



General Meeting

10am, Friday 31st January 2025

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (12th July 2024) *
4. Chair's Report *
Devolution White Paper and Local Government Reorganisation
5. Flood Risk in the East Midlands *
6. Regional Investment, Infrastructure and Growth *
7. Local Authority Workforce and Pay – Regional Employers' Board *
8. Asylum and Refugee Resettlement in the East Midlands *
9. Any Other Business

*Papers attached



Minutes of the East Midlands Councils Meeting

Friday 12th July 2024

(Nottinghamshire County Council)

Annual General Meeting

Cllr Martin Hill OBE chaired and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Cllr Naveed Alam, Cllr Pip Allnatt, Cllr Nigel Barker, Cllr David Bill, Cllr Lee Breckon, Cllr Adam Brown, Cllr Elly Cutkelvin, Cllr Alex Dale, Cllr James Dawson, Cllr Peter Dobbs, Cllr Anne Dorrian, Cllr Chris Emmas-Williams, Cllr Amanda Hack, Cllr Samia Haq, Cllr Graham Jeal, Cllr Corral Jenkins, Cllr Neghat Khan, Cllr Philip Owen, Cllr Nadine Peatfield, Cllr Rosemary Powell, Cllr Ramsay Ross, Cllr Nick Rushton, Cllr Claire Rylott, Cllr Simon Spencer, Cllr Naomi Tweddle, Cllr David Wilby, Cllr Nick Worth

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 Cllr Martin Hill declared an interest in land on the edge of Melton Mowbray – this is a standing Declaration of Interest held on file since September 2015.

3. Minutes of EMC meeting held on 9th February 2024

- 3.1 These were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Presentation of the Councillor Development Charter Award

- 4.1 Cllr Jewel Miah, Leader, Charnwood Borough Council received this accreditation award from Cllr Martin Hill.

5. EMC Chair's Report and Presentation of the Annual Report 2023/2024

- 5.1 Cllr Martin Hill formally presented the Annual Report to Members and highlighted work undertaken by EMC during the past year.
- 5.2 He highlighted to members the changes to Leaders in Local Authorities following the recent Elections.
- 5.3 Members agreed to delegate authority to EMC Chair/Vice Chairs and Political Group Leaders to confirm nominations to Midlands Connect and Midlands Engine boards.
- 5.4 Cllr Hill highlighted work areas and the key areas which have been delivered.
- 5.5 The APPG will be re-established shortly. Stuart Young highlighted the process of re-engagements with MPs and also to appoint new Co-Chairs. It is hoped this will be completed by the Autumn.
- 5.6 Cllr Jewel Miah reiterated the need to impress on MPs the challenges faced by Local Authorities.
- 5.7 Cllr Marianne Overton highlighted the 5 missions from labour and asked whether these needs to be focused on.
- 5.8 Stuart Young stated that this provides an important framework, however are still waiting for a number of announcements particularly in relation to investment proposals.
- 5.9 Cllr Phil King expressed concerns in relation to the new housing objective of building 50% more houses.
- 5.10 Cllr James Naish highlighted the issue of flooding and asked that EMC continues to push on this issue with the relevant authorities.
- 5.11 Resolution
Members of East Midlands Councils:
- Considered the issues highlighted in the report.

- Agreed the approach to confirming nominations to the Boards of Midlands Connect and Midlands Engine.
- Endorsed the annual report 2023/2024.

6. Presentation from Richard Humphries, Senior Policy Advisor, the Health Foundation, Visiting Professor at University of Worcester

- 6.1 Members received a presentation from Richard Humphries on Health & Social Care in a new political landscape: prospects and challenges for local government.
- 6.2 He provided an analysis of the biggest cost pressures that authorities are currently facing. There is currently an aging population, and people are experiencing more ill health. Poor health is causing wider problems for the economy.
- 6.3 Acute trusts tend to get the bulk of the funding. He feels that Local government needs to be a key part in securing care closer to home.

Questions/Comments

- 6.4 Cllr Martin Hill asked about potential policy changes that may support a redistribution of funding for local government and the NHS.
- 6.5 Cllr Sarah Russell asked if local government is in a good position to respond to a change of government. A significant challenge remains the siloed approach between Governments departments, and the challenges of working with more than one department on a single policy/programme issue.
- 6.6 Cllr Stuart Richardson suggested that overweight/obesity issues should be considered on a par with smoking and feels need to legislate against manufacturers on a similar basis to the tobacco industry.
- 6.7 Cllr Matthew Relf feels funding should be put into leisure facilities for people to lead healthier lives.
- 6.8 Cllr Kate Foale highlighted the need for early help and prevention although this can be difficult to get evidence and show that it works.

7. Changes to EMC Constitution

- 7.1 Stuart Young introduced this report and confirmed to members that proposed changes are intended to update arrangements, as stated in the covering report.

7.2 Resolution

Members of East Midlands Councils:

- Considered and endorsed the revised constitution and supporting governance documents.

8. Political Appointments

Stuart Young, Executive Director East Midlands Councils, took the Chair for this section of the meeting.

a) Political Group Leaders

- 8.1 The following were appointed as Group Leaders:
- Conservative – Cllr Phil King
 - Independent/Other – Cllr Matthew Relf
 - Labour - Cllr Jewel Miah
 - Liberal Democrat - Cllr David Bill MBE

b) Vice Chairs of East Midlands Councils

- 8.2 Cllr Sarah Russell (Leicester City Council) was appointed as Principal Vice Chair of East Midlands Councils and Cllr Tricia Gilby (Chesterfield Borough Council) was appointed as District-Vice Chair.

c) Chair of East Midlands Councils

- 8.3 Cllr Martin Hill OBE (Lincolnshire County Council) was appointed as Chair.

Cllr Martin Hill resumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

9. Motion(s) to East Midlands Councils

9.1 None submitted.

10. Regional Infrastructure and Investment

10.1 Andrew Pritchard introduced this report and updated Members on recent data in relation to economic growth.

10.2 He highlighted the work of TfEM Board to promote the shared priorities.

10.3 In relation to housing and planning issues, the government have pledged to build 1.5 million new homes over a 5 year period.

10.4 There is to be a review of the NPPF and measures will be in place to ensure all councils have up to date local plans. Funding will also be available for extra planning officers.

10.5 Cllr Stuart Richardson asked around the electrification of Midland Mainline and is also hopeful that investment will be delivered.

10.6 Andrew Pritchard confirmed the line will be electrified to South Wigston and the government will then be asked to make a decision to continue the roll out of this investment programme.

10.7 Cllr Joan Dixon highlighted the importance of Chesterfield station, and also the Robin Hood Line that provides strategic transport links.

10.8 Andrew Pritchard confirmed that lobbying work has always emphasised Chesterfield as a key location.

10.9 Cllr Tracey Taylor feels there needs to be joined up conversations in relation to housing delivery, i.e. the role of developers vs Local Authorities.

10.10 Resolution

Members of East Midlands Councils:

- Endorsed the work of the East Midlands Stations Growth Board and the TfEM Board.
- Noted the rest of this report.

11. Asylum and Refugee Resettlement in the East Midlands

11.1 Cllr Sarah Russell, Vice-Chair Regional Migration Board, formally presented this report and highlighted the work of the board during the last year.

11.2 She stated that the last year has been challenging and will continue to be as there continues to be large numbers of asylum seekers and not enough accommodation.

11.3 While a more equitable asylum dispersal system was supported, it should also be acknowledged that certain areas will always be more attractive for cultural and demographic reasons.

11.4 Resolution

Members of East Midlands Councils:

- Considered the impact of asylum and refugee resettlement programmes and provided advice in relation to the on-going work of EMC in addressing the concerns of local authorities.
- Considered the impact of the new Full Asylum Dispersal Model on Local Authorities.
- Considered the use of larger sites and the current and future impact on local authorities.
- Advised on current impact of the proposed Streamlined Asylum Process.

12. Regional Employers' Board Report

12.1 Cllr Kate Foale, Chair Regional Employers' Board formally presented this report.

12.2 She informed members that in relation to the national pay negotiations Unite and Unison have rejected the offer, however GMB have accepted.

12.3 Sam Maher updated on a recent event EMC hosted with the LGA to start the roll-out across the region of a funded recruitment advertising campaign to raise the profile of Local Government as an employer. The event enabled councils in the East Midlands to provide input to tailor the campaign and resources to their needs.

- 12.4 In relation to recruitment challenges, Cllr Steve Flitter highlighted that Councils cannot afford the rates of pay which private companies offer.
- 12.5 Cllr Kate Foale confirmed that the lack of government funding to councils and the challenges of being competitive on pay are issues that are regularly discussed at Regional Employers' Board meetings and with unions at the Regional Joint Council. She added that the Board will continue to lobby on this issue.
- 12.6 Resolution
Members of East Midlands Councils:
- Considered the key issues identified in the report.

Cllr Martin Hill closed the meeting at 12.20pm.



31st January 2025

Chair's Report

Cllr Martin Hill OBE

Summary

The following report provides a summary information on recent headline announcements, most notably the publication of the Devolution White Paper, proposed Local Government Reorganisation and local government finance settlement.

Recommendation

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- Consider and advise on the impact of proposals included with the Devolution White Paper and for local government reorganisation.
- Consider and advise upon the implications of other matters raised within this report.

1. Devolution White Paper

1.1 The 'English Devolution White Paper – Power and Partnership: Foundations for Growth' sets out how Government intends to deliver on its promised 'devolution revolution' over the course of this Parliament. Headlines include plans to extend devolution to all parts of England, additional powers and funding flexibility for mayors, and the replacement of two-tier local government with unitary authorities.

1.2 As part of these reforms, the Government has already established:

- a) The Council of the Nations and Regions, chaired by the PM, and brings together First Ministers of Devolved Governments and the Mayors of Strategic Authorities to collaborate across the national missions.
- b) The Mayoral Council, chaired by the DPM, and brings together England's Mayors. The Council will be the key forum for engagement between central government and Mayors on Local Growth Plans.
- c) The Leaders Council, bringing together a representative group of local authority leaders with the DPM and other ministers. The council aims to be a 'regular forum for the key sector representatives to discuss strategic questions impacting local government, to share key and evolving challenges, and co-design solutions'

Organisations represented on the Leaders Council include the Local Government Association, Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities, Core Cities Group, Key Cities, County Councils Network, District Councils' Network, and London Councils. There are no regional representatives, and concern that it lacks inclusivity:

- Angela Rayner - DPM
- Chair of Core Cities Group - Cllr James Lewis (Leeds)
- Chair of County Councils Network - Cllr Tim Oliver (Surrey)
- Chair of District Councils' Network - Sam Chapman-Allen (Breckland)
- Chair of Key Cities - Cllr John Merryr (Salford)
- Chair of Local Government Association - Cllr Louise Grittins (Cheshire West and Chester) plus others including Cllr Marianne Overton MBE from Lincolnshire County Council, has membership through being group leader of LGA Independent Group. She is the one person from the East Midlands.
- Chair of London Councils - Cllr Claire Holland (Lambeth)

- Chair of Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities - Cllr Stephen Houghton (Barnsley)

The Devolution Architecture - Strategic Authorities

- 1.3 The White Paper introduced the concept of a Strategic Authority that will have a statutory basis, with the following levels:
 - a) Foundation Strategic Authorities: these include non-mayoral Combined Authorities and Combined County Authorities automatically, and (in ‘exceptional circumstances’) any Local Authority designated as a Strategic Authority without a Mayor.
 - b) Mayoral Strategic Authorities: the Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities and all Mayoral Combined County Authorities will automatically begin as Mayoral Strategic Authorities.
 - c) Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities: for those Mayoral Strategic Authorities that meet specified eligibility criteria, and a status that will unlock further devolution, most notably an Integrated Settlement.
- 1.4 Upon LGR, a Combined County Authority will change to a Combined Authority when a two-tier area becomes single-tier.
- 1.5 The White Paper clarified the principles it will use to decide upon the geography for future devolution agreements: scale (with a preference for more than 1.5m people), economic geography, alignment to public service footprints and local identity.
- 1.6 It has also introduced a ‘Ministerial directive’ to compel areas to establish strategic authorities if they are unable to agree – or to prevent small devolution ‘islands’ being left out of the process.

New Powers for Combined Authorities

- 1.7 Substantial new powers were announced in relation to spatial development and planning. All areas will be required to develop Spatial Development Strategies over a strategic geography including the apportionment of housing targets across local areas. In Mayoral Strategic Authorities, Mayors will be empowered to develop and propose the Spatial Development Strategy for their areas, working closely with Strategic Authority members.
- 1.8 Mayors will also be granted call-in powers, allowing them to override local planning decisions in some circumstances.

- 1.9 Almost all the powers already being devolved to Greater Manchester and the West Midlands will be extended to a wider group of ‘Established’ Strategic Authorities, including Liverpool City Region, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and the North East in the first instance. At lower tiers of the framework, powers and funding flexibility will also be greater, although most powers are reserved for places with mayors.
- 1.10 The White Paper also confirms that the spending review will set out additional control over employment support and plans for new innovation funding for combined authorities with the role of mayors expanded in areas such as health, energy and net zero.
- 1.11 The White Paper announced proposals for how combined authorities take key decisions including for mayors to be able to exercise their functions with simple majority support from other local leaders ‘wherever possible’. This is perhaps intended to make it easier to implement spatial development, transport and investment strategies, where many existing current arrangements would require unanimous or two-thirds approval of combined authority boards.
- 1.12 The Government has also said that it will review the arrangements for establishing mayoral development corporations (MDCs), including considering whether local authorities should no longer have a veto over the establishment of an MDC in their area.
- 1.13 ‘Established’ Mayoral Strategic Authorities will be granted single-pot ‘integrated settlements’ that can be allocated flexibly in line with local preferences. As not all places will be ready to take on this level of responsibility, less advanced Mayoral Strategic Authorities will get separate consolidated funding pots covering local growth, place, housing, and regeneration, non-apprenticeship adult skills and transport following the next spending review.
- 1.14 The Government has also committed to reducing competitive bidding and rationalising the number of pots, acknowledging the burden and costs placed on local authorities by the existing model.

Devolution by Default

- 1.15 The Government will pursue an ambition to realign public authority boundaries, so that over time, public services are delivered over the same areas as Strategic Authority boundaries. The long-term aim is for public service boundaries –

including those of police, probation, fire and health services – and those of Strategic Authorities, to align.

- 1.16 Strategic Authorities will be considered as the default delivery institution for new programmes or activity where these are appropriate for local delivery and in their areas of competence.

Local Government Reorganisation

- 1.17 The Devolution White Paper prescribes sub-national governance structures and confirms the ambition to realign public authority boundaries, so that over time, public services are delivered over the same areas as Strategic Authority boundaries. While it acknowledges that a Local Authority may be designated as a Strategic Authority without a Mayor, albeit in exceptional circumstances – it is clear that the preference is the combined authority model.
- 1.18 Alongside these new governance structures, there will be the implementation of local government reorganisation and a single-tier unitary model.
- 1.19 LGR will be implemented for two-tier areas and for those unitary councils where there is evidence of failure or where their size or boundaries may be hindering their ability to deliver services. Note there is no definition of a small unitary, or ‘failure’.
- 1.20 All two-tier areas are expected to develop proposals for reorganisation. The Government proposes a phased approach to delivery, with implementation in either April 2027, or April 2028. Given the potential for lack of consensus in parts of the region, and the potential for proposals to include boundary changes (that the Government have signalled that they are open to considering) it is not clear which parts of the region will reach agreement and be included within the 1st wave.
- 1.21 New unitary councils will be required to have populations of at least 500,000, although there may be exceptions given specific local circumstances. The Government is clear that individual local authorities will not be eligible for mayoral devolution so the new unitary authorities will need to join with neighbouring areas to form mayoral strategic authorities across one or several county areas.
- 1.22 MHCLG confirmed that 18 councils had requested to postpone elections this year in order to progress LGR and devolution proposals, including Derbyshire and Leicestershire. Although Lincolnshire County Council does not meet the criteria for the priority devolution programme, it doesn’t believe its devolution deal should

be a barrier to seeking reorganisation and states it is well placed to fast track reorganisation. It is unclear as to whether there would be any impact on the May county council elections if Lincolnshire is chosen as an area to take reorganisation forward.

- 1.23 MHCLG have stated that it will only postpone elections where ‘there is a clear commitment to delivering both reorganisation and devolution to the most ambitious timeframe’. It is expected a decision will be made by the end of this month.
- 1.24 The Government confirmed that it will provide further detail on LGR proposals by end-January 2025. By end-March 2025, all areas are required to submit their initial proposals to Government for initial consideration.
- 1.25 For those included within the ‘first wave’ Devolution Priority Programme, final proposals are expected to be submitted in May 2025, for other areas it is an Autumn 2025 deadline. The English Devolution Bill is expected to be published in Summer 2025.
- 1.26 The implications of the Devolution White Paper and local government reorganisation are far reaching, and as one of the most two-tier regions, will have a significant impact on the East Midlands. It will also impact upon EMC as an organisation, in terms of the work we do, and our resource base. These issues will be considered with member councils over the course of 2025/26.

2. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2025-26

- 2.1 On 18th December 2024, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26, for all local authorities across England, including fire and rescue authorities.
- 2.2 This consultation ran from 18th December 2024 to 15th January 2025. It is expected that the final settlement will be published in late January / early February 2025.

Council Tax and Core Spending Power

- 2.3 The Government’s figures indicate that total Core Spending Power will rise by 6% in 2025/26.

- 2.4 It should be noted that Core Spending Power also includes the assumption that all councils will raise council tax by the maximum permitted by council tax referendum principles:
- A core increase of 3% for all councils, with a 3 per cent or £5 increase (whichever is higher) for district councils.
 - An additional 2% adult social care precept for authorities with social care responsibilities.
 - £5 increase for fire and rescue authorities.
 - £14 increase for Police and Crime Commissioners.
- 2.5 The Government has held back some grant funding as a contingency. The Government will make clear how this contingency funding will be allocated at the final settlement.
- 2.6 There will be no referendum principles for mayoral combined authorities except where the Mayor exercises police and crime commissioner functions. There are no referendum principles for parish and town councils.

Employer National Insurance Contributions

- 2.7 £515m of new funding will be provided to support councils with the costs associated with the increase in employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs). Individual allocations will be based on 2023/24 Revenue Outturn data and published at the final settlement. The £515m for NICs has not been included in Core Spending Power.

Recovery Grant

- 2.8 There will be a new one-off 'Recovery Grant', worth £600 million. The grant will be distributed using a formula, based on deprivation and population less the ability to raise income through council tax.
- 2.9 The grant is un-ringfenced. Allocations are capped at 3% of Core Spending Power, with a minimum allocation of £10,000.

Adult social care

- 2.10 In 2025/26, £5.9bn will be provided through the Social Care Grant, for both adult and children's social care. This is an overall increase of £880m compared to 2024/25.

- 2.11 Local authorities will receive £2.6bn through the Local Authority Better Care Grant. The grant will be required to be pooled as part of the BCF and will be distributed using the current iBCF methodology.
- 2.12 £1.05 billion will be allocated through the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSiF) for adult social care. The Government proposes to distribute this funding using the existing adult social care relative needs formula.

Children's social care and children's services

- 2.13 As stated above, in 2025/26 £5.9bn will be provided through the Social Care Grant for both adult and children's social care.
- 2.14 £250m of new funding into a new Children's Social Care Prevention Grant.
- 2.15 Children's Social Care Prevention Grant increased by a further £13m to £263m.

New Homes Bonus

- 2.16 Core spending power includes a provisional amount of £290m for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) in 2025/26, compared with £291m in 2024/25.
- 2.17 The Government proposes that 2025/26 will be the final year of the NHB in its current format and councils should consider this in their financial planning. The Government is consulting on the NHB beyond 2025/26 as part of the consultation on the principles and objectives of funding reform which has been launched alongside the settlement.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

- 2.18 Funding from the Rural Services Delivery Grant (£110m in 2024/25) will be repurposed. The Government is keen to hear from councils about how best to consider the impact of rurality on the costs of service delivery, and demand, as part of their consultation on the principles and objectives of funding reform.

Internal Drainage Board Levies

- 2.19 Government will provide £3m in funding for authorities impacted by increased Internal Drainage Board levies. The allocations for this funding will be published later in the financial year. These payments are not part of Core Spending Power.

3. Local Government Finance Reform

- 3.1 Government stated its intention to implement finance reform of council tax and business rates, with a deprivation-based approach in 2025-26 and a broader approach with multi-year settlements from 2026-27.
- 3.2 It is stated that the proposed reforms will build on the lessons learned through the previous government's review of Relative Needs and Resources, better known as the 'Fair Funding Review'.
- 3.3 Implementation of these reforms will take place alongside multi-year funding settlements from 2026-27. The number of funding pots will also be reduced to allow councils to have more flexibility to judge local priorities, to meet the needs of local people, and to decide how best to deliver on national priorities.
- 3.4 Concern continues to be expressed in relation to the proposed 'repurposing' of several grants including the Rural Services Delivery Grant and the Services Grant. MHCLG have stated that government will ensure the impact of rurality on the cost of service delivery and demand is reflected in the public consultation next year.

4. East Midlands All-Party Parliamentary Group

- 4.1 East Midlands Councils, in conjunction with East Midlands Chambers of Commerce (EMCC), has worked with MPs in re-establishing the East Midlands APPG.
- 4.2 The inaugural meeting was held on 27th November at Portcullis House, and elected James Naish MP (Rushcliffe) as its Chair. Rosie Wrighting MP (Kettering), Jonathan Davies MP (Mid-Derbyshire) and Lord McLoughlin, former MP for Derbyshire Dales and Secretary of State for Transport, were elected as officers.
- 4.3 MPs agreed the range of issues that they wish to work collectively on, with support from both EMC and EMCC, with an immediate focus on securing investment and growth support as part of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review (likely to be published in June 2025).
- 4.4 The APPG has invited stakeholders to make written submissions to inform its work and the publication of an 'investment options' prospectus for Government. Submissions are invited by email to emappg@emcouncils.gov.uk.

5. Spending Review 2025

- 5.1 The Spending Review is the process the government uses to set all departments' budgets for future years. This covers both the services the public uses every day, e.g. the NHS, schools and transport, and how the government will invest in research, energy security and infrastructure.
- 5.2 At the Autumn Budget on 30th October 2024, the Chancellor set out the outcome of Phase 1 of the Spending Review, which confirmed departmental budgets for 2024-25 and set budgets for 2025-26. The Chancellor also announced the total level of funding planned for Phase 2 ('the envelope'), which will conclude and be published in late spring of 2025 (Government's interpretation of late spring may extend into June 2025).
- 5.3 Phase 2 will prioritise delivering the government's missions. As part of this departments will be expected to make better use of technology and seek to reform public services, to support delivery of the government's plans for 'its decade of national renewal'.

6. Recommendation

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- 6.1 Consider and advise on the impact of proposals included with the Devolution White Paper and for local government reorganisation.
- 6.2 Consider and advise upon the implications of other matters raised within this report.



General Meeting

31st January 2025

Flooding & Flood Risk in the East Midlands

Summary

EMC Members have agreed that flood risk is a priority issue for the region. This report updates Members on recently published Environment Agency information on flooding and flood risk in the East Midlands.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note this report, discuss the issues arising and direct officers accordingly.

1. The Scale of Flood Risk in the East Midlands

- 1.1 In December 2024 the Environment Agency published an updated National Assessment of Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk in England¹, attached as Appendix 5(a). The report is very noteworthy. The Assessment highlighted that the East Midlands has the greatest share of properties at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea in England (18.4% - 127,500), and the highest proportion of properties at risk of any English Region (4.6%). This is the current risk and does not include the impact of future climate change or the impacts of surface water flooding.
- 1.2 The Environment Agency's assessment is consistent with research published East Midlands Councils in 2015 that was informed by analysis commissioned from the Met Office², which concluded that '*the East Midlands region has the highest exposure to increases in flood risk due to climate change in England*'.
- 1.3 In addition to large expansive areas of low-lying land on the Lincolnshire Coast, the river systems of the Trent, Derwent, Soar, Witham and Nene drain through the Region's most heavily built-up areas, many of which were historically developed around river crossings.
- 1.4 Climate warming contributes to rising sea levels and to more extreme weather events, the scale of which can overwhelm drainage systems and flood defences that were built consistent with previous understandings of risk. Even if the rise in global temperatures can be limited to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, these climate impacts are likely to become more severe over the coming decades³.

2. Recent Flooding Events

- 2.1 Major flooding events have occurred with increasing regularity in the last 20 years, with all of the Region's cities and counties having been directly affected. Storms Babet (October 2023) and Henck (January 2024) inflicted considerable damage across the Region (including the loss of life), the impacts of which is still being felt in many communities.
- 2.2 The January 2025 flooding events appear to have resulted from a combination of rapid snowmelt and a period of extended heavy rain. The impacts were particularly acute across Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, which both declared Major Incidents, and in parts of Nottinghamshire.

¹ [National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024](#)

² [The-Changing-Nature-of-Flooding.pdf](#)

³ [March 2023 Progress in adapting to climate change 2023 Report to Parliament](#)

- In Leicestershire, 800 homes and businesses and 160 roads were flooded, with over 60 people rescued from properties and 27 from cars.
- Over 100 homes were flooded in Lincolnshire, some of which were also flooded in the 2023/24 storms, along with numerous local road closures.
- The A1 was closed between Newark and Grantham for an extended period due to flooding causing extensive local congestion, and Midland Main Line train services were disrupted due to flooding near Long Eaton.
- Sections of the A52/A60 were closed and the Queens Drive Park and Ride in Nottingham was closed between the 6th and 24th of January.

3. Economic & Social Impact of Flooding

- 3.1 Flooding can cause significant economic damages to people, businesses, landowners and infrastructure.
- 3.2 Following the flooding caused by Storms Ciara and Dennis in 2020, the Association of British Insurers estimated that the average insurance claim per household was £32,000⁴. The Environment Agency has estimated the total economic damages for all floods between January 2016 and November 2019 in England and Wales was between £504 million and £924 million, with best estimate of £708 million at 2024 prices.
- 3.3 Research also shows that flooding can have severe long-lasting mental health consequences including, depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)⁵.

4. Key Challenges

- 4.1 Reducing the risk of flooding and its impacts will require action in at least four key areas.

Investment in New and Existing Flood Defences

- 4.2 Improving and maintaining flood defences is critical to protecting communities and businesses, and to maintaining investor confidence. Although important new assets have been created in recent years, most notably the Boston Barrier which became fully operational in 2022, the Region appears to be losing out in the battle for investment.

⁴ [Insurance pay outs to help customers recover from Storms Ciara and Dennis set to top £360 million | ABI](#)

⁵ [The English National Cohort Study of Flooding & Health: psychological morbidity at three years of follow up](#)

- 4.3 Analysis by the National Audit Office⁶ highlighted that the East Midlands receives close to the lowest level funding per property at risk at £3,227, despite the Region's high level of inherent risk. This compares unfavourably to North East which receives almost four times as much at £12,563 per property and the North West at £10,204.
- 4.4 A 2024 report by the Public Accounts Committee highlighted that the impact of construction inflation and scheme delays would significantly erode the effectiveness of planned investment by the Environment Agency over coming years⁷. The report also highlighted that lack of investment in existing assets is also increasing risk to communities. This is exacerbated by the investment associated with new housing development, where developers may be obliged to contribute to new flood defences but subsequent responsibilities and liabilities for ongoing maintenance are passed onto the Environment Agency and Local Authorities. While investment in new flood defences must continue, this should not be at the expense of maintaining existing infrastructure.
- 4.5 Public investment in flood defences requires a very strong business case (typically a BCR of more than 9 to 1) and a local partner contribution. This funding model makes delivering flood defences in areas with low land values (including Grade 1 Agricultural land) more challenging. There are often good social, economic and environmental reasons to protect local areas, but the investment methodology may preclude this. While Government might expect the partnership model to 'stretch' public funding, in practice it can cause schemes to stall before any real momentum has been gained.
- 4.6 In some areas of the country Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) also build and maintain flood defences. IDBs are public bodies responsible for managing water levels and can levy charges on councils. Boston Borough Council handed over £2.5m of the £4.2m it collected in council tax in 2023/24 for the IDB levy – around 60 per cent. Many Lincolnshire authorities have also seen major increases over the last two years, with East Lindsey's bill going up by £1.3m – the highest rise in the country.

⁶ [Resilience to flooding](#)

⁷ [Flood resilience eroded by poorly maintained defences with Government in the dark on progress - Committees - UK Parliament](#)

Land Management and Spatial Development

- 4.7 Capturing rainfall within the wider landscape and reducing the volume and flow of water through flood risk areas further downstream will become increasingly important as the level of risk continues to rise, suggesting an increasingly important role for landowners and land managers.
- 4.8 Landscape and river catchment scale interventions can reduce flood risk by capturing rainwater more effectively on higher ground before it has the chance to run into rivers. For example, peat moorlands are a natural sponge and can store far more water when in a healthy than in a degraded state. The way in which agricultural land is managed also makes a difference to the amount of run-off from farms entering water courses.
- 4.9 Patterns of spatial development have a major impact on the scale of flooding. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to direct new development away from flood risk areas. However, many existing town and city centres fall within identified flood zones where some development will be deemed necessary to support regeneration and maintain economic viability.
- 4.10 The Public Accounts Committee also noted an increasing trend for LPAs to approve development against Environment Agency Advice. The increased house-building targets published by the Government in December 2024 may further increase the pressure to develop in higher risk areas.
- 4.11 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) can help to reduce the risk of surface water flooding and create natural habitats with community benefits - but require regular maintenance. Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 made provision for Lead Local Flood Authorities (county and unitary authorities) to establish SuDS Approval Bodies to ensure long term maintenance arrangements for all new schemes. However successive Governments have failed to implement these powers.
- 4.12 Given projected sea level rise, there is likely to come a point when radical interventions will be required in parts of the Region to keep communities safe.

Insurance

- 4.13 Access to affordable insurance for people and business at risk of flooding is critical to maintaining economic viability and investor confidence.
- 4.14 The 'Flood Re' scheme is a joint initiative between the Government and insurers. Its aim is to make the flood cover part of household insurance policies more

affordable⁸. The funding comes from three sources – a Levy, a premium and an excess – all of which are paid by insurers. In establishing the scheme to the Government also committed to long term public investment in flood defences.

- 4.15 Flood Re was introduced in 2016 and will run until 2039, at which point insurers should be offering policies based on actual risk to property.
- 4.16 Flood Re has represented a lifeline to many communities impacted by flooding, but it does not apply to properties built after 1 January 2009 (which should be located outside of identified flood risk zones) or to most businesses.
- 4.17 Without access to affordable insurance, there is a danger that vulnerable places will lose their vitality and those that are able to leave will do so – as is starting to happen in parts of Australia impacted by repeated floods in recent years.

Resilience & Recovery

- 4.18 Despite efforts to prevent and protect against flooding events the UK will continue to experience extreme weather events and their consequences. It will therefore be important for local authorities, particularly Lead Local Flood Authorities, to be sufficiently resourced to support community resilience and recovery.
- 4.19 Lead Local Flood Authorities increasingly require additional capacity to administer repair grants and to complete and implement ‘Section 19’ investigations. In addition, the conditions associated with the repair grants result in significant delays and place councils at financial risk as they seek to support residents to return promptly to their homes.
- 4.20 Local communities themselves also have a key role to play. The National Flood Forum⁹ is a charity that helps, supports and represents people at risk of flooding and offers a range of advice and guidance.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are invited to note this report, discuss the issues arising and direct officers accordingly.

Key Contact: Andrew Pritchard

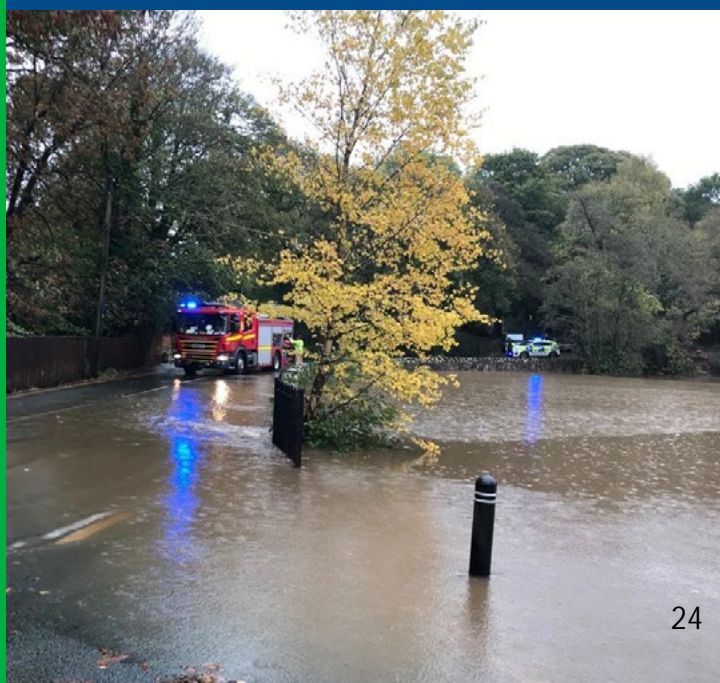
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⁸ [Flood Re - A flood re-insurance scheme](#)

⁹ [National Flood Forum – A charity to help, support and represent people at risk of flooding.](#)



National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024



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Executive summary

Overview

Understanding of current and future flood and coastal erosion risk is vital to ensuring that policy makers, practitioners and communities are ready to adapt to a changing climate.

We have built a new National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA) that provides a single picture of current and future flood risk from rivers, the sea and surface water for England. The last full update to NaFRA was in 2018. It uses the best available data both from the Environment Agency and Local Authorities. Our new data on depth of flooding also provides more information to help people understand the potential flood hazards they could face.

Alongside this we have also updated our National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM). The last update to NCERM was in 2017. Our new NCERM provides the most up to date national picture of current and future coastal erosion risk for England. It uses the best available evidence from the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.

For the first time, both NaFRA and NCERM account for the latest UK Climate Projections and the potential impact of climate change on flood and coastal erosion risk.



Reasons behind the changes

There are a variety of reasons for the changes to flood and coastal erosion risk seen in this report. This includes both NaFRA and NCERM being able to use much better data and improved modelling methodologies. It also includes an improved assessment of the risk to properties, infrastructure and agricultural land.

Rather than a real-world increase in risk, the changes we are seeing in the total number of properties at risk of surface water flooding is almost entirely due to significant improvements in our data, modelling and use of technology.

A huge step in our understanding is how we can now incorporate the UK Climate Projections into our assessment of future flood and coastal erosion risk. Under future warming scenarios, the projection of properties in areas at flood risk and coastal erosion risk is likely to increase.

How our assessment of flood risk is changing

The new NaFRA shows that around 6.3 million properties in England are in areas at risk of flooding from one or a combination of sources: rivers, the sea and surface water. With climate change the total number of properties in areas at risk from rivers and the sea or surface water could increase to around 8 million by mid-century. In other words, 1 in 4 properties in England could be in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea or surface water by mid-century.

There are wide regional variations in flood risk. From early 2025 we are making the detailed local mapping available through GOV.UK digital services to help our customers understand what this new information means for them.

1 in 4 properties in England could be in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea or surface water by the mid-century.

Properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

- Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea is around 2.4 million. This is slightly fewer than our previous assessment (see footnote).
- Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and the sea increases to 367,900 which is an 88 % increase from our previous assessment (see footnote).
- Of properties in areas at high risk, 163,300 are likely to flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from rivers and the sea. This is over two fifths (44 %) of all properties in areas at high risk.
- With climate change, we estimate the total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea will increase from 2.4 million to around 3.1 million, a 27 % increase between 2036 and 2069.
- With climate change, properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and the sea could increase to 637,600, a 73 % increase between 2036 and 2069.
- Of properties in areas at high risk, 288,800 could flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from rivers and the sea between 2036 and 2069 – a 77 % increase from the present day.



Properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water

- Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water is around 4.6 million. This is a 43 % increase on our previous assessment (see footnote).
- Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from surface water increases to about 1.1 million. This is an increase of 3 times the number of properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding.



- Of properties in areas at high risk, 184,200 properties are likely to flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from surface water. This is 1 in 6 (17 %) of all properties in areas at high risk of flooding.
- 83 % of properties in areas at high risk are in areas with likely flood depths of less than 30 centimetres. This suggests that the typical impacts from surface water flooding are likely to occur at shallower levels than flooding events from rivers and the sea.
- With climate change, we estimate that the total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water could increase from 4.6 million to 6.1 million, a 30 % increase between 2040 and 2060.
- With climate change, properties in areas at high risk of flooding from surface water could increase to 1.8 million, a 66 % increase between 2040 and 2060.
- Of properties in areas at high risk, 288,400 properties could flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from surface water between 2040 and 2060 – an increase of more than half (57 %) from the present day.

Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

Flood risk to infrastructure and agriculture

Around a third (38 %) of all roads are in areas at risk from one or more sources of flooding. If we apply the climate change projections the percentage of the road network in areas at risk rises to 46 % by mid-century. This represents an increase of 21 %.

38%
in areas
at risk



Around a third (37 %) of all railways are in areas at risk from one or more sources of flooding. If we apply the climate change projections the percentage of the rail network in areas at risk rises to 54 % at risk by mid-century. This represents an increase of around half.

37%
in areas
at risk



About a third (34 %) of water pumping stations and treatment plants are also in areas at risk of flooding from multiple sources.

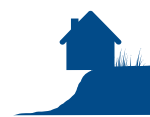


Around 13 % of all agricultural land and about 59 % of grade 1 agricultural land is at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. If we apply the climate change projections, this rises by 5 % by the mid-century.

How our assessment of coastal erosion risk is changing

The new NCERM shows that 3,500 properties are in areas at risk of coastal erosion in the period up to 2055. This increases to about 10,100 properties in the period up to 2105. About half of these properties are residential. The other half are non-residential properties such as schools, hospitals, retail and leisure businesses.

3,500
Properties
in areas
at risk



Our assessment of properties in areas at risk assumes that funding and implementation of all actions in Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) for the coast are delivered. [SMPs](#) set out a planned approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risk around the coast of England to 2105.

In the worst case, where the SMPs are not delivered and no future investment is made to manage coastal erosion, the numbers of properties in areas at risk increases significantly. The total number of properties in areas at erosion risk would be 9 times greater in the period up to 2055, reaching up to 32,800 properties.

The new NCERM shows that coastal erosion risk will increase with climate change. This is mainly due to the effects of sea level rise on erosion rates. Even with SMPs delivered there could be 19,700 properties in areas at risk of erosion in the period up to the end of the century. Without any of the investment set out in SMPs being delivered, this figure is expected to be 5 times greater.

Next steps

We are committed to a rolling programme of data improvements so we can take into account the latest local modelling evidence and national data improvements.

We are also developing a new flood and coastal investment programme using the best available evidence which includes the new NaFRA and new NCERM. This will allow us to assure that our investment programmes are prioritising the places and projects where current and future risk is greatest.

The context: Flooding and coastal erosion risk in a changing climate

Communities are on the frontline of flooding and coastal erosion. We have lived with and seen the effects of flooding and coastal erosion over many decades. This includes devastating events such as the east coast tidal surge in 1953 which resulted in hundreds of fatalities.

We know that flooding can cause significant economic damages to people, businesses, landowners and infrastructure. For instance, following the flooding caused by Storms Ciara and Dennis in 2020, it was estimated that [the average insurance claim per household was £32,000](#).

We estimate the [total economic damages](#) for all floods between January 2016 and November 2019 in England and Wales to be between £504 million and £924 million, with a best estimate of £708 million (2024 prices). Research also shows that flooding can have severe [long-lasting mental health consequences](#) including depression, anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The last year (April 2023 to March 2024) saw wet, windy and stormy weather across the country. There were 13 named storms compared to just one in 2022 to 2023 and 7 in 2021 to 2022.

Over winter 2023 to 2024, storms Babet, Ciarán and Henk impacted hundreds of homes, businesses and farms:

- during storms Babet and Ciarán we issued over 750 flood warnings including 5 severe flood warnings
- during storm Babet, our Flood Warning System (FWS) recorded its busiest day ever – more than 5,500 new users registered for warnings and almost 400,000 messages were sent in a single day
- during storm Henk several of our biggest river systems — the Trent, Thames, Severn and Avon — saw record levels, or close to record levels, as they drained huge volumes of rain from their catchments

Our flood defences operated well during the winter 2023 to 2024 storms, and whilst around 5,000 properties were sadly flooded, around 250,000 properties were protected. This protection is a result of the investments we have made in flood and coastal defences.

The frequency and severity of flooding and storm surges will get worse with climate change. To keep pace with a changing climate, we need to both cut emissions and adapt to climate risks.

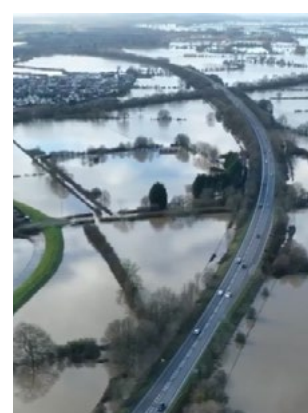
Even if we reach net zero, we can still expect more intense rainfall, more frequently.

In all future climate scenarios, we will experience a continued rise in sea level well into the next century. For example, by 2100:

- extreme once-a-century sea-level events are expected to become annual
- UK sea levels could rise by over a metre

The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change have advised that a global sea level rise of 2 metres by 2100 cannot be ruled out.

This means it is essential we prepare for the unavoidable impacts of climate change. We can do this by adapting and helping the nation to prepare for future flooding and erosion risks.



Flood and coastal erosion risk information

Flooding comes from several sources including:

- rivers – where heavy rainfall leads to overtopping of river embankments
- the sea – where high tides and storm surges lead to coastal flooding
- surface water – where there is so much rainwater that it overwhelms drainage systems collecting over the ground causing surface water runoff, also known as flash flooding
- groundwater – where water under the ground (the water table) rises to the surface causing flooding which can persist for days, weeks or even months after heavy or prolonged rainfall

Coastal erosion is where there is loss or displacement of land, or the long term removal of sediment and rocks along the coastline. This can be due to the action of:

- waves
- currents
- tides
- storms

The Environment Agency is required to update our understanding of current and future flood and coastal erosion risk as part of our ‘strategic overview’ role. This is described in the [2010 Flood and Water Management Act](#). This means we have a duty to provide the nation with the best available understanding of flood and coastal erosion risk. We must do this alongside our day-to-day operational role for managing flood risk from rivers and the sea.

Providing the best available flood and coastal erosion risk information is a vital part of our statutory overview role. It helps:

- individuals, communities and organisations prepare and adapt to flooding and coastal change
- planners decide where to build new homes, roads, railway lines and other critical infrastructure
- identify locations that need more flood risk protection or resilience measures
- prepare our response to flooding, for example defining our flood warning areas or planning evacuation routes

Our assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk has been based on 3 important sources of information:

- the National Flood Risk Assessment for England and the ‘Risk from Flooding from Rivers and the Sea’ maps – an assessment of present-

day risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. This is often referred to a **'NaFRA'** and was first published in 2004

- the National Coastal Erosion Risk Map for England – an assessment of properties at present day risk of coastal erosion. This is often referred to a **'NCERM'** and was first published in 2011
- the 'Risk of Flooding from Surface Water' maps. This was first published in 2013

Our flood and coastal erosion risk data and mapping information is available on [GOV.UK](#) and the [Data Services Platform](#). We also share this risk information through several well-established digital services which are aimed at different customers:

The public use: [Check your long term flood risk for an area in England](#).

This service:

- provides a summary of long flood risk for an area (which can be searched by postcode) – for rivers and the sea, surface water, reservoirs and groundwater
- displays the information on a map and provides the name of the risk management authority responsible for managing flood risk in an area

Over the last 12 months, this service was used by around 1.2 million users.

Coastal local authorities and practitioners use: [Check coastal erosion management in your area](#). This service:

- provides a link to a map which can be searched by place name or postcode
- shows the coastal management approach that is specific to the shoreline location
- shows the projected rates of erosion through this century if the location is on an erodible coast

Town and country planners and developers use [Flood map for planning](#).

This service:

- allows developers and planners to find the data they need to undertake a flood risk assessment for a planning application for a new development proposal

Over the last 12 months, the service was used around 1.5 million times.

For the coast we have recently updated our plans for managing flood and coastal erosion risk around our coastline. In January 2024 we published updated [SMPs](#). These set out a planned approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risk around the coast of England to 2105. The SMPs set out sustainable management approaches for each stretch of coast. The 4 approaches are:

- hold the line – maintain or upgrade protection from flooding or erosion by holding the shoreline in broadly the same position
- advance the line – actively move shoreline defences significantly seawards

- managed realignment – change the position of the shoreline in a controlled way, such as by slowing erosion or creating areas of habitat to help manage flooding
- no active intervention – maintain or encourage a more natural coastline, which may involve discussing adaptation to the risk from flooding or erosion

In January 2024, we also launched [SMP Explorer](#), a new map-based digital tool to make SMPs easier to access and understand.

Part of our key public commitments in the [FCERM Strategy](#) and [Roadmap to 2026](#) is “Between now and 2025 the Environment Agency will have better evidence to inform future risk and investment needs for managing all sources of flooding and coastal change”.

In line with this we are updating our national assessment of risk. We are doing this by updating NaFRA and NCERM using the best available national and local risk information.

Our updated assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England

This report provides an updated picture of current flood and coastal erosion risk in England. It also shows how risk could change in future. It provides the latest information on the:

- source and characteristics of flood and coastal erosion risk
- distribution of risk across England
- potential for these to change in the future due to climate change

Our updated national assessment of risk includes flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water as well as coastal erosion. It does not include groundwater flooding. This is because there are too many gaps in our understanding and evidence for groundwater flood risk at this time.

Our new national assessment:

- is an objective assessment of areas that are at risk of flooding and coastal erosion in the present day
- is based on the best available local and national mapping and modelling
- uses the latest data on current properties and other infrastructure to assess the possible impact of flooding and coastal erosion
- provides an overall risk assessment that combines the probability of flooding and coastal erosion with the potential impact
- reflects current housing, infrastructure and land use

- accounts for the current condition of existing flood and coastal defences

For the first time our new national assessment of risk also identifies areas that may be at risk in the future. This is based on climate change leading to increased frequency of storms that can worsen flooding and coastal erosion impacts. We use the UK Climate Projections 2018 from the Met Office. These projections indicate how rainfall, river flows, high tides and wave conditions that cause flooding and erosion may increase in future.

Our assessment of possible risk in the future does not consider:

- any additional development that may occur in future
- where new flood protection and resilience investments could change future risk

Our estimates of future risk due to climate change are therefore based on the potential for risk to increase rather than a prediction.

It is important to recognise that our assessment of risk is not static. Our national assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk will be regularly reviewed and updated to take on board the latest local modelling evidence and national data improvements.

Our previous assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk

We publish our latest information on the properties (homes and businesses) in areas at risk of flooding from different sources in our annual [flood and coastal erosion risk management](#) report.

In our 2023–2024 we reported:

- 2.6 million properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea
- 3.2 million properties in areas at risk of surface water flooding

Around twice as many properties were in areas at high risk of flooding from surface water flooding compared to flooding from rivers and the sea.

Some properties are in areas at risk of flooding from multiple sources. For example, around 642,000 properties were in areas at risk from flooding from rivers, the sea, and surface water.

In addition, between 122,000 and 290,000 properties were estimated to be in areas at risk of groundwater flooding. This may include properties also in areas at risk of surface water flooding.

For all sources of flooding, this totalled around 5.5 million properties at risk.

Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

Table 1: Properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea (as of December 2023), and from surface water flooding (as of January 2024).

Level of risk	Annual likelihood of flooding (percentage)	Total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and sea	Number of residential properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and sea	Total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water	Number of residential properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water
High	Greater than 3.3 %	196,100	122,700	344,100	272,300
Medium	3.3 % – 1 %	623,800	454,900	504,000	416,900
Low	1 % – 0.1 %	1,069,500	851,700	2,370,700	1,985,500
Very low	Less than 0.1 %	717,300	612,800	Not assessed	Not assessed
Total		2,606,600	2,042,000	3,218,900	2,674,600

Source: [Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 – GOV.UK](#)

The level of risk, or flood risk bands are:

- high risk – this means that each year an area has a chance of flooding of greater than 3.3 % (greater than a 1 in 30 chance of flooding)
- medium risk – this means that each year an area has a chance of flooding between 1 % and 3.3 % (1 in 30 to a 1 in 100 chance of flooding)
- low risk – this means that each year an area has a chance of flooding of between 0.1 % and 1 % (1 in 100 to a 1 in 1,000 chance of flooding)
- very low risk – this means that each year an area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1 % (less than a 1 in 1,000 chance of flooding)

For national coastal erosion risk we reported that there were 2,000 properties are at risk of being lost to coastal erosion by 2060. This assumed that the management approaches and actions in the SMPs are funded and carried out.

We conducted a survey of public attitudes to flooding over 2023 to 2024. This showed that:

- around half of households at risk of flooding don't believe it will happen to them
- 2 out of every 3 people at risk believed that flooding will be more likely with climate change

These results show that considerable effort is still needed to raise awareness of flood risk in England amongst the public. It also highlights that a significant proportion of the population are anxious about the long-term impacts of adapting to a changing climate.

Why our assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk needs updating

Our first national assessment of flood risk was published 20 years ago in 2004, and is based on technology dating back to that time. The last full update to this assessment was in 2018, using some improvements to the data.

Our first national coastal erosion risk map was produced 13 years ago in 2011, and again was based on technology from that time. The coastal erosion risk map was last updated in 2015 and 2017, using some new local data.

Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments (see footnote). It will look different for the following reasons:

Much better data

- the new national assessment of flood risk uses the most up to date local flood risk modelling for both surface water and rivers and the sea
- the new national coastal erosion risk map uses a further 10 years of data from the [Coastal Monitoring Programmes](#)

Improved modelling methodologies

- we have created new software which allows us to better combine very detailed local modelling studies into a national assessment, providing a more accurate assessment of risk
- digital terrain modelling now provides us with a much more detailed and accurate map of England. For instance, this means we can now identify the way water flows over roads accounting for the kerb level
- computing has also advanced so that, along with improved data and modelling methods, mapping risk at a more detailed 2 metre resolution is now possible

Improved assessment of properties, infrastructure and assets

- we have factored in new building development since our last analysis
- we are now able to better understand risk for a wider range of properties, infrastructure and other public assets. As set out in table 2, we can now include:

Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

Table 2: Types of property, infrastructure and assets included in NaFRA and NCERM data

Residential properties	Non-residential properties	Infrastructure	Our analysis for the new NCERM also includes the risk to other assets such as
houses	schools	road	heritage assets
apartments	hospitals	rail	sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs)
caravans with an address	industry	water	landfill sites
care homes	retail	electricity	
	leisure	gas	

Climate change projections

We are now able to incorporate the UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP18) future warming scenarios from the UK Met Office. We consider different climate change scenarios for different sources of flood risk to reflect the UKCP18 ranges. These are shown in table 3.

Table 3: UK climate change scenarios for different sources of flood risk

	Mid century range	End of century range
Rivers and the sea	2036 to 2069	2070 to 2125
Surface water	2040 to 2060	2061 to 2080
Coastal erosion	Now to 2055	Now to 2105

For potential coastal erosion risk projections, we have based the climate change scenarios on the long term planning periods in the SMPs. The mid-century time period runs from 2025 to 2055 whilst the end of century period runs to 2105.

For coastal erosion, the new assessment is from now (present day) to either 2055 or 2105. This reflects the reality that coastal erosion impacts could occur following a one-off tidal surge or storm event. It is not always possible to predict when these storm events will happen.

The information presented for climate change is based on percentiles from the UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP18) data. A percentile is a measure used in statistics. They describe the proportion of possible scenarios that fall below an allowance level. Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) are emissions scenarios that describe possible future greenhouse gas emissions based on assumptions about human activity.

For the purposes of this report:

- for river and surface water flooding, we are using the central allowance, based on the 50th percentile from UKCP18 RCP 8.5
- for sea flooding and coastal erosion, we are using the higher central allowance, based on the 70th percentile from UKCP18 RCP 8.5

We are using the same climate change scenarios for all the data in this report – for properties, infrastructure, public buildings and agricultural land.

The new national assessment of flood risk

Our new NaFRA:

- provides a single picture of current and future flood risk from rivers, the sea and surface water
- uses both existing detailed local information and improved national data
- includes the potential impact of climate change on flood risk

It provides clearer detail than our current risk assessment on the areas at risk – providing much higher resolution maps that make it easier to see where there is risk.

The current Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea maps are limited by a 50 metre resolution. The better modelling in the new NaFRA provides a 2 metre resolution.

The new NaFRA will also be able to show characteristics such as:

- potential flood depths
- likelihood and impacts
- economic damages of flooding

We have not previously had information to share on the possible depth of flooding from rivers and sea at a national scale. One of the advantages of our new NaFRA is that we now have information on the chance of flooding to different depths. We will now be able to let people know their chance of flooding to a depth of less than 30 centimetres; between 30 centimetres and 60 centimetres; and greater than 60 centimetres. This allows people to consider the possible impacts on their property, and the scope to apply property flood resilience measures.

Our assessment of flood depths is based on outside ground levels. It is important to note that property floor levels are generally higher than the surrounding land – often by around 20 centimetres. Furthermore, in high flood risk areas developers are often required by planning authorities to raise the floor levels of buildings to mitigate the impacts of internal flooding. For this reason, even if a property is identified by our new NaFRA as being in an area at risk of flooding to a certain flood depth, it does not necessarily mean that flood water will enter the property in a flooding event.

A fundamental principle of the new assessment is that the methods and data standards should be consistent around the country. This allows us to have a credible and robust understanding of risk.

We have also benefited from significant improvements made to the quality of flood risk mapping and modelling in recent years. This has come from both the Environment Agency and local authorities. It has included a 4 year local model data improvement programme which has successfully incorporated around 1,000 existing local flood models.

The new NaFRA outputs and methods are nationally consistent by design, so that they can be:

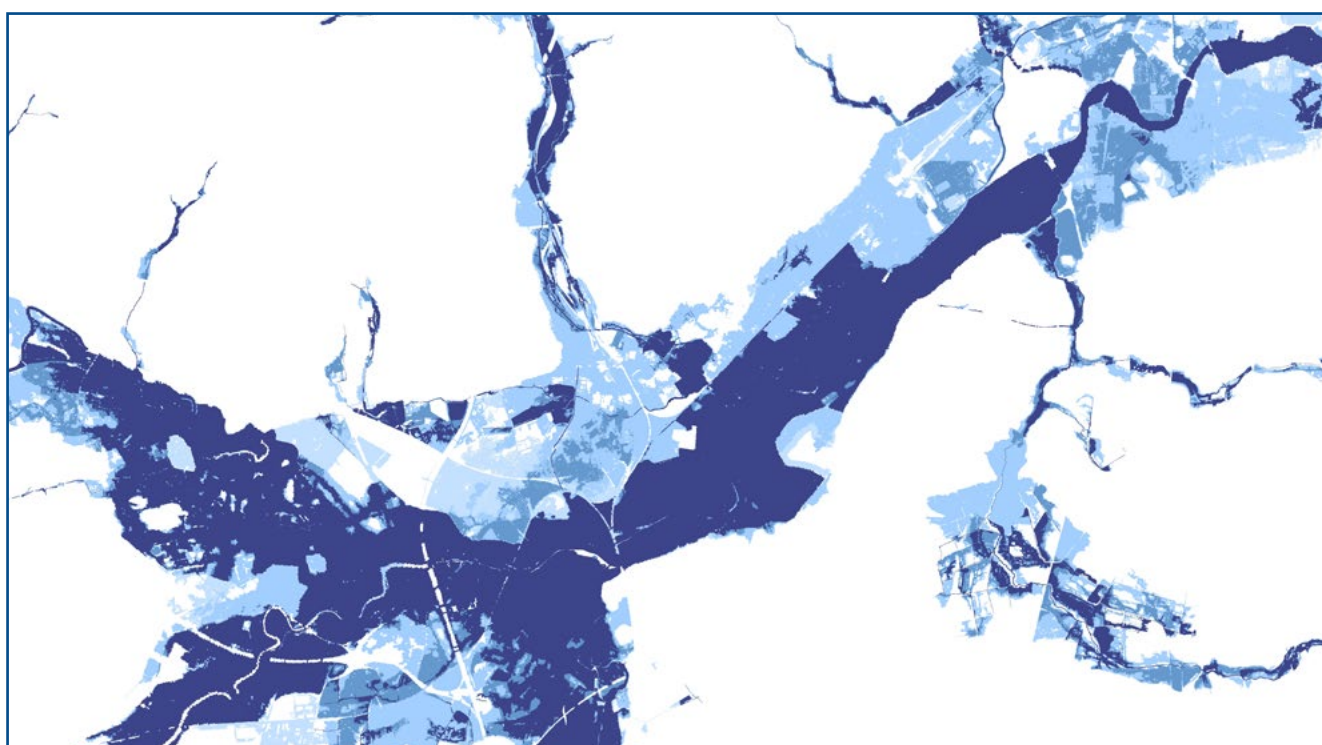
- regularly and easily updated
- improved to take on board the latest local model and data improvements.

In future we will be able to make regular national updates to NaFRA to account for the best available evidence.

In summary the new NaFRA is better for the following reasons; it:

- covers all sources of flood risk – rivers, the sea and surface water
- includes future flood risk due to climate change projections
- combines national models with local flood risk models from the Environment Agency and local authorities to provide more detail
- has clearer detail on the areas at risk through much higher resolution maps
- shows characteristics such as potential flood depths, and the likelihood and impacts, including the economic damages of flooding.
- provides better impact analysis (properties and infrastructure)

New NaFRA: Better methods and input data allow us to produce our data at a much higher resolution



Rivers and sea: How our assessment of flood risk from rivers and the sea is changing

Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea is around 2.4 million. This is slightly fewer than our previous assessment (see footnote).

Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and the sea increases to 367,900 which is an 88 % increase from our previous assessment (see footnote).

In the new assessment there are a significant number of properties moving from being in areas at medium flood risk to high flood risk. There are 48 % fewer properties in areas at medium risk, many of which we now consider to be in high risk areas



Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

Table 4: Properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

	Number of properties	% of total	% change compared to previous assessment (see footnote)
High risk	367,900	15.1 %	87.6 %
Medium risk	323,300	13.3 %	- 48.2 %
Low risk	966,500	39.7 %	- 9.6 %
Very low risk	777,300	31.9 %	8.4 %
All properties	2,435,000	100 %	- 6.6 %

Table note: new present day risk information without climate change

Our new data on depth of flooding provides more information to help people understand the potential flood hazard they could face.

Of properties in areas at high risk, 163,300 are likely to flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from rivers and the sea. This is over two fifths (44 %) of all properties in areas at high risk. A depth of just 30 centimetres of flood water can be enough to move a car during a heavy rainfall event.

If we look at the percentage of properties in areas at high risk that are likely to flood to depths of 60 centimetres or higher, this drops to 24 % of all properties in areas at high risk.

Table 5: Properties in areas at high and medium risk of flooding from rivers and sea, by depth of flooding

Depth of flooding	Present day risk assessment	Present day risk assessment
	High risk	Medium risk
Less than 30 cm	204,600	142,600
30 – 60 cm	75,800	77,400
More than 60 cm	87,500	103,300
Total	367,900	323,300

Table note: properties could be in areas that flood to depths of less than 30 cm, 30–60 cm, or more than 60 cm.

Reasons behind the changes

There are a variety of reasons for the changes in risk. The most notable are improved data and modelling methods for assessing the likely frequency of flooding. The key reasons are:

- we have updated the information on the condition of our flood defence assets. This includes improved methods for estimating the chances and impacts of flood defences failing under extreme pressure from flood water

Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

- we have a better understanding of the natural extents of flood waters in U shaped river valleys or steep coastlines. They may be more susceptible to deeper or more frequent flooding but the number of properties at risk is likely to remain unchanged

Regional distribution of properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

The East Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, and South East regions (Office for National Statistics regions) have the highest number of properties in areas at high or medium flood risk. These regions account for about one half (52 %) of the total number of properties in areas at high or medium flood risk.

Less than 1 in 10 of properties in areas at high and medium flood risk are in London. This is largely due to the presence of major flood defences such as the Thames Barrier.

Table 6: Regional distribution of properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

	Number of properties in areas at high flood risk	% of national properties in areas at high flood risk	As a % of total number of properties in each region	Total property count per region
East Midlands	67,900	18.5 %	2.5 %	2,758,200
East of England	28,100	7.6 %	0.8 %	3,540,400
London	27,800	7.6 %	0.6 %	4,315,900
North East	8,600	2.3 %	0.6 %	1,520,600
North West	34,900	9.5 %	0.8 %	4,168,500
South East	68,100	18.5 %	1.4 %	5,011,800
South West	47,200	12.8 %	1.4 %	3,495,000
West Midlands	20,700	5.6 %	0.7 %	3,184,300
Yorkshire and The Humber	64,600	17.6 %	2.0 %	3,159,800
Total	367,900	100.0 %	1.2 %	31,154,500

Table note: new present day information without climate change



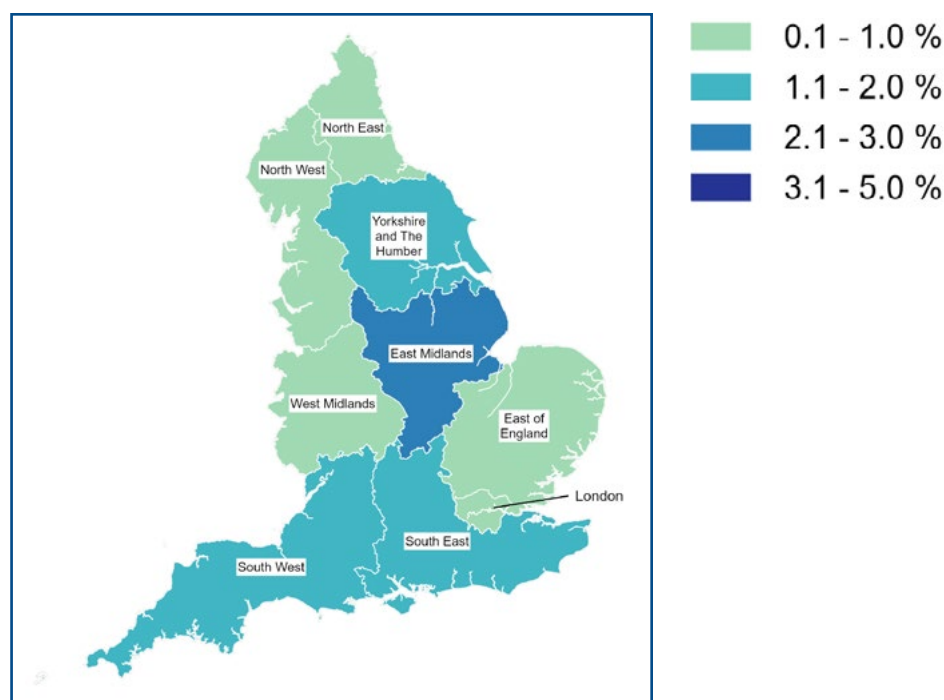
Table 7: Regional distribution of properties in areas at high/medium risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

	Number of properties in areas at high/medium flood risk	% of national properties in areas at high / medium flood risk	As a % of total number of properties in each region	Total property count per region
East Midlands	127,500	18.4 %	4.6 %	2,758,200
East of England	79,000	11.4 %	2.2 %	3,540,400
London	51,100	7.4 %	1.2 %	4,315,900
North East	13,200	1.9 %	0.9 %	1,520,600
North West	68,000	9.8 %	1.6 %	4,168,500
South East	113,900	16.5 %	2.3 %	5,011,800
South West	86,200	12.5 %	2.5 %	3,495,000
West Midlands	37,100	5.4 %	1.2 %	3,184,300
Yorkshire and The Humber	115,200	16.7 %	3.6 %	3,159,800
Total	691,200	100.0 %	2.2 %	31,154,500

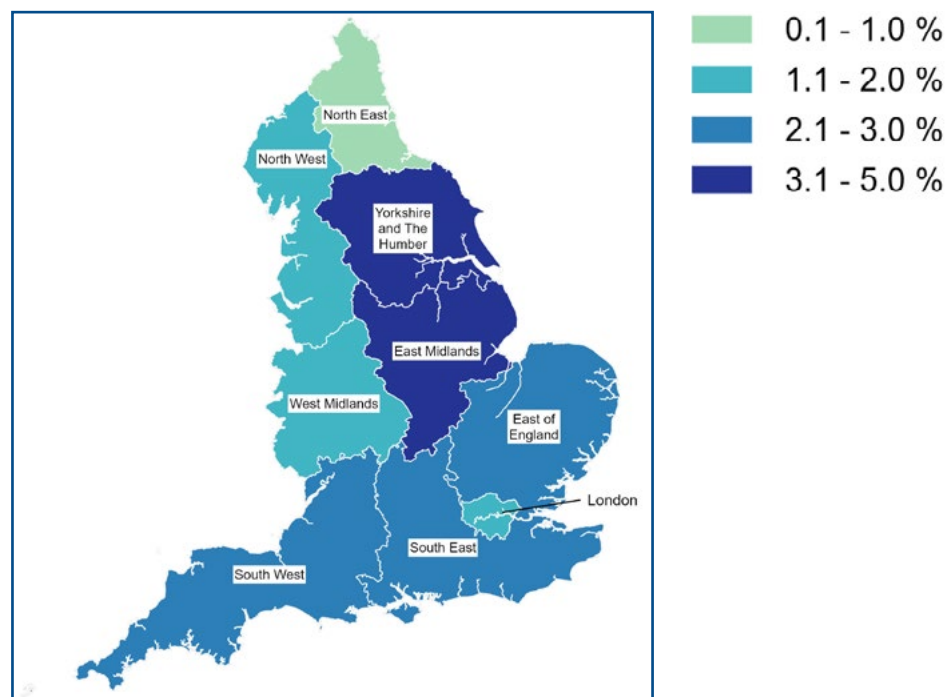
Table note: new present day risk information without climate change

The maps show the importance of considering flood risk relative to population size. For instance, 3.6 % of properties in Yorkshire and the Humber are in areas at a high or medium chance of flooding. In contrast, only 0.9 % of properties in the North East face the same level of risk.

Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and sea, as a % of total number of properties per region



Properties in areas at high/medium risk of flooding from rivers and sea, as a % of total number of properties per region



Properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea with climate change

Overall, climate change will increase the chance of flooding. In many locations which are already at risk, flooding may occur more frequently and to greater depths. This is in line with projections that climate change is driving sea level rise and increases of extreme flows in rivers.

With climate change, we estimate that the total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea will increase from 2.4 million to around 3.1 million, a 27 % increase. Properties in areas at high risk could increase by around three quarters (73 %) between 2036 and 2069.

3.1m
Properties in
areas at risk by
mid-century



Table 8: Properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea with climate change between 2036–2069

	Number of properties in areas at risk between 2036 and 2069	% of all properties in areas at risk	% change compared to new present day assessment
High risk	637,600	20.6 %	73.3 %
Medium risk	538,800	17.4 %	66.7 %
Low risk	1,209,400	39.1 %	25.1 %
Very low risk	710,900	22.9 %	- 8.5 %
All properties	3,096,700	100 %	27.2 %

Table note: with climate change compared to the new present day risk information

We also expect climate change to affect likely flood depths for properties already at risk from flooding from rivers and the sea.

Of properties in areas at high risk, 288,800 could flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from rivers and the sea between 2036 and 2069 – a 77 % increase from the present day. The percentage of properties in areas at high risk that could flood to depths of 60 centimetres or higher could increase by 87 % between 2036 and 2069.

Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and sea, by depth of flooding

Present day		With climate change 2036–2069	
60cm (2ft)	87,500	60cm (2ft)	163,200
30cm (1ft)	75,800	30cm (1ft)	125,600
20cm (8in)	204,600	20cm (8in)	348,800

Table 9: Properties in areas at high and medium risk of flooding from rivers and sea, by depth of flooding with climate change between 2036–2069

Depth of flooding	Present day	Present day	With climate change (between 2036 and 2069)	With climate change (between 2036 and 2069)
	High risk	Medium risk	High risk	Medium risk
Less than 30 cm	204,600	142,600	348,800	239,000
30 – 60 cm	75,800	77,400	125,600	120,700
More than 60 cm	87,500	103,300	163,200	179,100
Total	367,900	323,300	637,600	538,800

Table note: properties could flood to depths of less than 30 cm, 30–60 cm and more than 60 cm.

Surface water: How our assessment of flood risk from surface water is changing

Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water

Total properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water is around 4.6 million. This is a 43 % increase on our previous assessment (see footnote).

Our new assessment of risk of flooding from surface water shows about 1.1 million properties in high risk areas of surface water flooding. This compares to our previous assessment (see footnote) of 344,100. This is an increase of 3 times in the number of properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding.

There are now 3 times as many properties at high risk of flooding from surface water than there are from flooding from rivers and the sea.

The number of properties in areas at medium risk of surface water flooding has also increased by about three quarters (76 %) to 884,800 properties. Unlike flooding from rivers and the sea, this is a very significant increase in properties in areas at medium flood risk from surface water flooding.



Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

Table 10: Properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water

	Number of properties	% of total	% change compared to previous assessment (see footnote)
High risk	1,071,800	23.3 %	211.5 %
Medium risk	884,800	19.2 %	75.6 %
Low risk	2,644,000	57.5 %	11.5 %
All properties	4,600,600	100 %	42.9 %

Table note: new present day risk without climate change

Our new flood depths information shows that 184,200 properties in areas at high risk are likely to flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher from surface water. This is 1 in 6 (17 %) of all properties in areas at high risk of flooding. In comparison, over two fifths (44 %) of properties in areas at high risk from rivers and the sea face a 30 centimetres or greater depth hazard.

83 % of properties at high risk are in areas with likely flood depths of less than 30 centimetres. This suggests that the typical impacts from surface water flooding are likely to occur at shallower levels than flooding events from rivers and the sea. As a result of this, the economic costs are likely to be less damaging.

Table 11: Properties in areas at high and medium risk of flooding from surface water, by depth of flooding

Depth of flooding	Present day High risk	Present day Medium risk
Less than 30 cm	887,600	660,500
30 – 60 cm	153,900	174,900
More than 60 cm	30,300	49,400
Total	1,071,800	884,800

Table note: properties could flood to depths of less than 30 cm, 30–60 cm, more than 60 cm

Reasons behind the changes

Rather than a real world increase in risk, the changes we are seeing in the total number of properties in areas at risk of surface water flooding is almost entirely due to significant improvements in our data, modelling and use of technology. We do not think that risk has been significantly underestimated until now. Rather, we are now able to describe it with more confidence and detail. The key reasons are:

- we have updated the data and methods to determine frequency of heavy rainfall and how flood water responds. This has included

Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

inviting some local authorities to provide local evidence about the ability of drainage systems to carry away flood water. This has shown that in some places urban drainage systems do not have the capacity to manage surface water.

- we have revised our approach to determine when a series of puddles on the ground becomes surface water flooding, and the impacts that can have on people and property. This has resulted in more locations being shown at risk but we believe it is a more useful reflection of actual risk to communities. The new information on depth allows us to identify for the first time places where there is a high chance of relatively shallow flooding.
- our previous surface water flood risk maps were limited in the way they deflected water around the walls of buildings. This meant that the properties themselves did not appear to be at risk of flooding on the maps. The new mapping removes this limitation, making it a more realistic local assessment of surface water flood risk.

Regional distribution of properties in areas at risk of surface water flooding

Over one quarter of properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding are in London – nearly a third of a million. This is over 11 times as many properties as are in areas at high risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.

Other regions with a significant number of properties in areas at high and medium risk from flooding from surface water are the East of England, the North West and the South East. These regions account for 38 % of the total number of properties at risk.

Table 12: Regional distribution of properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding

	Properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding	% of national properties in areas at high risk of surface water flooding	As a % of total number of properties in each region	Total property count per region
East Midlands	67,600	6.3 %	2.5 %	2,758,200
East of England	170,600	15.9 %	4.8 %	3,540,400
London	319,800	29.9 %	7.4 %	4,315,900
North East	39,900	3.7 %	2.6 %	1,520,600
North West	123,300	11.5 %	3.0 %	4,168,500
South East	127,900	11.9 %	2.6 %	5,011,800
South West	86,500	8.1 %	2.5 %	3,495,000
West Midlands	73,900	6.9 %	2.3 %	3,184,300
Yorkshire and The Humber	62,300	5.8 %	2.0 %	3,159,800
Total	1,071,800	100 %	3.4 %	31,154,500

Table note: new present day information without climate change

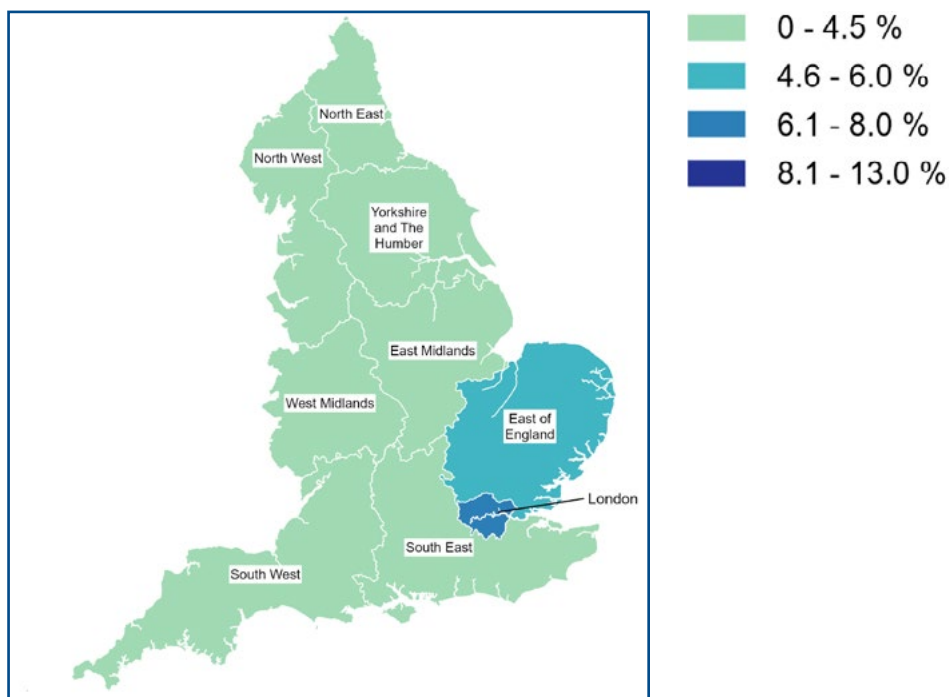
Table 13: Regional distribution of properties in areas at high/medium risk of surface water flooding

	Properties in areas at high/medium risk of surface water flooding	% of national properties in areas at high/medium risk of surface water flooding	As a % of total number of properties in each region	Total property count per region
East Midlands	136,900	7.0 %	5 %	2,758,200
East of England	270,200	13.8 %	7.6 %	3,540,400
London	543,500	27.8 %	12.6 %	4,315,900
North East	77,800	4.0 %	5.1 %	1,520,600
North West	240,200	12.3 %	5.8 %	4,168,500
South East	236,100	12.0 %	4.7 %	5,011,800
South West	159,800	8.2 %	4.6 %	3,495,000
West Midlands	157,600	8.0 %	4.9 %	3,184,300
Yorkshire and The Humber	134,500	6.9 %	4.3 %	3,159,800
Total	1,956,600	100 %	6.3 %	31,154,500

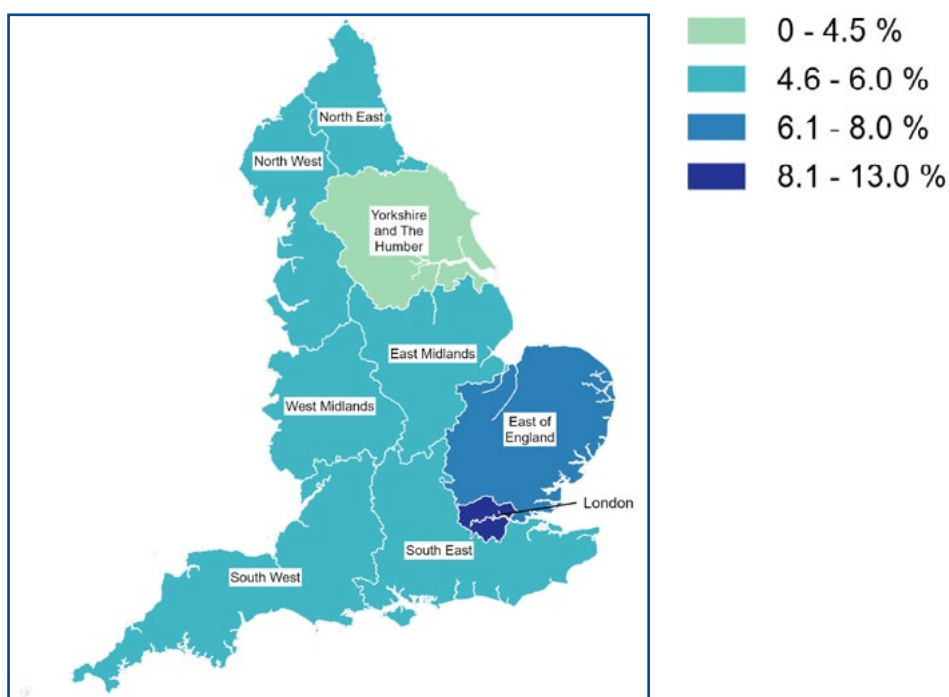
Table note: new present day information without climate change

The maps show the importance of considering flood risk relative to population size. Surface water flood risk is greater in cities where drainage systems are less able to deal with intense rainfall. 1 in 8 (13 %) of properties in London are in areas at high or medium risk of surface water flooding. This is twice the rate compared to the national total, and a far higher rate than any other region.

Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from surface water, as a % of total number of properties per region



Properties in areas at high/medium risk of flooding from surface water, as a % of total number of properties per region



Properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water with climate change

With climate change, we estimate that the total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water could increase from 4.6 million to 6.1 million, an increase of one third. Properties in high risk areas could increase by two thirds (66 %) between 2040 and 2060.



Table 14: Properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water with climate change between 2040 – 2060

	Number properties in areas at risk between 2040 and 2060	% of all properties at risk	% change compared to new present day assessment
High risk	1,784,300	29.5 %	66.5 %
Medium risk	972,300	16.0 %	9.9 %
Low risk	3,299,600	54.5 %	24.8 %
All properties	6,056,200	100 %	31.6 %

Table note: with climate change compared to the new present day risk information

We also expect climate change to affect likely flood depths for properties already in areas at risk from surface water flooding. We estimate that 288,400 properties in areas at high risk could flood to depths of 30 centimetres or higher between 2040 and 2060. This is an increase of more than half (57 %) on the present day.

The proportion of high risk properties flooding to depths of 60 centimetres or deeper could increase by over two thirds (73 %) between 2040 and 2060.

Properties in areas at high risk of flooding from surface water, by depth of flooding

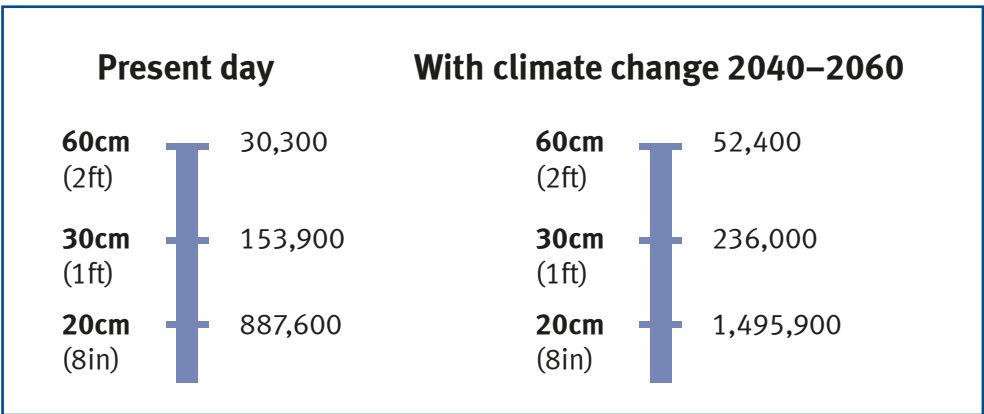


Table 15: Properties in areas at high and medium risk of flooding from surface water, by depth of flooding with climate change between 2040–2060

Depth of flooding	Present day	Present day	With climate change (between 2040 and 2060)	With climate change (between 2040 and 2060)
	High risk	Medium risk	High risk	Medium risk
Less than 30 cm	887,600	660,500	1,495,900	620,500
30 – 60 cm	153,900	174,900	236,000	268,500
More than 60 cm	30,300	49,400	52,400	83,300
Total	1,071,800	884,800	1,784,300	972,300

Table note: properties could flood to depths of less than 30 cm, 30–60 cm, more than 60 cm

Flood risk from multiple sources – rivers, the sea and surface water

Properties in areas at risk of flooding from multiple sources

Our new national flood risk assessment shows that in total around **6.3 million** properties in England are in areas at risk of flooding from one or a combination of sources: rivers, the sea and surface water.



This figure is based on our new assessment showing:

- **2.4 million** properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. This is slightly fewer than our previous assessment (see footnote).
- **4.6 million** properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water. This is a 43 % increase on our previous assessment (see footnote).

Our new mapping identifies about 750,000 properties in areas at risk both from rivers or the sea, and surface water.

In reality many flooding events we experience result in flooding to properties and places coming from many sources. For example, high river levels can impede surface water drainage, resulting in increased flood impacts in areas where the main risk is from rivers. As a consequence, it is common to find the same properties impacted by multiple sources of flooding.

We have not included groundwater figures in our new total as this estimate has not been updated for some time. Our next Flood and coastal erosion risk annual report for 2024/25 will reflect the updated assessment from the new NaFRA.

Footnote: Our new assessment is not directly comparable with previous assessments because we now have much better data and improved modelling methodologies.

With climate change the total number of properties in areas at risk from rivers and the sea or surface could increase to:

- **3.1 million** properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea between 2036 and 2069.
- **6.1 million** properties in areas at risk of flooding from surface water between 2040 and 2060.

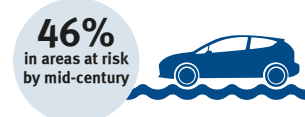
With climate change, our new mapping identifies about 1 million properties in areas at risk both from rivers or the sea, and surface water.

This could take the total number of properties in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea or surface water to around 8 million by mid-century. In other words, 1 in 4 properties in England will be in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea or surface water by mid-century.

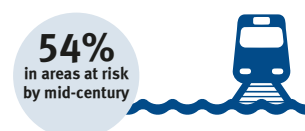
Infrastructure and other public buildings in areas at risk of flooding from multiple sources

If we look at flood risk from rivers, sea and surface water and the potential impact on infrastructure and other public buildings in England, we observe the following:

Our new assessment shows that 113,900 kilometres out of 302,100 kilometres of roads in England are in areas at risk of flooding. This is around a third (38 %) of all roads in areas at risk from one or more sources of flooding. Of that, about 18 % of roads are in areas at high or medium risk of flooding. If we apply the climate change projections the road network at risk rises to 137,700 kilometres or 46 % at risk by mid-century, an increase of 21 %.



Our new assessment shows that 4,300 kilometres out of 11,700 kilometres of railways in England are in areas at risk of flooding. This is over a third (37 %) of all railways in areas at risk from one or more sources of flooding. Of that, around 18 % of railway lines are in areas at high or medium risk of flooding. If we apply the climate change projections the rail network at risk rises to 6,300 kilometres or 54 % at risk by mid-century, an increase of around half. Compared to other major infrastructure sectors, the railways see the largest increase in future risk due to climate change.



A significant proportion of water pumping stations and treatment plants are also at risk of flooding from multiple sources – about a third (34 %). Other important public buildings, such as schools and hospitals, are also at flood risk from multiple sources at about 21 % and 26 % respectively.

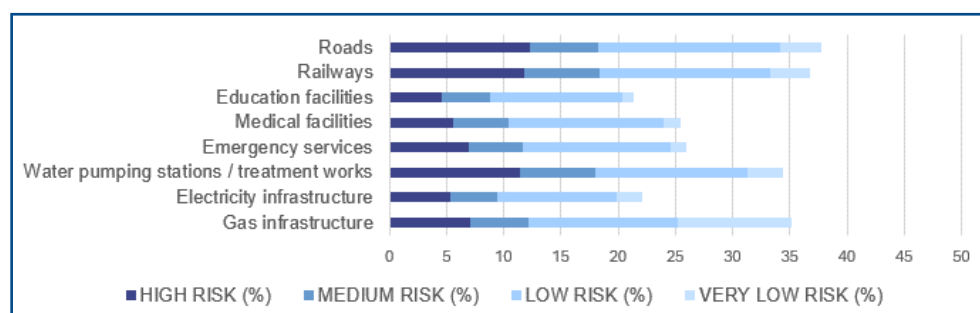
Table 16: Infrastructure and other public buildings in areas at flood risk from rivers, sea and surface water – present day and with climate change

	Present day km or numbers	Present day % of total	With climate change (between 2040 and 2060)	With climate change (between 2040 and 2060) % of total at risk	% change with climate change (between 2040 and 2060)
Roads	113,900	37.7 %	137,700	45.6 %	20.9 %
Railways	4,300	36.8 %	6,300	53.8 %	46.5 %
Education facilities	30,000	21.4 %	37,000	26.4 %	23.3 %
Medical facilities	11,800	25.5 %	14,600	31.5 %	23.7 %
Emergency services	2,000	26.0 %	2,400	31.2 %	20.0 %
Water pumping stations / treatment works	12,800	34.4 %	14,200	38.2 %	10.9 %
Electricity infrastructure	52,600	22.1 %	61,600	25.9 %	17.1 %
Gas infrastructure	1,300	35.1 %	1,400	37.6 %	7.7 %

Present day assessment

Table 17: Percentage of infrastructure and other public buildings in areas at flood risk from rivers, sea and surface water – present day, by level of risk

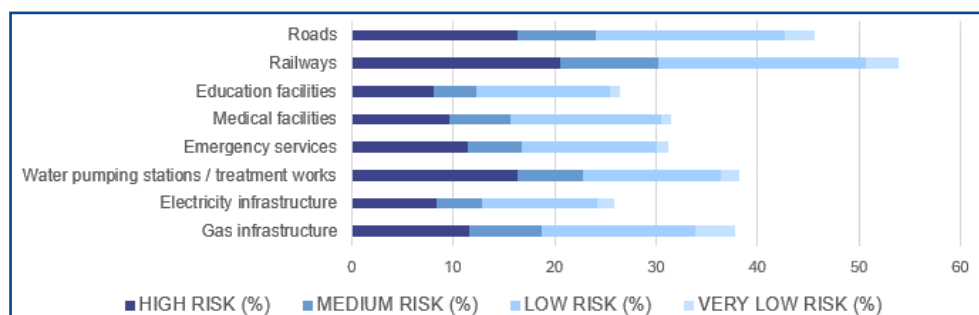
	High risk (%)	Medium risk (%)	Low risk (%)	Very low risk (%)	Total risk (%)
Roads	12.3 %	5.9 %	15.9 %	3.6 %	37.7 %
Railways	11.8 %	6.6 %	14.8 %	3.6 %	36.8 %
Education facilities	4.6 %	4.2 %	11.5 %	1.1 %	21.4 %
Medical facilities	5.6 %	4.8 %	13.6 %	1.5 %	25.5 %
Emergency services	6.9 %	4.8 %	12.9 %	1.4 %	26.0 %
Water pumping stations / treatment works	11.4 %	6.6 %	13.3 %	3.1 %	34.4 %
Electricity infrastructure	5.3 %	4.1 %	10.4 %	2.3 %	22.1 %
Gas infrastructure	7.0 %	5.1 %	13.1 %	9.9 %	35.1 %



Climate change assessment (between 2040 and 2060)

Table 18: Percentage of infrastructure and other public buildings in areas at flood risk from rivers, sea and surface water – with climate change, by level of risk

	High risk (%)	Medium risk (%)	Low risk (%)	Very low risk (%)	Total risk (%)
Roads	16.4 %	7.7 %	18.6 %	2.9 %	45.6 %
Railways	20.5 %	9.7 %	20.5 %	3.1 %	53.8 %
Education facilities	8.0 %	4.3 %	13.2 %	0.9 %	26.4 %
Medical facilities	9.6 %	6.0 %	14.9 %	1.0 %	31.5 %
Emergency services	11.4 %	5.4 %	13.2 %	1.2 %	31.2 %
Water pumping stations / treatment works	16.4 %	6.4 %	13.5 %	1.9 %	38.2 %
Electricity infrastructure	8.3 %	4.6 %	11.3 %	1.7 %	25.9 %
Gas infrastructure	11.6 %	7.1 %	15.1 %	4.0 %	37.8 %



Agricultural land in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

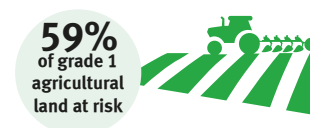
Our new assessment shows that of the 85,000 square kilometres of agricultural land in England, 11,200 square kilometres is in areas at risk of flooding from rivers and sea. This is around 13 % of all agricultural land and about 59 % of grade 1 agricultural land. If we apply the climate change projections, this rises to 11,700 square kilometres, an increase of nearly 5 % by mid-century.



Table 19: Agricultural land (by grade) in areas at flood risk from rivers and sea – present day and with climate change

	Present day risk (km ²)	% of agricultural land at risk	With climate change (2036 to 2069) (km ²)	With climate change (2036 to 2069) % of agricultural land at risk
Grade 1	2,100	59.2 %	2,100	59.2 %
Grade 2	3,300	17.8 %	3,400	18.4 %
Grade 3	5,800	9.2 %	6,200	9.9 %
Total	11,200	13.2 %	11,700	13.8 %

Table note: For agricultural land we are only presenting the risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.



The new national coastal erosion risk map

The new National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM) provides the most up to date national picture of coastal erosion risk for England. Our new NCERM:

- is based on coastal monitoring data from the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. This includes 10 years more evidence on coastal processes since the original map was published
- accounts for the UKCP18 climate projections which includes allowances for sea level rise

The new NCERM reflects the latest coastal management approaches set out in SMPs. Our assessment identifies the impacts of coastal erosion with SMPs being delivered compared to the worst case where the SMPs are not funded or delivered.

The projections of erosion risk around the coast are set to the time periods defined in the SMPs:

- mid-century year of 2055
- the end of century year of 2105

Where a part of the coast is deemed to be predominantly at risk from sea flooding, no erosion projections are provided.

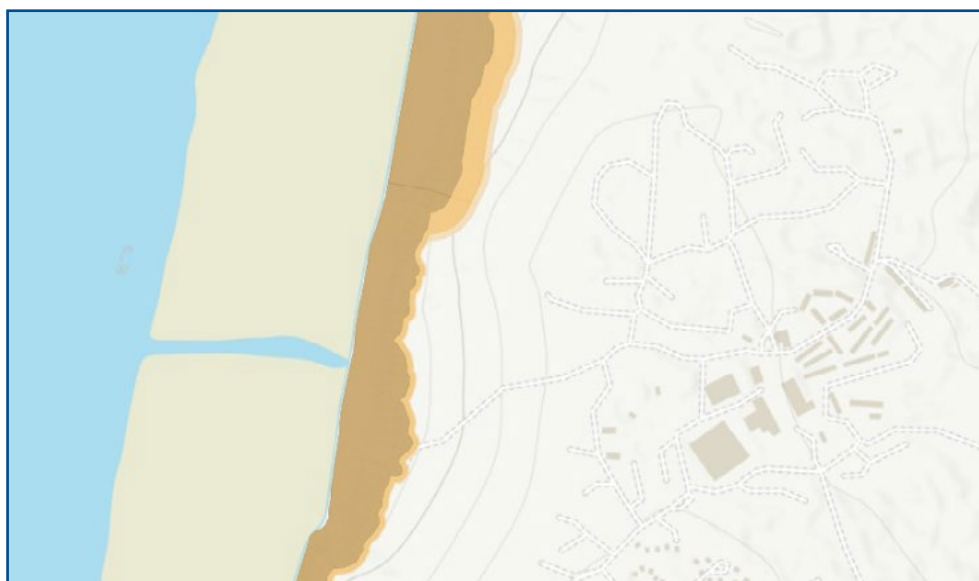
We have worked in collaboration with coastal local authorities to produce the new NCERM. The new erosion risk information will also be used by policy makers and practitioners to inform coastal planning and the designation of Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs).

CCMAs are areas identified in strategic Local Plans as likely to be affected by coastal erosion and coastal change where the local planning authority can require constraints on new development.

In summary the new NCERM is better for the following reasons, it:

- makes erosion information more accessible to coastal managers, planners and the public by providing clearer online visualisations
- includes climate change impacts on coastal erosion risk
- uses improved methodologies, more recent data and new research on the acceleration of erosion due to rising sea levels
- includes new information on areas of land instability at the coast caused by rainfall and rising groundwater levels which can contribute to cliff erosion and landslides

NCERM – users will be able to see the area of land that could erode between now and 2055 and 2105.



Coastal erosion: How our assessment of coastal erosion risk is changing

Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105

The new NCERM shows that 3,500 properties are in areas at risk of coastal erosion in the period up to 2055. This increases to about 10,100 properties in the period up to 2105.

About half of these properties are residential. The other half are non-residential properties such as schools, hospitals, retail and leisure businesses. The numbers of properties in areas at risk make the assumption that funding and implementation of all actions in the SMPs are delivered.

In the worst case, where the SMPs are not delivered and no future investment is made to manage coastal erosion, the numbers of properties in areas at risk increases significantly. The total number of properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion would be 9 times greater in the period up to 2055, reaching up to 32,800 properties.

The new NCERM shows that coastal erosion risk will increase with climate change. This is mainly due to the effects of sea level rise on erosion rates. Even with SMPs delivered there could be 19,700 properties at risk of coastal erosion in the period up to the end of the century. Without delivery of any of the investment set out in SMPs, this figure is expected to be 5 times greater.

19,700
Properties in
areas at risk by
the end of the
century



Table 20: Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105 – with and without SMPs delivered

	With SMPs being delivered	With SMPs being delivered	With SMPs being delivered	With SMPs being delivered	Without SMPs being delivered	Without SMPs being delivered	Without SMPs being delivered	Without SMPs being delivered
	Now to 2055	Now to 2055	Now to 2105	Now to 2105	Now to 2055	Now to 2055	Now to 2105	Now to 2105
	Present day	With climate change	Present day	With climate change	Present day	With climate change	Present day	With climate change
Residential	1,900	2,900	6,400	13,000	25,200	34,300	51,000	80,100
Non residential	1,600	2,300	3,600	6,800	7,600	10,200	14,000	22,000
Total properties	3,500	5,200	10,100	19,700	32,800	44,500	65,100	102,100

Table note: with SMPs delivered and without SMPs delivered

Reasons behind the changes

Our understanding of the impacts of coastal erosion has been improved by better evidence as well as accounting for future climate change.

The main reasons are:

- we are using more sophisticated coastal analysis techniques to assess coastal erosion at approximately 8,000 locations along the coast
- we are using a further 10 years of coastal monitoring data from the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. This provides a more detailed and accurate dataset to assess recent changes to the coast
- we have updated the information on the condition of coastal defences including improved methods for estimating the chances and impacts of defence failure
- we have better information on a wider range of properties at erosion risk in coastal locations. This includes accounting for caravans as well as tourist, leisure and businesses that have located to the coast over time



Regional distribution of properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105

England already has some of the fastest eroding coastlines in Europe. In some parts of the east coast, erosion rates can be up to 4 metres per year. The rates of erosion are likely to increase with sea level rise and climate change through this century.

The new NCERM shows that the highest number of properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion are in Yorkshire and The Humber, the South West and the East of England. Places such as East Riding of Yorkshire, North Norfolk and Cornwall have some of the highest numbers of properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion.

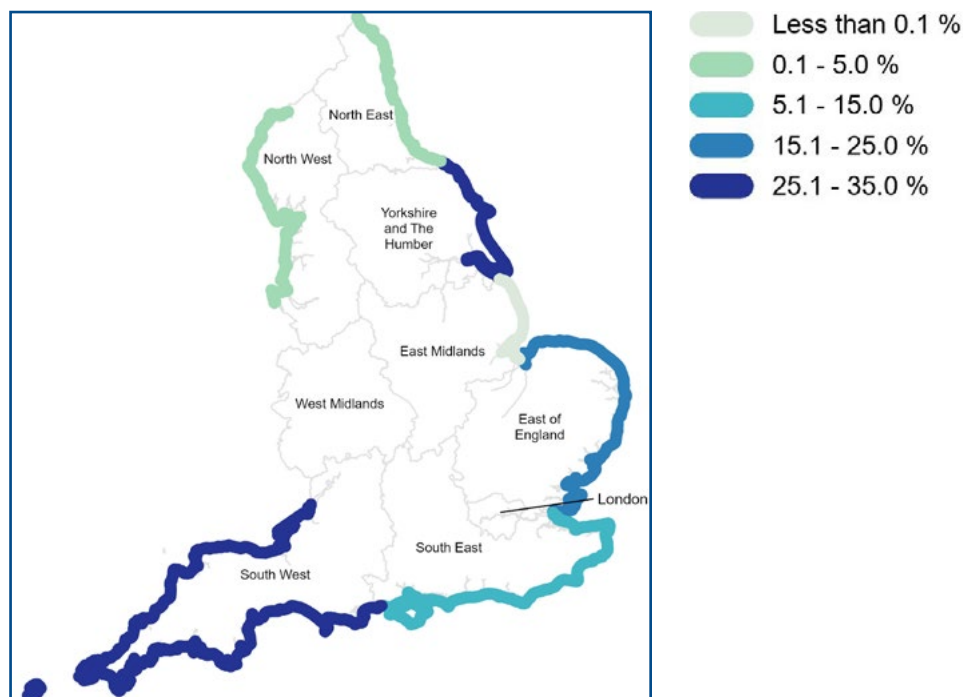
These 3 local authorities contain two-thirds of all residential properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion in England. This is why we are working with these local authorities as part of the £36 million [Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme \(CTAP\)](#). CTAP is exploring how coastal communities and businesses can adapt to the effects of erosion and climate change on the coast.

Table 21: Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105 – with SMPs delivered

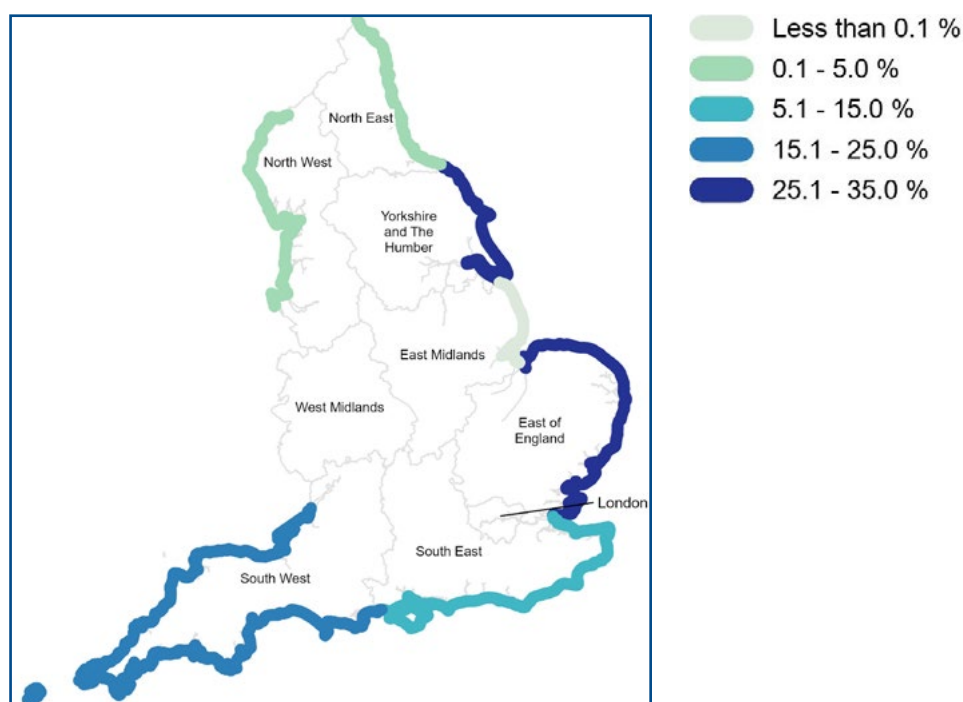
	Now to 2055 with SMPs being delivered	Now to 2055 with SMPs being delivered	Now to 2105 with SMPs being delivered	Now to 2105 with SMPs being delivered
	Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion	% of total properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion in England	Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion	% of total properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion in England
East Midlands	-		-	
East of England	860	25 %	2,760	27 %
London	-		-	
North East	160	4 %	410	4 %
North West	150	4 %	300	3 %
South East	290	8 %	1,290	13 %
South West	940	27 %	1,850	18 %
West Midlands	-		-	
Yorkshire and The Humber	1,100	32 %	3,490	35 %

Table note: with SMPs delivered and without climate change

Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion to 2055, as a % of total properties in areas at coastal erosion risk in England



Properties in areas at risk of coastal erosion to 2105, as a % of total properties in areas at coastal erosion risk in England



Other local authorities with significant ‘pockets’ of erosion risk include Great Yarmouth, Swale, South Hams, Dorset, New Forest, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

Additionally, there are related challenges from ground instability affecting whole communities, especially on the south and north east coasts.

Parts of the Isle of Wight are at high risk of landslides and cliff falls. Significant land movements happened in 2023 and 2024 as a result of:

- erosion at the base of the cliff
- large amounts of winter rainfall raising ground water levels

As well as property, coastal erosion can also affect the natural environment. Erosion can result in the loss and makeup of habitats along the coast, and the new NCERM shows over 6 square kilometres of Sites of Special Scientific Interest are within areas of coastal erosion risk by 2055. Erosion and the movement of sediment along the coast is a natural feature of the coastal environment. However, where losses occur due to flood and erosion defences being in place, we support wildlife in adapting to coastal change. Over recent decades we have created over 2,300 hectares of coastal habitats through our Habitat Compensation and Restoration Programme.

Infrastructure and agriculture in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105

Road networks along the coast mainly consist of minor and unclassified roads but these are often important access routes for coastal communities. A roads, B roads and motorways ('major roads') normally stop short of coastal areas. Where they do feature along the coast there are often sea defences or other beach management protection measures in place. This is also the case for railways which run along the coast.

Much of England's primary (Grade 1 and 2) agricultural land at the coast is in low lying areas where flooding is the main risk. Lower grade agriculture in many parts of the coast is at risk of erosion with some areas eroding naturally. This is in line with the approach set out in SMPs.

Table 22: Infrastructure and agricultural land (by grade) in areas at risk of coastal erosion between now and 2055 and 2105 – with SMPs delivered

	Now to 2055 with SMPs being delivered	Now to 2105 with SMPs being delivered
Major roads (Motorway/A/B roads)	Over 1 km	Over 10 km
Minor roads and local access roads	Over 55 km	Over 173 km
Railways	Over 2 km	Over 6 km
Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land	0.7 km ²	Over 2 km ²
Grade 3 agricultural land	Over 7 km ²	Over 17 km ²

Table note: without climate change

How the new national flood and coastal erosion risk information and data will be made available

Early 2025: New NaFRA and NCERM data published

In early 2025 we will publish:

- the new NaFRA data on ‘[Check Your Long Term Flood Risk](#)’ and on [data.gov.uk](#)
- the new NCERM data on ‘[Check coastal erosion risk for an area in England](#)’, [SMP Explorer](#) and on [data.gov.uk](#)

For the first time ‘[Check Your Long-Term Flood Risk](#)’ will show information for users:

- on future flood risk taking into account climate change
- on potential flood depths both for present day flood risk and with climate change

The improved service will make it easier for users to understand both the chances and potential impacts of current and future flood risk in the places in which they live or work.

Spring 2025: New NaFRA data published on Flood Map for Planning

In spring 2025 we will be updating our [Flood Map for Planning](#) service which displays the Flood Zones. The Flood Zones are defined by government in planning guidance and will continue to show present day flood risk from rivers and the sea. We will be updating the Flood Zones using the data from the new NaFRA.

The improved service will use data from the new NaFRA to:

- assist planners and developers towards the most appropriate sites for development
- make it easier for developers to produce [Flood Risk Assessments](#) as part of the process to obtain planning permission

For the first time, we will be:

- adding new information to show how climate change may affect the extent of flood risk from rivers and the sea in future
- including mapping showing areas at flood risk from rivers and the sea taking into account the presence of existing flood defences
- displaying surface water flood risk

Following these Spring 2025 improvements to [Flood Map for Planning](#), we will plan further updates to include other helpful information from the new NaFRA. This will include adding information on how climate change could affect surface water flood risk as well as information on flood depths.

Next steps: Continuous improvement in our understanding of risk

We have assessed that nearly 90 % of properties at flood risk in England are in areas that are suitable for the new NaFRA data and mapping. The remaining areas require either new detailed local modelling, or gaps and errors in the input data to be rectified. For areas that are not yet able to benefit from the new NaFRA we are temporarily retaining the existing flood risk information. Local Environment Agency teams will ensure that the best available local understanding of risk is also factored into decisions about future investment options. We are continuing to refine our modelling and data with the aim of reach 100 % coverage with the new NaFRA data by Summer 2026.

We are committed to a rolling programme of data improvements so we can take into account the latest local modelling evidence and national data improvements. Following publication of the new NaFRA data in early 2025, the first update will be in summer 2025. While details are to be confirmed, we expect updates to then follow quarterly.

Following publication of the new NCERM data in early 2025 on SMP Explorer, the first update is expected to be later in 2025. While details are to be confirmed, we expect updates to then follow yearly.

How we will use the new risk information to inform future investments

For the first time, our new national flood and coastal erosion risk assessment gives us an understanding of both risk for the present day, and with climate change projections. This new information is vital for our future planning, especially given climate change projections and aging flood and coastal defences.

Informing our future investment programme

We are currently developing a new flood and coastal investment programme using the best available evidence which includes the new NaFRA and the new NCERM. This will allow us to assure that our investment programmes are prioritising the places and projects where current and future risk is greatest.

Long term investment scenarios

At a national scale, both the new NaFRA and NCERM will provide the underpinning evidence to inform our new Long Term Investment Scenarios (LTIS). These are due to be published by the end of 2025. LTIS will produce detailed insights into future flood and coastal risk, options for managing risk as well as an assessment of the likely long term costs. The new scenarios will provide important evidence for informing future policy and investment choices for improving resilience and adaptation to future climate risks.

Acknowledgements

The new NaFRA and NCERM has taken several years of hard work to develop. This work would not have been possible without the expertise and dedication of colleagues across the Environment Agency's flood and coastal erosion risk mapping, modelling, evidence and project delivery teams. We would like to recognise our collaboration with Jacobs and JBA Consulting in producing the new assessment tools. We would also like to acknowledge the time and effort of Lead Local Flood Authorities across England who have worked in collaboration with us to develop the new surface water flood risk assessment. And finally we would like to thank coastal local authorities and the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes as well as the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the Ordnance Survey for the data and information they have provided. We will continue to build on these strong partnerships as part of our commitment to keep our national risk information for flooding and coastal erosion up to date.

Julie Foley, Director of Flood Risk Strategy and Adaptation

Report pictures

Front cover

Top – waves crashing against a sea wall. Credit: Environment Agency

Bottom left – Raby Mere, Wirral, October 2023. Credit: Janet Astbury

Bottom right – Environment Agency operations. Credit: Environment Agency

Page 3

Flooded riverside. Credit: Environment Agency

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Flooded agricultural land. Credit: Pexels

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Top – Chesterfield, Derbyshire. Storm Babet – October 2023. Credit: Environment Agency

Bottom – Flooded fields. Storm Henk – January 2024. Credit: Environment Agency

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Ironbridge, Shropshire. Credit: Environment Agency

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Hythe Ranges, Kent, coastal defences. Credit: Environment Agency

Page 23

Van driving through flood water. Credit: Environment Agency

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Flooded fields. Credit: Environment Agency/Getty images

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Aldbrough, East Riding of Yorkshire. Credit: Environment Agency

Page 36

Green Lane, Skipsea, East Riding of Yorkshire. Credit: Guy Cooper

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We help people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts, including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

We improve the quality of our water, land and air by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. A healthy and diverse environment enhances people's lives and contributes to economic growth.

We can't do this alone. We work as part of the Defra group (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), with the rest of government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and local communities to create a better place for people and wildlife.

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Environment first

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General Meeting

31st January 2025

Infrastructure and Growth

Summary

This report:

- Provides and update on relevant economic data and national policy.
- Seeks endorsement for the work of the TfEM Board and the East Midlands Stations Growth Board.

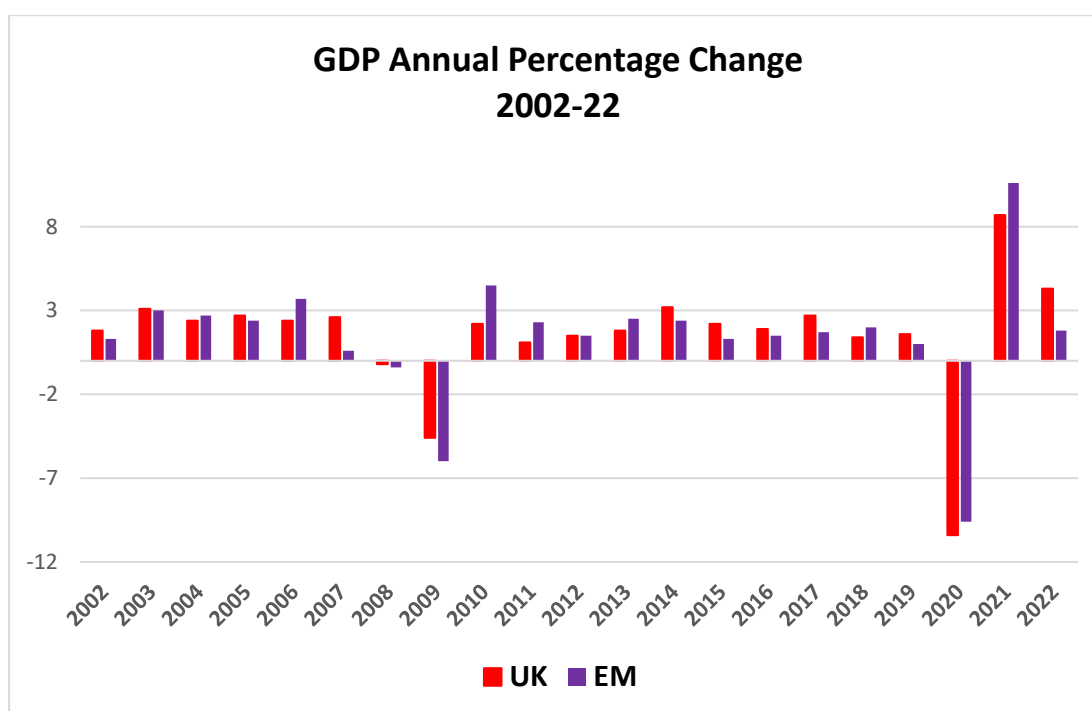
Recommendations

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- Endorse the work of the TfEM Board and the Stations Growth Board.
- Note the rest of this report.

1. Growth, Productivity & Investment in the East Midlands

- 1.1 The East Midlands is now a region of 5.0 million people and 368,000 businesses¹. Total regional output in 2022 (as measured by GDP) was £146.4bn, equivalent to 5.8% of the UK economy. The East Midlands employment rate is just above the UK average at 75.8% (UK=75.0%). Median weekly earnings are below the UK average: £640 pw compared to £682pw. 10.6% of the workforce work in manufacturing, compared with 7.0% for the UK – although this percentage has declined significantly in recent years. The region's unemployment rate has increased recently and is now above the UK average: currently at 4.4% compared to 4.0%.
- 1.2 GDP growth in the East Midlands over the last 20 years has been better than most other regions/nations but more recently has fallen sharply². Productivity has remained below the UK average over the last 20 years and has been declining relative to the UK to 84.4% in 2022³. The region has therefore been growing its economy by growing its population - not by becoming more productive.

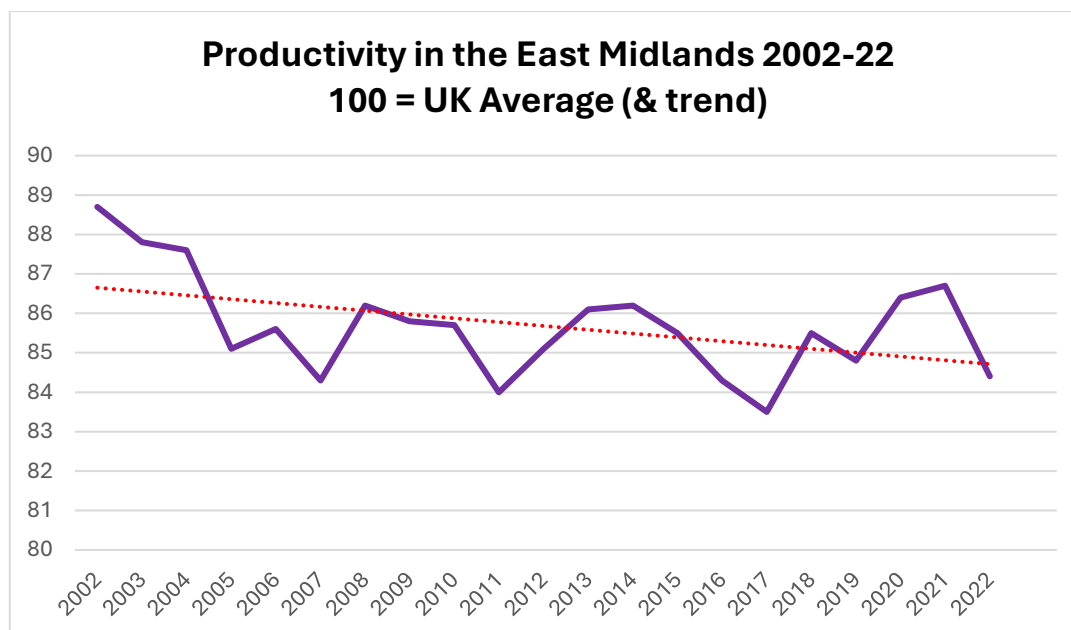


Source: [Regional gross domestic product: all ITL regions - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹ [Regional and National Economic Indicators - House of Commons Library \(parliament.uk\)](#)

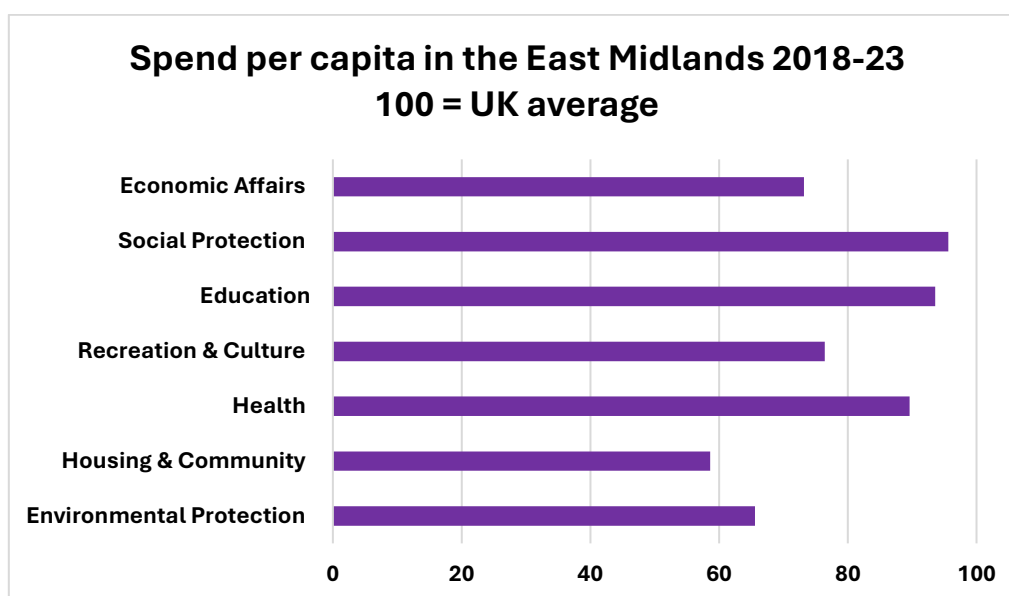
² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/bulletins/regionaleconomicactivitybygrossdomesticproductuk/1998to2022#gross-domestic-product-by-uk-country-and-region>

³ [Annual regional labour productivity - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)



Source: [Annual regional labour productivity - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

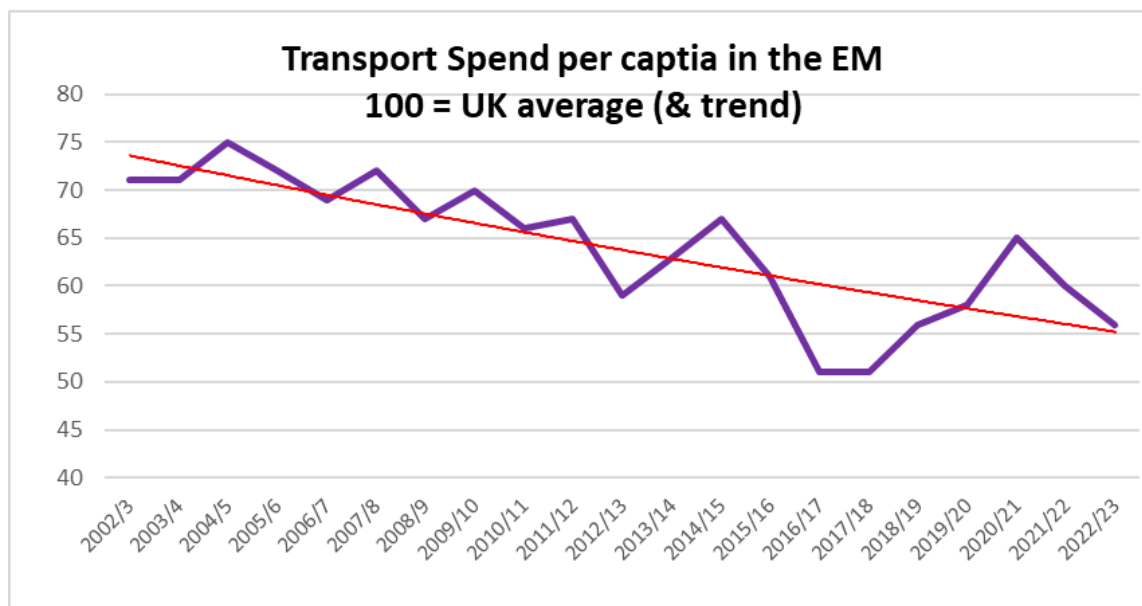
- 1.3 The Treasury publishes an annual Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis (PESA) every July on where public money (capital and revenue) is spent and on what, in the previous financial year.⁴ The data has the status of ‘National Statistics’ as defined by ONS and has been published on a broadly consistent basis over several decades. Over period 2018-23 total spend per head in the East Midlands on the functions listed below were all below the UK average.



Source: [Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk)

⁴ [Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk)

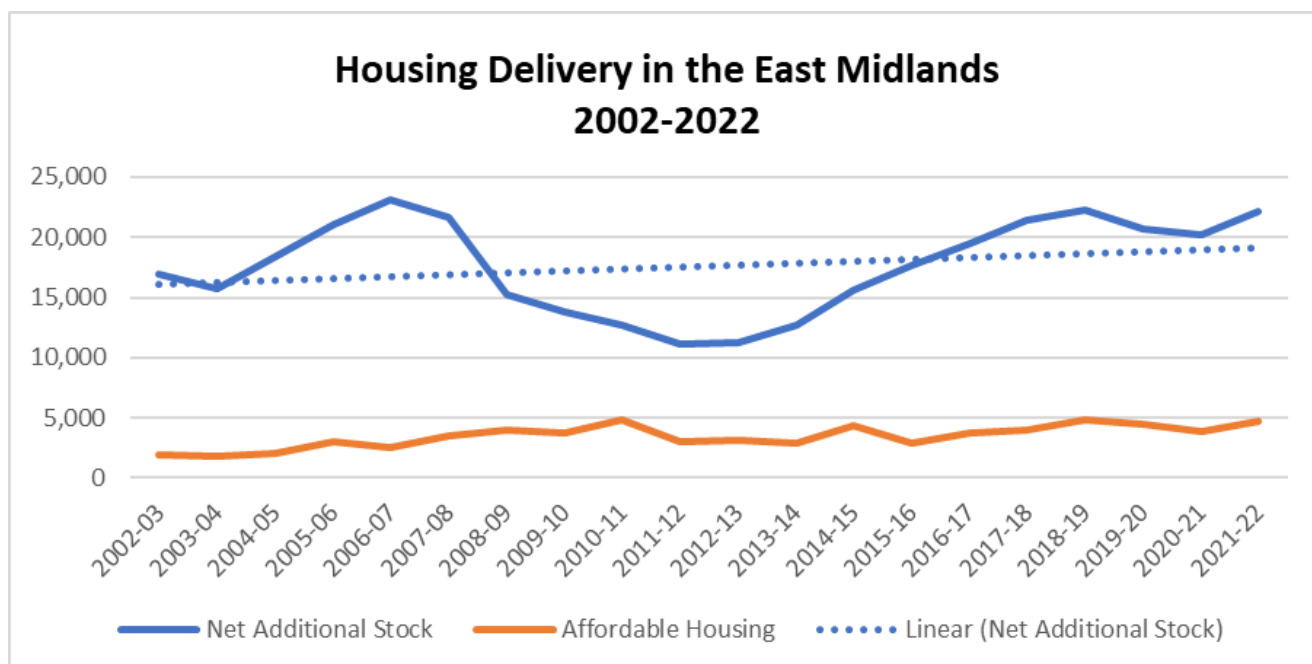
- 1.4 Transport spend per head has been very significantly below the UK average level for all of the last 5 years and now declined to just 56% of the UK average for 2022/23, the lowest level of any UK region or nation. If the region was funded at a level equivalent to the England average over the 5 years (2018-19/2022-23), a not unrealistic target, the East Midlands would have received an extra £6bn to spend on transport investment and services.



Source: [Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-expenditure-statistical-analyses-2024) & previous releases

2. Housing & Planning

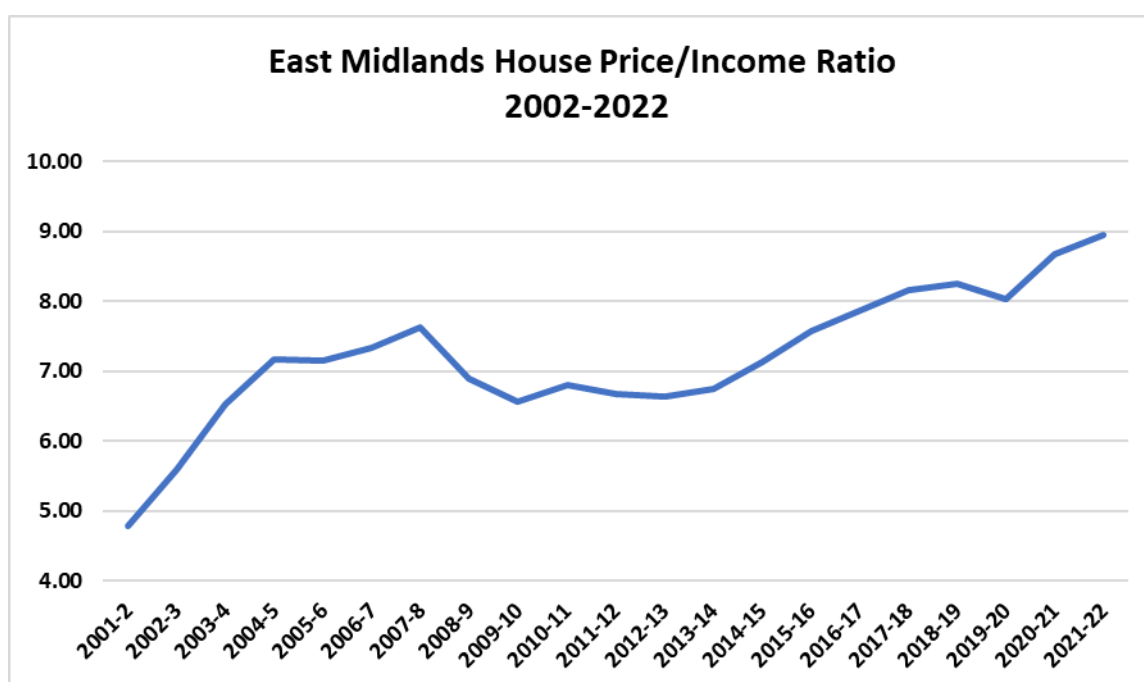
- 2.1 Housing delivery in the East Midlands over the last 20 years is set out below. As elsewhere, the scale of delivery has been largely determined by macro-economic conditions rather than local policies. Levels of affordable housing have been more consistent, although the definition of what constitutes 'affordable' has changed radically over this time.



Net Stock Source: [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants)

Affordable Housing Source: [Live tables on affordable housing supply - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply)

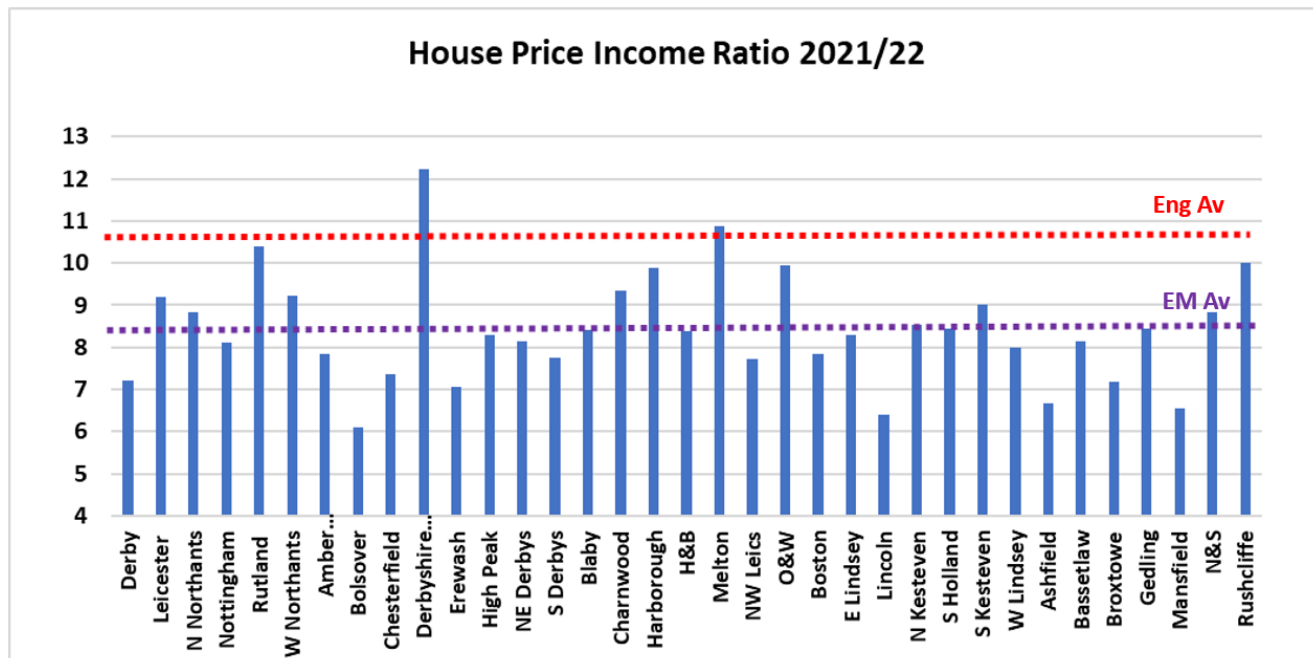
- 2.2 Housing affordability (the relationship between average house prices and average incomes) has worsened significantly over the last 20 years in the East Midlands – although the Region remains in a better position than England as a whole. Over this period, the value of capital assets generally (not just property) has risen at much faster rate than wages.



Source Net Additional Stock: [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants)

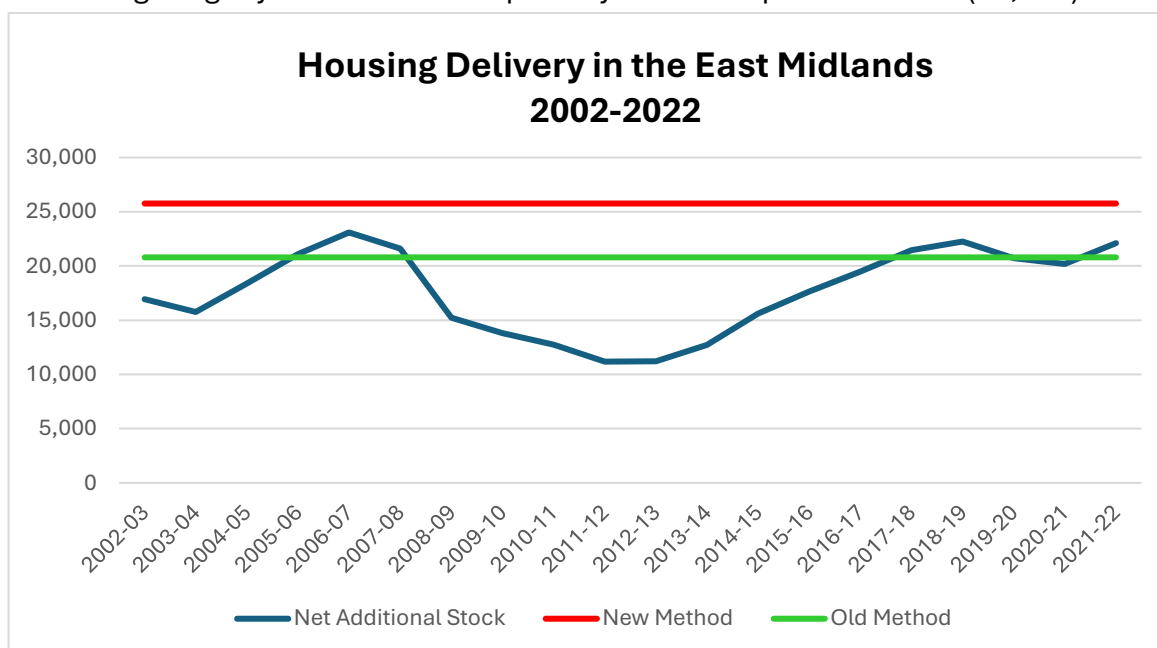
Source Affordable Housing: [Live tables on affordable housing supply - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-and-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply)

- 2.3 There are also major variations between local authorities within the Region. Based on analysis from the National Housing Federation, Derbyshire Dales and Melton Borough have the least affordable housing, whilst Bolsover and Lincoln have (relatively speaking) the most affordable.



Source: [National Housing Federation - Home Truths](#)

- 2.4 In December 2024 the Government confirmed its New Standard Method to determine the number of houses that Local Planning Authorities should plan for. This implies regional delivery of just over 25,760 new homes a year, significantly above both the old Standard Method and levels of delivery over the last 20 years – although slightly less than that implied by earlier Proposed Method (27,383).



- 2.5 The new Standard Method does not rely on demographic data or household projections. Instead, it comprises an annual 0.8% growth rate based on existing housing stock and an uplift adjustment to address affordability. The impact of the proposed new Standard Method on each of the Local Planning Authorities in the East Midlands is shown in Appendix 6(a).
- 2.6 The Government believes that increasing the number of planning consents will increase the number of homes completed and sold by the private sector and make housing more affordable. However, evidence from an independent review undertaken for previous Ministers in 2018 by Sir Oliver Letwin MP suggests that housing delivery is determined by the local ‘market absorption rate’: the number of homes a developer can sell without reducing the price⁵.
- 2.7 In terms of the Government’s wider planning reform agenda:
- Ministers also published a response to the NPPF consultation with a [Revised Document](#) in December 2024
 - The Government is intending to consult on the scope of new National Development Management Policies (introduced by the LURA 2023), which will set out national policy on issues common to all LPAs when determining planning applications.
 - The Government’s New Towns Taskforce is planning to publish an Interim Report in early 2025.
 - The Devolution White Paper also included proposals for a universal system of ‘larger than local’ strategic planning which will be taken forward by a new Planning & Infrastructure Bill. EMCs Director of Policy & Infrastructure published a short blog reflecting past experience of strategic planning: [Some thoughts on the return of strategic planning...](#)

3. Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM)

- 3.1 Transport for the East Midlands brings together the Region’s Local Transport Authorities under the auspices of East Midlands Councils to provide collective leadership on strategic transport issues and meets on a quarterly basis. TfEM is chaired by Sir Peter Soulsby the City Mayor of Leicester, Cllr Richard Davies, Transport Lead of Lincolnshire County Council, is the Vice Chair.
- 3.2 The TfEM Board last met on 16th December 2024 and included:

⁵ [Independent review of build out: final report - GOV.UK](#) and [Blog post: Building the Field of Dreams](#)

- An update from National Highways on current and future investment in the East Midlands.
- An Update from East Midlands Railway, including progress on deployment of new and re-furbished rolling stock and proposals for doubling services between Lincoln and Nottingham from December 2025.
- A draft TfEM response to the Government's National Transport Strategy consultation launched on the 28th November 2024: [Transport Secretary unveils her vision for integrated transport across England - GOV.UK](#)
- The basis for a TfEM submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review.

3.3 It is not yet clear what impact the appointment of Heidi Alexander MP as the new Secretary of State will have on the Government's transport policy.

4. East Midlands Station Growth Board

4.1 The East Midlands Station Growth Board is the effective successor to the former HS2 Strategic Board and provides oversight and accountability for the DfT funded Stations Growth Strategy, which covers Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham and East Midlands Parkway. The Growth Board has been Cllr Ben Bradley as Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council and the Vice Chair is Cllr Carolyn Renwick of Derbyshire County Council.

4.2 The Growth Board last met on 19th September 2024 and considered a number of update presentations on emerging technical work and a forward programme of activity. The next (and final) meeting of the Board will take place on 21st March 2025 with Cllr Renwick in the Chair.

5. Midlands Connect

5.1 The Midlands Connect Strategic Board met last on 14th November 2024 with Sir Peter Soulsby, Cllr Richard Davies and Mayor Claire Ward in attendance representing the East Midlands.

5.2 The meeting received a presentation from the Chair of National Highways and discussed the impact of devolution on the work of Midlands Connect. The Board went on to agree the Midlands Connect Business Plan for 2024/5 (subject to confirmation of DfT grant), and funding to refresh the Strategic Outline Business Case for the Nottingham-Leicester-Coventry Rail Enhancement.

6. Recommendations

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- 6.1 Endorse the work of the TfEM Board and the Stations Growth Board.
- 6.2 Note the rest of this report.

Andrew Pritchard
Director of Policy & Infrastructure

New Standard Method for Housing Need

Local Authority Name	Average Annual Net additions (2020/21- 2023/24)	Old Method	Proposed Method	New Method	Difference Old/New	Difference Proposed/New
Amber Valley	516	351	682	615	264	-67
Ashfield	405	446	604	535	89	-69
Bassetlaw	931	260	665	613	353	-52
Blaby	354	329	559	542	213	-17
Bolsover	464	195	404	353	158	-51
Boston	317	250	379	356	106	-23
Broxtowe	332	384	658	621	237	-37
Charnwood	698	1,115	1,012	978	-137	-34
Chesterfield	359	211	558	500	289	-58
Derby	892	1,244	1,062	906	-338	-156
Derbyshire Dales	222	216	571	580	364	9
East Lindsey	544	437	1,091	1,009	572	-82
Erewash	201	376	569	523	147	-46
Gedling	551	460	665	609	149	-56
Harborough	891	510	706	723	213	17
High Peak	362	243	585	553	310	-32
Hinckley & Bosworth	580	432	689	649	217	-40
Leicester	1,030	2,435	1,690	1,557	-878	-133
Lincoln*						
Mansfield	377	259	540	495	236	-45
Melton	374	192	370	362	170	-8
Newark and Sherwood	675	437	730	707	270	-23
North East Derbyshire	625	224	622	591	367	-31
North Kesteven*						
NW Leicestershire	755	357	621	595	238	-26
Nottingham	1,893	1,845	1,451	1,247	-598	-204
Oadby and Wigston	258	198	389	382	184	-7
Rushcliffe	1,079	609	831	830	221	-1
Rutland	101	123	264	266	143	2
South Derbyshire	1,033	507	606	581	74	-25
South Holland	680	427	573	542	115	-31
South Kesteven	567	687	912	895	208	-17
West Lindsey*						
N Northamptonshire	1,765	1,856	2,064	1978	122	-86
W Northamptonshire	2,095	2,124	2,584	2515	391	-69
*Central Lincs Joint Plan	1422	1,054	1676	1552	498	-124
EM Total	23,348	20,793	27,383	25,760	4,967	-1,623
Higher Figure						
Lower Figure						



General Meeting

31st January 2025

Local Authority Workforce – Report from the Regional Employers’ Board

Summary

This report provides an update to Members on significant issues relevant to local government as employers and provides a regional perspective.

Recommendation

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to note the issues highlighted in this report and endorse the work of the Regional Employers’ Board and EMC’s activity to support Councils on workforce issues and Councillor Development.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Midlands Councils (EMC) through its role as the region's Employers Organisation, has the responsibility of supporting employment relations for the sector. The Regional Employers' Board provides political leadership on employment issues and councillor development and forms the Employer's side of the Regional Joint Council, which meets with joint trade unions to support employment relations on behalf of councils in the East Midlands.
- 1.2 This report provides information for members on the significant issues affecting councils as employers, including national pay negotiation updates, workforce capacity – including recruitment/retention challenges, and key employment law changes. It includes a summary of regional support to councils on workforce matters and councillor development.

2. Key Priorities

- 2.1 This report focuses on key priorities identified by the Regional Employers' Board and updates on work to support councils in making progress on these areas:
 - Attracting, Developing and Retaining Talent
 - Workforce Capacity
 - Pay and Rewards
- 2.2 Attracting, Developing and Retaining Talent – Recruitment Advertising Campaign
 - 2.2.1 Recruitment and retention, and the ability of councils to ensure they have the capacity and skills to deliver services is a continuing challenge. Local government competes with other sectors to raise the profile of careers within the sector, competing with others that benefit from national advertising campaigns, e.g. NHS, Teaching and Armed Forces.
 - 2.2.2 EMC has been supporting and co-ordinating the roll-out across the region of a national recruitment advertising campaign. The campaign promotes careers in local government and has been funded by Government.

- 2.2.3 The campaign has been running since its launch on 4th November 2024, using a range of media, including radio. Resources have been provided to councils to use to support their own recruitment, and these are fully adaptable for authorities to tailor to their requirements and provide a local focus. An example of this is Charnwood Borough Council, which has included videos of their own employees describing the benefits of working for the council.
- 2.2.4 EMC held a meeting for Councils on 15th January 2025 to provide an update on progress with the campaign and enable councils to feedback on their experience of using resources made available. Feedback from councils was positive, with an increase in applications as well as seeing a positive impact on existing employees, with the benefits of working for the council being highlighted and promoted. A copy of the presentation with the progress update is attached at Appendix 7(a).
- 2.2.5 The national campaign runs to February and will then be independently evaluated to understand its impact. The resources remain available for Councils to use beyond that timeframe.
- 2.2.6 To support the campaign, EMC has updated the regional jobs portal, EMJobs, which provides a platform for councils to advertise their vacancies. Improved functionality allows councils to have their jobs automatically feature on EMJobs from their own websites, avoiding the need for duplication or increased work. The portal is being provided free for councils to use during the campaign.

2.3 Workforce Capacity

- 2.3.1 The Government has established a Local Government Workforce Development Group, which was referred to in its recent White Paper. Councils are being represented on the group by the LGA and representatives of Regional Employers Organisations. The first meeting took place in December to discuss terms of reference and workstreams are being identified.
- 2.3.2 EMC will ensure that information flows to and from the Workforce Development Group to reflect the experience and priorities of councils in the region.

2.3.3 Workforce data is key to understanding capacity issues, supporting workforce planning and helping to benchmark pay. There has been a lack of workforce data being held in a consistently and in a way that can be easily shared across councils at regional and national levels. This impacts on our ability to identify or evidence workforce issues and to benchmark between councils and regions.

2.3.4 EMC has partnered with other regional employers organisations to offer a system for workforce data - Infinistats.

2.3.5 To encourage councils to provide data linked specifically to workforce capacity, rather than pay benchmarking, EMC is offering this limited access free of charge.

2.4 Pay and Rewards

2.4.1 National pay negotiations for 2025 are about to commence and EMC is hosting a regional consultation meeting on 13th February 2025 for Chief Executives, Finance and HR Directors and Leading Members to meet with members of the national negotiating team. The meeting will discuss claims received on behalf of groups of employees and councils will be able to put forward their views to help inform the Employers' response to the claims.

2.4.2 To date, a claim has been received from the representatives of Local Authority Chief Executives. The claim is similar to that of previous years, in seeking:

- a pay increase that is the same as the percentage increase (or equivalent percentage if the offer is expressed in £s) for the top point on the scale for local government staff covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services
- a direct and immutable link for increases for April 2025 onwards, to ensure that chief executives receive the same percentage increase as the top point on the NJC scale
- the potential need to review annual leave provision and a matching increase if annual leave is provided to other groups as part of this year's pay awards.

- 2.4.3 The pay claim from the joint unions representing Local Government Services employees who make up the majority of council staff is expected to be submitted by the end of January. This is the negotiating group referred to within the Chief Executives' claim.
- 2.4.4 Claims are also pending from representatives of Chief Officers and of unions representing Craftworkers.
- 2.4.5 Nationally, work is now focused on jointly reviewing the national pay spine, which has needed to be reviewed for some time, to address the impact of the pressure of the national living wage and better reflect pay requirements for professional roles. 10% of Green Book employees are paid above the national pay spine, which indicates the need for review.
- 2.4.6 A significant influence on pay offers and the viability of the national pay spine is the National Living Wage (NLW). In addition to factoring in affordability for councils, the National Employers need to ensure that any offer will be compliant with the forecast level of the NLW coming into effect in April of the following year. The impact on the national pay spine is that the focus on improving pay at the lower levels can erode differences in pay points higher up the pay spine and lead to equal pay concerns.
- 2.4.7 The Low Pay Commission recommends changes to the NLW. Their remit from the previous Government was that the NLW should not fall below two-thirds of the median hourly earnings level. The current Government has amended this remit so that the Commission should also take account of cost-of-living increases.
- 2.4.8 On 30th October 2024, the Government announced that the NLW will be increased to £12.21 from 1st April 2025. This means that from 1st April 2025, until any pay agreement is reached, the bottom rate of pay on the national pay spine (£12.26 per hour/£23,656 per annum) will provide 5p headroom from the NLW.

3. Regional Employers' Board and Joint Council

- 3.1 The Regional Employers' Board met on 28th November 2024. The Board meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the latest developments in

relation to workforce issues, along with a summary of regional activity. This included an overview of implications for employers of the Employment Rights Bill. The Board agreed that workforce issues arising from local government reorganisation proposals will be considered at future meetings, as proposals become clearer.

- 3.2 The Regional Joint Council meeting followed the Employers' Board on 28th November 2024. The Joint Council agreed an uplift of 2.5% to caretakers' letting fees. The meeting received an update on the recruitment advertising campaign.
- 3.3 The Joint Council received a presentation on the Employment Rights Bill – see below, which will see significant changes for all employers and specific implications for local government (see section 4 below).

4. Employment Rights Bill

- 4.1 The Employment Rights Bill was published in October and proposes wide-ranging and significant changes across areas such as employment rights, trade unions, and collective bargaining in sectors relevant to local government.
- 4.2 Proposals that are particularly relevant for local government are:
 - Reinstating the two-tier code in public sector procurement (providing broadly similar terms and conditions for TUPE'd staff and those directly employed by the successful contractor).
 - Establishing a separate national negotiating body for school support staff.
 - Establishing a new Adult Social Care negotiating body.

These proposals are likely to take significant time to develop and the Board will be updated as developments arise.

- 4.3 Significant provisions for all employers are proposals for unfair dismissal protection to be a right from the first day of employment (currently this arises after 2 years' service), provisions relating to the industrial relations framework where thresholds for responses to ballots for industrial action will be removed, and collective redundancy and fire and rehire proposals. The fire/rehire proposals will mean that changes to terms and conditions will need

to be agreed and cannot be achieved through dismissal and re-engagement on revised contracts.

- 4.4 From the regional perspective, EMC will be supporting councils by providing advice and training on employment law changes, as well as engaging in consultations relating to the proposals where appropriate. The Regional Joint Council will provide a forum for Councillors and trade unions to discuss the implementation of changes.
- 4.5 EMC held an employment law seminar on 7th November 2024 which provided information to delegates on the Bill, along with any learning from recent employment case law. Over 70 delegates attended the event, and their feedback was very positive. A follow-up event is being provided by EMC in March 2025.

5. Local Government Reorganisation

- 5.1 There will be significant workforce implications of local government reform. EMC is already receiving queries from councils about this and is proactively engaging with HR Managers and networks on the issues. This will form a key topic for the Regional Employers' Board and Joint Council and will be a priority for EMC's work plan over the next two years.

6. Regional Activity and Support

6.1 Councillor Development

- 6.1.1 Events held so far as part of the regional development programme have been well-attended and feedback from delegates has been very positive. Development activity is also being provided through the Regional Scrutiny Network.
- 6.1.2 An event is being planned in March to provide a forum for councillors to look at and discuss the key policy developments affecting the sector such as planning reforms.

6.2 Networks

6.2.1 EMC provides an opportunity for Councils to collaborate and share experience and good practice across the region through a range of networks as listed below:

- Heads of HR – county-wide groups
- Scrutiny
- Councillor Development
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion
- Cyber Security (EMGWARP)
- Learning and Development/Organisational Development
- Communications
- Performance

The scrutiny and councillor development networks are for both officers and councillors to attend.

6.2.2 The Scrutiny Network met in June as an in-person meeting in Nottinghamshire County Council and in September the network was hosted by Oadby & Wigston. The network has enabled sharing on issues such as effective budget scrutiny and scrutiny training and development needs.

6.2.3 The Equality Diversity and Inclusion network met in September, with a presentation from Derby City Council. The network includes 6 working groups to help officers from different councils to work together to make progress on specific aspects of equality/diversity/inclusion. This is providing a more efficient way of working and information gained is shared amongst the wider EDI networks.

6.2.4 The Communications network has recently been launched in the region and had the national recruitment campaign as a focus of discussion.

6.2.5 The learning and development/organisation development network has been sharing information on learning platforms and talent pipelines.

6.3 Consultancy

6.3.1 Councils can access individual support from EMC on a not-for-profit basis on a range of workforce issues and in-house training/development.

6.3.2 Since the last meeting of the Board, assignments have included:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ▪ Chief Executive appraisal | ▪ Psychometric testing |
| ▪ facilitation | ▪ Disciplinary investigations |

- Mediation
- Grievance appeal hearing advice
- Restructuring support
- Coaching
- Complex case management

6.3.3 In addition to this work, EMC is supporting the delivery of a national programme of events for the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO). Feedback from the events is extremely positive – both from delegates and tutors, and EMC has recently provided a training event for tutors on the programme to further develop their skills.

7. Recommendation

7.1 Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to note the issues highlighted in this report and endorse the work of the Regional Employers' Board and EMC's activity to support Councils on workforce issues and Councillor Development.

Cllr Kate Foale
Chair
Regional Employers' Board

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local council**

National recruitment campaign

for local government



Funded by
UK Government



Make A Difference - Work for Your Local Council: Kerry's Story



Kerry's
story



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local council

Watch on  YouTube

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Campaign performance – first 4 weeks (November 2024)

Social media	2 million impressions across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, with 713,000 video plays and 20,000 clicks to campaign website
Outdoor billboards	9.9 million estimated impressions from advertising on 147 billboards
Digital display	5 million impressions delivered through advertising on websites (job sites, business, news, lifestyle)
Paid search	93,000 impressions from Google and Bing and 16,000 clicks, with high click-through rate of 24%
Digital audio	669,000 listens to campaign adverts on podcasts and streaming platforms, with 98.8% of people listening through to the end
Radio	Reported at end of campaign, estimated 72 million listens over campaign period



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opportunities

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local council jobs at
localcounciljobs.gov.uk

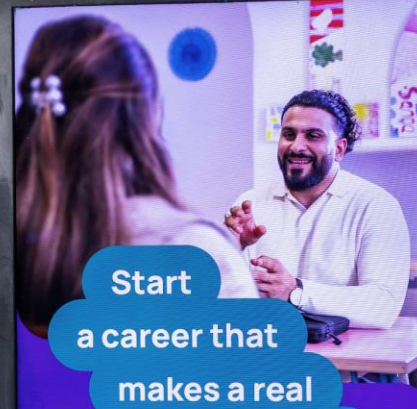
This campaign is funded by UK Government

Clear Channel

CAR WASH



Clear Channel



Start
a career that
makes a real
change

Improve your work-life balance and develop your career. Choose from hundreds of rewarding roles and help to make a positive impact in your area.

Make a difference in your area, visit

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Clear Channel



**Change to
working patterns
that work
for you**

Working at your local council could
be full-time, part-time, term-time or
flexible hours - and you could change
your pattern to suit you and the needs of real people in your community.

Find out about hundreds of local council jobs at

[localcounciljobs.gov.uk](https://www.localcounciljobs.gov.uk)

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Social media



Videos available in 60s, 30s or 15s, portrait, square and landscape formats

Social media posts available and editable, with text templates and headers

mix-match-toppings

Sign in | Register

Recipes ▾ Health ▾ What to buy ▾ Ingredients ▾ **Subscribe** Market Street

Search recipes...

84 ratings

Ingredients

200g [porridge oats](#)

2 [ripe bananas](#)

2 [eggs](#)

2 tbsp milled seeds (such as flaxseed or chia seeds)

2 [pitted dates](#)

1 tsp [baking powder](#)

50-100ml [milk](#)

For the mix & match toppings

[blueberries](#), raspberries, sliced dates, or chopped nuts

nut butter, Greek-style yogurt, maple syrup, to serve

Method

STEP 1

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Line 12 holes of a muffin tin with cupcake cases. Put the oats, bananas, eggs, seeds, dates, baking powder and 50ml of the milk into a [blender](#) and blitz to make a batter (or do this in a jug using a hand blender). Blitz in enough of the remaining milk to make the batter pourable, then pour into the cases and top with your choice of either blueberries, a raspberry, a couple of date slices or a sprinkling of chopped nuts. Bake for 15-20 mins until well risen and lightly golden. The berries, if using, should look soft and juicy. Leave to cool on a wire rack for 15 mins. *Or, leave to cool completely, then keep frozen for up to three months, or in an airtight container for up to five days.*

Change to working patterns that work for you

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VANITY FAIR

-prediction-markets-turned-american-politics-into-casino

VANITY FAIR

SYGMA/GETTY IMAGES.

Listen to this story

00:00

11:58

You may have registered to vote, but have you filed your bets?

There's a new wave of fintech start-ups—Polymarket, Kalshi, PredictIt—that want to turn betting on the outcome of an election or a war as easy as ordering Thai food. And if the 2024 campaign cycle is an accurate indicator, a potential bull market bonanza awaits.

With the spread of sports gambling apps, it seems like almost anything can be turned into a prop bet. On the industry-leading Polymarket, the prediction market where more than \$1 billion has been bet on the outcome of the November presidential election, there are dozens of **Donald Trump**-related gambles to choose from. More than \$2.2 million **has been bet** on whether Trump will go to prison for his hush-money conviction before the November election. (**He won't.**) About \$52,000 was wagered on whether **Trump would say "Loomer"** at a rally in North Carolina. (He didn't.) It gets pretty obscure pretty fast, but the odds are there if you want to take them.

Hive

Where Wall Street, Washington, and Silicon Valley meet.

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MOST POPULAR

STYLE

Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce Str Through Indianapolis, Hand in

95

METRO

everyone-know-21922923/

METRO


NEWS... BUT NOT AS YOU KNOW IT






NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT SOAPS LIFESTYLE VIDEO SHOPPING MORE


SEX HEALTH PROPERTY FOOD TRAVEL HOROSCOPES MONEY SHOPPING

Home > Lifestyle > Property

I'm a first-time buyer — these are the 5 tips everyone should know

 **Eleanor Noyce**
Published Nov 4, 2024, 11:41am


      Comment



Looking to get on the property ladder? You might enjoy some perks (Picture: Getty/Metro.co.uk)

sky sports

11:25 AA skysports.com




Change to working patterns that work for you


Start a career that makes a real change

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11:05 AA skysports.com



Start a career that makes a real change

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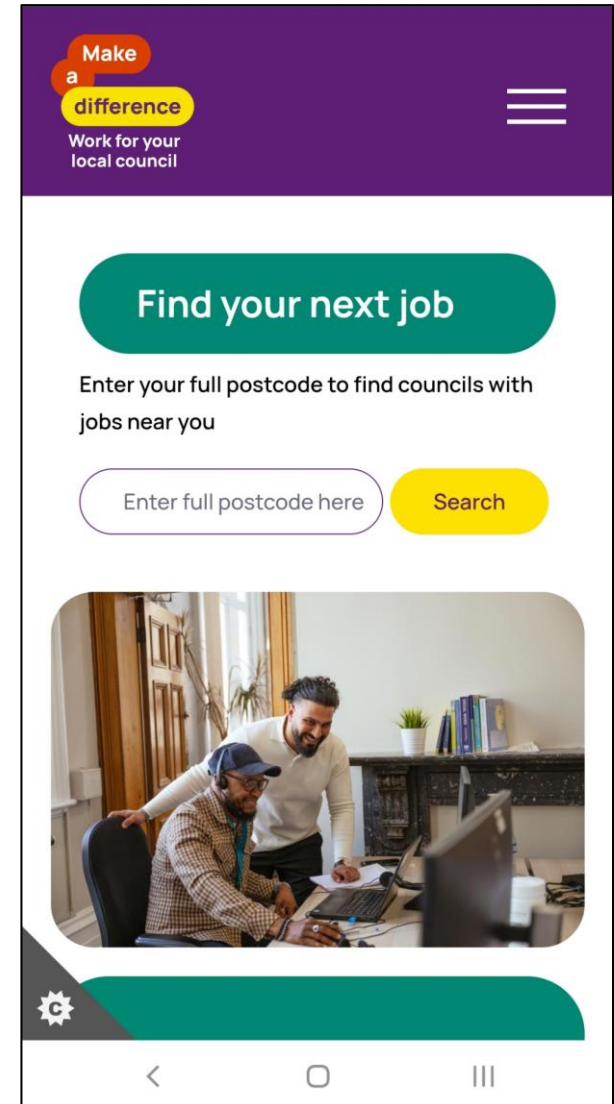
 Funded by UK Government

Campaign website – www.localcounciljobs.gov.uk

- ‘Call to action’ link for campaign adverts
- Postcode search to find your councils’ job website, and those nearby/in your region
- All councils and combined authorities in England
- ‘Why work in local government’ pages with videos

In the first four weeks of the campaign:

- 62,651 visitors to the campaign website
- 34,546 postcode searches to find council jobs



What can councils do to support the campaign?

- A campaign toolkit has been provided to councils and can be downloaded from the Make a Difference website
- The toolkit includes all campaign materials, with assets that can be adapted for local use and to meet local needs
- Assets include:
 - Social media content
 - Banner stands
 - Posters
 - Screen and outdoor ads
 - Email banners

Templates

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Campaign Toolkit

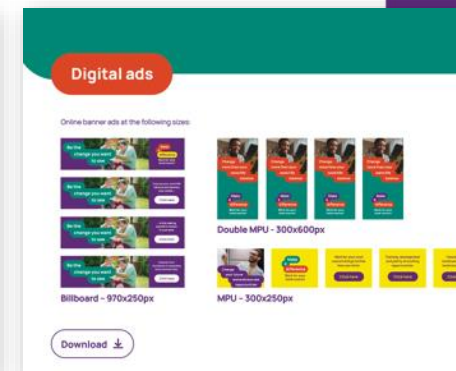
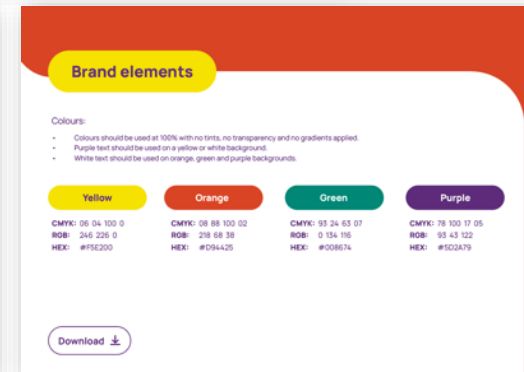
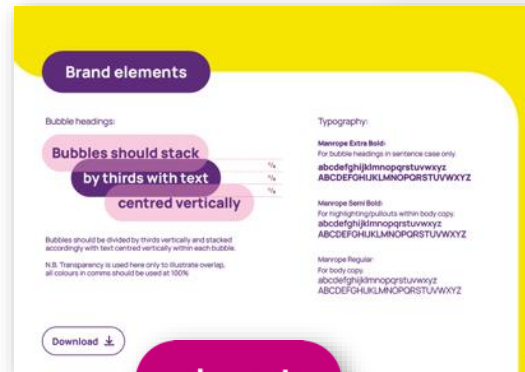
Download ↓

Be the change
you want to see

< insert url here >

Campaign elements

< Insert
your own
approx. 8-word
headline here >

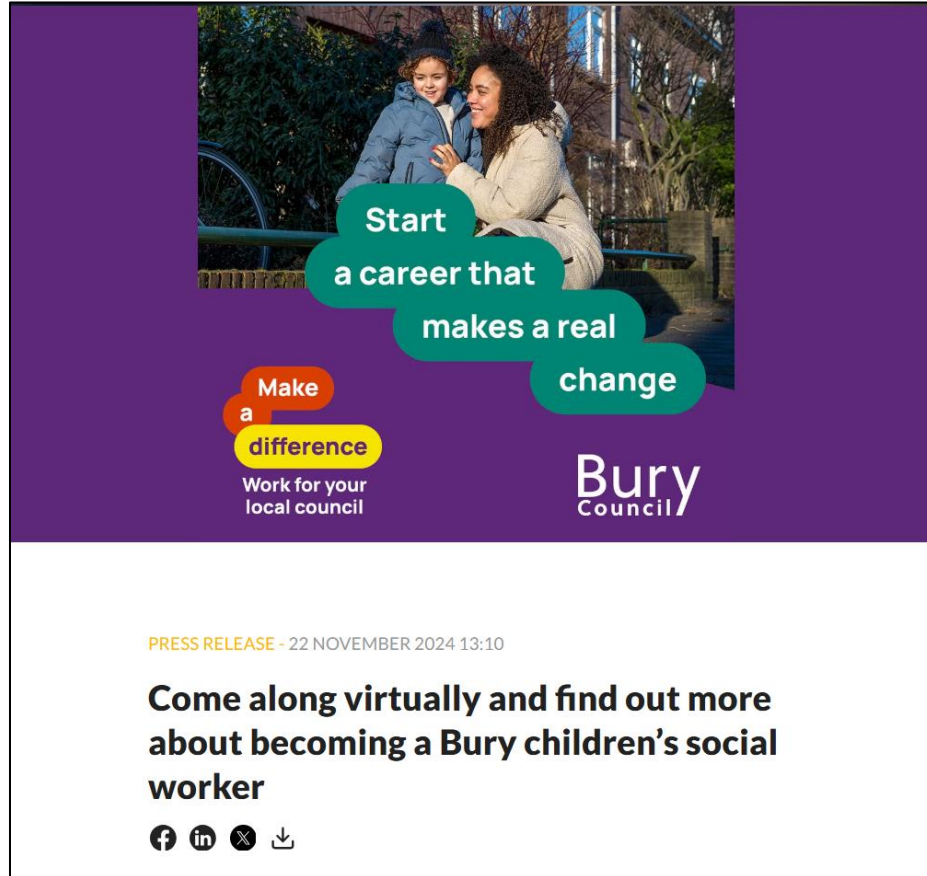


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Examples from councils

Bury Council



A social media post from Bury Council. The top half has a purple background with a photo of a woman and a child. Overlaid on the photo is a green speech bubble containing the text "Start a career that makes a real change". Below the photo, on the purple background, is a small graphic with the text "Make a difference" and "Work for your local council". The Bury Council logo is in the bottom right of the purple section. The bottom half of the post has a white background with the text "PRESS RELEASE - 22 NOVEMBER 2024 13:10" and "Come along virtually and find out more about becoming a Bury children's social worker". At the bottom are social media icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and a download icon.

Start a career that makes a real change

Make a difference
Work for your local council

Bury Council

PRESS RELEASE - 22 NOVEMBER 2024 13:10

Come along virtually and find out more about becoming a Bury children's social worker

f in X ↴



A social media post from Bury Council. The top half has a photo of three children playing with blocks. Overlaid on the photo is a purple speech bubble containing the text "Support a local family with one life changing career". Below the photo, on a yellow background, is a small graphic with the text "Make a difference" and "Work for your local council". The Bury Council logo is in the bottom right of the yellow section.


Support a local family with one life changing career

Make a difference
Work for your local council

Bury Council

Examples from councils

North Yorkshire Council

**North Yorkshire Council Jobs & Careers**

4,185 followers
1w • Edited •

[+ Follow](#) [...](#)

Make a Difference, Work for your Local Council
Join us to make a difference in your community—and discover a lot more along the way! 📁 ✨


Choose from hundreds of jobs

Link in comments

[#NorthYorkshireCouncil](#)


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a
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Examples from councils


Charnwood Borough Council

 **Charnwood Borough Council**
@CharnwoodBC

Housing officer Callum was attracted to working in local government so he could help the community that he grew up in.

Search hundreds of local council jobs at localcounciljobs.gov.uk

Current vacancies at Charnwood can be found at charnwood.gov.uk/vacancies




Start a career that makes a real change

Make a difference
Work for your local council

charnwood.gov.uk/makeadifference

Sefton Council


 **Sefton Council**
@seftoncouncil

Meet Joe - Library Services Officer 🙋🇬🇧

Check out vacancies at your local council at localcounciljobs.gov.uk

Find out more about how staff at Sefton Council are making a difference at sefton.gov.uk/jobs-volunteer...

#MySefton



Make a difference
Work for your local council

"I feel that the difference the work achieves is ensuring that our libraries remain a warm, welcoming, creative space where you don't need to buy anything to stay and is accessible to everyone. I feel that through our work, Sefton's Libraries, which could have become old fashioned and lost touch with the changing communities around them, instead feel like vital spaces which can adjust to Sefton's needs and wants, providing so much more than you'd expect a library to."

Make a difference

Work for your local council

Google Analytics Tracking

- Google Analytics tracks the number of visitors on your council website, and where they are visiting your website from – your Comms team may already be using this
- Visits directly from the campaign website will be shown as ‘Make a Difference Website’

Referral	make_a_difference_website / referral	132	118
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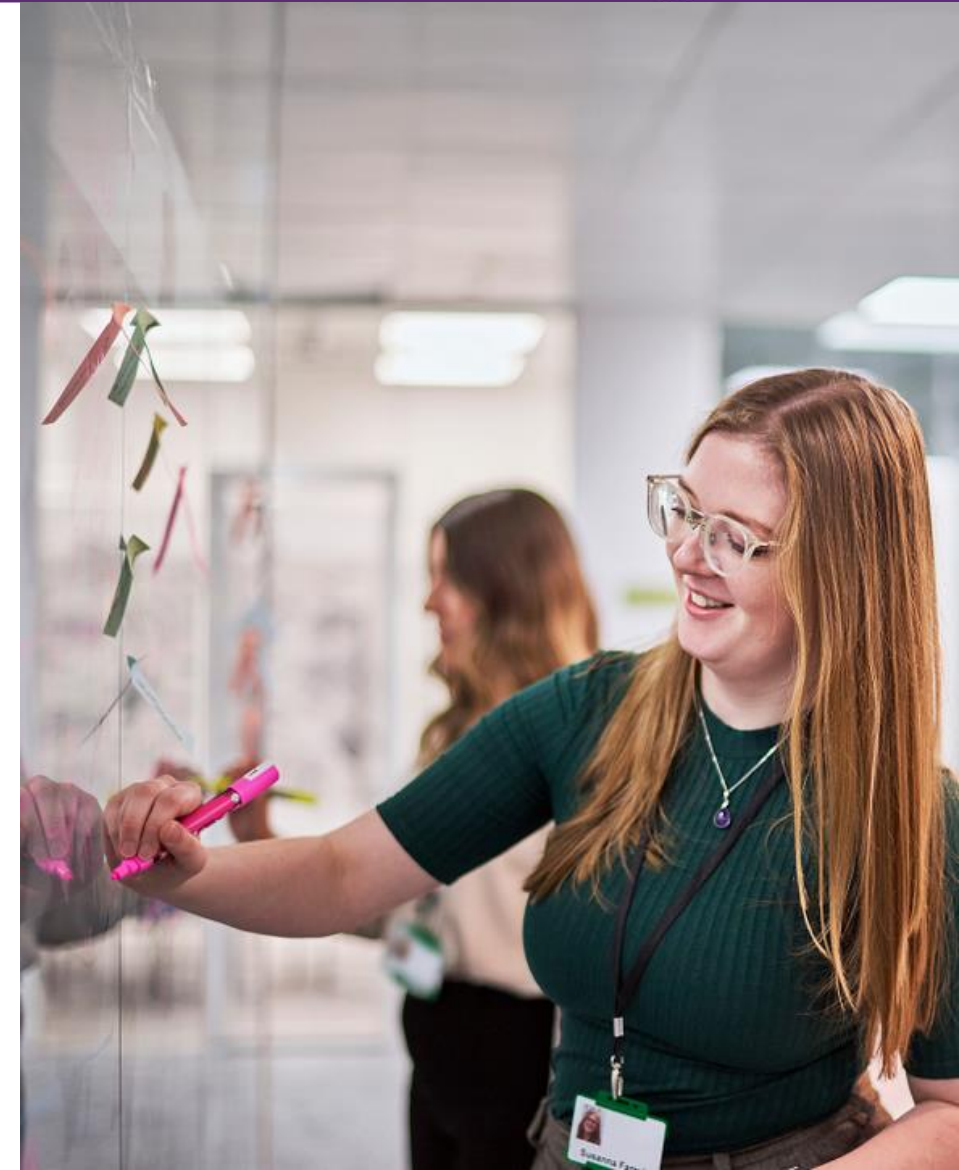
- At the end of January, we will be asking for website statistics from your council, and Google Analytics is a great way to track this
- **Note:** people may visit your website directly after hearing or seeing one of our adverts, or a post on your council’s own communications channels – this will not be marked as ‘Make a Difference’ on Google Analytics unless it is set up

Next steps

- **January 2025** – Second round of paid media activity in all regions
- **End of January 2025** – paid media campaign ends, councils are encouraged to continue using the campaign materials beyond this date
- **February 2025** – council survey and residents survey, and collection of recruitment data from councils, to assess impact of campaign
- **March 2025** – evaluation report produced, will be shared with councils at online event in April 2025

Thank you for your support!

makeadifference@local.gov.uk



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General Meeting

31st January 2025

Asylum and Refugee Resettlement Report

Summary

This report sets out the key issues relating to asylum and refugee resettlement in the East Midlands, specifically asylum dispersal, UASC and Afghan refugee resettlement.

Please note that this report remains confidential due to the inclusion of sensitive data.

Recommendations

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- Consider the impact of asylum and refugee resettlement programmes and provide advice in relation to the on-going work of EMC in addressing the concerns of local authorities.
- Consider the impact of the new Full Asylum Dispersal Model on Local Authorities
- Advise on the impact and experience of local authorities where contingency accommodation has been sourced.
- Advise on current impact of the proposed Streamlined Asylum Process.

To reflect recent and significant developments, the following report provides EMC Members with an update on asylum dispersal, including the revised version of the Full Dispersal Model, new streamlined asylum decision process, opening of additional asylum contingency hotels, UASC and the resettlement of Afghan refugees.

Work continues on the Ukrainian support programmes, Hong Kong BN(O) visa schemes and wider resettlement, including work to put in place better ESOL provision.

1. Asylum Dispersal

- 1.1 Nationally, at end-September 2024, there were approximately 105,400 asylum seekers supported in initial, contingency and dispersal accommodation.
- 1.2 Within the East Midlands, there were 6,251 asylum seekers being supported in initial, contingency and dispersed accommodation across the region.
- 1.3 Since the launch of the Full Dispersal model in April 2023, an additional 18 local authorities are now dispersal areas taking the number to 24 across the East Midlands. A full breakdown of local authorities including numbers can be found below.

Local Authority	Current Occupancy (as of 1/12/24)
Amber Valley	8
Ashfield	77
Bassetlaw	76
Blaby	21
Bolsover	88
Boston	63
Broxtowe	51
Charnwood	76
Derby City	985
East Lindsey	47
Gedling	15
Leicester City	1174
Mansfield	88
Melton	11
Newark & Sherwood	26
North East Derbyshire	29
North Northamptonshire	252
Northwest Leicestershire	24
Nottingham City	1318
Oadby & Wigston	22
South Holland	28

South Kesteven	25
West Lindsey	27
West Northamptonshire	20
TOTAL	4573

- 1.4 Home Office statistics confirm that 129,697 asylum claims were made nationally between September 2023 and September 2024, including applicants and dependants. This figure is a 12% increase on the peak of 84,132 recorded in 2002.
- 1.5 48,193 (37%) of applicants were granted protection with 48,421 (37%) of applicants were refused. 20,365 (16%) applications for asylum were withdrawn refused. The remaining cases were either granted other leave or where a result of an administrative outcome.
- 1.6 The Ministry of Defence publish weekly number of migrants detected in small boats. These figures show that 36,897 migrants were detected in 673 small boats from 10/1/24 to 9/1/25. Details can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats>

Contingency Accommodation

- 1.7 With small boats continuing to arrive on the South Coast, and with insufficient dispersal accommodation, the Home Office and accommodation providers have housed Asylum Seekers in contingency accommodation (mostly hotels) throughout the UK including in the East Midlands.
- 1.8 At end-March 2024, approximately 38,400 asylum seekers were accommodated nationally in contingency accommodation, with the East Midlands providing 1,678 bed spaces across 13 Sites. This is approximately 4% of the national total:

Leicester City (368)	Nottingham (223)	Derby (335)
Chesterfield (85)	Charnwood (175)	Erewash (153)
East Lindsey (62)	West Northants (277)	

- 1.9 Despite the announcement in October 2023 by the Secretary of State for Immigration relating to hotels being exited as asylum accommodation which saw the 20 hotels being closed across the region, an additional 3 hotels in West Northamptonshire have been opened to meet the demand for bed spaces as a result of significant small boat arrivals.

Full Asylum Dispersal Model (FADM)

- 1.10 The initial Full Asylum Dispersal Model was launched in April 2023 with the aim to increase bed spaces by 3,405 across the region by 31st December 2023. Despite an increase in the number of new dispersal areas, the numbers of actual bed spaces only increased slightly from the original baseline figures of 3,422 to 3,500, an increase of 3% against the target.
- 1.11 In January 2024, the Home Office announced their intentions of the next phase for Full Dispersal. An indexing tool was developed which will allow the next iteration of plans to be more evidence based, with a greater focus on market availability but also factoring in social pressures within local authority areas.
- 1.12 The new model was launched in July 2024 and has superseded the previous iteration of the full dispersal model. As a result, all local authority areas will see an increase in the targeted number of bedspaces aiming to be opened apart from Nottingham, Leicester and Derby where a 'maintain and replace' method will be in place to ensure the bedspace demand plan figure is not exceeded.
- 1.13 Serco has stated that 3,134 bed spaces are in the process of being procured with 1,029 bed spaces in the qualified pipeline. If these spaces were to be fully procured the East Midlands would achieve 90% towards the target.
- 1.14 In July 2024, the Home Office announced new funding arrangements. Each local authority that accommodated asylum seekers on 1st April 2024 received a £750 payment per asylum seeker in all accommodation types (including contingency accommodation).
- 1.15 A payment of £3,500 is made to local authorities for each new dispersal bed space in both new and existing dispersal areas between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025. This funding is only payable for Initial Accommodation, Dispersal Accommodation and Overflow Dispersal Accommodation (excluding contingency accommodation).
- 1.16 The Home Office provide monthly updates on the current progress made towards the FADM plan prior to the Regional Full Dispersal Governance Board who meet monthly and consist of officers from local authorities, Home Office and Serco.

Streamlined Asylum Process (SAP)

- 1.17 This process is intended to clear the backlog of outstanding asylum claims. The Home Office estimated there would be 4,441 decisions made in the East Midlands.
- 1.18 EMC is currently analysing the cost implications for local authorities of the policy of swifter decision making of asylum cases. 80-90% of all decisions are positive with leave to remain. This policy causes a cost-shunt onto local authorities principally through the risk of increased number of homeless presentations (staffing and accommodation costs). This work focuses on the 6 areas that have experienced some of the highest numbers of homelessness presentations and therefore most affected: Erewash, Broxtowe, Charnwood, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby.
- 1.19 A final report of cost pressures will be presented to the next meeting of the Regional Migration Board in March 2025.

2. Afghan Resettlement Schemes (ARAP and ACRS)

- 2.1 The latest official data (September 2024) shows 34,918 arriving under the Afghan ARAP and ACRS schemes.
- 2.2 Since November 2023, Afghans are being resettled directly from Pakistan. This is an accelerated programme of resettlement into vacant military Service Family Accommodation (SFA), and where local authorities have made use of Local Authority Housing Fund monies to increase local housing availability.
- 2.3 In order to provide temporary resettlement support, the MoD has used a facility in Leicestershire (Garats Hay) for use as a reception centre with a capacity for 300 civilians and 50 MoD personnel. The original operational aim was to process ARAP arrivals to SFA housing within 48 hours, but this has now been revised to 6 weeks, with other MoD sites now being used outside of region.
- 2.4 A further site in North Kesteven (Beckingham) is now in use for the accommodation of up to 260 Afghan refugees. The MoD are working closely with North Kesteven District Council and given its location, are also working closely with both Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils.
- 2.5 The MoD have confirmed that the reception centres across the UK including Garat's Hay and Beckingham will start to be closed from early Spring. The sites

were intended as a short-term solution with consideration of alternative accommodation options including hotel use.

- 2.6 In order to source accommodation, the MoD contracted Mears to procure available properties in the private rented sector. To date, 27 SFA properties and 34 Mears PRS properties have been procured, a total of 51 units operational in the East Midlands region.

3. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, the National Transfer Scheme and Spontaneous Arrival

- 3.1 The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) was introduced on 1st July 2016 and Local Authority participation became mandatory in December 2021.
- 3.2 East Midlands Councils through the Strategic Migration Partnership is supporting local authorities across the region in their response to the NTS. The NTS will be kept under review and the length of time for mandating will be dictated by a range of factors including intake levels, ability to place children in local authority care in a timely manner, and the viability of a return to a voluntary NTS that works effectively.

East Midlands Position

- 3.3 Transfers from November 2021 are counted towards mandated allocations. Under the mandated NTS, at the time of writing, the region has received 756 transfers,
- 3.4 Local authorities with numbers of UASC in care above 0.1% of their general child population are not required to accept transfers. Rutland dipped below its 0.1% threshold but is now again above the level for mandatory participation. All other East Midlands authorities remain below their 0.1% threshold.
- 3.5 Referrals to the region continue to be coordinated by East Midlands Councils.
- 3.6 In December 2024, the total number of unaccompanied children looked after by East Midlands authorities was 609. This is 12% lower than the same time last year. The number of former UASC care leavers in the region is currently 1,264, which represents a year-on-year increase of 35%

Asylum Contingency Hotels and Age Assessments

- 3.7 Since July 2021, a total of 346 unaccompanied young people claiming to be children in adult asylum hotels have been taken into care across all upper tier authorities in the region except Rutland. Although the Government committed to stopping the use of hotels as asylum accommodation, an additional 3 hotels have opened at short notice in West Northamptonshire which is could potentially see an increase of age disputed cases presenting to local authorities. Also, over the last few months referrals for age assessment have been rising again as occupancy in the remaining hotels has increased, putting pressure on Derby City, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. This has been raised with the Home Office through national and regional forums requesting the need for local authorities to receive the enhanced funding which accompanies children transferred via the NTS and for more robust age determination assessments to be conducted at port.
- 3.8 The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) has issued a call for evidence for his inspection of the Home Office's use of age assessments. In consultation with local authority UASC Lead officers, EMC has submitted a response on behalf of the partnership, attached as Appendix 8(a).

4. Recommendations

Members of East Midlands Councils are invited to:

- 4.1 Consider the impact of asylum and refugee resettlement programmes and provide advice in relation to the on-going work of EMC in addressing the concerns of local authorities.
- 4.2 Consider the potential impact of the new Full Asylum Dispersal Model on Local Authorities
- 4.3 Advise on the impact and experience of local authorities where contingency accommodation has been sourced.
- 4.4 Advise on current impact of the proposed Streamlined Asylum Process.

Cllr Alex Dale
Chair
Regional Migration Board



David Bolt
 The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
 By email to: ageassessment@icibi.gov.uk

8 October 2024

Dear David,

Re: evidence for the inspection into the Home Office's use of age assessments

I am writing on behalf of the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (EMSMP) in response to your call for evidence into the Home Office's use of age assessments.

East Midlands Councils (EMC) is the representative voice of East Midlands' local government, working on behalf of 45 local authorities. The East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership, and the policy team within EMC that supports its activities, provides advice to member organisations for the coordination and provision of support and services for migrants.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this call for evidence, and our submission is based on our experience of coordinating the response in the East Midlands in supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), and operation of the UASC National Transfer Scheme (NTS) within the region.

1. Home Office age assessments and the National Transfer Scheme

When an unaccompanied asylum-seeking young person is first encountered by the Home Office, where there is a lack of documentation and/or doubt about the young person's age, Immigration Officers will conduct a brief assessment of age based principally on the young person's physical appearance and demeanour.

The effectiveness of these age assessments by the Home Office at ports of entry has been a long-standing matter of concern for EMSMP, which has become more acute since the introduction of the NTS national rota in July 2021 and the increased use of asylum contingency hotel accommodation in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme over the last three years.

In relation to the NTS, since 2021 the region has seen a year-on-year increase in the proportion of UASC referred who have been age-disputed by the Home Office, typically at the Port of Dover. So far this year, 63% of NTS referrals to the East Midlands have been for young people whose age is disputed by the Home Office, compared to 60% in 2023, 55% in 2022 and 28% in 2021. This suggests an increasingly ineffective process at port for identifying whether newly-arrived asylum-

seeking migrants are to be routed through adult or child dispersal schemes, with the concomitant safeguarding risks inherent within this.

EMSMP has enquired of the Home Office whether a feedback mechanism exists in order to identify which Immigration Officers are in need of further support and training in relation to the efficacy of their age assessments, based for example on subsequent full Merton age assessments conducted by local authorities; no such quality assurance mechanism has been made known to us.

The Home Office provides BP7 (ASL.3596)¹ forms with NTS referrals for young people whose age they have disputed. The intention of sharing these forms is understood by EMSMP to be to provide receiving local authorities with information on the reasons for the Home Office's decision to dispute age, in order to support local authorities to identify suitable placements and inform any safeguarding considerations. When it was first agreed by the Home Office to share BP7 forms with receiving local authorities in May 2023, the information in the forms tended to be of a good quality, including young-person-specific details for the decision to dispute age. Over time however, the information in BP7 forms with more recent NTS referrals has become increasingly generic, and now it is rare for these forms to contain any specific information pertaining to the individual young person that the Home Office has age assessed. This then does not serve the original purpose for sharing these forms with local authorities, and again might reflect an increasingly ineffective age assessment process at port.

2. Home Office age assessments and the Adult Asylum Dispersal Programme

As noted above, EMSMP has long-standing concerns about the effectiveness of age assessments by the Home Office at ports of entry, which have become more acute since the increased use of asylum contingency hotel accommodation in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme over the last three years.

There is a cohort of young people who are age assessed as adults by the Home Office upon first encounter and routed through the adult asylum dispersal programme, either to Initial Accommodation (IA) centres or asylum contingency hotel (ACH) accommodation. Some of these young people identify themselves as children to staff in the IA or ACH; others are identified as possibly children by the staff themselves, either hotel staff, charity workers, or legal representatives. A referral for age assessment is then made to the appropriate local authority where the IA or ACH is situated.

Since July 2021, according to data from local authorities in the East Midlands, a total of at least 580 age assessment referrals have been received by Children's Services across in the region from either IA or ACH accommodation. Of these referrals, 364 (63%) have been assessed as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children by the local authority and removed from the adult asylum system to be taken into local authority care.

¹ The BP7 is a minute sheet used to record the reasons why a claimed age has been disputed by the Home Office and is completed by immigration officials.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are identified as a highly vulnerable group, and consequently this number of children incorrectly assessed as adults by the Home Office represents a grave safeguarding risk. It is not known by EMSMP whether IA/ACH staff undergo training in relation to child safeguarding. It is also unknown how many children who are routed through the adult dispersal programme go missing before they are identified and referred to the local authority for age assessment.

It is of note that in 2023 alone there were 159 children removed from IA/ACH accommodation and taken into care by East Midlands authorities. This is the equivalent of 11 additional NTS rota cycle allocations to the region (1 NTS cycle to the East Midlands = 14 children).

Anecdotally, local authorities contend that periods of high intake into the asylum system correspond to disproportionately high rates of referrals for age assessment from IA/ACH accommodation. I.e. that the *proportion* of asylum-seekers transferred to IA/ACH accommodation who are subsequently referred for local authority age assessment is higher during periods of peak intake than the proportion under quieter operating conditions. This suggests that Home Office age assessment processes at port are particularly ineffective during busy periods.

Local authorities report that there are occasions when their age assessment is substantially different to the Home Office age assessment. Local authorities realise that young people may often be tired and malnourished by their journey when they first arrive in the UK, but some of the differences in age assessment conclusions between Home Office and local authorities seem to go beyond that explanation. There are also occasions when the Home Office allocate an age to a young person which is within the margin of error for their brief assessments, for example giving a young person an age of 19, when they are claiming to be 17.5 years old.

One local authority highlighted that there have been a number of times when they have been sent an Immigration Officer logbook stating that the young person signed to say that they were aged over 18; whilst the young person in question informed the local authority that they were pressured to sign the document.

Positively, the Home Office is willing to investigate cases of unaccompanied children routed through the adult asylum system and engage in discussion with the affected local authorities. Local authorities also report a good working relationship with the Home Office Age Dispute Team, with timely and efficient responses in most cases.

Also positively, the Home Office is known to be conducting research into its age assessment processes, the outcome of which is expected imminently. It is hoped by EMSMP that this may lead to system changes that are better able to assess age effectively at points of entry.

3. The National Age Assessment Board

The National Age Assessment Board (NAAB) has only recently expanded its offer to conduct age assessment to the East Midlands, and it is too early to assess the impact or effectiveness. However, initial feedback from participating local authorities

has been mixed, with some positives and some concerns that the referral process is highly bureaucratic and administratively heavy, and that capacity within the NAAB is limited to respond to referrals in a timely manner.

One Local authority in the region noted the following:

“Our previous experience with the NAAB has been positive. There has been good communication and professional relationships formed between NAAB workers and local authority social workers. We have very recently asked the NAAB to undertake further assessments. However, this experience has not been as positive as we would have anticipated. With the new cohort, the NAAB are too strict on timescales and paperwork, including observational feedback which is required to be gathered and submitted to them before they will proceed. Sometimes, this can be a bit of a challenge especially if the young person is a new arrival. For example, we may not have pathway plans ready due to statutory timescales (as these are completed at three months post initial 28-day review process).”

Given the challenges for local authorities noted in points 1 and 2 above, EMSMP are of the view that the NAAB could usefully be deployed (legislation-allowing) to complete age assessments at port before the young people are dispersed either through the NTS or Asylum Dispersal. This would strengthen child safeguarding, save time and reduce costs for local authorities, increase the effectiveness of the NTS, and place less strain on increasingly scarce resources such as foster placements for unaccompanied children.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Clarke
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East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership
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