

SECTION 19 REPORT – ZOUCHE – JANUARY 2025

FOR COMPLETENESS, THIS APPENDIX SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PLACE) TO PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE ON 10TH SEPTEMBER 2025: "FLOODING EVENT ON THE 4TH TO THE 8TH OF JANUARY 2025, PLUS ROCKLEY (WITH MARKHAM MOOR AND WEST DRAYTON) – STORM BABET, OCTOBER 2023".

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/flooding-help-and-advice/the-councils-role>

Introduction

Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 states:

1. On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:
 - a) Which Risk Management Authorities have relevant flood risk management functions.
 - b) Whether each of those Risk Management Authorities have exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
2. Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) of Section 19 it must:
 - a) Publish the results of its investigation.
 - b) Notify any relevant Risk Management Authorities.
3. The objective of this report is to investigate which Risk Management Authorities had relevant flood risk management functions during the flooding event in January 2025 and whether the relevant Risk Management Authorities have exercised, or propose to exercise, their risk management functions (as per Section 19(1) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010).
4. The Risk Management Authorities for this area of Nottinghamshire are Rushcliffe Borough Council, Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) as LLFA, VIA East Midlands Ltd. on behalf of NCC as Highways Authority, and the Environment Agency.
5. It should be noted that a Section 19 does not identify specific measures to alleviate future flood risk, and it does not guarantee that flooding problems will be resolved and cannot force others into action. It is up to each Risk Management Authority if they then wish to carry out further investigation into possible flood prevention and protection measures that could be implemented.

Background

6. Zouch is a hamlet within the Borough of Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire, on the boundary to Leicestershire. It is situated by the River Soar which flows from Leicestershire in a westerly direction, through the centre of the hamlet itself, into Nottinghamshire.
7. On the 6th of January 2025, Zouch suffered a flood event caused by a large volume of rainfall falling over the Soar catchment. During the rainfall event, 38.6mm of rainfall was recorded at the Sutton Bonington rain gauge (Figure 1), with a maximum 60-minute intensity of 9.8mm/hr.

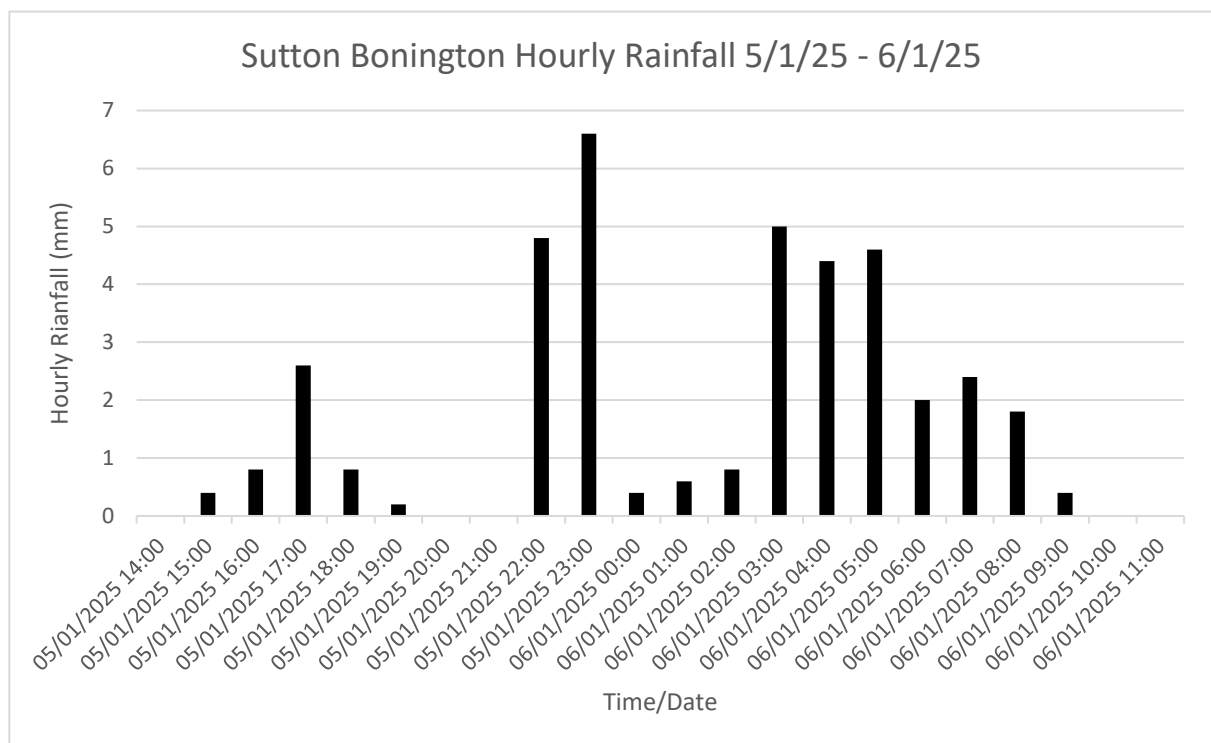


Figure 1 - Sutton Bonington Hourly Rainfall 5th – 6th Jan 2025. Data supplied by the Environment Agency.

8. The high volume of rainfall came after a period of persistent rainfall and freezing temperatures, consequently falling on already saturated and frozen ground, causing high water levels in the River Soar. This caused the River Soar to flow out of bank and causing internal flooding to 35 residential properties (Figure 2) and 1 business.
9. A location map of the affected areas of Zouch is shown in Figures 2 and 3 below, which also indicates Zouch's proximity to the River Soar. The affected areas were:
 - Main Street
 - Upper Holme
 - Lower Holme



Figure 2 - Reference map for affected areas across Zouch.

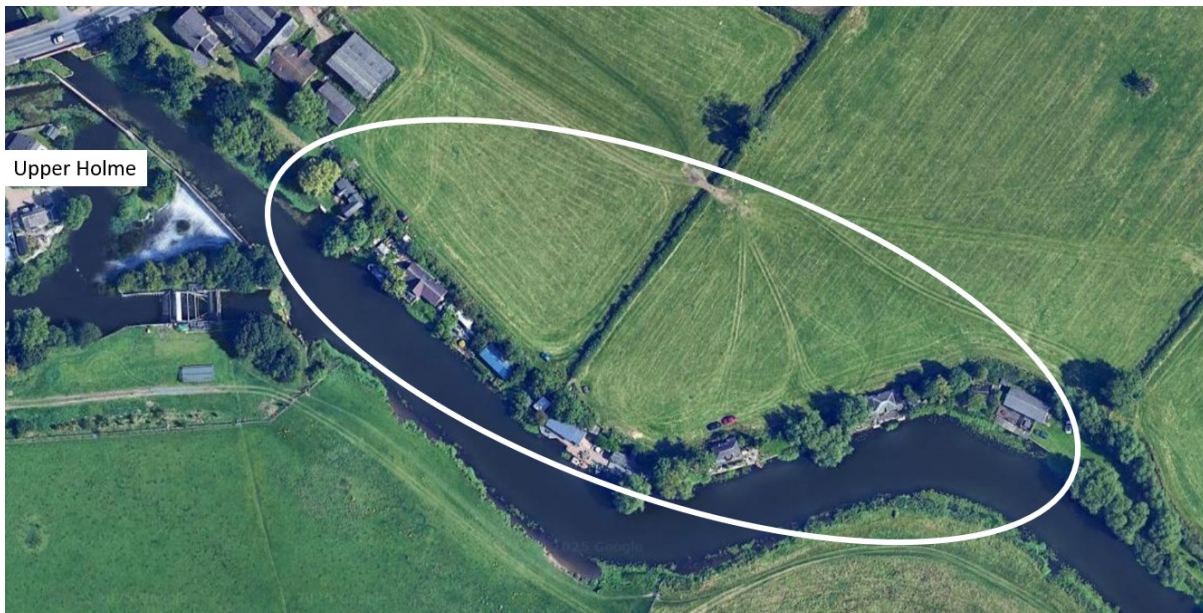


Figure 3 - Reference map for affected areas across Zouch – Riverside bungalows.

10. This event marks repeated flooding in Zouch after several properties were flooded during Storm Henk in January 2024, for which a Section 19 report was published.

Summary of flooding and its causes

11. Zouch is situated on the banks of the River Soar, which is designated as a Main River. Prolonged rainfall between the 4th to the 8th of January, following previous wet weather, fell on an already saturated, frozen ground and snowmelt which caused the river levels to rise, and ultimately flow out of bank. The River Soar peaked at near record levels of 1.33m during this flood event, according to data retrieved from DEFRA's Hydrological Data Explorer,

resulting in the majority of properties within the hamlet being flooded. The surrounding catchment was also inundated with flood water.

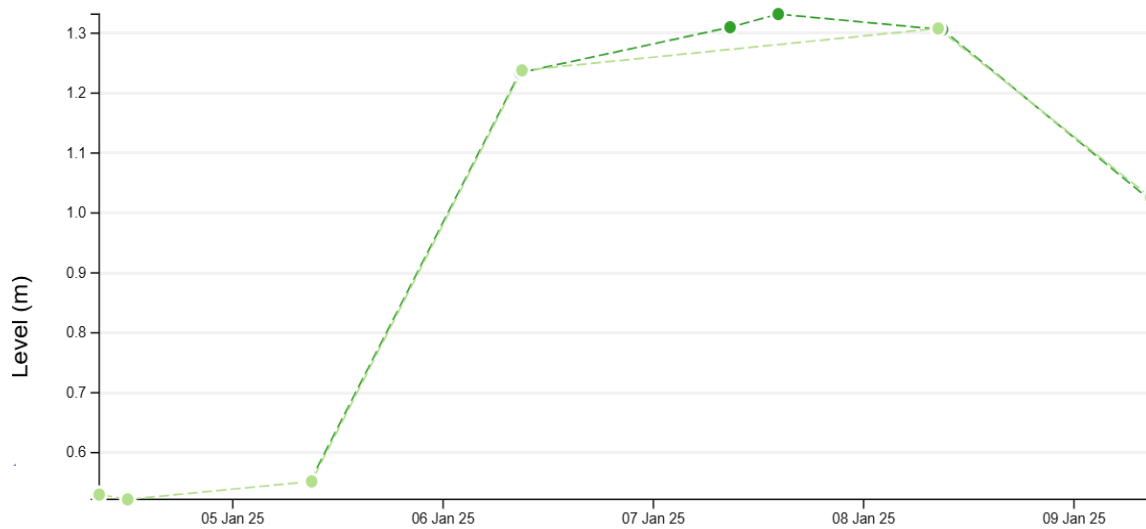


Figure 4: Water level data for the River Soar between the 4th - 10th January 2025.
Data supplied by the Environment Agency.

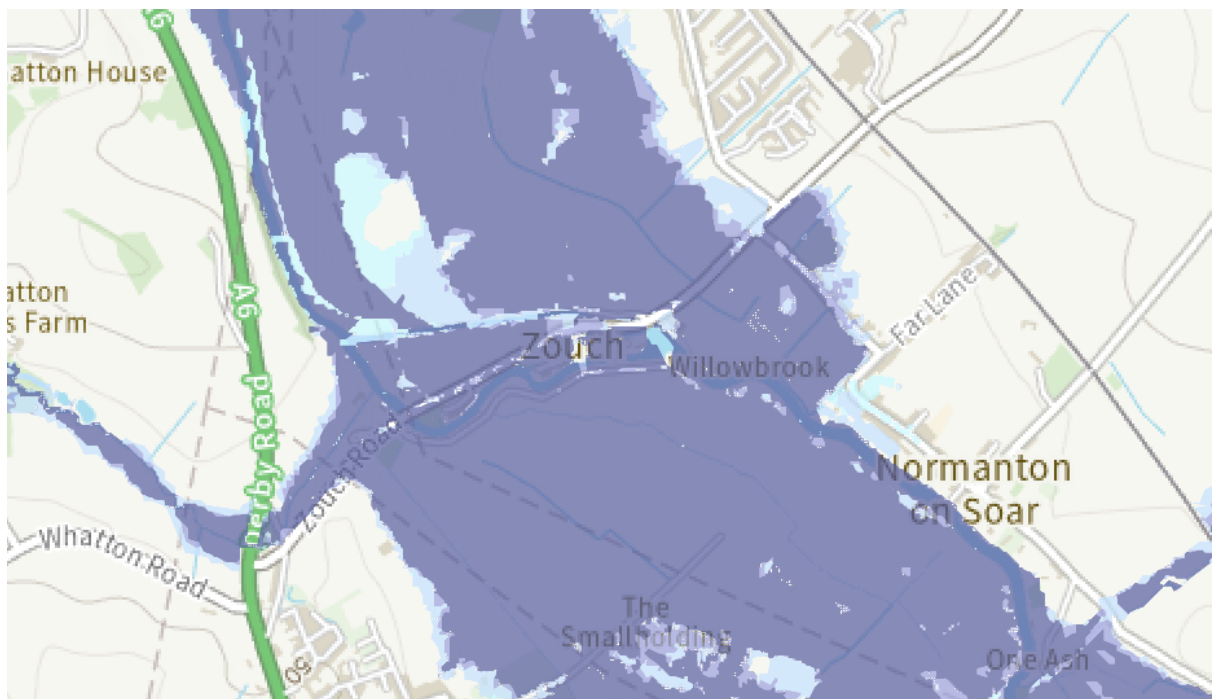


Figure 5 - Environment Agency - Flood Risk Mapping for Zouch

12. Figure 5 highlights the area of fluvial flood risk as identified by the Environment Agency's flood risk mapping, there is a high risk of flooding in Zouch from the River Soar.

Risk Management Authorities and their responsibilities

13. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)

a) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

- i. Investigate significant local flooding incidents and publish the results of such investigations.
- ii. Play a lead role in emergency planning and recovery after a flood event.
- iii. As the LLFA, NCC have a duty to determine which Risk Management Authorities have relevant powers to investigate flood incidents to help understand how they happened, and whether those authorities have or intend to exercise their powers.
- iv. By working in partnership with communities, LLFAs can raise awareness of flood risks.
- v. LLFAs should encourage local communities to participate in local flood risk management.

b) Emergency Planning.

- i. If a flood happens, all local authorities are 'category one responders' under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means they must have plans in place to respond to emergencies and control or reduce the impact of an emergency.

c) Highway Authority (VIA East Midlands Ltd. on behalf of NCC).

- i. Maintenance of the public highways including highway drainage assets.

14. Rushcliffe Borough Council.

- a) Category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means they must have plans in place to respond to emergencies and control or reduce the impact of an emergency.

15. Environment Agency

- a) Category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act. This means they must have plans in place to respond to emergencies and control or reduce the impact of an emergency.
- b) Maintenance and management of main rivers and associated flood risk and the issuing of Flood Warnings using the national Flood Warning System.

Risk Management Authority Responses to Flood

16. The following paragraphs list the actions taken by each Risk Management Authority in response to the flooding both in the immediate aftermath as well as in the longer term:
17. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC)
 - a) Initiated its Community Flood Recovery Grant to support individuals affected by internal flooding as a short-term recovery aid.
 - b) Attended site after flooding occurred to verify scale of internal flooding, offer support, guidance and advice to affected residents and businesses.
 - c) Information gathered on site was fed back to relevant Risk Management Authorities and partners to verify the scale of internal flooding.
 - d) Collated flood impact data from other Risk Management Authorities and partners and published verified data on Resilience Direct.
 - e) Visited flood-affected residents and businesses to establish sources and mechanisms of flooding and severity of flood impacts.
 - f) Chaired and / or attended Tactical / Recovery Coordination Group meetings initiated by the Local Resilience Forum.
 - g) Provided 24-hour support through the Emergency Planning team.
 - h) Carried out relevant actions requested by the Tactical / Recovery Coordination Groups.
 - i) Initiated and led the Section 19 Flood Investigation, including liaison with relevant Risk Management Authorities, Elected Members, Parish Councils, community groups, affected residents and businesses.
 - j) Delivered sandbags to affected areas and communities.
 - k) Closed 64 roads across Nottinghamshire to promote road safety and avoid additional flood damage to communities.
 - l) Supported and communicated with Community Flood Signage Scheme Wardens throughout event.
 - m) Utilised existing methods of communication to update the public, partners and Elected Members with key messages during the flood event.
 - n) In February 2025, attended an Environment Agency organised meeting with affected residents to discuss flooding mechanisms and impacts in Zouch, to inform the Section 19 report.
18. Rushcliffe Borough Council
 - a) Worked closely with NCC and other partners to share flood impact data.
 - b) Collaborated with community flood wardens and local volunteers to provide on-the-ground support.
 - c) Conducted housing assessments to determine the suitability of properties for habitation.
 - d) Provided guidance on health and safety measures, including sanitation and water safety.
 - e) Supported residents in accessing temporary accommodation where required.

- f) Communicated key messages to the public through council channels, including website updates, social media posts and press releases.
- g) Responded to resident queries and concerns in a timely and empathetic manner.
- h) Established a visible presence in the community to offer support, guidance and information to residents.
- i) Provided emotional support and signposted residents to relevant support services.
- j) Chaired and coordinated the Recovery Coordination Group (RCG), ensuring a multi-agency approach to support affected residents and businesses.
- k) Developed and implemented a recovery action plan with input from key stakeholders and agencies.
- l) Facilitated information sharing and collaboration amongst partners, including NCC, STW and the EA.
- m) Continued to monitor the needs of the community and adapted recovery support as necessary.
- n) Engaged with local community groups to build resilience and improve preparedness for future flooding events.
- o) Supported waste management by arranging additional waste collection services for flood-damaged materials.
- p) Coordinated drop-off points and collected flood-affected rubbish to assist with the community's clean-up effects.
- q) Liaised with British Red Cross to carry out house visits, ensuring vulnerable residents were checked on and provided with necessary support.

19. Environment Agency

- a) Warned and informed the community of Zouch in a timely manner during this event by issuing a Flood Warning for the River Soar at Zouch Island on 06/01/2025 at 07:49.
- b) Instigated flood patrols to operate their structures in accordance with their incident response procedures and cleared blockages in the area before and after peak flows.
- c) Attended a multi-agency community drop-in event and walk over which was attended by Severn Trent Water, NCC and Rushcliffe Borough Council.
- d) Coordinated community information officers to gather information and visit affected communities to understand the impact of flooding on affected communities and collect data. This information is used to validate and improve the Flood Warning Service and update the hydraulic models.
- e) Met with the local member for parliament for Rushcliffe to outline flooding and the impact on communities.

20. Severn Trent Water

- a) At the time of writing this report, Severn Trent are not aware of any sewer related issues at this event.

- b) If further information comes to light that indicates sewer related issues, Severn Trent will investigate these.

Additional Information and Future Actions

- 21. All the Risk Management Authorities involved in this event are committed to continuing the investigations into the causes of this incident. Those investigations may identify further actions not listed below.
- 22. The local community's resilience during the flooding must be recognised as without their efforts the impacts of the flooding could have been more severe.
- 23. As the LLFA, NCC have experience of how flooding devastates communities. The most vulnerable in the community will be our priority. NCC will continue to work closely with partners and communities to identify ways of proactively reducing the risk, likelihood and consequences of future flooding events