



Your Local Community Network

**Levels and Moors
LCN**

Agenda

- **Welcome and introductions**
- **Notes from the last meeting**
- **Brief Presentations from Environment Agency and SRA**
- **Discussion: Break out tables**
- **Feedback and Next steps**
- **Working groups Update**
- **Date and theme of next meeting**

Welcome and Introductions

- Housekeeping
- Summary of Actions from the AGM

| Date | Description | Responsibility |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 11 th June | How many Parishes are not engaging in the LCN? Can we look at the list for the all the staff invited, contact them and asking them to engage | LCN Link Worker Sean and Tim |
| 11 th June | Active travel working group to connect with other LCN groups from across somerset. | Active Travel working groups. |
| 11 th June | Chair and Vice-chair to attend local parishes, meeting the parishes getting them more involved. | Sean Dromgoole & Tim Kerly |
| 11 th June | Share the report with the LCN Members and stakeholders to celebrate the achievements. | LCN Team |
| 11 th June | Organise a LCN Meeting focused on flooding with relevant stakeholders and experts | Kate and Sean |
| 11 th June | Attend the Biweekly clerks meeting with planning colleagues and get updates on planning enforcement, local plan, and call for sites | Parish Clerks |

Presentation from the Environment Agency



Somerset Rivers Authority

The logo graphic consists of three curved lines that sweep upwards from left to right. The top line is a dark blue, the middle line is a medium blue, and the bottom line is a light blue. These lines are positioned below the text 'Somerset Rivers Authority'.

Jonathan Hudston, SRA Communications

Bel Deering, Paul Elliston

SRA Community Engagement

About the SRA (1)

Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) is a **partnership**. SRA partners are:

- Somerset Council
- the Parrett and Axe Brue Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs)
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Wessex Regional Flood & Coastal Committee
- Wessex Water

SRA purpose: **reduce the risks and impacts of flooding**. All kinds of flooding – except coastal.

SRA set up after 2013-14 floods to do more. More money. More working together.

Extra, not instead. **SRA does not duplicate or replace roles**. Not involved (for eg) in emergency responses to flooding.

Extra, not instead. Landowners with watercourses adjoining, running through or under their land: owners' roles are the same.

SRA partners' own flood risk and water management roles are the same. Not always duties, but choices for public good.

About the SRA (2)

To repeat: an SRA partner like the Environment Agency does not have a duty to dredge a river that it does not own.

It has what's called permissive powers along main rivers. It can choose to act for the public good. It does not have to.

What the SRA does for its partners and for Somerset is to expand the range of what it's possible and feasible to do, enable more local choices to be made, ensure a greater level of flood protection and resilience.

Lots of things only happen across Somerset – across the Levels & Moors LCN area – because Somerset has the SRA.

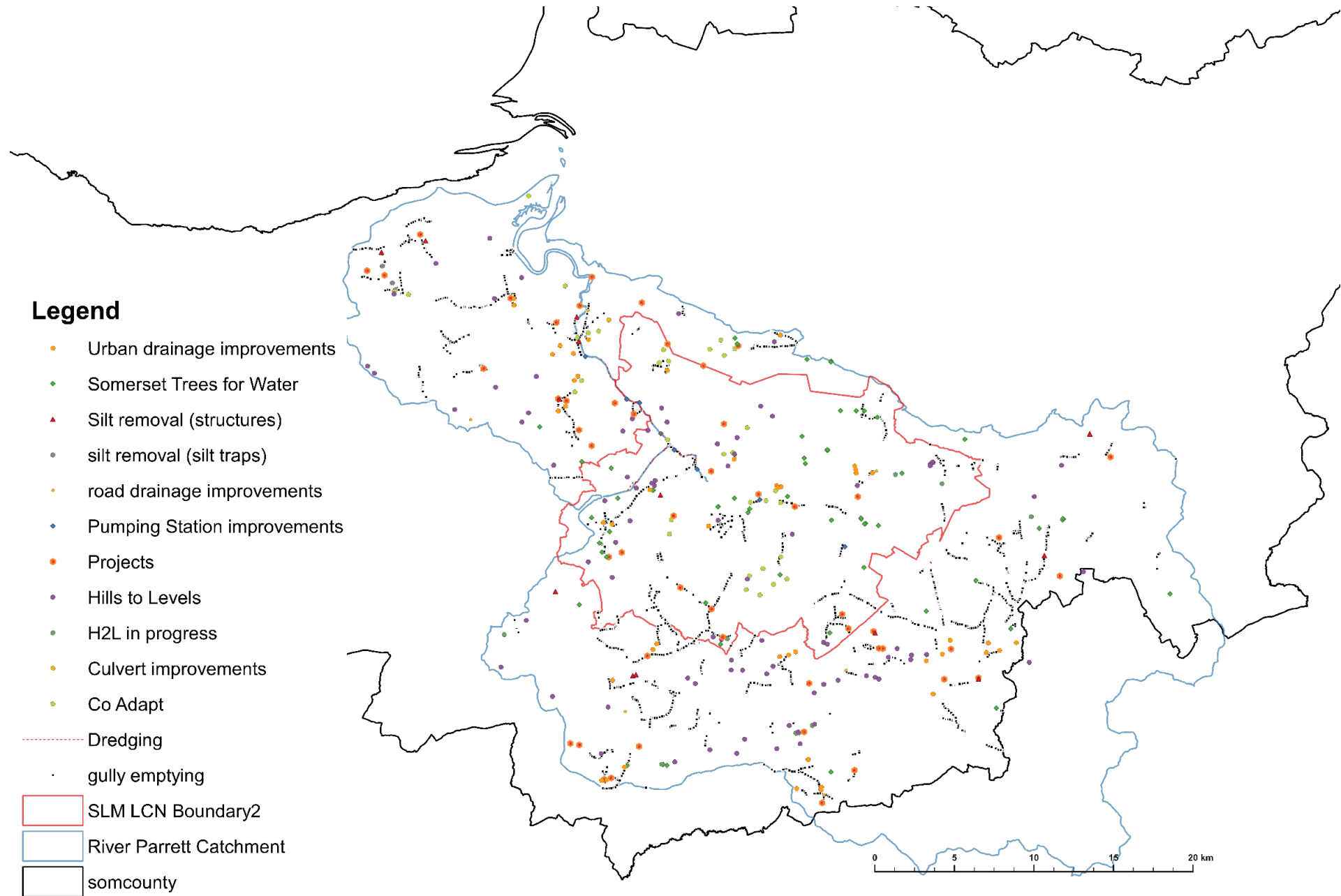
How? Because 1) the SRA gets just over **£3million a year through council tax**, for SRA use only + £20,000 from IDBs.

The SRA gives grants so people and organisations can do more across Somerset catchments than they could do otherwise.

2) Working together, SRA partners take a **catchment approach** to flooding problems. Parrett catchment: 478 square miles.

For eg, slow the flow of water down through upper catchments, store it in mid-catchments, and through lower catchments convey it safely out to sea or – when and where conditions are right – let it spread over floodplains. (So for example in 2022-23 SRA-funded trial run with Moor Associations of farmers being paid to store water as a public service).

Map of local SRA funded works 2015-2024





SRA-funded dredging

2014: Government gave Environment Agency £6million to dredge 5 miles of Parrett and Tone, using traditional methods

2016-2019: SRA funds additional Parrett dredging, downstream of Northmoor Pumping Station, Oath to Burrowbridge, traditional methods

2016-2024: SRA also funds Water Injection Dredging, much cheaper, much quicker, much less disruptive for residents and environment

2024: SRA funds trial of combination of Water Injection Dredging and traditional methods on shoulder of river banks

2025: Proposed extension of combined dredging along Parrett



SRA-funded activities in progress, coming up

River Sowy – King’s Sedgemoor Drain (KSD) Enhancements Scheme: SRA Board meeting this Friday in Bridgwater due to decide on plans for upgrading two river outfalls and hear more about 1.8km of KSD bank raising

Natural Flood Management: Hills to Levels programme continues this year, Trees for Water Action Fund continues this year

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS): pioneering programme of SuDS inspections continues, plans for Somerset Council to adopt new Somerset-specific SuDS guidance: <https://dev.somerset-suds.jbahosting.com>

Roads: big programmes continue of extra SRA-funded gully emptying and drain jetting

Community Flood Action Fund: SRA Board discusses Friday making £200,000 available for bids from towns and parishes.

Recommended further reading:

Environment Agency: Owning a watercourse – <https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/your-watercourse-rights-and-roles>

Defra: Surface Water and drainage: review of responsibilities, by David Jenkins - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/surface-water-and-drainage-review-of-responsibilities>

Building Local Resilience

- Over to SRA community engagement officers Bel Deering and Paul Elliston...

Community Resilience is about the public being *supported to* “harness local resources and expertise to help themselves and their communities to: **prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover** from disruptive challenges”

IMMEDIATE:

Could you respond well?

CURRENT:

Are you managing your context well?

FUTURE:

What additions would help?





LEVELS & MOORS LCN

Engagement in Past 12 Months

- Lower Somerton
- The Charltons
- Knole (Long Sutton)
- Martock
- Kingsbury Episcopi
- Drayton
- Isle Brewers
- Hatch Beauchamp
- Stoke St Gregory
- Burrowbridge
- Westonzoyland
- Chedzoy

Planned Future Engagement

- Langport and Martock

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- Thank you for listening. Any questions?

Presentation from Langport Flood Group

Discussion and Break Out Tables

- What can the LCN facilitate? For example- Emergency Planning workshops? Sharing resources between parishes? Practical activities to mitigate flooding.
- What can residents do themselves? And how can the LCN support?
- What is the role of a flood warden? Can we close roads locally?
- What local resilience groups already exist and are there gaps?
- How can we work better with the key lead agencies?

Feedback from Discussions

- What actions can we take from this?
- What would be valuable to investigate?

Working Group Updates

- Highways Working Group
 - On Microsoft Teams- Date TBC
- Active Travel Working Group
 - 10th October at Aller Village Hall

Date and Theme of Next Meeting

- What do you think would be a valuable theme to look at?
- Is there any working group that you would be interested to run?

- **The dates and locations of the next Levels and Moors LCN meetings are:**
 - **5th December- Hambridge and Westport Village Hall**
 - **6th March 2025- Venue TBC**
 - **19th June 2025- Middlezoy Village Hall**