



**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director Place**

Report to:	<b>Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>29 November 2021</b>
Subject:	<b>Investigations undertaken under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.</b>

**Summary:**

This is a standing item to inform the Committee of the status of all current flood investigations being undertaken in the County.

**Actions Required:**

Members are asked:

1. To view the current list of completed and active flood investigations online at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management/flood-investigations>
2. Inform Democratic Services in advance if they wish to raise any particular sites at the forthcoming Committee meeting.

## **1. Background**

This is a standing item to inform the Committee on the position of all current Section 19 investigations in the County. The Committee will be aware that all such investigations are published on the County Council's website by means of an interactive map, whether the investigation is completed, actively under investigation or awaiting works to mitigate future flooding.

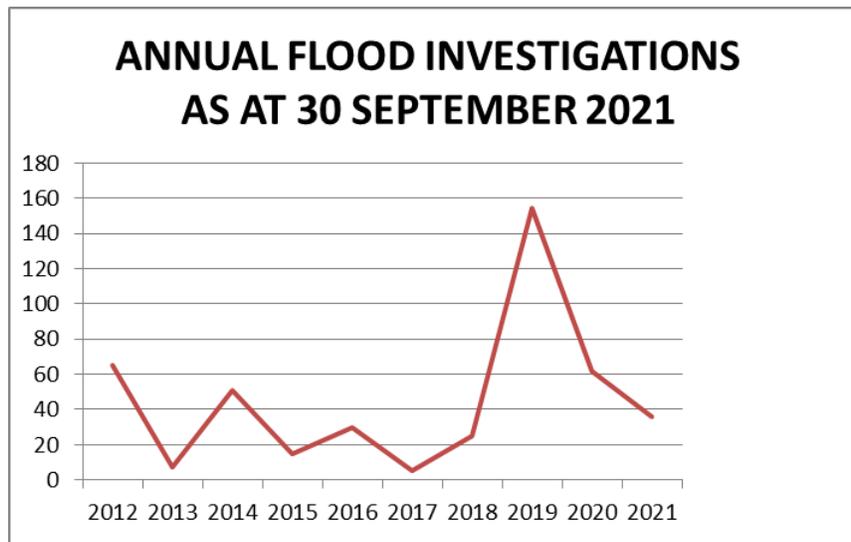
It is a duty under Section 19, Flood & Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA) for the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to carry out investigations to identify which Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) have a flood risk management function in connection with the flood and whether they have exercised, or intend to exercise, that function in response to the flood. To assist with this, Lincolnshire County Council as the LLFA makes recommendations for proportionate works to manage future flood risk, to be delivered by individual RMAs or in partnership as considered appropriate or expedient. Such recommendations are also published although this is over and above the requirements of the F&WMA; all

recommendations for mitigation works and the RMA leading those works are available to view on the interactive mapping. If Members have any site-specific questions, they are requested to contact the Flood Risk Manager in advance of the meeting.

The Committee will recall that at the meeting in September members' attention was drawn to the workload generated by significant and widespread flooding in 2019 and 2020, with the prospect of 2021 also producing a higher-than-average number of flood investigations. The Committee was informed of proactive steps being taken to streamline the investigation process to address not only the current incomplete investigations but also to assist with better managing the process in future whilst maintaining the high quality of investigation reports. Members will be pleased to learn that the benefits of the measures put in place are being realised with an increased turn over and delivery of flood investigations which nonetheless continue to be carried out in a professional manner.

With regards to new flood investigations starting in Quarter 2 of 2021/22 (July to September), there were 13 investigations commenced affecting 16 properties. This was mainly due to a wet conclusion to July although according to the Environment Agency, overall rainfall in the County in July was between 100% and 137% of the long-term average which is considered normal for the time of year. However, despite a relatively dry August and thanks to a period of heavy rain in mid-September, across the region rainfall totals for Quarter 2 were considered to be above normal. Significantly, in the south of the County the Welland and Nene catchments totals for the 12 months to September 2021 were still considered to be exceptionally high.

By way of comparison, Table 1 below illustrates the total number of flood investigations undertaken annually, with the figure for 2021 (36 investigations) correct as at the end of September.



**Table 1: Total annual S.19 flood investigations 2012-2021**

By way of information, the Committee may be interested to learn that although groundwater levels had recessed in line with seasonal trends over the Quarter 2 period, such was the continued impact of the winter 2020/21 recharge of aquifers that it was not until September that groundwater levels in the County were considered to be normal for

the time of year. This will have started to have a positive influence on local flooding issues related to groundwater, such as less infiltration into underground drainage apparatus, a reduction in active springs and less likelihood of water emerging onto the surface in gardens and fields following 'normal' rainfall.

## **2. Conclusion**

Despite the continued pressure on resources as a result of the above-average number of flood investigations being initiated, progress is being made in managing the backlog of investigations while maintaining quality. In this way, appropriate, reasonable and proportionate works to mitigate local flood risk will continue to be promoted to protect our communities and individual properties alike.

## **3. Consultation**

### **a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

## **4. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Paul Brookes, Flood Risk Manager, who can be contacted on 07787836877 or [paul.brookes@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.brookes@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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