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# 23/24

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## Department for Infrastructure- Rivers



## Business Plan 2023/24

[www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/dfi-rivers-overview](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/dfi-rivers-overview)

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## **Foreword**

We are pleased to introduce the Rivers Business Plan for 2023 - 2024. This Plan, similar to previous years sets out our vision, aims, objectives and business targets which we intend to deliver. We continue to be impressed with your determination to deliver the services we provide, whether it be directly dealing with correspondence and queries, or undertaking our work in a timely and professional manner.

During 2022-2023 Rivers, for business reasons, was divided into 2 Directorates, Development and Operations. This resulted in the creation of a temporary Grade 5 post responsible for the Operations Directorate.

Another major change was the re-alignment of both Rivers Directorates from Roads and Rivers to the Water and Departmental Delivery Group. This change assists with the harmonisation needed to deliver the Rivers 6-year strategic priorities, the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) and the new Rivers 10-year Asset Management Plan (AMP). This realignment also resulted in the Lough Erne Estate management and some Lough Neagh Quay and Drainage Council work moving to the Water and Drainage Policy Division. In return Rivers is now responsible for the Departments Inland Waterways work.

The development of the FRMP and the AMP, together with our work on the 6-year Strategy, has identified the future investment needed in these areas, the staff structure required and the key areas of focus to move flood risk management forward into the future. This work will strengthen our capacity to respond to planning consultations from a flood risk perspective and inform the establishment of a Reservoirs Authority, to prepare for and implement, any further commencement of the Reservoirs Act. It will importantly also lay the foundations for enhanced flood risk management expertise, increased operational capacity and depending on budget allocations, accelerated investment in future years.

We continue to undertake a range of flood risk management inspection and maintenance activities in an environmentally sensitive manner. We have also progressed a number of significant capital schemes with Shimna, Newry Phase 1, Glenbrook and the Belfast Tidal schemes being the most notable. Work is also continuing in relation to the development of the Portadown flood alleviation scheme with construction currently programmed to commence winter 2024. Last year these projects, along with a range of other schemes and



works, resulted in the highest ever level of capital investment in our flood risk management infrastructure.

As ever our hydraulic models, flood maps and the hydrometric network will be relied upon heavily to support many of our Flood Risk Management decisions and we have developed plans to strengthen these areas of work.

We are also in the process of developing a 5-year Rivers digital strategy and road map, to provide comprehensive detail on the strategic direction of digital transformation within Rivers to enhance our digital capabilities across all areas of our business.

Throughout all this activity the dedication of all our administrative teams continues to provide the support and governance necessary to ensure our public service focus remains at a high standard.

**JONATHAN MCKEE**  
**DIRECTOR OF RIVERS DEVELOPMENT**

**GARY QUINN**  
**DIRECTOR OF RIVERS OPERATIONS**

## Office Locations

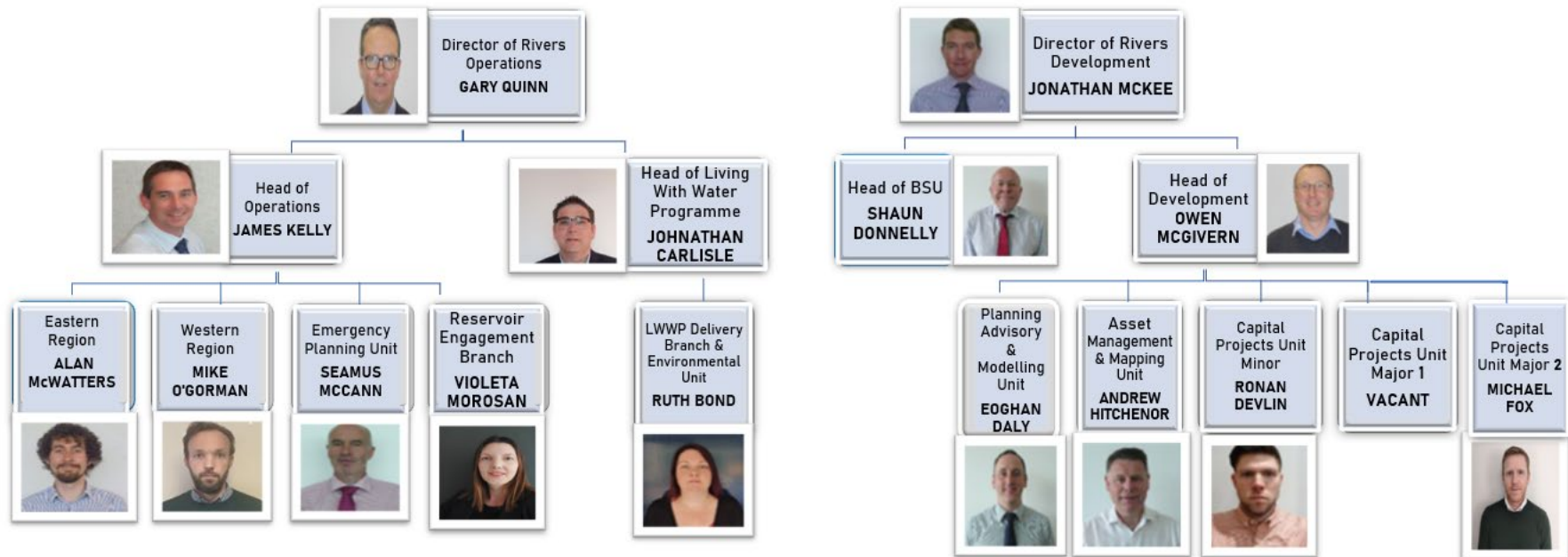


Rivers Headquarters is located at Loughry Campus in Cookstown. Rivers Operations is divided into two Regions: Eastern and Western. The main regional offices are located in Lisburn and Omagh for the respective Regions. There are also Area offices located in Coleraine, Fermanagh and Craigavon.



Rivers Headquarters

## Senior Staff Structure



## Department for Infrastructure

### 'The Department for Infrastructure every day connects people safely, supports opportunities and creates sustainable living places'.

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) is one of nine Northern Ireland Departments. The main responsibilities of the Department are:

- regional strategic planning and development policy;
- transport strategy and sustainable transport policy;
- public transport policy and performance;
- road safety and vehicle regulation policy, including strategies to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads;
- driver and operator licensing and driver and vehicle testing;
- provision and maintenance of all public roads;
- certain policy and support work for air and sea ports;
- river and sea defence maintenance and the construction of flood alleviation schemes;
- provision of flood maps and risk information; and
- policy on water and sewerage services and management of the Department's shareholder interest in Northern Ireland Water.

### **Strategic Framework**

The Department has recently launched a Strategic Framework. It reinforces how the Department is responsible for the maintenance and development of critical infrastructure in Northern Ireland. Through its focus on water, transport and planning public services, the Department is seeking to manage and protect £32 bn of public assets that improve people's quality of life, reduce our impact on the planet by living sustainability and decarbonising key services, and building prosperity by driving inclusive productivity.

The Framework outlines the main aspects of the Department's work and the challenges it faces in delivering its essential public services. By focusing on water, transport and planning we are clear on what we need to do, why we need to do it and how we will prioritise the use of increasingly precious public money.

A key focus of this document is the work we do in Rivers and this is encapsulated under the 'water' theme. It reinforces the how that Infrastructure investment can help mitigate the effects of climate change and manage flood risk.

### **Programme for Government**

The previous Executive aimed to bring forward an Outcomes-based Programme for Government (PfG) focusing on achieving outcomes of societal wellbeing and delivering real and positive change in people's lives. To achieve this a PfG draft Outcomes framework was developed, which builds on the Outcomes-based approach that has defined NICS business planning across the public sector since 2016. The draft Outcomes Framework contains nine

strategic Outcomes which, taken together, aim to set a clear direction of travel for the NI Executive and provide a vision for the future of all citizens.

## DfI Rivers

### **Vision**

To manage flood risk, both now and into the future, to maintain and create sustainable living places and support economic development.

### **Aims**

To support the vision Rivers aims:

- to reduce the risk to life and the damage to property from flooding from rivers and the sea; and
- to undertake our work in a sustainable manner.

### **Objectives**

In support of these aims Rivers' objectives are to:

- implement and inform sustainable flood risk management policies to meet society's social, environmental, and economic needs, whilst taking account of climate change;
- implement the requirements of the Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2009 for the assessment and management of flood risks;
- inform new development decisions from a flood risk perspective;
- reduce the number of properties currently at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea;
- sustainably maintain flood defences, drainage infrastructure and the designated watercourse network;
- discharge lead Department responsibilities for the emergency response to flooding;
- communicate flood risk through flood mapping and community engagement;
- deliver the Rivers element of the Living with Water Programme;
- prepare for the further commencement of the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015;
- support and develop all staff to achieve our objectives; and
- deliver quality services for our customers and stakeholders in a fair and equitable way.

Approximately 45,000 properties (equivalent to 5.2% of Northern Ireland's properties) are identified as being at flood risk from rivers, the sea or surface water.

Managing this risk is a key priority for Rivers. We do this in a variety of ways including providing expert flood risk advice to local planning authorities, undertaking sustainable watercourse maintenance, controlling (as far as weather conditions permit) Lough Neagh and Lough Erne water levels, constructing new flood defences, maintaining existing defences and along with other activities, fulfilling a key role in the emergency response to flooding incidents.



## **Rivers Business Units**

Rivers is headed by 2 Directors and supported by four Business Areas:

1. Operations;
2. Development;
3. Living With Water Programme Delivery and Environmental Section; and
4. Corporate Support Services.

### **A. Operations**

#### **HEAD OF OPERATIONS – JAMES KELLY**

There are four business units within Operations:

1. Eastern Region;
2. Western Region;
3. Emergency Planning and Hydrometrics: and
4. Reservoirs – Operations and Engagement & Inland Waterways

#### **Regional Area Offices**

Business Unit Managers -     Alan McWatters - Eastern Region  
   Mike O’Gorman - Western Region

Eastern Region maintains and protects the river drainage network across Armagh, Lisburn and Greater Belfast Areas. Western Region maintains and protects the river drainage network across Omagh and Coleraine Areas plus the Fermanagh Sub-Area.

The regional teams are responsible for the following key functions:

- inspection and maintenance of a network of free-flowing designated watercourses to provide adequate outlets for urban storm and land drainage;
- maintenance of the Department’s river and sea defences;
- identifying flood risks and undertaking minor works to repair and construct urban flood defences, culverts and provide drainage infrastructure;
- administering advisory, approval and enforcement procedures to protect the drainage function of all rivers;
- responding to complaints and enquiries;
- utilising available resources to maintain the effectiveness of the Department’s assets during periods of adverse weather;
- responding where possible to requests for assistance from the public whose property has suffered or is threatened by flooding.
- Flood preparedness and liaising with other statutory and public bodies to also provide an effective multi agency response to flooding;
- Emergency Planning & Chair of the **Southern** Severe Weather Working Group - Eastern Region;
- Emergency Planning & Chair of the **Belfast** Severe Weather Working Group - Eastern Region; and

- Emergency Planning & Chair of the **Northern** Severe Weather Working Group - Western Region.
- Act as Reservoir Manager for 7 reservoirs – Eastern Region
- Management of Control Structures used to control the flow of rivers when required.
- Regulation of Water Levels on Lough Neagh and Lough Erne – Western Region

### **Emergency Planning Unit**

Business Unit Manager – Seamus McCann

Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) carry out the emergency planning co-ordination duties within DfI Rivers. Key areas of responsibility include:

- discharging of Lead Government Department (LGD) responsibilities and supporting the multi-agency response to flooding and wider civil contingencies arrangements.;
- administrating the implementation of the Homeowner Flood Protection Grant Scheme to protect residential properties;
- the development of new, and ongoing support to over 35 established Community Resilience groups;
- representing DfI Rivers on the Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs) for civil contingencies in Northern Ireland to ensure that there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi-agency response to emergencies which have a significant impact on the local community; and

EPU also includes the Hydrometrics team who are responsible for:

- managing, maintaining, and enhancing the Northern Ireland Surface Water Network currently consisting of over 135 river level monitoring stations (gauging stations);
- provision of watercourse flow and level information to ultimately inform the UK “National Archive” that underpins the national understanding and estimation of flood return periods and consequently Northern Ireland flood models, flood maps, and data that is used by DfI Rivers to target capital investment and to help inform development control.
- providing near to real-time river level information to inform Rivers and other multi-agency partners’, in the preparation and response to flooding; and
- monitoring the coastal water level network to identify problematic storm surges which can raise sea levels and cause flooding.

### **Reservoirs – Operations and Engagement Branch**

Business Unit Manager – Violeta Morosan

#### **Reservoirs Team**

Rivers will ultimately be responsible for the administration of the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 (the 2015 Act), if the NI Assembly agrees that this legislation should be fully commenced.

If fully commenced, the 2015 Act will provide for the regulation of structures or areas capable of holding 10,000 cubic metres or more of water above the natural level of the surrounding land. These are Controlled Reservoirs.

The provisions of the 2015 Act are based on industry best practice in respect of reservoir management to minimise the risk of flooding due to an uncontrolled release of water resulting from dam failure, in order to protect people, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity.

The current 'Rivers Reservoirs Team' will ultimately form part of the 'Reservoirs Authority' and will administer the key provisions of the 2015 Act if they are taken forward and commenced by the Northern Ireland Assembly. In the interim period, **the Reservoirs Team** will:

- establish the location of, and the reservoir manager for, each controlled reservoir in Northern Ireland; and

**Engage with the reservoir managers to:**

- inform them of their common law responsibilities;
- encourage, where possible, the reservoir manager to progress any reservoir safety related works that are identified to prevent an uncontrolled release of water from their reservoir;

**The Reservoirs team will also:**

- share information on Controlled Reservoirs with the Rivers Planning Advisory and Modelling Unit where a planning consultation request is received concerning a proposal to develop lands within the inundation area of a Controlled Reservoir.
- encourage eligible reservoir managers, who voluntarily comply with the 2015 Act, to apply for 'Responsible Reservoir Manager Status' for their reservoirs and monitor the operation of this status;
- manage the Department's own stock of controlled reservoirs (seven reservoirs) where it has a management or part management role, in accordance with the provisions of the 2015 Act; and
- prepare the necessary processes and procedures for the further commencement and implementation of the 2015 Act.

## **Inland Waterways\*\***

This Business Unit will also assume responsibility for the co-ordination of the Departments Inland Waterways responsibilities, which include:

### **Lough Neagh**

- The Department is required to dredge the mouth of the Sixmilewater River where it enters Lough Neagh. We also provide maintenance to 48 navigational markers on Lough Neagh. There is a statutory requirement for 2 and discretionary power to maintain 46.

### **Lagan Canal Towpath**

- The Department has responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the Lagan Towpath from Stranmillis to Aghalee, including Broadwater Reservoir. A Departmental owned asset which includes the towpath, carparks (Lockview Road Stranmillis; Drumbridge; and Soldierstown) and abandoned canal.

\*\* Note: Responsibility for Inland Waterways transferred from Water and Drainage Policy Division (WDPD) to Rivers Directorate on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and responsibility for the management of the Lough Erne Estate and Drainage Council governance moved to WDPD at the same time. This formed a final piece of the transition work agreed as part of the Rivers move to the Water Group pillar of the Department which took place late 2022.

## **B. Development**

### **HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT – OWEN MCGIVERN**

There are five business units within Development:

1. Capital Projects Major 1
2. Capital Projects Major 2
3. Capital Projects Minor
4. Asset Management & Mapping Unit (AMMU);
5. Planning Advisory & Modelling Unit (PAMU).

### **Capital Projects Units**

Projects Major 1 - Business Unit Manager: Vacant

Projects Major 2 - Business Unit Manager: Michael Fox

Projects Minor - Business Unit Manager: Ronan Devlin

These units identify and deliver cost viable flood alleviation schemes to minimise identified flood risks. They are based at Loughry and consist of the 'Capital Projects Major' units and the 'Minor Works and Design Section'.

Whilst these units carry out the majority of their functions in conjunction with a Partner Consultant (Amey) the Design Section also undertakes design and site supervision of some schemes via an in-house team of staff. A prioritised programme of schemes is delivered under the following headings:

- Flood Alleviation Schemes – generally new culverts, walls, embankments, flood storage, open watercourse upgrade; and
- Drainage infrastructure Schemes – generally repair and construction of culverts, weirs, screens and control structures.

Major schemes typically cost more than £1.5m and have been identified through the Flood Risk Management Plan for Northern Ireland.



## **Major Schemes 2023/24**

- Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme -Design and Build Contract is awarded. Construction works commenced late Spring 2022;
- Drumahoe and Eglington Flood Alleviation Schemes are at the Outline Design stage;
- Londonderry feasibility study is currently expected to progress to the Design stage in 2024/25 subject to business case approval;
- Portadown Flood Alleviation Scheme is at the Detailed Design stage;
- Newry Phase 1 works are currently on site, with future phases 2 and 3 at the outline design stage.

## **Asset Management and Mapping Unit**

Business Unit Manager – Andrew Hitchenor

### **Asset Management Unit**

Asset Management is responsible for the inspection, grading and valuation of drainage and flood defence infrastructure. The Unit is based at Loughry and delivers the following:

- establishment and monitoring of Asset Management Plans for flood defences;
- Implement the recommendations in the Asset Management Plan;
- maintain databases of physical 'above and below ground' assets;
- condition grading of assets and valuation at year end;
- inspection of the fluvial and coastal flood defences through a programme of risk based inspections;
- Generate repair and defects list; and
- PSRA Management.

### **Mapping Unit**

The Mapping Unit is responsible for developing and providing map-based information to enable the assessment and communication of flood risk. Key areas of responsibility include:

- Management of the corporate Geographical Information Systems (internal & external facing) specific to Rivers business;
- Provision of GI support to Water and Drainage Policy Division with respect to various initiatives including the Living With Water Programme.
- Development and maintenance of Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Mapping for all sources of flooding (fluvial, coastal and pluvial), in support of the requirements of Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009;
- Development and maintenance of Reservoir Flood Mapping for Emergency Planning and for Development Planning; and
- Liaison with our Strategic Business Partner, Land and Property Services (LPS) to have access to their expert staff and on the management of jointly branded flood mapping products (including online map services to customers).
- Development and management of IT apps to assist the management of data relating to Rivers assets.

## **Planning Advisory & Modelling Unit (PAMU)**

Business Unit Manager – Eoghan Daly

PAMU is based in Craigavon and provides advice to Planning Authorities on the drainage/flood risk aspects of the forthcoming Local Development Plans and Planning consultations with a view to preventing inappropriate and unsustainable development.

The unit's key functions are:

- advising Planning Authorities in relation to inappropriate development on floodplains, or elsewhere, that may increase risk to life and damage to property through flooding as outlined in Planning Policy Statement PPS15 (Revised): Planning and Flood Risk;
- advising Planning Authorities on other river drainage aspects that may be impacted as a result of planning applications;
- scrutiny of flood risk assessments submitted by developers as part of planning applications;
- acting as key contact with the Planning Authorities in relation to matters concerning flood risk and land use planning;
- input to the Storm Water Management Group dealing with the emerging Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) policy for Northern Ireland; and
- liaising with Planning Authorities to ensure that development and flood risk policies in Local Development Plans (LDPs) are robust and consolidate the principles that underpin PPS15.

## **Flood Modelling**

This Unit contributes to the progression and management of feasibility studies to identify viable flood alleviation schemes. It is based in Craigavon and delivers the following:

- provision of expert technical advice regarding Flood Mapping & Modelling products;
- management and updating the Rivers library of 'infoWorks ICM' hydraulic models to inform the production of Flood mapping

## **C. Rivers Living with Water Programme**

**HEAD OF RIVERS LIVING WITH WATER PROGRAMME – JOHNATHAN CARLISLE**

There is one business unit within the Living with Water Programme Delivery and Environmental Unit.

### **Rivers Living with Water Programme Delivery and Environmental Unit**

Business Unit Manager - Ruth Bond

The Rivers Living with Water Programme Delivery (LWYPD) team are responsible for working alongside the Department's core LWWP team, DfI Roads, NI Water and BCC, to deliver the Strategic Drainage Infrastructure Plan (SDIP) for Greater Belfast. This Plan facilitates the delivery of integrated sustainable solutions to:

- Protect against flooding by managing the flow of water through the catchment from source to sea;
- Enhance the environment through effective wastewater management and the provision of enhanced blue/green spaces to benefit local communities; and
- Grow the economy by helping to provide the necessary capacity in drainage and wastewater management systems to facilitate new development projects including house building.

Similar to Belfast, work is also ongoing by the integrated LWWP team to develop a draft SDIP for Derry/Londonderry. This plan includes completing appropriate modelling, design, and assessment work to support the development of a wider strategic review of drainage and wastewater infrastructure across the greater Derry area. It is anticipated that a vision statement will be published during 2023, with the draft SDIP available for consultation during 2024.

The business unit is also responsible for the Environment Section, who:

- carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping studies on all new capital works;
- screening, stakeholder engagement and advertisement of the annual watercourse maintenance programme;
- provide advice on the timing, methodology and potential impact of maintenance works;
- provide technical guidance and training to staff on appropriate operational methods;
- liaise with relevant conservation authorities and other interested groups;
- provide advice on compliance with relevant Environmental legislation, including Habitats Regulations Assessments for Schedule 6 applications;
- develop and review methodologies and techniques that will enable Rivers to enhance biodiversity, and;
- sit on the advisory board to the Rivers Restoration Centre, to support the understanding and delivery of best practice in relation to river management and restoration.
- provide support and participate as required within the NI Drainage Council.

## **D. Corporate Support Services**

Business Unit Manager - Shaun Donnelly

### **Business Support Unit**

The Business Support team is based in the Rivers Headquarters, Loughry and is responsible for:

- providing an accurate and timely response to correspondence and enquiries, including ministerial correspondence, Assembly Questions and Press queries. This includes the commissioning of background information from Professional and Technical staff, drafting responses and ensuring clearance before issue within set timescales.
- keeping an accurate record of all correspondence handled within Business Support Unit, including service requests and following up on any necessary action required, ensuring deadlines are met;
- submission and co-ordination of Director's assurance statements, risk register returns and other governance related returns;
- co-ordination of DfI Rivers' budget management through meetings with Budget Holders and presentation of finance information to the Senior Management Team;
- liaising with the DfI Training Centre and providing Training and Development support for Rivers Industrial and Non-Industrial staff;
- Human Resource Management support including updating staff changes and preparing internal staff structure charts, providing staffing information to Senior Management and checking Payroll reports on a monthly basis for incorrect pay cost centres, grades, etc
- providing admin and secretariat support to Senior Management Team and other Business Areas as required. This includes secretariat support for various meetings, such as the Drainage Council. Arranging and coordinating meetings for senior management and taking minutes of meetings when required.
- Investigation support and co-ordination.
- Management of FoI and EIR requests.



## Significant Works 2023/24

DfI Rivers has a range of ongoing schemes at various stages of development, all aimed at minimising identified flood risks. Some of these are due to complete in 2023/24 whilst others are due to commence this year.

### **Belfast Tidal scheme**

The Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) developed in 2015 as part of implementing the EU Floods Directive identified Belfast as being at the highest flood risk of 20 Significant Flood Risk Areas in Northern Ireland. Tidal flood risk is of most concern, with up to 1,500 properties currently at risk from a 1 in 200 year event, which is the Rivers design standard for sea defences. The impact of climate change, causing sea level rise, will increase the number of properties at risk to over 7,300 by 2120.



As a result of the FRMP's, Rivers have developed a scheme of works that will provide a long-term approach to tidal flood risk management for Belfast and the tidal River Lagan.

The proposed scheme will extend from Belfast Lough to Stranmillis Weir and will involve the construction of flood defences along both sides of the river. The defences will extend to 8.5km and will comprise of a mixture of:

- glass flood walls;
- concrete flood walls;
- flood gates;
- temporary barriers
- demountable barriers;
- individual property level protection.

The scheme is currently under construction with works commenced in Stranmillis, Ormeau and Belfast Harbour Floodcells. It is expected that the scheme will be completed in summer 2024.

### **Newry Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) have also identified Newry as the most significant area of flood risk in Northern Ireland outside of Belfast. It is estimated 1,100 properties are subject to flood risk in the city with the potential to cause approximately £100m of damage.

A Feasibility/Economic Appraisal was previously approved by the Department of Finance (DoF) for this flood protection infrastructure with the estimated cost of the works at that time in the region of £14m. The Feasibility Study recommended flood defences to a number

of tributaries, flood defences in the city centre on the main Newry River/Canal and upstream flood storage. This Feasibility Study is currently being revisited to further assess options to address fluvial flooding and also include consideration of coastal flooding.

Due to a number of complex issues it has been decided to take forward the scheme in at least two separate phases. The project received Internal Gateway 2 approval on 25 February 2019, which allowed the commencement of the detailed design for Phase 1.

Phase 1 of the project, entitled “Newry River and Tributaries,” was procured at a cost of £2.05m and was substantially completed in March 2023.

Optioneering for Phase 2 and 3 is currently ongoing which includes flood defences through the city centre and potential upstream flood storage. This stage will also consider the risk from coastal flooding and will take into consideration the latest DfI climate change policy and updated flood modelling if viable options are identified it is expected that Phases 2 and 3 could move to the Detailed Design stage in 2024/25 subject to approval of the revised business case.

### **Portadown Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) have also identified Portadown as a Significant Flood Risk Area. A feasibility/economic appraisal was approved by the Department of Finance (DoF) on 28 September 2018. The scheme has undergone a review to take into account the revised guidance on climate change and subsequently an addendum to the business case is currently being produced. It is now estimated that 390 properties in the Portadown area are subject to flood risk.

The current preferred option includes a series of flood defences on the Annagh, Upper Bann and Ballybay/Corcrair Rivers at 21 separate locations. The estimated costs and benefits of the scheme will be updated as part of the business case addendum.

The detailed design is well advanced, and discussions are ongoing with a range of stakeholders including Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council, residents and businesses.

Subject to approval of the updated business case, it is estimated that procurement will commence in 2023/24.

### **Drumahoe, Eglinton and Londonderry Feasibility Studies**

Following the extensive flooding in Drumahoe and Eglinton on 22 August 2017 feasibility studies into the viability of flood defences were completed in 2019. As Drumahoe formed part of the Londonderry Significant Flood Risk Area identified within the 2015 Flood Risk Management Plans it was decided that the city should be included as part of the commission.

Development of potential flood alleviation proposals for Drumahoe and Eglinton is currently ongoing. The development of these proposals is complex and has required re-evaluation,

including consideration of flooding events in July 2022, to determine if viable solutions can be found. It is hoped this re-evaluation will be completed Spring 2023. If a viable solution is identified, the Department intends to progress these schemes to Detailed Design stage subject to business case approval.

The Londonderry Feasibility Report was completed in 2020 and the Economic Appraisal was approved in Oct 2020. Subject to business case approval it is expected that the project will proceed to the design stage in 2024/25.

### **Other Notable schemes**

There are a number of notable schemes these include the:

- Lurgan Significant Flood Risk Area project which is currently at the detailed design stage; and
- the Merok Burn, Belfast, Moyola flood study and Plank Drain, Downpatrick projects at the feasibility stage.

## **6-year Rivers Strategy and Structure**

We are now implementing the second cycle of our Flood Risk Management Plan which covers the period from 2021- 2027. To support the effective delivery of this, we are finalising work on a '6-year Strategy' which encapsulates our strategic priorities over this period.

The Strategy reflects changes in the understanding and management of flood risk here since the first Flood Risk Management Plans were produced in 2015. These changes include the delivery of key elements of the Living with Water Programme (LWWP), which will develop more integrated and holistic flood risk management approaches, and the need to continue to reflect climate change predictions in the management of flood risk.

We have also reviewed and modified our senior management structure and as part of this work developed proposals to enhance and maintain flood risk management expertise, information, and processes. In addition, we have identified how we need to significantly increase capital investment in flood risk management, to not only implement the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Plan, but also mitigate the flooding impacts associated with climate change and deliver our new 10-year Asset Management Plan.

## **Climate Change**

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 received Royal Assent on 6 June 2022 and includes a target for net-zero emissions by 2050 as well as a set of interim targets for 2030 and 2040.

Whilst DfI Rivers have already developed actions on climate adaption, resilience and mitigation such as considering climate change in flood mapping, scheme design and community resilience activities, it is accepted that this new Bill will place increasing focus on our work.

In order to be more resilient to the threat posed by climate change – in addition to meeting the challenges of achieving net zero – it is vital that we all effectively manage climate change risks.



## DfI Rivers Business Targets 2023/24

The Rivers Business targets and are at Annex 1

### **Additional Key Priorities**

In addition to the commitments set out in the targets, Rivers has a number of additional priorities which will support improvement in performance across the organisation. These are:

- **Managing financial resources**
- **Maintain a sound system of internal control** – Ensure that controls are in place throughout Rivers to provide a satisfactory assurance level of governance and control where possible;
- **Learning & Development** – Continue to take forward essential training and support staff to enable them to carry out their duties effectively to deliver Rivers objectives and achieve their potential;
- **Health & Safety** – We shall continue to demonstrate our commitment to maintaining high levels of Health & Safety across the Department by:
  - continuing to roll out our Health & Safety training programme;
  - Utilising Activity Safety Controls and carrying out risk assessments as appropriate;
  - implementing measures from infrastructure assessments in a prioritised manner;
  - implementing recommendations from Health and Safety audits and Health & Safety bulletins; and
  - aiming to reduce the number of accidents resulting in lost time off work.

## Annual Draft Financial Allocation 2023/24

The Department's full budget allocation to Rivers has not been issued at this stage. However, the current spending profile for Quarter 1 and 2 is likely to be met.

## Drainage Council for Northern Ireland

The Drainage Council ('the Council') for Northern Ireland is a non-Departmental Public Body constituted under the Drainage (NI) Order 1973. The Council has a general scrutiny role in relation to the Department's drainage functions and has a statutory duty to ensure uniformity of treatment of drainage throughout Northern Ireland.

### **Functions**

The Drainage Council for Northern Ireland is responsible for ensuring the impartial and uniform application of Rivers' drainage and flood defence programme throughout Northern Ireland.

### **Designation/De-designation of watercourses**

It is the Council's responsibility to decide which watercourses and sea defences should be maintained by Rivers at public expense. The Council 'designates' such watercourses and sea defences. Over 6,800km of watercourses and 26km of sea defences have been designated since the Council was established in 1947. The Council may also decide to de-designate a watercourse or sea defence if circumstances change and its maintenance at public expense is no longer justified.

### **Consideration of Drainage/Flood Defence Schemes**

The Drainage Council is charged with considering all works/schemes that Rivers proposes to undertake at public expense to ensure impartiality and value for money.

The Drainage Council considers:

- Rivers plans for drainage and flood defence schemes which satisfy cost benefit criteria;
- details of any emergency works carried out;
- Information presented in the Environment Statement and reaches a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of a drainage scheme on the environment; and
- Makes a determination that that the drainage scheme should be approved or should not be approved and provides the Department with this determination.

### **Consultee role**

As determined by the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 Part II, Rivers must consult with the Drainage Council on a number of environmental aspects of any proposed drainage/flood defence works or schemes.

Rivers must consult with the Drainage Council on:

- drainage/flood defence works or schemes which are considered likely to have a significant impact on the environment;
- drainage/flood defence works or schemes which are considered not likely to have a significant impact on the environment;
- environmental statements relating to all drainage/flood defence schemes; and
- notices regarding environmental aspects of drainage/flood defence works and schemes.

## Current Membership of the Drainage Council

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of First Appointment</b>	<b>Expiry of Appointment</b>	<b>Interest Represented</b>
<b>Chair</b>			
Prof Alan Strong	2015	2025	<b>Drainage Specialist</b>
<b>Vice Chair</b>			
Cadogan Enright	2021	2024	<b>Newry Mourne and Down District Council</b>
<b>Members</b>			
Cllr Bill Keery	2021	2024	<b>Ards and North Down District Council</b>
Cllr Cadogan Enright	2015	2024	<b>Newry Mourne and Down District Council</b>
Cllr William (Billy) Webb	2015	2024	<b>Antrim and Newtownabbey District Council</b>
Cllr Dan Kelly	2021	2024	<b>Derry and Strabane District Council</b>
Cllr Tim McClelland	2021	2024	<b>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council</b>
Cllr Sean McPeake	2021	2024	<b>Mid-Ulster District Council</b>
Ald Maurice Devenney	2021	2024	<b>Derry and Strabane District Council</b>
Cllr John Palmer	2021	2024	<b>Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council</b>
Cllr Kyle Savage	2021	2024	<b>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council</b>
Prof Alan Strong	2015	2025	<b>Drainage</b>
Mrs Wendy Joanne Elliott	2021	2025	<b>Tourism</b>
Mr Peter Mervyn Archdale	2021	2025	<b>Conservation</b>
Dr Cathal Gallagher	2021	2025	<b>Fisheries</b>
Mr Gary Quinn	2022	--	<b>DfI Rivers Ex Officio</b>
Shaun Donnelly			<b>Secretary</b>
Mrs Maureen Brunt	2021	2025	<b>Agriculture</b>
Mr Alistair Beggs	2023	--	<b>DfI Planning Ex Officio</b>

## DfI Rivers Contacts

<b>Office</b>	<b>Area Covered</b>	<b>General Office Numbers</b>	<b>Office Address</b>
<b>LOUGHRY HQ</b>	All areas	(028) 86768300	49 Tullywiggan Road Loughry Cookstown BT80 8SG
<b>ARMAGH</b>	Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Dungannon, Mourne & Newry	(028) 38399111	44 Seagoe Industrial Estate Portadown Craigavon BT63 5QD
<b>LISBURN &amp; GREATER BELFAST AREA</b>	Ards, Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Belfast, Down, Larne, Lisburn, Lurgan, Newtonabbey & Newcastle	(028) 92606100	Ravarnet House 36 Altona Road Largymore Lisburn BT27 5QB
<b>COLERAINE</b>	Ballymoney, Coleraine, Derry, Newbuildings Limavady, Moyle & Toome	(028) 70342357	37 Castleroe Road Coleraine BT51 3RL
<b>FERMANAGH</b>	Enniskillen, Fivemiletown, Kesh & Newtownbutler	(028) 66388529  (028) 66389221	53 Lettermoney Road  Ballinamallard Tullylone BT94 2NA
<b>OMAGH</b>	Castledearg, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Omagh, Strabane & Stewartstown	(028) 82254900	3A St. Julian's Road Omagh BT79 7HQ
<b>PLANNING ADVISORY &amp; MODELLING UNIT</b>	All areas	(028) 38399118	44 Seagoe Industrial Estate Portadown Craigavon BT63 5QD



# Department for Infrastructure

**Business Plan Targets 23/24 – Annex 1**



# Activities and Actions Departments will undertake to achieve Strategic Objectives/PFG

Please note this template should be used as a draft template until the ministerial priorities are agreed with any new Minister post the May 2022 Assembly election.

## 2023-24 Departmental Priorities

Objective 1: Fulfilling our statutory duties
Objective 2: Connecting People and Communities
Objective 3: Addressing regional imbalance and growing the all-island economy
Objective 4: Tackling the Climate Emergency
Objective 5: COVID 19 - Green Recovery



1	Link to Draft PfG 2021 Outcome <sup>1</sup>									What we will do and by when	How will this achieve our objective	Owner	Dfi Objectives										
	Our children and young people have the best start in life	We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment	We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect	We all enjoy long, healthy active lives	Everyone can reach their potential	Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral	Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other	We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives	People want to live, work and visit here				Fulfilling our statutory duties	Connecting People and Communities	Addressing regional imbalance and growing the all island economy	Tackling the Climate Emergency	COVID 19 - Green Recovery						
		✓							✓	Maintenance of Drainage, Flood Defence, Reservoirs, Control Structures and Inland Waterways Assets in 2023-24	<p><b>1.1</b> By <b>31 March 2024</b>, maintain drainage and flood defence infrastructure to protect people and property by repairing at least.</p> <p>1.1(i) <b>0.5 km</b> of designated culverts,</p> <p>1.1(ii) <b>3 km</b> of fluvial defences and</p> <p>1.1(iii) Complete the inspection of 100% of the culvert manhole chambers (lamping survey) highlighted for survey within the reporting year, as advised by AMMU. <b>(1964)</b></p> <p><b>1.2</b> Inspect &amp; maintain as required, <b>98%</b> of all designated urban open watercourses.</p> <p><b>1.3</b> Inspect &amp; maintain as required, <b>98%</b> of all designated culvert inlet grilles.</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Maintain a minimum of <b>389 designated</b> rural open watercourses.</p> <p><b>1.5 Controlled Reservoirs</b> - Inspect and maintain Dfi's own stock of controlled reservoirs (7 No) in accordance with the recommendations given by the Inspecting and Supervising Engineers.</p> <p><b>1.6 Control Structures</b> -Inspect and maintain Dfi water control structures.</p> <p><b>1.7 Inland Waterways</b> – carry out statutory obligations to dredge the channel and maintain the navigation posts or marks at the entrance to the Sixmilewater River from Lough Neagh (Section 6(3)(ii) of the Lough Neagh and Lower Bann Drainage Act (Northern Ireland) 1955);</p>	<p>1.1(i) O McGivern</p> <p>1.1(ii) O McGivern</p> <p>1.1(iii) J Kelly</p>	<p>1.2 J Kelly</p>	<p>1.3 J Kelly</p>	<p>1.4 J Kelly</p>	<p>1.5 J Kelly</p>	<p>1.6 J Kelly</p>	<p>1.7 J Kelly</p>	✓		✓		

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/programme-government-pfg>

	Link to Draft PfG 2021 Outcome <sup>1</sup>									What we will do and by when	How will this achieve our objective	Owner	DfI Objectives				
	Our children and young people have the best start in life	We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment	We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect	We all enjoy long, healthy active lives	Everyone can reach their potential	Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral	Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other	We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives	People want to live, work and visit here				Fulfilling our statutory duties	Connecting People and Communities	Addressing regional imbalance and growing the all island economy	Tackling the Climate Emergency	COVID 19 - Green Recovery
											<b>1.8 Inland Waterways</b> - maintain DfI sites on Lagan Navigation including towpath and bridges, to ensure safe and accessible route for walking and cycling.	1.8 J Kelly					
2		✓						✓	Flood Alleviation		<b>2.1</b> Construct infrastructure to offer enhanced flood protection to <b>1000</b> properties and invest approximately <b>21m</b> to reduce public safety risk from flooding or asset failure by April 2024. <b>2.2</b> Ensure <b>90%</b> of requests to Rivers for assistance are responded to within 3 hours, during flooding events up to a level defined as significant.	2.1 O McGivern 2.2 J Kelly	✓			✓	
3		✓						✓	Advice to Land Use Planners and the Public		<b>3.1</b> Respond to <b>98%</b> of Schedule 6 applications within 3 months of receipt. <b>3.2</b> Respond to <b>70%</b> of planning application consultations within 21 calendar days of receipt. <b>3.3</b> Respond to <b>100%</b> of all statutory LDP consultations no later than the target date set by DfI Strategic Planning. <b>3.4</b> Respond to <b>100%</b> of written enquiries for Hydrometric Data within 15 working days of receipt.	3.1 J Kelly 3.2 O McGivern 3.3 O McGivern 3.4 J Kelly	✓			✓	
4		✓						✓	Work constructively with Rivers key stakeholders to support the delivery of services		<b>4.1</b> Respond to <b>100%</b> of all non-statutory LDP consultations no later than the target date set by the Council issuing the consultation. <b>4.2</b> Respond to <b>100%</b> of all applicants to the Homeowner Flood Protection Grant Scheme (HFPGS) within 7 days to acknowledge receipt of their application. <b>4.3</b> Respond to <b>90%</b> of all HFPGS applicants with 8 weeks of receipt of their application to inform if the application has been successful.	4.1 O McGivern 4.2 J Kelly 4.3 J Kelly	✓			✓	

	Link to Draft PfG 2021 Outcome <sup>1</sup>									What we will do and by when	How will this achieve our objective	Owner	Dfi Objectives				
	Our children and young people have the best start in life	We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment	We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect	We all enjoy long, healthy active lives	Everyone can reach their potential	Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral	Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other	We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives	People want to live, work and visit here				Fulfilling our statutory duties	Connecting People and Communities	Addressing regional imbalance and growing the all island economy	Tackling the Climate Emergency	COVID 19 - Green Recovery
											<p><b>4.4</b> Carry out <b>500</b> successful spot gauges across the gauged station network.</p> <p><b>4.5</b> Carry out a minimum of <b>3 visits at 100%</b> of the gauged station network (currently <b>70</b> No) to carry out spot gauging.</p>	<p>4.4 J Kelly</p> <p>4.5 J Kelly</p>					
5		✓						✓	Ensure Rivers communicate effectively with its customers to promote better understanding of service provision.	5. Respond to <b>90%</b> of written enquiries from customers within 15 working days of receipt.	5. S Donnelly	✓			✓		
6		✓						✓	Support the WDPD in the progression of the further commencement of the Reservoir Safety Framework as defined within the Reservoirs Act (NI) 2015 by March 2024.	<p>The provision of information and expertise to support the further commencement of the Act and the processes and resources required to administer it.</p> <p><b>6.1</b> Resourcing Reservoir Authority and Reservoirs Operations Team by March 2024.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Finalise Reservoir Authority process development by March 2024.</p>	<p>6.1 S Donnelly, V Morosan</p> <p>6.2 S Donnelly, V Morosan</p>	✓			✓		