

Hazard Risk in the South East

The county of Kent has a fairly high flood risk, due to this Kent County Council has implemented a flood risk and management strategy. The strategy addresses flooding from surface water, ground water and ordinary Watercourses. The aim of the local strategy is to:

- to coordinate the work of management authorities to improve the understanding of local flood risks
- to ensure we work together to provide effective solutions to local flood risks where possible
- to improve the public's understanding of local flood risk in Kent and how everyone can play a part in reducing them

The strategy looks at where flooding is occurring and then how to reduce it. One of the ways they are doing that is to make some areas of the land flood where there will be less damage e.g. the Tonbridge Flood barrier when closed floods farmland and not the main town. As climate change is constantly occurring the strategy is constantly being reviewed by KCC to ensure that all the objectives are being delivered and are still relevant.

Current flood risks:

- In September 2011 surface flooding was estimated to affect 76,000 properties, of which 60,000 were residential
- Kent has approximately 64,000 properties at risk of river and coastal flooding of which around 46,000 are residential.

River flooding:

- Rivers are split into two main types: main rivers and ordinary Watercourses. The EA manages the main rivers that pose a large threat to areas,

indicating flooding from them causes a lot of damage

- There are 4 catchment flood management plans in Kent, these are: North Kent Rivers, River Medway, Rother and Romney and River Stour.

Coastal flooding:

- There are 4 shoreline management plans that cover the coastline of Kent, these are: Medway Estuary and Swale, Isle of Grain to South Foreland, South Foreland to Beachy Head and Thames Estuary 2100.

Impacts of climate change in the South East:

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Positives</u>	<u>Negatives</u>
<i>Business</i>	- Agriculture and tourism which rely on weather may see an increase in trade, etc	- Increased flooding damages assets, stock and premises - The risk of overheating has been identified as a high risk factor - Increased water scarcity may not be managed properly
<i>Health and Wellbeing</i>	None!	- High flood risk and social vulnerability that already exist by coastlines will increase further. - Strain on healthcare when extreme weather events occur e.g. flooding, heatwaves and storms.
<i>Building and Infrastructure</i>	None!	- 25% of properties in the SE are liable to flooding in the future. - Minor events have already put pressure on infrastructure, so this will increase further.
<i>Agriculture and Forestry</i>	- Opportunities many stem from a longer and warming growing season, allowing us to grow more continental crops. It will also be more suitable for biomass crops such as switch grass.	- Water scarcity is a major threat to agriculture in the SE, as we rely on high levels of irrigation
<i>Natural Environment</i>	- The already high biodiversity will increase providing greater services to us - Models have shown that habitats in the SE have the capacity to cope and adapt with climate change	None!

