

All Party MP Consortium meeting: 23 November 2020 River Severn Partnership (RSP) update

RSP – Programme of delivery

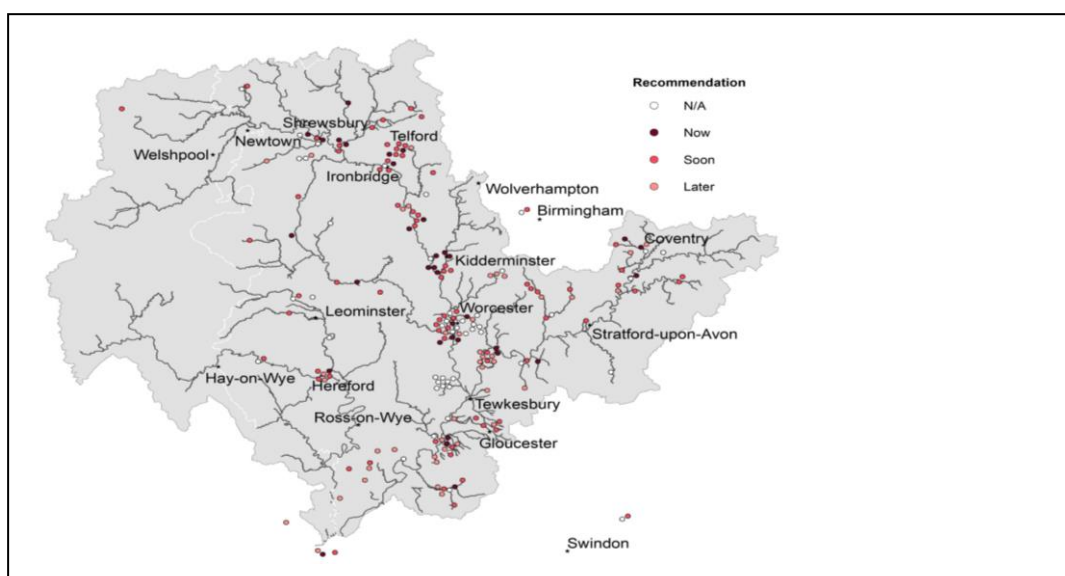
Accelerated Project Delivery

The Ministerial announcement in July included investment to accelerate key projects that either safeguard jobs or unlock new jobs and growth. These are planned for delivery by 2027:

- **The Severn Valley Water Management Scheme (SVWM):** Initial investigations have been undertaken to determine whether combining a water management scheme with the North West Relief Road (NWRR) is potentially viable and worth further consideration, as we look at a wider variety of options.
- **Tenbury Wells Flood Alleviation Scheme:** Ground investigation and site survey work will take place from November 2020 with the aim of starting construction by early 2022.
- **Carbon offsetting Project:** Work is now underway to plant 317,000 broadleaf trees over a minimum of 127ha.

Short Term Programme Delivery

In developing a new and unique route to economic growth and addressing national recovery needs, the RSP has been developing a programme of project delivery. The RSP has collated over 200 projects covering the whole of the Partnership area, illustrated below. Work is now ongoing to assess these against delivery timescales (now, soon, later) and by theme or location. This will be used to drive focus and delivery. However, over 100 of these projects have a funding constraint with an estimated funding gap of £1m each.



Long Term Strategy and Climate Resilient Plan

The RSP is a national pilot for developing a long term Adaptive Pathways Plan. This plan will test different climate and growth scenarios and identify the suite of flexible management approaches needed to provide the most resilient response. Whilst work will start on this Plan in 2021, the RSP has commenced early preparatory work to look at the data and engagement needs. The RSP is one of four pilots testing this long term planning approach, alongside Thames, Humber and Yorkshire.

Case for Investment

The RSP has been working to understand the data, evidence and key headlines which explain in more detail: the needs, future risks and opportunities for this way of working.

Key Statistics	Source
Over £500 million spent during visits to the natural environment across the Partnership area*	Natural England, Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment, Analysis of expenditure during visits (2015) (*excludes Wales)
The average cost of current fluvial flooding in the Partnership area is estimated at over £28m per year with potential to directly affect up to 100,000 jobs	Environment Agency River Severn Partnership flood and economic impact analysis work
The Partnership are comprises around 1,000,000ha of Agricultural land generating farm profits of over £300m per annum but with around 82,000ha at Medium or High risk of fluvial flooding	Land Cover Map 2015 (based on Areas of Arable, Horticulture and Improved Grassland), Land Cover Map, EA Flood Zone 3 and NRW Flood Zone 3 and NEVO natural capital accounting tool, Exeter University
Over 47,000 residential properties and over 9,500 businesses at risk of fluvial flooding in the Partnership area which significantly increases when also considering surface water flooding risks	Environment Agency River Severn Partnership flood and economic impact analysis work
Current land value at risk of fluvial flooding estimated to be in excess of £30bn	Environment Agency River Severn Partnership flood and economic impact analysis work
Climate change projections include up to +1m increase in modelled flood levels for the River Severn by 2100, with predicted increases for the Wye, Teme and Warwickshire Avon of between 0.6-0.85m	Flood risk and costal change climate change allowances for planning, EA West Midlands Feb 2019
Daily water abstraction for public water supply across the Partnership area is equivalent to 600 olympic size swimming pools (1,500ML/d) with around 40 needed to support agriculture (100ml/D) and 26 to support industry (65ml/d) each day	Environment Agency National Abstraction Licensing Database
Climate change projects indicate an average forecast reduction in Natural Available Water Flows of 20%-25% by 2050 across the Partnership area as a whole	Environment Agency Water Resources GIS 2050 (excludes Wales)

Engagement with Partners and Communities

The RSP has been undertaking targeted engagement through county based workshops, to share its ambition and build understanding of key risks based on the latest environmental data. The workshops aim to identify the management opportunities that the RSP should focus upon.

Workshops have been completed for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire and they are now being planned for Warwickshire and Herefordshire. It is hoped that engagement with Welsh partners will support similar workshop sessions for Powys.

The RSP recognises the importance of community level engagement. A dedicated RSP website is being developed and aims to go live in November. It will provide a single place for regular up to date information on the RSP's work. A press release is planned to raise further awareness of the RSP and launch the website.

RSP Governance and Member additions since July 2020

- Catherine Wright is the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the RSP within the Environment Agency. Catherine is a Director in the national flood risk management directorate and leads rural flood risk, and catchment planning for flood risk management, working closely with key partners such as the National Farmers Union, Countryside Landowners Association and the Association of Drainage Authorities.
- Clare Dinnis became the new West Midlands Area Director for the Environment Agency at the beginning of November, and joint chair of the Partnership, alongside Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place at Shropshire Council.



Other organisations are keen to join the RSP and explore opportunities to deliver multiple benefits, as follows:

- Homes England: supporting accelerated housing delivery and testing new fiscal models
- Midlands Connect: supporting resilience in transport infrastructure through managing environmental risks.
- The Countryside Landowners Association and National Trust to explore land management opportunities with positive discussions underway around opportunities for use of land for water management.
- Birmingham City University to lead research and an Innovation Advisory Group supporting new ways of working.

We ask the MPs to work with Ministers and help us to:

- **Champion the RSP as a national pilot** showing how collaborative partnerships can work across Government departments, across the English/Welsh border, and across organisational remits to deliver the Government's devolution and levelling-up agenda
- **Engage Ministers across Government in all the areas upon which the RSP touches** (environment, transport, housing, business, devolution, planning, skills, Wales) so they understand the value of the RSP to their own areas of responsibility and can help streamline decision-making to deliver positive progress at pace
- **Secure £10million to develop** a holistic strategy for the RSP area which, alongside the current investment for accelerated infrastructure delivery, will unlock a partnership funded £1billion infrastructure programme and consequentially £100billion GVA over the next 20 years

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