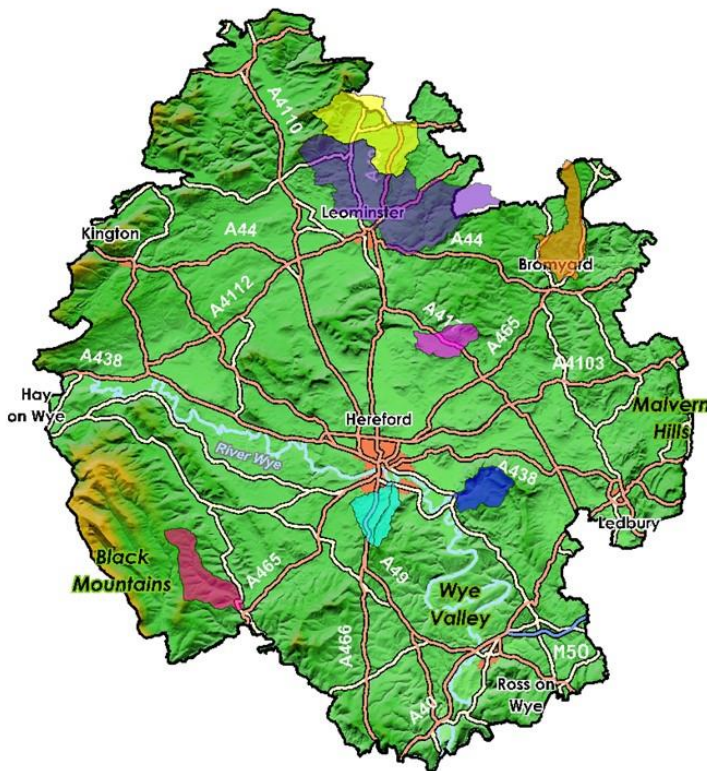


Natural Flood Management Newsletter

Welcome to January's update on the [River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management Project](#). A Defra funded partnership project which is working with landowners, farmers and communities within seven catchment areas, looking at the ways we can work together to reduce flood risk to downstream communities.



Herefordshire NFM Catchments:

- Bodenham & Millcroft Brooks
- Brimfield Brook
- Cheaton, Cogwell & Ridgemoor Brooks
- Dulas Brook
- Norton, Red & Twyford Brooks
- Pentaloe Brook
- Tedstone Brook

RECENT FLOODING



Image kindly provided by R & C Gladwyn

On the weekend of the 26th October 2019, many areas across Herefordshire were affected by flooding, including the NFM project areas. This flood event has highlighted the importance of working together to develop a catchment scale approach to reducing flood risk. We are therefore continuing to work closely with landowners across all of the NFM catchment areas to investigate the NFM opportunities available. If you have any information you would like to share, please get in touch.

Herefordshire Council appreciates what a difficult time this has been for people recently and has launched hardship schemes to residents and businesses whose homes or businesses have been flooded. To find out more about the support available please go to: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods

In December last year, a series of [flood drop in sessions](#) were conducted across the county, with a further session planned in Leominster next week. These sessions give people the opportunity to meet with the council and our partner organisations who are directly involved in managing flood risk and responding during flood events. They are intended to provide information, advice and support to those affected by the recent flooding and to help our county become more flood resilient in the future.

Last Flood Drop in Session:

- **Thursday 16th January 2020, 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm at Leominster Library, 8 Buttercross, Leominster, HR6 8BN.**

NFM MEASURES ARE HELPING TO REDUCE FLOOD RISK IN ALL CATCHMENT AREAS



Thanks to the support of landowners within the catchments, a wide variety of NFM measures have already been implemented through the project, including; 52 leaky dams, 29 ha of soil improvement works (including grassland aeration, grassland sward lifting and arable sub-soiling), 66.84 ha of cover crop, 14.5 ha of under sown maize, 520 m of bank side fencing, 110 m² of attenuation area and 250 m² of sediment trap. With the support of the Woodland Trust, numerous landowners are also planning to plant trees and hedgerows.

This is excellent news as each of these NFM measures is helping to slow the flow of water within the catchments, helping reduce the risk of flooding to downstream communities. Plans to install more NFM measures across all the catchments are continuing to progress and will be in effect shortly.

IN THE NEWS - NATIONAL RADIO INTEREST



Back in May 2019, BBC Radio 4's Farming Today did a feature on the NFM project. Thanks go to arable farmer Matt Duggan and Kate Speke-Adams at the [Wye and Usk Foundation](#) (WUF) for their help with explaining how the leaky dams on Matt's farm are helping to reduce flood risk to downstream communities.

As Kate explained:

"a lot of our work is at the top of catchments, quite a long way from the communities that are then actually affected by flooding. It's a case of starting right at the source where the water is running off, where it's falling as rainfall to try and slow it down and hold as much as possible either in the field, or with leaky dams in the brook, so that when it gets downstream it doesn't reach such a high flood peak that it actually then does damage to people's houses"

As a result of adopting this catchment scale approach, it was decided that the section of the Cheaton brook flowing through Matt's farm would be an ideal location for leaky dams. After site visits from WUF's NFM Catchment Advisor, it was time to build the leaky dams. Matt explained how:

"the guys have fallen some logs across probably the top two thirds of the stream, allowing normal flow to pass under the logs with the idea that when there's peak or higher flow it just helps hold back a quantity of water, to slow down the volume that's going further down."

As Kate explained:

"we have been trying to install small structures that require very little maintenance, they don't really interfere with the land management either side because there are quite a few in series there is much smaller risk of them actually causing a big blockage and having an impact on flooding, so that hopefully if they do reduce funding for this in the future these structures will require very little support"

When asked what he thought of the leaky dams, Matt said:

"Good idea, they are so natural"

UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS OF NFM

NFM can achieve multiple benefits, such as improved water quality, biodiversity and reduced flood risk. Through the project we are trying to gather the evidence that demonstrates these benefits.

Habitat and biodiversity

With the help of [Herefordshire Wildlife Trust](#), we have conducted a detailed habitat and biodiversity study on a section of the Dulas brook which is scheduled to have leaky dams. This study will compare changes in habitat and biodiversity linked to the leaky dams.



Soils

As part of their landowner visits, Catchment Advisors from the [Wye and Usk Foundation](#) and [Severn Rivers Trust](#) have been conducting detailed soil assessments. By testing the soils structure, organic matter content, infiltration rate and worm count the advisors are able to get an understanding of the current condition of the soils. This information is then used to provide tailored advice on how the landowner can improve their soils, both for the benefit of their business and for flood risk reduction.

River and rainfall monitoring

Thanks to the continued support of landowners, we have now installed river and rainfall monitoring stations with each of the catchments. These monitors enable us to assess changes in rivers response to different rainfall events. Data collected through these monitoring stations is publicly available at:

Website: www.timeview2.net

User name: Wye and Lugg NFM Project

Password: slowtheflow



WHAT CAN YOU DO AT HOME?



Source: [Environment Agency](#)

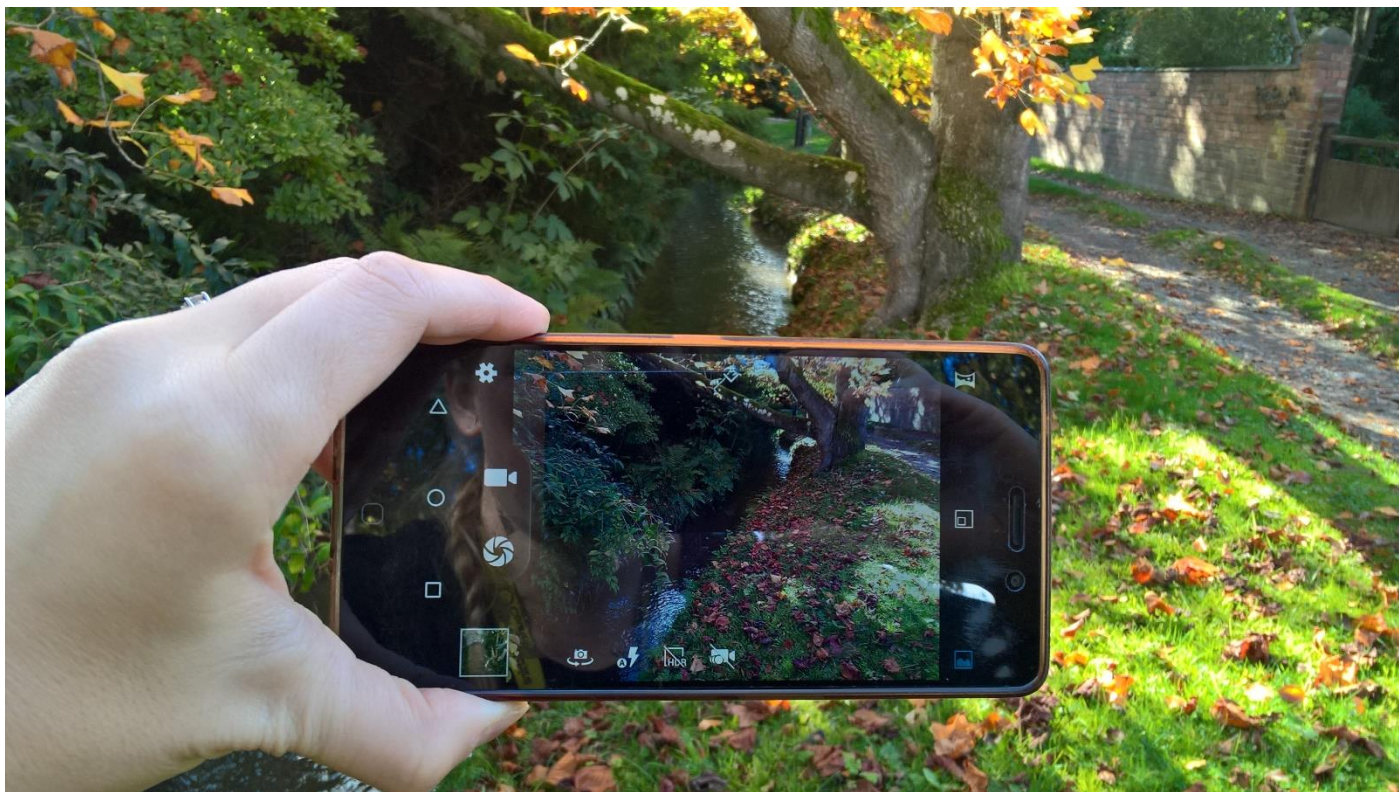
Everyone can make small changes, which collectively can make a significant difference to the volume of water that is being temporarily stored during storm events.

By storing more water at the locations where the rainfall lands, it is possible to reduce the flood peak, which can help reduce the risk of flooding to downstream communities.

Some of the ways you can help out at home include creating rain gardens, green roofs, permeable paving, swales and by making 'mini leaky dams' from your water butts.

More useful information about how you can help slow the flow at home can be found on the Slow the Flow Calderdale website: <http://slowtheflow.net/you-can-slow-the-flow/>

WE NEED YOUR HELP!



Want to join the team helping to reduce flood risk in Herefordshire? If so, there are many ways you can get involved, including:

- **Gathering photographic evidence**

During times of rainfall, we need volunteers to take photographs at key locations, allowing us to compare how the river at that location responds to rainfall events.

Don't worry if you don't live in one of the seven project areas, we are always interested in seeing photographs of flooding within the County. Please send pictures to bethany.lewis@herefordshire.gov.uk

We are working on creating more volunteering opportunities, including:

- Becoming a trained river surveyor ([Modular River Physical \(MoRPh\) surveys](#))
- Helping plant trees

For updates on volunteer opportunities please see: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfmvolunteer



NEED HELP FUNDING THE NFM?

The [NFM Construction Grant Scheme](#) is available to help support landowners and farmers within the project's priority sub-catchments to alter their land and water management practices in order to slow the flow of water and reduce flood risk to downstream communities. To date just over £30,000 of grant funding has been awarded to Herefordshire landowners to help them implement NFM across all seven catchment areas.

For more details about the NFM Construction Grant Scheme and how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfmgrant>

KEY CONTACTS:



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The Wye & Usk Foundation

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Bodenham Brooks, Dulas Brook: Tom Jolly (07887 459456)

Pentaloe Brook, Red, Norton & Twyford Brooks: Abi Crowshaw (07990 068941)



SRT Catchment Advisors:

Brimfield Brook: Hannah Weatherall

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