

APPENDIX L

SECTION 19 REPORT – EPPERSTONE – STORM BABET, OCTOBER 2023

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 must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:
 - (a) Which Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) have relevant flood risk management functions.
 - (b) Whether each of those RMAs has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
2. Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) of Section 19 it must:-
 - (a) Publish the results of its investigation.
 - (b) Notify any relevant RMAs.
3. The objective of this report is to investigate which RMAs had relevant flood risk management functions during the flooding in October 2023 and whether the relevant RMAs 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 Newark & Sherwood District Council (NSDC), Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and VIA East Midlands Ltd as Highways Authority on behalf of NCC.
5. It should be noted that this duty to investigate does not guarantee that flooding problems will be resolved and cannot force others into action.

Background

6. Epperstone is a village within the District of Newark and Sherwood, Nottinghamshire. It has a population of approximately 600 people according to the 2021 census.
7. On the 20th October, during Storm Babet, areas of Epperstone suffered a flood event caused by sustained heavy rainfall. Between the 18th and 20th of October, 80mm of rainfall was recorded at the Calverton rain gauge (Figure 1). Consequently, 6 residential properties were subject to internal flooding.
8. This storm came after a prolonged period of persistent rain which had saturated the ground resulting in flooding of roads and properties quicker than they would following a dry period.

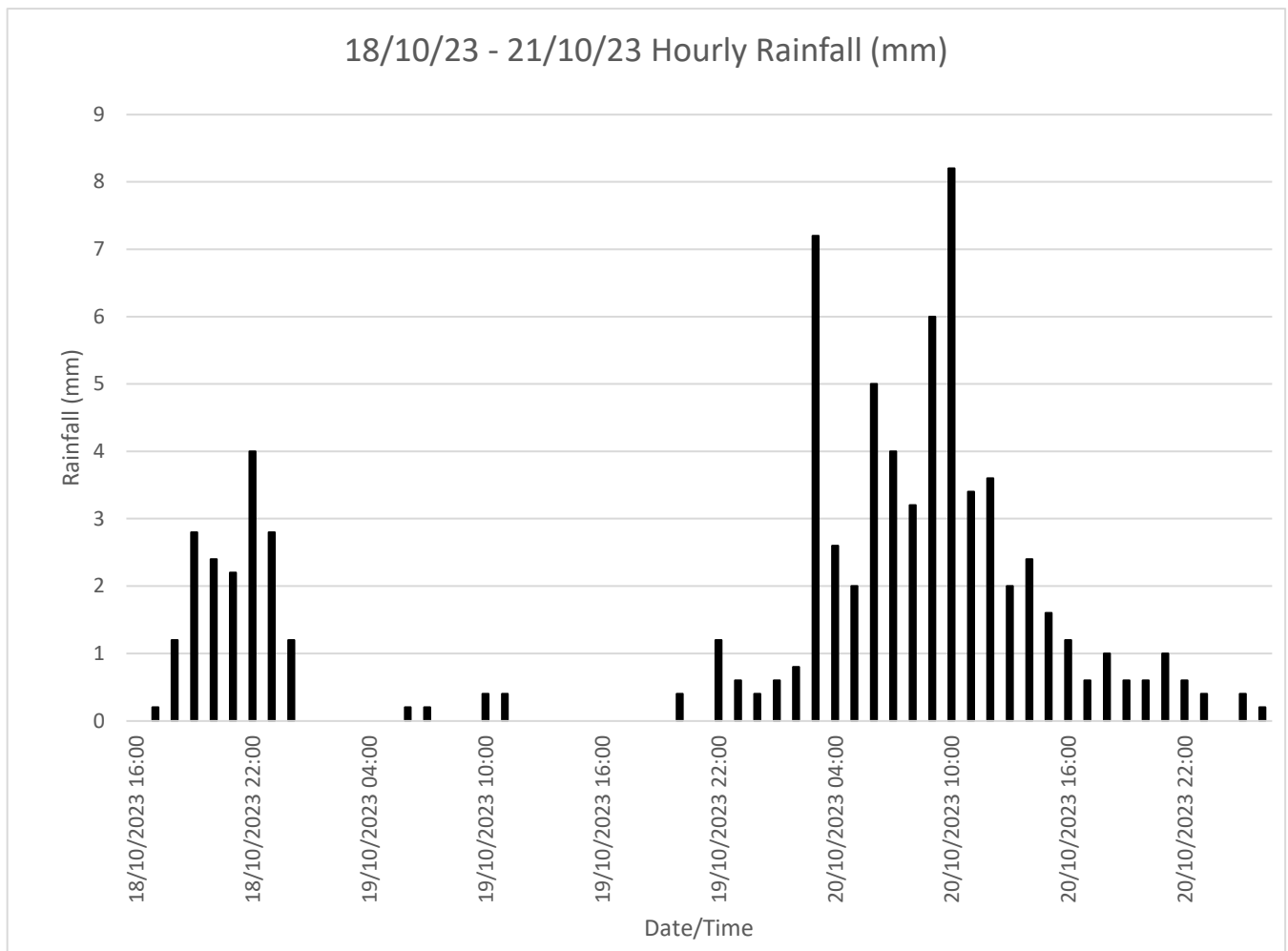


Figure 1. Calverton Hourly Rainfall 18th October 2023. Data supplied by the Environment Agency.

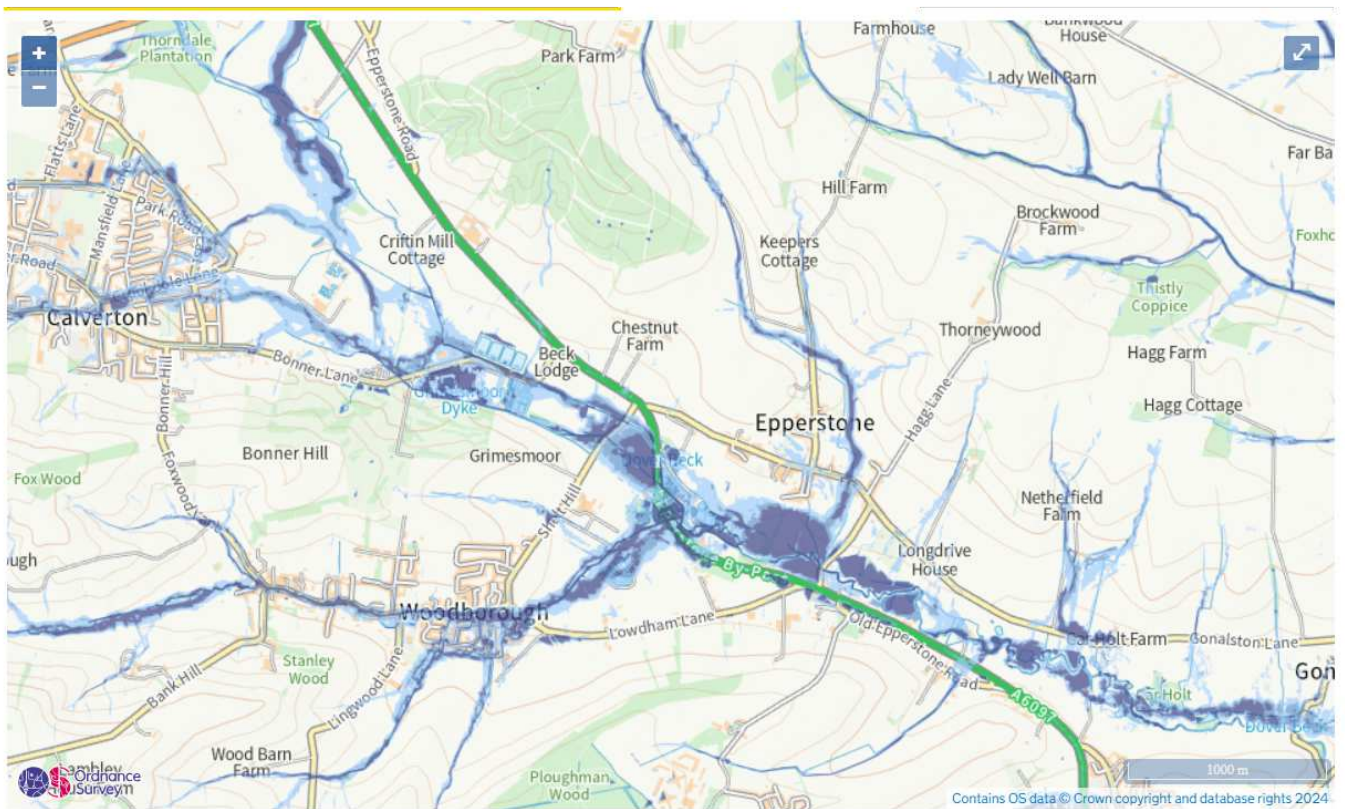
Summary of flooding and its causes

9. Main Street

Areas impacted by flooding on Main Street are shown in Figure 2. In total, 6 residential properties were impacted by internal flooding. As shown in Figure 3, a surface water flowpath exists which flows across Main Street from the north to the south. During Storm Babet, intense and prolonged rainfall caused excessive overland flow from agricultural land which overwhelmed drainage systems and flooded properties. It has been noted that a separate surface water flowpath which flowed from Hagg Lane to Main Street also contributed to flooding during Storm Babet.



Figure 2. View of Epperstone.



Extent of flooding from surface water
 ● High ● Medium ● Low ○ Very low

Figure 3. Epperstone Surface Water Flood Risk. Data provided by the Environment Agency.

Risk Management Authorities and their responsibilities

10. Nottinghamshire County Council.

a) Lead Local Flood Authority.

- 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 Lead Local Flood Authority, we 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, Lead Local Flood Authorities can raise awareness of flood risks.
- v. Lead Local Flood Authorities 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 Nottinghamshire County Council).

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

11. Newark and Sherwood District 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.

Risk Management Authority Responses to Flood

12. The following lists the actions taken by each RMA in response to the flooding both in the immediate aftermath as well as in the longer term:

13. Nottinghamshire County Council.

Officers from across the County Council played a key role in the response to the Major Incident that had significant impacts across the county. The following lists the key actions taken by Nottinghamshire County Council:

- 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 RMA's and partners.

- d) Collated flood impact data from other RMA's 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 attended Strategic / 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 Strategic / Tactical / Recovery Coordination Groups.
- i) Initiated and led the Section 19 Flood Investigation, including liaison with relevant RMA's, parish councils, community groups, affected residents and businesses.
- j) Leading on procurement and delivery of DEFRA Property Flood Resilience Repair Grant Scheme.
- k) Liaised with and supported existing community flood signage schemes during the flooding.
- l) Delivered sandbags to affected areas and communities.
- m) Closed 77 roads across Nottinghamshire to promote road safety and avoid additional flood damage to at risk areas.
- n) Supported District and Borough partners by sharing resources during the emergency response.
- o) Utilised existing communication channels to update the public, partners and Elected Members with key messages during the event.

14. Newark and Sherwood District Council

- a) Played a full and intensive role alongside other agencies and community representatives.
- b) Worked to deliver whatever support was possible from the skills and resources available.
- c) Ahead of the storm the council stood up a team of managers to prepare for potential impacts across the district. A large team of staff was formed from across departments prioritising the flood response. Staff worked throughout the flood event, working beyond the normal working hours and days.
- d) Staff visited impacted communities and vulnerable individuals.
- e) Many hundreds of aqua sacs were delivered and people were helped to evacuate their homes.
- f) The council prepared to support evacuated residents and provided emergency accommodation when necessary.
- g) The communications officers worked with other agencies to warn and inform the public of the risks and the support that was available. Daily briefings were also provided to councillors and community leaders.
- h) As the flood event changed from the surface water flooding to the continued risk of river flooding the council commenced actions to help clean up roads , paths and remove bulky waste from flooded homes.
- i) Staff contacted affected individuals to identify humanitarian needs and offer direct support or liaised with other agencies to find the appropriate assistance.
- j) Due to the predicted extreme levels for the River Trent, the council coordinated in person visits to communities at high risk of flooding to reinforce the need to take immediate action to prepare for potential flooding.
- k) Once the risk of further flooding had passed the council commenced its role in meeting the recovery needs of impacted communities and individuals. Grant funding is being delivered to those eligible.
- l) An internal and multi-agency debrief was conducted to identify any lessons learned.
- m) Since the flood the council has worked with parish and town councils to restock stores of aqua sacs.

Additional Information and Future Actions

15. 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.
16. As the Lead Local Flood Authority we have witnessed and have experience of how flooding devastates communities. The most vulnerable in the community will be our priority. Nottinghamshire County Council will continue to work closely with partners and communities to identify ways of proactively reducing the risk, likelihood and consequences of future flooding events.
17. NCC will continue to develop its Flood Warden / Road Closure training programme and support given to community volunteer groups to help ensure they operate as effectively and safely as possible. A community flood signage scheme is being developed in Epperstone with support from NCC. Officers for the Flood Risk Management team are working with the community to help them develop a local flood action group.
18. The Flood Risk Management team will look at the suitability of its Property Flood Resilience Programme for communities affected by Storm Babet and will take recommendations through the Cabinet Member later this year for consideration.
19. NCC will work with its partners to look at ways of strengthening the enforcement of riparian responsibilities alongside developing our asset inspection process.