



# Business Plan 2010-2011

[www.riversagencyni.gov.uk](http://www.riversagencyni.gov.uk)



An Agency within the Department of  
**Agriculture and  
Rural Development**  
[www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)



## Foreword

I am pleased to present the Rivers Agency's ("the Agency") Business Plan for the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011. The Agency's activities contribute to developing a more sustainable environment – a goal within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development ("the Department") Strategic Plan 2006 – 2011. The key performance targets in the business plan have been agreed by the Minister. They are aligned with the Programme for Government PSA target 23 which relates to managing the risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.

The Agency introduced legislation to transpose the European Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks (Floods Directive) in 2009/10. Key steps to implement the requirements of this Directive will be taken forward in 2010/11 with assistance from other Government Departments and responsible authorities. The Agency will also take forward the delivery of flood risk management in accordance with "Living with Rivers and the Sea". In doing so the Agency will continue to take account of the increasing range of legislative and policy developments affecting the wider water environment.



Reducing flooding risk and minimising the damage caused by flooding will continue to be priority issues for the Agency. Resources will be devoted to efficient management of our infrastructure assets and the delivery of cost beneficial flood alleviation schemes. The Agency will also continue to play a positive role in facilitating economic development by upgrading drainage infrastructure to accommodate the increase in run-off associated with industrial and housing development, where this is economically viable.

The management and maintenance of our arterial drainage systems, which are fundamental to securing good drainage



throughout Northern Ireland, will continue. The Agency will continue to be pro-active in addressing environmental matters in the planning and execution of all works for which it is responsible.

The Agency is fully committed to providing the best possible standards of service to our customers. In particular we will continue to seek to ensure an appropriate response in flood emergency situations working closely with other Government agencies and responders.

**John C Clarke**  
Chief Executive



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# Introduction

## The Agency

Rivers Agency (“the Agency”) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (“the Department”). The Agency is subject to the direction and control of the Minister with responsibility for the Department. The Agency Framework Document sets out the relationship between the Agency and the Department and the Agency’s accountability to Ministers and Parliament.

## Vision and Aims

### Vision

*To manage flood risk to facilitate the social, economic and environmental development of Northern Ireland.*

### Aims

The following aims support the vision:

- Reducing risk to life and damage to property from flooding from rivers and the sea.
- Undertaking watercourse and coastal flood management in a sustainable manner.

## Functions

The Department is the statutory drainage and flood protection authority for Northern Ireland. Under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 the Department has discretionary powers to:

- Maintain watercourses and sea defences which have been designated by the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland (Membership is listed in Appendix 3).
- Construct and maintain drainage and flood defence structures.
- Administer advisory and enforcement procedures to protect the drainage function of all watercourses.

## Organisation and Resources

The Agency is headed by a Chief Executive supported by a Senior Management Directorate and as at March 2010 employs 183 non industrial and 246 industrial staff. The Agency’s Headquarters is located at Hydebank in Belfast and it has Regional Offices in Lisburn and Omagh and Area Offices in Coleraine, Craigavon, Lisburn and Ballinamallard, which services the Fermanagh Sub-Area. Further details of the organisational structure and office locations can be found in Appendix I.



## Business Priorities for 2010/11

### Floods Directive

Legislation to transpose the EU Floods Directive in Northern Ireland was made on the 20th November 2009 and is called 'The Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009'. The Agency will continue to implement the Directive within the defined timescales. The data gathering for the preliminary flood risk assessment for Northern Ireland, as required by the Directive, is complete and the outcome will be communicated to the public in 2010/11. A flood risk management plan for Belfast is being progressed and we will continue to develop the detailed flood mapping for the areas identified as being at significant flood risk by 2013, as required by the Directive.

The Northern Ireland Regulations require a co-ordinated approach within both central and local government, and through public engagement. The Agency is developing close working relationships with these groups and other parties that have an interest in and represent those affected by flooding. The Agency will continue to work closely with colleagues in the Office of Public Works in the Republic of Ireland to fulfill the obligations of the Directive in

trans-boundary catchments.

### Flood Alleviation

The construction and maintenance of flood and sea defences to protect people and alleviate damage to property is one of the Agency's primary functions. The key factors influencing the urgency and priority of capital flood defence works are the numbers of people affected and the potential for damage to property and business activity due to flooding from rivers and the sea. Priority will also be given to culverts in need of repair to avert complete failure and thereby ensure public safety. Drainage infrastructure works will also be provided to ensure that the flood risk to new and existing development is managed. In delivering these works the Agency seeks to maximise the benefit secured from available resources.



## Business Priorities for 2010/11 (continued)

### Advisory and Enforcement

Rivers Agency will continue to liaise closely with Planning Service on drainage and flood protection aspects of Development Plans, planning applications and in relation to sustainable development in line with the Planning Service's policy PPS 15 on Planning and Flood Risk. As an efficiency measure the Agency will centralise the management and co-ordination of all planning related work to its Planning Advisory Unit. A Service Level Agreement has been entered into with Planning Service to ensure consistent and timely delivery of our advice on land use which impact on flood risk management.

### Asset Management

The Agency continues to migrate from its current reactive approach to creating and maintaining its assets to one based upon Asset Management Plans (AMP). A suite of AMPs are now in place dealing with culverts, sea defences and fluvial defences. Work programmes are being developed on the basis of condition assessments for all categories of assets and as part of the approach the Agency will continue to benchmark the level of asset condition with

the wider industry. An ongoing cycle of inspection, assessment and intervention will ensure the effective functioning of assets.

### Water Level Management

The Rivers Agency monitors and measures river flows and water levels at locations throughout Northern Ireland. It supplies appropriate river flow data to the United Kingdom (UK) National River Flow Archives on a monthly and annual basis and to other users such as Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Northern Ireland Water who use the data for environmental and water resource monitoring. The Agency is also responsible for managing, insofar as climatic conditions allow, the water levels of Lough Erne, Lough Neagh and stretches of the River Bann and River Lagan. Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann are controlled by a series of sluices at Toome, Portna and the Cutts near Coleraine. The operating regime controlling the levels of Lough Erne will be reviewed within the current legislation, taking environmental, navigation and drainage interests into account.



## Maintenance

Rivers Agency carries out cyclical inspections to designated watercourses, and culvert inlet grilles. The timing of these inspections is dependent on the likely maintenance requirements, drainage impact and flood risk. For example, high risk inlet grilles are inspected on a weekly basis and rural watercourses are generally on a six yearly programme. Maintenance works identified during these inspections are programmed and carried out by the Agency's industrial staff using in house plant, contractors or by using site specific repair and maintenance contracts. The Maintenance Programme is evaluated using environmental and cost-benefit criteria prior to the inclusion of proposals in the annual works programme. A methodology to categorise open watercourse maintenance on a risk basis will be developed. me.

## Health and Safety

In carrying out works the Agency strictly adheres to all Health and Safety legislation and endeavours to create a safe working environment both for staff and in areas accessible to the public. The Agency will continue to adopt a pro-active role on health and safety issues and in the coming year will continue to review and update

procedures. Ongoing and continuous training of staff will remain a key element in reducing accident rates. There has been a significant reduction in the number of reportable accidents.

## Environment

The Agency carries out works in an environmentally sensitive manner and employs Conservation Officers to give advice and oversee maintenance and capital works schemes.

The Agency is fully committed to complying with the implications of the Water Framework Directive and has been actively involved with Northern Ireland Environment Agency in drawing up draft River Basin Management Plans.



## Key Objectives and Performance Targets

### Key Objective 1:

To deliver sustainable flood risk management policies to meet society's social, environmental and economic needs

- 1.1 Produce a report identifying roles and responsibilities for the management of surface water across all of Northern Ireland.

### Key Objective 2:

To progress the implementation of the European Directive for the assessment and management of flood risks

- 2.1 Implementation of the EU Floods Directive is a 6 year programme with completion required by December 2015. For 2010/11 the Agency will progress implementation to meet documented programme milestones (PSA 23 Indicator 6 & 7).

### Key Objective 3:

To reduce the number of properties currently at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

- 3.1 Carry out all flood alleviation works identified in the 2010/11 year to protect 186 properties at significant risk from flooding (PSA 23 Indicator 9).
- 3.2 Improve drainage infrastructure to cater for development of at least 85 hectares of land.
- 3.3 Respond to 98% of Schedule 6 applications within 3 months.
- 3.4 Ensure response to 90% of requests to Rivers Agency for assistance within 3 hours during flooding events up to and including a level defined as significant.



#### Key Objective 4:

To maintain flood defence and drainage infrastructure in a satisfactory condition

- 4.1 Complete structural repairs to 1.6 km of the designated culvert network where collapse is likely or imminent.
- 4.2 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated urban open watercourses in accordance with the Maintenance Manual.
- 4.3 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated culvert inlet grilles in accordance with the Maintenance Manual.
- 4.4 Maintain a minimum of 442 designated rural watercourses as part of the Agency's 6 year scheduled programme.
- 4.5 Develop a system to categorise open watercourse maintenance on a risk basis.

#### Key Objective 5:

To operate to resource limits

- 5.1 Maintain expenditure within Resource Limits and to approved budgets.
- 5.2 Produce unqualified accounts which are laid in the Assembly by the summer recess.



## Key Objectives and Performance Targets (continued)

### Key Objective 6:

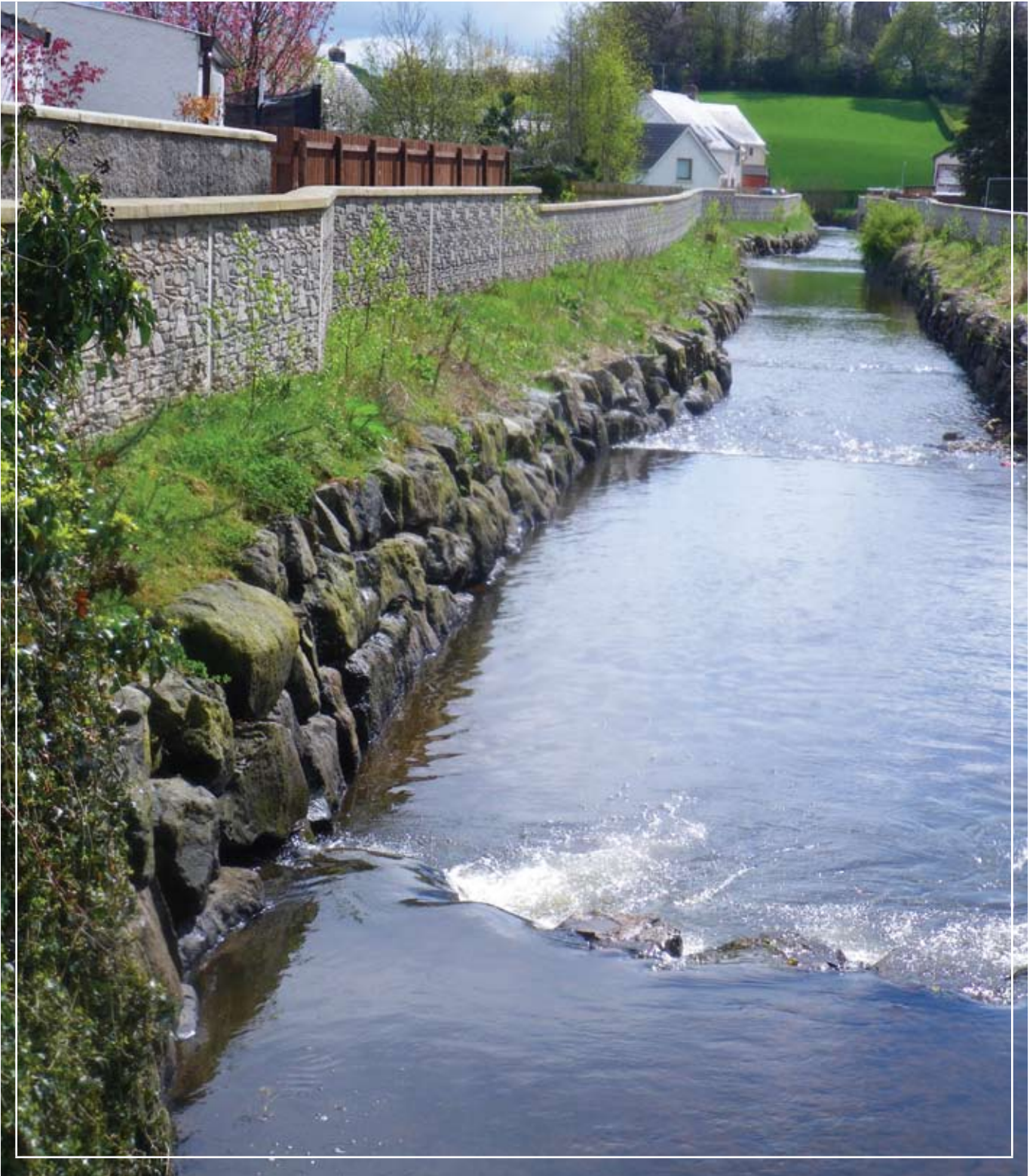
To support and motivate all our people to achieve the Agency's objectives

- 6.1 Deliver more than a 70% reduction in lost time work related accidents from the 2006-07 base figure of 21.
- 6.2 Reduce average annual level of absenteeism due to sickness for non industrial staff to meet Departmental absenteeism target.
- 6.3 Reduce average annual level of absenteeism due to sickness for industrial staff to not more than 15 days.
- 6.4 Deliver improvements within Rivers Agency in line with the DARD IIP Post Recognition Review Report (September 2009).

### Key Objective 7:

To deliver quality services for our customers and stakeholders in a fair and equitable way

- 7.1 Issue substantive replies to 95% of written enquiries within 15 working days of receipt.
- 7.2 Respond to 80% of planning application consultations within 21 working days of receipt.
- 7.3 Improve public accessibility to the Agency's work programmes through the internet.





**Chief Executive  
Mr. J C Clarke**

**Director of Development**

**Mr. P Aldridge**

Programme of capital works; and Design Construction procurement; Hydrometrics; Asset Management; Engineering Policy and Professional development

**Director of Operations**

**Mr. P Mehaffey**

Operational management of the Eastern Region; Operational management of the Western Region; Operations Support Unit; Health and Safety; Environment; and Emergency planning

**Director of Development**

**Mr. D Porter**

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive; Mapping and Modeling; Strategic Planning; and Planning Advisory.

**Director of Corporate Services**

**Mr. J Glass**

Finance; Corporate Support and training; Policy; IT; and Communications



**Appendix I**  
**Agency Offices**

**Agency Headquarters**

Hydebank  
4 Hospital Road  
Ballydollahgan  
BELFAST BT8 8JP  
Tel: 028 9025 3355  
Fax: 028 9025 3455

**Western Region**

Regional Office  
Woodside Avenue  
Gortin Road  
Lisnamallard  
OMAGH BT79 7BS  
Tel: 028 8225 4900  
Fax: 028 8225 4901

**Eastern Region**

Regional Office  
Ravarnet House  
Altona Road  
Largymore  
LISBURN BT27 5QB  
Tel: 028 9260 6100  
Fax: 028 9260 6111

**Coleraine Office**

37 Castleroe Road  
Castleroe  
COLERAINE BT51 3RL  
Tel: 028 7034 2357  
Fax: 028 7032 0628

**Armagh Office**

44 Seagoe Industrial Estate  
Seagoe Lower  
CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE  
Tel: 028 3839 9111  
Fax: 028 3839 9113

**Fermanagh Office**

Riversdale  
Ballinamallard  
Tullylone  
ENNISKILLEN BT94 2NA  
Tel: 028 6638 8529  
Fax: 028 6638 8972

**Plant Unit**

44 Seagoe Industrial Estate  
Seagoe Lower  
CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE  
Tel: 028 3839 9100  
Fax: 028 3839 9112



# Appendix 2

## Agency Opening Baseline 2010/11

### Agency Opening Baseline 2010/11

Description	Opening Baseline 2010/11 £'000
Salaries	5,412
Wages	5,498
GAE	895
Current	2,885
Current receipts	(210)
Flood Risk Management	900
Recurrent capital PV&M	500
Drainage infrastructure	1,500
Capitalisation of running costs	500
Flood Alleviation	3,349
PV&M capital receipts	(168)
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,061</b>



# Appendix 3

## Membership of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest Represented</b>
Mr. Gerald Crawford (Chairman)	Fisheries
Alderman Hubert Nicholl (Vice-Chairman)	Ballymena Borough Council
Alderman Roy Beggs	Larne Borough Council
Councillor Sean Clarke	Cookstown District Council
Councillor Michael Gillespie	Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Councillor Alan Graham	North Down Borough Council
Councillor Oliver Hughes	Magherafelt District Council
Councillor William King, MBE	Coleraine Borough Council
Councillor Jim McBriar	Ards Borough Council
Councillor Gerry McHugh MLA	Fermanagh District Council
Councillor Allan Rainey	Omagh District Council
Mr. Tom Clarke	DOE Planning Service
Mr. Robert Cummings	Agriculture
Ms R J Dobbin	Conservation
Mr. Trevor Hinds	Industry
Dr. Harold Johnston	Drainage Specialist
Vacant	Tourism
Mr. John C Clarke	Rivers Agency



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