

# Anne McIntosh MP

## Shadow Environment Minister

**“Creating the climate for change”**

10<sup>th</sup> November 2009

# Introduction

- Climate change is causing more rainfall in the UK annually.
- As a result flooding incidents are increasing and are likely to increase in the years to come
- Types of Flooding
  - Fluvial and Coastal
  - Sewer Flooding
  - Surface Water and Ground Water Flooding
  - Pluvial
- An example of this is the 2007 Summer Floods

# 2007 Summer Floods

- Severe flooding affected much of the Country during June and July 2007. Areas, The most severe floods occurred across, Yorkshire, the Midlands Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Oxfordshire Berkshire and South Wales.
- 48,000 homes and 7,000 businesses were damaged.
- 13 People died
- Power and water supplies were lost, railway lines and eight motorways as well as many other roads were closed
- Large parts of 5 counties and 4 cities were brought to a standstill
- Costs of the floods, according to the ABI was £3bn
- On the first anniversary of the floods, there were still over 4,000 people who where living in some form of temporary accommodation (shortage of skilled workers, as well as problems caused by a cool, wet winter have slowed down repairs)

# Pickering Floods 2007



# Flooding in Hull 2007



# Flooding in Toll Bar 2007



# Flooding in Tewkesbury 2007



# Flooding in Thirsk 2000



# Flooding in Filey 2007



# Managing Climate Change and Adaptation

- Global temperatures are likely to rise between 1.1 and 6.4°C above the 1990 level by the end of the century. This will result in significant sea level rises and changes in rainfall patterns. (United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC)
- A Need to change the way we live our lives and in particular how we organise our built and rural communities

Sir Michael Pitt recommends that:

- Strong governance will be required to tackle the increased risks of flooding due to the changing climate.
- There is a need for Government policy to prioritise adaptation to CC particularly in relation to flooding.
- Given the predicted increase in the range of future extremes of weather, the Government should give priority to both adaptation and mitigation in its programmes to help society cope with climate change.

# Government Response to Pitt's Flooding Report

## Funding breakdown/ Resource implications

Allocation to:	From Pitt fund (£m)	From other budgets (£m)	To deliver:
<b>Local Authorities</b>	£15m	£12m over 09/10 to 10/11/13	Local authority leadership on flood risk management in the 50 highest priority areas; including surface water management plans, tackling of surface water problems, mapping of drainage assets, and oversight and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) for new housing
<b>Environment Agency and Met Office</b>	£5.0m	£2.7m	A new joint forecasting and warning centre, including the extreme rainfall alert.
<b>Environment Agency</b>	£8.5m	£6.6m	All other recommendations where EA lead, including their new strategic overview of all types of flood risk in England, better modelling, forecasting and mapping for flooding particularly surface water, roll-out of ex-directory flood warnings, reservoir inundation maps, and a national flooding exercise to test the new response arrangements
<b>Met Office</b>	£0.5m	-	Research to make use of new detailed forecasting models for flooding.
<b>Individual property owners</b>	-	£5.0m	New grant scheme to encourage householders to install flood resistance and resilience measures.
<b>Cabinet Office</b>	£0.4m	£0.4m	New team within the Civil Contingencies Secretariat to run a national campaign to improve the resilience of critical national infrastructure
<b>Various organisations</b>	-	£0.56m.	Projects that demonstrate ability to reduce flood risk through working with natural processes, for example through using different types of planting regimes to slow down flood waters.
<b>Others</b>	£10k	£10k	To fund the Risk and Regulatory Advisory Council to consider the communication of flood risk to the public, and separately to fund the Department for Communities and Local Government to conduct research into more efficient ways of drying out homes following flooding.
<b>Contingency</b>	£5.1m	-	To provide a contingency fund in case allocations need to be increased in some areas, and to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to £2 million for an improved flood rescue capability;</li> <li>• Up to £1.25 million to support the production of reservoir emergency plans by Local Resilience Forums.</li> </ul>
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£34.5m</b>	<b>£27.3m</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£61.8m</b>		

# Properties At Risk of Flooding

- **Environment Agency Report “Flooding in England” (June 2009)**
  - One in six homes in England is at risk of flooding.
  - Over 2.4 million properties at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea in England, of which nearly half a million are at significant risk.
  - One million of these are also vulnerable to surface water flooding with a further 2.8 million properties susceptible to surface water flooding alone.
  - 55 per cent living in flood risk areas knew they were at risk and for these three out of five of them had taken some action to prepare for flooding.

# Building in Flood Risk Areas

- The number of major applications granted planning permission against Environment Agency advice rose from 13 in 2006/07 to 16 in 2007/08 (Environment Agency)
- 9 per cent of new dwellings are built in areas of high flood risk (DCLG, *Land Use Change Statistics*, May 2009).
- Planning guidance requires developers to submit a Flood Risk Assessment but around two thirds of all Environment Agency objections in 2007/08 were due to applications not containing a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) or the FRA was unsatisfactory (Environment Agency).

# Diametric Opposed Objectives

Arbitrary house building targets

Vs

Presumption against building on  
flood plains

# Planning Conclusions

- There should be a presumption against building on flood plains
- Building in flood risk areas should be restricted
- That water companies should be consulted on all new building developments to ensure capacity
- That there should be an end to the automatic right to connect on all major developments

# SUDS

- We welcome the idea of sustainable drainage and believe that developers need to include SUDS in their plans at the earliest stages of the process to ensure that they are successfully designed, built and maintained.
- We welcome the Draft Floods and Water Bill taking steps to ensure this. However we also agree with the EFRA Select Committee Report that more work needs to be done to answer some of the issues relating to SUDS, especially with regards to funding and responsibilities.
- The Bill should outline exactly who has responsibility for the building and maintenance of SUDS to ensure there can be no confusion
- Look at the possibilities of the role water companies could play

# EFRA Committee Report on Flooding

A number of reports have also made their own conclusions on flooding

## EFRA Committee Report- Some Conclusions

- “Given the enormous level of interest, we believe it is appropriate that local people have to be involved, and consulted, in the formulation of decisions about watercourse and river maintenance. The Agency, and local authorities, must open up dialogue with members of the public, through appropriate local forums, to ensure that they are part of this process.”
- “Once decisions have been made, the Agency should make clear, via its website or other means, the maintenance programme for all its watercourses and a schedule of maintenance should be announced whenever possible.”
- We need better transparency and more local involvement in maintenance. There is a real perception that maintenance is not being done effectively – the EA must communicate effectively with local areas and involve local people to demonstrate that work is being carried out.

# Flooding In England Report

- “The Environment Agency's call for more investment in flood defence – it is calling for investment into flood defences to be doubled to £1bn by 2035.
- brings home the reality of climate change, and there will need to be a debate on the priorities, but the public must be protected
- “When a staggering one in six homes in England are at risk, it is essential that flood defence schemes are cost effective and delivered on time, and that no unnecessary development takes place in areas that are susceptible to flooding.”

# Insurance

- Statement Of Principles – Contract was renewed in June 2008. Insurance companies will continue to insure flood risk properties on the proviso the Government proves a commitment to flood risk management. It is a commitment to “make flood insurance available where the flood risk is adequately managed.”
- January 2009 - ABI published guidance aimed at helping developers, builders and planners to ensure that new properties in flood risk areas incorporate measures to reduce and manage flooding.
- Insurers will expect such developments to have been approved by the relevant authority, and that developers provide buyers will evidence of steps taken to reduce the flood risk This will ensure that flood insurance remains widely available

# Local Expertise

- We believe that there is advantage to using local advice for flood risk management
- We want to work with local communities, in particular utilising the expertise and resources of Internal Drainage Boards.

# Joined Up Government

- DCLG - Planning, resilience, HIPs
- DECC - Mitigation
- Defence - Role of Met Office
- Cabinet Office - Natural Hazards Team, assessment of critical infrastructure

# Conservatives

- We put the risk of flooding as one of the greatest challenges the country faces, especially in light of climate change
- Currently drafting a national water policy to look at every possible solution to protect the nation and properties from inevitable increased flooding, this will include policies to:
  - Promote maintenance, protect flood resources, do more with less
  - The presumption should be against building on flood plains
  - More consultation with water companies on planning and on new developments
  - Ensure properties can continue to be insured against floods