

Monmouthshire County Council

Flood and Water Management Act 2010

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Summary

2026



monmouthshire
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1 What is a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy?

1.1 The Need for a Local Strategy

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA), Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) has been established as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for its administrative area. This Act requires all 22 LLFAs in Wales to produce, develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (Local Strategy) for their administrative area.

It is important to recognise that the management of flood risk associated with main rivers, such as the Rivers Monnow, Wye and Usk, is the responsibility of Natural Resources Wales and not Monmouthshire County Council. Although this Local Strategy acknowledges other sources of flooding, flood risk from these and other main rivers sits outside of the scope of this Local Strategy and is not covered in detail. The roles and responsibilities of each Risk Management Authority is set out in Chapter 5.

The Welsh Government's National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) in Wales (National Strategy) sets out that over 245,000 properties across Wales are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water, with almost 400 properties also at risk from coastal erosion. The National Strategy explains that, as the climate changes, we can expect those risks to increase, with more frequent and severe floods, rising sea levels and faster rates of erosion of the coast.

Storm events such as those of October 2019, February & December 2020, November 2024 and November 2025 demonstrated how vulnerable some communities within Monmouthshire are to flooding, with that risk likely to increase with the onset of climate change. Storm Dennis (February 2020) alone resulted in flooding to almost 200 homes and 50 businesses across Monmouthshire, with a further 75 homes and 22 businesses reported to have flooded during Storm Bert (November 2024). Storm Claudia (November 2025) resulted in the River Monnow reaching record levels once again, resulting in flooding to more than 270 homes and 140 businesses in the north of the county. These events emphasise the need for MCC to have in place robust strategic priorities for managing local flood risk to help improve community resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Different Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) in Wales are responsible for different sources of flood risk. As a LLFA, MCC are responsible for "local flood risk" which is defined as flood risk from:

- Surface water runoff
- Groundwater, and
- Ordinary watercourses (generally smaller watercourses).

This Local Strategy focuses on these local sources of flood risk within Monmouthshire but acknowledges and considers other sources of flood risk (including main rivers, sea, and sewers) and associated responsible RMAs.

The National Strategy sets out the legislative context to FCERM activities in Wales. In certain cases, Local Authorities are also required to produce Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP), under the 2009 Flood Risk Regulations (revoked as part of the Retained EU Legislation Action on 31st

December 2023). A summary of the legislative context to FCERM activities in Wales is provided in Appendix B.

1.2 The Purpose of the Local Strategy

MCC published our first Local Strategy in 2013, setting out our overarching approach to managing local flood risk. Alongside our Local Strategy, MCC published a FRMP in 2016. Our FRMP developed the objectives and high-level measures outlined in our Local Strategy into a more detailed plan for managing flooding in our communities.

This document is our second Local Strategy. Whilst we previously published our Local Strategy and FRMP separately, this new Local Strategy integrates the two documents into one. This reduces complexity and enables us to communicate and manage local flood risk more effectively. The FRMP is referred to as the Flood Action Plan within this Local Strategy.

This Local Strategy will explain how flooding from local sources will be managed across Monmouthshire, consistent with the objectives, measures and related policies and legislation set out in the National Strategy. This Local Strategy will be reviewed within 2 years of the publication of the next National Strategy, approximately every 6 years. The Flood Action Plan (Appendix A) will be reviewed and updated every 3 years or as required.

1.3 Structure of the Local Strategy

This document is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction

Introduces the background, need and purpose of the Local Strategy.

Chapter 2 Coordination of Flood Risk Management

Summarises how this Local Strategy aligns with other Council strategic plans, national policies and coordination with other stakeholders and their plans.

Chapter 3 Flood Risk in Monmouthshire

Provides an overview of the different sources and risk of flooding across Monmouthshire.

Chapter 4 How this Strategy Responds to Climate Change

Provides an overview of climate change in the context of flood risk and outlines how this Local Strategy seeks to address these risks in Monmouthshire.

Chapter 5 Roles and Responsibilities for Managing Flood Risk in Monmouthshire

Sets out the roles and responsibilities for managing flood risk in Monmouthshire. It also highlights some of the key policies we have in place for managing local flood risk.

Chapter 6 Strategic Objectives

Describes the strategic objectives for managing local flood risk in the coming years, and how these align with the objectives set out in the National Strategy.

Chapter 7 Flood Measures

Sets out the flood risk management measures. These are broad activities and ways of working which help us to meet our strategic objectives.

Chapter 8 Flood Actions

Introduces the Flood Action Plan. This is a focused plan, detailing specific deliverable actions required to meet the measures. The Flood Action Plan is included in Appendix A.

Chapter 9 Funding and Prioritisation

Summarises the different ways in which flood risk management activities can be funded as well as how MCC prioritise these activities.

Chapter 10 Environmental Assessments

Outlines how this Local Strategy will contribute to wider environmental objectives.

Chapter 11 Monitoring Progress

Describes how MCC will measure and monitor progress in delivering the objectives, measures and actions set out in this Local Strategy.

1.4 Targets within this Local Strategy – Objectives, Measures and Actions

This Local Strategy sets out our flood risk management Objectives, Measures and Actions. These three groupings, which provide different levels of detail on how flood risk will be managed, are summarised below.

Definitions of the Objectives, Measures and Actions for Delivering MCC's Local Strategy

Objectives

- Overarching targets or outcomes of flood risk management during, or beyond, the Local Strategy cycle.
- Statements of Local Authority ambition for flood risk management.
- Specific to the Local Authority but linked to the National Strategy Objectives.

Measures

- Broad activities and ways of working to meet the Objectives.
- Typically apply to the Local Authority area rather than specific communities/locations within it.
- Are loosely time-bound and are measurable at a high-level, with indicative costs and benefits.

Actions

- Specific tasks, activities or initiatives, planned and tracked, to meet the Measures.
- Reviewed and updated on a regular basis, reporting on progress every 3 years.
- Short, medium and long term with clearly defined outputs/outcomes.
- Typically location-specific within the local authority area.

1.5 Who is responsible for managing flood risk?

Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) across Wales include NRW, the 22 Local Authorities, water companies and the Welsh Government. Each RMA has legislative powers concerning flood risk management and is required to fulfil several statutory duties as defined under the FWMA. In addition to these statutory duties, the Act sets out a range of permissive powers for RMAs, enabling them to undertake defined activities if they so wish.

The table below outlines which RMAs are primarily responsible for managing flood risk dependent on the sources of flooding.

Risk Management Authorities Responsible for Managing Different Sources of Flood Risk in Monmouthshire

RMA Flood Source	MCC (LLFA)	Natural Resources Wales	Dŵr Cymru/ Welsh Water	MCC (Highways)	Welsh Government / SWTRA
Surface Water	✓			✓ (Local roads)	✓ (Trunk roads)
Ordinary Watercourses	✓				
Groundwater	✓				
Main River		✓			
Internal Drainage District (Gwent Levels)		✓			
Reservoirs		✓			
Sewers			✓		
Coastal/Tidal	✓	✓			

2 Flood Risk in Monmouthshire

The FWMA defines a “Flood” as *“any case where land not normally covered by water becomes covered by water”*. “Flood risk” is a combination of the probability and the potential consequences of flooding. Areas at risk of flooding are those at risk of flooding from any source, now or in the future.

Many communities across Monmouthshire are at risk of flooding from a variety of sources and experience regular flooding which can have a significant effect on people's lives. *The emotional, psychological and financial effects of flooding can persist for many months or even years after an event has occurred. Many people find that the extended recovery period, more than the flood itself, is the most draining, impacting their physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Even after returning home, some individuals continue to experience post-traumatic stress, heightened anxiety or sleep disturbances, particularly during storms or heavy rain.*

Over the past decade we have seen an increasing threat from more intense rainfall events and named storms than ever before. These rainfall events do not just occur during winter months, more localised surface water and flash flooding from smaller ordinary watercourses is becoming more frequent during the summer and autumn, often leading to wetter catchments that can exacerbate early winter flooding. Existing drainage infrastructure is not always able to cope with these intense rainfall events, which regularly results in the highway network, infrastructure and adjacent properties being impacted more frequently and to a greater extent.

Climate change forecasts suggest this more regular flooding will become the norm and with rising sea levels and tides, some communities in Monmouthshire face an increasing risk of flooding.

MCC as a RMA have a responsibility to manage local flood risk across the county. It is not possible to prevent all flooding, however, the activities identified in this strategy aim to ensure the risks from these local sources of flooding (surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) are identified and managed where possible.

Management of flooding from main rivers and tidal sources rests with Natural Resources Wales, whilst flooding from sewers falls under the remit of Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water. These flooding sources are covered in each RMA's own plans for managing flood risk and whilst they have been considered in this report they have not been assessed in detail.

2.1 Sources of Flooding in Monmouthshire

Communities across Monmouthshire are at risk from numerous different sources of flooding. The figure below summarises these and shows the most appropriate RMA to contact.

Sources of flooding and who to contact

	Surface Water Flooding Also known as "Pluvial Flooding", can be difficult to forecast and often occurs when intense heavy rainfall exceeds the capacity of the ground or drainage systems, resulting in overland flow and ponding that can affect highways, buildings and low-lying areas.	Contact MCC as Lead Local Flood Authority
	Ordinary Watercourse Flooding Generally smaller watercourses and ditches (not designated as main rivers) are typically prone to flash flooding from heavy localised rainfall that results in the capacity of the watercourse being exceeded and over topped. Flooding can also often occur when these smaller watercourses become 'flood locked' when unable to discharge to larger main rivers when they are in spate.	Contact MCC as Lead Local Flood Authority
	Groundwater Flooding Typically occurs after long periods of sustained heavy rainfall causing the water table to rise to ground level. Areas most at risk are often low-lying where the water table is likely to be at a shallow depth resulting in flooding as water rises up from an underlying aquifer or water flowing from springs.	Contact MCC as Lead Local Flood Authority
	Main River Flooding Occurs when designated main rivers cannot contain the flow of water from their catchments. Such flooding can often result in smaller ordinary watercourses and drainage systems becoming flood locked, leading to them backing up and causing wider flooding. Main rivers in Monmouthshire include the Rivers Monnow, Wye, Usk and Trothy, the Olway, Nedom and Mouton Brooks and the Mill Reen.	Contact Natural Resources Wales
	Sewer Flooding This occurs when the capacity of the sewer is exceeded by the volume of water entering it or a restriction to flow resulting from debris/blockage or a structural failure. Sewer flooding can be from foul, surface water and combined sewers.	Contact Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
	Highway Flooding This can be defined as flooding caused by heavy rainfall overflowing from blocked drains and gullies causing water to pond within the highway. This can also occur through inadequate or poorly maintained drainage, or when runoff from adjacent land overwhelms the system. Poor or degraded surfacing can also contribute to highway flooding.	Contact MCC for local adopted roads and SWTRA for Trunk Roads.
	Coastal & Tidal Flooding Can occur when high tides combine with severe weather, leading to storm surges and large waves. Such events can lead to flooding of low-lying land, overtopping or breaching of flood defences, as well as estuarine flooding as experienced along the Usk and Wye estuaries.	Contact Natural Resources Wales
	Internal Drainage District (Gwent Levels) Flooding The Gwent Internal Drainage District is made up of a complex network of reens and ditches that require careful water level management. This work is managed by Natural Resources Wales through their permissive powers who also carry out maintenance, improvement or construction work on the watercourses, to help manage flood risk to people and properties and protect the environment.	Contact Natural Resources Wales
	Reservoir Flooding Can occur when above ground water storage fails and spills onto the surrounding area. Reservoir safety is closely regulated through the Reservoirs Act 1975 making the likelihood of flooding low.	Contact the Reservoir Owner

2.2 How we assess Flood Risk in Monmouthshire

Flood risk across Monmouthshire has been assessed on a catchment basis using identified Strategic Flood Risk Areas (SFRAs). These SFRAs mirror the catchments of larger watercourses and breakdown the county into suitable areas whereby local flood risk can be considered in a holistic way along with all other sources of flooding. This approach also helps to highlight areas at greatest risk and their interconnected potential for mitigation on a catchment basis, whilst also maximising the potential for identifying flood risk management opportunities across a range of LLFA responsibilities and duties.

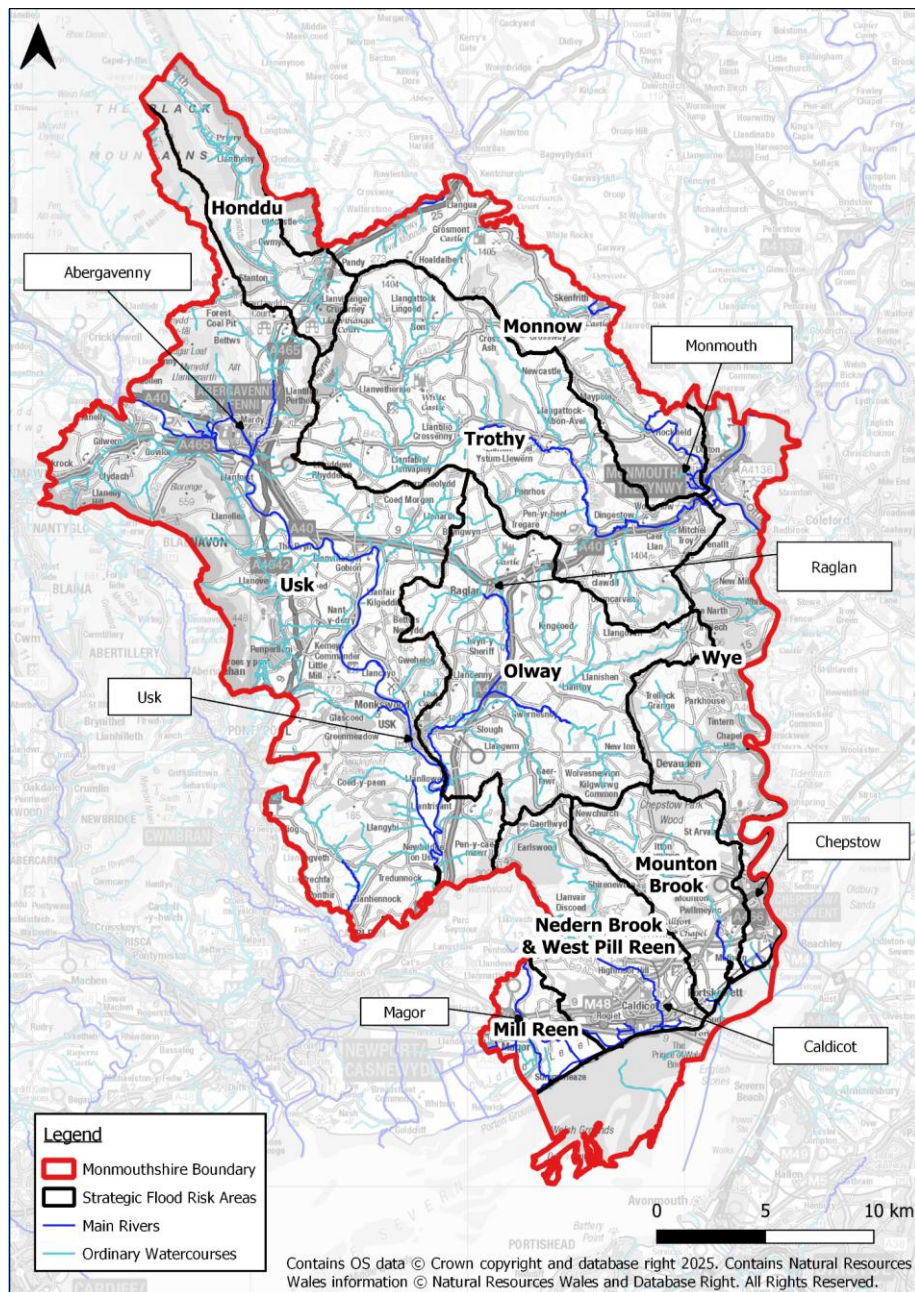
The largest river catchments of the Usk and Wye cover the majority of the county, therefore, to avoid overly large SFRAs, these catchments have been broken down to include their largest tributaries, using catchment boundaries from DataMap Wales. In the south, due to the location of the main settlements and the two catchments being comparatively small in area, the Nedern Brook and West Pill Reen catchments have been combined to form one SFRA. This has resulted in nine SFRAs as shown below.

Main Settlements in each SFRA

Strategic Flood Risk Area (SFRA)	Main Settlements
Usk	Gilwern, Govilon, Llanwenarth, Abergavenny, Llanellen, Llanover, Penperlleni, Little Mill, Monkswood, Usk, Llanbadoc, Llanllowell, Llantrisant, Llangybi, Treddunock, Newbridge-on-Usk
Olway	Trellech, Raglan, Llanishen, Llandenny, Gwernesney, Usk, Llangwm
Honddu	Llanthony, Cwmyoy, Llanvihangel Crucorney, Pandy, Wern Gifford
Monnow	Grosmont, Skenfrith, Rockfield, Monmouth
Trothy	Cross Ash, Llanvapley, Llantilio Crossenny, Dingestow, Mitchel Troy
Wye	Monmouth, Penallt, The Narth, Llandogo, Catbrook, Tintern, St Arvans, Chepstow
Mill Reen	Magor, Undy
Nedern Brook & West Pill Reen	Llanvair Discoed, Caerwent, Crick, Rogiet, Caldicot, Portskewett, Sudbrook
Mounton Brook	Itton, St Arvans, Shirenewton, Mynydd-bach, Mounton, Pwllmeyric, Mathern

Strategic Flood Risk Areas (SFRAs) In Monmouthshire

Commented [I1]: Plan updated to include "West" Pill Reen



3 Strategic Objectives

3.1 National Strategy Objectives

Welsh Government published The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales in October 2020. It sets out an overarching aim to reduce the risk to people and communities from flooding and coastal erosion and identifies 5 objectives for delivering this aim. These are summarised below.



MCC have developed strategic objectives which outline how local flood risk will be managed during the term of this Local Strategy. These local objectives align with the National Strategy objectives and reflect local context and priorities in Monmouthshire.

3.2 Monmouthshire's Strategic Objectives

MCC's objectives to manage local flood risk are shown in the table below which also shows the inter relationship between the National and Local objectives and the holistic approach taken between MCC and Welsh Government to address flooding in Wales. The objectives below are not listed in priority order.

Local Strategy Objectives	National Strategy Objectives				
	A	B	C	D	E
1. Reduce the risk and impact of flooding to people and property.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Reduce disruption to critical infrastructure and essential services resulting from flooding.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Ensure a risk based and sustainable approach to investment and delivery of flood risk management activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Ensure flood resilience at environmentally significant and sensitive sites of national, regional and local importance is maintained and enhanced where possible.		✓		✓	
5. Support the Water Framework Directive by preventing deterioration of watercourses and improve water quality.*					
6. Continue to improve understanding of flood risk and the impact of climate change within Monmouthshire.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7. Raise awareness of flood risk amongst individuals and communities and support them to prepare for, respond to and recover from flood events.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8. Work collaboratively with other Risk Management Authorities and organisations to effectively manage flood risk.	✓	✓		✓	✓

* Although this local objective is not explicitly listed among the specific objectives in the National Strategy, it has been included in this Local Strategy because it aligns with broader local and national goals outlined in the National Strategy.

4 Flood Measures

A measure is defined as activity, which will be undertaken to manage risk and achieve the agreed objectives. In order to deliver the objectives outlined the Local Strategy, a wide range of measures are proposed.

These measures have been categorised under the six high level themes:

1. Development planning and adaptation (encompassing both new and adaptations to existing developments/landscapes)
2. Flood forecasting, warning and response
3. Land, cultural and environmental management
4. Asset management and maintenance
5. Studies assessments and plans
6. Monitoring (of the local flood risk issues)

Summary of Flood Measures

Theme	Ref	Measure
Development planning and adaptation	1	Sustainable & Strategic Development Planning
	2	Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment (SFCA)
	3	SuDS Approving Body (SAB)
Flood forecasting, warning and response	4	Flood Awareness
	5	Flood Warning & Forecasting
	6	Emergency Response and Multi-Agency Plans
	7	Community Flood Plans
Land, cultural and environmental management	8	Natural Flood Management & Nature Based Solutions
	9	Environmental Enhancement & Habitat Creation
	10	Partnership Working
Asset management and maintenance	11	Flood and Drainage Asset Database
	12	Asset Management and Maintenance Plans
	13	Designation of Structures
Studies assessments and plans	14	Flood Investigations
	15	Flood Alleviation Schemes
	16	Strategic Flood Risk Area Management
	17	Flood Action Plan
Monitoring	18	Flood Monitoring

5 Flood Actions

The new Local Strategy combines the Flood Action Plan and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy into one document and will therefore supersede MCC's previous Flood Risk Management Plan published in 2016.

MCC's objectives and measures for managing local flood risk to our communities are outlined above. In order to deliver these, a range of actions have been developed as detailed in the Flood Action Plan. Actions have been identified on a countywide scale as well as for each of the nine SFRA's to ensure the local sources of flood risk at a community scale are considered. The proposed actions will be delivered over the short (1 - 3 years), medium (4 - 6 years) and long term (6+ years) and will have clearly defined measurable outcomes.

The Flood Action Plan will be regularly reviewed and updated every 3 years or as required. A more comprehensive review will be undertaken as part of future updates to this LFRMS, typically every 6 years.

6 Funding and Prioritisation

The measures and actions outlined in this Local Strategy will be funded from a number of sources, the majority of which comes from the Welsh Government via capital and revenue grants for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management.

To ensure investment is directed to areas where it is required most, Welsh Government have developed a scoring methodology for prioritisation of FCERM funding. In order to ensure alignment with Welsh Government's National Strategy, in our role of Lead Local Flood Authority, MCC will continue to adopt this methodology to ensure funding for flood risk management and alleviation schemes is directed to our communities most at risk.

7 Environmental Assessments

Environmental Assessments have been undertaken alongside the development of this Local Strategy to ensure the objectives, measures and actions presented take into account the environment within Monmouthshire, including important designations. The environmental assessments consider and record how the Local Strategy contributes to the achievement of wider environmental objectives.

These assessments include a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

8 How will we monitor progress?

Measuring progress will focus upon the delivery of the Actions set out in the Flood Action Plan in Appendix A. Actions have been derived from the overarching objectives and measures, therefore their delivery will provide a means of measuring progress across the Strategy.

The Monmouthshire Flood Action Plan and Action Plans for each of the nine SFRAs will be reviewed regularly and updated every 3 years to reflect the LLFA's continued delivery against the Local Strategy's Objectives and Measures.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as a whole will be reviewed and updated in line with the National Strategy and regulatory requirements, typically every six years.

Further Information

For further information on local flood risk management please visit our dedicated Flood Risk Management webpages [HERE](#)

or

contact the Flood Risk Management Team at flooding@monmouthshire.gov.uk