



Outer Hebrides Local Plan District (LPD 2)

Draft flood risk management plans 2022-2028

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Outer Hebrides Local Plan District

(LPD 2)

Draft flood risk management plans 2022-2028

The Outer Hebrides Local Plan District covers an area of around 3,100km² and has a population of approximately 30,000 people. It includes all of the islands in the Outer Hebrides of which 14 are inhabited.

The islands are diverse, varying from mountainous terrain on Harris to flat, low-lying land on Benbecula. Land cover is dominated by bog, heather grassland and smaller areas of agricultural land. Of particular importance is machair grassland on the west coast which supports crofting and has a large amount of biodiversity unique to the far north west of Europe. Inland lochs are widespread, often with complex water level management undertaken through a series of ditches and watercourse diversions. The coastline is 2,300km in length and is highly variable from hard and deeply indented in the east to long stretches of sand beaches and dune systems on the west coast.

The main risk of flooding in the Outer Hebrides is from coastal flooding. The Outer Hebrides have been affected by several large floods, including in January 2005 when a severe storm caused widespread flooding and the death of a family. Heavy rainfall has also led to flash flooding, such as in August 2017. Of note is the tendency for flooding to persist for long periods of time in the Uists due to a combination of high ground water levels and difficulties in discharging water from the main drains to the sea. Erosion of the soft coastline and dunes is also of significance as they help to protect inland areas.

Currently it is estimated that there are 980 people and 820 homes and businesses at risk from flooding. This is estimated to increase to 1,500 people and 1,200 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change. Annual cost of flooding is approximately £3.4 million. Note however that flooding from wave overtopping is not fully represented in the assessment of flood risk and the impact of coastal flooding may be underestimated.

Flood and erosion risk to key transport routes is a concern in the Outer Hebrides with airports, inter-island causeways and main roads particularly vulnerable.

SEPA lead development of the flood risk management plans for Scotland and delivery of flood warning services. Local flood risk management planning is led by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Other responsible authorities include Scottish Water. They are supported by Scottish Government agencies including Forestry and Land Scotland, Scottish Forestry and Transport Scotland.

Within this Local Plan District, actions are regularly carried out by SEPA and responsible authorities to help prepare communities for potential flooding and reduce the impact of any flooding that does occur.

Actions across the Local Plan District

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas of the Local Plan District which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. The following actions are due to take place over the next six years, and most of these are carried out on an ongoing basis.

Specific local actions to manage flood risk in target areas are detailed in the Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA) sections below.

	Awareness raising
Action	<p>SEPA the responsible authorities and other organisations such as the Scottish Flood Forum work together to help communities understand the risk of flooding and what actions individuals can take through national and local initiatives. Improved awareness of flood risk and actions that prepare individuals, homes and businesses for flooding can reduce the overall impact of flooding.</p> <p>Local authorities undertake additional awareness raising activities when developing any specific project proposals and will engage with community resilience groups and local communities.</p> <p>Scottish Flood Forum support flood risk communities by raising community awareness, promoting self-help, developing community groups and establish a recovery support programme after a flood.</p>

Emergency response and plans	
Action	<p>Many organisations, including local authorities, the emergency services and SEPA provide an emergency response to flooding. Emergency plans are prepared and maintained under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 by Category 1 and 2 Responders and are coordinated through regional and local resilience partnerships, often supported by voluntary organisations. They set out the steps to be taken to maximise safety and minimise impacts during flooding. Emergency plans may also be prepared by individuals, businesses, organisations or communities. Scottish Water is a Category 2 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and will support regional and local resilience partnerships as required.</p>

Flood forecasting	
Action	<p>The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service is a partnership between SEPA and the Met Office. The service continues to produce a daily, national flood guidance statement, issued to emergency responders, local authorities and other organisations with flood risk management duties. As the flood warning authority for Scotland SEPA continues to provide its flood warning service issuing flood alerts and warnings when required, giving people a better chance of reducing the impact of flooding on their home or business.</p>

Flood Warning Development Framework	
Action	<p>SEPA will publish a new Flood Warning Development Framework by March 2022, which will detail its ambitions and strategic actions to maintain and improve our flood warning service across Scotland.</p> <p>SEPA will continue to develop the Scottish Flood Forecast, a 3 day forecast of flood risk across Scotland and bring together all live information such as flood warnings, river levels and rainfall data into a central hub easily accessible for the public.</p> <p>Working in close partnership with the Met Office through the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service, SEPA will develop its capability in surface water flooding forecasting, focusing initially on the transport sector to support climate-ready infrastructure. SEPA will also undertake a prioritised improvement programme of existing river and coastal flood warning schemes to provide more accurate forecast with improved lead time.</p>

Guidance	
Action	<p>The Scottish Government and SEPA will develop and update guidance to inform flood risk management projects. This guidance will be produced by June 2022 and will look at how best to adapt to the long-term impacts of climate change and the most appropriate methods of assessing the benefits of flood risk management actions.</p> <p>Technical modelling guidance from SEPA will also be reviewed and revised where required.</p>

Hazard mapping updates	
Action	An understanding of flooding is essential to develop a plan led risk-based approach to flood risk management. SEPA will continue to update their national hazard mapping, which shows the likelihood of flooding in Scotland from different flooding sources. Link . SEPA will continue to develop the hazard mapping viewer to make it easier for the public, partners and stakeholders to access data on the likelihood of flooding.

Land use planning	
Action	<p>National planning policies set out the Scottish Ministers' priorities for the operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. Under this approach, new development in areas with medium to high likelihood of flooding should generally be avoided. Current national planning policies, the Scottish Planning Policy and accompanying Planning Advice notes restrict development within the floodplain and limit exposure of new receptors to flood risk. Local planning policies may place further requirements within their area of operation to restrict inappropriate development and prevent unacceptable risk.</p> <p>Local authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water all have a role to support sustainable development. Further information on each organisations responsibilities is detailed in Annex 1.</p>

Maintenance	
Action	<p>Local authorities have a duty to assess bodies of water and to carry out clearance and repair works where such works would substantially reduce flood risk. Local authorities are also responsible for the drainage of roads. In addition, local authorities may also be responsible for maintenance of any existing flood protection schemes or works.</p> <p>Scottish Water will continue to undertake risk-based inspection, maintenance and repair on the public sewer network.</p> <p>Asset owners and riparian landowners are responsible for the maintenance and management of their own assets including those which help to reduce flood risk.</p>

National Flood risk assessment	
Action	Understanding the future impacts of climate change remains a central theme of SEPA's flood risk management activity. SEPA will use the latest UK information on climate change to support an improved understanding of the changes in flood risk across the 21 st century. SEPA will use the most suitable data to develop the National Flood Risk Assessment 2024. This assessment will be used to identify future Potentially Vulnerable Areas.

National surface water mapping	
Action	The National Flood Risk Assessment 2018 identified that surface water flooding has the potential to impact more properties in Scotland than any other source of flooding. Over the next six-year cycle SEPA will look to vastly improve its national understanding of surface flood risk by undertaking a wholesale update of the national surface water maps to reflect developments in data and understanding, including the impact of climate change.

Reservoirs	
Action	SEPA will continue to develop its assessment of flood risk from dam failure and use these assessments to direct a proportionate regulatory approach to ensure reservoir safety. Over the next management cycle we will implement further developments of our flood warning capabilities in the unlikely event of reservoir failure.

Scottish Flood Defence Asset Database	
Action	We are in a global climate emergency. The evidence is clear. In Scotland one of the main impacts of climate change will be increased flooding. SEPA will push forward the development of adaptation planning within Scotland. This work will start by reviewing and developing our understand of how and when Scotland's flood defence assets can be adapted to continue to provide vital protection from flooding in the future.

Self help	
Action	Everyone is responsible for protecting themselves and their property from flooding. Property and business owners can take simple steps to reduce damage and disruption to their homes and businesses should flooding happen. This includes preparing a flood plan and flood kit, installing property flood resilience measures, signing up to Floodline, engaging with their local flood group, and ensuring that properties and businesses are insured against flood damage. Responsible authorities and SEPA will continue to develop the understanding of flood risk to communities and promote measures to help individuals and businesses to reduce their risk.

Potentially Vulnerable Areas

Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA) were designated in 2018 based on the potential current or future risk from all sources of flooding. This designation was informed by the National Flood Risk Assessment ([link](#)). As part of continued analysis of flood risk, the National Flood Risk Assessment and Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA) will be reviewed every six years to take on board any new information. There are five Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA) in this Local Plan District. Following sections provide more information on these areas.

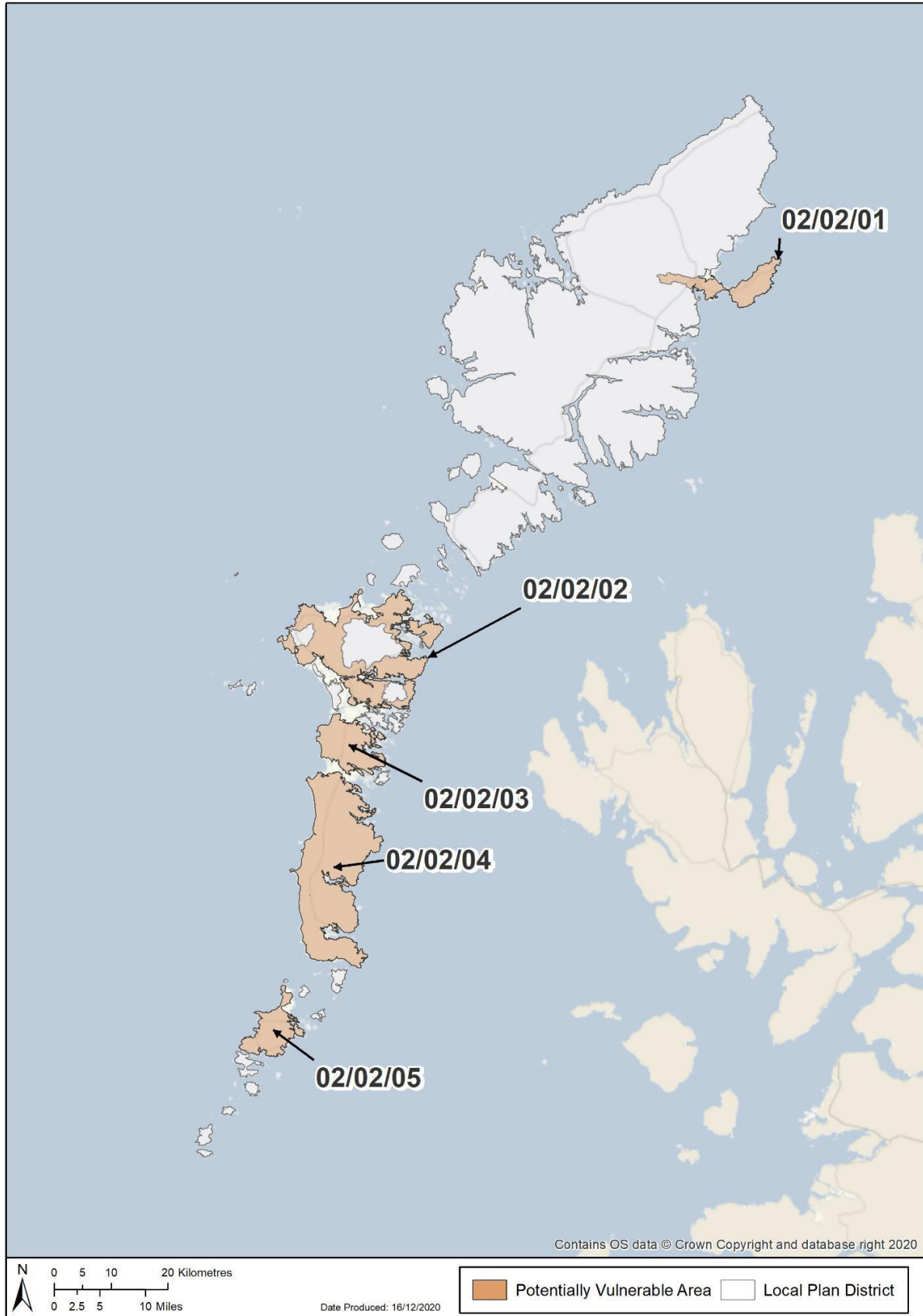


Figure 1. Potentially Vulnerable Areas in Outer Hebrides Local Plan District

LPD 2 Outer Hebrides - table of contents

Click the [blue text](#) to select your area of interest

PVA Ref	PVA NAME	Local authority
02/02/01	Stornoway	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
02/02/02	North Uist	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
02/02/03	Benbecula	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
02/02/04	South Uist	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
02/02/05	Barra	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar

02/02/01 (Stornoway)

This area is designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area due to the risk of coastal flooding to Stornoway. Historically the area has suffered from coastal flooding. Coastal flood risk is likely to increase due to sea level rise caused by climate change. The road to the Eye Peninsula is subject to frequent wave overtopping which cuts off the community from vital services.

There is 1 area in this Potentially Vulnerable Area, which has been the focus of further assessment, this is identified below. Further information on the proposed objectives and actions to manage flood risk within this area is provided below.

List of target areas

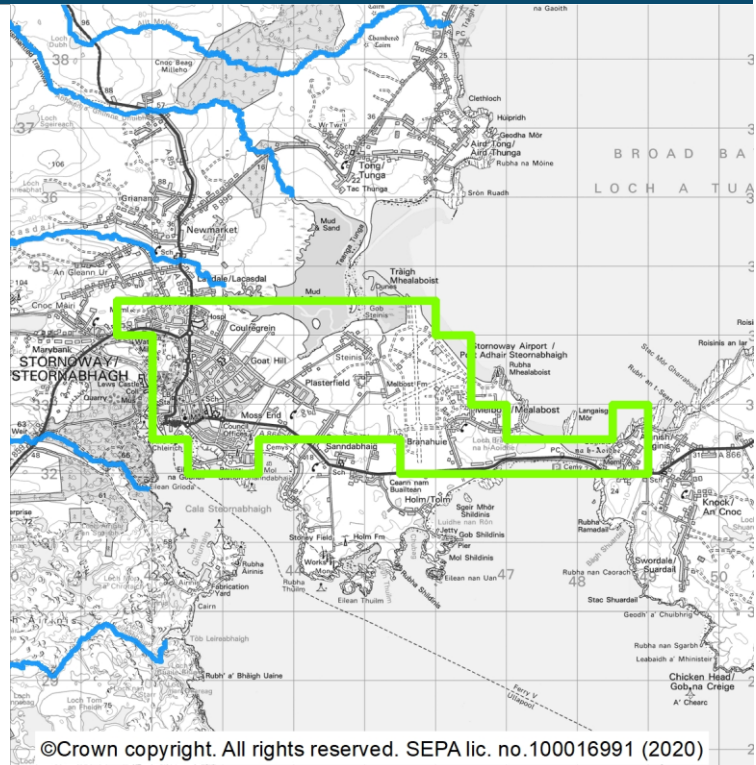
Stornoway (target area 378)

Stornoway (target area 378)

Summary

Stornoway is the main town on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. It is in the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area. Flooding in Stornoway is predominantly coastal, either directly due to high water levels and wave overtopping or indirectly by impeding land drainage. The Bhragh carries a vital coastal road linking communities on the Eye Peninsula (also known as the Point Peninsula) to Stornoway. When it is closed due to wave overtopping and flooding the communities on the Eye Peninsula are cut off from vital services. There are approximately 210 people and 230 homes and businesses currently at risk of flooding. This is likely to increase to 400 people and 380 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.

Location map



What is the current understanding of flood risk?

This section provides a summary of information, which has helped to develop an understanding of flood risk in the area. Since 2011 SEPA has developed and updated national level assessments of flooding from rivers, surface water and coastal sources. The national level assessment is improved for coastal flood and erosion risk through the development of the Eilean Siar flood warning scheme and the feasibility study for coastal protection works at Stornoway airport. Understanding of surface water flood risk has been improved by a sewer flood risk assessment. There is a long record of flooding in the target area with frequent closure or disruption of the Bhragh recorded due to wave overtopping and flooding.

The Dynamic coast project has shown that parts of the shoreline in or adjacent to this target area are subject to erosion at present or are considered likely to erode in the future. Consideration should be given to how erosion might impact flood risk. Any actions taken should aim to support building natural resilience to flooding and not lead to an increase in erosion.

What are the objectives for the area?

In each target area, SEPA and the responsible authorities have set objectives for the management of flood risk. In some locations, the objectives provide a short-term direction that will be reviewed and updated when more information is available. In others they provide a long-term direction for the management of flooding within a community. The objectives along with the current understanding of flood risk help to identify the actions that are required in the short and long term. It may take several years or multiple 6 year cycles to achieve the identified objectives, but they set a common goal for multiple agencies. The following package of objectives have been established for this area. The objectives must be considered alongside national principles to manage flood risk. These include:

- Take a long term, risk-based approach to flood risk management decisions and one that considers the impacts of and adaptability to climate change.
- Deliver coordinated and integrated flood risk management by engaging with communities and working in partnership, sharing data, expertise, services, and resources.
- Consider whole catchments and coastlines and work with natural processes and the environment to deliver multiple outcomes.

Objective ref	Objective type	Objective description
3781	Avoid flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development that increases flood risk in Stornoway.
3782	Prepare for flooding	Prepare for current flood risk and/or future flooding as a result of climate change in Stornoway.
3783	Reduce flood risk	Reduce the risk of coastal flooding to Stornoway, Stornoway airport and the A866 to the Eye peninsula.

What actions are proposed for this area?

This section provides information on the draft proposed actions for this target area. The proposed actions take account of the understanding of flood risk and the package of objectives set for the area. Actions will be coordinated to achieve maximum benefit; this will be determined once the actions have been finalised. The proposed actions are draft for consultation and are provided for comment. Your comments will help shape future flood risk management. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to available funding and resources.

Actions proposed to start before June 2028

Flood study (Ref: 37801)	
Action	An understanding of flood risk and associated issues in the area is to be developed, which may include surveys and modelling and should consider the impacts of climate change on flood risk. In areas where flood risk is confirmed, a range of possible options to manage flood risk are to be identified, including natural flood management actions where suitable, and a preferred approach is to be chosen. This should include adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	The flood study will focus on coastal flood risk to Stornoway and the Bhragh. The study may also consider flood risk to other transport routes. The impacts of climate change and coastal erosion should be considered. As part of the flood study an adaptation plan should be developed and implemented.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Strategic mapping improvements (Ref: 37802)	
Action	SEPA will continue to update flood maps based on new information.
Action detail	SEPA will be undertaking improved coastal modelling in this target area including taking account of the impact of waves on coastal flooding where appropriate. We will complete and publish the outcomes of this modelling work to inform decision making with respect to flooding at the coast.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood scheme or works implementation (Ref: 37803)	
Action	The flood scheme/works is to be built following agreement of the design, costs and timescales.
Action detail	HIAL to progress the programme of works for Stornoway airport as scheduled.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is HIAL and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood warning maintenance (Ref: 37804)	
Action	The Floodline flood warning service is to be kept operational through maintenance to the existing system and updates being undertaken as required.
Action detail	SEPA should maintain the Eilean Siar coastal flood warning scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. A description of these actions is included in the Local Plan District section at the start of this document.

What are the opportunities for joint working?

Working in partnership is at the heart of flood risk management, responsible authorities and SEPA regularly work together in all areas to improve the coordination of flood management. Working across organisations and groups contributes to sustainable ways of managing current and future flood risk in a community. The potential for joint working will be further explored following the consultation feedback.

02/02/02 (North Uist)

North Uist is designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area due to coastal flood risk. Coastal flood risk is likely to increase due to sea level rise caused by climate change. Transport routes, including those between North Uist and the neighbouring islands, are at risk from flooding. Storm Brendan in January 2020 caused transport disruption.

There is 1 area in this Potentially Vulnerable Area, which has been the focus of further assessment, this is identified below. Further information on the proposed objectives and actions to manage flood risk within this area is provided below.

List of target areas

North Uist (target area 379)

North Uist (target area 379)

Summary

The island of North Uist forms part of the Outer Hebrides and is within the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area. Flooding on North Uist is predominantly coastal, either directly due to high water levels and wave overtopping or indirectly by impeding the complex pattern of land drainage. As a result flood risk is likely underestimated here. Sea level rise, caused by climate change is expected to significantly increase flood risk. There are approximately 20 people and 30 homes and businesses at risk from flooding. This is estimated to increase to 50 people and 50 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change. Wave overtopping of the North Ford causeway can cut off vital transport links between the islands.

Location map



What is the current understanding of flood risk?

This section provides a summary of information, which has helped to develop an understanding of flood risk in the area. Since 2011 SEPA has developed and updated national level assessments of flooding from rivers, surface water and coastal sources. The national level assessment is improved for coastal flooding by the development of the Eilean Siar flood warning scheme. There are periodic records of flooding in North Uist with notable coastal flooding recorded in January 2005.

The Dynamic coast project has shown that parts of the shoreline in or adjacent to this target area are subject to erosion at present or are considered likely to erode in the future. Consideration should be given to how erosion might impact flood risk. Any actions taken should aim to support building natural resilience to flooding and not lead to an increase in erosion.

What are the objectives for the area?

In each target area, SEPA and the responsible authorities have set objectives for the management of flood risk. In some locations, the objectives provide a short-term direction that will be reviewed and updated when more information is available. In others they provide a long-term direction for the management of flooding within a community. The objectives along with the current understanding of flood risk help to identify the actions that are required in the short and long term. It may take several years or multiple 6 year cycles to achieve the identified objectives, but they set a common goal for multiple agencies. The following package of objectives have been established for this area. The objectives must be considered alongside national principles to manage flood risk. These include:

- Take a long term, risk-based approach to flood risk management decisions and one that considers the impacts of and adaptability to climate change.
- Deliver coordinated and integrated flood risk management by engaging with communities and working in partnership, sharing data, expertise, services, and resources.
- Consider whole catchments and coastlines and work with natural processes and the environment to deliver multiple outcomes.

Objective ref	Objective type	Objective description
3791	Avoid flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development that increases flood risk in North Uist.
3792	Avoid flood risk	Avoid an increase in flood risk in North Uist by the appropriate protection, management and maintenance of the sand dune systems.
3793	Prepare for flooding	Prepare for current flood risk and future flooding as a result of climate change in North Uist.
3794	Reduce flood risk	Reduce the risk of river, coastal and surface water flooding in North Uist.

What actions are proposed for this area?

This section provides information on the draft proposed actions for this target area. The proposed actions take account of the understanding of flood risk and the package of objectives set for the area. Actions will be coordinated to achieve maximum benefit; this will be determined once the actions have been finalised. The proposed actions are draft for consultation and are provided for comment. Your comments will help shape future flood risk management. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to available funding and resources.

Actions proposed to start before June 2028

Flood study (Ref: 37901)	
Action	An understanding of flood risk and associated issues in the area is to be developed, which may include surveys and modelling and should consider the impacts of climate change on flood risk. In areas where flood risk is confirmed, a range of possible options to manage flood risk are to be identified, including natural flood management actions where suitable, and a preferred approach is to be chosen. This should include adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Flood protection study for North Uist. Commencing with developing a better understanding of flood risk across the island, the study should assess the interaction between coastal, river and surface water flooding and take coastal erosion into account. The impacts of climate change should be considered. As part of the flood study an adaptation plan should be developed and implemented for North Uist.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Strategic mapping improvements (Ref: 37902)	
Action	SEPA will continue to update flood maps based on new information.
Action detail	SEPA will be undertaking improved coastal modelling in this target area including taking account of the impact of waves on coastal flooding where appropriate. We will complete and publish the outcomes of this modelling work to inform decision making with respect to flooding at the coast.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood warning maintenance (Ref: 37903)	
Action	The Floodline flood warning service is to be kept operational through maintenance to the existing system and updates being undertaken as required.
Action detail	SEPA should maintain the Eilean Siar coastal flood warning scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Land use planning (Ref: 37904)

Action	Planning authority should ensure that their development plan and planning decision-making supports delivery of sustainable flood management.
Action detail	Use the land use planning system to protect, manage and maintain the sand dune systems to avoid an increase in flood risk in North Uist.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. A description of these actions is included in the Local Plan District section at the start of this document.

What are the opportunities for joint working?

Working in partnership is at the heart of flood risk management, responsible authorities and SEPA regularly work together in all areas to improve the coordination of flood management. Working across organisations and groups contributes to sustainable ways of managing current and future flood risk in a community. The potential for joint working will be further explored following the consultation feedback.

There is the potential to work with NatureScot, who are leading a project to develop resilience and adaptation measures to face increasing flood risk due to climate change.

02/02/03 (Benbecula)

Benbecula is designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area due to coastal and surface water flood risk, particularly in Balivanich and around Liniclate, where erosion is also an issue. The airport is at risk of coastal erosion and flooding. Coastal flood risk is likely to increase due to sea level rise caused by climate change. Additional flood risk is associated with the drainage systems on the island, which are vital to managing water levels.

There is 1 area in this Potentially Vulnerable Area, which has been the focus of further assessment, this is identified below. Further information on the proposed objectives and actions to manage flood risk within this area is provided below.

List of target areas

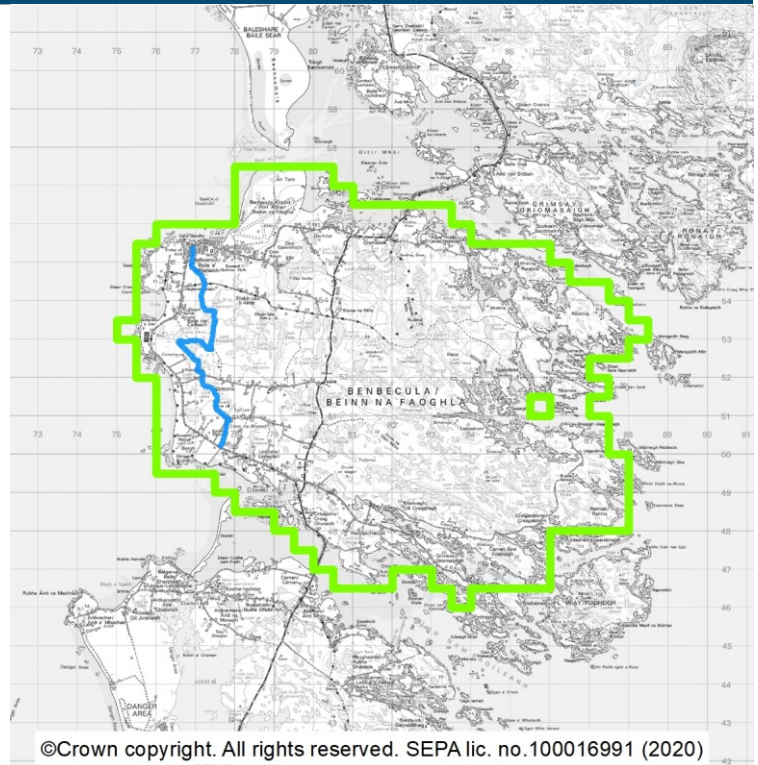
Benbecula (target area 381)

Benbecula (target area 381)

Summary

The island of Benbecula forms part of the Outer Hebrides and is in the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area. Flooding on Benbecula is predominantly coastal, either directly due to high water levels and wave overtopping or indirectly by impeding the complex pattern of land drainage. Sea level rise, caused by climate change is expected to significantly increase flood risk. There are approximately 220 people and 140 homes and businesses currently at risk from flooding. This is likely to increase to 280 people and 190 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change. Wave overtopping of the North and South Ford causeways can cut off vital transport links between the islands.

Location map



What is the current understanding of flood risk?

This section provides a summary of information, which has helped to develop an understanding of flood risk in the area. Since 2011 SEPA has developed and updated national level assessments of flooding from rivers, surface water and coastal sources. The national level assessment is improved for coastal flood risk by the modelling work done to develop the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme (which includes the Liniate dune protection), further modelling by JBA for the area, and the development of the Eilean Siar flood warning scheme. The development of works to protect Benbecula airport from coastal flooding and erosion by The Highlands and Islands Airport Authority (HIAL) also improved understanding of coastal flood risk. There are frequent records of flooding in Benbecula, with notable coastal flooding in January 2005. Both the North and South Ford causeways are prone to wave overtopping.

The Dynamic coast project has shown that parts of the shoreline in or adjacent to this target area are subject to erosion at present or are considered likely to erode in the future. Consideration should be given to how erosion might impact flood risk. Any actions taken should aim to support building natural resilience to flooding and not lead to an increase in erosion.

What are the objectives for the area?

In each target area, SEPA and the responsible authorities have set objectives for the management of flood risk. In some locations, the objectives provide a short-term direction that will be reviewed and updated when more information is available. In others they provide a long-term direction for the management of flooding within a community. The objectives along with the current understanding of flood risk help to identify the actions that are required in the short and long term. It may take several years or multiple 6 year cycles to achieve the identified objectives, but they set a common goal for multiple agencies. The following package of objectives have been established for this area. The objectives must be considered alongside national principles to manage flood risk. These include:

- Take a long term, risk-based approach to flood risk management decisions and one that considers the impacts of and adaptability to climate change.
- Deliver coordinated and integrated flood risk management by engaging with communities and working in partnership, sharing data, expertise, services, and resources.
- Consider whole catchments and coastlines and work with natural processes and the environment to deliver multiple outcomes

Objective ref	Objective type	Objective description
3811	Avoid flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development that increases flood risk in Benbecula.
3812	Avoid flood risk	Avoid an increase in flood risk in Benbecula by the appropriate protection, management and maintenance of the sand dune systems.
3813	Prepare for flooding	Prepare for current flood risk and future flooding as a result of climate change in Benbecula.
3814	Prepare for flooding	Develop an adaptive approach for Benbecula airport to future flooding and erosion resulting from climate change.
3815	Reduce flood risk	Reduce the risk of coastal, river and surface water flooding in Benbecula.

What actions are proposed for this area?

This section provides information on the draft proposed actions for this target area. The proposed actions take account of the understanding of flood risk and the package of objectives set for the area. Actions will be coordinated to achieve maximum benefit; this will be determined once the actions have been finalised. The proposed actions are draft for consultation and are provided for comment. Your comments will help shape future flood risk management. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to available funding and resources.

Actions proposed to start before June 2028

Flood scheme or works design (Ref: 38101)	
Action	The selected preferred approach for managing flood risk is to be designed following the completion of the flood study, including consideration of the long-term impacts of climate change. These can include small scale works or works to improve catchment management. This should guide adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Progress detailed design of the elements of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme which are located on or help manage flood risk on Benbecula. This includes the dunes at Liniclate.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Community engagement (Ref: 38102)	
Action	Community engagement is to continue to be carried out in the area by the responsible authorities to raise awareness of flood risk.
Action detail	The responsible authorities to continue to engage with the community, with particular focus on the detailed design of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood scheme or works implementation (Ref: 38103)	
Action	The flood scheme/works is to be built following agreement of the design, costs and timescales.
Action detail	Procure and construct the elements of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme which are located on or help manage flood risk on Benbecula. As built drawings should be made available to SEPA for consideration in the Scottish Flood Defence Asset Database, flood map updates and flood warning scheme updates.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Adaptation plan (Ref: 38104)

Action	Information on climate change is to be used to develop an adaptation plan to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	HIAL should continue to implement the adaptation plan developed for Benbecula Airport.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is HIAL and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood study (Ref: 38105)

Action	An understanding of flood risk and associated issues in the area is to be developed, which may include surveys and modelling and should consider the impacts of climate change on flood risk. In areas where flood risk is confirmed, a range of possible options to manage flood risk are to be identified, including natural flood management actions where suitable, and a preferred approach is to be chosen. This should include adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Flood protection study for Benbecula including the Balivanich and Uachdar areas. Commencing with developing a better understanding of flood risk across the island, the study should assess the interaction between coastal, river and surface water flooding and take coastal erosion into account. The impacts of climate change should be considered. As part of the flood study an adaptation plan should be developed and implemented for the island of Benbecula.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Strategic mapping improvements (Ref: 38106)

Action	SEPA will continue to update flood maps based on new information.
Action detail	SEPA will be undertaking improved coastal modelling in this target area including taking account of the impact of waves on coastal flooding where appropriate. We will complete and publish the outcomes of this modelling work to inform decision making with respect to flooding at the coast.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood warning maintenance (Ref: 38107)

Action	The Floodline flood warning service is to be kept operational through maintenance to the existing system and updates being undertaken as required.
Action detail	SEPA should maintain the Eilean Siar coastal flood warning scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Land use planning (Ref: 38108)

Action	Planning authority should ensure that their development plan and planning decision-making supports delivery of sustainable flood management.
Action detail	Use the land use planning system to protect, manage and maintain the sand dune systems to avoid an increase in flood risk in Benbecula.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. A description of these actions is included in the Local Plan District section at the start of this document.

What are the opportunities for joint working?

Working in partnership is at the heart of flood risk management, responsible authorities and SEPA regularly work together in all areas to improve the coordination of flood management. Working across organisations and groups contributes to sustainable ways of managing current and future flood risk in a community. The potential for joint working will be further explored following the consultation feedback.

There is the potential to work with NatureScot, who are leading a project to develop resilience and adaptation measures to face increasing flood risk due to climate change.

02/02/04 (South Uist)

South Uist is designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area due to the risk of coastal and surface water flooding. The whole of South Uist was designated due to the complex interaction between sea level, groundwater levels and the drainage systems. Recent flooding has occurred as a result of both river and surface water flooding.

There is 1 area in this Potentially Vulnerable Area, which has been the focus of further assessment, this is identified below. Further information on the proposed objectives and actions to manage flood risk within this area is provided below.

List of target areas

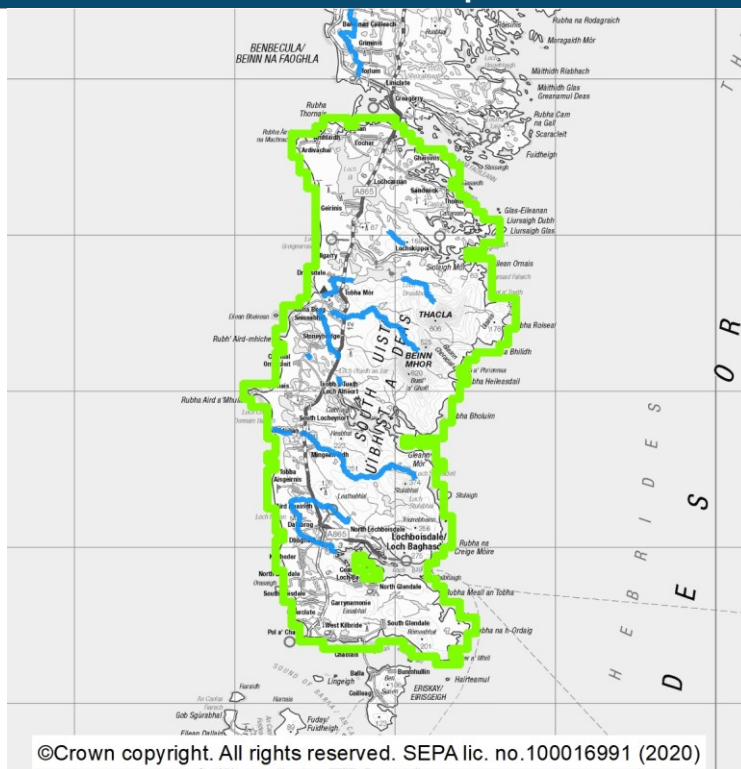
South Uist (target area 380)

South Uist (target area 380)

Summary

The island of South Uist forms part of the Outer Hebrides and is within the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area. Flooding on South Uist is predominantly coastal, either directly due to high water levels and wave overtopping or indirectly by impeding the complex pattern of land drainage. Sea level rise, caused by climate change is expected to significantly increase flood risk. There are approximately 170 people and 110 properties currently at risk from flooding. This is likely to increase to 260 people and 170 properties by the 2080s due to climate change. Wave overtopping of the South Ford causeway can cut off vital transport links between the islands.

Location map



What is the current understanding of flood risk?

This section provides a summary of information, which has helped to develop an understanding of flood risk in the area. Since 2011 SEPA has developed and updated national level assessments of flooding from rivers, surface water and coastal sources. The national level assessment is improved for coastal flood risk by the modelling work completed to develop the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme, further modelling by JBA for the area, and the development of the Eilean Siar flood warning scheme. There is a long record of flooding in South Uist, including the notable coastal flooding of January 2005.

The Dynamic coast project has shown that parts of the shoreline in or adjacent to this target area are subject to erosion at present or are considered likely to erode in the future. Consideration should be given to how erosion might impact flood risk. Any actions taken should aim to support building natural resilience to flooding and not lead to an increase in erosion.

What are the objectives for the area?

In each target area, SEPA and the responsible authorities have set objectives for the management of flood risk. In some locations, the objectives provide a short-term direction that will be reviewed and updated when more information is available. In others they provide a long-term direction for the management of flooding within a community. The objectives along with the current understanding of flood risk help to identify the actions that are required in the short and long term. It may take several years or multiple 6 year cycles to achieve the identified objectives, but they set a common goal for multiple agencies. The following package of objectives have been established for this area. The objectives must be considered alongside national principles to manage flood risk. These include:

- Take a long term, risk-based approach to flood risk management decisions and one that considers the impacts of and adaptability to climate change.
- Deliver coordinated and integrated flood risk management by engaging with communities and working in partnership, sharing data, expertise, services, and resources.
- Consider whole catchments and coastlines and work with natural processes and the environment to deliver multiple outcomes.

Objective ref	Objective type	Objective description
3801	Avoid flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development that increases flood risk in South Uist.
3802	Avoid flood risk	Avoid an increase in flood risk in South Uist by the appropriate protection, management and maintenance of the sand dune
3803	Prepare for flooding	Prepare for current flood risk and future flooding as a result of climate change in South Uist.
3804	Reduce flood risk	Reduce the risk of river, coastal and surface water flooding in South Uist.

What actions are proposed for this area?

This section provides information on the draft proposed actions for this target area. The proposed actions take account of the understanding of flood risk and the package of objectives set for the area. Actions will be coordinated to achieve maximum benefit; this will be determined once the actions have been finalised. The proposed actions are draft for consultation and are provided for comment. Your comments will help shape future flood risk management. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to available funding and resources.

Actions proposed to start before June 2028

Flood scheme or works design (Ref: 38001)	
Action	The selected preferred approach for managing flood risk is to be designed following the completion of the flood study, including consideration of the long-term impacts of climate change. These can include small scale works or works to improve catchment management. This should guide adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Progress detailed design of the elements of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme which are located on or help manage flood risk on South Uist. This includes the work to strengthen Gualan Island as a flood defence.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Community engagement (Ref: 38002)	
Action	Community engagement is to continue to be carried out in the area by the responsible authorities to raise awareness of flood risk.
Action detail	The responsible authorities to continue to engage with the community, with particular focus on the detailed design of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood scheme or works implementation (Ref: 38003)	
Action	The flood scheme/works is to be built following agreement of the design, costs and timescales.
Action detail	Procure and construct the elements of the South Ford Flood Protection Scheme which are located on or help manage flood risk on South Uist. As built drawings should be made available to SEPA for consideration in the Scottish Flood Defence Asset Database, flood map updates and flood warning scheme updates.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Strategic mapping improvements (Ref: 38004)

Action	SEPA will continue to update flood maps based on new information.
Action detail	SEPA will be undertaking improved coastal modelling in this target area including taking account of the impact of waves on coastal flooding where appropriate. We will complete and publish the outcomes of this modelling work to inform decision making with respect to flooding at the coast.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood study (Ref: 38005)

Action	An understanding of flood risk and associated issues in the area is to be developed, which may include surveys and modelling and should consider the impacts of climate change on flood risk. In areas where flood risk is confirmed, a range of possible options to manage flood risk are to be identified, including natural flood management actions where suitable, and a preferred approach is to be chosen. This should include adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Flood protection study for South Uist. Commencing with developing a better understanding of flood risk across the island, the study should assess the interaction between coastal, river and surface water flooding and take coastal erosion into account. The impacts of climate change should be considered. As part of the flood study an adaptation plan should be developed and implemented for South Uist.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood warning maintenance (Ref: 38006)

Action	The Floodline flood warning service is to be kept operational through maintenance to the existing system and updates being undertaken as required.
Action detail	SEPA should maintain the Eilean Siar coastal flood warning scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Land use planning (Ref: 38007)

Action	Planning authority should ensure that their development plan and planning decision-making supports delivery of sustainable flood management.
Action detail	Use the land use planning system to protect, manage and maintain the sand dune systems to avoid an increase in flood risk in South Uist.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. A description of these actions is included in the Local Plan District section at the start of this document.

What are the opportunities for joint working?

Working in partnership is at the heart of flood risk management, responsible authorities and SEPA regularly work together in all areas to improve the coordination of flood management. Working across organisations and groups contributes to sustainable ways of managing current and future flood risk in a community. The potential for joint working will be further explored following the consultation feedback.

There is the potential to work with NatureScot, who are leading a project to develop resilience and adaptation measures to face increasing flood risk due to climate change.

02/02/05 (Barra)

Barra is designated as a Potentially Vulnerable Area based on past flooding from surface water and small water courses. Recent flooding has occurred due to surface water, including small watercourses.

There is 1 area in this Potentially Vulnerable Area, which has been the focus of further assessment, this is identified below. Further information on the proposed objectives and actions to manage flood risk within this area is provided below.

List of target areas

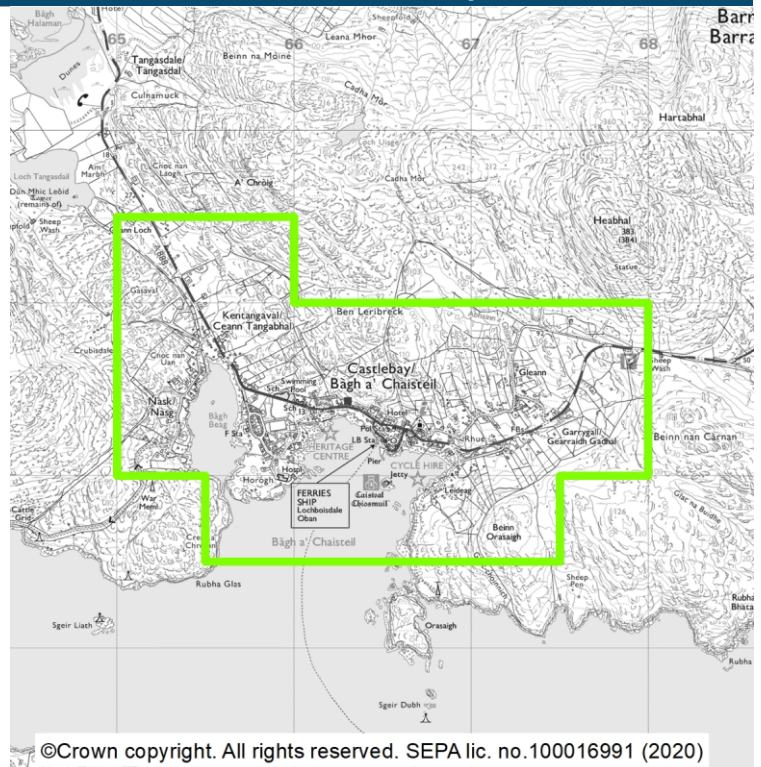
Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil (target area 384)

Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil (target area 384)

Summary

Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil is located along the southern coast of Barra in the Outer Hebrides. The area is within the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar region. The main concerns of flooding in Castlebay are from surface water and small water courses. However, this is not reflected in the SEPA flood maps which identify the predominant risks as coastal due to high water levels and wave overtopping from southerly storm winds. There are approximately 20 people and 30 homes and businesses currently at risk of flooding. This is likely to increase to 50 people and 50 homes and businesses by the 2080s due to climate change.

Location map



What is the current understanding of flood risk?

This section provides a summary of information, which has helped to develop an understanding of flood risk in the area. Since 2011 SEPA has developed and updated national level assessments of flooding from rivers, surface water and coastal sources, and this information and the flood history has highlighted the risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses in this target area. Castlebay has therefore been identified as a new target area for the 2021 flood risk management plans. The national level assessment is improved for coastal flooding by the development of the Eilean Siar flood warning scheme. There is a long record of flooding in Castlebay, Barra with notable floods in October 2014 and August 2017 following persistent rain.

What are the objectives for the area?

In each target area, SEPA and the responsible authorities have set objectives for the management of flood risk. In some locations, the objectives provide a short-term direction that will be reviewed and updated when more information is available. In others they provide a long-term direction for the management of flooding within a community. The objectives along with the current understanding of flood risk help to identify the actions that are required in the short and long term. It may take several years or multiple 6 year cycles to achieve the identified objectives, but they set a common goal for multiple agencies. The following package of objectives have been established for this area. The objectives must be considered alongside national principles to manage flood risk. These include:

- Take a long term, risk-based approach to flood risk management decisions and one that considers the impacts of and adaptability to climate change.
- Deliver coordinated and integrated flood risk management by engaging with communities and working in partnership, sharing data, expertise, services, and resources.
- Consider whole catchments and coastlines and work with natural processes and the environment to deliver multiple outcomes.

Objective ref	Objective type	Objective description
3841	Avoid flood risk	Avoid inappropriate development that increases flood risk in Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil .
3842	Prepare for flooding	Prepare for current flood risk and future flooding as a result of climate change in Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil.
3843	Reduce flood risk	Reduce the risk of flooding from surface water and small water courses in Castlebay / Bágħ a' Chaisteil.

What actions are proposed for this area?

This section provides information on the draft proposed actions for this target area. The proposed actions take account of the understanding of flood risk and the package of objectives set for the area. Actions will be coordinated to achieve maximum benefit; this will be determined once the actions have been finalised. The proposed actions are draft for consultation and are provided for comment. Your comments will help shape future flood risk management. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to available funding and resources.

Actions proposed to start before June 2028

Flood study (Ref: 38401)	
Action	An understanding of flood risk and associated issues in the area is to be developed, which may include surveys and modelling and should consider the impacts of climate change on flood risk. In areas where flood risk is confirmed, a range of possible options to manage flood risk are to be identified, including natural flood management actions where suitable, and a preferred approach is to be chosen. This should include adaptive planning to allow for the impacts of climate change to be monitored, understood and managed.
Action detail	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to carry out a flood study to understand flood risk from surface water and small watercourses in Castlebay / Bgh a' Chaisteil . The study should consider the impacts of sea level on the outflow into the sea. The impacts of climate change on flood risk should be considered.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

Flood warning maintenance (Ref: 38402)	
Action	The Floodline flood warning service is to be kept operational through maintenance to the existing system and updates being undertaken as required.
Action detail	SEPA should maintain the Eilean Siar coastal flood warning scheme.
Coordination	The action delivery lead is SEPA and coordination will be determined once the actions have been finalised.

SEPA and responsible authorities carry out actions in all areas which help to manage current and future flooding. These actions help to ensure that key aspects of flood risk management are taken forward in all locations. They ensure that for example new housing developments occur in the right places, and that critical flood risk information is developed and updated for all areas. A description of these actions is included in the Local Plan District section at the start of this document.

What are the opportunities for joint working?

Working in partnership is at the heart of flood risk management, responsible authorities and SEPA regularly work together in all areas to improve the coordination of flood management. Working across organisations and groups contributes to sustainable ways of managing current and future flood risk in a community. The potential for joint working will be further explored following the consultation feedback.

Flood Risk Management Glossary

July 2021

Term	Definition
Accretion	Accumulation of sediment.
Actions	Activities undertaken to reduce the impact of flooding. Actions describe where and how flood risk will be managed. These actions have been set by SEPA and agreed with flood risk management authorities. The actions presented in the consultation are draft and will be finalised after the consultation. Selection of actions to deliver the agreed objectives has been based on a detailed assessment and comparison of economic, social and environmental criteria.
Annual Average Damages (AAD)	Depending on its size or severity each flood will cause a different amount of damage to a given area. Annual Average Damages are the theoretical average economic damages caused by flooding when considered over a very long period of time. It does not mean that damage will occur every year: in many years there will be no damages, in some years minor damages and in a few years major damages may occur. High likelihood events, which occur more regularly, contribute proportionally more to AADs than rarer events. Within the flood risk management plans AADs incorporate economic damages to the following receptors: residential properties, non-residential properties, vehicles, emergency services, agriculture and roads. They have been calculated based on the principles set out in the Flood Hazard Research Centre Multi-Coloured Handbook (2010).
Appraisal	Appraisal is the process of defining objectives, examining options and weighing up costs, benefits, risks and uncertainties before a decision is made. The flood risk management plans appraisal method is designed to set objectives and identify the most sustainable combination of actions to tackle flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water.
Awareness raising	Public awareness, participation and community support are essential components of sustainable flood risk management. SEPA and the responsible authorities have a duty to raise public awareness of flood risk. This is undertaken both individually and collaboratively by a range of organisations. Improved awareness of flood risk and actions that prepare individuals, homes and businesses for flooding can reduce overall impact.
Bathing waters	Bathing waters are classed as protected areas under Annex IV of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). There are 84 designated bathing waters in Scotland.

Term	Definition
Benefit cost ratio (BCR)	A benefit cost ratio summarises the overall value for money of an action or project. It is expressed as the ratio of benefits to costs (both expressed as present value monetary values). A ratio of greater than 1:1 indicates that the economic benefits associated with an action are greater than the economic costs of implementation; therefore this is taken as the threshold of economic viability. It should be acknowledged that it is not always possible to accurately estimate economic values for all elements of benefit, and BCR is just one of a number of techniques used in appraisal.
Blue infrastructure	Blue infrastructure is often complementary to 'green infrastructure' and includes sustainable drainage systems, swales (shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey runoff and remove pollutants), wetlands, rivers, canals (and their banks) and all watercourses.
Business and services	Properties that are not used for people to live in, such as shops or other public, commercial or industrial buildings.
Catchment	All the land drained by a river and its tributaries.
Category 1 and 2 responders (Cat 1 / 2)	Category 1 and 2 Responders are defined as part of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 which seeks to minimise disruption in the event of an emergency. Category 1 Responders are 'core' responders: local authorities, police, fire and rescue services, ambulance service, NHS health boards, SEPA and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Category 2 Responders are key co-operating responders in support of Category 1 Responders. These include gas and electricity companies, rail and air transport operators, harbour authorities, telecommunications providers, Scottish Water, the Health and Safety Executive and NHS National Services Scotland.
Channel improvement	Where work has been carried out on the river's channel allowing an increase in the volume of water it can carry.
Characterisation	Provides a description of the natural characteristics of catchments, coastlines and urban areas in terms of hydrology, geomorphology, topography and land use. It also includes the characterisation of existing levels of flood risk and existing flood risk management activity.
Coastal flooding	Flooding that results from high sea levels or a combination of high sea levels and stormy conditions. The term coastal flooding is used under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, but in some areas it is also referred to as tidal flooding and covers areas such as estuaries and river channels that are influenced by tidal flows.
Combined sewer	Combined sewers transport sewage from homes and industry as well as carrying surface water runoff from gutters, drains and some highways. Heavy or prolonged rainfall can rapidly increase the flow in a combined sewer until the amount of water exceeds sewer capacity.
Combined sewer (overflow) (CSO)	Combined sewer overflows are purposely designed structures to ensure any excess water from sewerage systems is discharged in a controlled way and at a specific managed location.

Term	Definition
Community facility	Within the flood risk management plans this term includes: Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard, and Mountain Rescue) Educational Buildings (crèche, nursery, primary, secondary, further, higher and special education premises) Healthcare facilities: hospitals, health centres and residential care homes.
Community flood action groups	Community flood action groups are community based resilience groups which, on behalf of local residents and business, help to prepare for and minimise the effects of flooding. They reflect the interests of their local communities and may differ in composition and remit. There are over 60 groups already established in Scotland. The Scottish Flood Forum provides support for both new and existing groups.
Confluence	Where two or more rivers meet.
Conveyance	Conveyance is a measure of the carrying capacity of a watercourse. Increasing conveyance enables flow to pass more rapidly and reducing conveyance slows flow down. Both actions can be effective in managing flood risk depending on local conditions.
Cross Border Advisory Group (CBAG)	The Cross Border Advisory Group is a statutory group made up of representatives from the Environment Agency, SEPA, Scottish Water and the four lead local flood authorities located within the Solway Tweed River Basin District.
Cultural heritage site	Historic Environment Scotland maintains lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest; these buildings are referred to as 'listed buildings'. The highest level of designation is a World Heritage Site. Other designations included in this assessment are scheduled monuments, gardens and designed landscapes, and battlefields.
Culvert	A pipe, channel or tunnel used for the conveyance of a watercourse or surface drainage water under a road, railway, canal or other obstacle.
Damages	<p>Flood damages are categorised as direct or indirect i.e. as a result of the flood water itself, or subsequent knock on effects. Damage to buildings and contents caused by flood water are an example of direct damages, whilst loss of industrial production, travel disruption or stress and anxiety are indirect. Some damages can be quantified in monetary terms, and others can only be described.</p> <p>The potential damages avoided by implementation of a flood risk management action are commonly referred to as the benefits of that action. When comparing the effectiveness of different actions, it is useful to consider estimated damages and damages avoided across the lifespan of the action. Within the flood risk management plans, a 100 year appraisal period has been used as standard. This allows costs, damages and benefits across this time frame to be compared in present value terms.</p> <p>See also 'Annual Average Damages'</p>

Demountable defences	A temporary flood barrier is one that is only installed when the need arises, that is, when flooding is forecast. A demountable flood defence is a particular type of temporary defence that requires built-in parts and therefore can only be deployed in one specific location.
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Term	Definition
Deposition	A natural process leading to an accumulation of sediment on a river bed, floodplain or coastline.
Economic Impact	An assessment of the economic value of the positive and negative effects of flooding and/or the actions taken to manage floods.
Embankment	Flood embankments are engineered earthfill structures designed to contain high river levels or protect against coastal flooding. They are commonly grass-covered, but may need additional protection against erosion by swiftly flowing water, waves or overtopping.
Emergency plans / response	Emergency response plans are applicable for all types of flooding. They set out the steps to be taken during flooding in order to maximise safety and minimise impacts where possible. Under the Civil Contingencies Act, Category 1 Responders have a duty to maintain emergency plans. Emergency plans may also be prepared by individuals, businesses, organisations or communities.
Environmental Impact	A change in the environment as a result of an action or activity. Impacts can be positive or negative and may vary in significance, scale and duration.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process which identifies the potential environmental impacts, both negative and positive, of a proposal.
Environmental sites / environmental designated areas/ environmentally designated sites	Areas formally designated for environmental importance, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).
Episodic erosion	Erosion induced by a single event, such as a storm.
Erosion	A natural process leading to the removal of sediment from a river bed, bank, floodplain or coastline.
Estuarine surge attenuation	A reduction in the wave energy caused by storm surge. Breakwaters (barriers built out into the sea to protect a coast or harbour from the force of waves) or habitats such as saltmarsh can slow down and reduce the inland impact of storm surges (the rising of the sea due to wind and atmospheric pressure changes associated with storms), thereby reducing coastal flood risk.
Estuary	A coastal body of water usually found where a river meets the sea; the part of the river that is affected by tides.
Fault (fault line)	A break or fracture in the earth's crust as a result of the displacement of one side with respect to the other. In Scotland the Great Glen Fault is a major geological fault line cutting diagonally across the Highlands from Fort William to Inverness.

Flash flood	A flood that occurs a short period of time after high intensity rainfall or a sudden snow melt. A sudden increase in the level and velocity of the water body is often characteristic of these events, leaving a short time for warning or actions.
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Term	Definition
Flashy watercourse	A 'flashy' river or watercourse has a short lag time (the delay between peak rainfall intensity and peak river discharge), high peak discharge, and quickly returns to average flow. Rivers with these characteristics can be prone to flooding and leave a short time for warning or actions.
Flood	In the terms of the Flood Risk Management Act, 'flood' means a temporary covering by water, from any source, of land not normally covered by water. This does not include a flood solely from a sewerage system, as a result of normal weather or infrastructure drainage. A flood can cause significant adverse impacts on people, property and the environment.
Flood bund	A constructed retaining wall, embankment or dyke designed to protect against flooding to a specified standard of protection.
Flood defence	Infrastructure, such as flood walls and embankments, intended to protect an area against flooding, to a specified standard of protection.
Flood extent	The area that has been affected by flooding, or is at risk of flooding from one or more sources for a particular likelihood.
Flood forecasting	SEPA operates a network of over 250 rainfall, river and coastal monitoring stations throughout Scotland that generate data 24 hours a day. This hydrological information is combined with meteorological information from the Met Office. A team of experts then predict the likelihood and timing of river, coastal and surface water flooding. This joint initiative between SEPA and the Met Office forms the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service.
Flood frequency	The probability that a particular size/severity of flood will occur in a given year (see likelihood).
Flood gate	An adjustable, sometimes temporary, barrier used as a flood defence to control the flow of water within a water system or during a flood. Flood gates can also be part of operational flood defences or protect individual buildings or sites.
Flood guard	Flood guards cover a variety of types of door and window barriers that can be fitted to individual properties and operated by the owners / occupiers prior to a flood event. They act as a physical barrier to water entering the property and can provide protection against frequent and relatively shallow flooding.
Flood hazard	In terms of the Flood Risk Management Act, hazard refers to the characteristics (extent, depth, velocity) of a flood.
Flood hazard map	Flood hazard maps are required by the Flood Risk Management Act to show information that describes the nature of a flood in terms of the source, extent, water level or depth and, where appropriate, velocity of water. Flood hazard and risk maps are referred to collectively as flood maps and are available on the SEPA website.

Flood Prevention Scheme / Flood Protection Scheme (FPS)	A flood protection scheme, as defined by the Flood Risk Management Act, is a scheme by a local authority for the management of flood risk within the authority area. This includes defence measures (flood prevention schemes) formerly promoted under the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961.
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Term	Definition
Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961	The Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 gave local authorities discretionary powers to make and build flood prevention schemes. It was superseded by the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.
Flood protection study	Flood protection studies aim to refine understanding of the hazard and risk associated with flooding in a particular area, catchment or coastline. They will involve detailed assessment of flood hazard and / or risk and may develop options for managing flood risk.
Flood protection works	Flood protection works can include the same flood defence measures that would make up a formal Flood Protection Scheme but without the legal process, protections and requirements that would come by delivering the works as a scheme.
Flood risk	A measure of the combination of the likelihood of flooding occurring and the associated impacts on people, the economy and the environment.
Flood Risk Assessment	Flood Risk Assessments are detailed studies of an area where flood risk may be present. These are often used to inform planning decisions, may help to develop flood schemes and have also contributed to the National Flood Risk Assessment.
Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 (FRM Act)	The flood risk management legislation for Scotland. It transposes the EC Floods Directive into Scots Law and aims to reduce the adverse consequences of flooding on communities, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity.
Flood risk management cycle	Under the Flood Risk Management Act, flood risk management planning is undertaken in six year cycles. The first planning cycle is 2015 – 2021. The first delivery cycle is lagged by approximately 6 months and is from 2016-2022.
Flood Risk Management Local Advisory Groups	Flood risk management local advisory groups are stakeholder groups convened to advise SEPA and lead local authorities in the preparation of flood risk management plans. SEPA and lead local authorities must have regard to the advice they provide.
Flood Risk Management Plan (FRM Plans)	A term used in the Flood Risk Management Act. Flood risk management plans set out a long-term vision for the overall management of flood risk. They contain a summary of flood risk in each Local Plan District, together with information on catchment characteristics and a summary of objectives and actions within Potentially Vulnerable Areas.
Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRM Strategy)	The term used for the first set of flood risk management plans, which were published in December 2015. These are now referred to as the flood risk management plans to keep consistency with the Flood Risk Management Act and other areas of the UK.

Flood risk map	Complements the flood hazard maps published on the SEPA website providing detail on the impacts of flooding on people, the economy and the environment. Flood hazard and risk maps are referred to collectively as flood maps and are available on the SEPA website.
Flood wall	A flood defence feature used to defend an area from flood water to a specified standard of protection.
Flood Warning Target Area (FWTA)	A Flood Warning target area is where SEPA operates a formal Flood Monitoring Scheme to issue targeted flood warning messages for properties located in the area.

Term	Definition
Flood warning scheme	A flood warning scheme is the network of monitoring on a coastal stretch or river, which provides SEPA with the ability to issue flood warnings.
Floods directive	European Directive 2007/60/EC on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks builds on and is closely related to the Water Framework Directive (see river basin management planning). It was transposed into Scots Law by the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. The Directive requires Member States to assess if all watercourses and coastlines are at risk from flooding, to map the flood extent, assets and humans at risk in these areas and to take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce this flood risk.
Floodplain	Area of land that borders a watercourse, an estuary or the sea, over which water flows in time of flood, or would flow but for the presence of flood defences and other structures where they exist.
Floodplain storage	Floodplains naturally store water during high flows. Storage can be increased through natural or man-made features to increase flood depth or slow flows in order to reduce flooding elsewhere.
Fluvial flooding	Flooding from a river or other watercourse.
Gabion	A metal cage filled with rocks often used in river bank protection.
Green infrastructure	The European Commission defines green infrastructure as “the use of ecosystems, green spaces and water in strategic land use planning to deliver environmental and quality of life benefits. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, wetlands, road verges, allotments and private gardens. Green infrastructure can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, natural disaster risk mitigation, protection against flooding and erosion as well as biodiversity conservation.” See also ‘blue infrastructure’.
Groundwater flooding	This type of flooding is caused by water rising up from underlying rocks or flowing from springs. In Scotland groundwater is generally a contributing factor to flooding rather than the primary source.
Integrated catchment study (ICS)	In urban areas, the causes of flooding are complex because of the interactions between rivers, surface water drainage and combined sewer systems and tidal waters. Scottish Water works with SEPA and local authorities to assess these interactions through detailed studies.

Land use planning (LUP)	The process undertaken by public authorities to identify, evaluate and decide on different options for the use of land, including consideration of long term economic, social and environmental objectives and the implications for different communities and interest groups.
Lead local authority	A local authority responsible for leading the production, consultation, publication and review of a Local flood risk management plan.

Term	Definition
Likelihood of flooding	The chance of flooding occurring. High likelihood: A flood event is likely in the defined area on average once in every ten years (1:10). Or a 10% chance of happening in any one year. Medium likelihood: A flood event is likely in the defined area on average once in every two hundred years (1:200). Or a 0.5% chance of happening in any one year. Low likelihood: A flood event is likely in the defined area on average once in every thousand years (1:1000). Or a 0.1% chance of happening in any one year.
Local Flood Risk Management Plans (Local FRM Plan)	Local flood risk management plans, produced by lead local authorities, will take forward the objectives and actions set out in flood risk management plans. They will provide detail on the funding, timeline of delivery, arrangements and co-ordination of actions at the local level during each six year, flood risk management planning cycle.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	A Local Nature Reserve is a protected area of land designated by a local authority because of its local special natural interest and / or educational value. Local authorities select and designate local nature reserves using their powers under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
Local Plan District	Geographical areas for the purposes of flood risk management planning. There are 14 Local Plan Districts (LPDs) in Scotland.
Local Plan District Partnerships	Each LPD has established a local partnership comprised of local authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water and others as appropriate. These partnerships are distinct from the flood risk management plans local advisory groups and they retain clear responsibility for delivery of the flood risk management actions set out in the Local flood risk management plans. It is the local partnership that makes decisions and supports the delivery of these plans.
Maintenance	Sections 18 and 59 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 put duties of watercourse inspection, clearance and repair on local authorities. In addition, local authorities may also be responsible for maintenance of existing flood protection schemes or defences.
Montane habitat	This habitat encompasses a range of natural or near-natural vegetation occurring in the montane zone, lying above or beyond the natural tree-line.

National Flood Management Advisory Group (NFMAG)	The National Flood Management Advisory Group provides advice and support to SEPA and, where required, Scottish Water, local authorities and other responsible authorities on the production of flood risk management plans and Local flood risk management plans.
National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA)	A national analysis of flood risk from all sources of flooding which also considers climate change impacts. First published in December 2011 this provides the information required to undertake a strategic approach to flood management that identifies areas at flood risk that require further appraisal. The NFRA was reviewed and updated for the second cycle of flood risk management planning in 2018.

Term	Definition
Natural flood management (NFM)	A set of flood management techniques that aim to work with natural processes (or nature) to manage flood risk.
Non-residential properties	Properties that are not used for people to live in, such as shops or other public, commercial or industrial buildings.
Objectives	Objectives provide a common goal and shared ambition for managing floods. These objectives have been set by SEPA and agreed with flood risk management authorities following consultation. They were identified through an assessment of the underlying evidence of the causes and impacts of flooding.
One in 200 year flood	See 'likelihood of flooding' and 'return period'.
Options appraisal study	An options appraisal study looks to identify and assess a range of options that achieve flood risk management objectives whilst delivering other economic, social and environmental benefits. This helps to inform the decision-making process and identify how options work together to identify a preferred option for managing flooding within an area.
Planning policies	Current national planning policies, Scottish Planning Policy and accompanying Planning Advice notes restrict development within the floodplain and limit exposure of new receptors to flood risk. In addition to national policies, local planning policies may place further requirements within their area of operation to restrict inappropriate development and prevent unacceptable risk.
Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA)	Catchments identified as being at risk of flooding and where the impact of flooding is sufficient to justify further assessment and appraisal. There were 243 PVAs identified by SEPA in the 2011 National Flood Risk Assessment and were the focus of the first flood risk management planning cycle. There are 233 PVAs identified for the 2018 National Flood Risk Assessment.
Preferred option	A preferred option identifies the collection of flood management options which combined offer the most suitable way of managing flooding within an area. Based on the economic, social and environmental benefits of the options.

Property level protection	Property level protection includes flood gates, sandbags and other temporary barriers that can be used to prevent water from entering individual properties during a flood.
Property level protection scheme	Some responsible authorities may have a formal scheme to provide, install and maintain property level protection for properties.
Ramsar sites	Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.
Receptor	Refers to the entity that may be impacted by flooding (a person, property, infrastructure or habitat). The vulnerability of a receptor can be reduced by increasing its resilience to flooding.
Residual risk	The risk which remains after risk management and mitigation. This may include risk due to very severe (above design standard) storms or risks from unforeseen hazards.
Resilience	The ability of an individual, community or system to recover from flooding.
Responsible authority	Designated under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 and associated legislation as local authorities, Scottish Water and, from 21 December 2013, the National Park Authorities and Forestry Commission Scotland. Responsible authorities, along with SEPA and Scottish Ministers, have specific duties in relation to their flood risk related functions.
Return period	A measure of the rarity of a flood event. It is the statistical average length of time separating flood events of a similar size. (See Likelihood).

Term	Definition
Revetment	Sloping structures placed on banks or at the foot of cliffs in such a way as to deflect the energy of incoming water.
Riparian	The riparian area is the interface between land and a river or stream. For the purposes of flood risk management plans this commonly refers to the riparian owner, which denotes ownership of the land area beside a river or stream.
River basin management planning (RBMP)	The Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 transposed the European Water Framework Directive into Scots law. The Act created the River Basin Management Planning process to achieve environmental improvements to protect and improve our water environment. It also provided the framework for regulations to control the negative impacts of all activities likely to have an impact on the water environment.
Runoff reduction	Actions within a catchment or sub-catchment to reduce the amount of runoff during rainfall events. This can include intercepting rainfall, storing water, diverting flows or encouraging infiltration.
Scottish Advisory and Implementation Forum for Flooding (SAIFF)	The stakeholder forum on flooding set up by the Scottish Government to ensure legislative and policy aims are met and to provide a platform for sharing expertise and developing common aspirations and approaches to reducing the impact of flooding on Scotland's communities, environment, cultural heritage and economy.

Sediment balance	Within a river where erosion and deposition processes are equal over the medium to long-term resulting in channel dimensions (width, depth, slope) that are relatively stable.
Sediment management	Sediment management covers a wide range of activities that includes anything from the small scale removal of dry gravels to the dredging of whole river channels and the reintroduction of removed sediment into the water environment. Historically, sediment management has been carried out for several reasons, including reducing flood risk, reducing bank erosion, for use as aggregate and to improve land drainage.
Self help	Self help actions can be undertaken by any individuals, businesses, organisations or communities at risk of flooding. They are applicable to all sources, frequency and scales of flooding. They focus on awareness raising and understanding of flood risk.
Sewer flooding (and other artificial drainage system flooding)	Flooding as a result of the sewer or other artificial drainage system (e.g. road drainage) capacity being exceeded by rainfall runoff or when the drainage system cannot discharge water at the outfall due to high water levels (river and sea levels) in receiving waters.
Site protection plans	Site protection plans are developed to identify whether normal operation of a facility can be maintained during a flood. This may be due to existing protection or resilience of the facility or the network.
Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)	A Shoreline Management Plan is a large scale assessment of the coastal flood and erosion risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment. It sets out a long-term framework for the management of these risks in a sustainable manner.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Sites of Special Scientific Interest are protected by law under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to conserve their plants, animals and habitats, rocks and landforms.

Term	Definition
Source of flooding	The type of flooding. This can be coastal, river, surface water or groundwater.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Special Areas of Conservation are strictly protected sites designated under the European Habitats Directive. The Directive requires the establishment of a European network of protected areas which are internationally important for threatened habitats and species.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	Special Protection Areas are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with the European Birds Directive. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed in the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species.
Standard of protection (SoP)	All flood protection structures are designed to be effective up to a specified flood likelihood (Standard of Protection). For events beyond this standard, flooding will occur. The chosen Standard of Protection will determine the required defence height and / or capacity.
Storage area	A feature that can be used to store floodwater, this can be natural in the form of low lying land or manmade such as a reservoir or modified landform.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A process for the early identification and assessment of the likely significant environmental effects, positive and negative, of activities. Often considered before actions are approved or adopted.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is designed for the purposes of specifically informing the Development Plan Process. A SFRA involves the collection, analysis and presentation of all existing and readily available flood risk information (from any source) for the area of interest. It constitutes a strategic overview of flood risk.
Strategic mapping improvements	Strategic mapping improvement actions have been identified in locations where SEPA is planning to undertake additional modelling or analysis of catchments and coastlines, working collaboratively with local authorities where appropriate, to improve the national understanding of flood risk.
Surcharge	Watercourses and culverts can carry a limited amount of water. When they can no longer cope, they overflow, or 'surcharge'.
Surface water flooding	Flooding that occurs when rainwater does not drain away through the normal drainage systems or soak into the ground, but lies on or flows over the ground instead.
Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)	A plan that takes an integrated approach to drainage accounting for all aspects of urban drainage systems and produces long term and sustainable actions. The aim is to ensure that during a flood the flows created can be managed in a way that will cause minimum harm to people, buildings, the environment and business.
Surface water plan / study	The management of flooding from surface water sewers, drains, small watercourses and ditches that occurs, primarily in urban areas, during heavy rainfall. Flood risk management plan actions in this category include: Surface Water Management Plans, Integrated Catchment Studies and assessment of flood risk from sewerage systems (Flood Risk Management Act, Section 16) by Scottish Water. These have been selected as appropriate for each Potentially Vulnerable Area.
Term	Definition
Sustainable flood risk management	The sustainable flood risk management approach aims to meet human needs, whilst preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations. The delivery of sustainable development is generally recognised to reconcile three pillars of sustainability – environmental, social and economic.
Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	A set of techniques designed to slow the flow of water. They can contribute to reducing flood risk by absorbing some of the initial rainfall and then releasing it gradually, thereby reducing the flood peak and helping to mitigate downstream problems. SuDS encourage us to take account of quality, quantity and amenity / biodiversity.
Target area	Target areas are based on communities at risk of flooding. These are situated within Potentially Vulnerable Areas and should benefit from actions to reduce flood risk. To benefit the community, actions may apply to outside the target area. National flood risk management efforts and funding should be targeted to benefit these target areas.

UK Climate Change Projections (UKCP18)	The leading source of climate change information for the UK. It can help users to assess their climate risks and plan how to adapt to a changing climate. The high emissions scenario refers to the RCP8.5 emission scenario. See the UKCP18 climate change projections report for details.
Utility assets	Within the flood risk management plans this refers to electricity sub stations, mineral and fuel extraction sites, telephone assets, television and radio assets.
Voe	A dialect term, common in place names and used to refer to a small bay or creek in Orkney or Shetland.
Vulnerability	A measure of how likely someone or something is to suffer long-term damage as a result of flooding. It is a combination of the likelihood of suffering harm or damage during a flood (susceptibility) and the ability to recover following a flood (resilience).
Wave energy dissipation	Process by which a wave loses its energy.
Wave overtopping	Wave overtopping occurs when water passes over a flood wall or other structure as a result of wave action. Wave overtopping may lead to flooding particularly in exposed coastal locations.