where the River Isle runs through the village. The main mechanism of flooding in Combe St Nicholas, according to Parish Council reports, was surface water running downhill off nearby fields, and down Wadeford Hill / Combe Hill. They also reported that a small watercourse in the centre of the village rose in level, and that some properties were affected by both flooding mechanisms. The properties in Wadeford were affected by runoff across farmland on surrounding hills. The village is at a topographical lowpoint. In **Wadeford** the road flooded outside Goblin Hollow. The culvert was reported as being partially blocked. They also reported that gullies outside are either damaged or have been buried within the access road. During the flood there was a sudden rise in water level in Wadeford, and this has led to allegations within the village that it was linked to the breaching of containment of a series of ponds of fairly recent construction. **Wadeford** around Court Mill Lane has a system of mill streams, leats, and sluice gates. Houses around Court Mill Lane were badly flooded, with water reaching above window sill height. These mill structures extend downstream into Pudleigh. The sluice owner at Pudleigh reported a collapsed culvert. The Haymaker pub in **Wadeford** was also reported as being flooded– it was reported that surface water came straight from the field opposite, onto the road and down the eastern side of the pub, into the car park. From here it flowed through the gardens of the houses to the north. Surface water also flowed straight into the pub via the side entrance. There is a small drain there which crossed under the road which was working but it exceeded capacity.

	Properties that were flooded in **Forton** are situated next to the Forton Brook. Reports identified the flooding as coming largely from surface water runoff from across neighbouring fields. There was some flooding from the brook, and culverts were raised as an issue, though it is unknown if these were blocked or acting as a pinch point in waterbodies over capacity. The flood also acted to scour the bridge and deposit the debris from this in the watercourse. A resident observed a general rise in water levels in the Brook over the past few years. Several houses in **Tatworth** were flooded in the region of Fore Street, near the Loveridge Lane junction. Residents observed that water entered around the back of the houses, after running overland across the field to the West and North. A Parish Councillor reported seeing manhole covers which had been lifted by the force of the water, and that the profile of the road had been changed by the force of the water. Councillors went to the watercourse the day after and saw a lot of rubbish along the banks. Some of this was cleared by SSDC Land Drainage team. In **Wambrook** three properties were flooded, but residents did not give information on likely flood mechanisms. They are, however, all next to the Brook, so a fluvial source is likely to be at least a part of the source of flooding. There have been no reports thus far of houses flooding in **Whitestaunton**, but there have been reports of extensive road damage. This has apparently resulted from the force of the overland pluvial flow down White Ash Lane and Mill Lane. In **Lower Coombes**, Parish Councillors reported that 20 houses in the village were flooded and one had a toilet back up. A rapid rise in level was reported in the Forton Brook which runs behind the majority of the affected properties, and it was observed that this is where most of the water which affected properties came from. Parish Councillors, who were out on the night, reported that the water seemed to be running off fields, towards the brook, which was also rising, leading to some people getting hit from both sides. The Parish Council have also stated that Highways gullies required clearing. On Waterlake Road there is a culvert which became blocked during the event. It was reported that pressure build up caused the culvert to partially collapse and create a 3 foot hole in the road, and that water had been running across people's property rather than down the usual path of the stream ever since. Concerns have also been

	raised about farming practices in the area and the growing of crops which allow/encourage large amounts of runoff. In **Scrapton lane** two houses were affected and the road surface badly torn up. Videos submitted by residents show a huge volume of water rushing down Scrapton Lane with tremendous force. This apparently came off surrounding fields. It was reported that there is a possible blocked culvert here, and that drain gullies required clearing. There is also an open drain/watercourse of unknown ownership which is not marked on the maps. Link: Photos of road damage In **Chaffcombe** it was reported that the main problem is that they are at the bottom of a very wide hill, and that the flash flood water rolled down the hill from two directions and joined at the junction of the village where it completely overwhelmed the drainage system. The drainage in the village is reported to be many years old. In **Cricket St Thomas, Winsham** parish Council reported that some houses had been flooded, but not specifically which ones.

Catchment Area	Chard sits at the edge of the Blackdown Hills. The natural path of surface water is down from the hills to the west of Chard, into central Chard, and then down to the low point at Chard Reservoir via Furnham Road and Beeching Close. The reservoir overflows into the River Isle to the east of the town. Surface water from the areas of Combe St Nicholas, Wadeford and Nimmer run down into the River Isle. South East Chard, Wambrook, Higher Wambrook, and Coombses/Tatworth/South Chard areas sit in a different catchment – that of the River Axe – and surface water from there will run into the brooks and away to the Axe. The only 'main' river is a stretch of the Isle, down through Knowle St Giles into Chard Reservoir. A main river is classed as a river for which the Environment Agency is responsible in terms of flood risk. A flood warning was issued for this stretch, but it has not been implicated in any property flooding. The rest of the waterbodies in this report will be ordinary watercourses. These are under the responsibility of riparian owners (those who own the land the river flows through) unless there is a legal document or agreement stating otherwise. There are no flood warnings for ordinary watercourses, or indeed for surface water movement. The area is not covered by an Internal Drainage Board (IDB). An IDB is a public body that manage water levels in an area, known as an internal drainage district, where there is a special need for drainage. IDBs undertake works to reduce flood risk to people and property, and manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs within their district.
Historical Information	District Council records are time limited. Historic flooding episodes are listed in the appendix: Wadeford and Combe St Nicholas in particular have a history of flooding. Historic

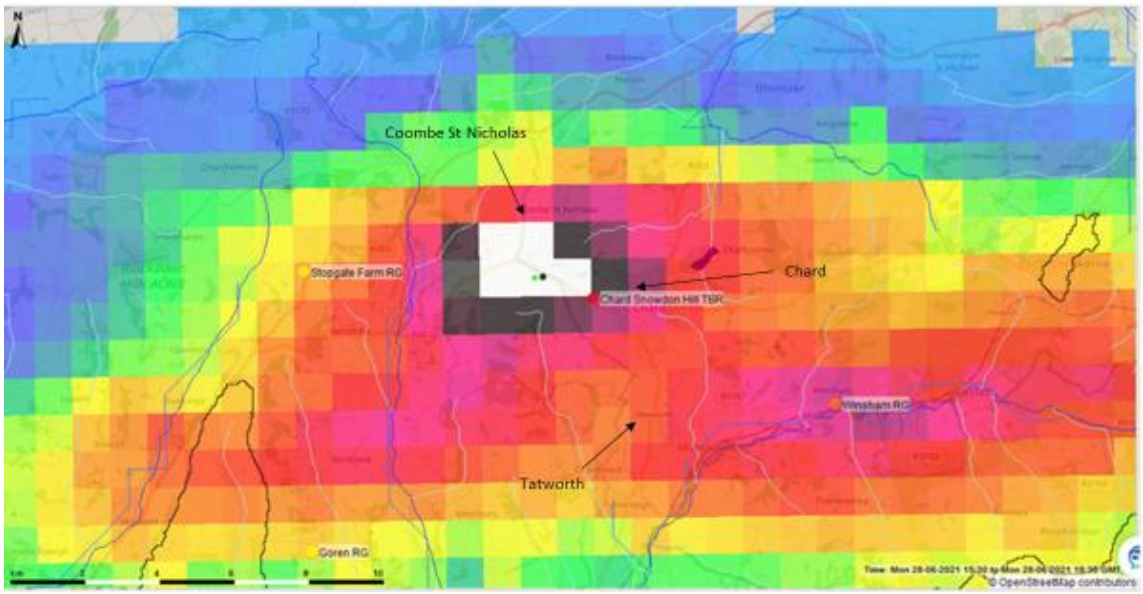
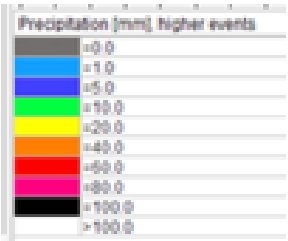
Highways Drainage Assets	The drainage assets of concern here are the gulleys in the road and their connecting drainage pipes, plus any culverts and connections to the sewerage system, soakaways or surface water bodies. The local authority keeps records of drainage under their care, mostly belonging to the Highways Department. Private drainage is not generally recorded. The drainage network around the affected areas is extensive, as figure 36 shows. However, significant problems with draining the accumulated rainfall during the incident have been noted by many parties. For the most part, this is due to the severity of the rainfall – during a flooding incident, it is very difficult to tell if a gully is blocked, or if it just being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of water. Some gullies reported as blocked by residents could have been due to this overwhelming effect. In a site visit after the event, scouring was visible along flow paths, providing evidence that sediment loading and deposition was taking place. Further investigation of the drainage system would be required to ascertain the exact problem in each location. The examination and, where needed, clearing of gullies needs to be improved. Current design standards for highways drainage require drains to cope with a 1 in 5 year event plus 20% allowance for climate change, and that a 1 in 100 year event not exceed the bounds of the highway. This event was a 1 in 300 year rainfall event. Drainage meeting this standard would not have coped with the intensity of rainfall during the flood event, and would have overflowed or failed to drain all the water away even without any obstruction. When a new housing estate is built, planning policy states that the outflow from any surface water collection system should not be greater than the volumes of water which flowed from that site as a green field. However, these standards only apply to modern sites. Previously, housing and highways drainage were built on principles of coping with average rainfall, and were designed for the rainfall levels and groundwater levels of the time. With the action of climate change over the years, many of these installations are no longer adequate for even average rainfall, let alone the 1 in 300 year event that occurred on 28th June. Blocked drainage gullies were an issue on the night. In part, this is fairly inevitable during a storm situation, as much of the debris blocking the gullies has been washed into place by the storm itself. However, there were also places (Holyrood

Highways Drainage Assets	Street (Eastern End), Old Town, Church Street and Forton Road in Chard, Lower Coombses, amongst others) where it was observed that drains were not draining during the incident. This could be because they were blocked, or it could be that they were simply overwhelmed by the volumes of water and not able to get all of it away. There are also reports that gullies have been cleaned out, but that the drainage pipes between them were blocked. Blocked surface water drains typically contribute more to flood risk during small events than large ones. This is because during small events the flow capacity of the drainage system might represent a significant part of the flows reaching the town. However, in larger events the capacity of the drainage system is likely to be a lot smaller than the flows reaching the town. This means that the drainage system would be expected to make a smaller difference during a large flood event, even if the drainage system was maintained in perfect condition. There are places where there appear to be gaps in the council record of the gully network, for instance, around the Furnham Road industrial estate, around the Holyrood Academy Campus in Chard, large areas in the very centre of Chard, and the centre of the village of Forton. This may be because there are private gullies in place (as there are in Furnham Road Industrial Estate), or this could be an issue with the completeness of council records. All the flow routes in the North East Catchment are likely to contribute to flood risk on Furnham Road, especially at the northern end. LiDAR evidence indicates that the northern end of Furnham Road is one of the lowest points in Chard and that there is a slight dip in this location. It is therefore likely that this area acts as a conduit, and as a basin for most of the overland flows which pass through the catchment and are not collected by below ground drainage systems. Somerset County Council commissioned a CCTV survey for a private surface water drain in Furnham. The drain was short, and the inlets to it served small, well-defined areas of hard standing. However, this survey found high flows in the drain on a day when it was not raining. This may be evidence of groundwater ingress to the drainage system. The survey observations are supported by geological information. Borehole evidence shows that, in parts of Chard, sands gravels and sandstone (which are typically permeable) are underlain by clay (which is typically impermeable). This could lead to perched groundwater, where water drains into the ground rapidly but is prevented from escaping. While no evidence has been found

	of groundwater being a direct cause of flooding, it is likely that groundwater reduces the capacity of surface water drains, which contributes to flooding from other sources. Certain culverts have also been highlighted as potentially contributing to flooding, as they were reported as become blocked or damaged during the flood event, or to have created a bottleneck for flowing water. There are a lot of culverts under and around Chard, many of which are not entirely mapped, and their precise locations and condition are unknown. This includes culverted watercourses running from Mitchell Gardens to Millfield, another to the south of Millfield, from Glynswood to Furnham Road area, and another approaches Furnham Road from the south. There is a wide and varied network, some have been lost due to building works, and owners may not be aware of their responsibilities. Modelling undertaken as part of this investigation indicates that flows are unable to enter the Glynswood Culvert during large storms (primarily due to the capacity of the inlet), causing water to back up in the upstream watercourse and eventually overflow on to Glynswood. When this occurs, the model shows overland flows extending through residential areas towards the A358, contributing to highway and property flooding. This is supported by reports from residents. However, the same modelling, also indicates that overland flows from the south and north also contribute significantly to flooding in this area. One way in which different sources of flooding interact in Chard is at the head of culverts. Water that spills from the head of a culvert is often unable to get back into the culvert system which means it joins with overland flow routes form elsewhere. The modelling undertaken for this investigation indicates that this happens at the head of the Glynswood culvert (as described above) and where open channel sections of the Furnham Road Culvert discharge back into pipes. At the head of the Glynswood Culvert this is also supported by descriptions of historic floods from local residents. The risk of flooding from multiple, interacting sources is particularly high at the northern end of Furnham Road. In this location, it is understood that three culverted watercourses meet each other. Additionally, the model shows overland flows from the southern end of Furnham road meeting overland flows from the

	land to the north west. There are also indications of high groundwater in this location, which could be contributing to flood risk.

Water Company Drainage	Surface and groundwater can also drain into the combined sewer system. Some older properties have their surface water drainage (usually from roofs and downpipes) connected into the sewage system. Surface water can potentially enter the system via holes in manhole covers, and there were reports during the event of people lifting sewage system manhole covers to try and get accumulated water to drain away. These factors would have acted on the night of the incident to fill and potentially overwhelm the sewage system.

Rainfall Information	The rainfall in the study area during the June event was extremely severe. This was the sort of quantity and intensity of rain that has a 0.3% chance of happening in any one year, based on past rainfall figures. Officers on the ground in Chard during the event commented that the rainfall was so intense that visibility was down to about 5 yards, and that it was 'like working in fog'. Emergency services working in Chard were unable to cross the central area around High Street and Furnham Road, and had to set up control points on either side of Chard to enable them to get to everyone affected.   ***Figure 6: Rainfall radar showing cumulative rainfall over Chard, Monday 28th June 2021, 15:30 to 18:30. The white area indicates rainfall of over 100mm in the 3 hour period.***

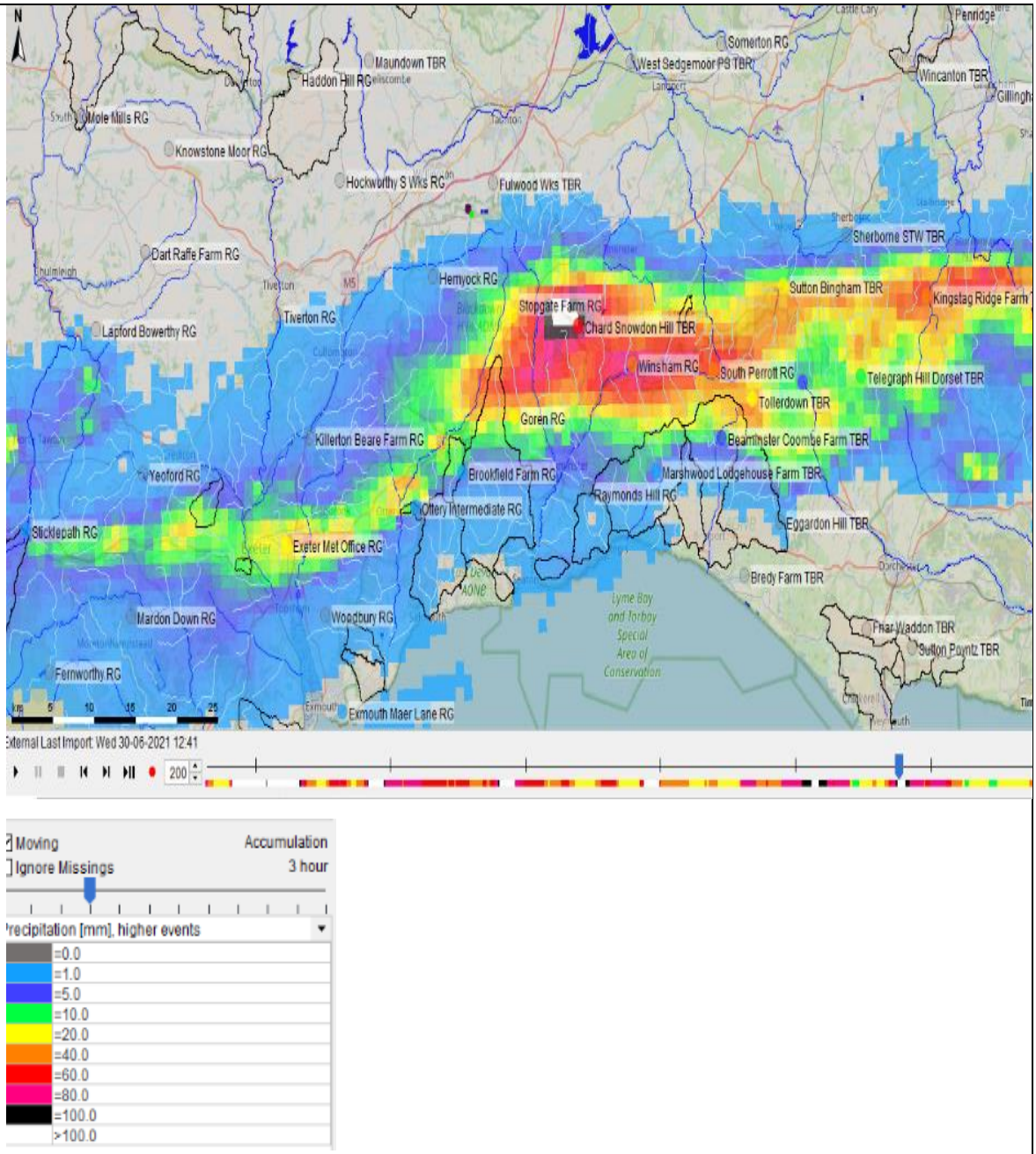


Figure 7: Rainfall radar showing cumulative rainfall over a wider area, Monday 28th June 2021, 15:30 to 18:30.

Figure 7 shows the location of the rain gauge at Chard Snowdon Hill. This recorded 32mm of rain in the 24 hours immediately before the event. The maximum rain recorded at Chard was 95mm in 2.5hr, between 5pm and 7:30pm BST on 28th Jun 2021.

	A private rain gauge recorded 50mm in 2 hrs at Chardstock. Below is an excerpt from EA Monthly water situation report for Wessex: "The first half of June was dry, followed by two main periods of rainfall over 16 – 21 June and 24 – 28 June, when 43% and 51% of the month's rain fell respectively. The majority of south catchments received 'above normal' rainfall. Cumulative rainfall since the start of the water year (October 2020) remains high at 117% LTA." Rainfall for the catchment including Chard was at 144% of long term average rainfall for June, and had been consistently at above normal levels for the last 12 months. The nearest river flow gauging station, on the River Isle at Ashford Mill, had flows at 170% of long-term average for June. Although this was not directly implicated in the June flooding event, it gives some idea of the volumes of rainfall around at the time. It is difficult to overstate just how extreme an event this was. The flood maps we are used to looking at from the Environment Agency show an intensity of rainfall with a 1% chance of happening in any one year. This event has a 0.3% chance of happening in any one year. As against the 1 in 100 year maps, the areas that flooded during this incident were more extensive, and flooded to a greater depth. The sheer size of this event makes it difficult to propose solutions that would completely cope and totally prevent flooding when an event of this magnitude happens again. It is possible to mitigate, it is possible to have an impact, it is possible to make future flooding 'less bad', but on the rare occasion that that this volume of water falls from the sky again, there will inevitably still be flooding.

Surface Water	Most of the flooding seen around Chard and surrounding villages during the event was due to heavy rainfall gathering and moving across the land – this is usually referred to a pluvial or surface water flooding. The basic mechanism appeared to be the movement of overland flow downhill, and as the centre of Chard and most of the surrounding villages are in valleys, heavy flooding was experienced in these topographically low areas. Chard suffered particularly as it is in a wide valley with considerable hills either side, forming a large 'bowl' effect. There are also low areas within Chard, particularly around Furnham Road and Millfield. These attracted considerable amounts of surface water runoff. Flows in transit also caused significant flooding and damage to roads and property, blocking drains in the process. Link: EA Surface water flood risk mapping. The area affected was more extensive than shown in the EA surface water flooding map shown – this map illustrates the extent of flooding with a 1% chance of happening in any one year, as opposed to the 0.3% chance of the 28th June event.
Fluvial	The study area has a network of smaller streams and drainage ditches, as opposed to main rivers. Many of these watercourses are under riparian ownership. In several areas these watercourses were directly implicated by residents in flooding: In Lower Coombses some properties near the river were caught between rising surface water on the lane at the front, and a rising brook behind their houses. In Wadeford, Nimmer and Lower Coombses, public comments were made that watercourses had not been properly kept clear, reducing capacity to convey water. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many riparian owners are unaware of their rights and obligations with regards to their watercourses.
Coastal	There is no risk of coastal flooding in this area.

Groundwater	Most of Chard is on bedrock of sandstone (the Upper Greensand Formation), apart from Furnham Road and the associated industrial estates, which are on mudstone. Borehole logs indicate a layer of clay beneath the greensand. There are also shallow deposits of mixed clay, sand, and gravel. Upper Greensand is porous and will absorb water, however mudstone will not. The shallow sands and gravels will variably absorb water depending on the percentage of clay it contains. The effect of this layering is that rainwater will absorb into the ground in most of Chard, down to about 120 feet. This generates a layer of fairly shallow groundwater, which generally responds quite quickly to rainfall with a rise in groundwater level. In the Furnham Road area, the presence of mudstone nearer the surface means that rain is poorly absorbed, only really into the overlying thin layer of sands and gravels, and as such rainwater cannot locally 'get away' as easily. It is much more likely, once the sands and gravels are saturated, to combine with surface water to form significant overland flows, of the kind seen entering the Furnham Road industrial estate.
Soil Moisture Deficit	Soil moisture deficit is the difference between the amount of water actually held in the soil, and how much water the soil can hold. A low soil moisture deficit means that the ground is almost saturated and cannot readily absorb more water. For the Chard catchment in this time period was in the region of 11 to 40mm. This is between 26 and 50mm below the long term average, so even though there had been considerable spring rainfall, when the flooding incident occurred, the soil was still fairly dry. As such, some of the rainfall from the event would have been absorbed into the soil.
Risk Management Authority Responsibilities	The Flood and Water Management Act places a duty on all flood risk management authorities to co-operate with each other, to ensure flood management activities are well co-ordinated, and work in partnership to reduce the severity and impact of flooding. See Appendix

Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency, and Stakeholder Actions During And Immediately After The Event	Somerset County Council (in their roles as LLFA and Highways Authority) Highways Authority: Had no direct responsibilities on the night. They exercised their statutory duty by: • 3x Highways Superintendents inspecting and where necessary actioning defects and/or formalising road closures. • 4x safety gangs assigned to this area to respond Highways Superintendents requests. • Scrapton Lane, Combe St Nicholas, roads in Whitestaunton, and Court Mill Lane, Wadeford, were closed as impassable. • Major clear up required in Whitestaunton. Resource was assigned to this task rapidly. • 1x SCC (Milestone) sweeper operational in Chard area. Considerable debris to be removed from the carriageway across the area. Temporary use of the Chipping landing on the nearby A30 (Windwhistle – north of Chard) approved to deposit arisings. • General clearing of mud and debris from roads. They also sent street cleaners through Chard the following day to clear up road debris In the following days they assessed and prioritised work to rebuild the damaged roadways, and began a programme of works to rapidly bring the damaged roads back into use. LLFA: commissioned section 19 and began to gather information from residents and other RMAs about their activities, and when, where and how flooding occurred.

Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency, and Stakeholder Actions During And Immediately After The Event	**Environment Agency** Fulfilled their statutory duty by issuing flood warnings for main rivers as follows: | DATE	AREA	CODE	WARNING / ALERT AREA NAME	TYPE
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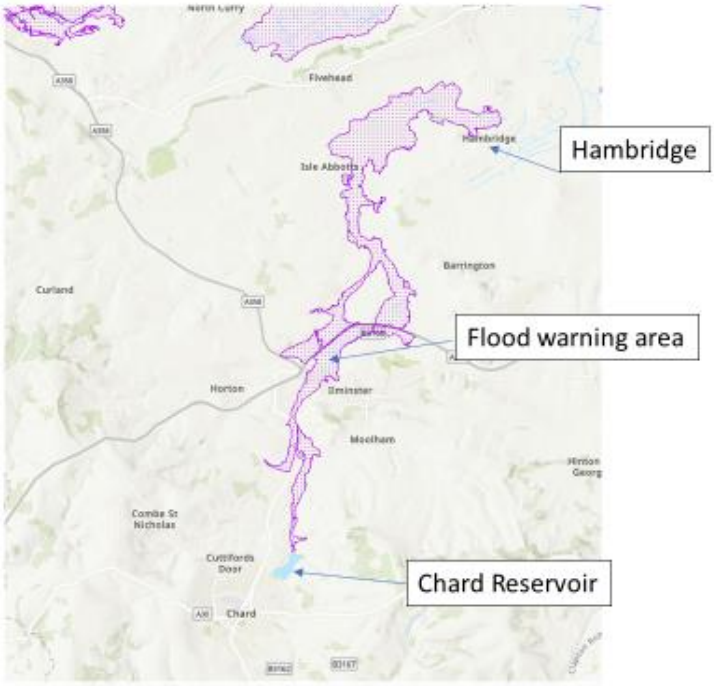
28/06/2021	Wessex - North	112WAFTSSR	South Somerset Rivers, Upper Reaches	Flood Alert
28/06/2021	Wessex - North	112WAFTSES	South East Somerset Rivers, Upper Reaches	Flood Alert
28/06/2021	Wessex - North	112FWFISL10A	River Isle from Chard Reservoir to Hambridge	Flood Warning	  ***Figure 8: Flood warnings*** None of the flooding in or around Chard has been traced to a main river, although non-main river watercourses have been implicated.
	Wessex Water Took 12 calls on the night. Mostly due to external flooding but one was due to the internal flooding of a property. The calls were mostly for blocked and backed up sewerage systems. They fulfilled their statutory duty by having two crews out working to deal with sewage incidents. Crews came back to affected properties the next day to follow up and complete works as needed. Wessex Water reported that their main issues were in Furzhill and Glynswood where pluvial flooding was inundating the sewers.

Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency, and Stakeholder Actions During And Immediately After The Event	Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Community engagement officers do not have statutory duties, but they assisted partners by supporting the LLFA in managing public correspondence and providing info and support to parishes around property resilience.
	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Fulfilled their statutory duty by taking charge of the emergency and responding to calls for help from the public. Twenty two calls were reported by 7:30pm and they were deploying high capacity pumps to pump out houses at this point in time. Took 90 calls overnight. They had to prioritise calls where life was at risk due to the numbers needing help. Set up two forward command points, because Chard itself could not be crossed safely – one at Honiton and one and Chard Fire Station. Each dealt with incidents on the half of Chard accessible to them. Multi-agency representation was present at both command points, so these effectively operated as 'gold control'. In general, very good communications were reported between the Fire Service and the District Council. Returned to normal control/methods at 1:30am on the 29th.
	Civil Contingencies Unit: (Partnership between SSDC and SCC) Report from Duty Civil Contingencies Officer: The Duty Officer was aware of incoming rainfall. They received a phone call from the Police at 7:30pm on the 28th. Their first duty was to ensure there were places of safety for the public, to which end they opened The Guildhall as a refuge. In the end no-one needed to use it as a refuge, but it was a useful base for distributing sandbags and generally co-ordinating their efforts. A multi-agency meeting was held at 9:45pm on the 28th. Contingencies Officers reported that rain happened very quickly and overwhelmed the highways piped drainage system. Officers also reported that residents were calling all sorts of agencies to try and get help and find out what

Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency, and Stakeholder Actions During And Immediately After The Event	was happening, which reduced the ability to co-ordinate centrally. Sandbags were available, and the Town Council were advertising their availability on Facebook. Officers identified a wider and more strategic issue with Chard being on the edge of the county and all the civil contingencies equipment being held more centrally. The CCU have since been talking to other agencies and community members about community resilience arrangements, supporting Parish Councils with the development of community resilience plans, and developing grant applications for resilience equipment. Officers fulfilled their statutory duty by assisting partners and the public during the incident.
	South Somerset District Council: Opened the Guildhall as a place of respite for affected residents, and as a general co-ordination and recovery centre. The duty officer also went to a co-ordination centre set up by the Sainsburys at the crossroads. Two locality officers were out on the night and took gel sandbags over to the Guildhall for wider distribution. Officers fulfilled their statutory duty by assisting partners and the public during the incident.
	Avon and Somerset Police Reported in incident to the Duty Civil Contingencies Officer at 7:30pm. Reported that there was flooding in the High Street and Furnham Road. That there was water in the houses in the High Street and they were helping people to move upstairs. They were closing the main route through town. There was a further operational multi-agency call phone call around 7:30pm, at which point the incident was downgraded from 'major' to 'significant'. Officers fulfilled their statutory duty by assisting partners and the public during the incident.

Risk Management Authority, Incident Response Agency, and Stakeholder Actions During And Immediately After The Event	Tatworth and Forton Parish Council At Tatworth: Councillors delivered sandbags to the village, sourced from the Town Hall. Helped residents (some very elderly) upstairs to safety. Councillors assisted in getting debris from the flood cleared from people's property. At Lower Coombses: Councillors were out on site at Coombses helping people upstairs to safety. Councillors reported that 20 houses in the village were flooded and one had a toilet back up. Councillors who were out on the night reported that the water seemed to be running off fields, towards the brook, which was also rising, leading to some people being affected by both flooding mechanisms. Parish councils do not have statutory duties.
	South West Water Information about their activities on the night have been requested but not received.
	Chard Town Council Councillors were available on the night, helping local residents. They were out clearing drains that were blocked, these were in Church Street, Old Town, Holyrood Street and Millfield. On 24th January they hosted a multi agency drop in event at the Guildhall in Chard.

Flooding Mechanism	Examination of flow paths of rainwater and information from local residents and site visits has established several probable causes for flooding, acting together in different parts of the area. The essential issue is that Chard sits in a bowl in the hills (see topographic map), and rainfall runs off the surrounding farmland and into the streets of Chard. To the West of Chard there is a large area of farmland on the edge of the Blackdown Hills with a considerable slope to it. Examination of flow paths has shown that rainfall runs off these slopes at some speed and enters the town via roadways and paths to the west such as Touchstone Lane and Crimchard. To the north of Chard, the topography acts to funnel runoff water down Furnham Road. This comes with sufficient speed to bring rocks and debris, causing further issues with keeping drains etc clear. This also spills over into roads such as Furzehill, causing additional flooding. The main issue across Chard is surface water running across the town, picking up speed, more water, and debris as it goes. In Glynswood surface water runs down into a brook which runs through the open space near Holyrood Academy. This brook enters a culvert to run under properties at the eastern end of Glynswood and enter the drainage system. This culvert is a potential bottleneck for flows, especially it if becomes blinded. Furnham Road industrial estate presents a complex and multi-layered issue. There are issues with surface water runoff and drains not clearing. Photos and video taken during the flood show significant amounts of water entering the estate overland from the adjacent housing estate, around Coker Way. Issues in the Millfield industrial estate are also believed to be due to inadequate capacity in an intermittently culverted watercourse. During the site walkover, a series of bunds were identified along the west end of Crimchard, (at the bottom of the agricultural land and above the first row of houses). The owner of the farmland identified these as being part of a historic surface water management system. However, breaches of these bunds were identified during the walkover, which appear to have been made by the owners or builders of the houses to accommodate development on their land. These breaches might have changed flow paths locally and could have increased flood

	risk to properties. Many properties in the Crimchard Catchment also have low door thresholds relative to the highway. The design specifications of the drainage systems in Chard and surrounding villages are currently poorly understood. Many are very old and not up to modern standards for coping with above average rainfall. Many gullies were reported as being blocked; however they would not have coped with an event of this intensity, and many could just have been overwhelmed by the volume of water. Foul drainage system: Some drains which are apparently surface water drains actually connect into the sewerage system – either due to mis-connections, or because in properties of a certain age, this was the standard method. This type of connection was, in certain areas of the UK, used up until the 1970's. On the 28th June, people were lifting drain covers in the foul system to try and get water to flow away. However, as this water moved through the system under gravity, it resulted in manhole surcharging and more flooding at the Furnham Road end of town. Wessex Water reported that on the night the main issues were in Furnham and Glynswood, where pluvial flooding was inundating the sewers, and then causing the sewers to surcharge. Together, this points to a sewage system being overwhelmed with rainwater, causing it to surcharge. Flooding mechanisms in surrounding villages were not dissimilar. High volumes of water flowed down sloped roads in Combe St Nicholas, Wadeford, Scrapton, Wambrook and Higher Wambrook. Lower lying areas such as Nimmer, Tatworth and Lower Coombses received a lot of this water, which collected at low points, and were also threatened by rising water levels in brooks running through the villages. Modelling of flood flows in Chard has provided a map of the likely water movement during the event, which corresponds with reported experience on the ground. The map below (figure 9) is representative of a 1 in 375 year rainfall event, and so is somewhat more severe than the 1 in 300 event experienced. However, the flow directions seem to hold true, even if the extents of flooding shown are a little greater than what actually occurred.

Figure 9: Model mapping of 1 in 375 year rainfall event and resultant fluvial and surface water flooding.

Recommendations	The intensity of this event makes adaption and mitigation challenging. It is difficult to mitigate against this type of severe weather event purely with civil engineering – it was extensive, with significant intense rainfall and with different flood mechanisms for each of the communities. Just building higher defences and bigger drains will not be enough, a more creative and sustainable programme of measures is needed. In Chard itself, local topography and historic road/ town layout is a contributing factor to the flood mechanisms, as is drainage capacity. Catchment topography in the villages is highly significant, as well as old watercourse systems which have limited capacity and cannot be readily altered. Riparian responsibilities need to be understood at the community level and appropriate emergency planning and property level flood protection measures need to be in place. There is much opportunity in the upper catchment to slow flows and intercept and redirect pluvial flows. This can make flooding 'less bad', and reduce road and property damage and hazard to life by slowing the speed at which the water arrives from surrounding high areas. But communities need to recognise that there will always be flood risk in certain areas of Chard and the surrounding communities. However we construct drainage and flood defences of any kind, they will always have their limits. As we now know that the centre of Chard is not readily crossable during a flood event, civil contingency operations should prepare for having control centres on either side of Chard. This should include having two safety centres for the public, two places from which to distribute sandbags and other temporary property level flood protection devices, and two control points for emergency services. The net of who to include in the multi-agency calls and civil contingency co-ordination needs to be cast wider. Parish Councils in particular were very active during the event, but were not on the multi-agency call and were out of the loop. Water companies were also not included. There needs to be a better conduit for public contact during events. The public were reported as contacting a variety of agencies, creating confusion and inefficiencies. Civil contingency bodies should consider having, and publicising, a

	single point of contact for non-life threatening situations which can then be referred to the appropriate bodies for action.
	
	SCC Highways are currently auditing their gully and drain cleaning management regime to see what improvements can be made.
	
	Work is currently ongoing to identify flood mitigation measures which can be installed around Chard and surrounding areas – items such as flood storage basins. This work is to be continued. It should be expanded to look at natural flood management measures such as 'slow the flow' and reconnecting rivers and flood planes in more appropriate and less damaging locations.
	
	Work on the area around Furnham Road should continue, to develop appropriate drainage and flood mitigation schemes.
	
	The source of the sudden rise in water level in Wadeford should be investigated. If this was down to a containment breach or similar, as is alleged locally, the landowner should be advised on appropriate reinstatement or alternative measures.
	
	A protocol should be developed for the mill and sluice gate owners on the River Isle near Wadeford and Pudleigh so that they act in a co-ordinated way to minimise flood risk during flood events.
	
	There have been concerns in Lower Coombses about the crops being grown in the area creating high levels of runoff. Engagement should take place with the community, FWAG and local farmers on this issue.
	
	The following culverts, gullies and other assets need to:
	
	• Have their owner identified or confirmed.
	• Be checked for damage or blockage.
	• Be repaired and/or cleared as necessary.
	  ○ Flood alleviation feature at the back of St Marys Close, Chard.
	  ○ Culvert and trash screen in the open area in Glynswood.
	  ○ Drain or culvert on Bews Lane.
	  ○ Culvert in Dellshore Close.
	  ○ Culvert(s) in Nimmer, reported as being installed by the council in 2009, and/or under MAFF funding in the late 1990's.
	  ○ Culvert and gullies near Goblin Hollow, Wadeford.

	○ Culvert around the junction of Wadeford Hill and Court Mill Lane, Wadeford. ○ Drainage pipes around the Haymaker Pub, Wadeford. ○ Culvert on Waterlake Road, Lower Coombses. ○ Culvert(s) and watercourse on Scrapton Lane. ○ Drainage system in Chaffcombe. The installation of a 'sleeping policeman' at Nimmer Mill by Highways should be expidited. Changes in local planning policy should be considered. Currently the standard requirement for drainage in a housing development is to cope with a 1 in 5 year event for highways drains, and to cope with greenfield runoff rates for surface water drainage. Consideration should be given to adopting a higher standard, and/or specifying a policy of betterment. There are areas on the Highways gully map that are sparsely populated. These areas should be surveyed, and the locations of any private drainage arrangements should be recorded for information purposes. A full modelling study for the villages around Chard, similar to that being undertaken for Chard, should be considered. There should be events and materials to educate riparian owners around Chard as to their rights and responsibilities.

Planned Developments	The planned development at Blackdown heights has naturally raised concerns about the destination of surface water from this development. The full plan is available via South Somerset District Council's Planning Portal. The natural flow path of water from this site is towards the east. Full planning permission has been granted and development has begun. The full details are available under planning permission number 19/00074/FUL, but moving from outline to full planning permission being granted was conditional on a number of things, including: • Surface water shall not discharge onto the highway. • Surface water details to serve the development shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The developers have proposed to meet these conditions by installing a surface water attenuation area (sustainable urban drainage basin) and ecological habitat enhancement at the east end of the site. According to the developers: "The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy confirm that the site is not within an identified floodplain or an area at risk of flooding. Surface water will be controlled and managed to existing local watercourses and existing drains to the east and west. A sustainable urban drainage basin proposed at the east end of the site will accommodate runoff arising from the development during periods of extreme rainfall. The Environment Agency (and previously the Council's Engineer) have assessed the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and are satisfied that surface water can be satisfactorily controlled to ensure that the risk of flooding downstream of the site is not increased. Whilst the evidence received from residents clearly shows that the local area has and continues to suffer from flooding, the FRA has demonstrated, with the agreement of the Environment Agency, that this development can be adequately mitigated to ensure that there is no increase in terms of flood risk to adjacent and other sites." There is a further development awaiting a decision which is Land East Of Mount Hindrance Farm, near Crimchard and Cuttifords Door. This is for 295 dwellings. Again, in order to have full planning permission granted, the developer will need

	to submit and have approved a drainage strategy for the site which will make flooding in the area no worse. The Holbear development on the south extent of Chard is also causing concern alongst local residents. Modelling has shown that the surface water draining from this development will drain into the watercourse that heads towards Forton. The following condition has been imposed on the planning permission: 'No development shall be commenced until details of the surface water drainage scheme, based on sustainable drainage principles, ⋯ have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. ⋯ The drainage scheme shall ensure that surface water runoff post development is attenuated on site and discharged at a rate and volume no greater than greenfield runoff rates and volumes.' So far, the developers have not proposed a suitable scheme to meet this condition. Dialogue is ongoing between the Local Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, the developers, and other stakeholders to ensure that whatever the developers propose will meet this criteria. In both cases, proper implementation of the planning conditions should ensure that, at the very least, the developments will not worsen existing flooding.

Ongoing Works	Work is currently ongoing through the LLFA to model surface water flow paths around Chard, with a view to identifying and prioritising potential flood mitigation solutions. Following this, the study on Chard will be expanded to other settlements in the area. A Chard resilience group has been set up, under the auspices of the Town Council. While the group was convened on the back of flooding incidents, their remit is to support with all adverse weather events.

Planning Policy and Future Development	The pillar of planning policy on surface water is that developments must not increase flood risk elsewhere or cause risk to people and properties. As referred to in the Planned Development section above, incoming planning applications have conditions applied to them which ensure that runoff from the development is attenuated on site. No more surface runoff water should leave the site than did while it was an undeveloped, grassed field (the 'greenfield rate'). This should ensure that no development makes flooding in the area around it worse. This is in accordance with 'The National Planning Policy Framework Section 14; Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change', and also the Government standards for SUDS, published on the .gov.uk website. It is required that runoff must not increase due to the development, and all runoff should be first restricted to the greenfield 1 in 1-year runoff rate during all events up to and including the 1 in 100-year rainfall event, with 40% added for climate change on top of previous rainfall figures. If this cannot be met from infiltration and site design, long term storage of surface water needs to be added to allow water to be released gradually from site. There should also be a full maintenance and operational management schedule for the development confirming the body who will maintain the system for the lifetime of the development. We would expect to see full a full operational and maintenance schedule, confirmation and adoption arrangements before planning permission is fully granted. In order for the Local Authority to require any stricter standards to be applied (such as accounting for events at greater than 1 in 100 years return period, or requiring runoff at less than greenfield rates), this needs to be stated in local planning policy. It is recommended that further work be undertaken with a view to requiring stricter standards to be applied to surface water management by developers in affected areas in and around Chard.

Appendix 1: Figures

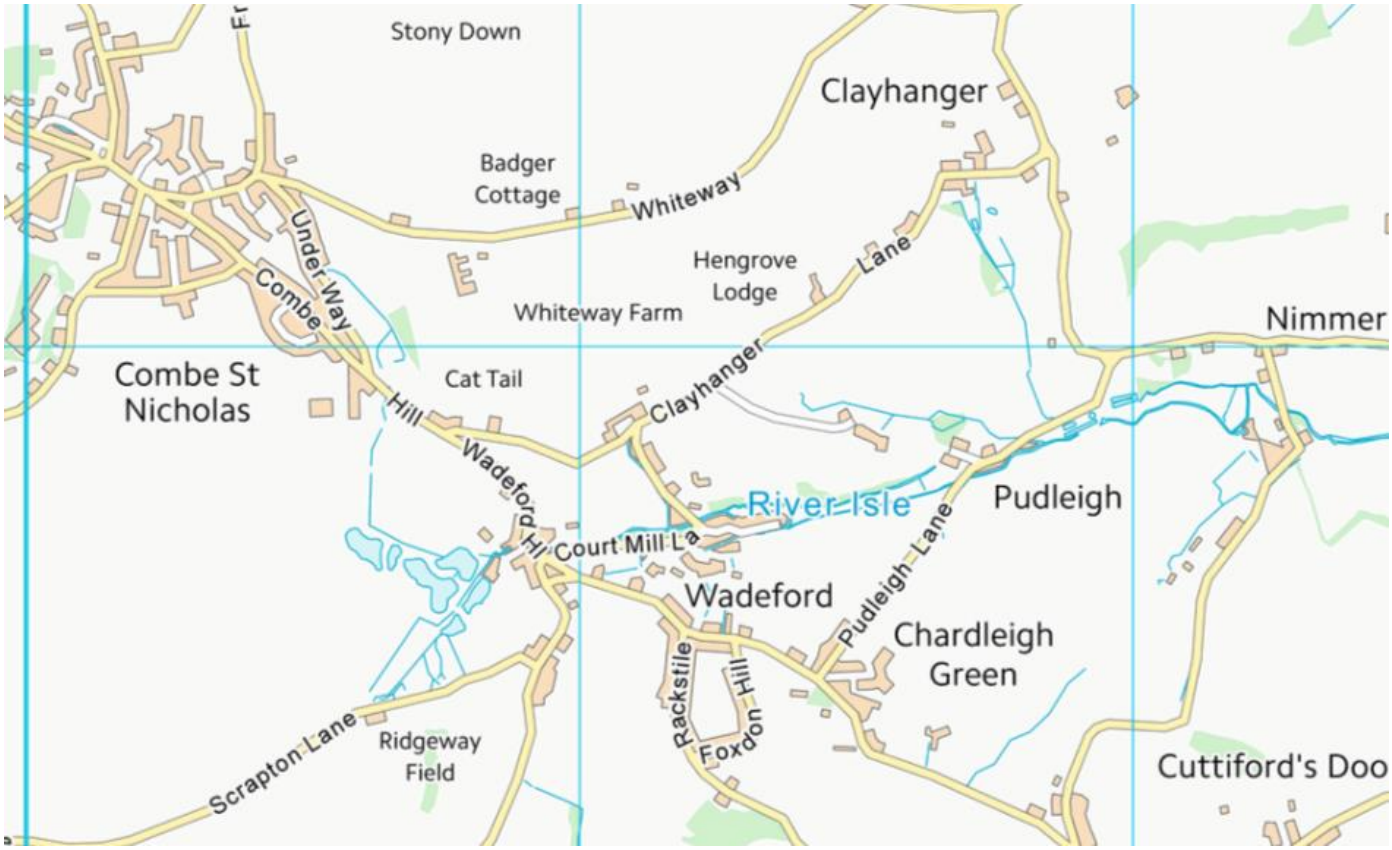


Figure 10: Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas and Nimmer

Figure 11: Coombeses and Tatworth

Figure 12: Forton.

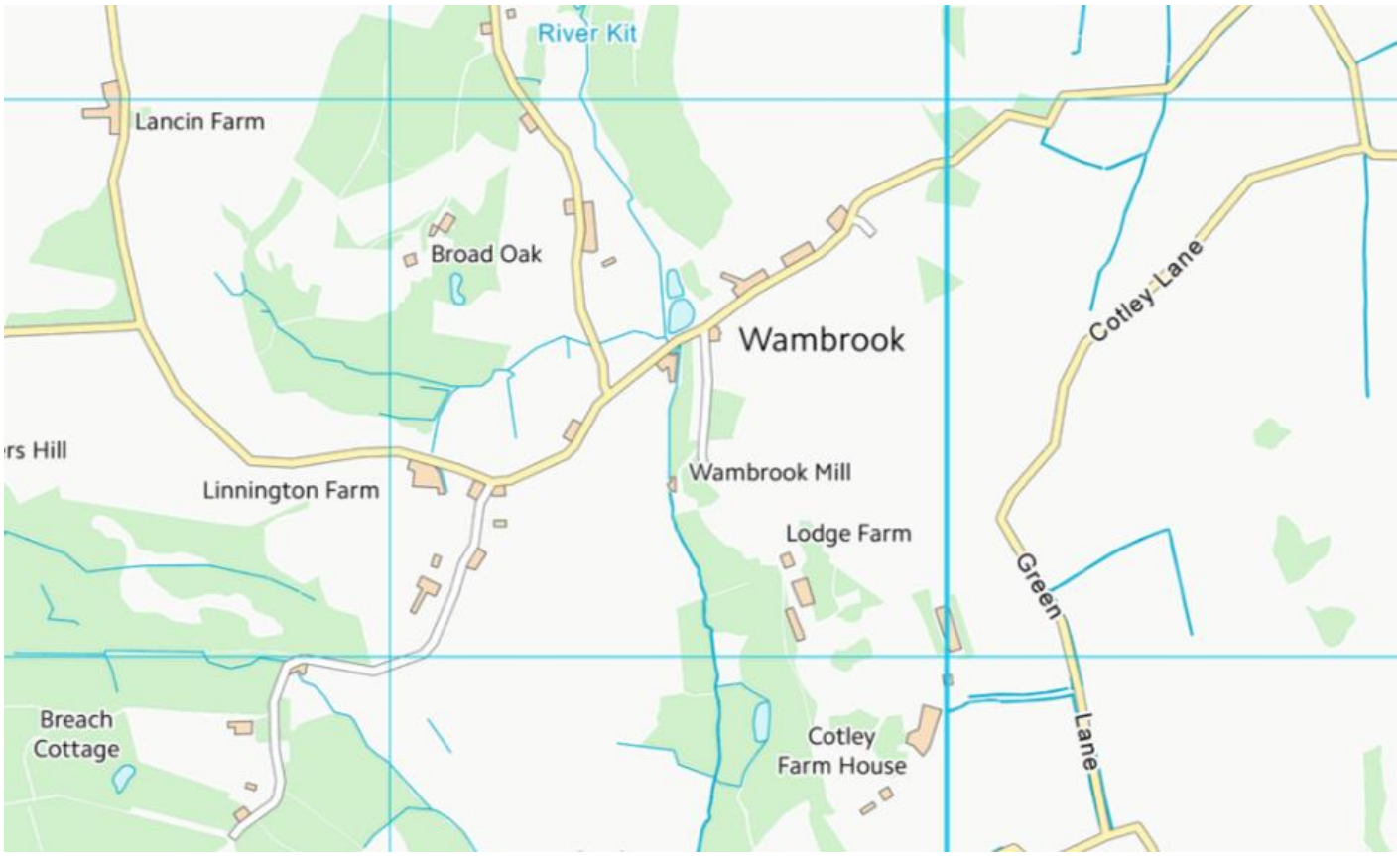


Figure 13: Wambrook

Photos from Chard:

Figure 14: East Street, Chard. Just off the High Street.

Figure 15: Crimchard Road, Chard.

Figure 16: High Street, Chard

Figure 17: Mitchell Gardens, Chard

Figure 18: Mitchell Gardens, Chard

Figure 19: Outside B&Q, Furnham Road, Chard.

Figure 20: Surface water entering Furnham Road Industrial Estate from Coker Way, a residential area to the south. Photo supplied by Turnweld Engineering.

Figure 21: Furnham Road Industrial estate. Picture from Chard and Ilminster News. bit.ly/3Jaijxn

Photos from Wadeford:

Figure 22: The front of a house on Court Mill Lane – note that the water is up over the window ledges. Photo supplied by Parish Clerk.

Figure 23: Main road around Goblin Hollow. Photo supplied by Parish Clerk.

Figure 24: Back Garden of a house at Chapel Triangle, Wadeford. Photo supplied by Parish Clerk.

Flooding in Wadeford rose extremely high in places, and water ran down the sloping streets to the bottom of the village with considerable force and speed.

Flooding in the villages:

Figure 25: Flooded properties in Wadeford.

Figure 26: Flooded properties in Nimmer.

Again, here the main flooding mechanism, as reported by the Parish Council, was the overland flow of surface water from nearby fields to a topographical lowpoint. Residents near the river explicitly stated that they were flooded from overland flow, not from the river rising. Blocked drains and blocking of a culvert installed in 2009 were implicated as contributing to the problem.

Figure 27: Flooded properties in Combe St Nicholas

The main mechanism of flooding here, according to Parish Council reports, was surface water running downhill off of nearby fields, and down Wadeford Hill / Combe Hill. The village is at a topographical lowpoint. They also reported that the watercourse in the centre of the village rose in level, and that some properties were affected by both flooding mechanisms.

Extent of flooding in Forton:

Figure 28: Flooded properties in Forton.

Figure 29: Flooded properties in Tatworth and Lower Coombses

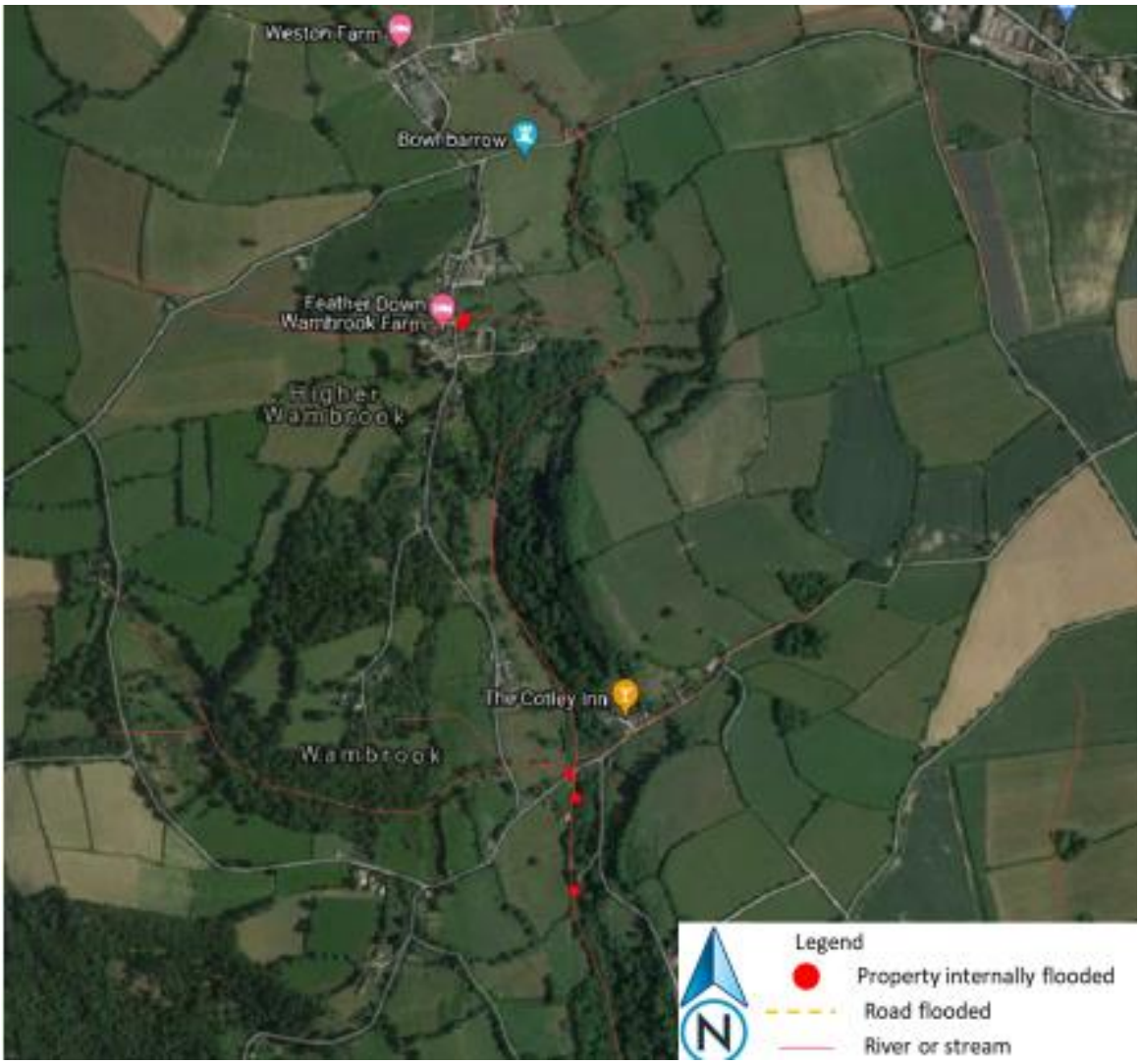


Figure 30: Flooded properties in Wambrook.

Outlying areas:

Figure 32: Flooded properties and road damage in Scrapton Lane

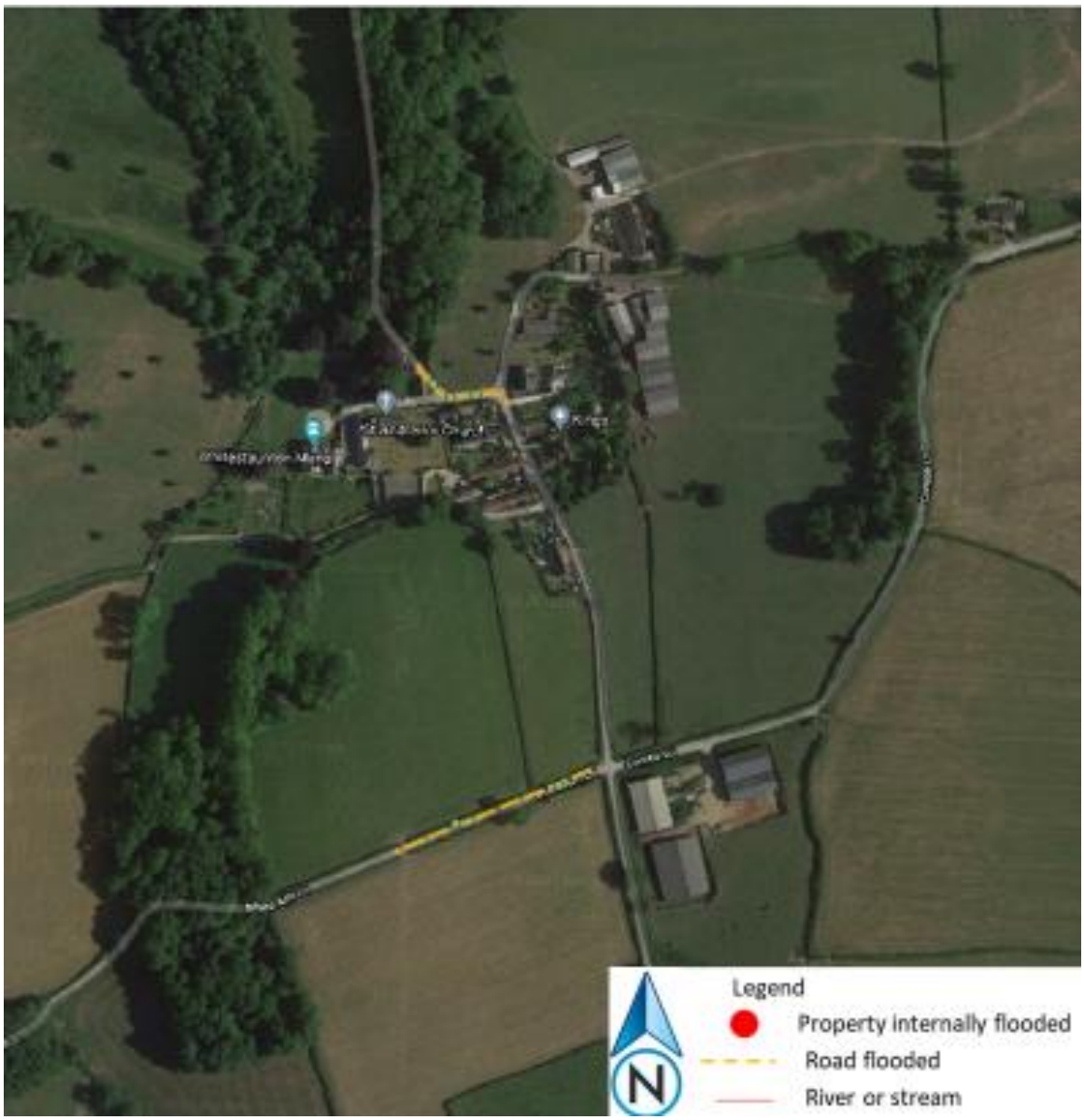


Figure 32: Flooded areas and damaged roads in Whitestaunton.

Note that the report for flooding and damage outside the settlement only named 'White Ash Lane'. The area shown is the steepest section, and therefore thought most likely to have sustained damage

Figure 33: Flooded properties in Chard

Figure 34: Damage to Scrapton lane. From

Chard flooding aftermath leaves roads completely destroyed - Somerset Live.

Figure 35: Road damage in Whitestaunton. Photo from [Access restored as Highways teams respond to flash flooding damage | Somerset County Council Newsroom (somersetnewsroom.com)](somersetnewsroom.com).

Appendix 2: Historical information.

Date	Location	Receptor
July 1968	Wadeford	2 houses
October 1994	Nimmer	2 houses
January 1995	Wadeford	Road
	Knowle St Giles	Road
	Thorndon Park Drive, Chard	2 houses
May 2011	Whatley	Road
October 2011	Furnham Road, Chard	Road
November 2011	Combe St Nicholas	Road
May 2012	Winsham	Road
August 2012	Winsham	Road
September 2012	Knowle St Giles	Road
November 2012	Crimchard Road	Road
	Chard Junction	2 houses
October 2013	Combe St Nicholas	Road
	Wadeford	Road
December 2013	Bath Street, Chard	1 commercial property
January 2014	Crewkerne Road, Chard	Road in two places
	Dening Close, Chard	Road
	Combe Street, Chard	1 house
Records marked 'pre 2015'.	Victoria Avenue, Chard	Road
	Station Road Tatworth	1 house

	Court Mill Lane, Wadeford	4 houses
	Forton, Chard	2 houses, Road
	Whatley lane, Winsham	Road
	Whatley	Road
	Furnham Road, Chard	Road, twice
	Church Street, Winsham	Road, outbuilding
	Amerham Lane, Winsham	Road
	Davies Close, Winsham	Road
	Crimshard, Chard	Road
	Perry Street, Tatworth	1 house
	Wayside, Wadeford	Road
	Bath Street, Chard	1 commercial premises
	Dening Close, Chard	Road
	Crewkerne Road, Chard	Road
	Combe Street, Chard	1 house
	A30, Chard	Road
	Chaffcombe Lane, Chard	1 house, road

Appendix 3: Drainage pipes in Chard

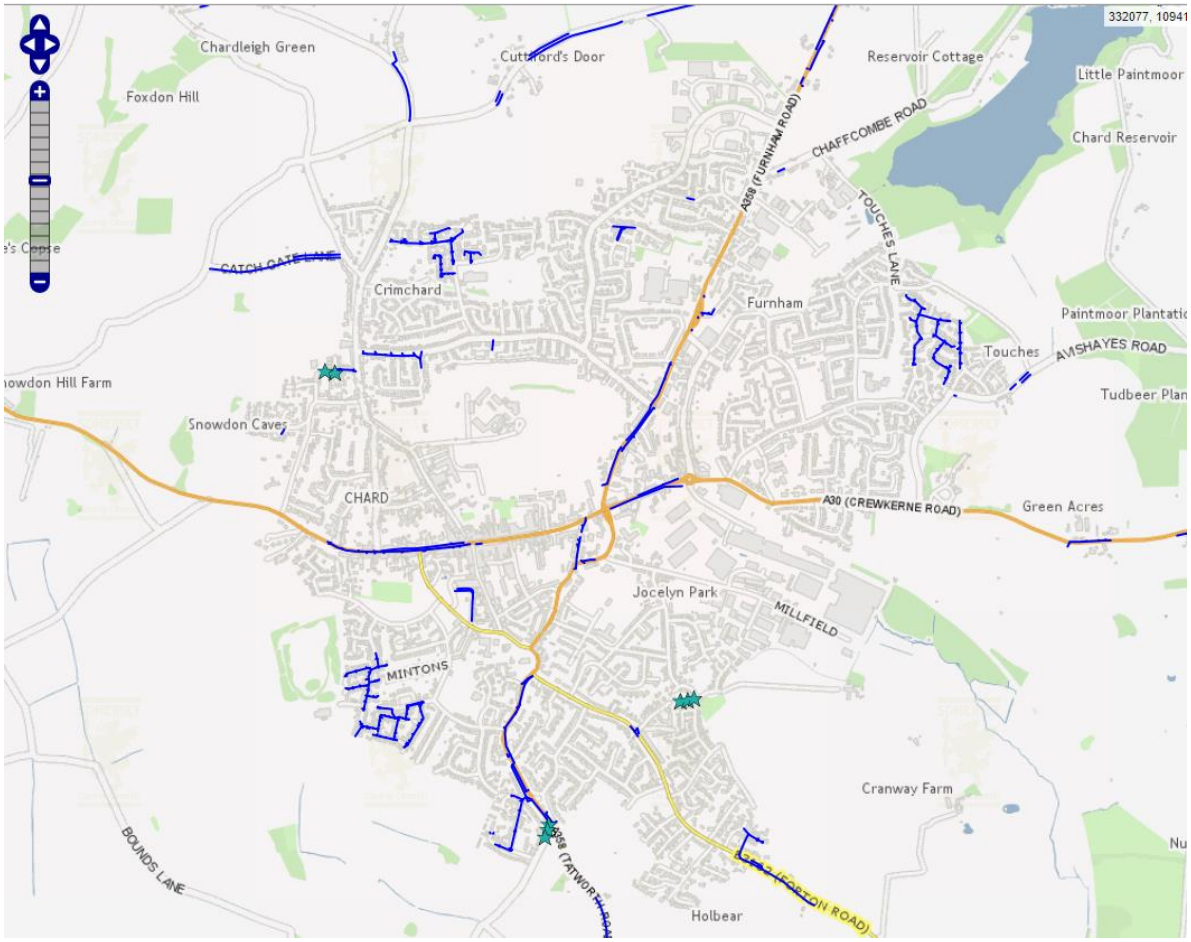


Figure 36: Highways Surface water drainage pipes in Chard.

Figure 37: Highways Gullies in Chard

Figure 38: Highways Surface water drains in Furnham Road Industrial Estate.

The absence of any apparent gullies around the Furham Road industrial estate needs to be looked at and the location of private gullies recorded, along with their ownership.

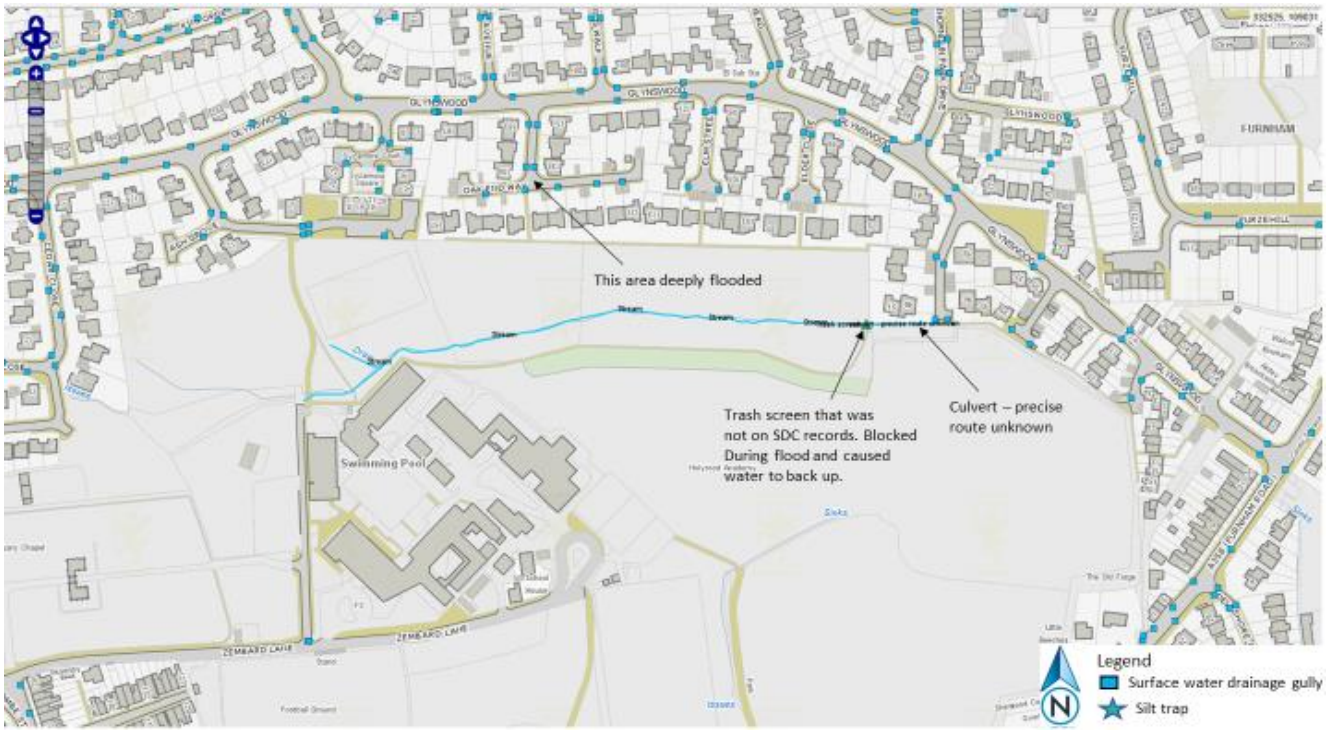


Figure 39: Highways Surface water drains in Glynswood.

The absence of gullies around the Academy and leisure centre needs to be looked at.

Figure 40: Highways Surface water drainage around the High Street and East Street.

There are large areas here with no apparent gullies. Again, this needs to be looked at and any gullies and their ownership recorded.

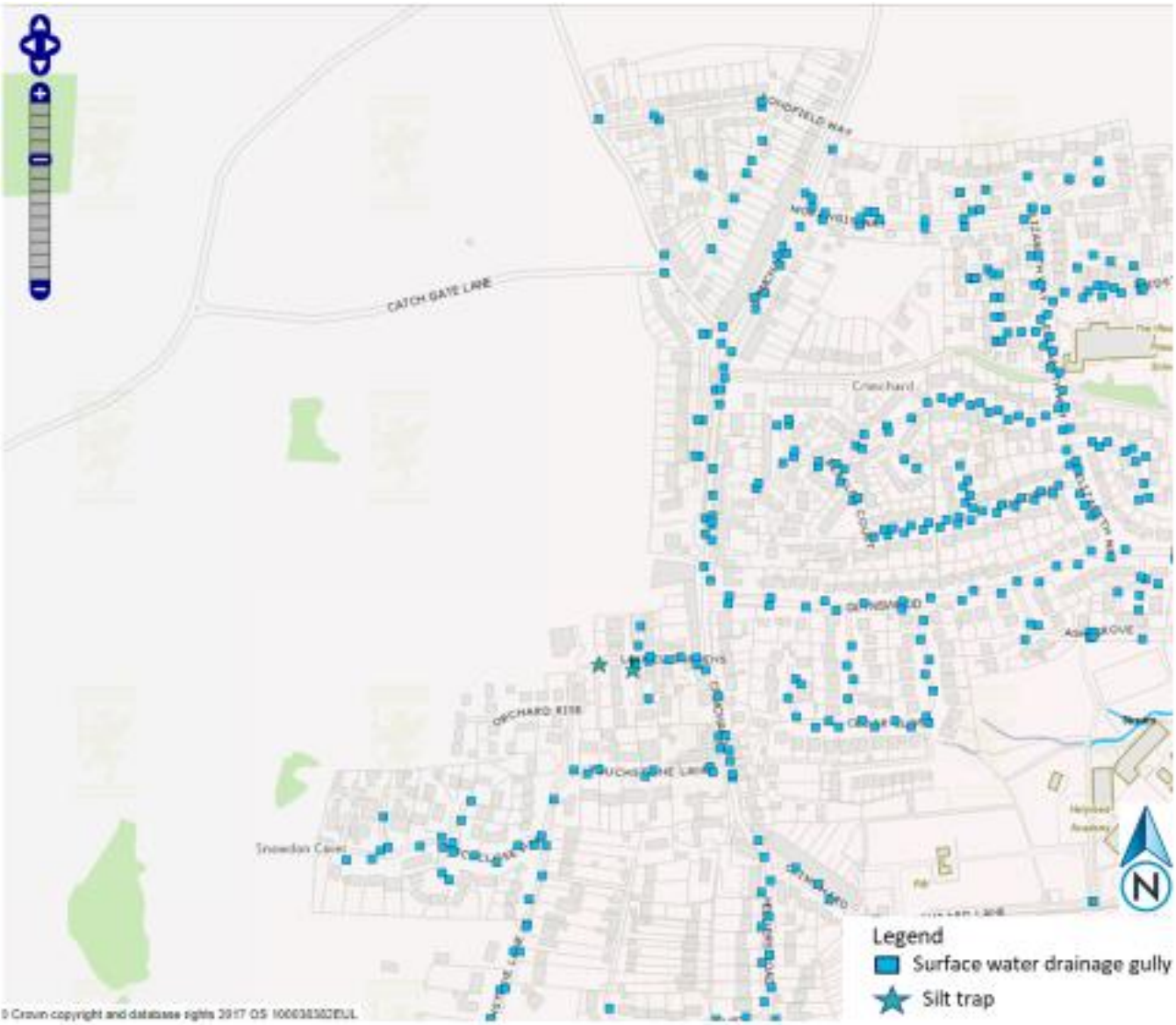


Figure 41: Highways Surface water drainage around Crimchard and Touchstone Lane.

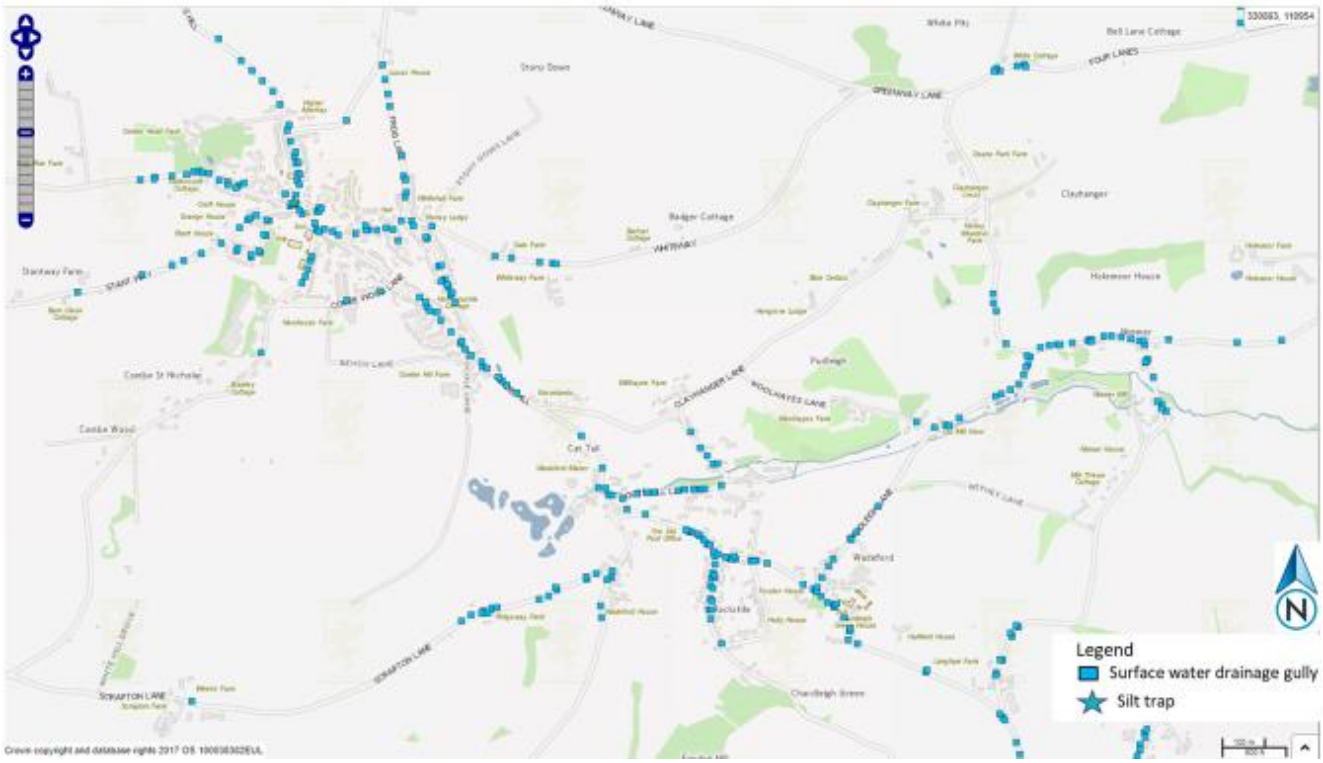


Figure 42: Highways Surface water drainage in Combe St Nicholas, Wadeford and Nimmer.

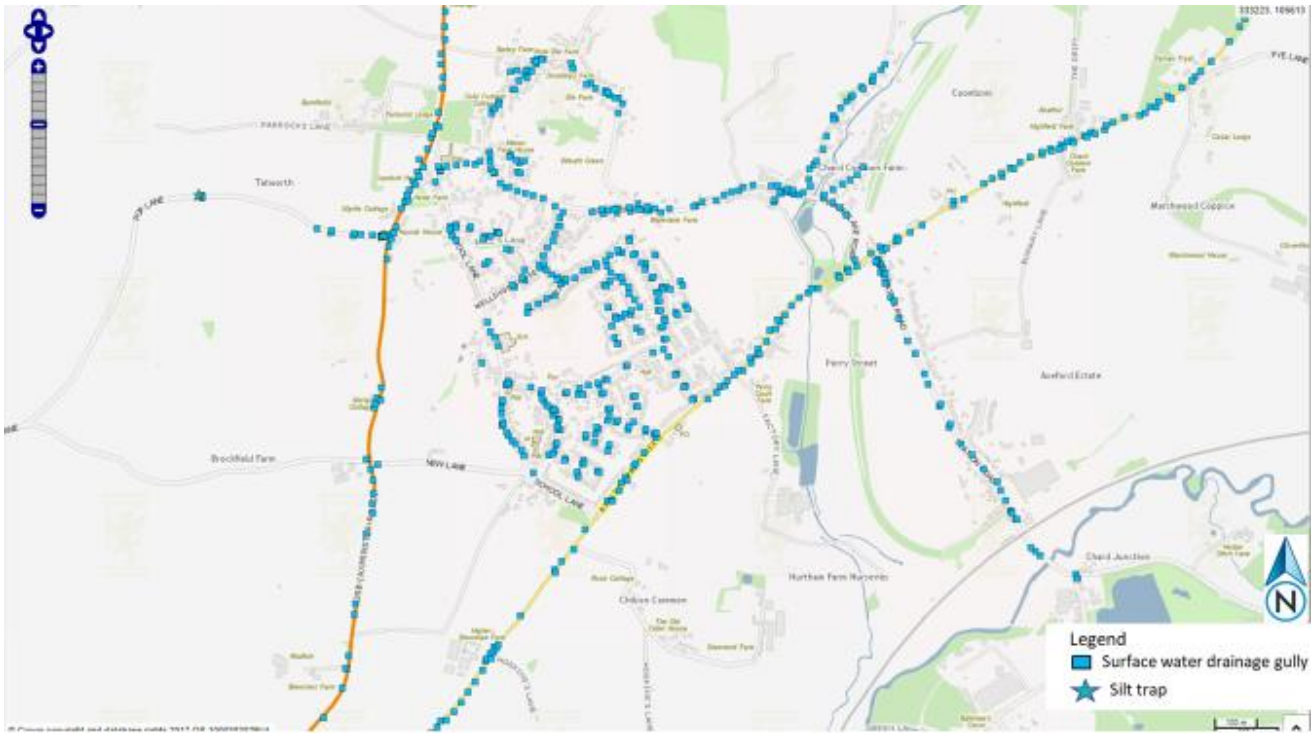


Figure 43: Highways Surface water drainage in Coombses and Tatworth.

Figure 44: Highways Surface water drainage in Forton.

There are no gullies in the centre of the village. This needs to be looked at and confirmed.

Figure 45: Highways Surface water drainage in Wambrook.

Appendix 4: EA Surface water flood mapping.

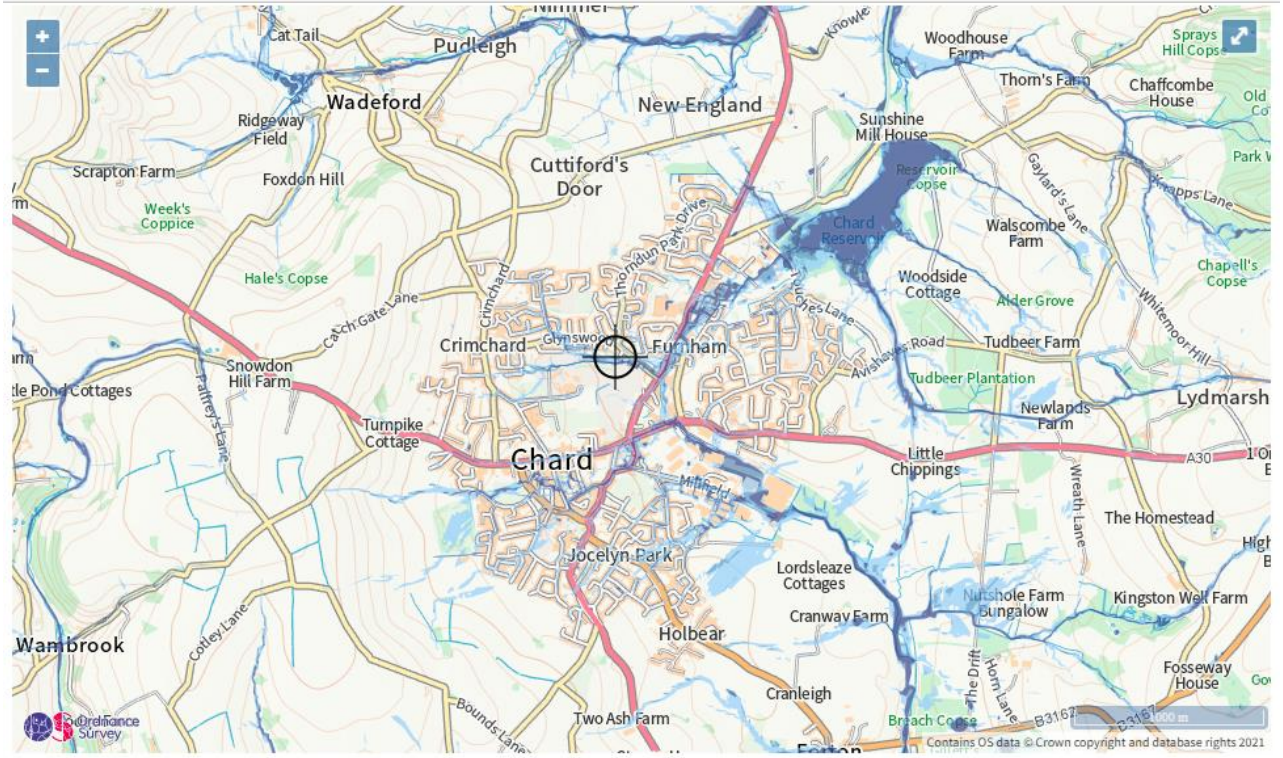


Figure 46: Surface water flood risk map for the whole of Chard

Surface water flood risk maps show the risk of flooding from pluvial sources – from rainfall accumulating and forming an overland flow. It considers the drainage systems in the area. It does not show predicted fluvial flooding – that is, flooding resulting from rising levels in rivers and streams. However, the two effects often occur together, as both pluvial flow and rivers and streams will naturally locate in the lowest topographical points.

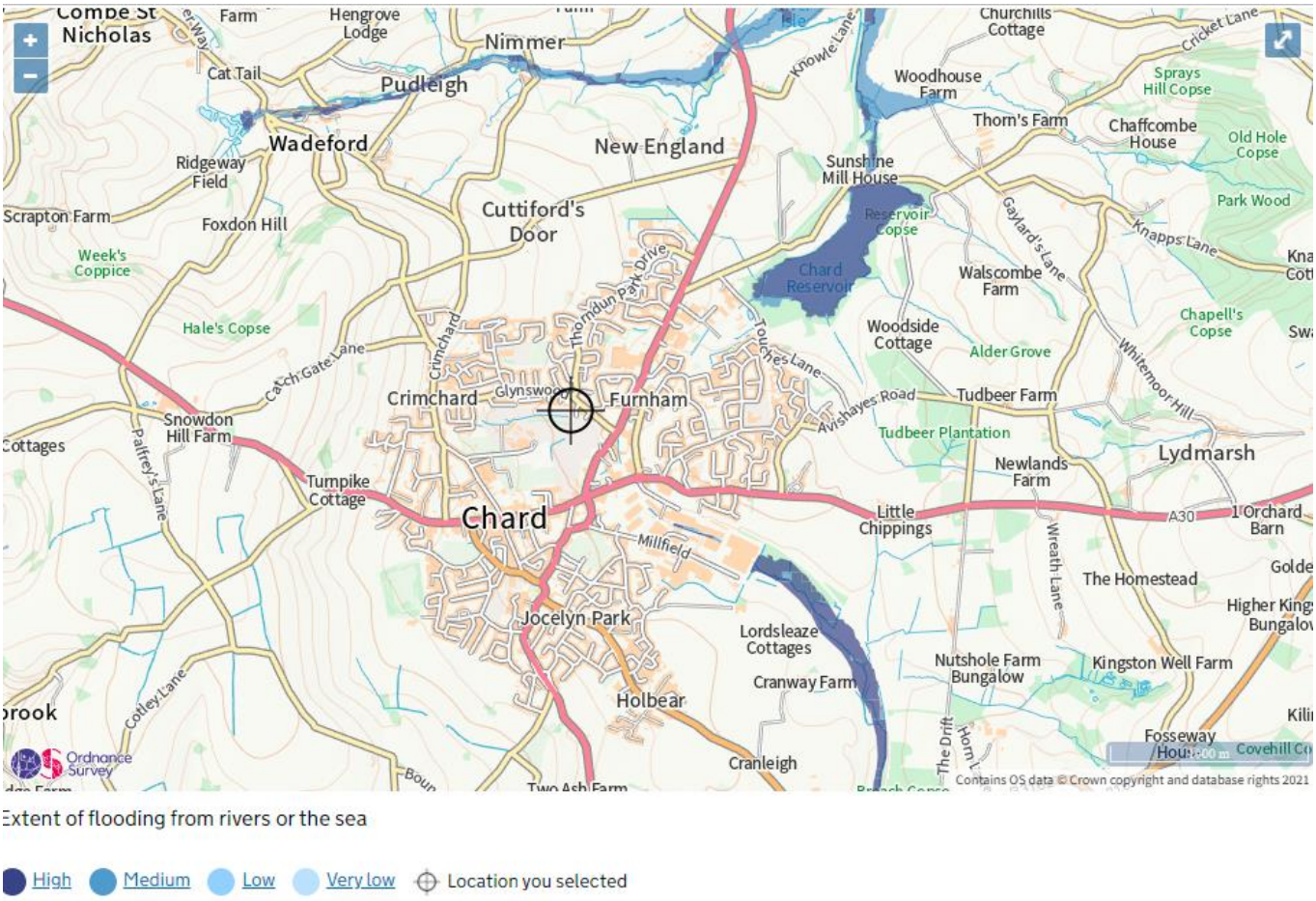
The maps show four different grades or frequencies of flooding – dark blue areas (high risk) will flood most frequently, with an average 3.3% chance of flooding in each year.

Mid blue areas (medium risk) will flood only after heavier rainfall – in these areas there is an average chance of flooding between 1% and 3.3% each year.

Light blue areas (low risk) only flood after very heavy rain – here there is an average chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1% per year.

Areas with no colouration have an average chance of flooding each year of less than 1%.

To put this in context, the rainfall event that fell on Chard in June 2021 has a 3% chance of occurring every year. That is extremely heavy rainfall, and is too heavy to be covered by this map. If the map was reworked to cover a 3% annual chance of flooding, the blue coloured area would be larger than it is now, and new areas would appear. As such, not every area which flooded during the June event will be shown on this map.



Extent of flooding from rivers or the sea

High Medium Low Very low Location you selected

Figure 47: Fluvial flood risk map, whole of Chard

The nearest main river is approximately 1km from the fringes of Chard, in a north easterly direction. These are not implicated in the flooding event of the 28th. All waterbodies within Chard that may have been involved in the flood event are ordinary watercourses.

Although not implicated in the June flooding event, the fact that the River Isle at Ashford Mill was at 170% of long term average levels during June, gives some idea of the amount of water that was around in the catchment.

Very little fluvial flooding is predicted for within Chard itself, indicating that the flooding that occurred in June is likely mainly pluvial. Fluvial flooding is predicted for the centre of the villages if Wadeford and Nimmer. Some properties in Wadeford were described by the Parish Council as being affected by both pluvial and fluvial flooding. In Nimmer, properties on the main river Isle reported a blocked culvert being an issue – suggesting that rivers levels were rising and causing concern, if not actual

flooding, however residents on side stream reported that their flooding came entirely from overland flow.

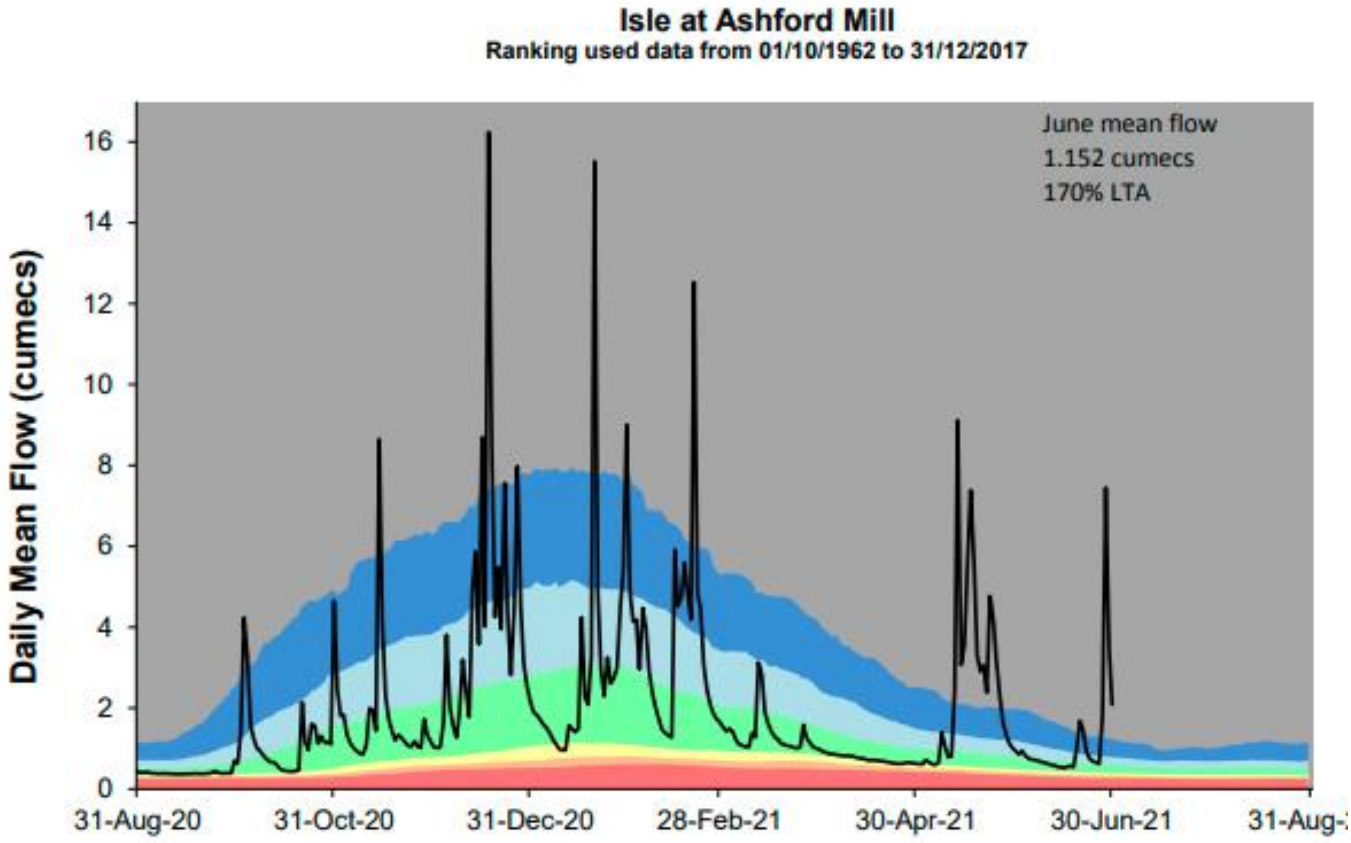


Figure 48: Daily Mean flow on the River Isle.

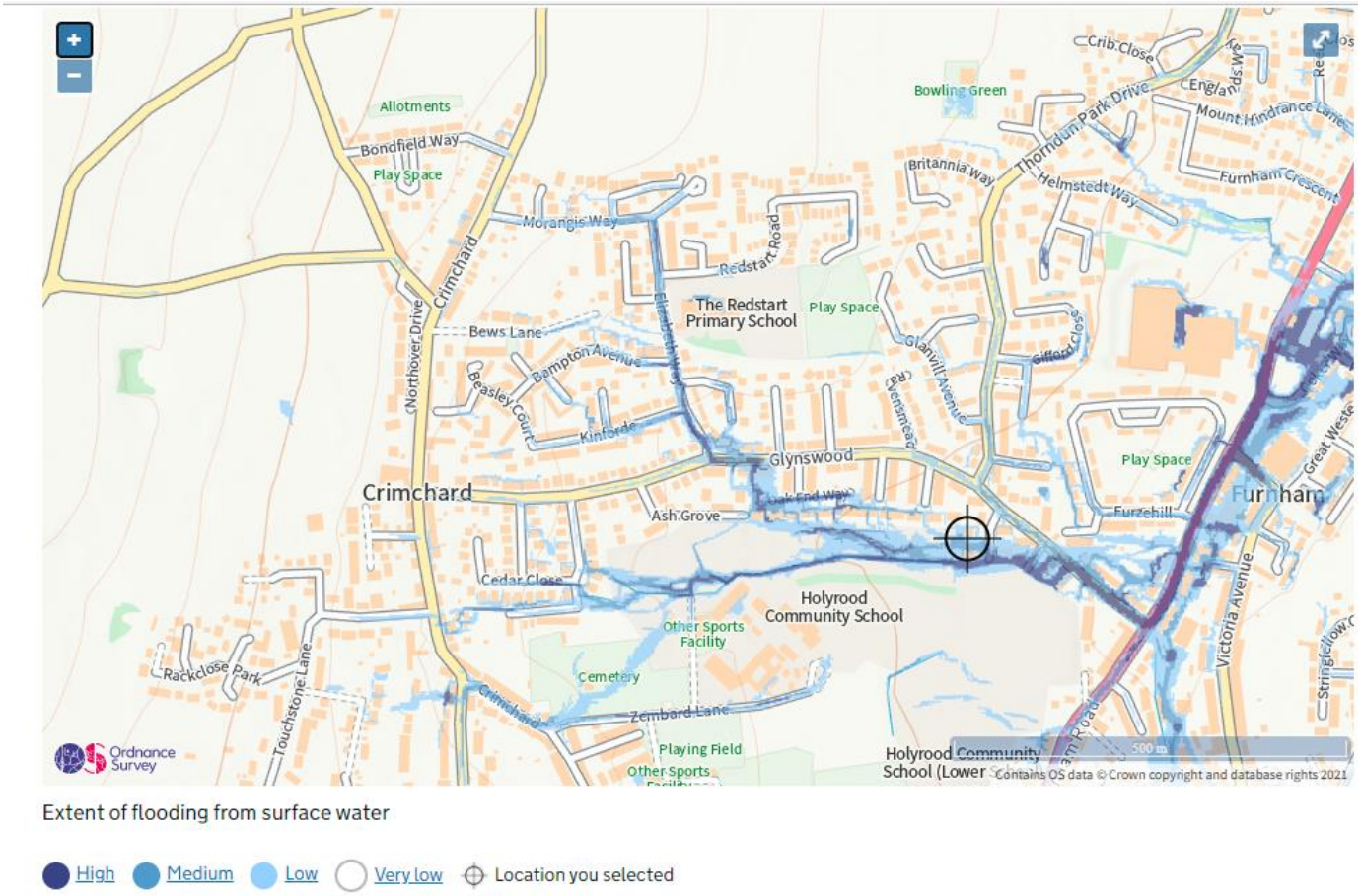


Figure 49: Surface water flood risk map for Glynswood

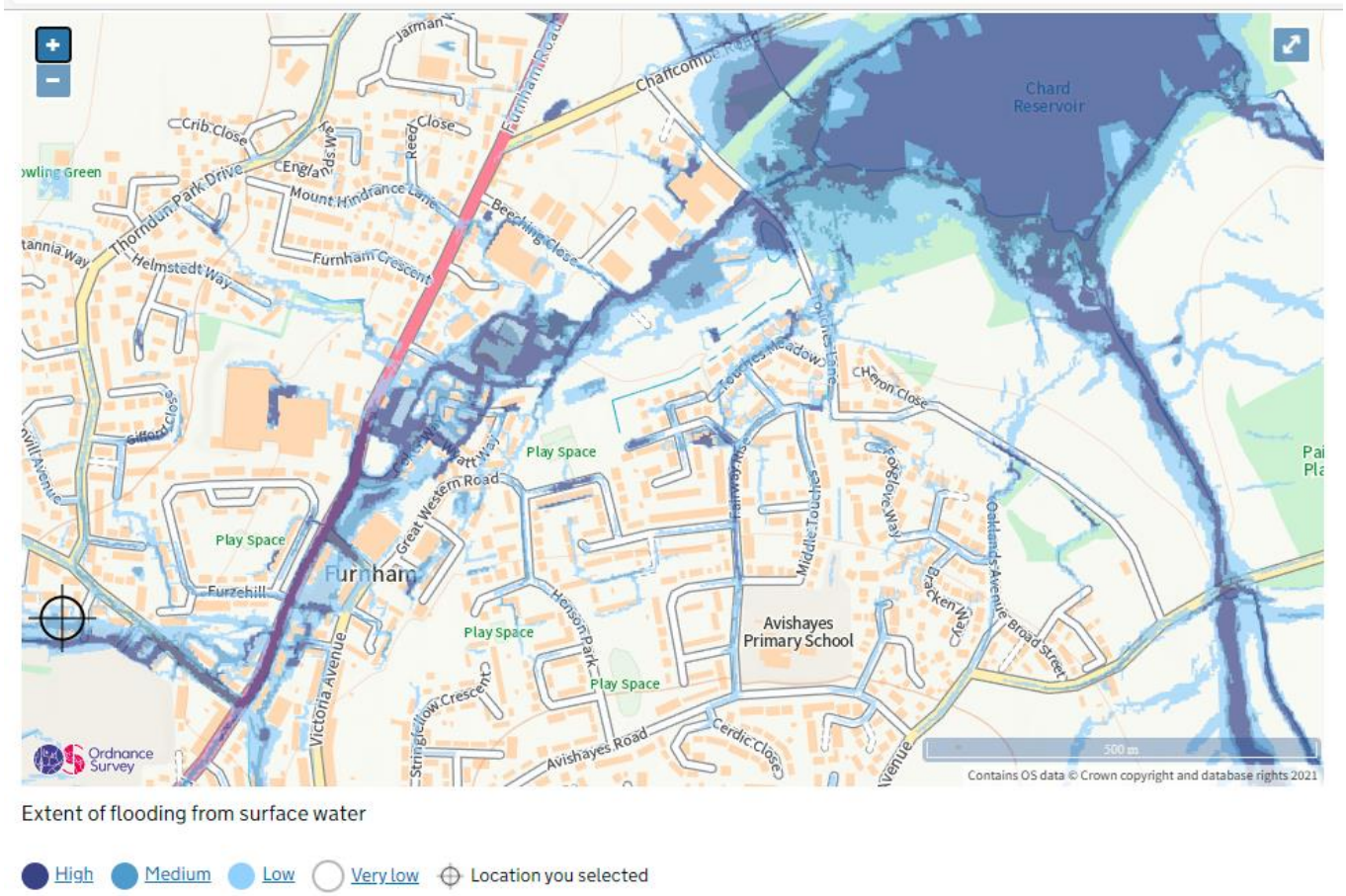


Figure 50: Surface water flood risk map for Furnham

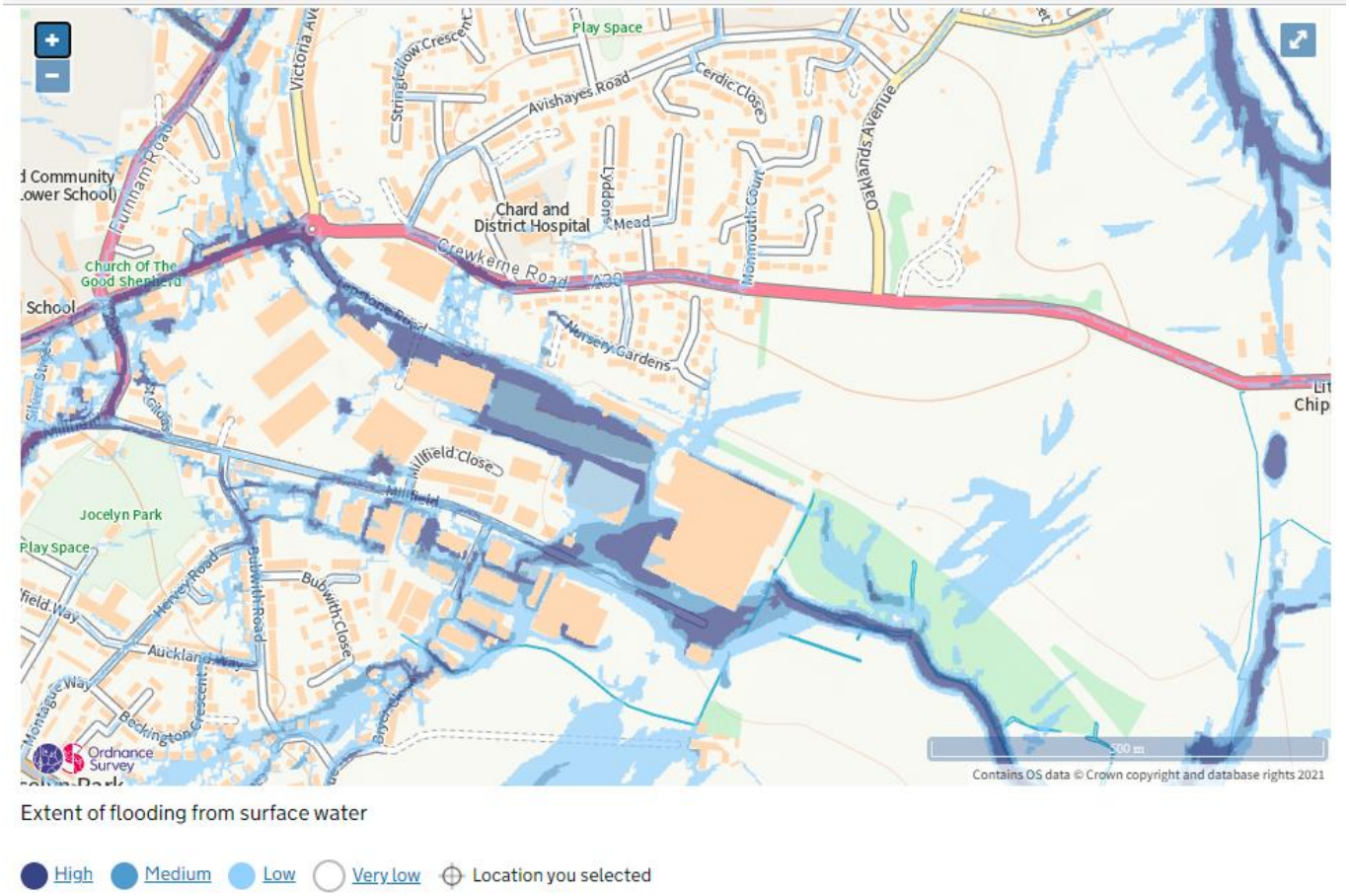
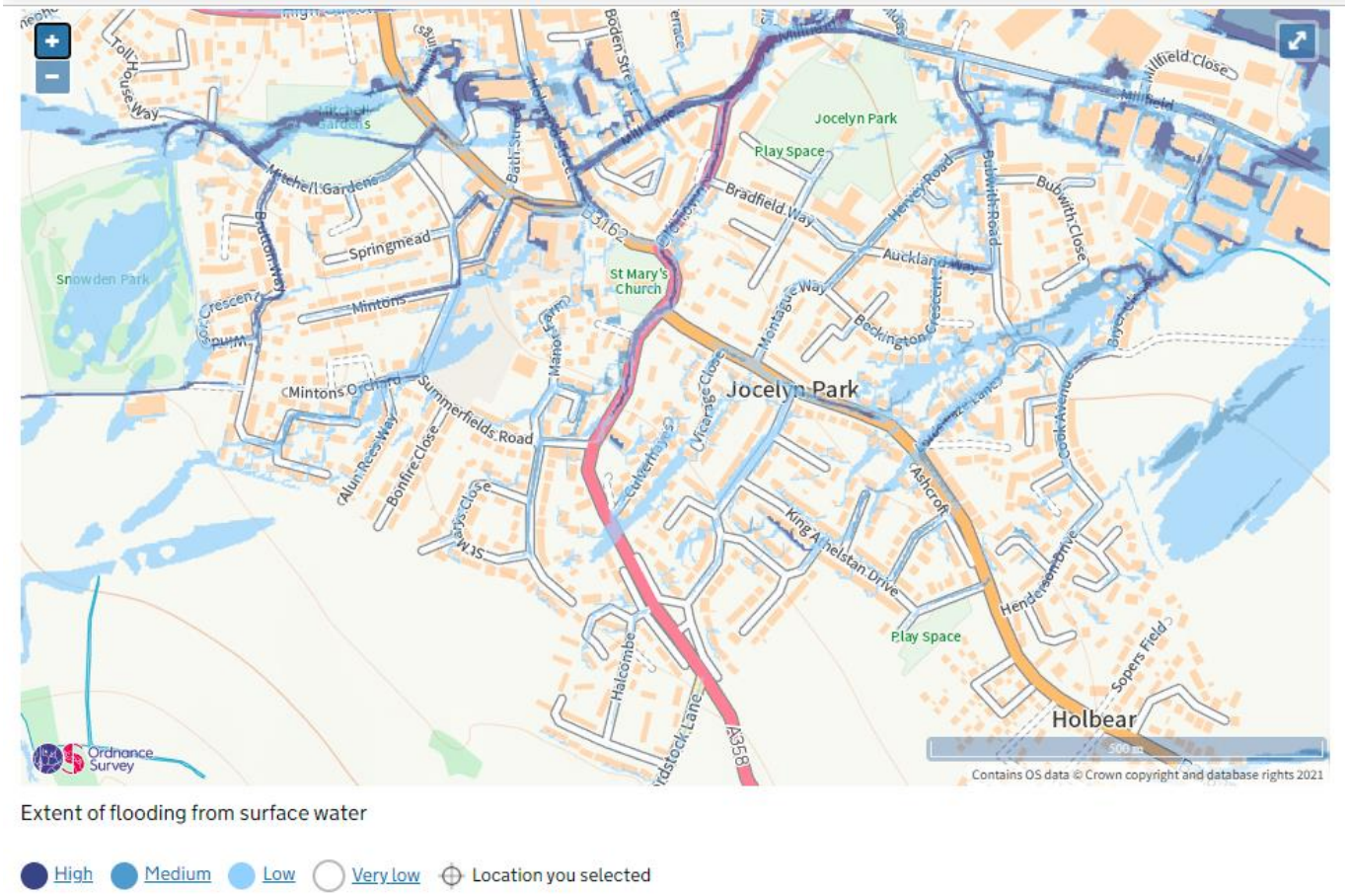


Figure 51: Surface water flood risk map for Crewkerne Road

Extent of flooding from surface water

High Medium Low Very low Location you selected

Figure 52: Surface water flood risk map for High Street

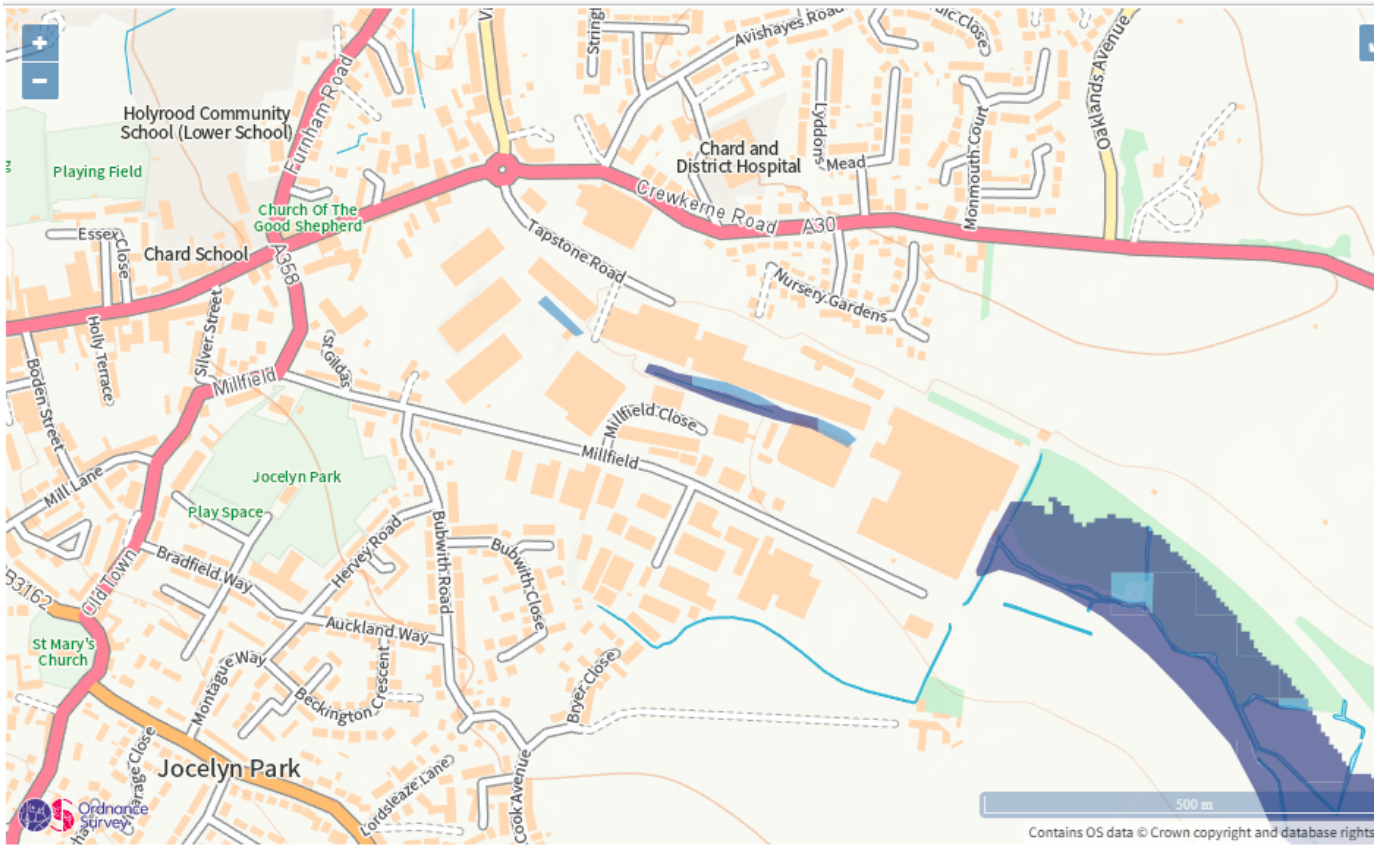


Extent of flooding from surface water

High Medium Low Very low Location you selected

Figure 53: Surface water flood risk map for Jocelyn Park

Detailed fluvial flood risk maps:



Extent of flooding from rivers or the sea

High Medium Low Very low Location you selected

Figure 54: Fluvial flood risk map, Millfield

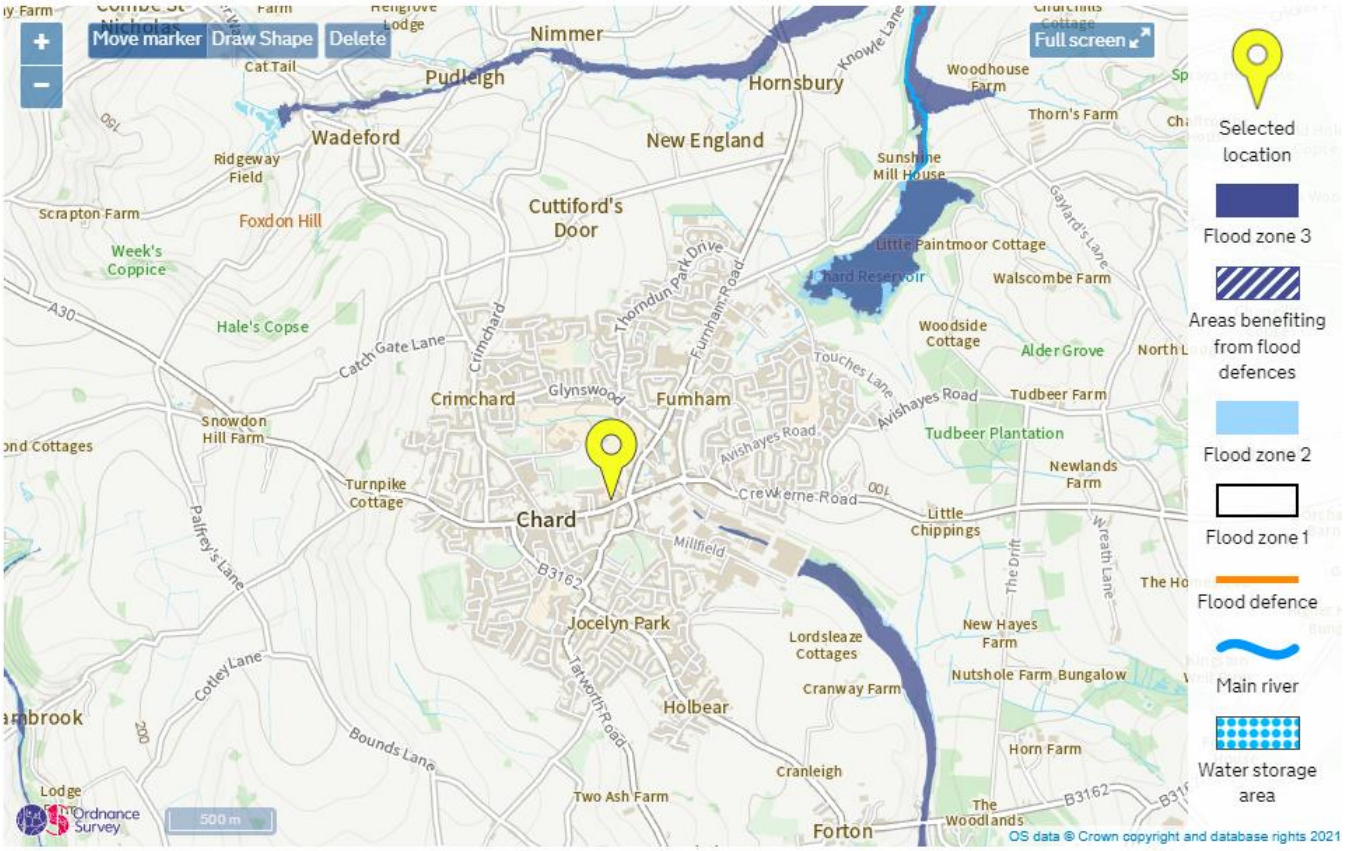


Figure 55: EA Flood Map for Planning. Note that this only shows flood risk from fluvial sources.

Table 5: Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities.

Somerset County Council (in their roles as LLFA and Highways Authority)	Risk Management Authority. As the LLFA they are required to develop a strategy to tackle local flood risks, involving flooding from surface water, 'ordinary watercourses', for example ditches, dykes, and streams, groundwater, canals, lakes and small reservoirs. Along with all LLFAs, they are required to: • investigate all significant flooding incidents; • maintain a register of flood defence assets; • act as a statutory consultee in the planning process on surface water for major developments; and • build partnerships and ensure effective working between authorities that have control over flood risk. They also have to undertake specific tasks associated with the Flood Risk Regulations, and this includes completing a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and identifying flood risk areas. As the highways authority they have the lead responsibility for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches under the Highways Act 1980. The owners of land adjoining a highway also have a common-law duty to maintain ditches to prevent them causing a nuisance to road users.
Environment Agency	Risk Management Authority. The Environment Agency has a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion (as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010). It is also responsible for coastal erosion risk management activities, regulating reservoir safety, and working in partnership with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings. The study area runs across one of their internal borders. Chard, Combe St Nicholas, Wadeford, Nimmer, and points north of the southern edge of Chard are handled by the Wessex office. South of this, including Tatworth and Forton, are handled by the Devon office.
Wessex Water	Risk Management Authority. They manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure. Their southernmost border is tight around the south side of Chard, so they are responsible for water and sewage in Chard itself, and

	the northern settlements such as Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas, and Nimmer.
Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)	Stakeholder Somerset Rivers Authority's main aim is to give Somerset greater flood protection and resilience. Somerset Rivers Authority focuses heavily on providing additional maintenance and improvements to rivers and their catchments, roads prone to flooding, and structures such as culverts and drains.
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	Incident Response Lead. The Fire Brigade is typically the lead responder for a flooding incident. The Fire Brigade role includes saving life and carrying out rescue of casualties or persons stranded by flooding, including by boat. They may pump out floodwater.
Avon and Somerset Police	Incident Response. The police co-ordinate the emergency services during a major flood and help with evacuation of people from their homes where necessary. They also close roads and take other actions to ensure public safety.
South Somerset District Council	Risk Management Authority. They are key partners in planning local flood risk management. They can carry out flood risk management works on minor watercourses (outside of IDB areas).
South West Water	Risk Management Authority. They manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure. Their northernmost border is tight to the south side of Chard, so they are responsible for water and sewage in Tatworth and Forton.
Riparian Owners	Stakeholders Responsible for the maintenance of watercourses running through or bordering their land.

Parish and Town Councils	Stakeholders. Do not have statutory duties, but are often the people 'on the ground' helping local residents to safety, and to access property level emergency flood protection and information.
All bodies are required to work in partnership to support the local flood risk strategy, to ensure flood management activities are well co-ordinated, and work in partnership to reduce the severity and impact of flooding.	

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Somerset County Council
Lead Local Flood Authority

Section 19 Investigation Report

As the Lead Local Flood Authority for Somerset, we have a duty to investigate flood incidents as outlined within Section 19 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010.

Date of Incident:	20th October 2021	**Date of Report: 11th November 2022** **Version: 34.1** **Status:** adding feedback from park homes group
Site / Catchment Location:	Ilminster	

Contents

Introduction

The function of a Section 19 report is to gather information on the happenings during a particular flood event. They are known as a Section 19 report because they are required under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The legislation says:

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.

In addition, a Section 19 report will often detail any ongoing work with regards to flooding in the area, and will signpost additional work that should be considered, usually in the form of investigations to be undertaken.

It is not the function of a Section 19 to provide concrete solutions for flooding. This requires far more detailed technical work, liaison with landowners, and decision making about schemes in concert with the public and other stakeholders, although the Section 19 report can help in proving the need for this work and securing funding. Also, it is impossible to prevent absolutely *all* flooding – rainfall events vary widely in intensity, and whatever drainage systems or flood mitigation schemes are put in place, there is always the possibility, however remote, that an extreme rainfall event will overwhelm them. We can, however, plan for the vast majority of rainfall events, and in the course of doing so, make exteme events less bad. Even a small difference in the final height or path of flood water can be the difference for some between their homes flooding and not, so even small schemes can have value in an extreme rainfall event.

The usual way to describe the severity of rainfall events is to talk in terms of '1 in X years'. If we take the example of a 1 in 100 year event, this is an event of a size that will be equalled or exceeded *on*

average once every 100 years. This means that over a period of 1,000 years you would expect the one in 100 year event would be equalled or exceeded ten times. But several of those ten times might happen within a few years of each other, and then none for a long time afterwards. This report deals with a rainfall event of 1 in 38 year intensity. Reports of flooding extents from residents suggest that the flooding was not nearly as extensive as that resulting from a 1 in 100 year flooding event, which is what is shown on Environment Agency flood maps.

This report includes selected photographs supplied by residents showing flooding in progress, and maps showing more detail of the area. We are grateful to residents for the information they have provided which has enabled the compilation of this report.

Area Information

Ilminster is a town in South Somerset located west of Yeovil and Southeast of Taunton on the intersection between the A303 and A358. It is a small market town with about 5,800 residents recorded on the 2011 census. The town is positioned within an agricultural landscape. Its form is broadly linear in the valley formed between Beacon Hill, Pretwood Hill and Herne Hill. It is referred to in the Somerset Local Plan as an historic market town of Saxon origin originally centred on the Market Place and church and extending between the Shudrick Stream and lower slopes of Beacon Hill. The town subsequentially spread along the route of the watercourse and part way up the surrounding hills. More recent residential development is identified as having expanded north, south and southwest. Industrial and trading areas have been sited predominantly on the western edge of the town. This area is known historically to have been wet and marshy. The parish includes the hamlet of Sea, 1.5 miles to the south west.

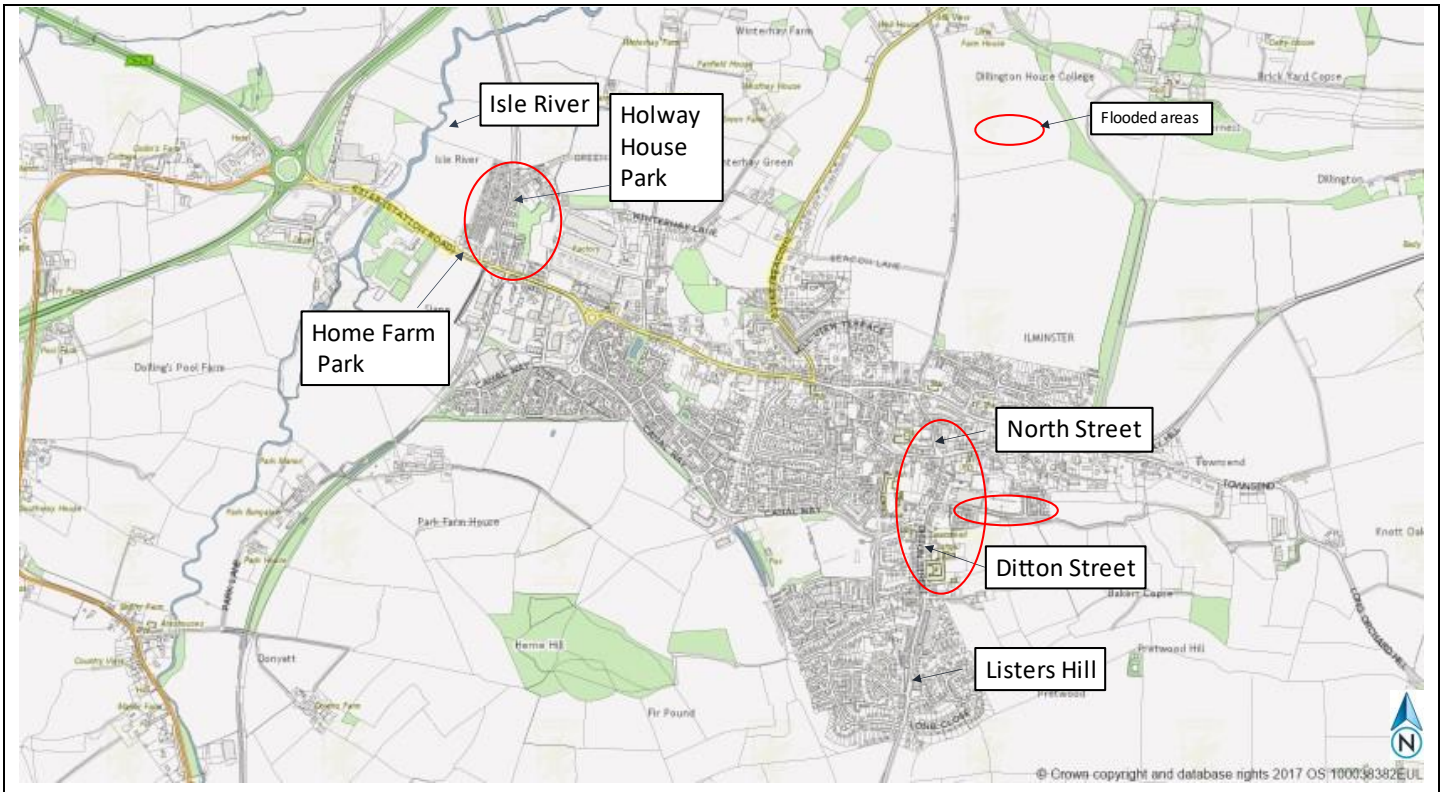


Figure 1: Catchment of this report, Ilminster

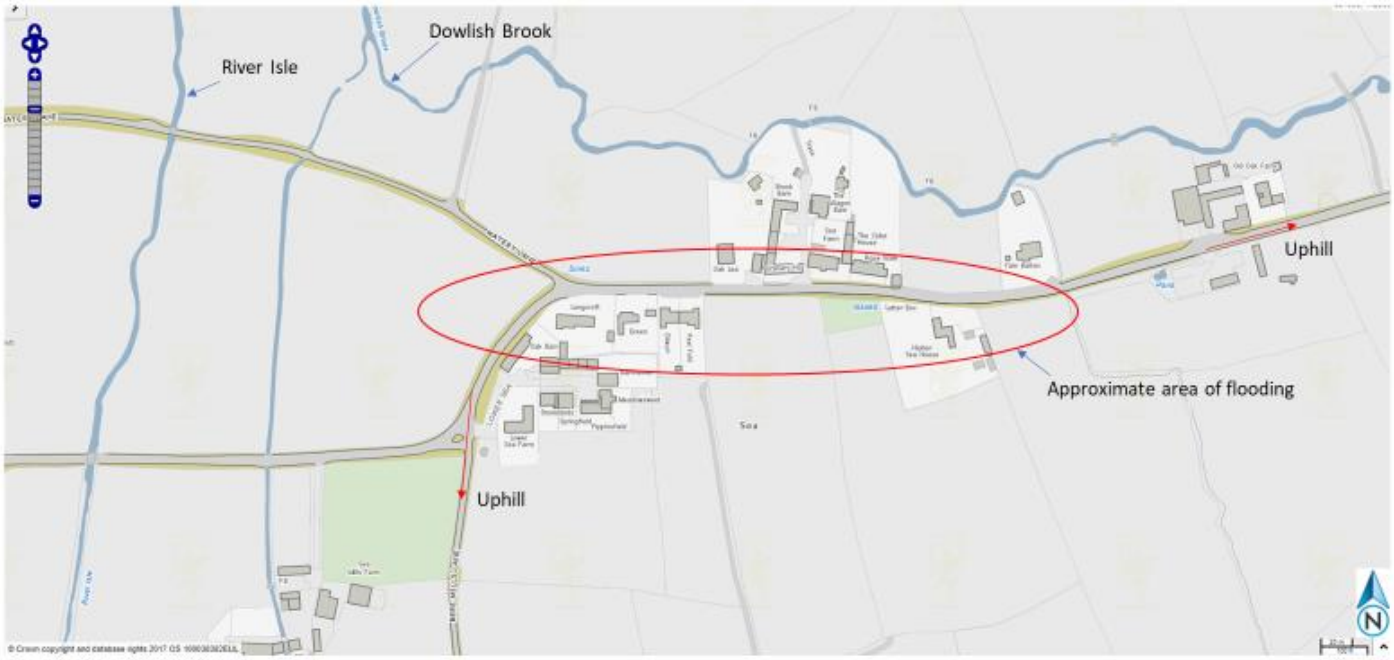
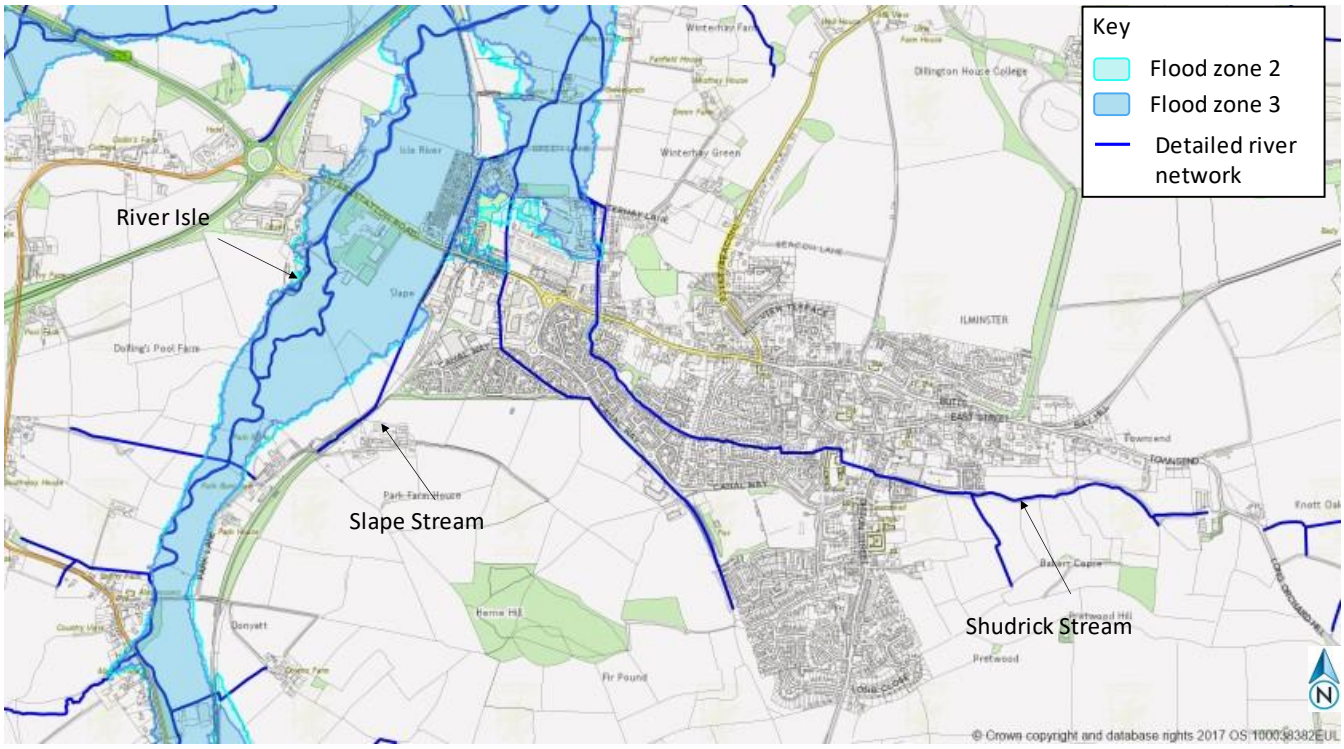
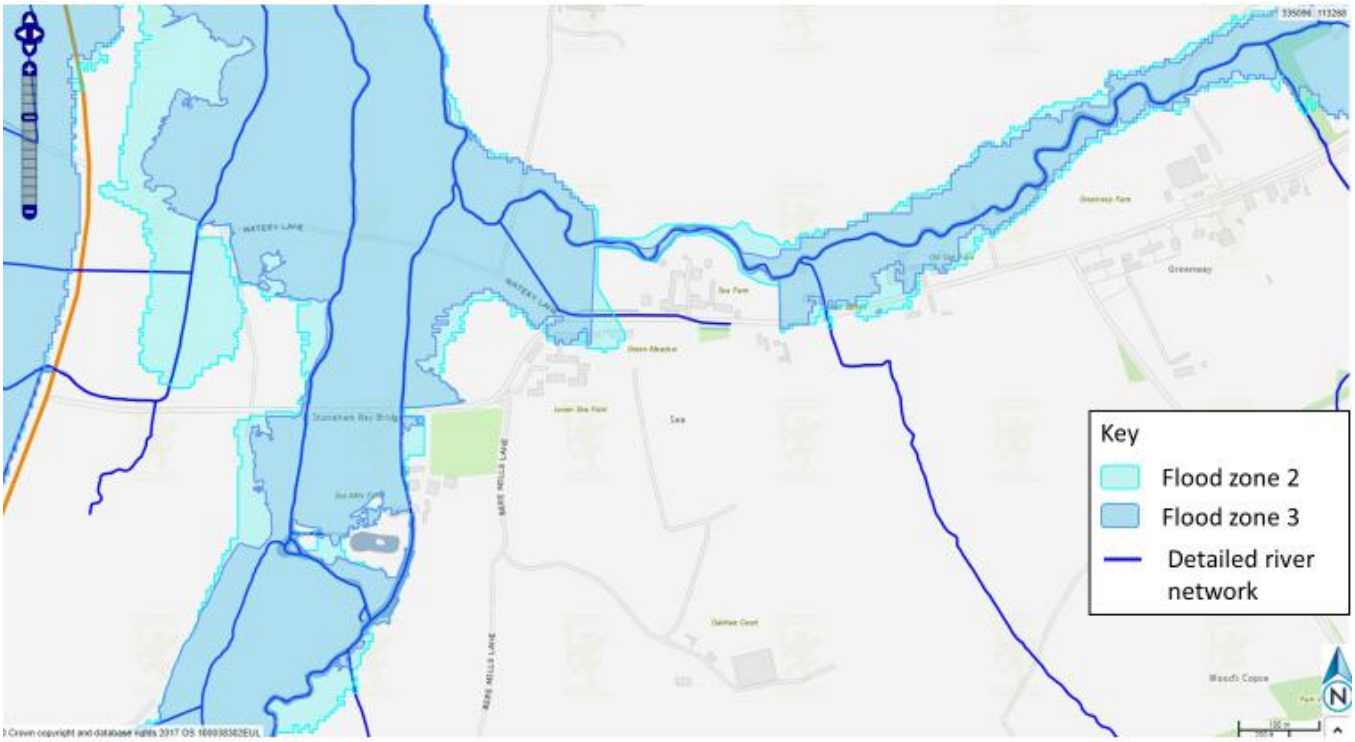


Figure 2: Catchment of this report, Sea





Figures 3 & 4: Flood zones and detailed river network

The above maps also show the risk of fluvial flooding – that is, from the river alone. Flood zone 2 consists of areas that have 0.1-1% chance of flooding from rivers in any year, and Flood zone 3 consists of areas that have a 1% or higher chance of flooding from rivers.

A member of the public has reported that the Figure 3 map above is incorrect, and that the old canal, which runs down the western side of Ilminster town, actually joins with the Shudrick Stream rather than the Snape Stream. This appears to be an issue with the Ordnance Survey map as well as the Environment Agency information from which the above figure derives. The path of this watercourse should be investigated and corrected as necessary.

Ilminster is in the catchment of the River Isle, which discharges into the River Parrett at Midelney in the Somerset Levels. The Isle runs to the west of the town, with a tributary – the Shudrick Stream – running across the town east to west. The Shudrick Stream enters the Isle to the north of Ilminster, near Winterhey Farm. Ilminster is surrounded by high ground to the north, south and east, with further high ground across the river to the southwest. The low points are next to the Isle to the west, and along Old Road, North Street and Ditton Street on the East of town.

Both the River Isle and the Shudrick Stream are main rivers. The EA have overall responsibility for the management of flood risk on main rivers in England and Wales. This means they have powers to oversee, undertake and regulate flood risk management works on Main Rivers. Other risk management authorities and individuals, such as riparian owners, can be authorised by the EA to undertake works on Main Rivers in accordance with the environmental permitting regulations. Flood risk management works, such as projects and maintenance, depend upon the availability of central government funding. The availability of funding from central government (DEFRA) depends on a comprehensive assessment of options, including cost/benefit analysis, and on the environmental impacts. Central government funding might be available to cover part of the cost of the works; in such cases the rest has to be found from other local sources, such as Local Levy, local authorities, other government departments, or the private sector. Where the EA or another risk management authority are not funded for maintenance or development works, responsibility falls to the riparian owner. The EA can provide advice in such cases.

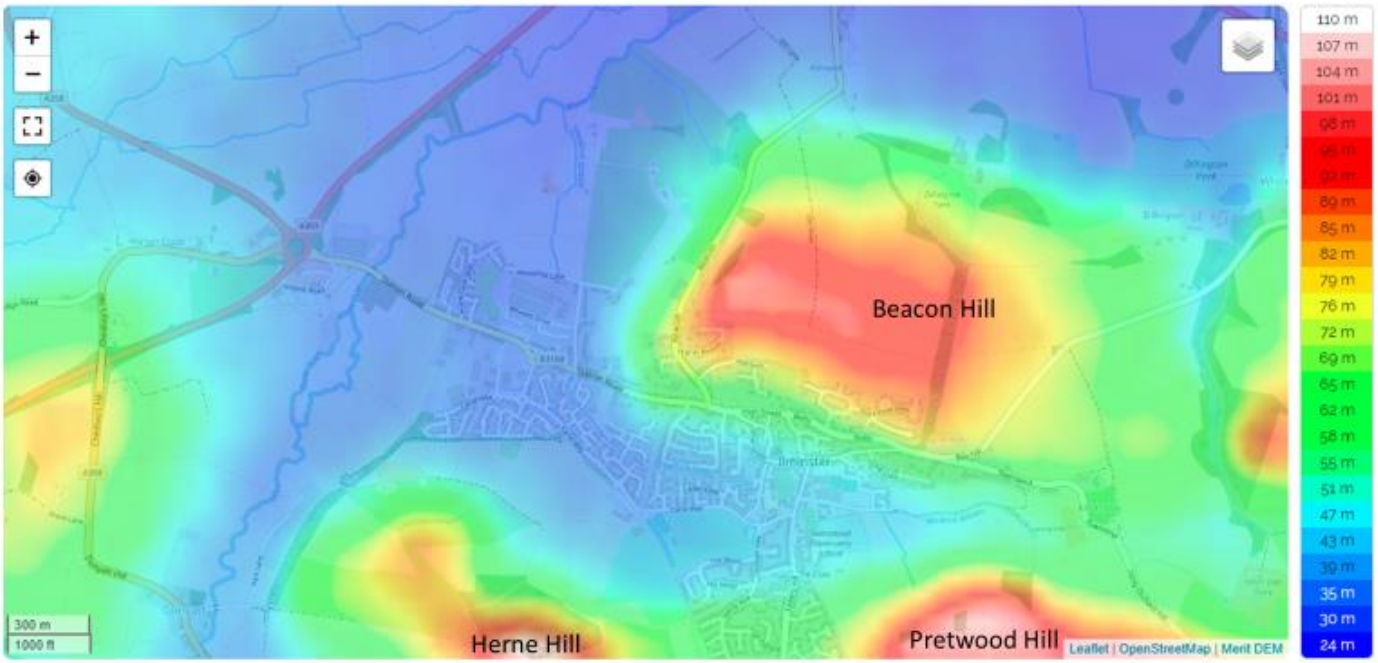


Figure 5: Topographic map of Ilminster area.

This shows the form and, most importantly, height of the land surrounding Ilminster. Pink and red land is the highest, with blue at the lowest points. Beacon Hill summit is around 103m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD), Pretwood Hill 107m AOD and Herne Hill 110m AOD. The land falls to about 55m AOD, at the head of the Shudrick Stream then down to around 30m AOD at the downstream confluence with the River Isle. Within the town the lower levels are generally on land between the Shudrick Stream and Canal Way at about 33m to 34m AOD. Note that the majority of the area which flooded is at the same low point as the river Isle, and the steep slopes from the Beacon down to the east end of town.

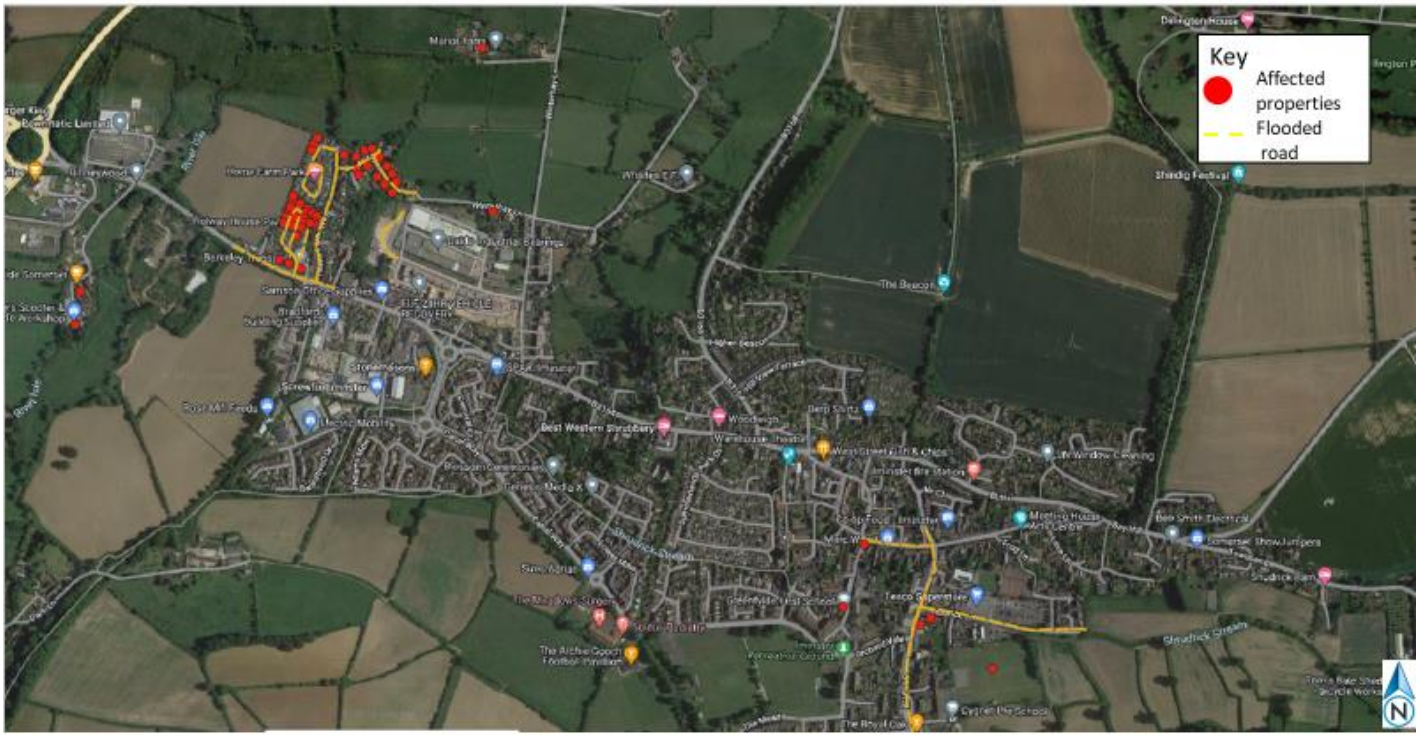


Figure 6: Areas affected in Ilminster

50 properties have been reported as flooding in Ilminster during the event. The actual number affected may be higher, as those affected sometimes do not report having been flooded.

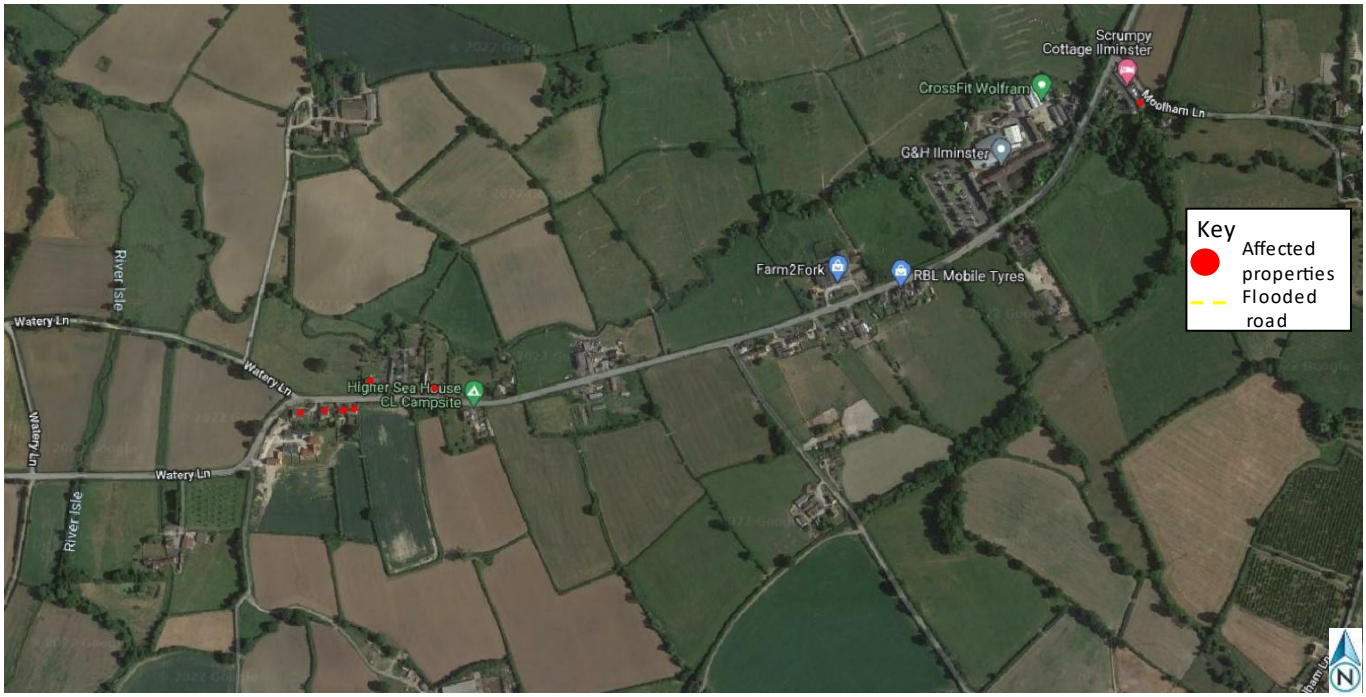


Figure 7: Areas affected in Sea and Dowlish Ford

Six Properties were reported as being affected by flooding in Sea, and one in Dowlish Ford.

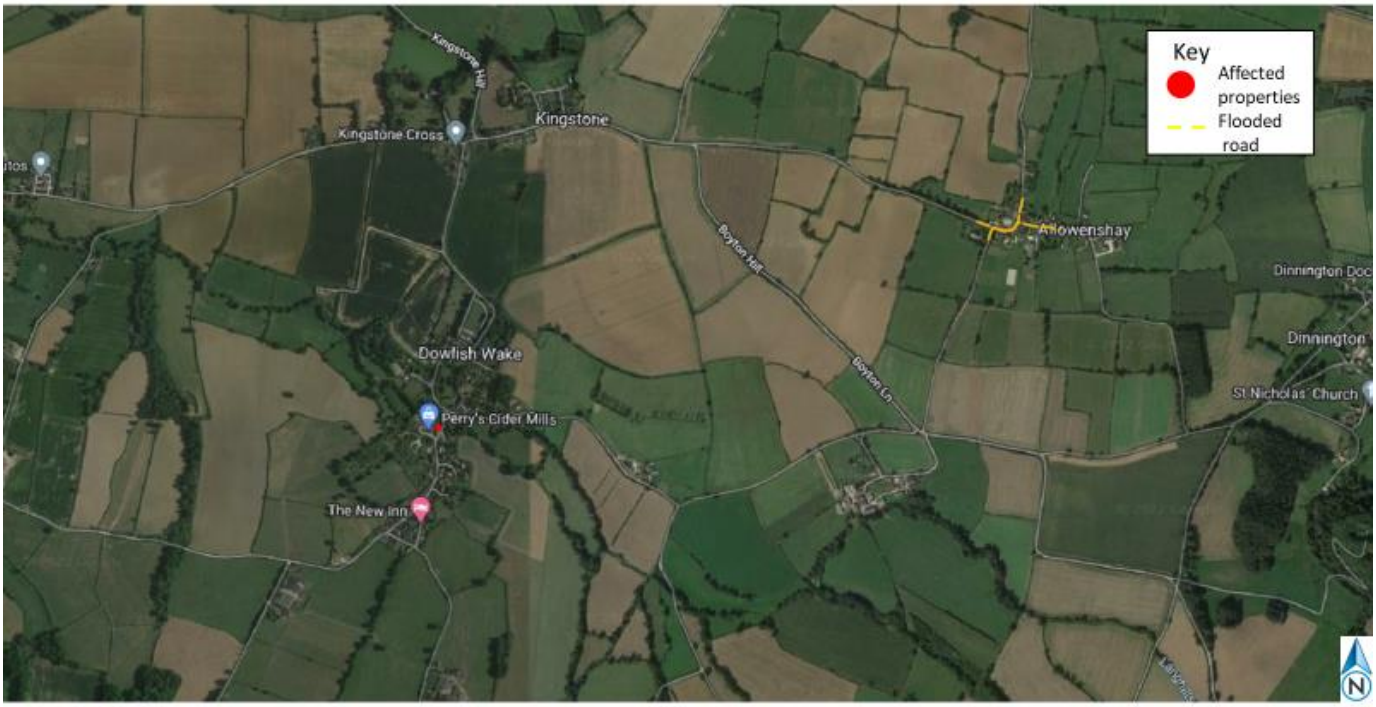


Figure 8: Areas affected in Allowenshay and Dowlish Wake

One property was reported as being affected in Dowlish Wake. Roads were flooded in Allowenshay.

Horton Village was also reported as being badly affected, but no details have been received.

These are the main areas reported as being affected by flooding in October 2021. Flooded farmland or forestry is not shown.

Figure 9: Watercourses around the Park Home sites

The two Park Home sites were particularly badly affected. Houses in Station Road, Green Way and Home Farm Way, and the Rose Mill Industrial Estate also experienced flooding.

Although the Slape Stream is marked on this map as running down Home Farm Way, alongside the residential parks, there is no sign of it on the ground until you get across Station Road, where it appears as a ditch running alongside the small industrial area on the old station site. It is not known whether this is a winterbourne, only appearing during periods of high rainfall, or whether the stream has been culverted under the park homes developments, and re-appears at the surface during high rainfall. The true situation may be a combination of the two.

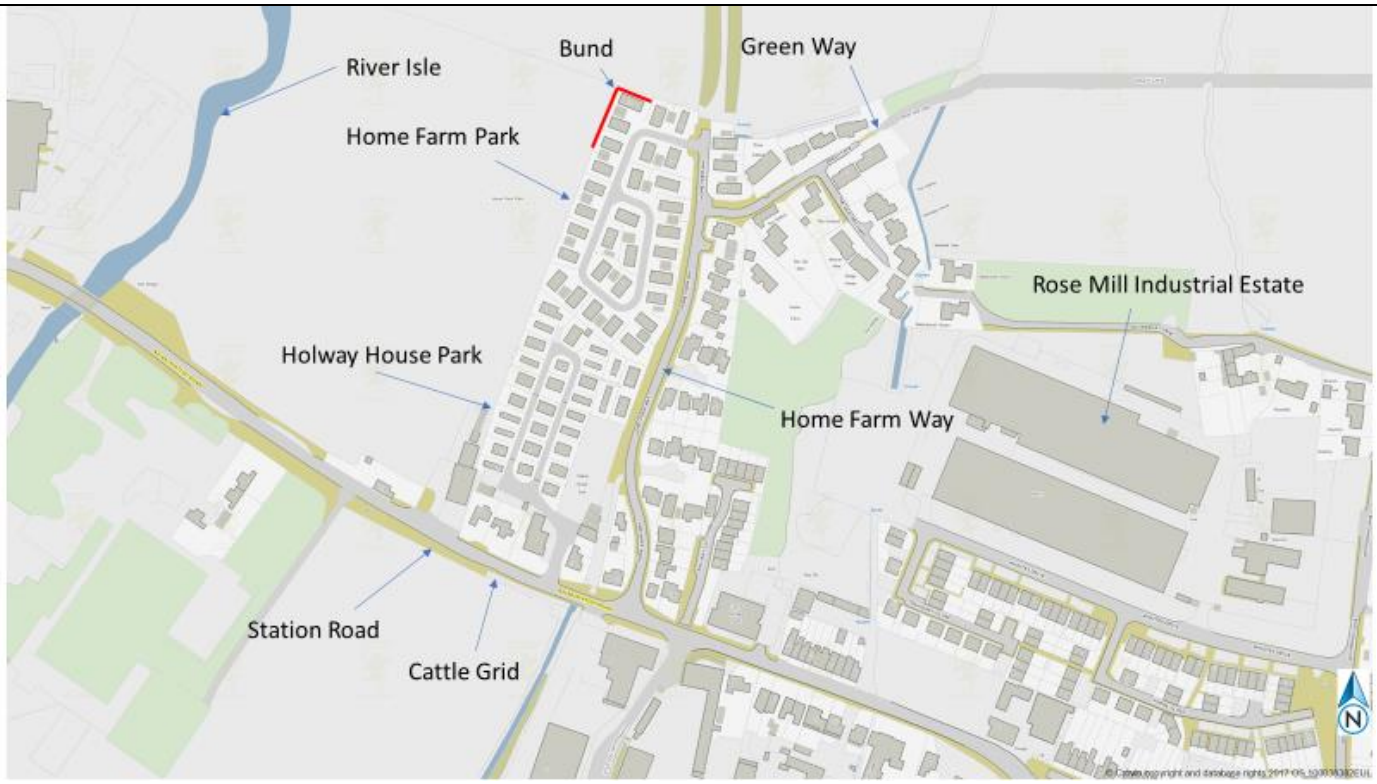


Figure 10: Detail of Park Home sites

The history and placement of the bund shown in Figure 10 will be discussed in a later chapter.

Impact and Extent of Flooding - Summary	Severe flooding took place in Ilminster and Sea on the 20th of October 2021. High rainfall on the back of previous wet weather created high river flows and overland surface water flows in the area. Further information on rainfall is given later in the report. The effect on many has been devastating. Homes and businesses have seen property damaged and belongings destroyed. The residential park home developments on the west of town were particularly hard hit. Residents, many elderly, had to be evacuated, and some have lost everything. Some people found themselves in life threatening situations or in fear of personal harm. The overarching problem was a combination of the very high rainfall and the already wet ground conditions following recent rain in the preceding period, making October a very wet month overall. This is combined with a relatively impermeable underlying geology and soils, which would have had very little moisture deficit to absorb more rain. Hence the Isle experienced its highest water level in 30 years gauge history. The resultant flooding was well beyond what any residents of the area had seen in their lifetimes, and flows on the river Isle were the highest recorded. This created two issues – the Isle coming out of its bank and flooding areas to the west of town, and rainwater accumulating in North Street, Ditton Street and Shudrick Lane. This report will examine how the infrastructure and stakeholders coped with this very high volume of rainfall, and question whether anything can be done to reduce the effects of extremely high rainfall events in future.

Impact and extent of Flooding	Over the 20th and 21st October 2021, flooding was extremely severe in Ilminster and Sea. In an incident of this nature it is difficult to collate exact numbers of properties affected, and whether flooding was internal, or external. From reports, we know that at least 50 properties were affected. The main cause of flooding in Ilminster and Sea was the high volume of rain and already wet ground conditions. This caused the Isle to burst its banks, and there was a resultant overland flow of water. The bursting of the Isle caused severe flooding at the western edge of Ilminster, causing residents to be evacuated, while the accumulated rainfall running down from the Beacon caused surface water flooding at the eastern end of town. In Sea, surface water ran down the main road and entered properties mostly via the front doors. This water could have come from rainfall, or from local drains and streams, or a combination of the two. A variety of agencies were present on the night of the event, fulfilling their statutory duties. This flooding incident was wider than the Ilminster area, so many agencies were having to prioritise across the county. The Fire Brigade were attending life threating emergencies, and in Ilminster they evacuated residents. The Police were out assisting with emergencies across the county. The Civil Contingencies Unit had two duty officers out who opened a flood relief centre and organised the distribution of sandbags. They were also active securing alternative emergency accommodation for evacuated residents, and trying to find transport to get them there. They worked in concert with Fire and Rescue, and other District Council, County Council and Parish Council officers. Members of Ilminster Town council were out helping residents to protect their homes and handing out sandbags. The Highways Authority had no statutory duties on the night, and were not required to be called out. Over the following days they visited various sites where debris has been washed into the road, to clear up and identify road areas which needed repair. The Environment Agency fulfilled their statutory duty on the night by issuing flood warnings on main rivers. There were no reports of sewer flooding, so Wessex Water were not involved. **Timeline of events: 21st October 2021** • 19:00 - Following heavy rainfall on Wednesday 20th October 2021, levels on the River Isle began to rise. • 22:00 - Civil Contingency Officer (CCO) called to action.

	• 22:36 - CCO called Fire & Rescue who confirmed that they were dealing with multiple incidents. • 22:42 - Flood Warning for this area was issued; River Isle from Chard Reservoir to Hambridge, 112FWFISL10A. Levels continued to rise, peaking at Donyatt at approximately 23:30 and at Hort Bridge at 23:45. The level at Donyatt was the highest ever recorded at this gauge. Over the course of the event, 61.8mm of rain fell on the nearby Snowdon Hill in 24 hours (71% monthly average). 52.4mm of that fell during a 7 hour window, which equates to 60% of the average monthly rainfall for the area. • 24:00 – Peak rainfall predicted for now. • 01:00-01:30 – Flooding started in the areas of Station Road, Holway House Park, Green Lane and the Old Orchard. All reports are consistent that the onset and rate of rise was very rapid, with peak depths being reached within 20-25 mins. • 02:00 – Fire & Rescue began rescuing people from park home development. River Isle reported to have burst its banks. • The time when the Ditton Street end of Ilminster and Sea began to flood are unknown. **Ditton Street:** According to the reports of agencies out on the night, the flooding at Ditton Street was believed to be due to a combination of urban surface water, surface water coming off of land at the end of Shudrick Lane and the top of Listers Hill, and water spilling from the Shudrick Stream. Drains were reported by residents as being blocked. There have also been reports that ditches have not been cleared by land owners. The Shudrick stream runs along Shudrick Lane, and at one point enters a culvert, which feeds into a large drain running under the Tesco petrol station, and emerges in Abbots Close. The culvert appears to have been overwhelmed by the volume of water coming down the Shudrick Stream. If it had been blocked, we would expect to see more debris attached to the grate in front of the culvert in the photograph below. The overwhelming effect was supported by the testimony of a local resident, who said that he had never seen so much water coming down the Shudrick catchment into the culvert by Tesco, and that it appeared to overwhelm the stream and culvert, which then compounded the subsequent surface water flooding on Ditton Street. The culvert, at 600mm diameter, is quite small for the size of catchment.

Figure 11: Culvert in Shudrick Lane, taken some time after the incident.

This stretch of the Shudrick Stream, including the culverted reach in question, is Main River and as such the EA is the flood risk management authority for this stretch. Under their permissive powers, they undertake periodic inspections of the culvert and channel. If there are significant concerns, and if they are able to, they exercise their powers to mitigate the situation. Ultimately the responsibility falls to the riparian owner. The EA's last culvert survey was undertaken in February 2017. This survey found no problems in the majority of the culvert from the inlet on down, but in the lower section (where it becomes an old masonry arch structure), there are two service pipes passing across the culvert, which pose a potential blockage risk. The pipes would be very difficult to remove, and at least one is currently in use for conveying sewage.

Figure 12: Storage area near Station Road. (Taken after flood waters had subsided)

Within the culvert, the Shudrick Stream then flows to the west under Ditton Street and Wharf Lane. Further downstream on the Shudrick the watercourse passes through a housing development in an open channel before flowing into a storage feature upstream of Station Road (as seen in Figure 12).

Figure 13: East end of Shudrick Lane at Walnut Close.

This photograph was taken close to where the road ends and the fields begin; the surface water floods down the road and into Ditton Street (which is half a metre lower than the top of the town culvert in Shudrick Lane) where it floods homes and shop premises. This roadway leads into fields where the area is in Flood Zone 2-3. On the right, on the other side of the wooden fence, is the Shudrick Stream.

Figure 14: Looking west down Shudrick Lane.

Tesco car park is on the right, just outside of the photograph, and there is a small car park on left. Further to the left is the Swanmead school playing field, part of which also flooded. The entrance to the small car park, where the wooden fence ends, is the start of the town culvert on the Shudrick Stream.

North Street:

Flow down North Street was not a problem early in the event, but flow down Listers Hill was. Drains on Listers Hill and High Street were reported by residents as having been blocked for some time.

Residents reported runoff coming straight down from the fields to the north of Ilminster, from the beacon, coming right down the Old Road past the allotments, crossing the road and going straight down into North Street. The first obstacle it comes to is the shops at the bottom of the Market Square. A Local long-term

	resident observed that problems on the night were due to the overwhelming volume of water. **Station Road, Home Farm Park, and Holway House Park**: The River Isle overflowed into the park homes developments, Rose Mill Industrial Estate, and the Station Road area. Flooding started in the areas of Station Road, Holway House Park, Green Lane, and the Old Orchard area around about 1:30am. Water levels rose rapidly. Flood water was reported as flowing towards the north east, from the field to the South of Station Road, crossing Station Road and entering Holway House Park. It then flowed down Home Farm Way and, according to resident reports, it was increased by flood water flowing from the Isle downstream of Hort bridge. The water then crossed the field to the West of Home Farm Park and over topped the informal bank around Home Farm Park, continuing through the park to Home Farm Way. The combined flow then carried on down Green Lane and the Old Orchard area, reaching significant depth. Four residential properties were reported as being flooded on Station Rd, with water flowing with sufficient force to destroy a masonry garden wall. There is a ditch going past the old station which has flooded on several occasions, and another that seems to go through a culvert by the Stonemasons pub and comes out in the industrial area. Residents expressed a belief that that these were not properly maintained, and they feel that this has contributed to the flooding. **Holway House Park** was one of the worst affected areas with depths of water being described as up to 1.25 meters. Around 19 of the park homes were flooded internally, with nine being damaged beyond repair. A further 13 properties along Green Lane flooded with depths to around a metre. Thanks to its elevated ground level, none of the park homes in Home Farm Park were flooded internally, although there was external damage to garages and vehicles. There were an additional three commercial properties flooded in the Rose Mills Industrial Estate, which is on the left bank of the Isle upstream of Hort Bridge. From the damage witnessed in the buildings it was evident that there were water depths of up to 10 centimetres. There are defences on the river Isle upstream of Hort Bridge which are maintained by the Environment Agency. It is believed that there was some outflanking of those defences at the very upstream end, and that this is the first time that has happened since they were built in the 1970s. On the night, park residents were lifting manholes

to get water to drain away – but these are thought to have been sewage manholes so doing this would have caused/added to surcharging elsewhere.

There is a network of small drainage ditches around the park homes, Home Farm, and the old station, which overflowed on the night. Ownership and responsibility for these assets is not definitively known, but is probably riparian. Residents feel that the flooding would have been contributed to because they have not been maintained. There is also a cattle grid which was installed to catch field runoff. Residents said that water was emanating from the cattle grid and contributing to flooding.

Figure 15: Holway House Park

Lamplighters:

There is a new development called Lamplighters, just off Wharf Lane to the South of the town centre. Water is reported as coming off of the development and flowing into the middle of town.

	Sea: In Sea, surface water ran down the main road and entered properties mostly via the front doors. Six properties were flooded internally, some to over 1/2m in depth. One property had a flood door fitted, which failed. Residents said they believed that road drains were blocked. There is also concern that a pond along Watery Lane is adding to the risk by not being properly maintained or managed, and that a ditch near the corner in the road is overgrown.

Historical Information:	District Council records are likely incomplete, but they show the following previous flooding episodes:

Date	Location	Receptor
23/07/2017	Ditton St /Wharf Lane/ Silver St.	x10 properties, Highway
31/01/2014	Greenway	Highway
16/01/2014	Station Road	Highway
24/12/2013	Station Road	x3 properties
22/02/2013	Herne Rise	Highway
12/01/2013	Ditton Street	Highway
24/11/2012	Ditton Street	x5 properties
21/11/2012	Winterhay Lane	Highway
21/11/2012	Station Road	Highway x2 properties
21/11/2012	Green Lane	Highway 1x property
21/11/2012	Horton Cross	Highway
21/11/2012	Townsend	Highway
29/04/2012	Listers Hill	Highway
16/01/2012	Shudrick Lane	Highway
13/12/2011	Station Road	Layby
11/01/2011	Greenway	Highway
01/10/2010	B3168 Beacon	Highway
13/12/2008	Ditton Street	x6 properties
29/05/2008	Shudrick Lane	Highway
16/04/1998	High Street	Highway
1947	Ditton Street	Highway

Drainage Assets:	The drainage assets in question are the gulleys in the road and their connecting drainage pipes, plus any culverts and connections to the sewerage system or surface water bodies. The local authority keeps records of drainage under their care, mostly belonging to the Highways Department. Private drainage is not generally recorded. The drainage network around the affected areas is extensive, as Figures 15 to 18 show. However, significant problems with draining the accumulated rainfall during the incident have been noted by many parties. For the most part, this is due to the severity and intensity of the rainfall – during a flooding incident, it is very difficult to tell if a gully is blocked, or if it just being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of water. Some gullies reported as blocked by residents could be due to this overwhelming effect. Further investigation of the drainage system would be required to ascertain the exact problem in each location, and clean as required. Current design standards for highways drainage require drains to cope with a 1 in 5 year event plus 20% allowance for climate change, and that a 1 in 100 year event not exceed the bounds of the highway. This event was a 1 in 38 year rainfall event. Drainage meeting the current design standard would not have coped with the intensity of rainfall during the flood event, and would have overflowed onto the highway or failed to drain all the water away even without any obstruction. When a new housing estate is built, planning policy states that the outflow from any surface water collection system should not be greater than the volumes of water which flowed from that site as a green field. However, these standards only apply to modern sites. Previously, housing and highways drainage were built on principles of coping with average rainfall, and were designed for the rainfall levels and groundwater levels of the time. With the effect of climate change over the years, many of these installations are no longer adequate for even average rainfall, let alone the 1 in 38 year event that occurred on 20th October. Many of the sewers in Ilminster are combined foul and surface water systems. The modelling undertaken for the Integrated Catchment Report indicates that they often do not have sufficient hydraulic capacity to contain flows during a 1 in 5 year (20% annual probability) event. The model indicates flooding to the highway from sewers

during the 1 in 5 year event and by the 1 in 20 year event, the model shows that combined flows contribute to property flooding.

Lister Hill, North Street, and the High Street saw large amounts of surface water emanating from the fields uphill of the eastern end of town. This water is likely to have carried large amounts of soil and debris, and could well have caused gullies and drains to become impaired on the night. Residents felt that gullies and drains were blocked in any case before the event.

The Shudrick Stream was the eventual recipient of large amounts of this runoff water, which caused it to also flood. The Shudrick Stream runs through a culvert underneath the Tesco filling station, and there are reports that this became partially blinded with debris during the night, adding to the flooding issues, although this is not supported by photographs. There are varying reports of the size and extent of this drain, ranging all the way up to 'big enough to stand up in', although EA records show it is only 600mm in diameter. Ownership is also uncertain, but the EA would have flood-related responsibility as this is a main river.

In Sea, there were reports that highways drains in Green Meadows were blocked.

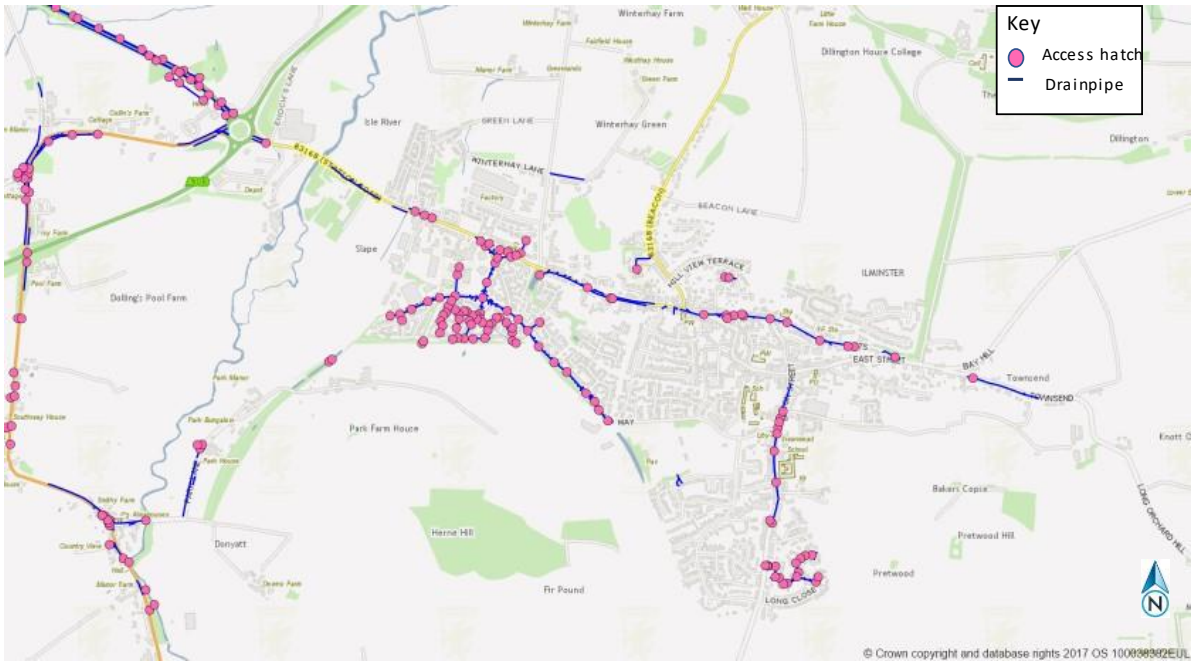


Figure 16: Highways surface water drainage pipes in town

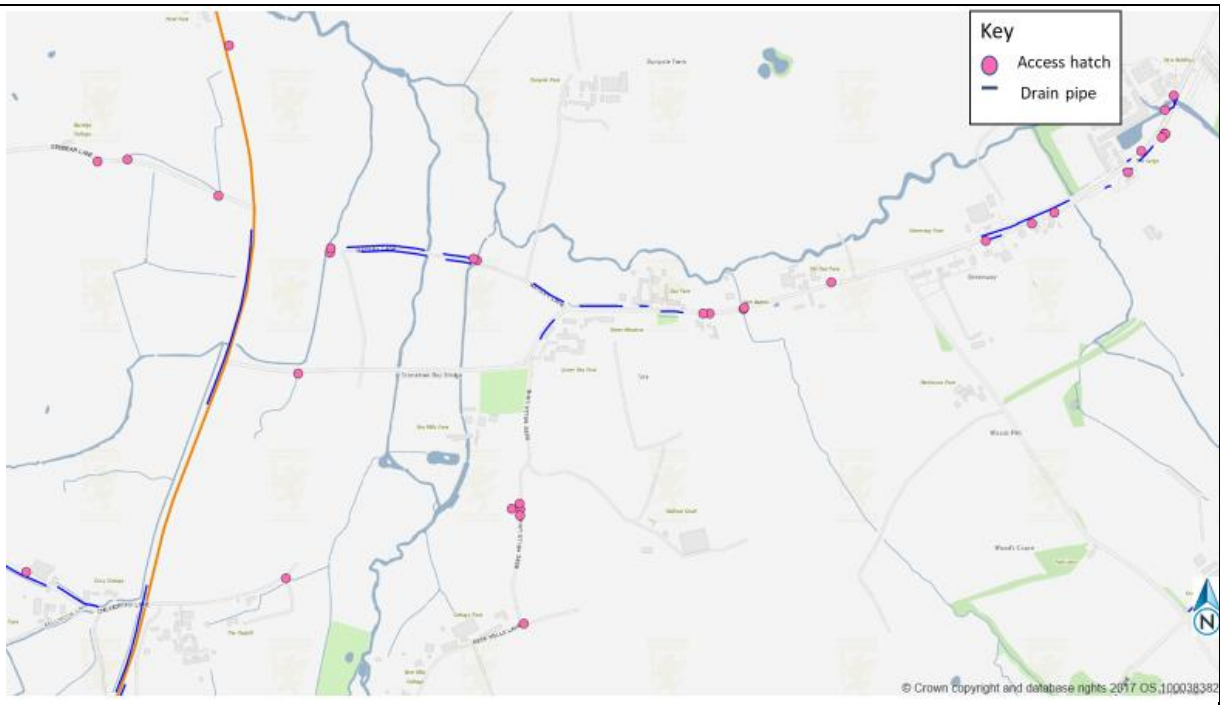


Figure 17: Highways surface water drainage pipes in Sea

Figure 18: Highways gullies in Ilminster

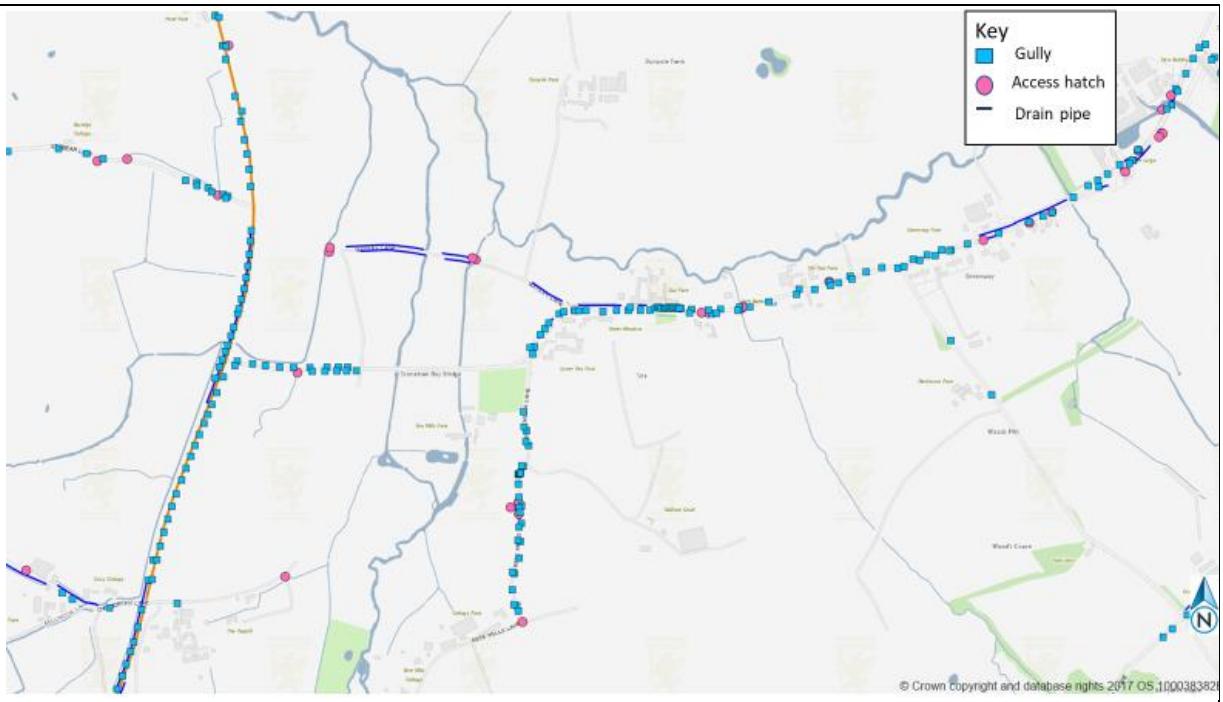


Figure 19: Highways gullies in Sea

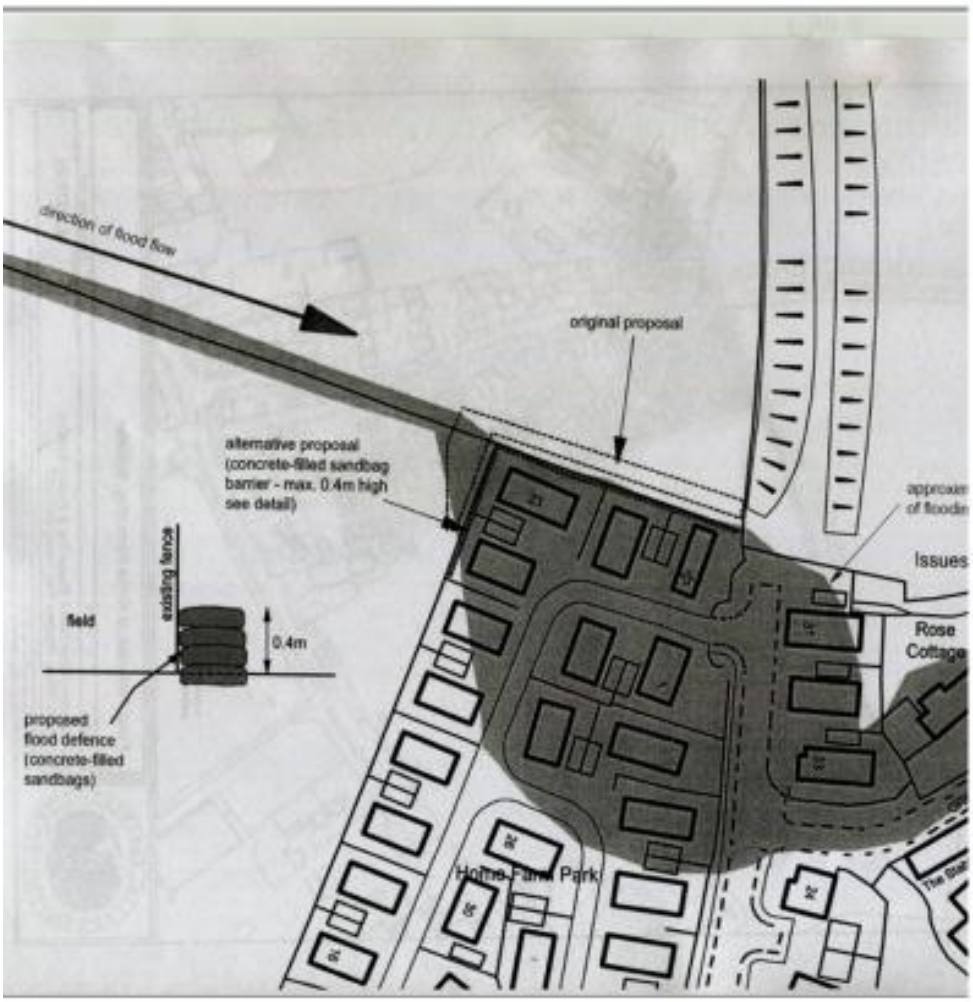
The drainage network around the affected areas is extensive, as the figures show. However, residents and others have noted some significant problems with draining the accumulated rainfall during the incident.

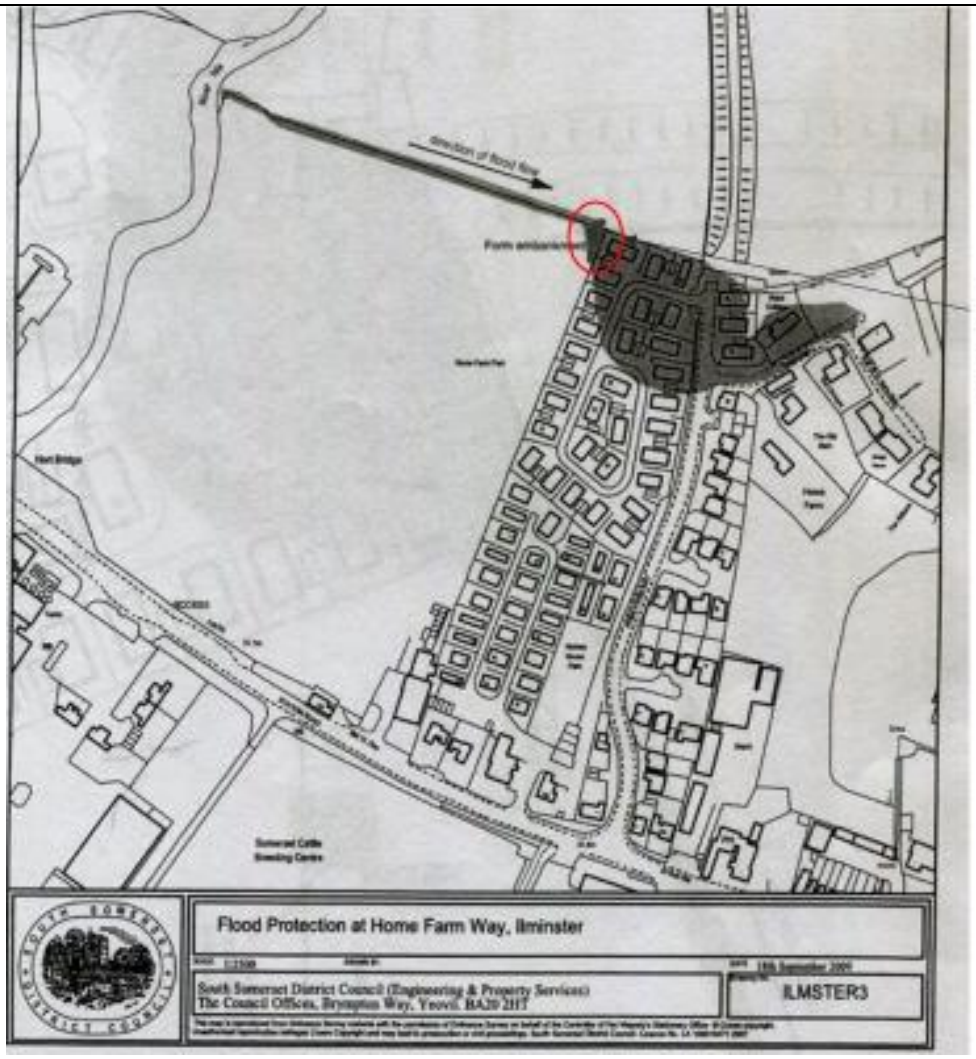
In part, this could just be due to the severity of the rainfall – during a flooding incident, it is very difficult to tell if a gully is blocked, or if it just being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of water. Many gullies reported as blocked by residents could be due to this overwhelming effect.

Current design standards for highways drainage require drains to cope with a 1 in 5 year event plus 20% allowance for climate change, and that a 1 in 100 year event not exceed the bounds of the highway. Drainage meeting the current standard would not have coped with the intensity of rainfall during the flood event, and would have overflowed onto the highway or failed to drain all the water away even without any obstruction.

When a new housing estate is built, planning policy states that the outflow from any surface water collection system should not be greater than the volumes of water which flowed from that site as a green field.

	However, these standards only apply to modern sites. Previously housing and highways drainage were built on principles of coping with average rainfall, and were designed for the rainfall levels and groundwater levels of the time. With the action of climate change over the years, many of these installations are no longer adequate for even average rainfall, let alone the more intense events we have seen in recent years.

Bunds Around Station Road and Home Parks	Within the residents' testimony of the flooding to Home Farm Park and Holway Park there were many references to 'the bund behind Home Farm Park'. Investigation has revealed some of the history and detail of this bund, and a cattle grid installed around the same time on Station Road. A copy form has been found, dated 26th June 2013, which details the application by Ilminster Town Council and the West Ilminster Flood Mitigation Group (made up mostly of residents of Holway House Park and Station Road). This form details the proposal to construct a bund, at the back of the north most corner of Home Farm Park, and a cattle grid and ditch along Station Road, as shown in the following maps:  ***Figure 20: Proposed bunds at the back of Home Farm Park.*** The deep grey area shows the area flooded in 2008.



Label says:
Form
Embankment

Figure 21: Wider view of proposed bund at Home Farm Park.

Figure 22: Proposed cattle grid and ditch on Station Road.

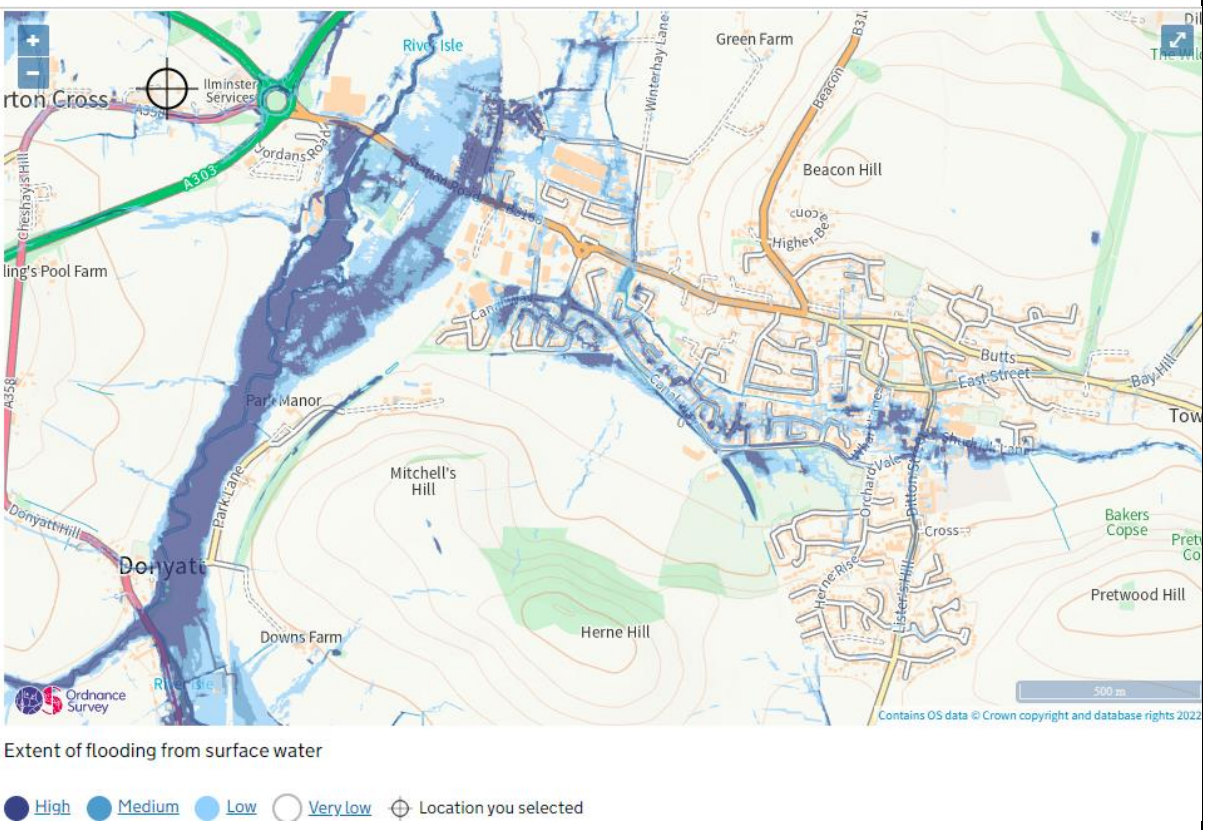
Further works were proposed to install a cattle grid structure next to the drainage ditch on Station Road, designed to divert water coming across the field away from the main Station Road surface, and down the ditch that runs alongside the old station area.

SCC records show that the funds were granted to Ilminster Town Council as requested. However, there are other records which suggest (but don't state explicitly) that this funding was used only to build the cattle grid and drainage system on the south of Station Road, and that the bund was provided by another method. The bund, ditch and cattle grid are visible on site. Furthermore, the bund is visible on Lidar data[1], and the cattle grid has been referred to during residents' testimony of the October 2021 event. Details of the construction of the cattle grid were included with the application, but unfortunately only sketchy details of the bund. It appears to have a central core of sacks of concrete, with an earthen bund of unspecified original height over the top. However, it is not known what the design

	parameters of the bund were; it appears to have been constructed in response to floods in the area in 2008, but it is not known whether it was designed to withstand, for instance, a 1 in 100 year rainfall event, or another parameter. The land that the bund is on belongs to DairyGold, however it appears that their land agents were unaware of the bunds existence. Residents around the Home Parks, Green Lane and Old Orchard have produced various records around the construction of the bund. They state that the bund was constructed by SSDC on 23rd September 2014, over the course of a single working day, using big bulldozers. They state that the scheme was designed and supervised by an SSDC engineer, now retired. SSDC have been approached for records relating to this project, but have not been able to produce any. There was also an engineer from SCC involved, but again records relating to their involvement have not been forthcoming. A resident has reported that "When viewed in person from the field to the North of the Park homes it's clear to see how the Park home gardens have increased slightly in size over many years flattening the Bund, filling the adjoining ditch and removing any usefulness of the original built bund.". There have been other reports that the bund has degraded, in various ways and for various reasons. Not knowing the original design parameters, it is difficult to say how much degradation has taken place. It may be better, rather than try and restore the bund to an unknown original condition, to ascertain what design parameter we wish to use and rebuild to that standard.

[1] LiDAR terrain map of (archiuk.com)

Rainfall Information:	There was very heavy rain on the 20th and 21st of October, on the back of previous heavy rain saturating the catchment. The amount of rain, which the Environment Agency estimate at around 62 millimetres in 24 hours, was 71% of the monthly average, just in that 24-hour period. The nearest river gauge is at Donyatt, which is just upstream of Ilminster. This gauge is used by the Environment Agency to predict flooding and issue flood warnings for the main river Isle. On the 20th of October, this gauge returned the record highest level for the river Isle, over the gauges 30-year history. Below is an excerpt from EA Monthly water situation report for Wessex: "October was a wet month for Wessex, with 'above normal' rainfall at 187% of the LTA (149 mm). There was light rain at times throughout the month, but the main rainfall events occurred on 1 – 4, 19 – 20 and 28 – 31 October which combined produced around 90% of the month's total rain. The highest accumulation was on 19 and 20 October when 33% of the month's rain fell, distributed across most of Wessex."

Surface Water:	Most of the flooding witnessed around eastern Ilminster during the event was apparently due to heavy rainfall accumulating and moving across the land – this is usually referred to a pluvial or surface water flooding. The basic mechanism appeared to be the movement of overland flow downhill, and as the east of Ilminster is in a valley, heavy flooding was experienced in these topographical low areas around Ditton Street and the Shudrick Stream. Flows in transit also caused significant flooding and damage to roads and property, and carried the debris from this along, blocking drains in the process.  ***Figure 23: Surface water flood risk map for the Ilminster*** Maps later in this report will show the estimated flow paths of flood water through Ilminster.

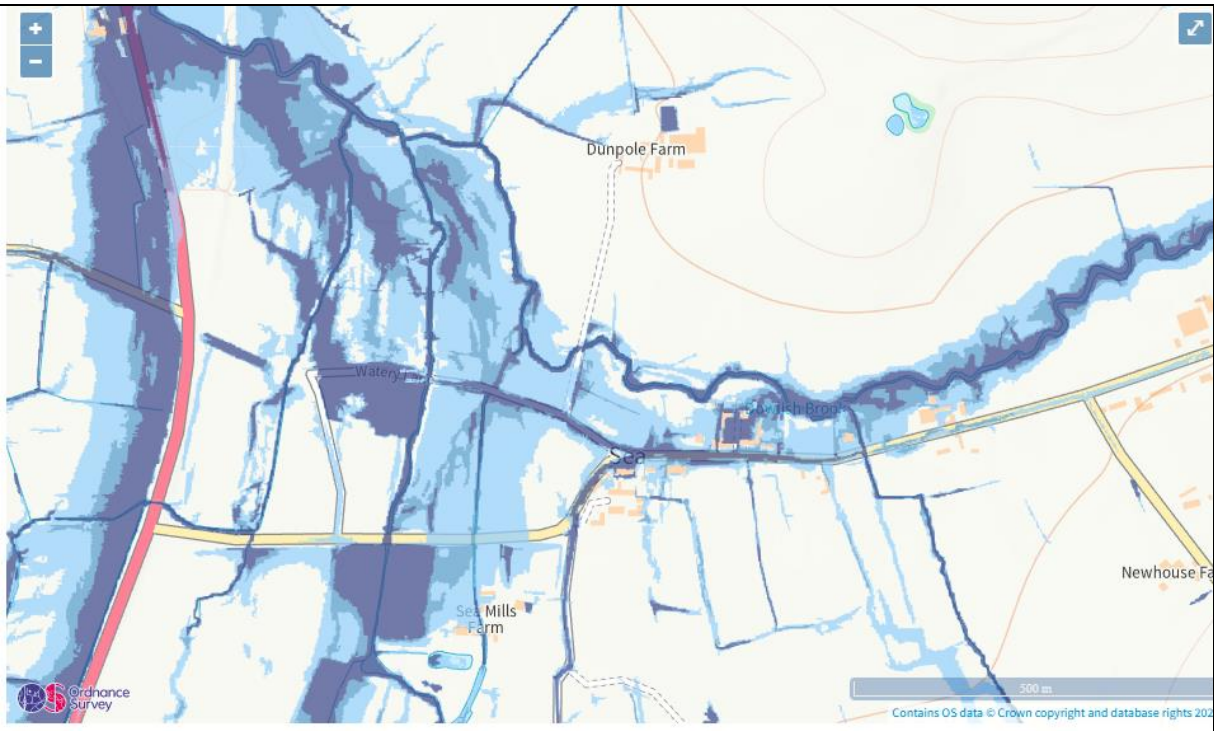


Figure 24: Surface water flood risk for Sea.

Surface water flood risk maps show the risk of flooding from pluvial sources – from rainfall accumulating and forming an overland flow. It considers the drainage systems in the area. It does not show predicted fluvial flooding – that is, flooding resulting from rising levels in rivers and streams. However, the two effects often occur together, as both pluvial flow and rivers and streams will naturally locate in the lowest topographical points.

The maps show four different grades or frequencies of flooding – dark blue areas (high risk) will flood most frequently, with an average 3.3% chance of flooding in each year.

Mid blue areas (medium risk) will flood only after heavier rainfall – in these areas there is an average chance of flooding between 1% and 3.3% each year.

Light blue areas (low risk) only flood after very heavy rain – here there is an average chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1% per year.

	Areas with no colouration have an average chance of flooding each year of less than 0.1%. To put this in context, the rainfall event that fell on Ilminster and Sea in October 2021 has a 2.6% chance of occurring every year.

Fluvial:	The western side of Ilminster was particularly badly affected by fluvial flooding from the River Isle. The river appears to have bypassed the Environment Agency flood defences upstream of the Hort bridge and spread out over the old Dairy Gold site and fields next to the river. It then entered the two park homes sites and surrounding roads, both from the east and from the south, as water ran across station road, as shown in figure 27. It also affected the Rose Mill Industrial estate on the Horton Cross side of the river.

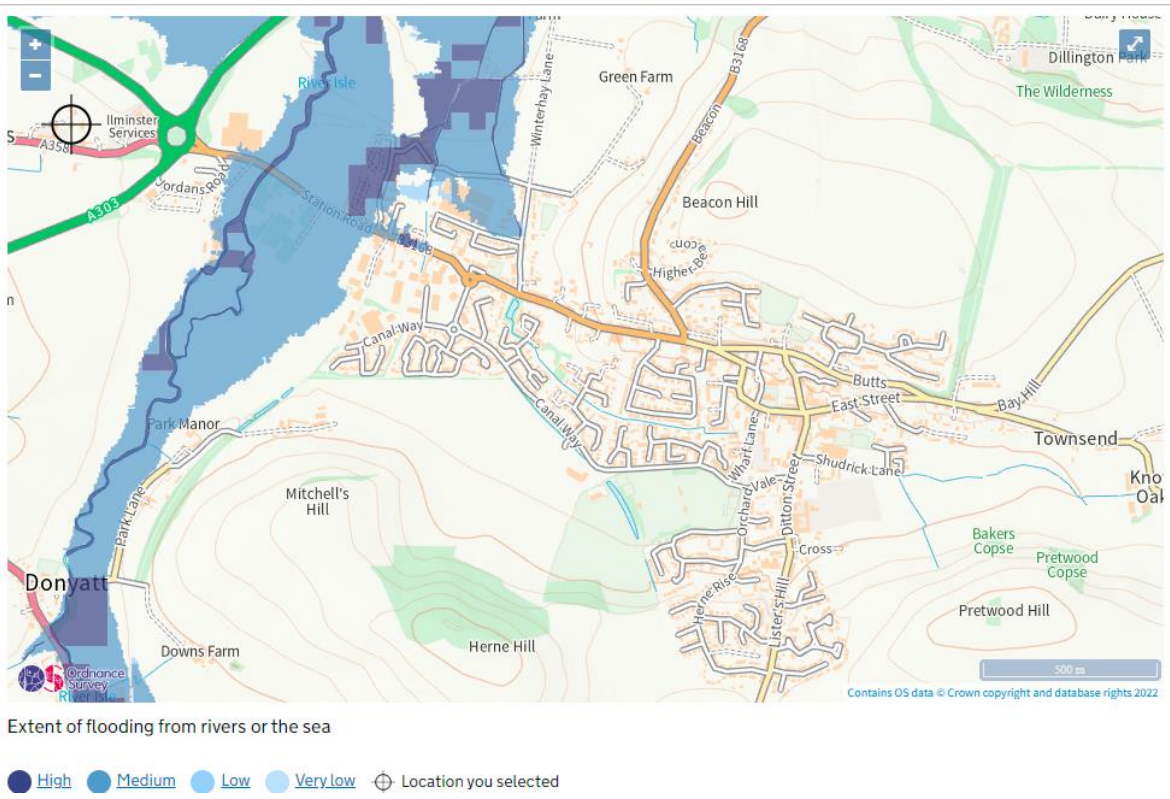


Figure 25: Fluvial flood risk Ilminster

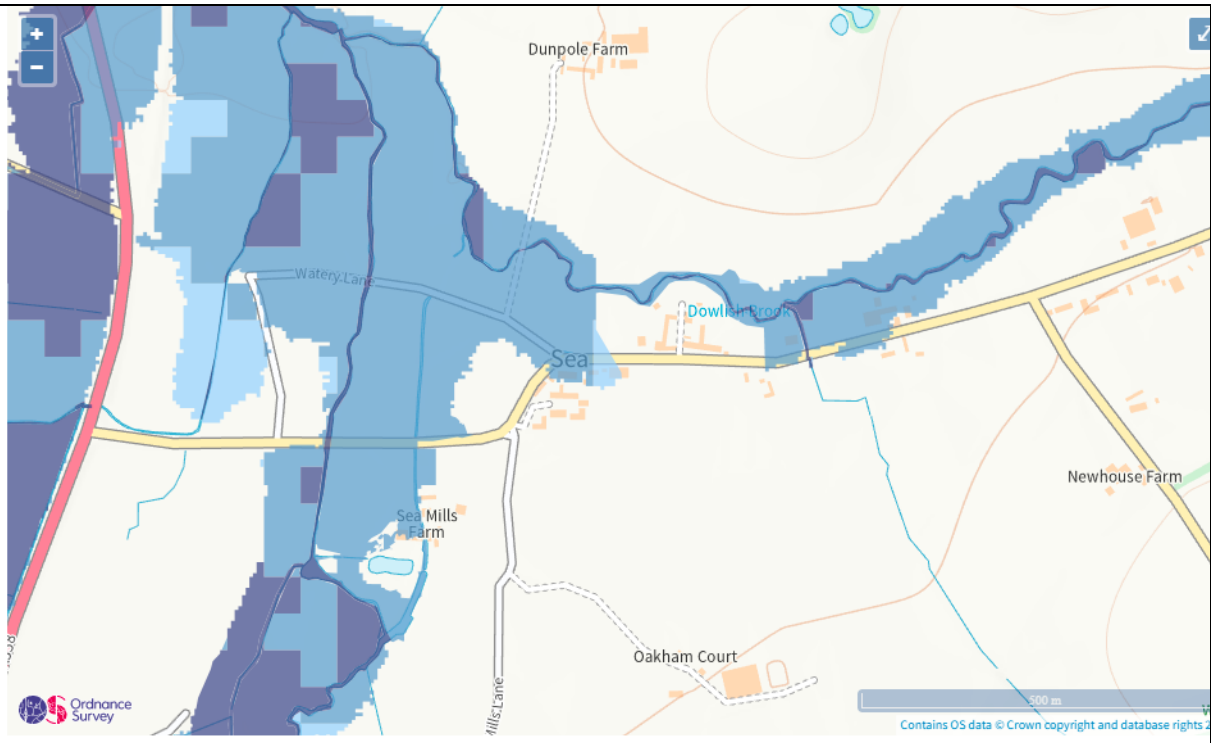
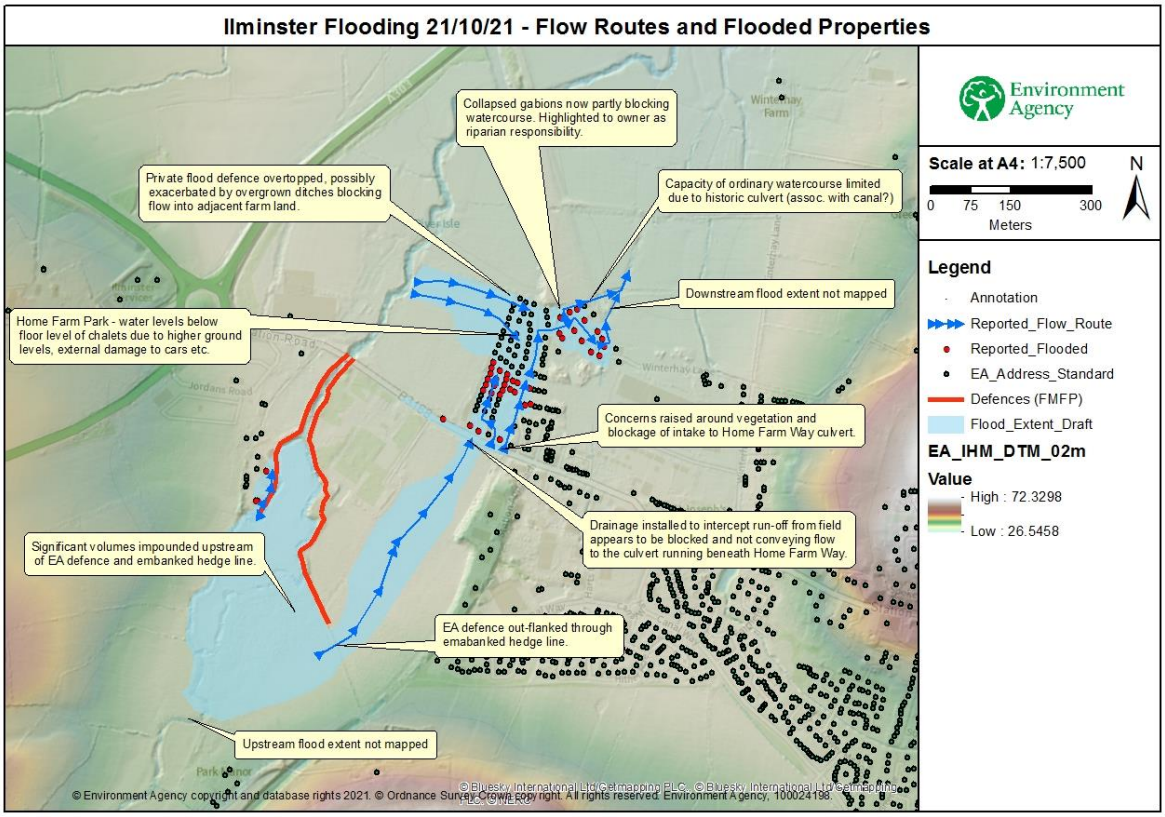


Figure 26: Fluvial flood risk Sea

The EA defences in Ilminster undergo routine maintenance inspections three times a year. During these inspections, the embankments are subject to hand paring to maintain conveyance and debris is removed from the weir at Hort Bridge. As part of recovery works of the 2013/14 flood, the raised embankment on the right bank upstream of Hort Bridge was extended to tie into high ground. During the latest inspection of these assets, they were all deemed to be up to the standard to which they had been designed in the 1970's. One of the reasons the EA is bidding for funds for a flood alleviation study, is to bring flood protection in this area up to a more modern standard.

The study area, particularly around the residential home parks, has a network of smaller streams and drainage ditches, aside from main rivers. The ownership of many of these watercourses is unclear but is assumed to be riparian. In several areas these watercourses were directly implicated by residents in contributing to the flooding, either because they felt they had not been kept clear, or they were simply overwhelmed by the volume of water.

Coastal:	There is no risk of coastal flooding in this area.
Groundwater:	Most of Ilminster is underlain by loam and clay soils with impeded drainage. This is seen in the centre of the town and through Herne Hill to the south. To the north, the slopes of Beacon Hill, are generally freely draining loamy soils, while Pretwood Hill is overlain with shallow soils over chalk/ limestone. The available mapping indicates that the ground around Ilminster has poor infiltration, which indicates that runoff from rural areas is likely to be high. Historically the land on which Ilminster has been developed was low lying land known to be water meadows and marsh land. The eastern parts of Ilminster, and the catchment to the east, are underlain by a Principal Aquifer (able to yield significant quantities of groundwater). Central Ilminster and western Ilminster are underlain by Secondary A and Secondary undifferentiated aquifers (small amounts of groundwater stored in cracks and fissures in the rock). The EA also identifies the catchment as being in an area of Ground Water Vulnerability. In summary; the geology underneath Ilminster makes it more likely to flood. Once rain falls it takes a long time to drain away.
Soil Moisture Deficit:	The Soil Moisture Deficit generally decreased throughout October, interspersed with a slight increase due to a relatively drier spell towards the middle of the month. The heavy rainfall on the 19th and 20th October decreased deficit to 12 mm by the end of October which is 40% less than the LTA (40 mm) but similar to this time last year (15 mm). When the rain fell during the storm event, the ground was already close to being saturated. This increased the severity of flooding as water could not be absorbed into the soil, and instead ran over the top to form surface water flooding.

Probable Causes	**West end of Ilminster:** The Environment Agency compiled the following map of flow paths at the west end of Ilminster during the event:  ***Figure 27: Flow paths at the west end of Ilminster. Source:* Environment Agency, November 2021.** The information in this map represents an outline estimate of the flood mechanisms and flooded properties during the flood of 20/21 October 2021 on the west side of Ilminster. It is based on information gathered in the aftermath of the flood and may not be a complete and accurate summary, but is based on the best data and resource available at the time. Data collected from residents of the area during the drop-in session at The Shrubbery, Ilminster, on 17th November 2021, suggest the following additional mechanisms:

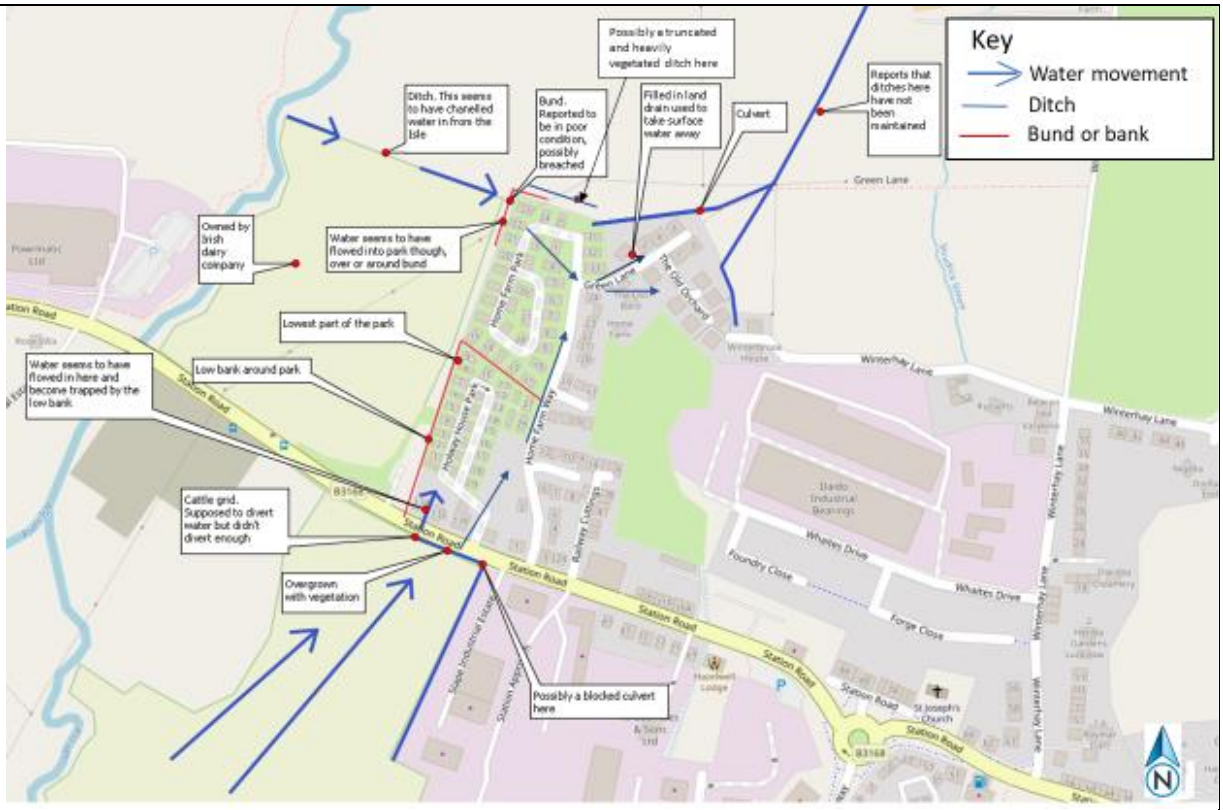


Figure 28: Further detail of west Ilminster

Most of the volume of water seems to have come from the river Isle. The river spilled over its banks both to the north of the Hort bridge, and around the flood defences to the south of the bridge. Water from the northern spill flowed up a ditch to the edge of Home Farm Park. From here it flowed through, around and/or over the bund into Home Farm Park, and across into Green Lane. Water coming up from the south combined with pluvial flow across the fields, flowed into and over the cattle grid, and across Station Road into Holway House Park and the houses next to it. This water was trapped in situ by the low bank around the park. Another portion of the water that came up from the south flowed across Station Road and across into Home Farm Way. This flowed down Home Farm Way to join up with the water from the north in Green Lane and the Old Orchard.

A resident has reported that, during development of Green Lane in 2018/19, changes were made to the culverting system and ground levels, which has negatively affected the passage of water away from the area. This should be considered within future modelling and flood mitigation planning. The ditches downstream of Green Lane are

	also reported as being overgrown, and the owner (assumed to be riparian) should be encouraged to clear the excess. A lot of work has been done previously to try and protect this area from flooding. Not all elements of the scheme seem to be functioning as intended, and they may not have been correctly specified for an event of this size. The EA defences were built in the 1970's. The EA is bidding for money to undertake a flood risk management study for Ilminster over the next couple of years, subject to gaining central government funding. If successful, this will review the current and future flood risks, including the current defences, as well as considering potential future partnership options to better mitigate flood risk, taking account of any developments in the area. **East end of Ilminster:** Pluvial flow from the hills to the north and south of Ilminster flowed down into the centre of town and gathered in the low spot at the junction of Ditton Street and Shudrick lane. Flow from the north came from Beacon hill, down the track past the allotments, along Old Road and into North Street. Water heading into town from the south flowed down Listers Hill and into Ditton Street. Rainwater also flowed in from the fields to the east of Ilminster and down Shudrick Lane, where it again collected at the low point. This was added to by water from the Shudrick Stream itself, which came out of bank, possibly due to the culvert that leads under Ditton Street becoming blinded with debris or overwhelmed by the large quantity of water. EA, local residents and Councillors observed these flow paths, and also that the pluvial flow comes off fields, carrying soil, stones, and debris with it. This will tend to collect in and possibly block drains during an event. Long term local residents also observed the massive amount of water coming from these sources, and said that they felt even free running drains would not have coped with all of it.

Figure 29: Pluvial flows around east Ilminster

Residents have raised the issue of the crops being grown around the periphery of Ilminster and the surrounding villages. Maize has recently started to be grown, and this particular crop is associated with high levels of runoff. This could be exacerbating the surface water and pluvial flow element of the flooding experienced.

Sea:

Residents reported that water entered their properties from the highway, via the front and back doors. One resident further reported that highways drains outside their property were and are blocked. Sea is at a low point in the landscape, and it's entirely possible that the surface water running down Watery Lane originated on

	Herne Hill or Pretwood Hill as rainfall. There is also a stream just to the north of the main road through Sea, which also crosses the road near the dairy farm. There are no records of flow in this stream at the time, but it is possible that the water running through the centre of Sea originated, in whole or in part, from this watercourse. More detailed data and/or modelling will be required to determine the origin of this water.	
Risk Management Authority Responsibilities	See Appendix (link)	
Risk Management Authority Actions During and Immediately After the Event	Somerset County Council (in their roles as LLFA and Highways Authority)	Highways Authority: Were not called out on the night. Began clear up work the following day. LLFA: No emergency role. After the event commissioned the Section 19 report and began to gather information from residents and RMAs about their activities, and when and how flooding happened.
	Environment Agency	Issued flood warnings. Flood warning was issued at about 10:20pm for the river Isle from Chard Reservoir to Hambridge. Levels continued to rise, peaking around about 11:30pm.
	Wessex Water	No emergency role.
	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	Fielded 33 calls from Home Park Farm, Holway House Park, and Station Road. Some were to rescue people from vehicles in water. Undertook specialist rescue by boat from the caravan park for 10 people.
	South Somerset	The duty Civil contingency officer (CCO) was called at 10pm. They called Fire and Rescue at 22:36 who confirmed that they were dealing

	District Council	with multiple incidents and were only attending where life was at risk. Peak rainfall was predicted for midnight, at around 60mm/hour. The CCO was called again by Police at 2am, and informed that Fire and Rescue were deploying boats to rescue people from the park homes development. It appeared that the river had burst its banks and mixed in with sewage from a septic tank. At 2:30am the CCO identified a rest centre nearby in case it was needed. At 2:45am Fire and Rescue confirmed that 8 people were being rescued, and the CCO purchased rooms at a nearby hotel for them. The CCO was also trying to sort out taxis who could get there without going through flood water, when Fire and Rescue reported they had found a volunteer with a Land Rover to shuttle people to the hotel. The first evacuees arrived at the hotel at 4am. Lines of communication became confused early in the event because some information was going directly between SSDC and others, rather than via the central control system. There also seems to be an emergency duty team that was available but not used. This could have helped to make things run more smoothly. There were also some issues on the night with CCOs not being able to get through to the police control centre because all lines were busy, and with confusion over payment for the hotel rooms. SSDC Councillor Sherman took calls from the public about Ditton Street flooding as he lives near there. He communicated on to other (town) councillors, SSDC, SCC and emergency services. Town councillors were out delivering sandbags around Ditton Street area, but the water was already in some houses. No-one contacted their office about the problems at Station Road end, even by a couple of days later. After the event they have been talking to other agencies and community members about community resilience arrangements, supporting Parish Councils with the development of community

		resilience plans, and developing grant applications for resilience equipment.
	Avon and Somerset Police	No recorded actions in Ilminster on the night.
	Parish Council	No report from Sea Parish Council.

Recommendations	Ilminster Town Council are keen to develop a resilience plan and a local resilience group – this should be progressed in concert with the SRA, and possibly the EA. The Ilminster Town Council should liaise with FWAG and local landowners to discuss the issue of maize growing in the area, ascertain if it is a problem, and see if more benign crops or growing methods can be found. The Shudrick Valley and the area around the River Isle have the potential for Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes. These should be investigated as part of further work to model flood flows in the area and evaluate mitigation schemes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many residents and landowners have an incomplete understanding of riparian responsibilities. Communities should be educated on riparian rights and responsibilities. SRA may be best placed to do this. There was some confusion during the incident as to communication between parties and the use of the Emergency Duty Team. In particular, this should include the Town Council and the SSDC Homelessness Team, who were unaware of the problems at Station Road and the residential parks until late the following day. Emergency plans should be reviewed to ensure that all parties involved with flooding incidents to have a method statement setting out line of communication, contact details, and full information about who can be called upon to do what during an emergency. Audit gulley cleaning contractors to ensure the job is being done correctly, and see if improvements can be made – e.g. informing residents in advance of gully clearing so cars can be moved to facilitate access. The frequency of gully cleaning has already been increased from around every 4 years to an annual round. It took a long while to get the electricity back on at the residential parks, and this delayed people getting back into their homes and being able to start getting dried out. In future Western Power Distribution need to prioritise getting vulnerable people reconnected so they can get back into their homes. Information needs to be distributed more widely about how to prepare yourself and your property for flooding. Information needs to be distributed more widely about who to contact with different concerns e.g. to whom should people report a blocked culvert, or an overgrown ditch?

	There should be a review of post incident support to residents, to ensure that it is adequate and correctly targeted. Those most at risk are mainly elderly and often uninsured. They can find it hard to access help and services, due to mobility problems or lack of internet access. People often need help 4 or 5 days after an incident when they can no longer stay with relatives or in a hotel. Some people have nothing but the clothes they stand up in. This package also needs to include mental health care, as many are completely shocked and bewildered by what has happened. The modelling that has been done for the integrated catchment study to be extended to include fluvial and surface water movement around Ilminster. The EA are hoping to start a flood alleviation study next year (23/24), subject to a funding bid (previously mentioned), which they hope to link to the previous integrated catchment study. As a separate piece of work on their modelling programme, they are updating the catchment fluvial model for the River Isle and adding in the Shudrick Stream for the first time. This model will be at a catchment scale (going from head of main river down to Isle Brewers near the Somerset Levels), so it will cover a much larger area than just Ilminster. A greater local focus in Ilminster will come from the flood alleviation study. The catchment fluvial model will likely not complete until 2025 at the earliest. Changes in local planning policy should be considered. Currently the standard requirement for drainage in a housing development is to cope with a 1 in 5 year event for highways drains, and to cope with greenfield runoff rates for surface water drainage. Consideration should be given to adopting a higher standard, and/or specifying a policy of betterment. The path of the old canal in Ilminster should be investigated, and it should be ascertained which other waterbody it joins into and where. Any changes required should be communicated to the Environment Agency and Ordnance Survey as appropriate. Further work needs to be done to understand the parties responsible for ownership and improvement of the bund around the Park Homes. The condition of the bund needs to be examined and improved or repaired as required.

	The culverting of Green Lane should be looked at to see if changes have been made without the proper permissions, and the arrangement should be taken into account in flood modelling and mitigation strategies.

Development Planning	The most recent local plan for Ilminster (adopted 2015) mentions fluvial flooding as a constraint to development in Ilminster, but surface water flooding is not considered. Previous local plans have identified an area in the Shudrick Valley as being allocated for housing. This area was rejected by the Planning Inspector prior to adoption of the latest Local Plan. The Plan also brings forward allocations of employment land with an enabling development of housing for sites around the River Isle, in the vicinity of Hort Bridge, and between the isle and the static home parks. Flooding is considered as a significant issue for the sites around the River Isle, and the improvement of flood defences or other suitable mitigation solutions along the river should be a core consideration by any developer. The issues of surface water flooding need to be taken into account here too, and again any developer should be required to provide betterment on this issue.
Ongoing Works	The modelling that has been done for the integrated catchment study is to be extended to include fluvial and surface water movement around Ilminster. The EA is hoping to start a flood alleviation study next year (2023/24), subject to a funding bid, which they hope to link to the aforementioned integrated catchment study, previously completed by SCC and Wessex Water. This will require the input and collaboration of all other authorities, communities, and stakeholders.

Planning Policy and Future Development	In order for a planning application to be granted, they must have conditions applied to them or a design detailed within them which ensure that surface water runoff from the development is attenuated on site and leaves the development at no more than greenfield runoff rates. This should ensure that no development makes flooding in the area around it worse. This is in accordance with National planning policy and the Government standards for SUDS, published on the .gov.uk website. These documents deal with rainfall intensity of a 1 in 1 year and 1 in 100 year event – much more common than the event covered in this report. In order for the Local Authority to require any stricter standards to be applied (such as accounting for events at greater than 1 in 100 years return period, or requiring runoff at less than greenfield rates, or if development is proposed within Flood Zone 3, it should also seek to provide flood mitigation to existing properties, as well as those proposed in the new development), this needs to be stated in local planning policy. It is recommended that further work be undertaken with a view to requiring stricter standards to be applied to surface water management by developers in affected areas in and around Ilminster.

Appendix: Risk Management Authority Responsibilities

Risk Management Authority Responsibilities	Somerset County Council (in their roles as LLFA and Highways Authority)	As the LLFA they are required to develop a strategy to tackle local flood risks, involving flooding from surface water, 'ordinary watercourses', for example ditches, dykes, and streams, groundwater, canals, lakes and small reservoirs. Along with all LLFAs, they are required to: • investigate all significant flooding incidents; • maintain a register of flood defence assets; • act as a statutory consultee in the planning process on surface water for major developments; and • build partnerships and ensure effective working between authorities that have control over flood risk. They also have to undertake specific tasks associated with the Flood Risk Regulations, and this includes completing a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and identifying flood risk areas. As the highways authority they have the lead responsibility for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches under the Highways Act 1980. The owners of land adjoining a highway also have a common-law duty to maintain ditches to prevent them causing a nuisance to road users.
	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency has a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion (as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010). It is also responsible for flood and coastal erosion risk management activities on main rivers and the coast, regulating reservoir safety, and working in partnership with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings.
	Wessex Water	They manage the risk of flooding to water supply and sewerage facilities and flood risks from the failure of their infrastructure.

	Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)	Somerset Rivers Authority's main aim is to give Somerset greater flood protection and resilience. Somerset Rivers Authority focuses heavily on providing additional maintenance and improvements to rivers and their catchments, roads prone to flooding, and structures such as culverts and drains.
	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	The Fire Brigade is typically the lead responder for a flooding incident. The Fire Brigade role includes saving life and carrying out rescue of casualties or persons stranded by flooding, including by boat. They may pump out floodwater.
	Avon and Somerset Police	The police co-ordinate the emergency services during a major flood and help with evacuation of people from their homes where necessary. They also close roads and take other actions to ensure public safety.
	South Somerset District Council	They are key partners in planning local flood risk management. They can carry out flood risk management works on minor watercourses (outside of IDB areas).
	All bodies are required to work in partnership to support the local flood risk strategy, to ensure flood management activities are well co-ordinated, and work in partnership to reduce the severity and impact of flooding.	

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