

*In 2006 the Environment Agency Midland Region decided that its maintenance operations would be targeted according to either high, medium or low risk. Much of the Axholme/North West Lincolnshire area was shown as high risk and works would be undertaken to ensure that the watercourses and pumping stations were operating to a satisfactory standard. The Parish Council cannot understand why there has been such a dramatic change of policy.*

The tidal inundation represents a high flood risk and maintenance relating to tidal flood risk will be targeted to these systems. The Isle of Axholme is predominantly land drained by human intervention. The drainage system that currently operates was primarily designed to manage water levels for agricultural purposes. It was not designed to cope with property flooding and the pumps are reaching the end of their working lives. This is not sustainable long term, especially given the potential impact of climate change. We will undertake more detailed studies, and continue discussions with partners and public representatives to find out exactly what the application of the policy in the Trent CFMP means in the short, medium and longer terms for the Isle of Axholme and to try to find an acceptable long term solution.

*The surface water drainage system at present is provided by a joint working arrangement between the Environment Agency and internal drainage boards. If the Environment Agency is withdrawing support for the area, the internal drainage boards would find it extremely financially challenging to undertake the present role of the Environment Agency. Where would the extra funding come from and is this new policy all about a lack of resources and the sacrificing of area such as the Isle of Axholme for the larger more populated areas of the country.*

Surface water drainage is outside the remit of the Environment Agency, we will however work with the IDB to find an acceptable long term solution. Under our framework to achieve a sustainable approach to flood risk management that utilises the natural floodplain by considering the long term maintenance costs, longevity and appropriateness of raised defences, we have stated that we will work with land owners and IDB's.

*Why should the lowland area be expected to deal with major rivers such as the River Idle and River Torne which have received their major input from the urban areas of Mansfield, Worksop and Retford and the south east of Doncaster respectively. Similarly the Waring Drain receives its largest flow from the Finningley area which contains Robin Hood Airport.*

Drainage from new development will be controlled through PPS25. We are doing everything we can to influence existing urban areas to control surface water run off better and slow down the rate at which it enters rivers to a more sustainable level.