



Working with
Communities

Building Community Flood Resilience in West Sussex

Louise Goldsmith

Leader, West Sussex
County Council

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Once Bitten...

- June 2012 saw exceptional and unseasonal rainfall in West Sussex – 180mm in 12 hours along coast
- Inadequate or neglected drainage systems were overwhelmed
- 780 properties flooded
- Residents unsure where to turn

...Twice shy

- Just cleaning up was not an option

NFF involvement in recovery work led to:

- Establishment of local Flood Action Groups
- Pathfinder Community Flood Project has enabled further Flood Action Group development, support and training
- Groups now joining together into strategic flood risk management partnership
- Applications for support made to WSCC's **Operation Watershed**

Operation Watershed

- WSCC funded £8.25m investment for highway drainage and environmental improvements
- Programme includes £1.25m to support community led drainage projects through its Active Communities Fund

Operation Watershed

- Works include:-
 - developing Surface Water Management Plans in 6 high risk areas;
 - over 100 drainage improvement projects;
 - £220k to increase jetting maintenance programme;
 - £220k to increase ditch maintenance programme.

Money well spent?

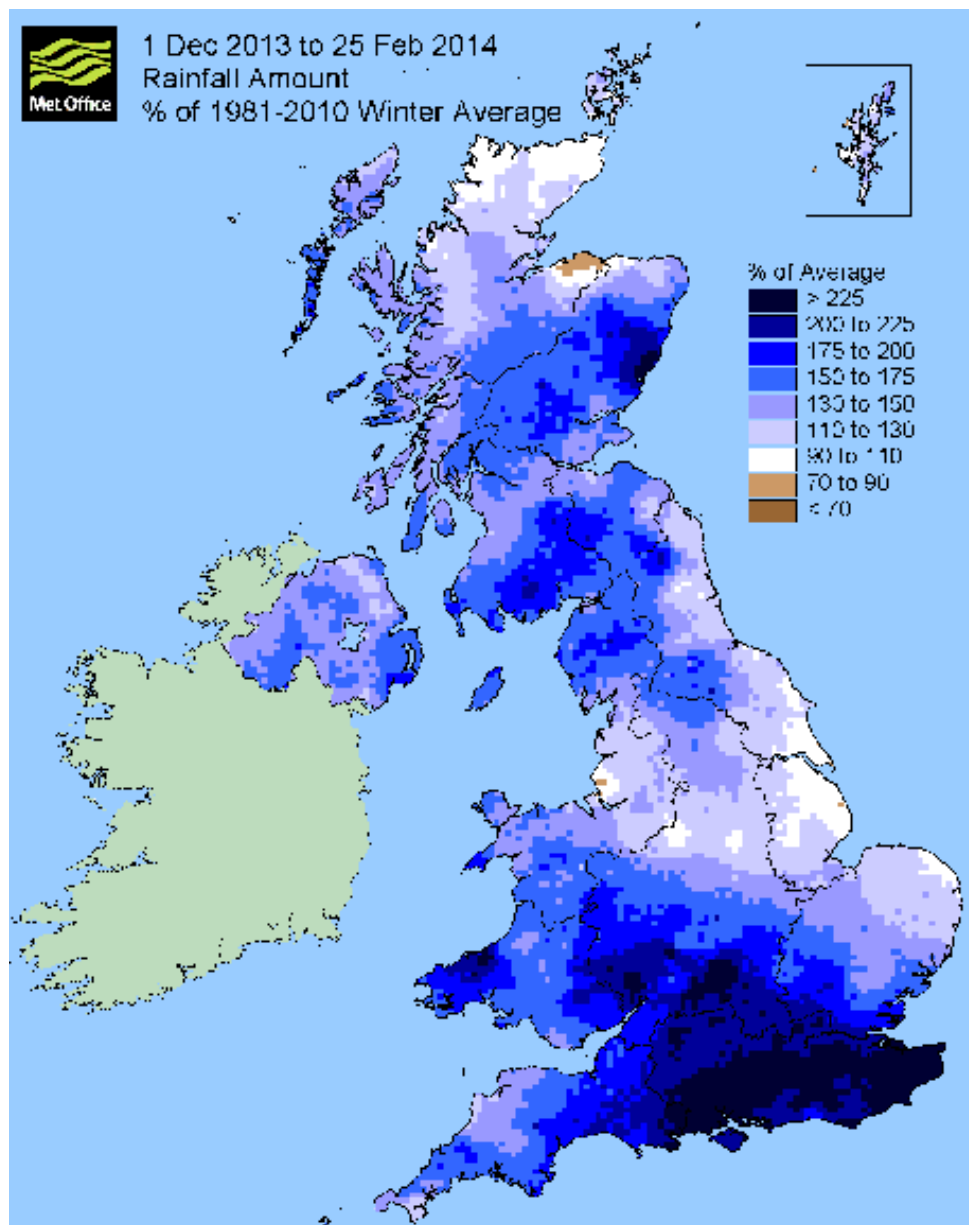
- Prevention better than cure
- Applications to the Active Community Fund supported by local county councillor – promoting local democracy
- Takes advantage of local knowledge
- Helping communities to help themselves
- Funded without increasing council tax

Pathfinder pilot

- 2 year pathfinder pilot project with NFF
- Key is to build in sustainability
- Helping flood action groups to link up
- Successful event organised in Littlehampton on 7th November to help bring groups and agencies together
- NFF Community Resilience Officer has supported 14 Flood Action Groups' funding bids

- £650 per group to support day-to-day operational running costs (i.e. venue hire, stationary, map and leaflet production, newsletters etc.)
- A successful £1,000 bid will be used to pay for training for Flood Action Group members in how to respond to the local community during a flooding event
- Relatively small amounts but vital to support unpaid volunteers who give many hours of commitment

Met Office Graphic
gives idea of the
challenge West
Sussex has faced
this winter



Money well spent?

- Winter 2013-14 the real test
- West Sussex has seen 380% of average January rainfall
- Wettest winter for 200 years
- Completed schemes have performed very well
- Previously flooded properties protected
- Highway damage being quickly repaired
- Communities more prepared, resilient and safe



Blocked and overgrown ditches in West Felpham hampering drainage



Local flood action group assessing scale of the challenge



Water has somewhere to go!



Volunteers can move mountains...of earth!



West Felpham Flood Action Association – rightly proud and a little tired