



FAO:

Ref: OV/003

The Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Daniel Poulter MP, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich  
Cllr Matthew Hicks, Leader, Suffolk County Council (SCC)  
Cllr Paul West, Operational Highways and Flooding, SCC  
Cllr Andrew Reid, Public Health and Public Protection, SCC  
Cllr Richard Rout, Finance and Environment, SCC  
Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader, East Suffolk District Council (ESDC)  
Chris Bally, CEO, ESDC  
Philip Ridley, Head of Planning and Coastal Management, ESDC  
Peter Simpson, CEO, Anglian Water  
Tom Hunter, Area Management, East Suffolk Water Management Board  
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Dear All,

### **Storm Babet: Impact of the flooding on Framlingham and nearby Villages**

We wish to bring to your attention the impact of the recent flooding on the town of Framlingham and the nearby parishes and villages. Many residents have endured an unprecedented level of flooding, and while authorities have been disposed to label this event as a 1 in 100 or 1 in 1000 occurrence, this offers little comfort to the many who have been affected. Statistics cannot be used to disguise the fact that our waterways and highways have been neglected for several decades and that authorities and agencies, both national and local, have failed to maintain adequate flood preparedness and response plans.

Please find below a summary detailing some of the impact and action required now.

**Framlingham.** The volume of rainfall caused the Mere to burst its banks, flooding properties along New Road including the Elms and the Elms carpark. Elderly residents were evacuated and several vehicles were flooded. Properties and businesses adjacent to the River Ore and situated on lower ground were flooded, incorporating parts of Well Close Square, Riverside, Albert Place, Fore Street, and Station Road. A torrent of water submerged Brook Lane, carrying vehicles and drivers with it. Several properties on Brook Lane, approaching Framlingham are severely flood damaged. Two properties on Brook Lane were also affected by water cascading down the hillside from the new Mount Pleasant estate, lying above it. It appears that the Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs) systems did not function properly. Fairfield Road was flooded along the west side and the junction with Station Road was beset by floodwater from three sources (Coopers Close, River Ore and

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Station Road) almost submerging the houses at this junction. **The River Ore runs parallel to Fairfield road (a busy thruway) and has burst its banks twice in the past week, undermining the roadside verge. This needs urgent inspection and remediation.** Runoff from the housing development situated in the vicinity of Coopers Close greatly compounded the situation. In effect it served as an enormous concrete slide for the floodwater. Groundworks SuDs placed in front of the development to mitigate such circumstances failed to take any water at all. Several properties at the end of Badingham Road were also inundated. Over 70 properties in the town were impacted and many cannot access insurance for flooding.

**Sweffling.** Attention needs to be given to the Gull which stretches from the B1119 to the River Alde. The culverts need to be inspected and any debris removed. The ditch which runs along the road through the village, alongside the Village Hut needs to be cleaned and a decision needs to be taken vis-à-vis deepening the ditch so that it can hold more water. In some places, the level of the ditch is dangerously shallow in relation to the level of the road, making the latter liable to flooding in a storm. Mud and debris need to be removed from Holdens Lane, and particular attention given to the removal of sewage which has spilled from damaged septic tanks. **It must be stressed that at present, raw sewage remains on Holdens Lane, despite efforts to encourage local authorities to clean it up. Residents have slipped in the mess, and it continues to pose a public health hazard.** One factor which exacerbated the situation to quite some degree was the sluices at Snape. In the middle of the worst part of the storm when it was raining very hard and water was rushing in a torrent through the village and numerous houses were at serious risk, the water levels suddenly started to drop. However, after only a relatively short period of time the situation reversed, and the levels began to rise again. Only one conclusion can be drawn to explain this - the sluices had been opened for a short period of time and then re-closed. Flooding of the land and houses on the north side of the B1119 occurred. The flood water on the fields and onto the edge of the road remained until late on Sunday afternoon when it slowly started to recede - presumably someone had decided to open the sluices after almost 3 days. This seemingly haphazard management is very difficult to comprehend and is resulting in continued damage to land and property.

**Easton.** Multiple properties and homes were flooded in Easton as a result of surface water coming from farmland onto the highways. Surface water from open farmland drained onto the Kettleburgh Road which joined the water draining down the Framlingham Road; this delivered fast flowing flood water into properties along the Framlingham Road by entering Harriers Walk, and down drives either side of Framlingham Road as it travelled to the lowest point at Pound Corner and the Street and river beyond. The flooding did not come from the river. The ditch traversing from Martley Hall to the river via Harriers Walk and beyond should be monitored to maintain efficient flow, the culvert at the point it meets the street has pipework under the road that is not sufficient, at this point it backs up flooding nearby properties. The surface water that flows down from Cemetery Lane onto The Street should be addressed, it led to flooding of properties in The Street, exacerbated by the ineffective road drainage system. The problem has been raised over many years, Suffolk County Council (SCC) and Easton Parish Council have evidence of the reporting, but no effective action by SCC took place. It is vital that the surface water from landowners does not use roads as an open drainage system. Surface water from the roads must be

efficiently drained away from the road and properties. The sewers backed along the street entering the homes and properties that suffered flooding. The watercourse that takes farmland surface water to a culvert and pipe work under the road adjacent to the new development of Skylark Rise backed up, flooding properties because of insufficient capacity. The Hopkins development permitted through appeal has left this unsatisfactory infrastructure. The works along with ownership and a maintenance plan of the watercourse and culvert are conditions East Suffolk Council (ESC) were tasked to secure, as laid out by the Environment Agency (EA) and SCC. It appears ESC have failed to do so. This situation has serious implications demonstrated by the flooding of the road and properties. On the opposite side of the road the highways pipework and culvert has collapsed as it enters land belonging to The Osiers, a property which was also flooded.

Easton needs drain gullies and storm drains to be installed along Kettleburgh Road, and the same for Framlingham Road, at present there is no road drainage. The farmland needs drainage plans in place that prevent it draining directly onto the roads, by way of attenuation which could include creating a pond. Throughout the village the road drainage needs to be fit for purpose to convey surface water in a managed way to the flood meadows and river, and this should include a maintenance plan and proper enforcement where riparian and landowners are compromising the ability of surface water to drain freely. SuDs should be adopted for all drainage systems and management, it is clearly stated that SuDs must cope with the 'one in a hundred year event' and recognise that with global warming extreme weather events and flooding will occur more frequently.

**Letheringham.** Access in and out of the village is restricted at the best of times. Work needs to be conducted on the roads in the vicinity of Four Bridges (IP13 7RF) to ensure the road can be used by emergency vehicles during a flood. Better water management and partial raising of the road would enable access along Park Road to the B1078. Consideration should also be given to the digging of ponds on fields along the Street and Park Road. The banks are steep and waterflow traverses the roads impacting properties on the opposite (lower) side. Ponds would be an invaluable and relatively cheap method in mitigating runoff from two additional ditches which have been dug across the fields to facilitate agricultural drainage. The road outside Easton Farm Park also requires raising, as there is a significant dip outside the entrance which collects substantial water, even during periods of relatively light precipitation.

**Dennington.** The A1120 roadside ditches from Capons Green to Wood Farm need cleaning out regularly on a rotating basis. This road floods often after heavy rainfall and work must be carried out to speed up the flow to the river. The River Alde at Capons Green has flooded two properties causing considerable damage. Obstructions (branches, leaves etc.) along the River Alde, as well as silt on the riverbed have not been cleared out in living memory. Consequently, the river has become shallower. Dredging of the river at this location would help lower the water level around these properties. The B1118 (Brundish Road) was extensively flooded for about 300 metres from Frostley Bridge to Brundish Bridge. Again, silt and debris need to be removed and ditches maintained to mitigate the impact. The roadside gullies along the B1116 (Durrants Bridge) also require regular maintenance and cleaning out.

**Saxtead.** Ditches overflowed along the A1120 and Saxtead Bottoms and require cleaning out and widening to cope with the flow of water. The ditch near Worlds End Farm is blocked and there is also a real problem with sewage here and at the end of Worlds End which the floods exacerbated. Lack of ditching and hedgerow along Davey field means substantial runoff from the field floods the road.

**Parham.** The gull which runs alongside North Green Road and The Street into the River Ore is blocked in several places with fallen trees, silt, and debris. It needs to be dredged to enable the smooth flow of water into the Ore. The culverts supporting this watercourse also need to be investigated and unblocked. A redesign should be considered, as the water has to negotiate two right-angle bends which hinder flow and likely contribute towards silting. The River Ore also needs to be cleaned. During the flood, the water level rose by 12-14 ft, flooding The Street and surrounding properties. The force of the water partially demolished a brick wall and deposited debris, blocking a footbridge south of the main village bridge. The Environment Agency previously removed the debris, but upon further inspection it is blocked once more. The road adjacent to the river also needs to be investigated to ensure flood water has not compromised the integrity of the supporting bank. A brand new Housing Association Development recently built on the east side of Main Road (on lower ground) was extensively flooded. It defies common sense that building was ever permitted on what was in essence a floodplain. Properties on the west side of Main Road were subjected to flooding on account of runoff from fields. It is essential that the ditch and drainage system is improved around properties on both sides of the road. Runoff down Hall Road and North Green Road compounded the situation on The Street, all the way to the bridge over the River Ore. The drains along Hall Road and the Street are not only blocked, but too narrow to receive excess water and deposit it into the Gull.

**Kettleburgh.** This village has historically suffered floods but had little support for mitigations. This latest event has been serious. Water flowed East to West down Easton Road and met water flowing fast down The Street, itself joined by water flowing down Rectory Road, School Hill, and Church Road. Reports describe water flowing fast over fields and ditches. The Deben burst its banks. The main T-Junction was flooded, and water again entered properties. One had flood mitigation installed but still had ingress. Properties down Mill Lane, Water Mill House, and others on the Junction, at least 7 dwellings, were flooded to the point that homeowners were forced to evacuate. At the Village Hall, desperate efforts with sandbags prevented ingress. The ancient sewer pipe down The Street was again overwhelmed and residents had raw sewage backing up from toilets and showers - some of these being on higher ground. Bow waves from vehicles past the T-Junction overwhelmed the flood defence of one home and the water entered several others. Families are 2 weeks waiting for Insurance companies to visit, preventing urgent clearance works. An elderly couple still await alternative accommodation that can take a hospital bed. Highways has not cleared dangerous sand/mud from Easton Road. Ditches remain full of debris. Anglian Water were expected to survey all the manholes in The Street in 2020 to ensure that rainwater run-off could not enter them and reseal those that could allow rainwater ingress, but probably did not do so. There is now incontrovertible evidence that the sewage system (sewer pipe and the Pumping Station) and water drains and pipework including under the T-junction bridge must urgently be

upgraded to be fit for purpose. Residents want to know if the Deben Flood Gates at Wickham Market and Debenham were closed or opened, and what impact their status had on the Deben continuing to rise. They need to know how the Deben is affected by tides and call for robust alerts in future. The established fluvial High Levels need to be reviewed. Flood authority officers will need to provide their best support for imminent Parish Council work to create a Community Flood Plan. Planning decisions must take more account of water issues.

**Badingham.** This village was cut off by deep water forming at: Low Street by the White Horse pub; A1120 at Rooks Bridge and towards Dennington; Low Street near Castle Farm; Mill Road at Twin Oaks. Flooded housing areas were: 1. At the top of Mill Road near Twin Oak Drive; 2. At the junction of Mill Road and Low Street; 3. In Low Street near the church (area has been affected several times before); and 4. In Low Street near the Village Hall. At 1. at least some of the impact was caused by building work affecting and possibly filling in ditches. Stronger planning conditions need to be imposed on landscaping works and properly enforced. At 2. drains seem to have been blocked at the junction, now cleared. But the torrent of water down Mill Road seems to have originated from possibly compacted fields above Rectory Road bringing mud and aggregate with it. The impact of changed farming practices needs to be assessed and specific mitigations implemented to slow the flow of runoff at 2. in future. At 3. The drain running along Low Street on the South side despite being well maintained overtopped its banks from the Church to Orchard Rise, exacerbated by the flow down Mill Road and possibly by backing up of the drain from its confluence with the also over-topping Alde. Roadside drains seem to have been blocked also, opposite the home most badly impacted again. Other homes were also impacted. The neighbouring landowner again arranged for a pinch point bridge/pipe to be bypassed allowing water to escape onto fields. Permanent mitigation for this known flood area is essential, involving the bridge/pipe and surroundings and regular roadside drains maintenance. Wash from vehicles was an additional issue. At 4. a home is said to have been impacted by water flowing off the rise behind the home and Village Hall.

**Rendham.** Dredging the River Alde would mitigate the risk of future flooding to the village. Properties along Bruisyard Road were flooded and the ditch system adjacent to Garden House needs cleaning and deepening. It is currently incapable of taking water back to the Alde. Indeed, there is insufficient ditching along Bruisyard Road heading towards 1 and 2 The Willows, and mitigation works are required. The culverts in the vicinity of the bridge into the village (B1119) need to be properly managed to ensure they can support waterflow.

**Great Glemham.** Low Road and Chapel Lane were severely impacted by flooding. Rising water levels caused the Village Hall to flood, as well as several adjacent properties. **The Village Hall needs inspection to facilitate repair. It is not insured on account of its proximity to the Brook. County and District Funds are needed to ensure the Hall's continuance as a community hub, and we urge authorities to declare their support.** Drains in Low Road are blocked with silt and leaves and require urgent cleaning. A dangerous sinkhole has emerged on Low Road, in the direction towards Simpers Drift and needs repairing. The brook that runs along Low Road, behind the Village Hall and under Chapel Lane is filled with debris, holding up waterflow. A roadside ditch running along

Chapel Lane leading into the brook is blocked and water is collecting in the lane. It requires clearing and deepening so that it can serve any useful purpose.

### **Cretingham, Monewden, and Hoo.**

In Cretingham, the rising of the River Deben and run off from the fields flooded several properties on Swan Lane, Kittles Corner, and The Street. In Monewden, a property near to turning into the village from Clopton Road was flooded as the ditches were not deep enough to take the volume of water. The village was swiftly cut off as floodwater submerged all roads leading in and out (something other villages in this report have also endured). In Hoo, 2 houses suffered flooding: one on Sandy Lane and the other on Chimers Lane. While the owners coped with the flooding, the ditches and drains need to be properly cleaned and maintained, having been neglected by authorities for several years.

We urge you to work together to reverse decades of neglect so that the residents of Framlingham and the nearby parishes/villages can be assured that measures have been taken to mitigate the future impact of flooding.

### Summary

- The Alde, Ore, and Deben need to be comprehensively dredged and cleared of debris.
- Other water courses (streams, brooks, gullies, ditches etc.) need to be regularly cleaned and maintained. Years ago, authorities invested time, money, and effort to tend the land and ensure all trees, branches, silt, and debris were removed annually.
- Many roadside ditches have been filled in, and consideration needs to be given for them to be re-established to protect from water runoff directly onto road surfaces.
- Greater attention and investment in holding water to alleviate pressure on the drainage system is required. We need more ponds and reservoirs constructed and urge the authorities to coordinate efforts with landowners.
- Property developments on flood plains and water meadows need to be banned. It is beggar's belief developments were given consent in such locations.
- Required Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure on new estates does not appear to have functioned properly and exacerbated flooding in other properties.

You each have a fundamental duty to protect our communities and our environment.

Yours,



**Owen Grey | Liberal Democrat  
District Councillor for  
Framlingham  
East Suffolk Council**



**Vince Langdon-Morris | Green  
Party District Councillor for  
Framlingham  
East Suffolk Council**



**Copy to:**

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Badingham Parish Council  
Brandeston Parish Council  
Bruisyard Parish Council  
Cransford Parish Council  
Cretingham, Monewden, and Hoo Parish Council  
Dennington Parish Council  
Earl Soham Parish Council  
Easton Parish Council  
Great Glemham Parish Council  
Kettleburgh Parish Council  
Letheringham Parish Council  
Parham Parish Council  
Rendham Parish Council  
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ClIrr Elaine Bryce, SCC  
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