

Severn Estuary

Flood Risk Management Strategy Wessex

December 2011

The aim of the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy (SEFRMS) is to identify the most effective and sustainable way to manage flood risk in the estuary over the next century. The Strategy covers the northern coastline from Lavernock Point near Cardiff to Gloucester, and back down the southern coastline to Hinkley Point in Somerset.

The consultation on the draft SEFRMS earlier this year prompted a number of concerns from individuals and organisations in Wessex. Many of these related to the proposals for managed realignment of defences either in the short or longer term. There was also concern about the flood risk to infrastructure. Respondents requested a more open and transparent consultation.

We recognise the need for greater community involvement in discussing options and making decisions. We want to develop the Strategy by working closely with communities. We are aiming to reach general agreement on the Strategy before we republish it. This will be after April 2012, to allow time for these discussions to take place.

In the coming months we will help concerned communities describe and assess their preferred short and longer term options for managing flood risk within legislative and technical constraints. We will also advise on what could be funded using public money.

The longer term strategy options to manage flood risk are likely to be linked to actual levels of sea level rise rather than specific dates based on current predictions. These options would only be needed once a certain rise in sea level has occurred and makes the short term option unsustainable for the community.

Graham Quarrier will remain as the Project Manager for the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy, concentrating on delivering the revised strategy document and ensuring the final strategy can be approved by Defra and Welsh Government. He will continue to have a comprehensive overview of progress on the strategy across both England and Wales.

In addition, I have asked Rachel Burden, my Deputy Flood Risk Manager for our Wessex area, to be the lead Strategy Engagement Officer. Please feel free to contact her with any queries.

Dr Richard Cresswell

Environment Agency Director, South West Region

Project sponsor for the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy

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