

The Rt Hon Steve Reed MP

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State,

Subject: Protecting Flood Risk Funding — more not less

We write on behalf of Flood Action Groups and flooded communities, insurance sector, other partners across the UK who are on the frontline of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from flood events.

We are writing to give you the strongest support for making sure that, as part of wider Government, you can convince them to see the critical role of flood risk management, the value it brings to a range of other Government Departments, and the importance, therefore, of dedicating the necessary funding for that in the forthcoming Spending Review.

We urge you and the Government, in the strongest terms, not to reduce spending on flood risk management in the forthcoming Spending Review.

The costs of flooding — human, economic, environmental, and emotional — are growing year on year. Cutting investment in prevention and managing flooding and water would not save money; it would simply shift the burden elsewhere — to emergency services, to already stretched local authorities, to business owners, and above all, to the communities who live with the devastating impacts long after the floodwaters recede.

Recovery is far more expensive than prevention. Every pound spent on flood resilience and mitigation saves multiple pounds in avoided damages, emergency response, and long-term social and economic disruption. The cost of doing nothing — or doing less — is one that the country simply cannot afford.

Local communities have stepped up. Across the country, flooded people are working tirelessly to improve their preparedness and resilience, but this work is fragile. It depends on sustained national and local support. Communities should not be asked to shoulder this challenge alone.

Supporting and representing flood risk communities

Disinvestment at this stage would undermine progress, weaken local capacity, and risk leaving the most vulnerable behind. It would also erode the cross-sector partnerships that have taken years to build and are essential to effective flood response.

We ask that you:

- Maintain — and ideally increase — DEFRA’s funding for flood risk and resilience.
- Protect the long-term investment pipeline to support both capital projects and community-led initiatives.
- Recognise the real, rising cost of inaction.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and share evidence from our work across the country. We are planning to share this letter with media editors.

Yours sincerely,

National Flood Forum, Association of British Insurers, British Insurance Brokers Association, Town and Country Planning Association, ADA, Policy Connect, Emma Howard Boyd, Paul O Hare – Manchester University, Paul Cobbing - flood resilience consultant. Mary Long-Dhonau - flood campaigner.

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