



Welcome to the third in a series of newsletters designed to keep you up to date with our proposed changes to the way your local watercourse is maintained and regulated.

It's all change as proposals to re-designate stretches of low flood risk watercourses in your area are given the go ahead.

The effect of this re-designation is that selected watercourses in the South Forty Foot Catchment will be changed from Main River to ordinary watercourse.

The change means that the Environment Agency will no longer be responsible for the overall management of the watercourse. Instead, maintenance and flood risk management will be done at a more localised level by Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board.

This process is known as 'de-maining' and will help ensure that the right people are managing the right watercourses and assets in the right places.

How has the decision been made?

The Environment Agency is looking at new and innovative ways to deliver more for the environment by changing our ways of working and how we use our resources. As part of this, we have been working closely with Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board who wish to take more responsibility for maintaining and regulating their local, low flood risk, watercourses in Lincolnshire.

De-maining: how do we decide?



Areas have been chosen to be part of the Rationalising the Main River Network project because:



Low flood risk

All watercourses have low flood risk



No major river or large population

Watercourses are not major rivers or near major population centres.



We heard your views

We have consulted to seek the views of individuals, groups and organisations, who are affected by, or interested in the proposals



Local interest

Only where IDBs or lead local flood authorities/district councils are willing and the local community is supportive.

A major aspect of these proposals was understanding the benefits de-maining will bring to the South Forty Foot catchment. So, in addition to working alongside our partners at Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board, we also invited the community to have their say via a public consultation.

This consultation ran from midday on 15 January 2018 to midday on 12 February 2018. Overall feedback indicated support for de-maining with the majority of respondents in favour of more localised decision making around flood risk management.

We also held drop-in events throughout October 2017 with partner organisations and members of the public. For the public, events were organised to reach a broad spectrum of residents, to ensure they could inform our approach to the project. This engagement formed part of a longer programme of working with the local communities to shape the proposals, prior to a formal decision being taken.

The responses gathered from the consultation were thoroughly considered and used to finalise the proposals. This has ensured that the transfer of the selected watercourses will be delivered in the most effective way possible. We thank everybody who took part, and the document detailing the responses can be found here: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/fcrm/south-forty-foot-de-maining-pilot-proposals/>

What does the change mean for my community?

The Environment Agency is making this change as a 'determination' under section 193C (1) of the Water Resources Act 1991. This determination represents a formal decision to change the main river map.

The effect of this determination is that the following watercourses will no longer be treated as a main river but will be treated as an ordinary watercourse.

- Ewerby Catchwater
- Northlands Dyke
- Horbling Catchwater, New Cut and Diversion
- Atkins Cut
- Pointon Lode

This change will mean that the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board will be responsible for the management and maintenance for these watercourses. The Environment Agency will no longer have this responsibility.

De-maining aims to bring more choice to communities and local organisations in how watercourses are managed and maintained. In the South Forty Foot Catchment, this means decisions on watercourse maintenance will be made at a local level and be better informed through greater collaboration between all area stakeholders.

If you wish to view the proposals for this project, you can do so on the main river consultation map (please see link below). The change is shown as a 'deletion' - a red line - on the map.

Or you can view the main river consultation map at:

Environment Agency,
Ceres House,
2 Searby Road,
Lincoln,
LN2 4DT

What next?

On the 9 October 2018, the proposals were published as a designation change on GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/main-river-map-for-england-proposed-changes-and-decisions>.

The change to the main river map itself will take place after 6 weeks to allow for appeals to the decision.

If you disagree with this decision, you can appeal to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) by 19 November 2018.

If you wish to appeal, you should email: fmppo@defra.gsi.gov.uk explaining why you disagree with the decision or, get in touch with our local project lead, Abigail Jackson at: abigail.jackson@environment-agency.gov.uk.