Environment Agency

River Medway Catchment Flood Management Plan

Summary Report December 2009

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The Environment Agency. Out there, making your environment a better place.

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Introduction

I am pleased to introduce our summary of the Medway Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP). This CFMP gives an overview of the flood risk in the Medway catchment and sets out our preferred plan for sustainable flood risk management over the next 50 to 100 years.

The Medway CFMP is one of 77 CFMPs for England and Wales. Through the CFMPs, we have assessed inland flood risk across all of England and Wales for the first time. The CFMP considers all types of inland flooding, from rivers, groundwater, surface water and tidal flooding, but not flooding directly from the sea (coastal flooding), which is covered by Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs). Our coverage of surface and groundwater is however limited due to a lack of available information.

The role of CFMPs is to establish flood risk management policies which will deliver sustainable flood risk management for the long term. This is essential if we are to make the right investment decisions for the future and to help prepare ourselves effectively for the impact of climate change. We will use CFMPs to help us target our limited resources where the risks are greatest.

This CFMP identifies flood risk management policies to assist all key decision makers in the catchment. It was produced through a wide consultation and appraisal process, however it is only the first step towards an integrated approach to flood risk management. As we all work together to achieve our objectives, we must monitor and listen to each others progress, discuss what has been achieved and consider where we may need to review parts of the CFMP.

The main source of flood risk in the Medway CFMP area is from localised river flooding, mainly located in Tonbridge, Collier Street, Yalding, East Peckham and surface water flooding in Maidstone.

We cannot reduce flood risk on our own, we will therefore work closely with all our partners to improve the co-ordination of flood risk activities and agree the most effective way to management flood risk in the future. The key partners we have worked with to carry out the actions to reduce flood risk include Tandridge District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Wealden District Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Edenbridge Town Council, Natural England, Southern Water, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board.

This is a summary of the main CFMP document, if you need to see the full document an electronic version can be obtained by emailing **enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk** or alternatively paper copies can be viewed at any of our offices in Southern Region.

Toby Willison
Regional Director, Southern Region

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The purpose of a CFMP in managing flood risk

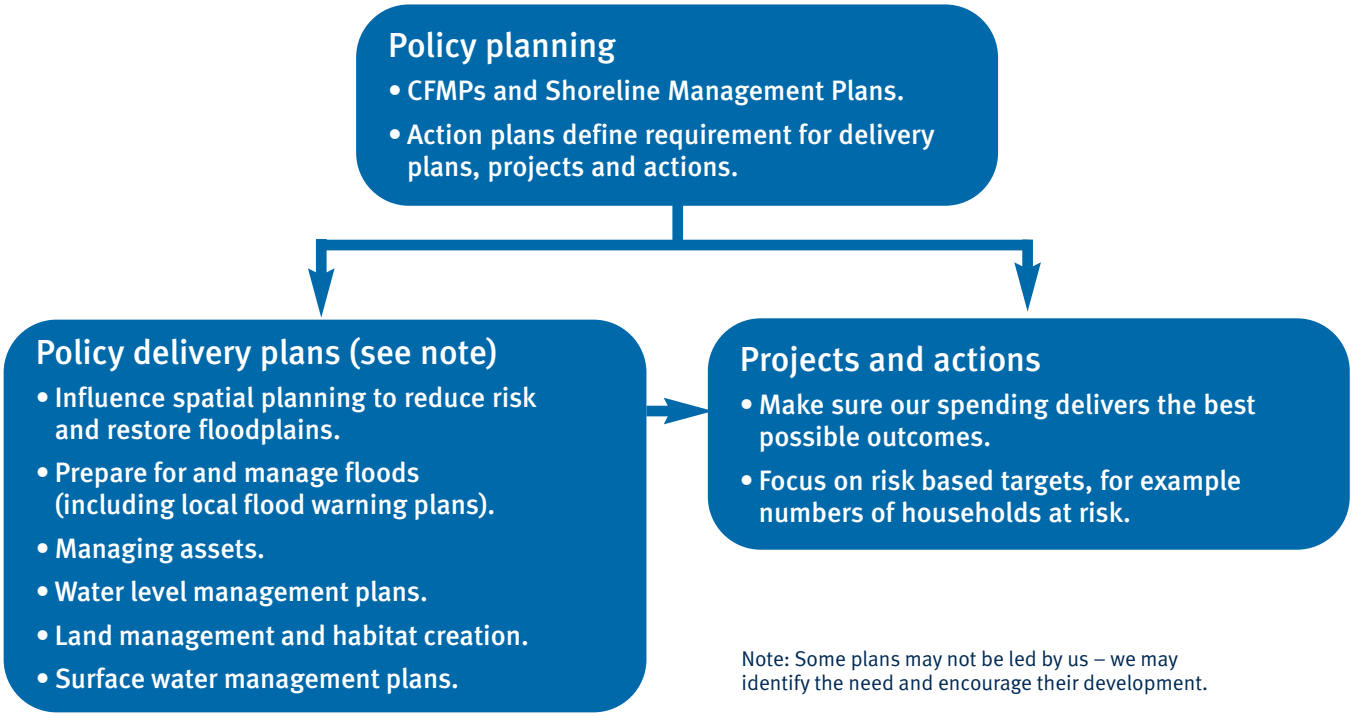
CFMPs help us to understand the scale and extent of flooding now and in the future, and set policies for managing flood risk within the catchment. CFMPs should be used to inform planning and decision making by key stakeholders such as:

- The Environment Agency, who will use the plan to guide decisions on investment in further plans, projects or actions;
- Regional planning bodies and local authorities who can use the plan to inform spatial planning activities and emergency planning;
- IDBs, water companies and other utilities to help plan their activities in the wider context of the catchment;
- Transportation planners;
- Land owners, farmers and land managers that manage and operate land for agriculture, conservation and amenity purposes;
- The public and businesses to enhance their understanding of flood risk and how it will be managed.

CFMPs aim to promote more sustainable approaches to managing flood risk. The policies identified in the CFMP will be delivered through a combination of different approaches. Together with our partners, we will implement these approaches through a range of delivery plans, projects and actions.

The relationship between the CFMP, delivery plans, strategies, projects and actions is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1. The relationship between CFMPs, delivery plans, projects and actions.



Note: Some plans may not be led by us – we may identify the need and encourage their development.

Catchment overview

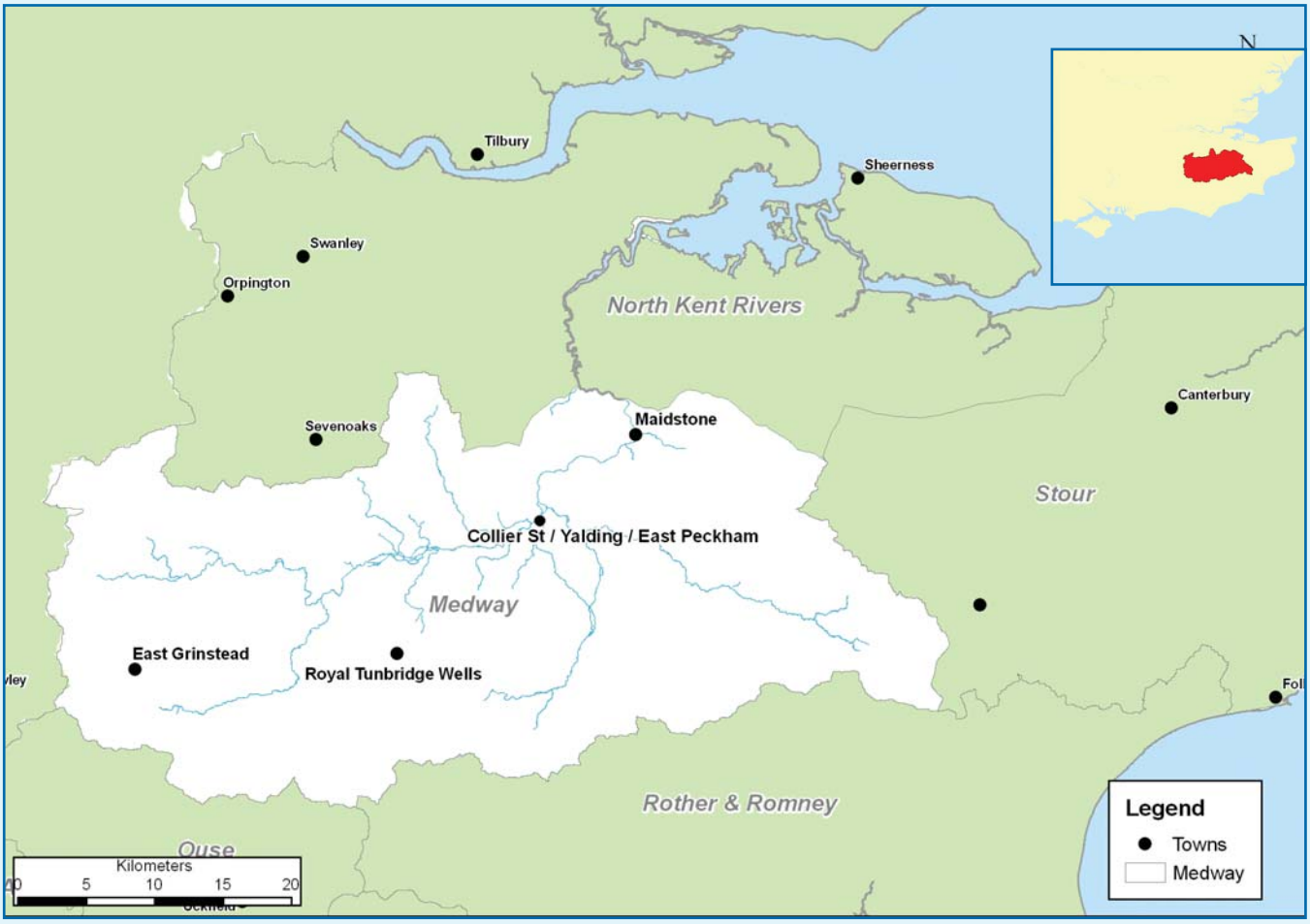
The Medway CFMP area is situated in the South East of England and covers approximately 1388km^2. It contains the heavily managed River Medway and its four main tributaries the Eden, Bourne, Teise and Beult. The mechanisms of flooding are complex and interdependent but the main cause is posed by rivers and surface water and to a lesser extent groundwater. Risks to people, property and infrastructure are dispersed throughout the catchment. The main risk is concentrated in Edenbridge, Tonbridge, the confluence of the tributaries near East Peckham and Yalding, and at Maidstone.

The Medway is a heavily managed river. Activities currently in place serve a balance of measures that manage navigation, water levels and flood risk. The Medway is home to one of the largest flood storage reservoirs in the UK, the Leigh Barrier, that stores up to 5.6M m^3 and regulates flow in response to high rainfall. Elsewhere on the river a series of sluices regulate flow during high and normal flow conditions to allow navigation and improve flora and fauna. Flood walls and earth embankments offer towns and villages further flood protection at Tonbridge, Smarden and Edenbridge.

'The catchment has a range of topographies and diverse underlying soils, creating high gradient watercourses in the Upper Medway and Teise and very low gradient watercourses in the Beult and in the Middle Medway.'

← The Weald, East Sussex.

Map 1. Overview map of the Medway catchment.



The catchment has a range of topographies and diverse underlying soils. This creates relatively high gradient watercourses in the upper catchment to the south and west (Upper Medway and Teise), and very low gradient watercourses in the east (Beult) and in the centre (Middle Medway). To the south and west the river system is characterised by deeply incised rivers which had cut through siltstones and sandstones and clays. The east west band of impermeable weald clay, from which the Eden and Beult rise, means surface run-off can play a significant part in the Medway drainage. The Teise, Beult and Bourne tributaries converge with the Medway in the centre of the CFMP area forming a large flat floodplain area. From the confluence the Medway flows north and has cut a steep sided valley through the Ragstone Ridge south of Maidstone.

The Medway CFMP is predominantly rural catchment with high agricultural importance. The higher grade agricultural land is concentrated in the north east part of the catchment. There are also areas of great landscape character and environmental value, with nearly three quarters of the catchment being protected by the National Kent Downs AONB and the High Weald AONB. The Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA is the only internationally designated site which is located outside of the floodplain.

Current and future flood risk

Overview of the current flood risk

Flood risk is the combination of the likelihood of a flood occurring and the consequences when it does. We have assessed flood risk across the CFMP area using broad-scale computer modelling, though making best use of existing knowledge and models where appropriate. Flood risk figures take into account current flood defences. Serious flooding can occur in the River Medway CFMP area, and the main source is from river flooding with a minor influence from tidal conditions, however in many parts of the catchment, flooding brings environmental benefits to habitats such as wet woodland and reed bed.

Flood risk is concentrated in Edenbridge, Tonbridge, and the confluence of the tributaries near Collier Street, East Peckham and Yalding. Upstream locations in the catchment such at Lamberhurst and Smarden are both at some degree of risk and can flood despite defence measures. The urban areas of Tonbridge and Maidstone are at flood risk from high rainfall events. Tonbridge relies on the operation of the Leigh Barrier and maintained walls to protect property in the floodplain.

Where is the risk?

The map on page 10 illustrates the consequences of a 1% annual probability event (1 in 100 year) occurring in the CFMP area.

The areas with the highest concentration of properties at risk from river or groundwater flooding are shown in the following table:

↑ Looking upstream on the River Beult, near Staplehurst.

How we currently manage the risk

Our activity is prioritised on a risk basis. Our main activities include:

- **Maintenance of existing flood defences and structures** such as the Leigh Flood Storage Reservoir on the River Medway which protects Tonbridge. The channel of the river Medway is managed/ maintained for navigation at various locations including Edenbridge, Smarden and Maidstone.
- **Maintenance of existing navigation structures** such as maintenance activity between Tonbridge and Maidstone.
- **Flood forecasting and warnings**, which are currently sent to approximately 2900 properties in the catchment, aim to give at least two hours lead time ahead of river flooding.
- **Development control** to influence spatial planning so that new developments are sited away from flood risk areas, or take appropriate mitigation measures.
- **Flood risk mapping** ensure that our data needs are met and to map and model flood risk.
- **Strategic planning** to plan long term investment.
- **Environmental improvements**.

Table 1. Locations of towns and villages with 25 or more properties at risk in a 1% annual probability river flood.

Number of properties at risk	Locations
>1000	None
500 to 1000	Tonbridge, Collier St, Yalding, East Peckham
100 to 500	Upper catchment, Edenbridge, Teise, Beult, Maidstone
50 to 100	None
25 to 50	None

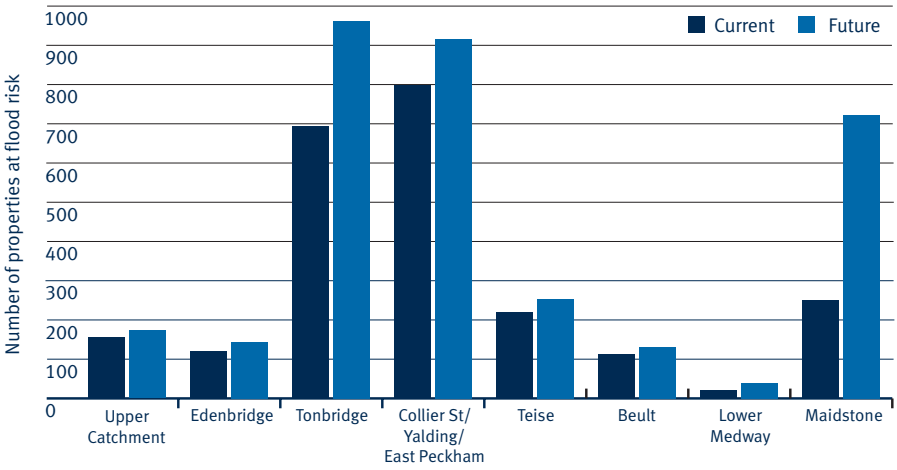
Table 2. Critical infrastructure at risk:

9 electricity sub stations

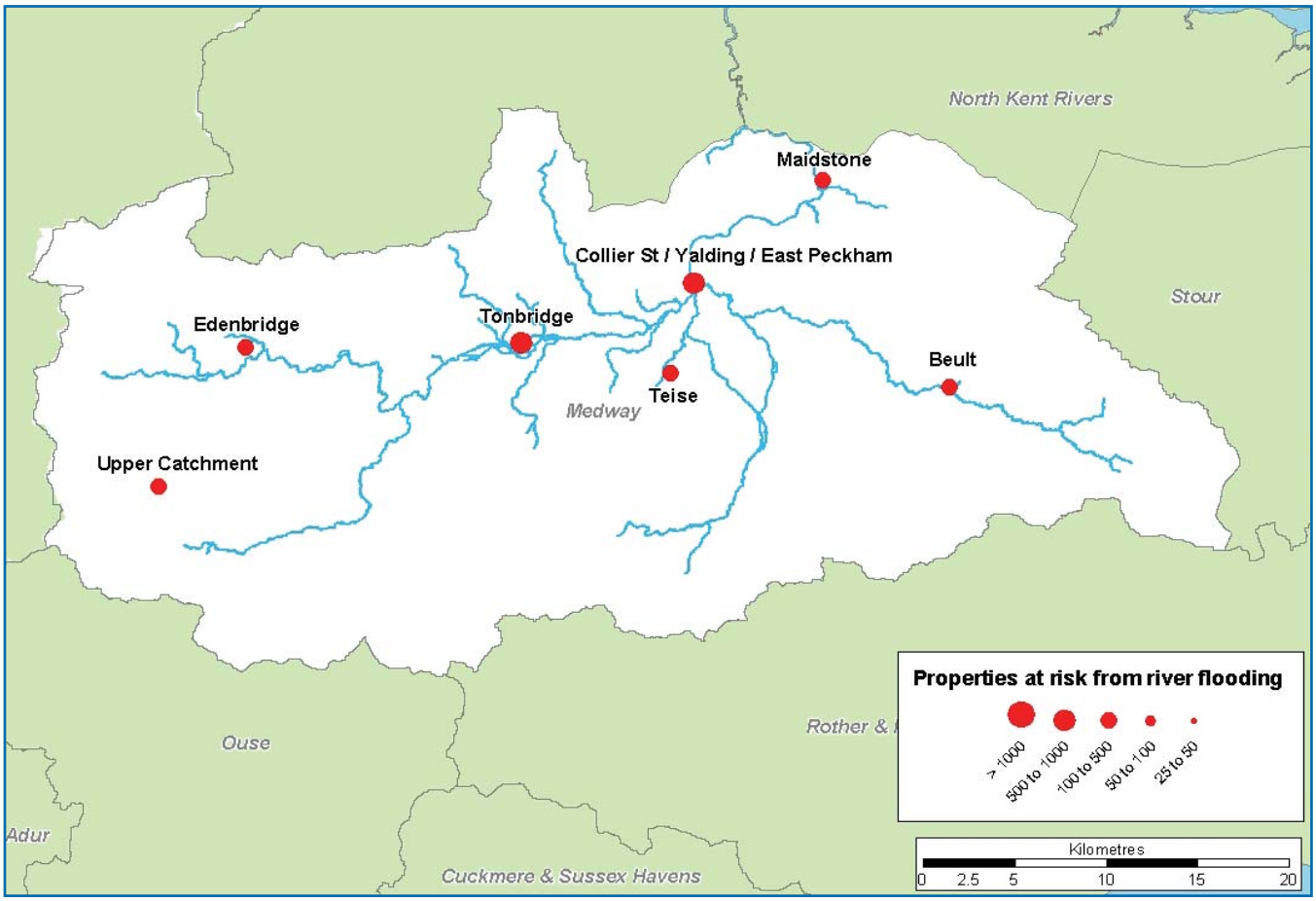
Table 3. Designated sites at risk:

Ashdown Forest SAC, SPA

Figure 2. Current and future (2100) flood risk to property from a 1% annual probability river flood, taking into account current flood defences.



Map 2. Flood risk to property in a 1% annual probability river flood, taking into account current flood defences.



The impact of climate change and future flood risk

The effect that flooding will have in the future is influenced by a range of issues such as climate change, changes in land use such as development, and changes in how land is managed.

Predictions of future change are based on understanding the existing condition of the catchment, an extrapolation of trends over the long term (up to 100 years), and a high level review of likely future change based on research findings and knowledge. The broadscale modelling found future urban development or change in land use to have no significant impact on fluvial flooding. The CFMP has investigated the sensitivity of the rainfall-runoff model parameters considered to be affected by land management practice. However, in the absence of clear guidelines associated with land management practice and flood risk, the flood impacts at the catchment level could not be meaningfully associated to a future scenario. Similarly, the combined scenario which includes parameters for land use change cannot be used with confidence. For these reasons the most confidence remains in the climate change scenario, it is expected that this scenario will have the greatest effect on future flood risk with up to 20% increase in peak flood flows. This scenario is used to assess likely impacts in the catchment. In the Medway catchment the future flood risk is likely to be from river flooding and some surface water flooding. Our appraisal of the future risk in the catchment reveals the number of properties at risk to the 1% annual probability event will increase from 2,397 to 3,350 properties by the year 2100. The majority of these properties are located in Tonbridge, Maidstone, Collier Street, Yalding, East Peckham and Edenbridge.

The key trends are:

- More frequent and intense storms causing more widespread and regular flooding from drainage systems and some rivers.
- More rain in winter, increasing the likelihood of large scale flood events.
- Rising sea levels.

Future direction for flood risk management

Approaches in each sub-area

We have divided the River Medway catchment into nine distinct sub-areas which have similar physical characteristics, sources of flooding and level of risk. We have identified the most appropriate approach to managing flood risk for each of the sub-areas and allocated one of six generic flood risk management policies, shown in Table 4.

To select the most appropriate policy, the plan has considered how social, economic and environmental objectives are affected by flood risk management activities under each policy option.

Map 3. Sub-areas and flood risk management policies.

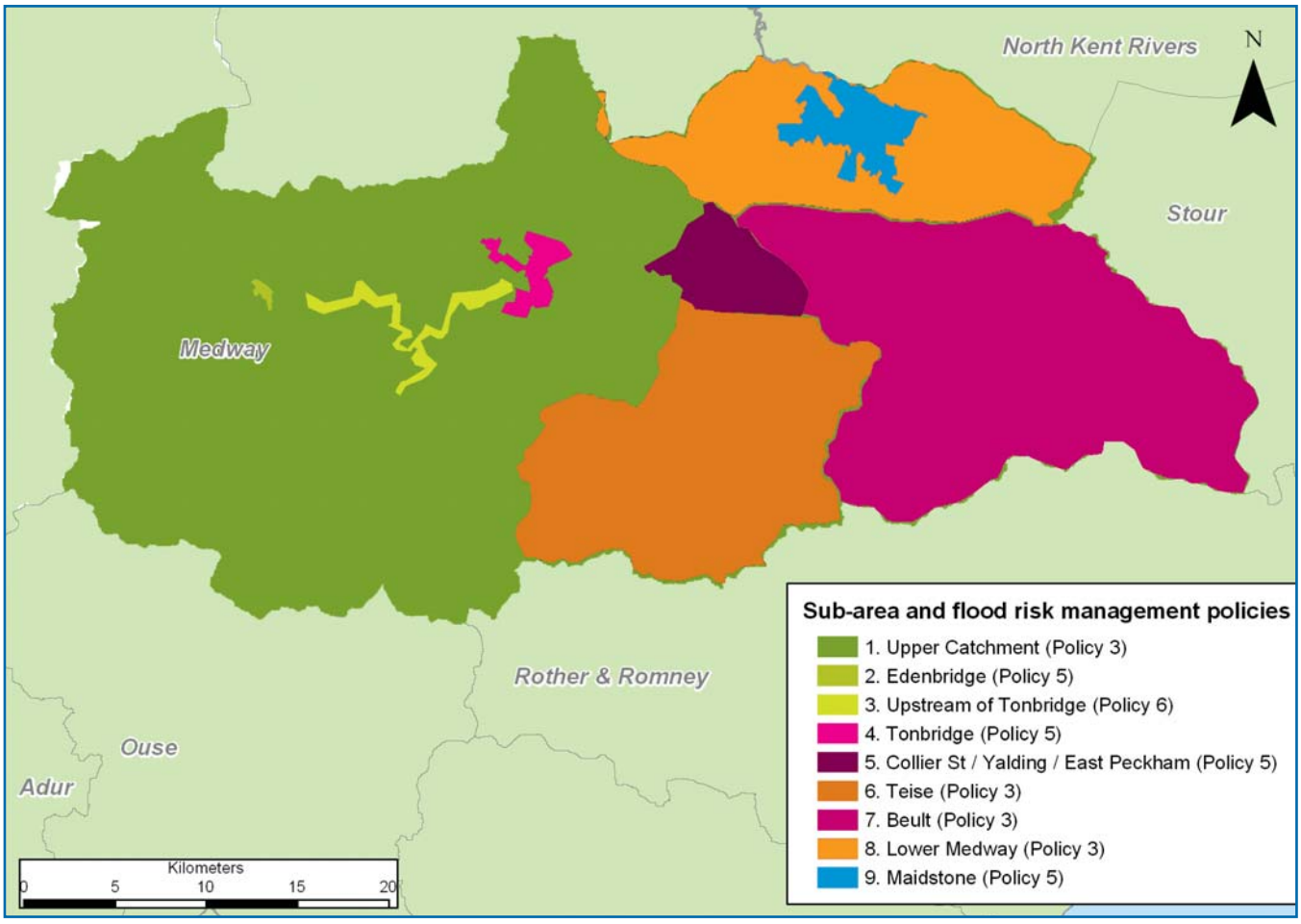


Table 4. Policy options.

→ Policy 1

Areas of little or no flood risk where we will continue to monitor and advise

This policy will tend to be applied in those areas where there are very few properties at risk of flooding. It reflects a commitment to work with the natural flood processes as far as possible.

→ Policy 2

Areas of low to moderate flood risk where we can generally reduce existing flood risk management actions

This policy will tend to be applied where the overall level of risk to people and property is low to moderate. It may no longer be value for money to focus on continuing current levels of maintenance of existing defences if we can use resources to reduce risk where there are more people at higher risk. We would therefore review the flood risk management actions being taken so that they are proportionate to the level of risk.

→ Policy 3

Areas of low to moderate flood risk where we are generally managing existing flood risk effectively

This policy will tend to be applied where the risks are currently appropriately managed and where the risk of flooding is not expected to increase significantly in the future. However, we keep our approach under review, looking for improvements and responding to new challenges or information as they emerge. We may review our approach to managing flood defences and other flood risk management actions, to ensure that we are managing efficiently and taking the best approach to managing flood risk in the longer term.

→ Policy 4

Areas of low, moderate or high flood risk where we are already managing the flood risk effectively but where we may need to take further actions to keep pace with climate change

This policy will tend to be applied where the risks are currently deemed to be appropriately-managed, but where the risk of flooding is expected to significantly rise in the future. In this case we would need to do more in the future to contain what would otherwise be increasing risk. Taking further action to reduce risk will require further appraisal to assess whether there are socially and environmentally sustainable, technically viable and economically justified options.

→ Policy 5

Areas of moderate to high flood risk where we can generally take further action to reduce flood risk

This policy will tend to be applied to those areas where the case for further action to reduce flood risk is most compelling, for example where there are many people at high risk, or where changes in the environment have already increased risk. Taking further action to reduce risk will require additional appraisal to assess whether there are socially and environmentally sustainable, technically viable and economically justified options.

→ Policy 6

Areas of low to moderate flood risk where we will take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits

This policy will tend to be applied where there may be opportunities in some locations to reduce flood risk locally or more widely in a catchment by storing water or managing run-off. The policy has been applied to an area (where the potential to apply the policy exists), but would only be implemented in specific locations within the area, after more detailed appraisal and consultation.

Upper catchment

Our key partners are:

- Sevenoaks District Council
- Wealden District Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Tandridge District Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	157	173

The issues in this sub-area

The upper catchment covers the River Medway where both the Medway and Eden rise. The area stretches from the area south of Sevenoaks and Caterham, to Royal Tunbridge Wells, East Grinstead and Crowborough. Flood risk is well distributed throughout but available data suggests it is managed well and that risk is relatively low. Surface water flooding can occur in urban areas such as Royal Tunbridge Wells, East Grinstead and Crowborough.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 3 – areas of low to moderate flood risk where we are generally managing existing flood risk effectively.

The key messages

The increased risk is scattered across this large policy unit. Risk increases by small amounts near Forest Row, Hadlow and Golden Green and with some satellite properties close to Edenbridge and Penshurst. Some risk will be posed from other sources of flooding, primarily from surface water, within East Grinstead, Royal Tunbridge Wells and Crowborough. We will work with local authorities and utilities to manage these risks.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Undertake System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review maintenance regimes and to maintain current level of investment.
- With reference to the planned development at East Grinstead, PPS25 and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be followed to manage development that might influence the speed of run-off and flood risk.
- Work towards improving the flood warning service, Floodline Warnings Direct. Improve the accuracy of real-time flood warnings by assisting the development of our National Flood Forecasting System.
- Investigate opportunities to work with landowners to create wetland habitat (link to Regional Habitat Creation Programme).
- Implement the outcomes of the Middle Medway strategy, such as investigating schemes for Forest Row, Five Oak Green and Little Mill.
- Influence the development of emergency response plans.

↑ Fast flowing stream, Upper Medway Catchment.

Edenbridge

Our key partners are:

Sevenoaks District Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	120	Not available

The issues in this sub-area

The head waters of the Eden come together upstream of Edenbridge before they are constricted by the bridge crossings as they flow through the urban area. Property here is built on the flood plain and channel improvements and defences currently extend them protection. The flood risk in this policy unit is considered high.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 5 – areas of moderate to high flood risk where we can generally take further action to reduce flood risk.

The key messages

The economic impacts of flooding and the social impacts of risk to life from frequent flooding at fairly large depths and velocities justify taking further action.

↑ Bridge crossing the River Eden.

↑ The low bank defences at Edenbridge.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Implement the outcomes of the Middle Medway strategy to reduce flood risk in Edenbridge.
- Develop a feasibility study of storage options upstream of Edenbridge and improvement to local defences in order to benefit Edenbridge, Penshurst and downstream towns such as Tonbridge, Yalding and Maidstone.
- With reference to development in Edenbridge, PPS25 and the SFRA should be followed to avoid inappropriate development in the floodplain and to influence development to effectively to manage flood risk.
- Influence and further develop the local emergency response plan to mitigate flood risk in Edenbridge, linking in with existing civil contingencies.
- Undertake System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review maintenance regimes, to assess future investment needs and to reduce the current level of risk.

Upstream of Tonbridge

Our key partners are:

Sevenoaks District Council

Natural England

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	Minimal	Minimal

The issues in this sub-area

This sub-area covers the rural area upstream of Tonbridge that includes the confluence of the Eden and Medway. During high flow, major attenuation of flood waters occurs here at the Leigh flood storage reservoir and upstream of Tonbridge on this sub-areas active floodplain.

There is minimal risk of flooding in this sub-area.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 6 – areas of low to moderate flood risk where we will take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits.

The key messages

In the future there are limited social or economic losses with the policy unit and a number of environmental gains associated with increasing the frequency of flooding in the area.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Develop a System Action Management Plan (SAMP) to review current maintenance and operation of current flood risk measures including the Leigh Barrier.
- Investigate opportunities to work with landowners and conservation organisations to create and restore grazing marsh wetland habitat (link to Regional Habitat Creation Programme).

← Flood water storage at the Leigh Barrier.

Tonbridge

Our key partners are:

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	694	962

The issues in this sub-area

A higher degree of risk management is required properties and infrastructure at risk in this policy unit. Associated cost of flood damages mean that management activities need to be considered above what is currently in place. The Middle Medway strategy has previously looked at options to improve flood protection in the catchment. A higher degree of protection for people and property is required.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 5 – areas of moderate to high flood risk where we can generally take further action to reduce flood risk.

The key messages

The chosen policy best supports economic and social objectives. While Tonbridge currently receives a standard of protection from the Leigh flood storage reservoir, Policy 5 recognises that the level of risk in this unit irrespective of previous management is very large in terms of receptors; people, properties and critical infrastructure. Risk is due to increase by about 270 properties or about 640 people when comparing a current and future 1% event. Damages are expected to approximately double in the future as a result of climate change. It is recommended that management should improve and be carried out to more than its current level to minimalise this increase in risk.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Implement the outcomes of the Middle Medway Strategy to reduce flood risk in Tonbridge.
- Undertake System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review maintenance regimes, to assess future investment needs and to reduce the current level of risk.
- With reference to development in Tonbridge, PPS25 and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be followed to avoid inappropriate development in the floodplain and to influence development to effectively to manage flood risk.
- Work toward improving the Flood Warnings Direct service. We will continue to develop our National Flood Forecasting System which will improve our ability to forecast flooding at Tonbridge.

←Tonbridge Great Lock.

Collier Street/Yalding/ East Peckham

Our key partners are:

Maidstone District Council

Tonbridge and Malling District Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	798	917

The issues in this sub-area

The most extensive and severe flooding effects are felt at the confluence of the Medway with its tributaries. The sub-area covers an area at the bottom of the Middle Medway area that constitutes the highest level of flood risk. It contains the villages of Yalding, Laddingford, East Peckham and Collier Street and is where the Medway is joined by the two tributaries the Beult and the Teise. The flood risk in this policy unit is highest in the CFMP, with flood depths potentially reaching anything up to 3.5 metres during a 1% probability event.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 5 – areas of moderate to high flood risk where we can generally take further action to reduce flood risk.

The key messages

Risk is clearly high in this sub-area and the importance of maintenance or reducing the risk to this area is therefore very high.

Weir system from Twyford Bridge on the River Medway, Yalding. ➜

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Implement the outcomes of the Middle Medway strategy.
  - o Consider new flood walls or earth embankments at Collier Street, Yalding and East Peckham.
  - o Produce feasibility study for further storage options at upstream locations, benefiting locations on or around the confluence of the Medway and its tributaries.
  - o Assist and provide education with flood proofing of properties where appropriate.
- Influence and further develop the local emergency response plan to mitigate flood risk at Collier Street, Yalding and East Peckham linking in with existing civil contingencies.
- Develop a System Action Management Plan (SAMP). We will continue to develop our National Flood Forecasting System which will improve our ability to forecast flooding at Collier Street, Yalding and East Peckham.

↑ Sluice gates at the Yalding Depot.

Teise

Our key partners are:

Tunbridge Wells District Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	220	254

The issues in this sub-area

The flood risk in this policy unit is largely centred at Lamberhurst and Paddock Wood, with some properties between Lamberhurst and Collier Street at risk.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 3 – areas of low to moderate flood risk where we are generally managing existing flood risk effectively.

The key messages

The level of flood risk in the Teise sub-area is relatively low. Flood risk also does not increase significantly due to climate change. Continuing with our current levels of investment, with the option to implement better alternatives should the opportunity arise, is therefore the most appropriate response.

↑ Confluence at the River Teise and minor tributary, near Colliers Street.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Develop System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review current maintenance. Current assets to be maintained at Lamberhurst and Paddock Wood.
- With reference to development in Paddock Wood, PPS25 and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be followed to avoid inappropriate development in the floodplain and to influence development to effectively to manage flood risk.
- Work toward improving the Flood Warnings Direct service. We will continue to develop our National Flood Forecasting System which will improve our ability to forecast flooding on the River Teise.

Beult

Our key partners are:

- Maidstone Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Ashford Borough Council
- Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board
- Natural England

The issues in this sub-area

The River Beult catchment has a relatively low gradient and has fluvial flood risk from typically frequent but less severe flood events. However the impacts of climate change may increase the frequency of these and larger events in the future. The flood risk to properties is dispersed throughout the catchment but there are significant centres around Smarden, Staplehurst and Headcorn.

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	114	131

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 3 – areas of low to moderate flood risk where we are generally managing existing flood risk effectively.

The key messages

The chosen policy supports the environmental objectives while meeting economic and social objectives best.

The current level of risk is acceptable and is set to remain at an acceptable level into the future if we maintain the current level of investment.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Implementat the River Beult Water Level Management Plan to enhance the habitat in the tributary.
- Work toward improving the Flood Warnings Direct service. We will continue to develop our National Flood Forecasting System which will improve our ability to forecast flooding at Smarden and Headcorn.
- Assist and provide education with flood proofing of properties where appropriate.
- Develop System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review current maintenance.
- Maintain current flood risk at Smarden and Headcorn.

←Hawkenbury Bridge over the River Beult, near Staplehurst.

Lower Medway

Our key partners are:

Maidstone Borough Council

Medway Valley Countryside Partnership

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	22	39

The issues in this sub-area

This sub-area covers the area outside of Maidstone and the Lower Medway River between the Ragstone Ridge and Allington Sluice. For navigation purposes the Environment Agency actively maintains this part of the Lower Medway until downstream of the Allington Sluice at Aylesford. The flood risk in this sub-area is low as there are very few properties within the floodplain.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 3 – areas of low to moderate flood risk where we are generally managing existing flood risk effectively.

The key messages

The chosen policy supports the environmental objectives while meeting economic and social objectives best.

The relatively small number of properties at risk and infrequent nature of flooding mean that the continuing with current management with the potential for implementing alternative actions to manage risk at today's level is an acceptable measure.

Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Continue to support the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and maintain the Medway valley as a green corridor for wildlife and recreation through community support and action.
- Develop System Action Management Plans (SAMPs) to review current maintenance and continue to meet navigation requirements.
- Work toward improving the Flood Warnings Direct service. We will continue to develop our National Flood Forecasting System which will improve our ability to forecast flooding within this policy unit.

Teston Lock. →

Maidstone

Our key partners are:

Maidstone Borough Council

Impact of a 1% annual probability flood event

	Today	Future (2100)
Number of properties at risk	251	722

The issues in this sub-area

This sub-area covers the urban area of Maidstone. The flood risk is currently considered to be moderate due to the levels of the flood protection offered and the relative infrequency of flood events. Surface water flooding is a significant problem in this area and there is also some fluvial flood risk, Maidstone is also affected by high tide levels which can impede the drainage of floodwater, worsening flood events. In the future the effects of climate change could significantly increase flood risk by increasing both the effects of tide locking, and through increased surfacewater flooding from more extreme rainfall events.

The vision and preferred policy

Policy Option 5 – areas of moderate to high flood risk where we can generally take further action to reduce flood risk.

The key messages

The chosen policy supports economic and social sustainability by recognising that the level of risk in the policy unit is high within the CFMP catchment.

The level of risk is such that measures should be taken to increase flood protection for the present risk and for the future.

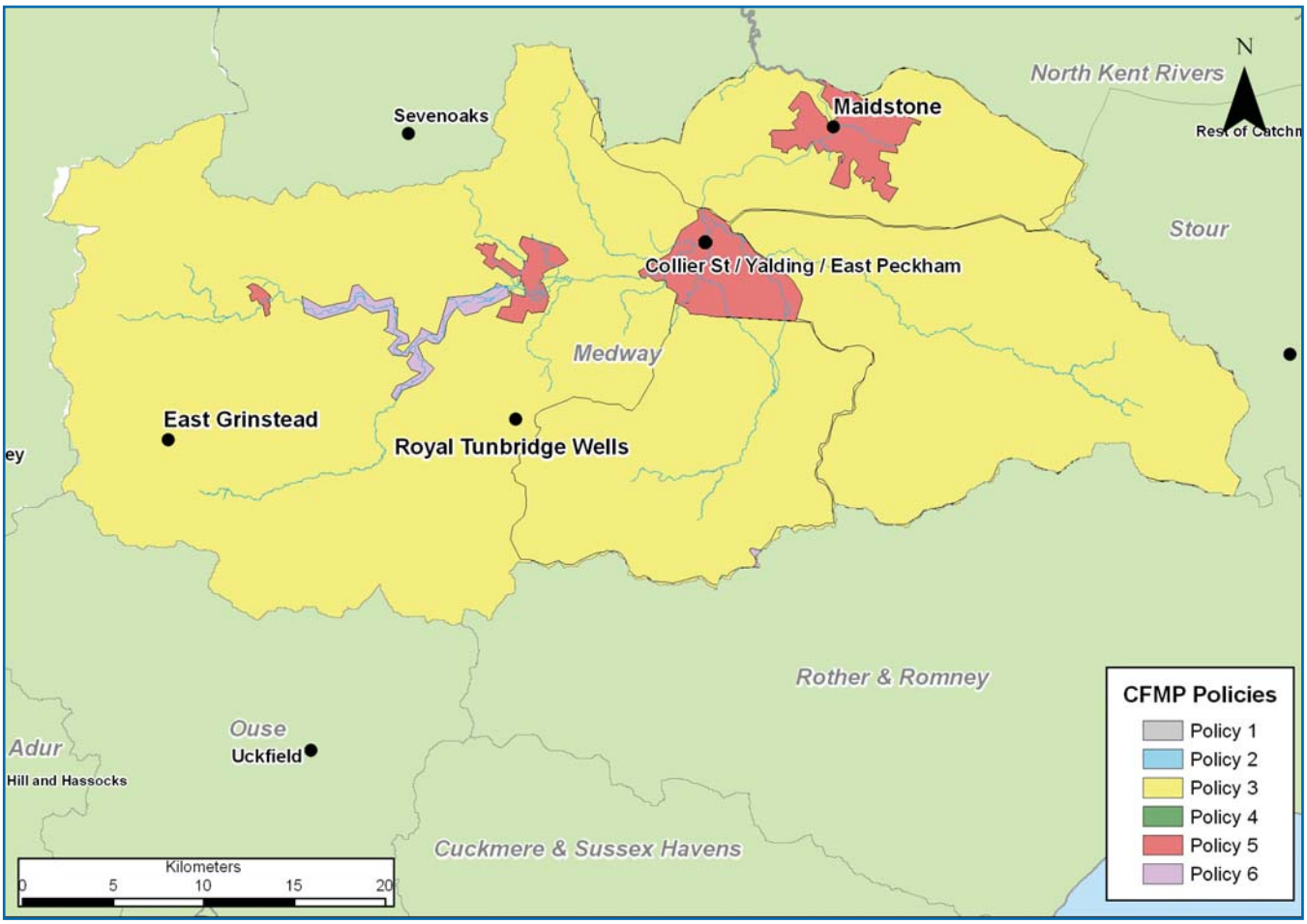
Proposed actions to implement the preferred approach:

- Develop a System Action Management Plan (SAMP) to review current maintenance and encourage conveyance.
- Influence and further develop the local emergency response plan to mitigate flood risk in Maidstone linking in with existing civil contingencies.
- With reference to development in Maidstone, PPS25 and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be followed to avoid inappropriate development in the floodplain and to influence development to effectively to manage flood risk.
- Work towards improving the flood warning service, Floodline warnings Direct. Improve the accuracy of real-time flood warnings by assisting the development of our National Flood Forecasting System.

↑ Allington Lock, downstream of Maidstone.

Map of CFMP policies

Map of the policies in the River Medway catchment.



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incident hotline 0800 80 70 60 (24hrs)
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* Approximate call costs: 8p plus 6p per minute (standard landline).
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