

# Plan to improve flood and drought resilience in Severn Valley

Climate change is happening now; extreme weather is bringing an increase in flooding and a need to create climate resilient places that can adapt.

To rise to the challenge of flooding along the River Severn, the Environment Agency is seeking ways to better protect up to 3,000 homes and over 1,000 businesses along the length of the River Severn.

Flooding over the last 12 months, where some of the highest ever river levels have been recorded, has highlighted the need for a number of wide ranging solutions that mitigate the extreme weather communities here are beginning to see. Last year the government committed £30 million towards developing such a programme.

The Environment Agency is engaging on a much more holistic approach, working with partners to find interventions that work together to provide better protection against flooding across a wide area.

Environment Agency Area Environment Manager, Adam Lines said:

Climate change is happening now and we're starting to see the real impacts, we need to think differently about how we're going to protect homes, businesses and infrastructure for the coming decades.

We have a real opportunity here to make the Severn Valley more resilient for the future and we want to hear from everyone. We've started discussions with partners and are planning a series of community engagement events. We are asking local authorities, landowners and communities to work alongside us and help to develop the best possible solutions.

The Environment Agency aims to do more than improve protection from flooding. In recent years measures have also had to be put in place to manage the effects of dry weather and water shortages. The aim is to deliver projects that work to conserve water supplies in dry weather as well as providing better protection for communities in wet weather.

The initial phase of the Severn Valley Water Management Scheme considered the possibility of combining a water management scheme with Shropshire Council's plans for the North West Relief Road. The Environment Agency found a number of constraints with this approach, and whilst it remains one of the options, other options are now being developed.

The Environment Agency plans to outline a programme of measures by early 2022, following this they will carry out more detailed investigation to

establish a set of preferred options. These options could include:

- engineered solutions such as the construction of flood walls and embankments
- natural flood risk management measures that slow the flow of water upstream such as tree planting or the creation of leaky dams
- alternative farming and land management practices
- operating reservoirs in a different way; and other storage options across the catchment

The project is in its very early stages and the Environment Agency is committed to engaging with local communities and partners at every stage before any final decisions are made. You can read more at <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/svwms>.

### Notes to editor

- The Environment Agency maintains strategic oversight of flood and coastal erosion risk in England
- The River Severn and its tributaries are a vital source of public water supply for nearly 8 million people and over 100,000 businesses

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## [Budget 2021 – a GAD technical bulletin](#)

News story

In our Budget analysis, we focus on topics on which we advise our clients, such as reforms relating to investment, insurance and pensions.



The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) has analysed the announcements in this week's Budget. We've focused on topics on which we advise our clients, such as reforms relating to investment, insurance and pensions.

## **GAD's analysis**

In our [Budget 2021 technical bulletin](#) we look at areas which have particular resonance for GAD's work. These include:

- government's plans for growth via its Build Back Better programme
- launch of a UK Infrastructure Bank
- environmental objectives in monetary policy and the launch of a 'green gilt'
- tax allowances and thresholds, such as the pensions' Lifetime Allowance

## **Recovery plans**

The government also announced new and extended aspects of its COVID-19 recovery plan such as the Mortgage Guarantee Scheme and the Recovery Loan Scheme.

GAD has supported the government's response to the pandemic. We've advised on various schemes set up to support different areas of the economy. These included the Trade Credit Reinsurance scheme, and the Film and TV Production Restart Scheme both of which are considered in the Budget.

More details are available in the [Budget 2021 technical bulletin](#).

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## **[Jane Harbottle appointed Legal Aid Agency Chief Executive](#)**

News story

Jane Harbottle has been appointed as the permanent Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Agency and Director of Legal Aid Casework.



Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Agency, Jane Harbottle

Jane Harbottle has been appointed as the Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) and Director of Legal Aid Casework, taking the posts on a permanent basis after serving as interim chief executive and director since July 2019.

Antonia Romeo, Permanent Secretary of the [Ministry of Justice \(MoJ\)](#) said:

I am pleased that Jane has been substantively appointed as Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Agency. Jane has provided excellent leadership delivering the LAA's response to COVID-19, working closely with representative bodies and providers of legal aid.

I know that Jane will work closely with colleagues in the Ministry and partners in the sector to ensure we deliver swift access to justice for UK citizens.

LAA Chief Executive, Jane Harbottle said:

It is an honour to lead the Legal Aid Agency's exceptional, talented and passionate teams and I am so proud to be able to continue.

The provision of legal aid matters. Every day through working collaboratively with providers we help people in need.

Jane Harbottle was appointed interim Chief Executive of the [Legal Aid Agency](#) and Director of Legal Aid Casework in July 2019.

Earlier in her career Jane conducted fraud investigations, litigation and debt recovery in the private sector. She joined the Legal Services Commission (the LAA's predecessor organisation) as a contract manager in May 2000.

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# PCA Publishes Star Plan to Implement Investigation Recommendations

News story

Fiona Dickie, the Pubs Code Adjudicator, has today published the Action Plan drawn up by Star Pubs & Bars responding to findings of her investigation into the pub-owning business.



The [detailed plan](#) sets out how and by when Star intends to deal with each of the 8 binding recommendations she made after finding the company had committed 12 breaches of the Pubs Code.

These recommendations set out what Star had to do to make good the harm caused to tenants including carrying out an audit of completed free of tie tenancies to identify any non-compliant stocking terms and offering to change them, or change their impact, without cost to the tenant.

As well as setting out how Star will meet these recommendations, the action plan includes a commitment to review, amend or adjust its processes and procedures as well strengthen its internal checks and balances so the company can demonstrate evidence-based compliance with the Pubs Code.

Star will also establish a Compliance Cabinet within its management system to ensure independent assurance.

Fiona Dickie said:

Star has provided a detailed plan for carrying out my recommendations and I welcome this. I will continue to monitor Star's compliance with them to ensure they are implemented effectively and efficiently.

I am currently engaging with Star on how the company is putting this plan into practice and will provide a further update on

progress in due course.

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## [Life Raft for missing fishing vessel Nicola Faith recovered](#)

News story

Nicola Faith investigation update



The life raft for fishing vessel Nicola Faith which went missing off the coast of Colwyn Bay on 27th January has been recovered. The raft was found off the coast of Kirkcudbrightshire by HM Coastguard and has been positively identified by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch as being from the Nicola Faith. The raft will be transported to the MAIB in Southampton for further investigation and analysis.

The investigation into the causes and circumstances surrounding the vessel's loss is ongoing. The search for the vessel which is being co-ordinated by the MAIB is continuing. MAIB has been working with underwater search experts to cover a wide area including all of the vessel's historic operating area.

The next of kin have been informed of this development.

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