



## Flood Risk Management Roles & Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for flood risk management are varied and often complicated by systems having multiple owners.

### Sefton Council

Sefton Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the Sefton borough area and its primary purpose is to oversee flood risk from local sources of flooding; defined as flooding from surface water, groundwater or ordinary watercourse sources.

Sefton Council is also the Highway Authority, Local Planning Authority, Coastal Protection Authority and a land owner.

- **Highway Authority** - Sefton Council has the lead responsibility for providing and managing highway drainage and roadside ditches under the Highways Act 1980.
- **Lead Local Flood Authority** - The Council is the Land Drainage Body for consenting and enforcement activities on ordinary watercourses, in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991.
- **Local Planning Authority** – In this capacity, Sefton Council has a duty to prepare and adopt an up-to-date Local Plan for the area and also to determine planning applications in accordance with planning legislation and regulation.
- **Coastal Protection Authority** – Sefton Council has responsibilities for managing flood risk from the sea under the Coast Protection Act 1949.
- **Land Owner** – where watercourses pass through land that is owned by Sefton Council or under the highway (adopted roads and pavements) we are the riparian owners for those sections and responsible for their maintenance.

### Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is an executive, non-departmental public body responsible to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Its principal aims are to protect and improve the environment, and to promote sustainable development.

The Environment Agency has strategic roles for all sources of flooding and coastal erosion in England and Wales. The Environment Agency also provide river flood warnings.

They have the power to undertake work on main rivers to prevent or fix a flooding issue at their discretion, but may choose to charge this cost to the Riparian Owner.

### United Utilities

United Utilities is the water and sewerage undertaker for the Sefton area and holds an appointment and licence under the Water Industry Act 1991, to have regard to local strategies. United Utilities is the responsible risk management authority for the risks of flooding from their water supply, surface, foul or combined sewer systems.

Other risk management functions include planning the future development and maintenance of its services, taking account of flood and coastal erosion risk management plans in their own planning processes, ensuring their assets and systems are resilient to flood and coastal risks and ensuring the required level of service can be maintained in the event of a flood incident. In addition, they should also work with developers and landowners to reduce the input of rainfall into sewers through the use of storage, source control and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

### Riparian owners

Riparian owners are responsible for maintaining the watercourse (piped/culverted or open ditch) running through or adjacent to their land, to allow the free flow of water. Riparian owners can face legal action if the lack of maintenance of their watercourse causes flooding.

Land ownership is sometimes unknown, disputed or difficult to work out. To find out who owns certain parcels of land (and therefore whether or not they have a riparian responsibility), title registers and title plans can be obtained from the Land Registry online services. Often developers will leave a strip of land (this can be several metres wide) behind a property to allow for watercourse maintenance, but the land is normally registered to the adjacent property and as such they are still the riparian owner.

### Canal and Rivers Trust

Operate and manage the canal network in England and Wales. They perform inspections and maintenance of canals, bridges, towpaths etc., and monitor water levels. They will respond to flooding from canal breaches.

### Other Organisations

There are many other organisations, asset owners and land owners who have a role to play in flood risk management and its impacts. This will include transportation agencies, emergency services and developers.