

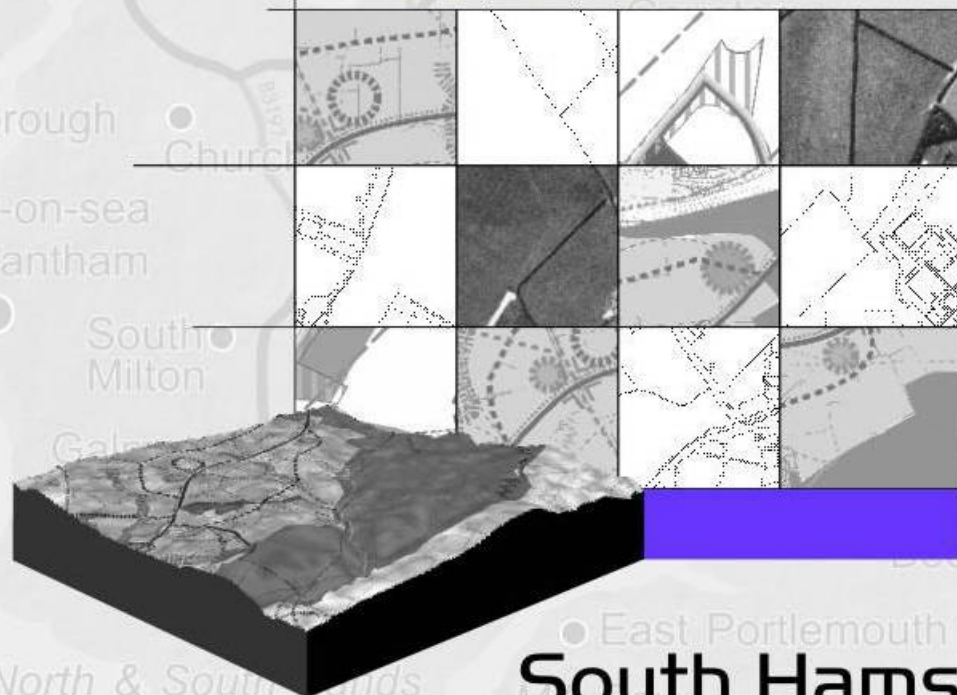


South Hams
District Council

January 2006

Evidence Base

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment



South Hams
Local Development Framework

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South Hams LDF – Core Strategy – Submission Version (January 2006)

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - Background Paper

Policy Introduction

Flood risk is a major issue which needs careful consideration in the preparation of LDF's. Indeed, properly prepared assessments of flood risk will inform the decision-making process at all stages of development planning. The Government has recently published further advice on this topic in the form of a revision to the existing guidance on flood risk. Draft PPS 25 – Development and Flood Risk, which is published in consultation form, sets out the requirements in relation to the assessment of flood risk.

These requirements are set out in detail in Annex E of PPS 25. Annex E states that Local planning authorities (LPAs) should prepare Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) in consultation with the Environment Agency (EA). SFRAs will determine the variations in flood risk across and from their area as the basis for preparing appropriate policies for flood risk management for these areas. They will also enable local authorities to determine the acceptability of flood risk in relation to emergency planning capability. The SFRA should either form part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Development Documents (LDDs), or be used to inform it and will inform the sequential approach to flood risk in the development allocation and development control process.

South Hams District Council is totally committed to this process and will apply SFRA principles throughout the LDF process. The Council has always worked very closely with the Environment Agency in the way it has brought forward development plan documents and individual development allocations. This process continues through the development of the emerging South Hams LDF.

An example of this joint working is in the development of the Sherford new community proposal on the edge of Plymouth where the Council has ensured that the EA has been closely involved from the outset. The EA are one of the key stakeholders currently involved in the ongoing Enquiry by Design process which is developing the Sherford masterplan and has been closely involved in the development of the Sherford Area Action Plan LDF document. The Council intends to continue this close working with the EA on the progression of all aspects of the South Hams LDF.

The detailed SFRAs will be informed by the Practice Guide to be published to accompany PPS 25. In preparation for this, certain requirements of the SFRAs are being addressed by the Council in work that is already underway and in work programmes. Discussions are ongoing with the EA and other key stakeholders such as the water company (South West Water). A draft policy statement on Flood and Coastal Defence has been prepared, this includes an assessment of flooding and coastal erosion risk in the South Hams area and the plans for managing that risk. This policy is to be considered by Council within the next two months and is programmed to be implemented with effect from 1st April 2006. A copy of the draft policy statement is attached hereto.

Significantly more work is required as indicated in the draft framework of the Practice Guide (page 48 PPS 25 Consultation Document). The development of SFRAs will therefore be an interactive process which will imitate and follow the development of the LDF.

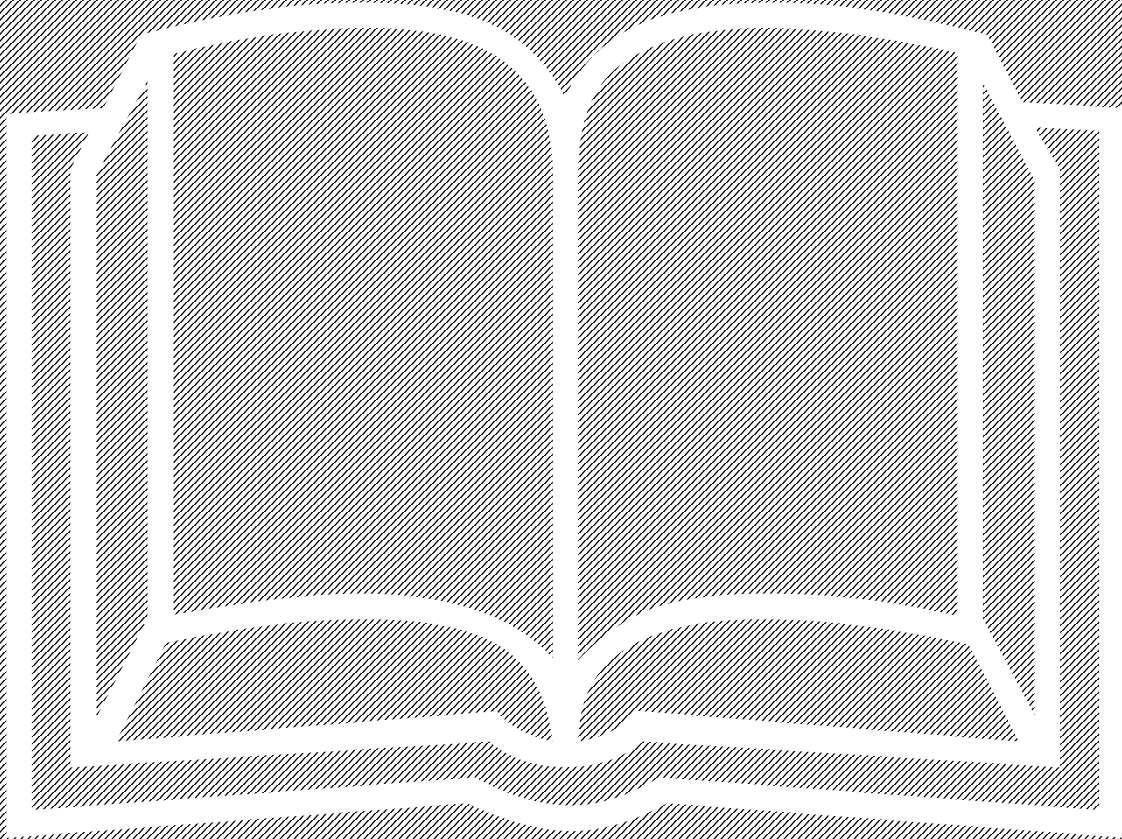
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South Hams District Council

Policy Statement on Flood and Coastal Defence

2006



SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY STATEMENT ON FLOOD AND COASTAL DEFENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

- 1.1 This policy has been prepared by South Hams District Council to provide a public statement of the Council's approach to flood and coastal defence in its area.

Background

- 1.2 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has policy responsibility for flood and coastal defence in England. However, delivery is the responsibility of a number of flood and coastal defence *operating authorities* i.e. the Environment Agency, local authorities and internal drainage boards. Responsibilities differ according to the type of operating authority and South Hams DC's responsibilities are set out in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 below.
- 1.3 The Government has published a policy aim and three objectives for flood and coastal defence¹. To ensure a more certain delivery of the aim and objectives by the individual operating authorities the Government has published a series of high-level targets². The first target requires each operating authority to publish a policy

statement setting out their plans for delivering the Government's policy aim and objectives in their area. This will include their assessment of flooding and coastal erosion risk in their area, and the plans for reducing or managing that risk.

1.4 This policy statement fulfils that requirement. Copies are also available from the Council's offices at Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5NE and on the Internet at www.southhams.gov.uk. We are also providing a copy to:

- the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;
- the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister;
- the Environment Agency.

2. HOW THE COUNCIL WILL DELIVER THE GOVERNMENT’S POLICY AIM AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 South Hams DC acknowledges and supports the Government’s aim and objectives for flood and coastal defence (as set out below). Our policy and approach will be consistent with them, as follows:

Government’s policy aim: *To reduce the risk to people and the developed and natural environment from flooding and coastal erosion by encouraging the provision of technically, environmentally and economically sound and sustainable defence measures.*

2.2 Section 3 below sets out our plans for reducing or managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion risk in the Council’s area.

Objective (a): *To encourage the provision of adequate and cost effective flood warning systems.*

2.3 Provision of flood warning systems is the responsibility of the Environment Agency. However, South Hams DC recognises its related and important role in emergency planning and response. We will therefore:

- ensure that our emergency response plans include appropriate arrangements for flooding emergencies and that such plans are reviewed, in consultation with the Environment Agency, at least every two years;

- maintain an awareness of the Environment Agency's flood warning dissemination plan for our area and contribute to its implementation as necessary; and
- play an agreed role in any flood warning emergency exercises organised by the Environment Agency covering our area.

Objective (b): To encourage the provision of adequate, economically, technically and environmentally sound and sustainable flood and coastal defence measures.

2.4 South Hams DC will: provide an adequate, economically, technically and environmentally sound approach to providing the flood and coastal defence service.

We will:

- adopt a strategic approach to provision of flood and coastal defences, particularly by assessing any potentially wider effects of proposed defences. To this end we will continue to play a full role in Shoreline Management Plans, and Local Environment Agency Plans, for our area;
- aim to provide sustainable flood and coastal defences which provide social and/or economic benefits to people whilst taking account of natural processes and which avoid committing future generations to inappropriate defence options;
- ensure work is carried out in accordance with best practice and to deliver best value for money including (a) keeping up-to-date with policy and technical developments in flood and coastal defence, in particular by reference to Defra guidance, other Government publications and relevant technical manuals; (b) consulting the Environment Agency on flood defence

options to ensure that best practice is adopted and shared; and (c) using appropriately qualified experts to advise on analysis and design of works or programmes of management;

- consider alternative approaches to funding, such as Public Private Partnerships and employ partnering forms of contract where possible;
- where appropriate seek contributions from developers or other direct beneficiaries of works, in accordance with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 25*.
- ensure that appropriate maintenance regimes are in place for flood and coastal defences for which the Council takes responsibility;
- inform landowners of what responsibilities for maintenance rest with them (see paragraph 3.1 below);
- make publicly available the Council's expenditure plans for flood and coastal defence maintenance and capital works by the production of annual spending reports.

2.5 In addition, South Hams DC will play a positive role in fulfilling our statutory and other responsibilities for furthering nature conservation, including achievement of the Government's environmental obligations and targets. In particular we will:

- fulfil our responsibilities in relation to nationally and internationally important conservation areas, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and as a competent authority under the terms of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994;
- co-operate with English Nature and the Environment Agency in completing and implementing Coastal Habitat Management Plans (CHaMPs) covering our area, drawing on English Nature/Environment Agency guidance for plan production;

- when carrying out flood and coastal defence works, seek opportunities for environmental enhancement, and aim to avoid damage to environmental interest and to ensure no net loss to habitats covered by Biodiversity Action Plans. We will monitor all losses and gains of such habitats as a result of these operations and report on them annually to the Environment Agency; and
- ensure that, for those Water Level Management Plans where we are the lead operating authority, we work in partnership with English Nature to complete, implement and review Plans in accordance with Defra guidance on plan completion and the timetables set out in Defra High Level Targets.

Objective (c): *To discourage inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding and coastal erosion.*

2.6 As the local planning authority for our area, South Hams DC will take account of flooding and coastal erosion risks in all matters relating to development control, including development plans and individual planning applications, in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Notes 20 and 25.

3. Our assessment of the risk of flooding and coastal erosion in our area and what we will do to reduce or manage that risk

Flood and coastal defence responsibilities

3.1 Apart from certain obligations to protect internationally important habitats under the EC Habitats Directive, all flood and coastal defence works are undertaken under **permissive powers**. This means that operating authorities, such as South Hams District Council, are not obliged to carry out flood and coastal defence works. It is also important to note that the Council does not normally accept responsibility for maintenance of flood defences on private land; this is the responsibility of the landowner.

3.2 South Hams District Council is the relevant operating authority for:

- flood defences on ordinary watercourses which are not within the area of an internal drainage board; and
- coast protection (i.e. measures against coastal erosion) on all frontages in the authority's area.

3.3 The flood and coastal defences that are owned or managed by the Council are to be detailed in our return for the National Flood and Coastal Defence Database which is maintained by the Environment Agency.

- 3.4 The Environment Agency is the relevant operating authority for flood defences on designated main rivers (including those which, up until transfer in March 2006, were designated critical ordinary watercourses (COWs)).
- 3.5 Culverts under adopted roads will generally be the responsibility of the relevant Highway Authority (Devon County Council or Highways Agency).
- 3.6 There is an extensive network of ordinary watercourses within South Hams DC area, for which the Council is the relevant operating authority and, therefore, has discretionary powers for the exercise of maintenance.

Assessment of flood risk

- 3.7 There are in excess of 700 km of ordinary watercourses for which South Hams DC is the relevant operating authority. These comprise all the watercourses in the Council's area except for lengths of the rivers Plym, Yealm, Erme, Avon, Dart and Harbourne which are designated as main rivers and thus the responsibility of the Environment Agency. There is no internal drainage board operating in the Council's area.
- 3.8 We have agreed with the Environment Agency that within the Council's area there are 4 km of "critical ordinary watercourses" (i.e. watercourses which are not classified as "main river" but which the Council has agreed with the Environment Agency to be critical because they have the potential to put at risk from flooding large numbers of people and property). The watercourses concerned are:

- Kingsbridge West from the hospital to the head of the estuary
- Kingsbridge East (Dodbrooke) from Springhill to the head of the estuary
- Dartmouth from Ford to the Boatfloat
- Totnes, Malt Mill Lake from the embankment dam at Copeland Meadow to the Mill Tail.

These watercourses were transferred to the Environment Agency on 31 March 2006 to be “enmained”. Officers of the Council are having further discussions with the Environment Agency to designate the Kingsbridge Redford Stream and pressure pipe from the former railway embankment to the head of the estuary as a further critical ordinary watercourse.

3.9` Based on historical flooding information, coupled with the Environment Agency’s indicative flood plain maps, the Council has carried out an assessment of the risk of flooding from the ordinary watercourses in our area. The main areas at risk of flooding from ordinary water courses are tabled below:

Location	Risk / History / Comment
Harberton	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• flood management scheme currently under construction for lower end of village
Hope Cove (Meadowside)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• repeated flooding in 1999/2000/2001 from high level leat affecting approximately 10 properties• numerous riparian owners in the absence of knowledge of original constructor of leat• catchment study required to determine flows and capacity of system
Torcross Chapel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• repeated flooding in 1997/9 due to inadequate (100mm diameter) outfall pipe• Council approval to progress scheme• Requires agreement of Whitley Trust
Dartmouth – Ford Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• regular flooding in 2003/4/5 of Ford/Victoria Road/Market Square from apparent lack of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">capacity further up the systemcatchment study requiredpossible short term improvements to inlet chamber by 185 Victoria Road
Ivybridge – Woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">regular flooding resulting from blockage of trash screen in Woodlands Park (head of adopted surface water sewer and the responsibility of SWW)overland flow through residential properties
Totnes – Warlands/Victoria Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none">repeated regular flooding due to inadequate surface water ditches/blocked screens/lack of capacity in outfallcatchment survey required
Littlehempston	<ul style="list-style-type: none">for flood events in excess of the 1 in 10 year design storm
Modbury – town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">from existing surface water culverts (Exeter Inn and Red Lion) of limited capacityadditional run-off from development

In addition to the above, the Environment Agency with responsibility for sea defence, are investigating the risk of tidal flooding in the low lying parts of Kingsbridge and Salcombe. The Council is satisfied that there are minimal risks to human life created by these flood risks from ordinary watercourses, but emphasises the need for the Environment Agency's flood warnings to be heeded, where these are provided (see below).

Action to reduce or manage flood risks

3.10 The main means by which flood risks will be managed is through the Environment Agency's flood warning dissemination plan. This makes arrangements for warnings to be provided within this Council's area, including individual warnings to high-risk properties. South Hams DC will include plans for responding to both major and

minor flooding in its emergency planning procedures and will make arrangements for cascading warnings received from the Environment Agency to relevant Council services.

3.11 The Council will put in place a programme to inspect the state of:

- flood defences (whether or not owned by the Council) on all ordinary watercourses; and
- all critical ordinary watercourse and related culverts.

3.12 The Council will ensure that regular maintenance is carried out on the flood defences and channels which we own, or for which we accept responsibility, so that they operate at optimum efficiency. Where the responsibility for maintenance rests with a landowner, we will aim to secure co-operation in ensuring appropriate maintenance takes place, drawing on enforcement powers if necessary.

3.13 The Council's approved Capital Programme includes the schemes at Harberton and Torcross and the catchment study at Hope Cove. In addition it will be necessary as a matter of urgency to address the structural stability of the overhead leat and structure at Ford. This structure is owned by the Council. Although part of the COW transferred to the Environment Agency, as the structure has no flood defence purpose, the asset responsibility rests with this Council. A detailed condition survey is also to be carried out on all structures on watercourse grills, screens, culverts etc in order that priority can be established for the expenditure of the current repairs and maintenance budget.

3.14 By following Government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 on development in flood risk areas, the Council, acting as a local planning authority, will ensure that risks are further minimised. This includes measures for ensuring sustainable urban drainage systems are provided to control surface water run off, and that Flood Risk Assessments are required for all significant developments.

Assessment of coastal erosion risks

3.15 As identified in the 1998 Shoreline Management Plan, of the 90 km of coastline in the Council's area, 6 km is defended against erosion. The remaining frontage consists of natural cliff (74 km) and shingle bank/beach head (10 km). As identified in the Plan, 8 km of the coast has a policy of "Hold the Line" and 82 km has a policy of "Do Nothing".

3.16 Risks of erosion of the defended frontages at Kingswear, Dartmouth and Salcombe are low as these defences are primarily masonry/concrete walls. There is, however, an ongoing risk of local instability for those defences located on the Start Bay barrier beaches (Blackpool, Slapton, Beesands, Hallsands) because of the dynamic nature of this system. There is also a risk of local instability at South Milton Sands where the existing temporary defences are reaching the end of their useful working life and at Leasfoot, Thurlestone where re-established soft dune defences have again been destroyed by storm events. Elsewhere on the undefended coast erosion rates for the cliff line are very low.

3.17 The Council, as a member of the Lyme Bay and South Devon Coastal Group (now redesignated Durleston Head to Rame Head Coastal Group) will participate in and

benefit from the South West Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme due to commence in Spring 2006 (subject to final confirmation of Defra funding). This 5 year programme to be carried out by external contractors will include annual/biannual topographical beach surveys at specified locations together with LIDAR surveys and aerial photography. In addition, the Council will put in place a programme for regular beach surveys at specific areas at risk supplemented by further surveys after significant storm events.

Action to reduce or manage coastal erosion risks

3.18 The Council will put in place a programme to inspect the state of all coastal defences, as required by Defra as one of the High Level Target returns. The Council will ensure that regular maintenance is carried out on the coastal defences that we own or for which we accept responsibility, so that they operate at optimum efficiency. The Council jointly with Devon County Council will monitor the Slapton Line frontage to the A379 coast road and respond to storm events in accordance with the agreed Contingency Plan. The Council has accepted the findings of the recent Slapton Line Coastal Management Study and, as a member of the Slapton Line Partnership, is actively taking forward the recommendations of the study. The Council, as a member of the Coastal Group, will participate fully with the review of the Shoreline Management Plan.

4. PARTNERSHIPS AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 The Council has set out its policy and approach to flood and coastal defence. We recognise the need to work in partnership with central Government and other operating authorities. Our local population also has an important part to play, in recognising the vital importance of watercourses in controlling flood risk and the need to avoid blockages, whether by dumping rubbish or obstructing flows in other ways. We ask members of the public to let us know of any problems which might increase the risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

4.2 South Hams DC intends to review this policy statement in three years' time, when it will be revised and reissued as necessary. Meanwhile, the Council welcomes any comments on the approach and policies set out in this statement.

References

¹ *Strategy for Flood and Coastal Defence in England and Wales*

MAFF and Welsh Office, September 1993

² *High Level Targets for Flood and Coastal Defence Operating Authorities and Elaboration of the Environment Agency's Flood Defence Supervisory Duty*

MAFF (former Defra), November 1999

³ *High Level Targets for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management*

Defra March 2005

⁴ *Lyme Bay & South Devon Shoreline Management Plan 1998*

⁵ *Lyme Bay & South Devon Monitoring Action Plan 1999*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – (Available on Request)

Plan showing Main Rivers and Critical Ordinary Watercourses.

APPENDIX B – (Available on Request)

Plan showing locations of flood alleviation schemes and coastal defences owned/maintained by the Council.

APPENDIX C

Council owned/maintained flood alleviation schemes

Scheme	Inspection Regime	Risk/Comments
Blackawton Priory Cottage	twice a year and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new scheme • inlet structure
Cornwood	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surface water drain
Dartmouth Ford Leat structure	monthly de-silting and after storms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high risk • has overtopped and flooded adjacent properties • structure in poor condition • asset not the responsibility of the EA even though a COW
Harberton	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under construction • grills and screens
Ivybridge Woodlands Pond and surface water channel	monthly and after storms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of flooding incidences with adjacent screen to SW sewer (responsibility of SWW)
Kingsbridge Recreation Ground	monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • screen to surface water culvert • tidal influence
Kingsbridge Redford Meadow Pressure Pipe and inlet structure	quarterly and after storms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential COW
Littlehempston flood alleviation scheme	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flood channels to River Hems and Gatcombe Brook
Modbury town centre flood alleviation scheme	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surface water pipe and culvert
Salcombe North Sands	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surface water culvert • history of blockage by seaweed from tidal outlet

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Slapton flood alleviation scheme	twiceyearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surface water culvert • inlet grill
Totnes Bridgetown/Westonfields	monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grills and screens
Scheme	Inspection Regime	Risk/Comments
Totnes Follaton House	monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grills and screens
Totnes Southern Area	monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grills and screens
Totnes Steamer Quay outfalls	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tidal flaps

Ordinary watercourses

Scheme	Inspection Regime	Risk/Comments
Aveton Gifford	twice year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • previous flooding by village hall
Compton (National Trust)	twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • previous flooding history
Dartmouth Ford Valley	quarterly and after storms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chamber by 185 Victoria Road • regular flooding incidences
Goveton	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • previous history of flooding
Hope Cove man made leat discharging to Mouthwell beach	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of flooding
Noss Mayo The Hard	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inlet chamber
Stokenham Holbrooke	twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level leat • previous history of flooding

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Torcross Chapel	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• substandard pipe under chapel• previous flooding history
Yealmpton Church Park	twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• erosion of banks risking adjacent private property• inlet structure

APPENDIX D

Council owned/maintained coastal defences

Asset	Inspection Regime	Comments
Beesands Village Green	quarterly and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• placed rock armour on derelict gabions• at moderate risk of storm damage
Bigbury Sedgewell Cove	quarterly and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rock armour defence
Dartmouth Embankment	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sheet piled wall and capping beam• steps by others• check for ALWC on sheet piles
Dartmouth Bayards Cove	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• masonry quay wall• below defence level of embankment
Kingsbridge Quay walls (strictly flood defence)	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• masonry quay walls• some subsidence of footway above• very open free draining structure
Salcombe South Sands Quay	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• masonry quay walls• require annual pointing• history of collapse/failure
Salcombe North Sands Wall	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council own beach and inland car park/open space• County Council responsible for highway• walls and rock armour contested
Salcombe Ferry Pier	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• coastal defence function• to be subject to feasibility for reconstruction
Salcombe Cliff House Gardens	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• masonry sea wall

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Salcombe Victoria Quay	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • masonry sea wall • support DCC maintained PROW • responsibility for wall in contention
Asset	Inspection Regime	Comments
Salcombe Whitestrand	quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • masonry/concrete sea wall • crack movement being investigated
Slapton Line Car Park	quarterly and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concrete revetment blocks severely damaged • temporary shingle bastions
Slapton Line	annual and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as lessee and to monitor shingle movements

Other defences (not Council owned) – SMP monitoring requirement

Asset	Inspection Regime	Comments
Beesands The Cellars	annual and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • privately constructed gabion defences • subject to drastic beach level changes • adjacent access road at threat from erosion
Blackpool Sands	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concrete sea wall • revetments • rock armour
Bovisand	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sprayed concrete sea wall
Challaborough	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rock armour
Hallsands North	twice year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rock armour defence at risk • questionable viability of defence being maintained

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Hope Cove	twice a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• harbour wall responsibility of harbour commissioner• masonry walls at back of Inner Hope beach and Mouthwell – responsibility not confirmed
Long Sands/Scabbacombe Sands	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• former gabion removed• natural realignment?
Mothecombe	annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gabion defences
Asset	Inspection Regime	Comments
South Milton Sands	annual and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• monitoring of erosion• potential retreat the line scheme
Thurlestone Leasfoot	annual and after storm events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• soft defences now destroyed• erosion risk to PROW