

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Edward Mountain MSP  
Convener  
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Email: [netzero.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:netzero.committee@parliament.scot)

Dear Edward,

I am writing to inform you that this afternoon, the Scottish Government will publish Scotland's first Flood Resilience Strategy. A copy of the Strategy is attached for the Committee's convenience.

We know that flooding in Scotland will become more frequent and severe in the decades ahead. As our biggest climate adaptation challenge, we need to do all we can to be prepared for this. Sea levels, peak rainfall and peak river flows are all set to increase significantly in the years to come resulting in greater flood exposure and more flood impacts. By 2080 nearly 400,000 properties in Scotland will be at risk of flooding compared to 284,000 now.

This Strategy, part of our Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 (SNAP3), will help us meet this challenge and facilitate the changes we need to make over the long-term to make our communities more flood resilient.

The Strategy recognises that people who are impacted most by flooding must have a bigger role in determining their flood resilient future and the development of the Strategy has been steered by our extensive public and stakeholder engagement over the last eighteen months.

By acting now and pursuing the flood resilient places approach we will be able to work with multiple sectors to deliver a much broader range of flood resilience measures, all of which will contribute in their own way to creating flood resilient places that are adaptable to our future climate.

Yours sincerely,

**GILLIAN MARTIN**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



# Ministerial Foreword



Our climate is changing and the impacts around the world and here at home are clear to see.

The 12 named storms last winter showed the significant impacts and costly damage that flooding and coastal storm surges can have on our communities and infrastructure. Storm Babet brought record rainfall and floods to eastern Scotland with devastating impacts for some communities. It highlighted our vulnerability to extreme events, even where we have some flood protection in place.

Many of our European neighbours have also been impacted by severe flooding this year, most recently the catastrophic flooding in Spain which resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives and untold damage to communities.

We know that for us in Scotland flooding will become more frequent and more severe in the decades ahead. As our biggest climate adaptation challenge, we need to do all we can to be prepared for this.

Sea levels, peak rainfall and peak river flows are all set to increase significantly in the years to come resulting in greater flood exposure and more flood impacts. By 2080 nearly 400,000 properties in Scotland will be at risk of flooding compared to the 284,000 we have now.

This Strategy, part of our Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 (SNAP3), will help us meet this challenge and facilitate the changes we need to make over the long-term to make our communities more flood resilient.

The Strategy recognises that it is people who are impacted most by flooding and that they must have a bigger role in determining their flood resilient future. Our public and stakeholder engagement over the last eighteen months steered the development of the Strategy including helping us shape the outcomes, guiding principles and priority areas for action.

Building on the success of our Flood Risk Management Plans, the Strategy will look at the flood resilience challenges we face in the much longer term recognising that some of the changes that we need to make will take decades to implement.

Over that period the Strategy will enable the change from trying to stop flooding impacting on our activities to creating flood resilient places where our activities are adapted to the flood risk that we face.

Reducing the impacts of flooding is as much about the design of our places as it is about the design of our flood actions.

To be flood resilient we must adapt our places to our future climate. This means that many of our towns and cities and rural landscapes will look quite different in future. We will see more space being made for water along our rivers and at the coast, fewer properties on the flooding front-line and more blue and green infrastructure

and natural flood management actions being used to manage water in urban and rural settings.

We are already seeing these changes happening in our countryside and in some of our towns and cities as spaces are managed differently or redeveloped to provide multiple community benefits including actions that improve our flood resilience.

By acting now and pursuing the flood resilient places approach we will be able to work with multiple sectors to deliver a much broader range of flood resilience measures, all of which will contribute in their own way to creating flood resilient places that are adaptable to our future climate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Martin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Gillian Martin MSP**

Acting Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy

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## Executive Summary

Flooding is Scotland's biggest domestic climate adaptation challenge.

Floods like we saw in the east of Scotland in October 2023 during Storm Babet show that global warming is already influencing weather events here at home. Over the coming decades we will see greater economic, social and environmental impacts as sea levels, rainfall intensities and river flows increase as a result of climate change. By 2080 the number of properties at risk of flooding in Scotland will rise from 284,000 to almost 400,000.

This Strategy, part of *The Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029, Actions today, for a climate resilient future (SNAP3)*, is in direct response to the climate emergency and the imperative to address the challenges that we face.

Focusing on building community flood resilience and resilient placemaking, it puts people at the heart of the process and supports an increase in the range and rate of delivery of actions both to manage our flood exposure, and to reduce the impacts of flooding when it does occur.

The Strategy supports a flood resilient places approach, recognising that reducing the impacts of flooding is as much about the design of our places as it is about the design of specific flood actions.

We are already seeing climate-positive actions shaping our rural landscapes and our urban areas as we adapt to reduce our emissions, increase our resilience and provide other community and environmental benefits. The case studies throughout the Strategy, and in the accompanying case study document, provide a range of examples of this.

Figure 1: Photo from engagement workshop, courtesy of Sniffer



## Vision

The Strategy sets out a vision for a flood resilient Scotland through to 2045 and beyond:

**Our people and places are prepared for increased flooding and we are adapting to a changing climate and creating sustainable resilient places in ways that are inclusive and fair.**

The Strategy is structured around the themes of People, Places and Processes and sets out our Outcomes, the Guiding Principles we will work to and our Priority Actions.

## Outcomes

The Strategy has three Outcomes based on the themes of People, Places and Processes. Each of these is considered as to how they can contribute to our flood resilience.

### People Outcome

**Creating flood resilient places involves our people and communities.**

We will work with partners to explore how people and communities can be sufficiently informed and supported to be involved in flood resilience decision making and so contribute to their own flood resilience.

### Places Outcome

**Land management and placemaking decisions follow good practise for flood resilience.**

We will work with partners to explore how our places can contribute to our flood resilience.

### Processes Outcome

**Flood resilience is blended into our places at all scales; a broader range of actions are being delivered by a broader range of delivery partners.**

We will work with partners to develop our processes to improve our flood resilience.

## **Guiding Principles**

The four guiding principles laid out in the Strategy will help us to make the most of all the resources available to us. They will help embed flood resilience into climate adaptation and placemaking and engage as many contributors as possible to deliver as broad a range of actions as possible.

- ▶ The scale of the challenge means that the focus of action will change from 'fixing flooding problems' to creating flood resilient places.
- ▶ Flood resilience is part of community resilience and part of adapting to climate change.
- ▶ At the heart of our flood resilience activities will lie the principles of a Just Transition (to secure a fairer, greener future for all by working in partnership to deliver fairness and tackle inequality and injustice).
- ▶ Everyone benefits from flood resilient places, and we all have a contribution to make.

## **Priority Actions**

To support the delivery of our outcomes we have identified six priority areas for action that we will take forward with partners through a strategy implementation plan.

### **Establish a flood advisory service**

The Flood Advisory Service will provide support and advice on building flood resilience to delivery partners and communities and provide the governance framework and gateway process for progressing high value flood actions such as flood protection schemes.

### **Involve and support communities**

This will include creating a framework for supporting communities in their flood resilience journey and encouraging and supporting actions by individuals to improve their own flood resilience and that of their community.

### **Improve land-use for flood mitigation**

Develop our understanding of how our urban and rural landscapes can be adapted to increase our flood resilience. Seek urban and rural land-use opportunities to improve our flood resilience and expand our range of delivery partners to include others whose activities can contribute to our flood resilience.

### **Support a broader range of flood actions**

We will review available flooding budgets to assess how a proportion of flood funding can be directed to support a broader range of flood actions including smaller flood protection schemes and property level flood resilience.

We will seek new flood resilience partners across the public, private and third sector and seek to influence policy across sectors who can contribute to creating flood resilient places.



## **Improve flood resilience through data**

We will work with partners to review how we can improve our presentation and use of data to drive flood resilient activity including developing new datasets to improve decision making.

We will use data to raise community awareness of current and future flood exposure to support communities on their climate adaptation journeys.



Figure 2: Photo from engagement workshop, courtesy of Sniffer

## **Support long-term transition planning for our most exposed communities**

We will support those communities where it may not be possible to maintain a level of flood resilience indefinitely with long-term transition planning. We will explore how coastal storm damage could be better forecast and warned for and determine the most efficient and effective way to establish a national coastal monitoring programme to ensure that up to date information on coastal change is collected, analysed and made available to support decision making.

## **Strategy Implementation**

Achieving our outcomes and realising the Flood Resilience Strategy vision will depend on establishing a new level of cross-sector collaboration.

The next stage will be to develop the Strategy implementation plan that backs the vision and enables the Scottish Government and our partners to work together to deliver actions supporting our People, Places and Processes outcomes.

This will include taking forward policy development for the six priority action areas starting with the establishment of the Flood Advisory Service. This service will be the cornerstone of the flood resilient places approach.

## Introduction

The climate emergency is impacting on our communities, society, economic wellbeing, and the environment – both here at home and around the world.

Climate change means that Scotland will be warmer and wetter in winter, hotter and drier in summer, sea level rise will continue, and our weather will become more variable and unpredictable. Extreme events like Storm Babet last year, and the associated impacts that Brechin and other communities suffered as a result, will become more common.

Flooding is Scotland's costliest climate hazard. We must adapt to our increasing flood exposure and respond to the impacts it is having on our people, places and activities. This is a challenge that Scotland must tackle together and ensure we are taking all available opportunities to overcome.

Tackling the impacts of climate change is one of our four top priorities for Scotland and creation of this strategy, as part of Scotland's National Adaptation Plan and our wider Just Transition commitments, is a key element of our continued commitment to respond to the climate emergency.

The National Flood Resilience Strategy focuses on what Scotland needs to do to make our communities more flood resilient over the coming decades. It presents our flood resilience vision and the intended outcomes are structured around the themes of People, Place and Processes. It sets out the long-term policy direction and framework for improving flood resilience, our guiding principles and priority areas for action.

Delivering the Strategy will require multiple sectors working together to ensure that flood resilience is at the heart of the design of our places and our response to the changing climate.



Figure 3: Example of less resilient riverside community and more resilient riverside community.

# Our Vision and Outcomes

Our vision and outcomes for a flood resilient Scotland through to 2045 and beyond:



Figure 4: Vision and Outcomes Graphic

## Strategy Purpose

Flood protection and flood risk management activity has been undertaken in Scotland for a number of years, with the current flood management framework being introduced in 2009. The climate emergency is significantly increasing the frequency and severity of flooding requiring us to review and refresh our response to ensure that we have an agreed national vision and approach to the challenges that brings. Focusing on building community flood resilience, the Strategy will increase the range and rate of delivery of actions both to manage our flood exposure, and to reduce the impacts of flooding when it does occur. Building on current delivery mechanisms, such as the existing flood risk management planning process,<sup>1</sup> it will enable new delivery opportunities and engage new delivery partners.

### Scotland's climate is changing and by 2100:

- Sea levels around the coast of Scotland are predicted to be at least 80cm higher and could be up to 1.90m higher;
- Peak rainfall intensities are expected to increase by up to 50%;
- Peak river flows are expected to increase by up to 60%.

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<sup>1</sup> [Flood Risk Management Plans | SEPA](#)

As a result, our flood exposure is increasing. There are currently 284,000 properties across Scotland exposed to flooding, and by 2080 this number is expected to increase by 110,000 through climate change.



Figure 5: Exposed Properties Data Visualisation

The 12 named storms of 2023/2024 have highlighted the significant and costly damage that flooding and coastal storm surges can have on our communities and infrastructure. We know that these impacts will become more frequent and more severe. We need to take action now to improve the resilience of our communities and ensure that we can continue to rely on our essential services as the climate changes.

**The pace of response needs to match our increasing flood exposure**

**£570M**  
INVESTED 2016-2026

In recent years the flood protection scheme delivery programme has successfully provided protection for communities at a rate of between 400 and 800 properties per year. £570 million will be invested in flood resilience in the period 2016-2026. Since 2016, 16 flood protection schemes

have been completed, 4 are under construction and a further 11 are in the early stages of development. However, each year 2,000 more properties are being exposed to flooding through climate change. We will need to ensure that we build on the progress to date and learn lessons of that delivery in order to increase the pace of delivery in future years.

**The financial impact of flooding is increasing**

The expected cost of flooding impacts in Scotland is now around £260 million per year<sup>2</sup>. This figure will continue to increase with inflation and as more properties and infrastructure become exposed to river, coastal and surface water flooding through climate change. To mitigate against the costs of damages caused by flooding, we will need to increase investment in flood resilience from all sectors to ensure our places are designed and prepared for the level of flooding we expect in future.

### **There has been a focus on a limited range of flood management actions**

Most of Scotland's flooding budget is currently spent on delivering large river and coastal flood protection schemes for towns and cities. This means that less is available for other measures such as surface water management, property flood resilience measures or nature-based actions and wider catchment management. It is clear that there is no simple solution to improving flood resilience that will work across all locations and for all communities. We need to better understand the relative benefit that a wider range of actions may deliver, and so help communities determine what may work best for them.

### **Flood actions are delivered through a limited range of contributors**

Currently, almost all flood management actions are delivered through the Flood Risk Management Planning process and are carried out by flooding teams in local authorities, Scottish Water and SEPA supported by specialist engineering and technical consultants. This narrowly focuses the actions we are able to take to reduce our flood exposure and increase resilience. It also limits the opportunity to combine flood resilience activity with other activities to achieve multiple benefits for our places, communities and environment. In line with the Place Principle<sup>3</sup> there is a need to shift toward a plan-led, place based approach where all the elements of design and development of our places have the potential to increase our flood resilience and achieve better outcomes for people and communities. There is a need to secure benefits across small interventions that manage surface water at a local scale right up to Local Development Plans that take account of and respond to flood risk at a strategic level, guiding development away from vulnerable areas. Making space for water and enabling places to adapt and respond.

### **The flooding challenge is increasing for future generations**

The current approach to flooding, principally focused on flood protection, is increasing the challenge for future generations. As floods get bigger and happen more frequently, it will become more and more challenging to continue to provide protection for those who live in flood prone areas. For those communities most vulnerable to flooding, long-term adaptation planning is required to support communities through a resilience process that may include a slow transition away from those areas most exposed to flooding and coastal erosion where protection cannot be sustained in the long term.

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<sup>2</sup> The Flood Risk Management Plans published by SEPA in 2022 report that the expected cost of flooding impacts in Scotland is now around £260 million per year.

<sup>3</sup> [Publication 2019 - The Place Principle - Our contribution to place-based working.pdf](#)

## What is flood resilience?

Flood resilience is about our ability to avoid flooding and, where we can't avoid it, being well prepared, responding well, and recovering quickly from damaging flood events.

| <b>Components of flood resilience</b> | <b>Description</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Assess</b>                         | This is about understanding where flooding will occur and what the impacts are when flooding happens. This can help us avoid, prepare and respond to flooding.   |
| <b>Avoid</b>                          | This is about how we minimise our exposure in areas that flood. This includes avoiding, as a first principle, development in areas that flood, areas which have an erosion risk, and ensuring that the impact of flooding on infrastructure is minimised. This also includes changing activities in areas that frequently flood. For example, if a community is exposed to frequent flooding, one option to improve its flood resilience in the long term may be to slowly withdraw from the flooded area over time.   |
| <b>Prepare</b>                        | Where we can't avoid flooding in certain areas we need to prepare. Being prepared includes being aware of our flood exposure, having well-designed places that are adapted to their flood exposure, having good flood forecasting and warning systems in place, being ready to respond effectively and having flood protection in place. This can be large flood protection structures like we have in many of our towns and cities, enhanced natural protection at the coast (for example from dunes), or small individual household protection measures (such as flood guards). Flood resilience actions are coordinated through Scotland's Flood Risk Management Plans. |
| <b>Respond</b>                        | This is what we do when flooding happens to ensure that we stay safe and to minimise the impacts. It includes the actions of the emergency services, other responders and individuals – a whole Team Scotland approach. Our flood forecasting and early warning systems help communities and emergency services to respond. It also includes how we respond after the event by taking into account what we have learned and what we can do differently in future to reduce the impacts next time it happens.   |

## Recover

This is about how quickly we can bounce back after a flood in a way that makes us more resilient to future floods. Our ability to recover will depend on how well we have avoided areas that flood and how well we have prepared and responded. Communities that avoid well, prepare well and respond well will recover well.

Supporting positive behavioural change will also play a role across all stages of improving flood resilience. Research shows that people systematically underestimate the risk and impact of flooding, and addressing this will hopefully encourage greater buy-in and support for improving flood resilience.



Figure 6: Example of less resilient urban community and more resilient urban community.

## Current Arrangements

This strategy builds on flood resilience arrangements which are currently in place.

### Flood Risk Management Planning process

The current Flood Risk Management Planning process<sup>4</sup> provides the framework for responsible authorities to work together to reduce overall flood risk. For more than

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<sup>4</sup>The Flood Risk Management Planning process is a requirement of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. The Act allocates clear roles and responsibilities for managing flood risk in Scotland. Scottish Government works in partnership with SEPA, local authorities, Scottish Water and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority and Cairngorms National Park Authority. It brings responsible authorities together to assess risk and to prioritise objectives and actions for places with the greatest flood exposure. These objectives and actions are summarised in the Flood Risk Management Plans that are published every six years by SEPA.

15 years, Scottish Government has supported this with funding of £42m per year, and an additional £150m over the course of this parliament. We have also provided £11.7 million of capital funding to support coastal change adaptation for the four-year period 2022-23 to 2025-26.

The Flood Risk Management Planning process introduced in 2009 has enabled SEPA, local authorities, Scottish Water and others to work together to deliver actions to increase our flood resilience. New flood protection schemes have been delivered for communities across Scotland such as those completed in recent years in Kirkwall, New Cumnock, Smithton and Culloden and Stonehaven and those currently under construction in Hawick, Campbeltown and Millport. Other actions taken forward under the Flood Risk Management Plans include improvements to drainage infrastructure and advancements in flood mapping and flood forecasting and warning.

### **Scottish National Adaptation Plan 3**

The Flood Resilience Strategy is a key component of *The Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029, Actions today, for a climate resilient future (SNAP3)*<sup>5</sup>.

SNAP3, which was published in September 2024, sets out more than 200 actions that will be delivered over the next five years to make Scotland more climate resilient. While broader than flooding, it recognises flooding as our costliest adaptation challenge and includes objectives on community resilience, development planning and nature-based solutions aligned with this strategy.

### **National Planning Framework 4**

Scotland's Fourth National Planning Framework<sup>6</sup>, published in 2023, sets out a comprehensive set of national planning policies. It recognises the crucial role that planning has in creating communities that are resilient and adapted to climate change impacts. In particular:

- Policy 10 sets out national planning policy on protecting coastal communities and assets and supporting resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Policy 20 sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure and their networks.
- Policy 22 sets out national planning policy on strengthening resilience to flooding by promoting avoidance as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding.

### **Scotland's National Marine Plan<sup>7</sup>**

General Policy 8 in Scotland's National Marine plan, published in 2015, sets out that developments and activities in the marine environment should be resilient to coastal

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<sup>5</sup> [Draft Scottish National Adaptation Plan \(2024-2029\) \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/draft-scottish-national-adaptation-plan-2024-2029/pages/12/index.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> [National Planning Framework 4 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/pages/12/index.aspx)

<sup>7</sup> [Scotland's National Marine Plan: A Single Framework for Managing Our Seas \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-national-marine-plan-a-single-framework-for-managing-our-seas/pages/12/index.aspx)



change and flooding, and not have unacceptable adverse impact on coastal processes or contribute to coastal flooding.

Scotland's National Marine Plan 2, currently in development and scheduled for adoption in Summer 2027, will set out specific objectives and associated policies relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and will include an updated monitoring and evaluation framework to better support adaptive management.



Figure 7: Example of less resilient coastal community and more resilient coastal community.

Regional Marine Plans are also under development in the Orkney, Shetland and Clyde marine regions, and will set out locally-specific planning policies once adopted. These will support coastal community decision-making to deliver multiple local-scale benefits, including adaptation to, and mitigation of, coastal erosion and flood risk.

### **SEPA's Flood Warning Development Framework 2022-28**

SNAP3 refers to flooding as Scotland's costliest climate hazard. It identifies the flood forecasting and warning services provided by SEPA in collaboration with the Met Office and Floodline as being key to building greater community resilience.

SEPA's Flood Warning Development Framework 2022-28<sup>8</sup> supports the SNAP3 Community Resilience Objective (C3). SNAP3 sets out how SEPA will maintain and improve Scotland's flood forecasting and warning through these principal products and services.

- Scottish Flood Forecast
- Flood Guidance
- Floodline
- Improved multi-hazard warning
- Surface water flood forecasting

<sup>8</sup> [Flood Warning Development Framework 2022-28 \(sepa.org.uk\)](https://sepa.org.uk)

## Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 and Delivery Plan 2024-2030

SNAP3 sets out an objective for nature-based solutions (NbS) to be protected and enhanced to support water resilient and nature-rich places. Given the 'twin crises' of climate change and nature loss, the Scottish National Adaptation Plan is closely aligned with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) and Delivery Plan 2024-2030.

The SBS sets out a clear ambition for Scotland to be nature positive with restored and regenerated biodiversity across both land and sea by 2045, and the Delivery Plan 2024-30 includes actions to enhance Scotland's urban green and blue infrastructure which will support flood resilience.

## Responsibility for managing flood risk

The roles and responsibilities for managing flood risk and responding to flood events are set out below.

| Stakeholder   | Responsibility  |
|---|---|
| Property and business owners  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• manage their own flood risk and protect their family, property or business.</li></ul>   |
| SEPA - Scotland's flood forecasting and warning, and strategic flood risk management authority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provides warnings to the public and emergency responders when flooding is likely.</li><li>• produces Scotland's Flood Risk Management Plans.</li><li>• provides flood risk advice to Planning Authorities.</li></ul>  |
| Local authorities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• produce Local Flood Risk Management Plans which set out how actions in the SEPA plans will be implemented.</li><li>• implement and maintain flood protection schemes.</li><li>• inspect, clear and repair watercourses and gullies on public highways.</li><li>• coordinate emergency response within their own functions e.g. housing, etc. working with other key responders to support local communities.</li><li>• hold particular responsibilities in respect of council owned properties.</li><li>• as planning authorities, responsible for development planning and management including identifying where flood risk may be a key consideration.</li></ul> |

### Scottish Water

- assesses the risk of flooding from public surface water and combined sewers that results from higher than usual rainfall.
- operates public foul, surface water and combined sewers and the public sewer network.
- works with local authorities and SEPA to look for ways to reduce risks through its capital investment programme.

### The Scottish Government

- oversees the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 including setting the policy framework for flood management and approving the objectives and actions set out in the Flood Risk Management Plans.

## Our Engagement

Scottish Government has been engaging with flood risk management stakeholders and communities over the last year to inform this Flood Resilience Strategy<sup>9</sup>.



Output from our programme of engagement workshops and the public consultation<sup>10</sup> helped us structure the Strategy, including defining our guiding principles, setting the key themes of People, Places and Processes, and identifying our priority areas for action.

Figure 8: Engagement Timeline

<sup>9</sup> [Towards Scotland's first Flood Resilience Strategy \(flippingbook.com\)](https://flippingbook.com)

<sup>10</sup> [Flood Resilience Strategy: consultation - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

## Our Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles will underpin our approach to dealing with flooding and help us to make the most of all available resources. They will help embed flood resilience into climate adaptation and placemaking and engage as many contributors as possible to deliver as broad a range of actions as possible.

Responses to the public consultation showed a high level of support for the proposed guiding principles with 82% of respondents supporting a focus on creating flood resilient places.

Respondents recognised the need to broaden the range of delivery partners and put forward a wide range of suggestions for those who could have a role in helping Scotland to become more flood resilient.



Figure 9: Photo from engagement workshop, courtesy of Sniffer

### 1. The scale of the challenge means that the focus of action needs to change from 'fixing flooding problems' to creating flood resilient places.

We will focus on creating flood resilient places by taking all the opportunities available to reduce our flood exposure and take actions to lessen the impacts when flooding does occur.

Our current approach to managing flooding is principally geared towards trying to fix flooding problems to allow us to continue to do the same things in the same places with a reduced exposure to flooding. However, as shown by recent events such as Storm Babet's impact in Brechin in October 2023, this is becoming increasingly difficult to do. We must consider how else we can make our places more flood resilient, and accept that we may not be able to do the same things in the same places indefinitely. Reducing the impacts of flooding in future will be as much about the design of our places as it is about the design of our flood actions.

### 2. Flood resilience is part of community resilience and part of adapting to climate change.

We will work with lead organisations and relevant partners to further embed flood resilience within community resilience and climate adaptation planning. We will help communities understand their current and future flood exposure and what options they have to improve their flood resilience. A community with a high level of awareness and the right support will be able to make informed adaptation choices on development, redevelopment, investment, design, location and activities to increase their flood resilience through time. Scottish Government already supports the 20 Community Climate Action Hubs to develop climate action projects and embed climate solutions into local plans. Scottish Government is funding this with up to £5.5m in 2024-25.

**3. At the heart of our flood resilience activities will lie the principles of a Just Transition (to secure a fairer, greener future for all by working in partnership to deliver fairness and tackle inequality and injustice).**

Organisations leading on improving our flood resilience will ensure that communities are involved in the process and that adapting to this climate challenge is achieved in a way that is fair and leaves no one behind. We will ensure that communities exposed to flooding or coastal change are supported, understand what the future holds for them and what options are available to them to improve their flood resilience. In particular those communities where floods may compound other social vulnerability factors and lead to flood disadvantage<sup>11</sup>.

**4. Everyone benefits from flood resilient places, and we all have a contribution to make.**

We can all as individuals and communities do something to improve our flood resilience. We will work to broaden the range of those that can engage with and deliver flood resilience actions. We cannot rely solely on flood teams and flood budgets to make our places more flood resilient and there are things we can all do to help. Government, local authorities and other key stakeholders will drive the big changes but communities and individuals must be supported so that they can contribute to the resilience of their places too.

## Our Outcomes

To achieve our vision for flood resilient communities, the Scottish Government and our partners will work together to deliver the following shared outcomes.

| Outcome          | Description  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>People</b>    | Creating flood resilient places involves our people and communities.   |
| <b>Places</b>    | Land management and placemaking decisions follow good practice for flood resilience.   |
| <b>Processes</b> | Flood resilience is blended into our places at all scales. A broader range of actions are being delivered by a broader range of delivery partners. |

<sup>11</sup> socio-spatial vulnerability combined with the probability of being flooded.

## Priority Areas for Action

To support the delivery of our outcomes we have identified **six priority areas for action** that we will take forward.

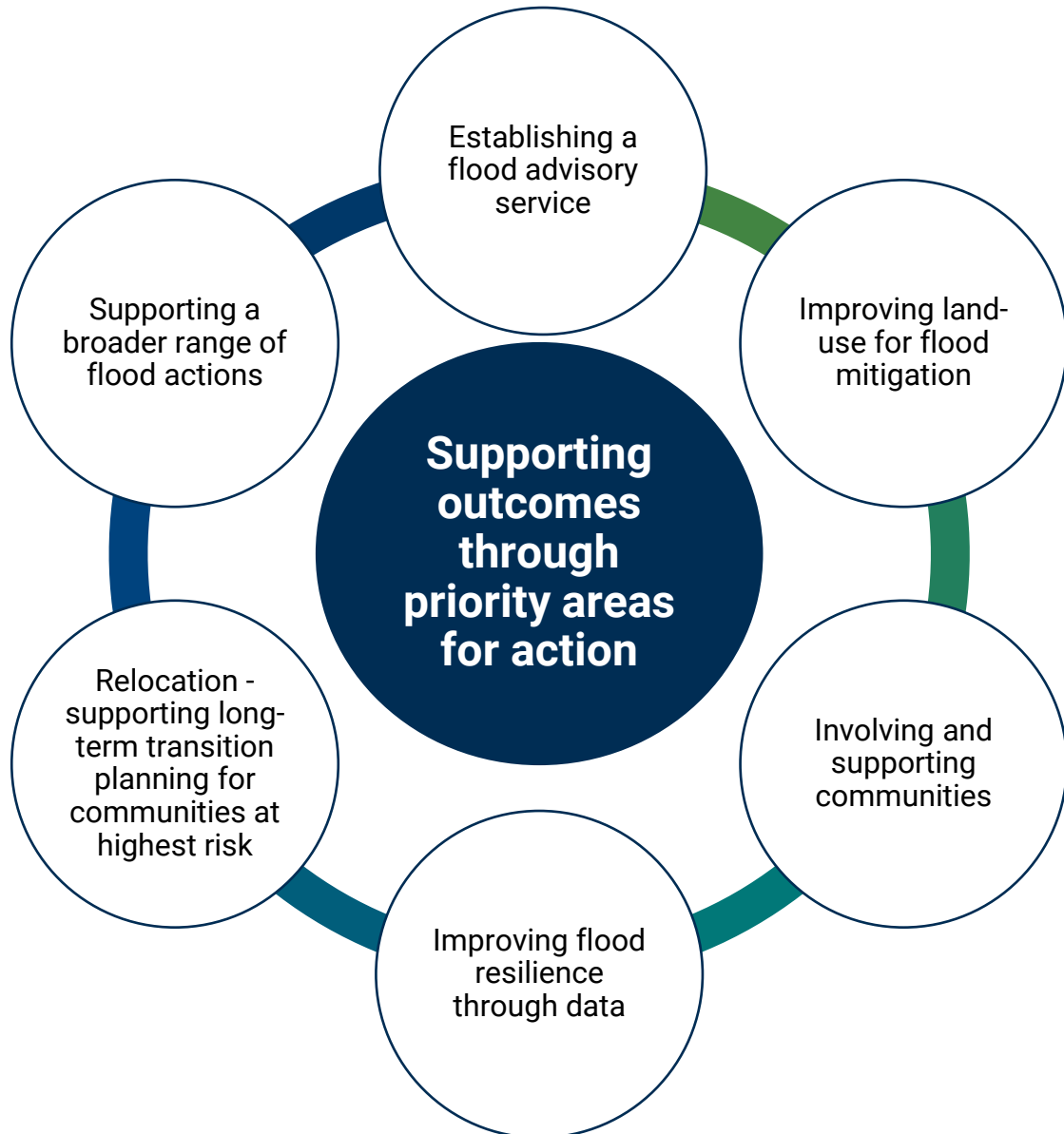


Figure 10: Supporting Outcomes Diagram

## Outcome One: People

### Creating flood resilient places involves our people and communities.

This outcome focuses on how our people and communities can contribute to our flood resilience.

It is our people and communities who suffer most when flooding happens, and for those directly affected, the impacts are often devastating and long-lasting. As well as the immediate impacts to flooded homes and businesses, it can disrupt our lives, livelihoods and impact on our physical and mental health long after the flood event itself. Floods often have impacts on community cohesion too and can have a negative effect on community identity. Communities that have been flooded often refer to a long-lasting heightened state of alert and anxiety when heavy rain is happening or is forecast. In recent years we have heard from some communities that they do not feel involved enough in the design of flood resilience options for their places.

### What's already happening

- Scottish Government promotes community-led action and works to embed community resilience through a number of connected policy areas which enables collaboration between community resilience groups, voluntary sector organisations, Government and statutory responders. Scottish Government has committed up to £5.5 million, in 2024-25, to fund a network of Climate Action Hubs to transition to low carbon, reduce emissions, and improve resilience in the face of ongoing climate change and extreme weather events. The Ready Scotland website ([ready.scot](https://www.ready.scot))<sup>12</sup> and associated digital campaigns also provide a range of advice to individuals and communities to help them to prepare for and respond to weather-related disruption.
- Scottish Government supports Scottish Flood Forum to work with communities and local authorities across Scotland to reduce the impacts of flooding on individuals and communities. They do this by providing immediate support to flooded communities and by establishing a network of community resilience groups in flood risk areas to equip communities to cope with the impacts and threat of flooding.
- Scottish Government supports the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service, a partnership between the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Met Office. The service produces daily forecasts predicting the likelihood and timing of river, coastal and surface water flooding across Scotland up to five days ahead giving organisations, communities and individuals advance warning and time to prepare.

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<sup>12</sup> [Advice for emergencies in Scotland \(ready.scot\)](https://www.ready.scot)

- SEPA’s Floodline service provides live flooding information and advice on how to prepare for or cope with the impacts of flooding 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This includes a flood warning service allowing people time to prepare to take action to reduce the impact of flooding on their homes, businesses and communities.

Informed communities know their places best, so we need to put people at the heart of building their community flood resilience. Around Scotland there are already many initiatives where people are getting involved in contributing to their own or their community’s flood resilience and some examples are set out below.

### Case Study: Tillicoultry Flood Group and partnership working

In January 2008, following days of heavy rain, the River Devon burst its banks and quickly flooded 17 homes and a commercial property in Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire. The impact on residents was devastating, losing their homes and community in a matter of minutes and being relocated to temporary accommodation for up to 9 months until their homes were dried out and reinstated.

In response, Tillicoultry residents formed a Flood Group and worked closely with Clackmannanshire Council and the Scottish Flood Forum to identify flood risks and to identify simple actions to improve their flood resilience. The developed partnership, working with key frontline agencies,



Figure 11: Photo of Tillicoultry flooding in 2020, image provided by Tillicoultry Flood Group



Figure 12: Photo of Tillicoultry flooding, image provided by Tillicoultry Flood Group

secured public funding for demountable flood defences. A significant amount of work has taken place on agreeing how, when and where partners work together and focus efforts where they were most needed. Response planning was based on experience and trial and error, where the approach was refined after actual storm events.

Within a year, a walkway that separates homes from the river was raised by almost two metres and three years later, a pumping station was installed to help manage surface water.

In 2017 the Tillicoultry Flood Group became part of a network of flood groups along the Hillfoots area of Clackmannanshire, supported by the Council. The group worked in partnership with Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland, the Scottish Flood Forum,



and others to produce a Flood Plan for the area that sets out how volunteers would work alongside other agencies to respond to flooding events. This plan was shared with the other Hillfoots groups to provide the basis of their response planning and adapted to suit local conditions. The group meets with frontline partners after each flood event to debrief and identify potential improvements which could be employed during any future events. Furthermore, flood groups across the Hillfoots area (Menstrie, Alva, Tillicoultry, Dollar and Muckhart) meet monthly to discuss good practice, share experiences, and support one another.

## Case Study: Queensland Court and Gardens - delivering multiple benefits for communities



Figure 13: Queensland Gardens Community Park, image provided by Glasgow City Council

An area of underused greenspace in Cardonald, Glasgow has been transformed into a vibrant community park. The project has delivered an accessible, open space for residents - enhanced through an award-winning landscape design complemented by sustainable drainage measures that reduce flood risk. The project was a partnership between Southside Housing Association and Glasgow City Council.

The attractive new space also boasts dedicated toddler and children's play spaces with climbing frames and slides, as well as a bicycle pump track and cycle

storage facilities to encourage active travel. Sustainable drainage measures that mimic nature by slowing down water such as raingardens, basins, and swales, have also been introduced on site to reduce flood risk and increase downstream drainage capacity to support regeneration.

Extensive community engagement has meant that an enhanced open space has been created, which is suited to the community's needs. Access to good quality green space was identified as being of vital importance by those living in the high-rise accommodation. A survey of residents, carried out by Research Resource on behalf of Southside Housing Association, found that 90% of those surveyed now say their neighbourhood is either a 'very good' or 'good place to live' - up from 68% before the park was constructed. The project



Figure 14: Opening of the Queensland Gardens Community Park, image provided by Glasgow City Council

has also delivered health benefits. Compared to a baseline survey from 2020, respondents use of greenspace at Queensland Court and Gardens has increased from 35% to 64% - with 30% now saying they go outdoors in their local area for fresh air 4-7 times a week, compared with only 10% previously.

## Case Study: Monitoring Moray's Coastline and community volunteer research



Figure 15: The Moray Coastline, image provided by Moray Council

Public participation in scientific research is being promoted through the creation a network of photographic monitoring points along the Moray coastline. These points will allow the community to upload photographs of coastal change from the same viewpoint and upload them to the CoastSnap App. This information will be used to inform Moray Council's Coastal Adaptation Plans and monitor change.

Communities are being encouraged to engage in the Monitoring Moray's Coastline project and improve their own knowledge and understanding of how storm events are impacting on the coastline. It is anticipated the project will help raise awareness through public participation in data collection and monitoring.

The project will allow active monitoring of the indicative rate of change of the coastline, based on recording information from the same point. Using photographs will assist in predicting of the rate of change at a given point along the coastline.

The People Actions in this strategy will build on this. Our aim is to work with partners to explore how people and communities can be sufficiently informed and supported to be involved in flood resilience decision making and so contribute to their own flood resilience.

### We will do this by:

- ▶ **Involving and supporting communities:**
  - ▶ Looking at ways to involve people from the very start of the flood resilience process.
  - ▶ Creating a framework for supporting communities in their flood resilience journey.
  - ▶ Encouraging and supporting actions by individuals to improve their own flood resilience and that of their community. For example

supporting communities and individual householders where appropriate to take small actions to lessen the impacts of floods such as starting up a community flood resilience group or installing property level flood resilience measures.

- ▶ Providing communities with a better understanding of their current and future exposure to flooding and coastal erosion, what this means for those directly impacted, and for the wider community, and the options they may have for improving their resilience through time.
- ▶ Improving community involvement and input to decisions relating to their flood resilience. In particular improving involvement at the options and design stage of flood protection schemes, but also having input to decisions like where new homes could be built so they were not exposed to flooding, or how surface water may be managed through blue and green infrastructure in their community.
- ▶ Exploring how existing mechanisms can be used to support this, such as existing community engagement and consultation processes of the planning system, Local Place Plans, and tools and resources such as the Place Standard with a Climate Lens and the National Standards for Community Engagement.
- ▶ Providing information on current and future flood exposure that can help people make choices when buying or renting their home.
- ▶ Drawing together existing resources to support community flood resilience journeys. This could include combining the resources already provided by Scottish Government's Resilient Communities Team with SEPA data, Scottish Flood Forum resources, local information and experiences of communities that have successfully set up flood resilience groups.

## Outcome Two: Places

### Land management and placemaking decisions follow good practice for flood resilience.

This outcome focuses on how our places can contribute to our flood resilience. Reaching a sustainable level of flood resilience for communities at risk from flooding or coastal change will allow them to continue to thrive and to support sustainable economic activity. Achieving this will require significant changes to their places over the longer term.

### What's already happening

- Adapting to climate change is at the heart of the Scottish Government's mission to improve the wellbeing of people living in Scotland, now and in the future. This includes considering how all our activities can be adapted to make a positive contribution to our climate resilience.
- We are witnessing changes to our urban and rural landscapes reflecting the role that land and our land based activities have in helping us address the climate and nature crises. Land use and planning policy is being strengthened to ensure we are adapting to climate change and not adding to the climate challenge for future generations.
- This Strategy is a key component of The Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 (SNAP3) helping to deliver SNAP3 objectives on nature based solutions, community resilience and development planning.
- Scotland's Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) supports flood resilience for our places through Policy 10 on protecting coastal communities and assets and support resilience to the impacts of climate change, Policy 20 on protecting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure and their networks and Policy 22 on strengthening flood resilience.
- Scotland's National Marine Plan supports flood resilience for our places through General Policy 8 on coastal processes and flooding. It sets out considerations for location, design and potential impacts of coastal infrastructure or developments, and the need to use best available data and evidence, to guide decision-making. The Plan also reiterates the need for alignment across Regional Marine Plans and terrestrial Development Plans to build coastal resilience for the inshore regions.
- The Place Standard with a Climate Lens supports flood resilient places. It has been developed to help people understand how climate change might play out in a local area and support them to design their future place with climate in mind.
- Through our Agricultural Reform Programme, we are considering how farmers can be supported to make changes to handle extremes in water

availability; for example, through improving soil management practices and planting trees.

- We will continue to work with stakeholders to make the most of existing financial support for farmers to adapt for the good of the farm itself, and the wider public good, as well as exploring opportunities offered by the Agricultural Reform Programme.
- Scottish Government's ambition is to expand woodland cover to 21% of Scotland by 2032 and supports tree planting through the Forestry Grant Scheme. This support is only provided where UK Forestry Standard requirements are met, which includes forest design and management guidance to reduce flood risk. The Forestry Grant Scheme offers enhanced payment rates for targeted areas where riparian woodlands can have multiple benefits, including flood management.
- The Scottish Government has committed £250 million over 10 years to restore 250,000 hectares of degraded peatlands by 2030. Peatlands in good condition provide many benefits: capturing and storing carbon, supporting nature, reducing risks of flooding and wildfires, and improving water quality.

The examples below showcase some of the changes we are seeing in our urban and rural landscapes that are contributing to flood resilient places and highlight the importance of SEPA's flood forecasting and warning service in preparing for and responding to floods.

### **Case Study: Eddleston Water case study.**

The Eddleston Water project is a unique long-term study investigating the effectiveness of natural flood management (NFM) techniques and habitat restoration measures at a catchment scale. A series of measures have been introduced which enhance flood resilience through the restoration of natural processes that slow water flows and increase the amount of water stored in the landscape.



Figure 16: The Eddleston Water, image provided by the University of Dundee

Working closely with 22 landowners, a wide range of NFM measures were implemented across the 69km<sup>2</sup> catchment. This includes planting more than 330,000 native trees in the headwaters and along the riverbanks; placement of 115 engineered log-structures to slow the flow; creation of 38 temporary flood storage ponds; and re-meandering 3.5km of historically straightened river channels reconnecting it with the floodplain.

Underpinned by extensive activities designed to collect data and provide hydrological information, using both observed and recorded data, the findings suggest that NFM effectiveness works well in small catchments and at lower levels of flood intensity.

Cost-benefit analysis was carried out to evaluate the efficiency and desirability of such NFM projects. The findings suggest NFM can provide good value for money and be implemented alongside other structural flood protection measures. In this instance, they delivered a minimum of £950k present value (PV) from flood damages avoided downstream; a figure that can be doubled to account for other damages and recovery costs, and an additional £4.4million PV from biodiversity, carbon management, water quality, recreation and other benefits.

### **Case Study: Croftfoot Primary School SuDS retrofits**

Retrofit sustainable drainage measures have been introduced into a school playground at Croftfoot Primary School in Glasgow, managing flows which were previously directed to the sewer network. As well as managing flood risk, the wider surface water management measures have also delivered benefits to local communities through the creation of amenity space and improved biodiversity. A swale has been formed at the school to collect runoff from the playground area, and new drainage introduced to gather runoff from roof downpipes, all of which is conveyed to below a new multi-use games area (MUGA). The MUGA has a permeable surface and storage below it to attenuate the surface water runoff, prior to discharge to the Spittal Burn culvert on Croftpark Avenue. By diverting rainwater from the combined sewer, the risk of sewer flooding in the lower catchment is reduced and drainage capacity is created to facilitate regeneration.

An outdoor amphitheatre area has also been formed, a feature which combines sustainable drainage with flexible play space. This brings together an outdoor learning area for pupils with a storage area which provides additional capacity during



Figure 17: Croftfoot Primary Amphitheatre, image provided by Glasgow City Council

large storms when the storage under the MUGA is exceeded. Once the storm event passes, the amphitheatre drains down by gravity over the course of a number of hours.

The project has provided the opportunity for Glasgow City Council to engage with local students and to create a fun learning experience, whilst ensuring they understand the multiple benefits of these innovative solutions.

## Case Study: Flood forecasting and warning

SEPA is the Flood Forecasting and Warning Authority in Scotland. Working in partnership with the Met Office, SEPA produces a range of products to give advanced notice of flooding impacts across Scotland. The Met Office and SEPA jointly produce a daily Flood Guidance Statement, giving responder organisations an early heads up to potential flooding up to 5 days ahead.

Since February 2023 a public version of the daily guidance is shared publicly on SEPA website. The Scottish Flood Forecast provides a 3-day flooding outlook to give an early heads up of potential flooding to communities. This allows everyone to see what is forecast and plan ahead.

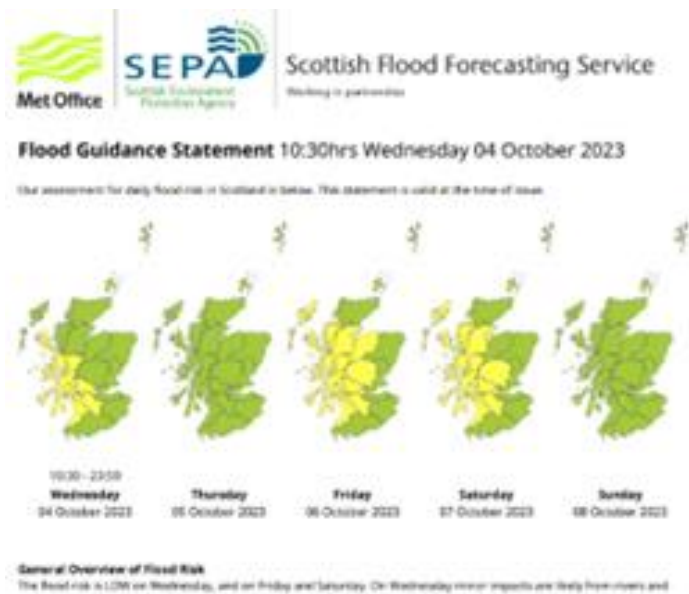


Figure 18: Scottish Flood Forecasting Service website - Flood Guidance Statement

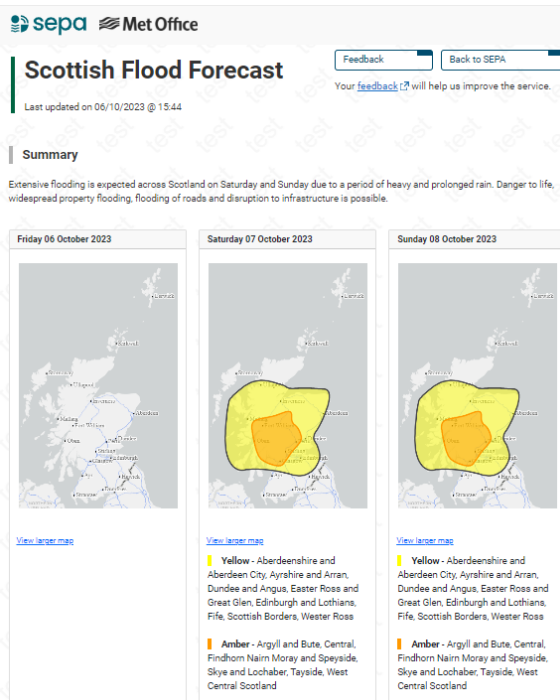


Figure 19: Scottish Flood Forecast website - Summary

People who are registered with SEPA's Floodline service can receive Regional Flood Alerts, indicating that flooding is possible, up to 48 hours in advance of potential impacts. Notifications of Alerts can be received by telephone, SMS and email.

Local Flood Warnings cover smaller, more targeted areas and warn that flooding is expected. The messages provide information about the local extent of flooding (e.g. which street may be affected) and timing. They give communities time to prepare and take action, such as avoiding travel and putting in place property level protection. Many communities have developed resilience groups who use this information and have active groups on social media to share local information.

Our response to the climate emergency is already driving land management and placemaking decisions that are changing the look and feel of our urban and rural landscapes. However, we need to ensure we are taking all available opportunities to

manage our land to reduce the impacts of flooding and coastal change. We must use land assets and natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding as well as avoiding development and redevelopment in areas that flood as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding and coastal change as required by our National Planning Framework (NPF4) and National Marine Plan. By following the Place Principle supported by Scottish Government we will seek to ensure that flooding is routinely taken into account in the design of our places<sup>13</sup>.

We must also take the opportunities presented by other initiatives to deliver multiple benefits for our places. For example, making space for water<sup>14</sup> and introducing blue and green infrastructure into our towns and cities brings improvements including flood resilience, biodiversity, water resource management and well-being. Peatland restoration, river restoration and biodiversity improvement projects can contribute to flood resilience too if appropriately designed.

### **The role of nature and blue-green infrastructure in flood resilience**

The Scottish National Adaptation Plan 3 (SNAP3) and The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 set out the importance of healthy, resilient, biodiverse ecosystems in helping us adapt to the changing climate. This is because nature provides many regulating services including those that can help us manage floods.

Nature-based solutions as such have a central role in creating flood resilient places across Scotland. 'Blue-green infrastructure' is a subset of nature-based solutions. It is the green and blue features of natural and built environments and the connections between them that provide benefits for people and the natural environment.

- Green features include parks, woodlands, trees, play spaces, allotments, community growing spaces, outdoor sports facilities, churchyards and cemeteries, swales, hedges, verges, green roofs and gardens.
- Blue features include oceans, rivers, lochs, burns, wetlands, floodplains, canals, ponds, porous paving and sustainable urban drainage systems.
- Paths, cycleways and blue corridors such as rivers or canal paths provide connections through and between areas of green infrastructure.

98% of responders to the Flood Resilience Strategy consultation agree that there is a need to make space for water to improve the flood resilience of our villages, towns and cities. A majority of responders also supported increased use of sustainable

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<sup>13</sup> [The Place Principle](#) requests that:

All those responsible for providing services and looking after assets in a place need to work and plan together, and with local communities, to improve the lives of people, support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and create more successful places.

<sup>14</sup> Making space for water in this context is about recognising where water will naturally go and working with this to increase our flood resilience. This includes making space on low-lying coastlines, river corridors, floodplains and urban flowpaths and ensuring that activities in these areas do not expose us to flood impacts nor impede the flow of water.



drainage systems and blue and green drainage networks to reduce the impacts of surface water flooding.

Scottish Government and our partners will take opportunities to improve flood resilience through land-use planning, land management activities and the design of our urban fabric and infrastructure.

This will include:

- Avoiding development and redevelopment in areas at flood risk as a first principle.
- Ensuring flood resilience is considered as part of our urban fabric and infrastructure design.
- Making space for water in rural and urban areas.
- Increasing blue and green infrastructure in urban areas.
- Increasing natural flood management where beneficial to do so.
- Promoting good practice for water management and flood resilience to land managers and land users including the agriculture and forestry sector.
- Increasing peatland restoration.

The Places Actions in this strategy will build on this. Our aim is to work with partners to explore how our rural and urban places can contribute to our flood resilience.

## **We will do this by:**

- ▶ **Improving land use for flood mitigation:**
  - ▶ Developing our understanding of how our urban and rural landscapes can be adapted to increase our flood resilience. For example: how we can make more use of our natural capital such as peatland and forestry to help mitigate flooding impacts and how space can be made in urban areas for more blue and green infrastructure to manage rainfall.
  - ▶ Avoiding development and redevelopment in areas at flood risk as a first principle.
  - ▶ Supporting new development and redevelopment where it contributes to the flood resilience of our places.
  - ▶ Seeking new delivery partners whose activities can contribute to our flood resilience.
  - ▶ Seeking urban and rural land-use opportunities to improve our flood resilience.
  - ▶ Developing policy for rainwater drainage networks. Scottish Government is developing policy to improve the management of rainwater in urban areas through strategic drainage networks designed for now and our future climate.
  - ▶ Investigating how mechanisms such as the Agricultural Reform Programme could contribute to Scotland's flood resilience and coastal change adaptation. For example, by supporting farmers and land

managers to optimise the natural hydrological and hydraulic services provided by land, river networks and coastal zones.

- ▶ **Supporting long-term transition planning for our most exposed communities:**
  - ▶ Supporting those communities where it may not be possible to maintain a level of flood resilience indefinitely with long-term transition planning.
  - ▶ Exploring how coastal storm damage could be better forecast and warned for.
  - ▶ Identifying the most efficient and effective way to establish a national coastal monitoring programme to ensure that up to date information on coastal change is collected, analysed and made available.

90% of responders to the Flood Resilience Strategy public consultation agreed that consideration should be given to exploring how communities can be supported to plan for managed retreat from areas with the highest flood exposure where other options were not feasible.

## Outcome Three: Processes

**Flood resilience is blended into our places at all scales; a broader range of actions are being delivered by a broader range of delivery partners.**

This outcome focuses on how our processes and how we work together can contribute to our flood resilience.

Creating flood resilient places will require improvements to existing processes, introducing new ways of working and seeking innovative approaches. It will need involvement from a wider range of partners and a new level of cross-sector collaboration to ensure we take all available opportunities to improve our flood resilience. It will also require exploration of new funding models, including how public and private finance can come together to create flood resilient places.

We want to ensure that the processes that are in place to improve flood resilience make the best use of resources we have available and where possible deliver multiple benefits for places and communities. We also want to make sure that everyone involved in flooding in Scotland has access to the information and support that they need to contribute.

### What's already happening

- We are witnessing an increase in collaboration on projects that can deliver multiple benefits for places that include components to increase flood resilience.
- Scottish Government is working across policy areas to understand where there are joint opportunities to deliver multiple benefits to help address the net zero, climate adaptation and nature crisis challenges. This includes looking at how flood resilience can be improved by taking a place-based approach and integrating flood resilience measures in development planning and management, peatland restoration, forestry management and agriculture.
- Scottish Government is developing policy for the future of the water industry in Scotland in response to the climate emergency. This includes exploring how we can bring together partners to improve the drainage of rainwater in our urban areas, provide more resilience to the increasing frequency of intense storm events and reduce flooding and environmental impacts.
- Scottish Water is working with partners across Scotland to improve drainage in our urban areas, to remove or reduce rainwater entering the sewer system to reduce sewer and surface water flood risk and reduce the impact of sewer spills to the environment. Examples of some of these collaborations are set out in this section.
- Property Flood Resilience actions focus on individual properties as opposed to wider resilience actions which benefit a larger number of properties. It is estimated that 81,000 properties in Scotland could specifically benefit from

some sort of property flood resilience measures<sup>15</sup>. Several local authorities are looking at supporting property flood resilience measures for householders in areas not covered by flood protection schemes. Property flood resilience measures can be very effective for low-level flooding and surface water flooding. For example Scottish Borders Council offers residents access to a discount scheme for flood protection products, Fife Council has a grants scheme and West Lothian Council is providing property flood resilience measures for properties at risk in Broxburn.

- Scottish Government is working with COSLA to understand the lessons learned from delivering cycle one Flood Protection Schemes<sup>16</sup>. These lessons are being used to develop an improved governance model for cycle two schemes to ensure that resources are best used to deliver effective resilience actions for communities. This same group is also considering reform to the funding of flood resilience actions so that the most appropriate flood resilience actions for different local communities can be supported.
- Scottish Government is developing a Flood Recovery Framework to provide greater clarity and coherence around flood recovery responsibilities and support to recover from flooding. Given the increase in extreme weather events it will also set out the terms under which the Scottish Government will provide additional financial support to help communities and businesses return to normal or adapt to a more sustainable arrangement following a flooding event.
- A number of multi-organisational collaborations designed to improve local flood resilience and benefit communities are already underway across Scotland. These include the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership which is transforming how the city region thinks about and manages rainfall to end uncontrolled flooding and improve water quality. It brings together local authorities, Scottish Water, SEPA and other partners to do this.

The two examples on the following pages highlight where new types of approaches are contributing to flood resilience.

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<sup>15</sup> [Property flood resilience - Scottish baseline study | ClimateXChange](#)

<sup>16</sup> The cycle one flood protection schemes are those included in the 2015-2021 Flood Risk Management Plans. Cycle two runs from 2022-2028.

## Case Study: Water Resilient Dundee

The Water Resilient Dundee (WRD) partnership aims to jointly plan and sustainably manage rainwater in the City of Dundee to help respond to climate change now and for future generations. Scottish Water and Dundee City Council (DCC) recognise the need to develop new ways to manage intense rainfall and stormwater flooding to create future-proofed, flood-resilient communities.

The partnership builds on the collaborative work undertaken as part of the Tayside Integrated Catchment Study (ICS) and is in the process of developing an overall drainage strategy for the city, as well as more detailed community-based strategies and projects.

A project in Craigie Street is an example of where a community-led design project has transformed the area, providing environmental enhancements, which include the installation of a pocket park which features raingardens and tree planter to manage surface water runoff, as well as street furniture and a mural. Previously the area was drained by a traditional combined sewer network. The new features collect and store surface water before entering the sewers at a slower rate.

The [Stobswell Forum](#) community group partnered with [Sustrans Scotland](#), [Dundee City Council](#) and [Scottish Water](#), to deliver these improvements within an urbanised



Figure 21: Craigie Street pocket park, image from Sustrans



Figure 20: Craigie Street pocket park, image from Sustrans

area. Raingardens have also been installed on both Balmore Street and Arthurstone Terrace. Such projects demonstrate that empowering communities can not only help deliver flood resilience but can also provide a safe environment, where people are proud to live.

The Douglas project is also an example of a where ongoing efforts to improve local infrastructure and enhance public open spaces has been integrated with flood resilient

design. Douglas Community Spaces Group (SCIO SC043807) negotiated a 25-year lease for the site of a former primary school with the aim of creating a Community Park and growing space. After extensive consultation, funding from The Big Lottery (Our Place Fund), and in partnership with other organisations.

Completed in the summer of 2022, Douglas Community Park is a unique landscaped space which offers a variety of activities for the community, and where surface water runoff is stored in a series of basins and swales which are integrated into the landscape.

The long-term vision is that the success of the park will inspire other projects which will improve green spaces in the Douglas area by raising local aspirations, knowledge, skills, support, and resources.

### Case Study: Climate Ready Edinburgh

The Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan is the city’s second adaptation plan. The plan has been developed by the Adaptation and Nature Partnership, which includes: The City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Water, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Edinburgh World Heritage, Historic Environment Scotland, NHS Lothian, NatureScot, Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership, University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Napier University, Edinburgh College and Sniffer.

The plan sets out actions the partnership has agreed are essential if we are to improve flood resilience and address the risks and impacts of a changing climate. Adaptation is central to the plan, with actions being progressed in ways that are fair, equitable and beneficial to people, communities and businesses, and helping to deliver a nature positive city. Nine priority themes and thirty-one objectives were identified, each having a set of actions for delivery between now and 2030. Objectives include delivering a long-term sustainable approach to water

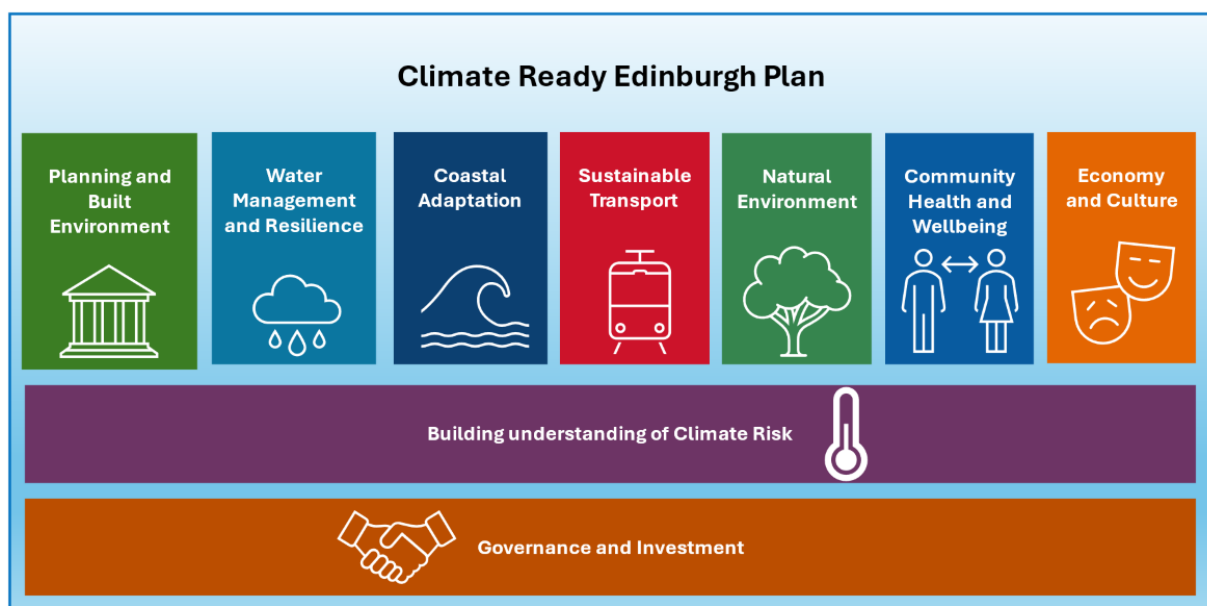


Figure 22: The Climate Ready Edinburgh Priority Themes, image provided by City of Edinburgh Council

management across Edinburgh. The partnership has agreed to work to reduce flooding and deal with drought in the city through a co-ordinated approach to water management, helping to create well-managed water resilient places.

The Processes Actions in this strategy will build on this. Our aim is to work with partners to develop our processes to improve our flood resilience.

## **We will do this by:**

### ▶ **Setting up a Flood Advisory Service for Scotland**

One of the strongest messages to come from the stakeholder engagement sessions is that there is a need for a nationally coordinated service that supports delivery partners to take forward a broader range of flood resilience measures and to bring more consistency, efficiency and value into how large value flood actions like flood protection schemes are procured, designed and delivered. Such a service would also enable the sharing of advice, knowledge, skills and best practice between delivery partners.

- ▶ This service will provide support and advice on building flood resilience to delivery partners and communities.
- ▶ It will provide the governance framework and gateway process for progressing high value flood actions such as flood protection schemes.
- ▶ **Providing support for a broader range of flood actions (including property level flood resilience):**
  - ▶ We will review flooding budgets to assess how a proportion of flood funding can be directed to support a broader range of flood actions including smaller flood protection schemes and property level flood resilience where the evidence suggests they can provide a positive contribution to improving flood resilience.
  - ▶ We will seek new flood resilience partners across the public and private sector to better influence decisions where positive impacts for flood resilience can be achieved.
  - ▶ We will seek to influence policy across sectors who can contribute to creating flood resilient places.
  - ▶ We will explore how public and private finance can contribute to creating flood resilient places.
- ▶ **Improving flood resilience through data:**
  - ▶ We will work with partners to review how we can improve our presentation and use of data to drive flood resilient activity.
  - ▶ We will use data to raise community awareness of current and future flood exposure to inform decision making and support communities on their climate adaptation journeys.
  - ▶ We will develop new datasets to improve decision making.

## **Strategy Implementation**

Realising the Flood Resilience Strategy vision will depend on establishing a new level of cross-sector collaboration.

To ensure that our people and places are prepared for increased flooding through to 2045 and beyond it is essential that we lay solid foundations at the outset, building on lessons learned and widening our actions into new areas.

The next stage will be to develop an implementation plan with partners that sets out how we will deliver the actions and move towards our Vision and our People, Places and Processes outcomes.

We will take forward for the six priority action areas starting with the establishment of the Flood Advisory Service. This service will be the cornerstone of the flood resilient places approach.

We will continue the close engagement with stakeholders which we have undertaken in developing this strategy.



## Acknowledgements

Developing Scotland's first Flood Resilience Strategy has been a significant and collective effort and we are grateful for the advice, expertise and insight received from all contributors.

The Strategy has been informed by what we have heard from stakeholders and the public through our engagement sessions organised by Sniffer, ClimateXChange and Scottish Flood Forum and through the public consultation.

A total of 198 responses to the public consultation was received, with 87 from groups or organisations and 111 from individual members of the public. The consultation analysis and production of the summary document was completed by Craigforth Social Research.

The Flood Resilience Strategy Programme Board and the Strategic Leads Group have shared their knowledge and advice throughout the process and our thanks go to the following organisations who have contributed through these groups.

- ▶ Architecture and Design Scotland
- ▶ ClimateXChange
- ▶ Consumer Scotland
- ▶ COSLA
- ▶ Heads of Planning Scotland
- ▶ Local authorities
- ▶ NatureScot
- ▶ Scottish Community Development Centre
- ▶ Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- ▶ Scottish Flood Forum
- ▶ Scottish Water
- ▶ Sniffer
- ▶ Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland

Our thanks also go to all those organisations and communities who have supplied case studies for the Strategy showcasing the diversity, initiative and innovation of flood resilience activities around Scotland.

## Glossary

**Adaptation Scotland Programme:** Adaptation Scotland is a programme initiated by the Scottish Government to address the challenges posed by climate change. It focuses on enhancing Scotland's resilience and preparedness for the impacts of a changing climate.

[Home - Adaptation Scotland](#)

**Agricultural Reform Programme:** The programme introducing the new agricultural support framework which will start in 2027.

[The future of agricultural support \(ruralpayments.org\)](#)

**Annual Average Damages (AADs):** Annual average damages (AADs) are the theoretical average economic damages caused by flooding when considered over a very long period of time. It does not mean that level of damage will occur every year: in many years there will be no damages, in some years minor damages and in a few years major damages may occur.

**Biodiversity:** Short for biological diversity. The number and types of plants and animals that exist in a particular area. Biodiversity is central to all of our lives and it is now very widely accepted that biodiversity is in crisis, both globally and in Scotland.

[Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency](#)

**Blue and green infrastructure:** The combination of blue and green infrastructure.

**Blue infrastructure:** Water environment features within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services. Blue features include rivers, lochs, wetlands, canals, other water courses, ponds, coastal and marine areas including beaches, porous paving, sustainable urban drainage systems and raingardens.

**Blue and green drainage networks:** Connected areas of blue and green infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems and open space, that together form an integrated drainage system. These work side-by-side with manmade drainage infrastructure such as roads drainage and sewer systems to improve the drainage of urban areas to reduce flooding.

**Catchment:** The area of land and the water collected in it, especially the collection of rainfall over a natural drainage area. For example, a river catchment is the area of land drained by a river and all its tributaries. The catchment area may include hill slopes and floodplains, lochs, forests, agricultural fields and urban areas.

**Climate Action Hubs:** Climate Action Hubs are supported by Scottish Government and encourage local action which tackles both climate change and nature loss.

[Community-led climate action - Climate change - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

**ClimateXChange:** Scotland's centre of expertise on climate change.

[ClimateXChange | Scotland's centre of expertise on climate change](#)

**Coastal Adaptation Plans:** These plans aim to safeguard coastal communities and assets as climate and coast continue to change. The Scottish Government is supporting local authorities to prepare these plans.

[Dynamic Coast - Coastal Change Adaptation](#)

**CoastSnap:** CoastSnap is a global citizen science project to capture our changing coastlines.

[CoastSnap](#)

**Community Flood Resilience Group(s):** Local groups reflecting the interests of their communities. These differ from area to area, depending on the particular issues faced by communities. Scottish Flood Forum provide help and ongoing support to such groups in flood risk areas.

[Improving Flood Resilience Through Community Action - SFF](#)

**Edinburgh's Water Vision:** The City of Edinburgh Council's long-term and sustainable approach to river, coastal and storm water management across the city and its environs, respecting its unique historic heritage. It involves all stakeholders with the aim of addressing the flooding and water quality risks associated with our changing climate as a result of changes in rainfall and sea level rise.

[Edinburgh's Water Vision – Planning Edinburgh](#)

**Edzell Flood Group:** A local flood action group set up by residents in Edzell in Angus. The group works together as a community to reduce the flooding impacts in Edzell.

**Flood Disadvantage:** A situation when vulnerable neighbourhoods are exposed to flooding. In other words, disadvantage occurs where high social vulnerability to flooding spatially coincides with flood hazard-exposure represented by flood extents.

**Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009:** An Act of the Scottish Parliament to make provision about the assessment and sustainable management of flood risks, including provision for implementing European Parliament and Council Directive 2007/60/EC; to make provision about local authorities' and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's functions in relation to flood risk management; to amend the Reservoirs Act 1975; and for connected purposes.

[Flood Risk Management \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)

**Flood Risk Management Plans:** Flood risk management plans coordinate efforts to reduce flood risk and impacts. The plans set objectives and identify actions that are taken forward by responsible organisations.

[Flood Risk Management Plans | SEPA](#)

**Flooding in Scotland – Who does what?:** The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 allocates clear roles and responsibilities for managing flood risk in Scotland, in which we work in partnership with SEPA, local authorities, Scottish Water and other responsible authorities including the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority and Cairngorms National Park Authority.

**Floodline:** Floodline provides live flooding information and advice on how to prepare for or cope with the impacts of flooding 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[Floodline | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#)

**Floodplain:** The area of land next to a river or at the coast that is covered by water in a flood.

**Flood Guidance Statement:** The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service produces a daily, national flood guidance statement issued to Category 1 and 2 agencies, such as emergency responders, local authorities and other organisations with flooding management duties. Each daily statement gives an assessment of the risk of flooding for the next five days and provides organisations with valuable time to put preparations in place to reduce the impact of flooding.

[Your guide to using the Flood Guidance Statement \(sepa.org.uk\)](#)

**Flood Recovery Framework:** The Scottish Government is developing a Flood Recovery Framework setting out the respective responsibilities for flood recovery caused by extreme weather events. The Framework will set out the terms under which the Scottish Government will make available support for local authorities to help communities and businesses return to normal or adapt to a more sustainable arrangement following a flooding event.

**Forestry Grant Scheme:** The Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) is administered by Scottish Forestry and offers financial support for the creation of new woodland and the sustainable management of existing woodland.

[Scottish Forestry - Forestry Grant Scheme](#)

**Green infrastructure:** Features or spaces within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services.

**Greenspace:** Space, other than agricultural land, which serves or could serve a recreational or an amenity function for the public, or provides aesthetic value to the public including parks, gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments, green corridors like paths, disused railway lines, rivers and canals, derelict, vacant and contaminated land which has the potential to be transformed.

**Integrated Catchment Study:** Integrated Catchment Studies investigate the interaction between sewage networks, surface water drainage networks, watercourses, and, where applicable, the sea.

**Just Transition:** Is how we secure a fairer, greener future for all by working in partnership to deliver fairness and tackle inequality and injustice.

**Large flood protection structures:** Larger flood protection schemes for urban areas are delivered by local authorities under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

An example is the recently completed Stonehaven flood protection scheme.

## [Stonehaven Flood Protection Scheme - Aberdeenshire Council](#)

**Leaky Woody Dams:** Leaky dams (also known as large woody debris dams or leaky barriers) are just one of a range of Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques. Natural flood management involves implementing measures to:

Leaky dams mimic the natural obstruction caused by trees and branches falling into the river. They are used to slow the rate of flow in the river, creating a backing-up effect and releasing water gradually.

**Local Development Plans:** Each Planning Authority has a Local Development Plans (LDP) setting out land use proposals and planning policies intended to guide development and inform planning decisions within their area. The Planning Authorities in Scotland are the 32 local authorities and the two national parks.

**Local Place Plans:** Local Place Plans offer communities the opportunity to develop proposals for their local area, expressing their aspirations and ambitions for future change.

Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, which contains a new right for communities to produce their own plans as part of the new Scottish planning system. Local Place Plans contain the community's proposals for the development and use of land, and provide a new opportunity for communities to feed into the planning system with ideas and proposals.

## [Local Place Plans | Our Place](#)

**Making space for water:** The process of understanding where water will naturally go and considering how we can make space for it. Making space for water is particularly useful in terms of increasing our flood resilience by reducing our exposure to flooding.

**Masterplanning:** Strategic planning for an area proposed to be regenerated or changed in order to meet a perceived challenge or strategic need.

**Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership (MGSDP):** The Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership is a non-statutory, collaborative partnership between public bodies involved in managing surface water, water quality, flood risk, investment planning and economic development in a regulatory, service provision, asset management and/or infrastructure provision capacity along with organisations involved with the operation of the sewerage and drainage network within the metropolitan Glasgow area.

## [Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership \(MGSDP\) - MGSDP](#)

**Multiple benefits:** In the context of flood resilience, multiple benefits refers to the actions we take to make places more flood resilient that also deliver other benefits for communities. For example, natural flood management can improve flood resilience, habitat, biodiversity, increase green space in our towns and cities, and contribute to our health and well-being.

**National Marine Plan:** Scotland's National Marine Plan covers the management of both Scottish inshore waters (out to 12 nautical miles) and offshore waters (12 to 200 nautical miles).

[Scotland's National Marine Plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

**National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4):** National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is our national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out our spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.

[National Planning Framework 4 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

**National Standards for Community Engagement:** The National Standards for Community Engagement are good-practice principles designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement.

[National Standards for Community Engagement | SCDC - We believe communities matter](#)

**Natural flood management (NFM):** Using natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. These measures protect, restore, and mimic the natural functions of catchments, floodplains and the coast to slow and store water and dissipate wave energy.

NFM measures can include soil and land management, river and floodplain management, woodland management, run-off management and coast and estuary management.

**Peatland Restoration:** Peatland restoration is a term describing measures to restore the original form and function of peatlands, or wet peat-rich areas.

Peatland ACTION is a national programme to restore peatlands across Scotland.

It is led and funded by Scottish Government and delivered in partnership with NatureScot, Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Water, and Forestry and Land Scotland.

[Peatland ACTION - What we have achieved | NatureScot](#)

**Place-based approach:** A place-based approach is about understanding the issues, interconnections and relationships in a place and coordinating action and investment to improve the quality of life for that community.

[Place Based Approaches | Our Place](#)

**Place Standard Tool:** The Place Standard tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place.

[The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places. | Our Place](#)

**Place Standard with a Climate Lens:** The Place Standard with a Climate Lens has been developed to help people understand how climate change might play out in a local area and support them to design their future place with climate in mind.

It builds on the core Place Standard tool and is designed to support a joined up, collaborative, and participative approach to climate action within a place.

[New! - Place Standard with a Climate Lens | Our Place](#)

**Placemaking:** The process of creating good quality places that promotes people's health, happiness and wellbeing. It concerns the environment in which we live; the people that inhabit these spaces; and the quality of life that comes from the interaction of people and their surroundings. Placemaking is a collaborative approach involving the design and development of places over time, with people and communities central to the process.

[Placemaking | Our Place](#)

**Property Flood Resilience Measures:** Property Flood Resilience, or PFR, is the term used to describe measures that help to reduce flood risk to people and property. Using PFR enables households and businesses to reduce the damage caused by floods, making the process of recovery and reoccupation easier.

[Supporting documents - Living with flooding: action plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

**Public body:** A formally established organisation that is publicly funded to deliver a public or government service.

**Raingarden:** A garden that lies below the level of its surroundings, designed to absorb rainwater that runs off from a surface such as a patio or roof.

**Ready Scotland:** Ready Scotland is run by Scottish Government. It aims to make Scotland more resilient to emergencies.

[Advice for emergencies in Scotland \(ready.scot\)](#)

**Riparian:** Riparian refers to the area at the edge of a river, or things relating to this area.

**River Restoration:** River restoration is when rivers that have been modified in the past are restored to their natural state. It enhances water quality by reducing pollution and promotes a healthier ecosystem. It also helps mitigate the impact of floods, as restored rivers can better absorb and manage excess water, protecting surrounding areas.

**Run-off:** This refers to water running across a surface before it enters a drain or watercourse. For example, during heavy rainfall more water may fall onto a field than can soak into the soil. The water that can't soak in will run off.

**Scotland's Flood Risk Management Plans:** Are Scotland's route map for increasing community flood resilience. They are key to Scotland's health, wellbeing and economic success, with an estimated 284,000 homes, businesses and services identified as at risk of flooding. The plans are also an important response to the climate emergency, as the number of homes businesses and services at risk of flooding are projected to increase by an estimated 110,000 by the 2080s. SEPA leads Scotland's flood risk management planning process. The plans outline the long-term ambition for increasing flood resilience by setting objectives and identifying actions.

[Flood Risk Management Plans | SEPA](#)

**Scotland's National Planning Framework 4:** National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is Scottish Government's national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.

[Supporting documents - National Planning Framework 4](#)

**Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA):** Scotland's national flood forecasting, flood warning and strategic flood risk management authority.

[Flooding | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#)

**Scottish Flood Forecasting Service:** A strategic partnership between the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Met Office combining hydrological and meteorological information to improve the accuracy of flood forecasts for the whole of Scotland.

The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service produces a daily, national flood guidance statement issued to Category 1 and 2 agencies, such as emergency responders, local authorities and other organisations with flooding management duties. Each daily statement gives an assessment of the risk of flooding for the next five days and provides organisations with valuable time to put preparations in place to reduce the impact of flooding.

[Forecasting flooding | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#)

**Scottish Flood Forum:** The Scottish Flood Forum is an independent organisation which supports individuals and communities at risk from flooding.

[The Scottish Flood Forum - Supporting Flood Risk Communities](#)

**Scottish National Adaptation Plan 3:** Published in September 2024 this sets out the actions that the Scottish Government and partners will take to respond to the impacts of climate change. This Adaptation Plan sets out actions from 2024 to 2029.

[Draft Scottish National Adaptation Plan \(2024-2029\)](#)

**Scottish and Southern Energy Networks Resilient Communities Fund:** Scottish and Southern Energy Networks Resilient Communities Fund's helped communities become more resilient in the face of storms, severe weather and prolonged power interruptions. It ran as part of their Resilient Communities Fund.

[Resilient Communities Fund - SSEN](#)

**Sniffer:** Sniffer is an organisation helping Scotland get ready for the impacts of climate change by raising awareness of climate risks and opportunities and creating catalysts for collaborative action through the Adaptation Scotland Programme.

[Sniffer](#)

**Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS):** Are a natural approach to managing drainage in and around properties and developments. They work by slowing and holding back water that runs off from a site. They help manage and control surface water.

[Sustainable drainage \(susdrain.org\)](#)



**Transport and utility organisations:** This includes road and rail, ports and harbours, electricity, gas and water service providers.

**UK Forestry Standard:** The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) is the technical standard for sustainable forest management in the UK. It sets out the approach of the four governments of the UK, and defines the requirements and provides guidance for foresters on how to practise sustainable forest management in the UK. Sustainable forest management is essential to ensure the supply of good quality fresh water, provide protection from natural hazards such as flooding or soil erosion, and protect aquatic species.

[The UK Forestry Standard - Forest Research](#)

**Water body:** Is a certain, clearly distinguishable part of surface water, such as the sea, a loch, a pond, a wetland, a stream, river or a part of a stream or river.

**Water butt:** A container for storing rainwater which can then be used to water gardens or clean driveways etc.

**Water Resilient Dundee:** The Water Resilient Dundee (WRD) partnership aims to jointly plan and sustainably manage water in the City of Dundee to help the City respond to climate change now and for future generations.

**Watercourse:** A natural or artificial channel through which water flows. This could be a river, stream, canal etc.

## Annex – Impact Assessments

As part of the development of the strategy we have undertaken the required impact assessments (IAs). Below sets out our approach to each of the IAs.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- In Scotland, public bodies and private companies operating in a public character, such as utility companies, are required to assess, consult on, and monitor the likely impacts their plans, programmes and strategies will have on the environment. This process is known as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- A Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) pre-screening was conducted on the Flood Resilience Strategy (FRS) and has been notified on the [SEA pre-screening register](#). The FRS sets the strategic direction for improving flood resilience, with the detailed actions set out in Delivery Plans, which may require SEAs to be conducted.
- A key focus of the FRS will be improving ways of working and communication, meaningfully engaging with communities, and clarifying responsibilities. These changes are not expected to result in environmental consequences.

### Equalities Impact and Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment

- An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) aims to consider how a policy may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways. A policy can cover activities, functions, strategies, programmes, and services or processes.
- The Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) is set out in legislation as Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 and came into force in Scotland from April 2018. The aim of the FSD is to help the public sector to make better policy decisions and deliver fairer outcomes. The duty focuses on socio-economic inequality issues such as low income, low wealth, and area deprivation. The Fairer Scotland Duty applies to ‘decisions of a strategic nature’ – these are the key, high-level choices or plans that the public sector makes.
- A joint EQIA and FSD has been prepared for the FRS. It is not foreseen that the FRS itself will unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristics. However, the delivery of detailed actions set out in Delivery Plans which will underpin the FRS may require EQIA and FSD assessments to ensure that they do not unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristics.

### Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment Business (CRWIA)

- The Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) is used to identify, research, analyse and record the impact of a proposed policy on children’s human rights and wellbeing. CRWIA helps the Scottish Government consider whether it is: advancing the rights of children in Scotland; and protecting and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.
- CRWIA is a Ministerial duty under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

(Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill was first passed by the Scottish Parliament unanimously on 16 March 2021. An amended bill was then passed by the Scottish Parliament on 7 December 2023 which came into force on 16 July 2024. The UNCRC Act requires public authorities to protect children's human rights in their decision-making when delivering functions conferred by Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

- A CRWIA has been conducted for the FRS. It is anticipated that the FRS will have a positive impact on children's rights and wellbeing,

### **Business Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA)**

- A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) looks at the likely costs, benefits, and risks of any proposed primary or secondary legislation. It also covers voluntary regulation, codes of practice, guidance or policy changes that may have an impact on the public, private or third sector.
- With the FRS being a high-level strategy, Delivery Plans will be developed by a range of actors following its publication, setting out the detailed actions and implementation to deliver it. Given the importance of fully understanding business impacts, many actions will be subject to individual BRIAs.
- The Scottish Government undertook an extensive programme of engagement with a range of flood risk management stakeholders and communities over 2023 and 2024 to inform the FRS.
- This included engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders through Sniffer. This included 12 workshops with over 300 participants where businesses could, and did, attend. The workshops were attended by representatives from a range of sectors, including engineering and flood risk management consultancies – Mott Macdonald, Atkins, Sweco, Amey, and those from other sectors – property flood resilience, agriculture, land management, green finance, and architecture. The outputs of these workshops fed into the development of the consultation paper and the three key themes of People, Places and Processes. More details about the workshops can be found on the [Sniffer website](#).
- Third sector engagement was also extensive, including with the Scottish Flood Forum, community flood groups, Scottish Community Development Centre and the Climate Policy Engagement Network (CPEN) which has members from third sector and local government.
- The public consultation ran in 2024 and the results fed into the FRS. A range of organisations and individuals responded to the consultation and more details can be found on the Scottish Government website.
- The FRS will be followed by Delivery Plans that set out actions that partners will take to implement it. The FRS includes a number of recommendations such as the Flooding Advisory Service or a property flood resilience grant scheme which may have an impact on business and regulation, so will require BRIAs to be completed as they are developed further.

## **Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)**

- An Island Community Impact Assessment (ICIA) tests any new policy, strategy or service which is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from the effect on other communities. This became a legal duty in December 2020 under the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.
- The FRS is based around three key themes: people, place, and process. The FRS should not have differential implications for island communities. The themes of people, places and processes are high-level and can be applied in a range of contexts and according to the needs of different communities.
- An ICIA screening has been completed and can be found on the Scottish Government website.