



Business Plan 2011-2012

www.riversagency.cymru.gov.uk



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**
www.dardni.gov.uk



Foreword

I am pleased to present the Rivers Agency's ("the Agency") Business Plan for the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012. The Agency's activities contribute to delivering improved sustainable environmental outcomes – a goal within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development ("the Department") Corporate Balanced Scorecard 2011/12. The key performance targets in the business plan have been agreed by the Minister.

The Department is the Competent Authority under the European Directive

on the assessment and management of flood risks (Floods Directive). Key steps to implement the requirements of this Directive will be taken forward in 2011/12 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 we 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. We 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 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. We are actively involved in the review of PPS 15 to bring it into line with the Floods Directive and to update policies related to all sources of flooding.

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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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 2011 employs 174.5 non industrial and 241 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 1.



Business Priorities for 2011/12

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 is currently identifying areas of significant risk from the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment. This information will be communicated to the public during 2011/12.

The Northern Ireland Regulations require a co-ordinated approach with other government departments, district councils, NI Water, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the public. The Agency will continue to develop close working relationships with these groups and other parties that have an interest in and represent those affected by flooding. We continue to work closely with colleagues in the Office of Public Works in the Republic of Ireland to fulfil the obligations of the Directive in respect of 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 2011/12 (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. The Agency is actively involved in the review of PPS 15 to bring it into line with the Floods Directive and to update policies related to all sources of flooding.

Asset Management

With some £600m worth of assets the Agency has a suite of Asset Management Plans (AMP) 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 Measuring

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.

Water Level Management

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. It is proposed to review the operating regime controlling the levels of Lough Erne 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.

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.

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.

Reservoir Safety

The Agency intends to progress legislation to introduce regulation of reservoir safety. This need was identified in the policy framework document "Living with Rivers and the Sea". The recently completed Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment as required by the EU Floods Directive has quantified the impact and confirmed the need for this legislation.



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 Obtain Ministerial approval for the draft Reservoirs Bill.

Key Objective 2:

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

- 2.1 Complete at least 40% of the maps and commence 2 Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP's) as the year 3 actions in a 6 year plan to implement the EU Floods Directive by 2015.

Key Objective 3:

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

- 3.1 Subject to the availability of resources over the period 2011-15 construct infrastructure to offer enhanced flood protection to 1,700 properties of which 64 will be delivered in 2011-12.
- 3.2 Improve drainage infrastructure to cater for development of at least 159 hectares of land.
- 3.3 Respond to 98% of Schedule 6 applications within 3 months of receipt.
- 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.
- 3.5 Test the Agency's major incident plan.



Key Objective 4:

To maintain flood defence and drainage infrastructure in a satisfactory condition

- 4.1 Complete structural repairs to 1.39 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 433 designated rural watercourses as part of the Agency's scheduled programme.
- 4.5 Categorise main 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:

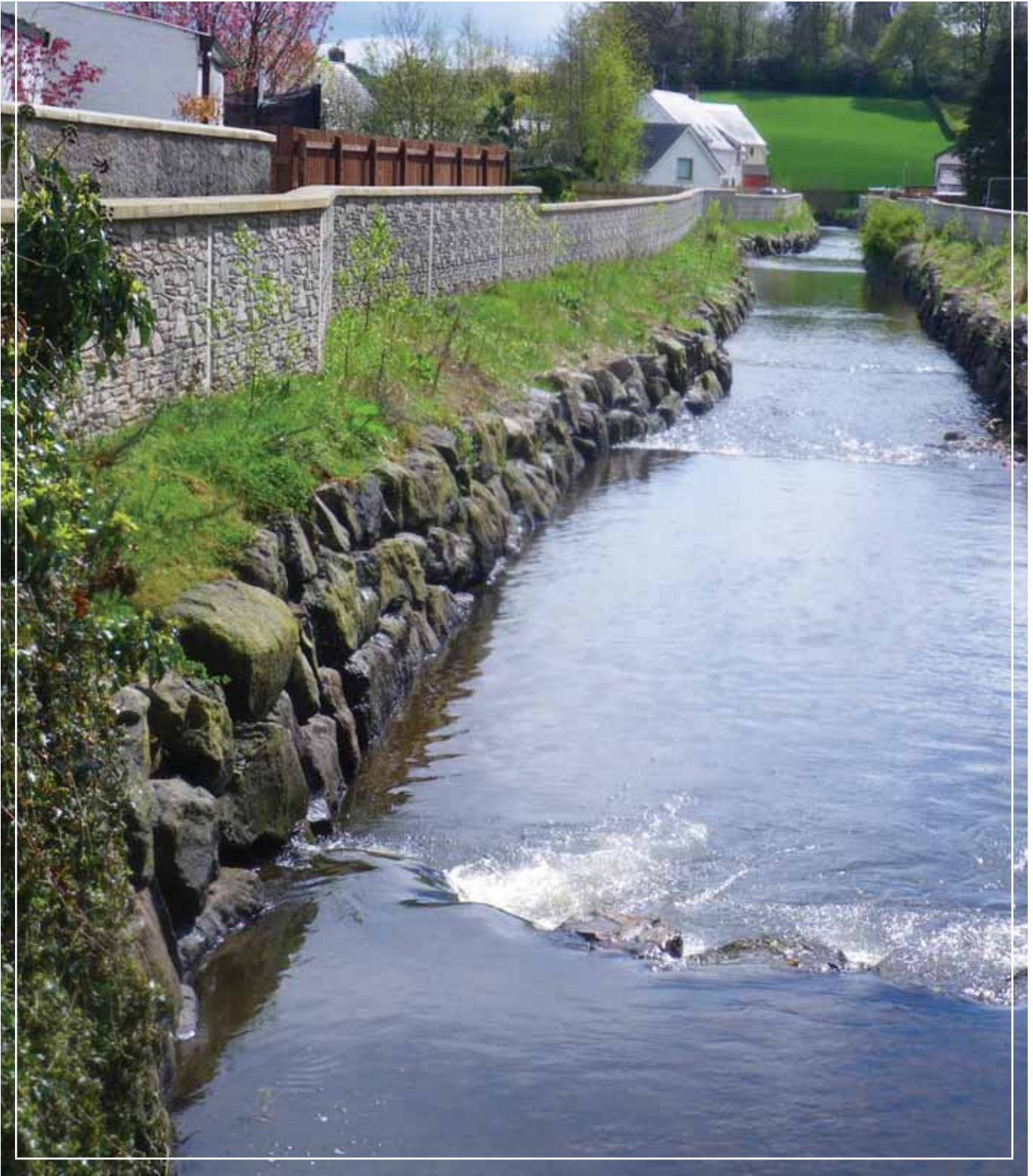
To support and motivate all our people to achieve the Agency's objectives

- 6.1 Deliver more than a 65% 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 all staff to comply proportionately with the Departmental absenteeism target of 8.5 days.

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.





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 1

Agency Offices

Agency Headquarters

Hydebank
 4 Hospital Road
 Ballydollahan
 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 2011/12

Agency Opening Baseline 2011/12

Description	Opening Baseline 2011/12 £'000
Salaries	6,111
Wages	5,576
GAE	895
Current	2,585
Current receipts	(210)
Flood Risk Management	1,500
Recurrent capital PV&M	233
Drainage infrastructure	1,500
Capitalisation of running costs	850
Flood Alleviation	0
Coastal Flood and Erosion	300
Total	19,340



Appendix 3

Membership of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland

Name	Interest Represented
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
Mr Oliver Hughes	Magherafelt District Council
Councillor William King, MBE	Coleraine Borough Council
Mr Jim McBriar	Ards Borough Council
Mr Gerry McHugh	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

*Retired April 2011, post currently vacant



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