



APPENDIX F

SECTION 19 REPORT – GIRTON – STORM HENK, JANUARY 2024

FOR COMPLETENESS, THIS APPENDIX SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PLACE) TO PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE ON 22 JULY 2024: “SECTION 19 REPORTS: STORM HENK FLOODING JANUARY 2024”.

<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 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 January 2024 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 and Sherwood District Council (NSDC), Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), VIA East Midlands Ltd on behalf of NCC as Highways Authority, the Environment Agency (EA) and Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board (TVIDB).
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. Girton is a village within the Newark and Sherwood district of Nottinghamshire. It has a population of approximately 138 people according to the 2021 census. Girton sits in the River Trent corridor adjacent to the A1133, approximately 8 miles north of Newark on Trent. The western boundary of the village is bordered by The Fleet, a tributary of the River Trent with the south and east boundaries bordered by the Mill Dam Dyke, both of which are managed by the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board and ultimately outfall to

the River Trent north-west of the village. Figure 1 shows Girton and its proximity to the The Fleet and the Mill Dam Dyke, Figure 2 gives reference to the River Trent.



Figure 1. Girton showing its proximity to The Fleet and Mill Dam Dyke.



Figure 2. Girton showing its proximity to the River Trent.

7. On the 2nd January 2024 Storm Henk brought heavy rain across the East Midlands, resulting in widespread flooding across Nottinghamshire. The Staythorpe rain gauge, located approximately 9m south of Girton, measured a total of 20.4mm of rain between 10am and 9pm and a peak of 4.8mm per hour. Figure 3 shows the hourly rainfall at Staythorpe Gauge.

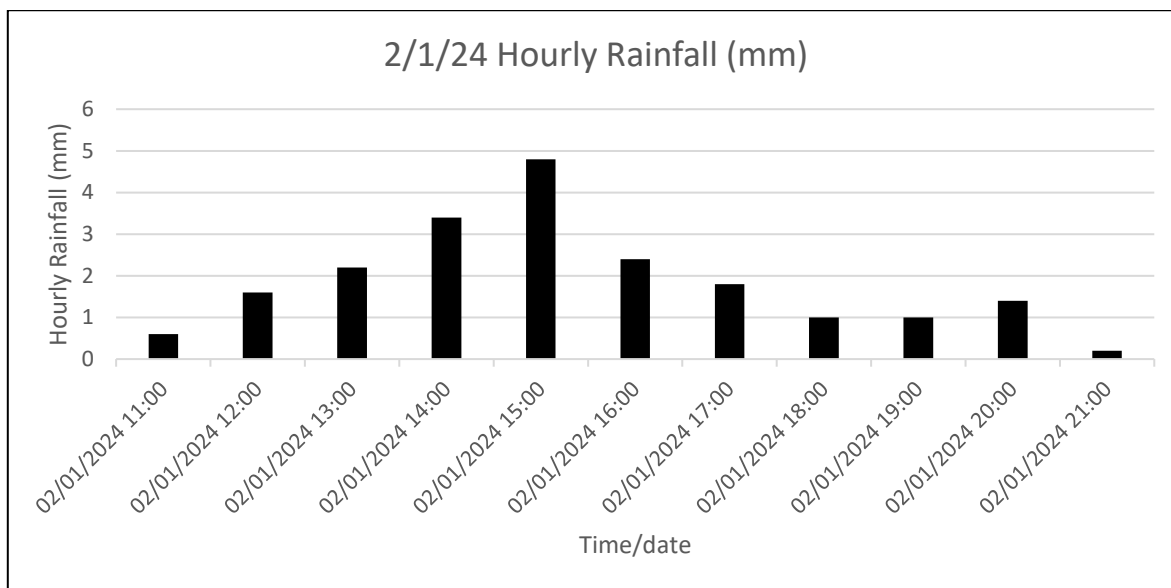


Figure 3. Staythorpe hourly rainfall. Data supplied by the Environment Agency.

Summary of flooding and its causes

8. Girton has a significant history of flooding. The village is surrounded by watercourses on three sides that all discharge to the River Trent. When the River Trent surcharges it has a direct detrimental impact on the ability of The Fleet to discharge into it, which in turn has a knock-on effect to the Mill Dam Dyke. With these watercourses all surcharged other surface water assets in the village are unable to function effectively.
9. Storm Henk caused both the River Trent and the Fleet to flood out of bank resulting in 25 properties in the village being internally flooded. Previous storms had caused some internal flooding, but this is the highest number reported to the Lead local Flood Authority in the last 10 years.
10. The flooding resulted in many of the residents being evacuated for their safety, a challenge that was made possible thanks to the emergency services and significant help and resource provided by volunteers in the village. Girton's volunteer flood wardens provide a critical support to the village and their knowledge and commitment to their cause is exceptional.
11. This flooding mechanism mirrored a number of other catchments along the Trent corridor. Figure 5 shows how the areas affected all lie within Flood Zone 3 – an area at high risk of flooding from rivers.

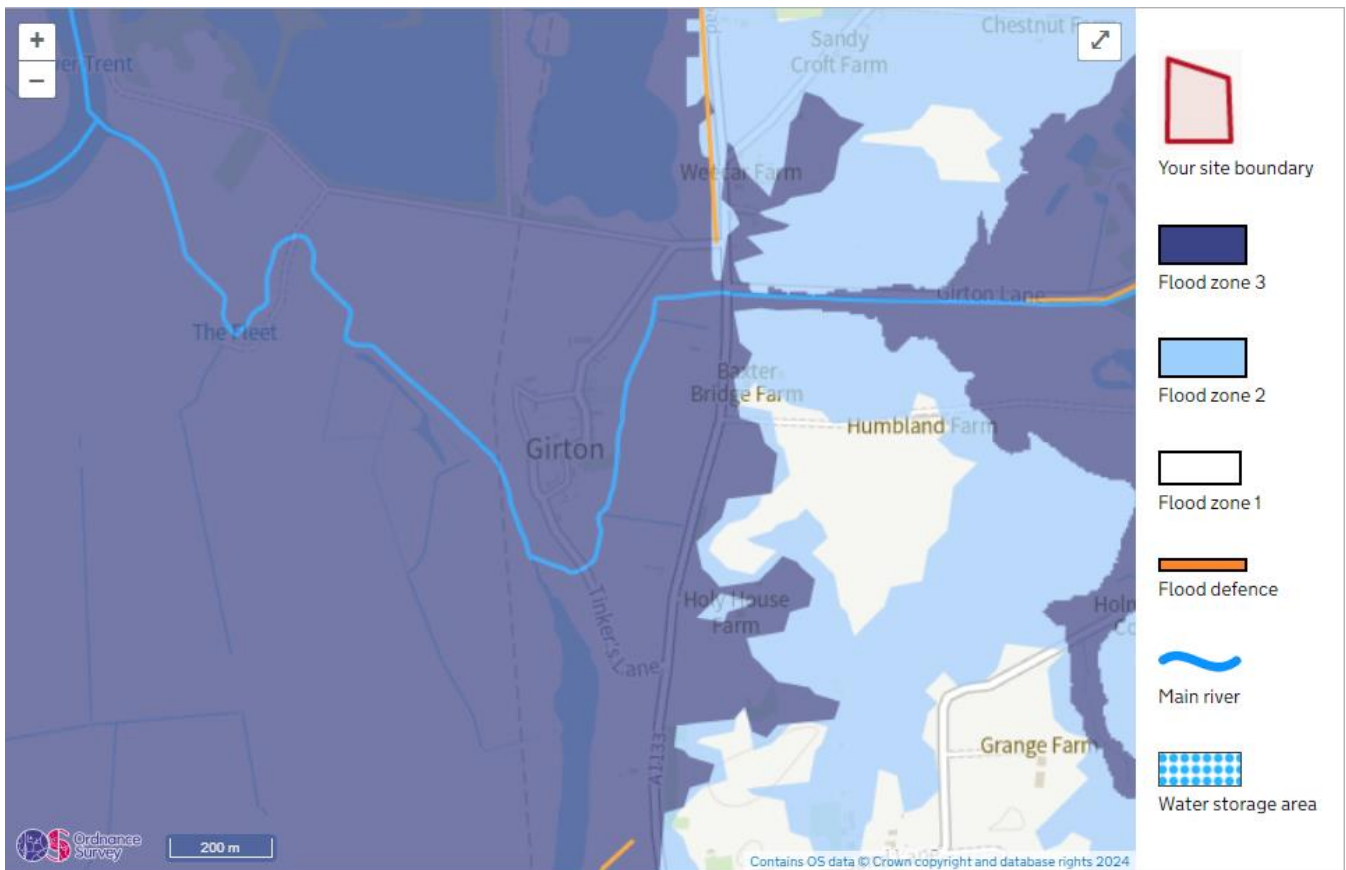


Figure 5. Excerpt from the Flood map for Planning

Risk Management Authorities and their responsibilities

12. 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.

13. The 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.
14. 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.
15. Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board.
 - a) Has a duty to manage flood risk and land drainage within areas of special drainage need in the Trent Valley.
 - b) Has permissive powers to undertake work to provide water level management within their area.
 - c) Undertake works to reduce flood risk to people and property and manage water levels for local needs including the maintenance of rivers, drainage channels, outfalls and pumping stations.

Risk Management Authority Responses to Flood

16. 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:
17. 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, Elected Members, 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 69 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.
- p) Attended a public meeting concerning flood risk in Girton.
- q) Liaised closely with Community Flood Volunteer Groups throughout the event.

18. The Environment Agency.

- a) The Environment Agency warned and informed the community of Girton in a timely manner by issuing a Flood Warning for the River Trent at Girton at 07:42 on 2nd January 2024.
- b) The Environment Agency also instigated flood patrols to operate their structures in accordance with their incident response procedures. Blockages as a result of high water levels in the area were cleared once water levels receded.
- c) The Environment Agency organised and attended a multi-agency community drop in event which was attended by Nottinghamshire County Council, Severn Trent Water, and Newark & Sherwood District Council.
- d) The Environment Agency 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.

19. 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

- 20. 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.
- 21. The Girton Community Flood Signage Scheme became activated during Storm Henk with volunteers closing several roads within the village to limit the impact of bow wave flooding on properties.
- 22. NCC will continue to support its Flood Warden / Road Closure training programme and community volunteer groups to help ensure they operate as effectively and safely as possible.
- 23. NCC are working with Community Volunteer groups to supply new river and flood monitoring equipment.
- 24. NCC are continuing to develop proposals with the community for a flood evacuation egress route.
- 25. 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.