



House of Commons

Environment, Food and Rural  
Affairs Committee

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**Future flood  
prevention:  
Government's Response  
to the Committee's  
Second Report of  
Session 2016–17:  
Government Response  
to the Committee's  
Fourth Report**

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**Fifth Special Report of  
Session 2016–17**

*Ordered by the House of Commons  
to be printed 22 February 2017*

**HC 1032**  
Published on 23 February 2017  
by authority of the House of Commons

## The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and associated public bodies.

### Current membership

[Neil Parish MP](#) (*Conservative, Tiverton and Honiton*) (Chair)

[Chris Davies MP](#) (*Conservative, Brecon and Radnorshire*)

[Jim Fitzpatrick MP](#) (*Labour, Poplar and Limehouse*)

[Simon Hart MP](#) (*Conservative, Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire*)

[Kerry McCarthy MP](#) (*Labour, Bristol East*)

[Dr Paul Monaghan MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross*)

[Rebecca Pow MP](#) (*Conservative, Taunton Deane*)

[Ms Margaret Ritchie MP](#) (*Social Democratic and Labour Party, South Down*)

[David Simpson MP](#) (*Democratic Unionist Party, Upper Bann*)

[Angela Smith MP](#) (*Labour, Penistone and Stocksbridge*)

[Rishi Sunak MP](#) (*Conservative, Richmond (Yorks)*)

### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at [www.parliament.uk/efracom](http://www.parliament.uk/efracom) and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Eliot Barrass (Clerk), Sian Woodward (Clerk), Danielle Nash (Second Clerk), Sarah Coe (Senior Committee Specialist), Anwen Rees (Committee Specialist), Caitriona Fleming (Senior Committee Assistant), Henry Ayi-Hyde, (Committee Assistant) and Nick Davies (Media Officer).

### Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5774; the Committee's email address is [efracom@parliament.uk](mailto:efracom@parliament.uk).

## Fifth Special Report

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The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee received and published the Government's response to its recent report on Future flood prevention on 24 January 2017. The Committee requested further information to this response.

The Government's further response to the Report was received by the Committee on 20 February 2017, and is appended below and is titled: Future flood prevention: Government's response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2016–17 in its Fourth Report of Session 2016–17, published on 24 January 2017, as HC 926.

## Appendix: Government Response

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Dear Neil,

I am following up on the Committee's request for further information from Defra regarding flood prevention.

Firstly, you asked for more information on how we are using the government's £2.5 bn flood risk management budget to slow the flow of water across catchments so as to reduce the risk of communities flooding in future.

Our approach is to support both a catchment approach to planning and greater use of natural flood management (NFM) measures alongside hard, engineered defences. In the Autumn Statement, we announced funding of £15m specifically for Natural Flood Management schemes across England and further details on where this money will be spent will be announced in due course.

NFM is being used as part of an integrated engineered solution in several schemes already including Lustrum Beck in Stockton on Tees, Skipton in Yorkshire, Perry Barr and Witten in Birmingham and Medmerry on the south coast.

Further potential schemes that work with natural processes are planned for the Great Stour in East Kent, and Rochdale and Littleport.

Details of the projects of our refreshed investment programme will be made public in the next few months. In addition, we are introducing a new reporting measure on NFM which will enable us to say how many schemes include NFM measures in the government's flood investment capital programme, broadly what measures they are, and how much they cost. Such schemes will be reported within the programme from 2018/19 onwards.

Secondly, you asked for more information on proposals for improving local governance and partnership working at catchment level.

Although we do not agree there is a need for substantial structural change, we are always looking for ways to improve and adapt the way we work to meet current and future needs.

We have recently published the Local Flood Risk Management Action Plan, which contains actions to support Lead Local Flood Authorities in carrying out their responsibilities for managing local flood risk.

In addition, the Environment Agency will be working with interested partners such as Regional Flood Coastal Committees and Internal Drainage Boards to refresh the national flood and coastal erosion management strategy for England. Amongst other things, the revised strategy will set out the authorities involved in flood and coastal erosion risk management and their respective functions. It will also cover how the strategy will contribute towards the achievement of wider environmental objectives.

Dr Therese Coffey MP