

Flood Forecasting Centre: the Flood Outlook is changing

News story

Based on extensive user research, we are refreshing the way we present our monthly flood forecast.



The Flood Outlook provides a flood forecast for the coming month in England and Wales. It is issued twice a month.

Over the past 18 months, we have been working with our users to make our Flood Outlook service more useful.

The result is a redesigned, clearer, and more modern looking product, supported by new training materials.

This work responds to:

Product development

We have based the changes on extensive user and prototype testing. They include:

- revising how we present the flood forecast to support better decision making
- redesigning the front page so you can find the most important information quickly
- reorganising the layout so that complementary information is now grouped together
- presenting the information in a clearer and modern style

- introducing a navigation bar so you can move around the document more easily

The Flood Outlook will continue to be based on a national scale assessment to provide an overview for England and Wales.

User research

The changes respond to our user research findings:

- the current product showing 'low' risk much of the time and the non-committal language does not support decision making
- the monochromatic colour palette and layout makes it difficult to quickly identify the most important information
- a need for a more intuitive presentation of the forecast based on colour codes
- a request for more information in the 6 to 10 day timescale, and on spring tides

They also incorporate feedback from our hydrometeorologists:

- that the requirement for forecasting 'significant impacts' results in a tendency to forecast a 'low risk' too often
- a need to be able to communicate known forecast information that may be useful to users
- decreasing the time steps of the forecast for the last 2 weeks to give a better representation of the accuracy of forecasts at this range

Product launch

The first issue of the refreshed Flood Outlook was on Friday 27 May 2022.

To help you understand the Flood Outlook short training videos are available:

We can also provide webinar training to organisations on request.

Signing up and more information

If you are already signed up for the Flood Outlook, you will continue to receive it as normal.

If you are a planner who needs to make decisions at a timescale of 6 to 30 days and think this product would be useful, contact FFCenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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1. 6 July 2022

Links to Flood Outlook training videos added

2. 7 June 2022

First published.