

Lowdham – Flood Risk Information and FAQs

1. Which organisation is responsible for my stretch of river?

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency carries out maintenance, improvement or construction work on main rivers to manage flood risk. We are also responsible for working in partnership with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings. The main river map (link below) shows which rivers are designated as 'main rivers'. In Lowdham, downstream reaches of the Cocker Beck, to the east of the Epperstone Bypass, is a main river.

Other rivers are called 'ordinary watercourses'. Lead Local Flood Authorities, District Councils and Internal Drainage Boards carry out flood risk management on ordinary watercourses.

To see a map of the Main River network, please visit:

<https://environment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17cd53dfc524433980cc333726a56386>

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

LLFAs are county councils and unitary authorities. They are responsible for managing and investigating the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (smaller watercourses) and lead on community recovery. To contact your LLFA, please see:

Nottinghamshire County Council

0300 500 80 80

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/flooding/the-councils-role

Internal Drainage Board

Each Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is a public body that manages water levels in an area, known as an internal drainage district, where there is a special need for drainage. IDBs undertake works to reduce flood risk to people and property, and manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs within their district. However, not all areas are covered by an IDB.

There are 112 IDBs in England. They play a key role in reducing flood risk to over 600,000 people and nearly 900,000 properties. They operate and maintain over 500 pumping stations, 22,000 km of watercourse, 175 automatic weed screen cleaners and numerous sluices and weirs.

customer service line **03708 506 506**

incident hotline **0800 80 70 60**

floodline **03459 88 11 88**

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For more information, please visit www.ada.org.uk/idb-map/

The Carr Dyke in Lowdham are managed by the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board (TVIDB) and Newark and Sherwood District Council.

Trent Valley IDB
01636 704371
www.wmc-idbs.org.uk

Newark and Sherwood District Council
01636 650000
www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

2. Who owns my stretch of river?

The owner of a watercourse is usually the owner of the land that the watercourse runs on or under. Where the watercourse is on the boundary of the land, the landowner is responsible for the watercourse up to its centre.

If you own a watercourse, for example a river, culvert, brook or mill stream, you must maintain the river beds and banks and not obstruct the water flow. You should also call the Environment Agency incident hotline [0800 807060](tel:0800807060) to report flooding, collapsed or badly damaged banks, or any blockages which could cause flooding to main rivers.

Further guidance on owning a watercourse can be found here:
www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse

3. Where can I find details for recent planning applications, and whether flood risk has been considered?

Information on local planning applications can usually be found on your local council's website here: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Planning applications for developments within flood zones require a flood risk assessment to be submitted with the application. Find out more about flood zones and flood risk assessments here:

www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-for-planning-applications

The Environment Agency provides expert statutory and discretionary advice to planners, developers, and communities, provides evidence on the capacity and value of the environment to aid decision-making, and attracts investment into the environment.

The Environment Agency's External Consultation Checklist informs Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) of the types of development where we should be consulted. It describes the categories of development that could potentially impact on the environment and includes those for which we are listed as a statutory consultee in Schedule 4 of the Development Management Procedure Order (DMPO) and current Government planning policy.

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With particular reference to flood risk, the Environment Agency is consulted on certain types of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Paragraph 155 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that where development is proposed in areas at risk of flooding ‘the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere’. Whilst the onus is on applicants to demonstrate this in a site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), the LPA will ultimately need to satisfy themselves that this requirement has been met. Depending on the particular flood risks to a site, the LPA may be required to seek the views of the Environment Agency and/or the Lead Local Flood Authority.

For further details on specific planning applications, please contact your local LPA:

Newark and Sherwood District Council
01636 650000
www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

4. Where can I find a map that will show the flood risk for my area?

You can view flood risk maps for your area by visiting:

www.flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map

Type your postcode in the search box on the right-hand side to zoom into your area, and then click and drag the map to pan around. You can switch between maps of flood risk from rivers or from surface water by selecting the different options in the drop-down menu on the left-hand side.

To find out more about your area’s long-term flood risk, please visit:

www.flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk

5. What maintenance will be carried out to the watercourses in my area?

The maintenance of the watercourses at Lowdham are a high priority for the Environment Agency, in order to minimise flood risk to the community.

Cocker Beck

We carry out scheduled quarterly maintenance checks of the Cocker Beck, and Trent Valley IDB regularly maintain the channel, including debris clearance, vegetation management and tree maintenance, which involves pruning overhanging branches and ensuring trees and bushes don’t impede the flow of water, as well as coppicing some trees to ensure bank stability is maintained.

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To see the maintenance schedule, please visit:

https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-midlands/lowdham/supporting_documents/Cocker%20Beck%20maintenance%20schedule.pdf

Carr Dyke (near Cocker Beck in Lowdham)

The Carr Dyke is currently managed by the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board (TVIDB) and Newark and Sherwood District Council. The IDB carry out annual weed clearance and desiltation, with regular checks at known areas of increased risk along the Dyke.

The Environment Agency also carry out ad hoc maintenance works as and when issues are reported. Please call the Environment Agency Incident hotline [0800 807060](tel:0800807060) to report collapsed or badly damaged banks, or any blockages which could cause flooding to main rivers.

6. Is anything being planned for the future?

The Environment Agency is currently working on feasibility studies for upstream storage solutions, in order to reduce the flood risk to the Lowdham community. There are also plans to install a wall along a section of the left bank of the Cocker Beck, opposite the cricket pitch, along the back gardens on Main Street and the community hall, in order to reduce the risk of flooding.

Please see the Summary of Local Flood Risk section below for further information, and the following Lowdham consultation website for the latest updates:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-midlands/lowdham/>

We are also currently working on refining our Flood Warning Service, and looking into the possibility of providing more lead time for members of the public to prepare for flooding.

7. What is the Flood Warning Service and how do I register?

The Environment Agency issue Flood Alerts and Flood Warnings to inform the public of expected flooding.

Flood Alerts are issued when low-lying land and roads are expected to flood. This is an early indication of possible further flooding.

Flood Warnings are issued when property flooding is expected. Upon receiving a Flood Warning, immediate action may be required to protect your property.

You can sign up to receive Flood Alerts and Flood Warnings by phone, email or text message if your home or business is at risk of flooding.

To register for this free service, please visit: www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

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You'll need to provide:

- the address you're registering
- a phone number which you can be contacted on day or night
- an email address

You can also register, update your details or cancel your account by calling **Floodline**: 0345 988 1188 (24-hour service).

River Levels Online

Current river levels at our gauge stations can be viewed here:

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/river-and-sea-levels>

River levels are updated at least once a day during normal flows, and up to hourly during flooding. Levels for the Cocker Beck and Dover Beck can be viewed at the nearby Lowdham river gauges.

8. How can I help to make my property flood resilient?

There are many things you can do to help protect your property and your belongings from flooding. A great way to start is by creating a personal flood plan. A template can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan

For advice and information on property resilience products and simple ways to reduce the damage caused by flood water, please visit The National Flood Forum (www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk), which is a charity aimed at supporting individuals and communities at risk of flooding.

The National Flood Forum also provide an independent directory of property flood resilience products, called Blue Pages (www.bluepages.org.uk), which can help to advise and inform you of what's available to help reduce the risk of flooding to your property.

There are some ideas about property resilience products in this Property Flood Resilience E-Magazine, which may be useful: <https://bit.ly/2ZXVYvF>

Flood Resilience Grants

If you were affected by flooding in the November 2019 or February 2020 floods, you may be eligible for a Flood Resilience grant to help prevent your property from flooding in the future. Please contact your local council for further information.

Newark and Sherwood District Council

01636 650000

www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

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9. Where can I get sandbags?

Sandbags are a short-term and relatively cheap way to manage flooding but only if they are filled and placed correctly. However, they are not as effective as purpose-designed flood resilience products (please see www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk for information on such products).

Residents are encouraged to make sure their property is protected as far as possible. When flooding is likely, **Nottinghamshire County Council** may have limited supplies of sandbags to provide to vulnerable residents, who are unable to provide their own. For further information on sandbags and eligibility criteria please visit:

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/flooding/preparing

If you are not eligible to receive sandbags from your council, you can buy unfilled sandbags and a supply of sand from most DIY stores and builders merchants, but remember that if there is a flood expected in your area, demand may exceed supply as people rush to buy them. In an emergency you can use alternatives such as pillow cases or refuse sacks and fill them with garden soil. For information on how to use sandbags properly for flood protection, please visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/sandbags-how-to-use-them-to-prepare-for-a-flood

As a community, you can apply for a grant for a community resilience store, which can be used to store equipment such as sandbags. Please see Question 10 (Additional Grant Funding) for more information.

10. How can I help my community during a flood?

You can help your community before, during and after flooding by becoming a community Flood Warden. Flood Wardens are volunteers who are trained by the Environment Agency and the Local Authority, and can help prepare the community by:

- ✓ Monitoring the rivers for obstructions and hazards, and reporting these to the Environment Agency
- ✓ Contributing to the creation of a community flood plan
- ✓ Helping to prepare the local community
- ✓ Offering support during flooding
- ✓ Keeping residents informed of the ongoing situation
- ✓ Monitoring the situation locally and reporting back to the Environment Agency and local authorities

Activities that Flood Wardens do not carry out include:

- ✗ Putting themselves at risk or entering flood water
- ✗ Rescuing people or animals (this is the role of the emergency services)

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- × Unblocking watercourses (this must be done by professionals)
- × Closing roads or diverting traffic

Lowdham currently has an active Flood Warden Scheme through Lowdham Flood Action Group (FLAG). For more information, please contact the Environment Agency on 0114 282 5312 or enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Additional Grant Funding

As a community, you can also apply for a grant for a community resilience store, which can be used to store flood resilience equipment such as sandbags and flood boards.

For more information, please contact your local authority, who can help by identifying grant funding from other organisations such as the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC).

Newark and Sherwood District Council
01636 650000
www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Summary of Local Flood Risk

Cocker Beck

Reducing flood risk from the Cocker Beck is an issue we have been working hard to find a sustainable solution to for a number of years. Prioritising substantial investment in flood risk alleviation measures for Lowdham is a top priority for the Environment Agency and our strategic partners. Our Chair (Emma Howard-Boyd) and our Chief Executive (Sir James Bevan), both visited Lowdham since the February 2020 flooding and they have viewed at first hand the damage and distress which has been experienced by the community. This should give confidence that we have raised this at the highest levels within our organisation, with particular emphasis on the funding challenges that the present system of Partnership Funding poses for small rural communities like Lowdham.

In January 2020, our Operations Team successfully completed work to improve the drainage of the cricket pitch storage area, making it available to provide storage much more quickly than previously, in order to cope better with repeat rainfall events. The improvements they have undertaken worked very successfully following the February flooding and allowed the area to drain rapidly.

Please speak to the Parish Council or see the Lowdham consultation website for the latest updates: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-midlands/lowdham/>

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