

WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

GOVERNANCE

Review date: December 2023

To be reviewed every 5 years

Next review date: September 2028

Reviewed by: WMA Consortium Management Committee

Adopted by:

Broads Internal Drainage Board
East Suffolk Water Management Board
King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board
Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board
South Holland Internal Drainage Board
Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland Internal Drainage Board
Pevensey and Cuckmere Water Level Management Board

In order to deliver our water management aims we need to ensure we have communication objectives that support our work and those we work with. This policy identifies who we intend to engage with, to deliver our aims & objectives, sets out what our stakeholders and partners can expect from us and explains how we will communicate with them to build and maintain our relationships and reputation.



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COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Water Management Alliance (WMA), on behalf of our member Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), has developed a Communications Policy to consider our approach to engaging our stakeholders, partners, and customers. We have developed our communication objectives to support our business aims and objectives.
- 1.2. Our vision is to make each Member Board's Drainage District, Coastal Zone and watershed catchment area a safer place to live, work, learn and have fun, as a model of sustainable living in a high flood risk area. As a result, we need to interpret how we should engage others as we endeavour to deliver our vision.
- 1.3. As outlined by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) councils are the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency manages the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) framework focusing on reducing flooding to people and properties. The IDBs work within this structure and legislate work on their own infrastructure or work in partnership with other risk management authorities.

2. TARGET AUDIENCES

After considering our business aims and objectives we have undertaken a review of our key stakeholders, partners, and customers and they fall broadly into the following groups:

- people and places at flood risk
- those that support people and places that are at flood risk
- policy and decision-makers
- the public

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3. COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

We have developed the following communication objectives for our target audiences:

- 3.1 **Increase Public Awareness:** To inform and educate the public about our flood risk reduction efforts, fostering a better understanding of the measures we take to protect people, property, infrastructure, and the natural environment.
- 3.2 **Build Trust and Credibility:** To establish the WMA as the preferred local delivery partner for flood, water resource, and coastal risk management services, showcasing our reliability and expertise in these areas.
- 3.3 **Promote Responsible Land Use:** To raise awareness about the impact of human activities on flood risk and encourage responsible land use decisions that balance residential, commercial, recreational, and environmental needs while minimising flood risk.
- 3.4 **Highlight Environmental Stewardship:** To demonstrate our commitment to preserving and enhancing natural habitats and species in and around watercourses and infrastructure projects, emphasising our dedication to the enhancement of biodiversity.
- 3.5 **Engage Stakeholders:** To foster meaningful engagement with key stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, and environmental organisations, to gather feedback and input on flood risk reduction initiatives.
- 3.6 **Showcase Success Stories:** To share success stories and case studies that illustrate the positive outcomes of our flood management projects, emphasising real-world examples of how our efforts benefit people, property, infrastructure, and the environment.

4. DELIVERING OUR OBJECTIVES

We will:

- 4.1 Actively seek feedback from stakeholders, partners and customers to ensure we are meeting their needs, as we aim to deliver our business objectives.
- 4.2 Promote a culture of effective and extensive engagement approaches across our teams, ensuring everyone is aware of our commitment to holistic communications.
- 4.3 Share our communications policy with the IDB members to ensure we are being inclusive and seek their views on our approach.
- 4.5 Measure our engagement successes and report back to our stakeholders and partners for their information and advice.

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5. KEY MESSAGES

We aim to convey the following messages to our target audience:

- 5.1 How we aim to reduce the risk to people, property, infrastructure and the natural environment from flooding.
- 5.2 Showcase our efforts as a trusted local delivery partner of choice for all flood, water resource and coastal risk management services.
- 5.3 Cultivate an understanding of how activities can influence flood risk, whilst safeguarding land use for residential, commercial, recreational and environmental purposes.
- 5.4 Demonstrate our commitment to nurturing, enhancing and maintaining the natural habitats and species, which exist in and alongside the watercourses and infrastructure we build and maintain.

6. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Effective communications rely on a mix of communication channels, including media relations, direct communications, events and internal and partner communications.

6.1 External Communications

- **Media** (including; Website, Newsletters, On site interpretation / posters, Promotional Videos, Case Study / Fact Sheets, Social Media Channel Posts, Press Releases)
- **Face to Face** (including; Community Engagement Events, County Shows, Site Meetings)
- **Correspondence** (including; Letters, Emails, Video Conferencing, Live Chat, Phone calls)

6.2 Internal Communications

- Face to Face Meetings
- 1-2-1 Appraisals
- Emails
- Video Conferencing
- Live Chat
- Phone calls

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7. MEDIA RESPONSE PROTOCOL

When asked by the media for comments in response to various types of event or question, the following post holders will be expected to advise on and/or communicate the Board's position to the media after liaising with the relevant managers/officers and receiving approval from the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive:

Potholder	Question/Event Type
Area Manager	Operational
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	Tactical
Chair/Vice-Chair	Strategic

If there is any doubt as to whether a particular question or event is of an operational, tactical or strategic nature, the Chief Executive will make the decision on this.

8. REVIEW

- 8.1. This Communications strategy will be reviewed at regular intervals, as stipulated on the front page.