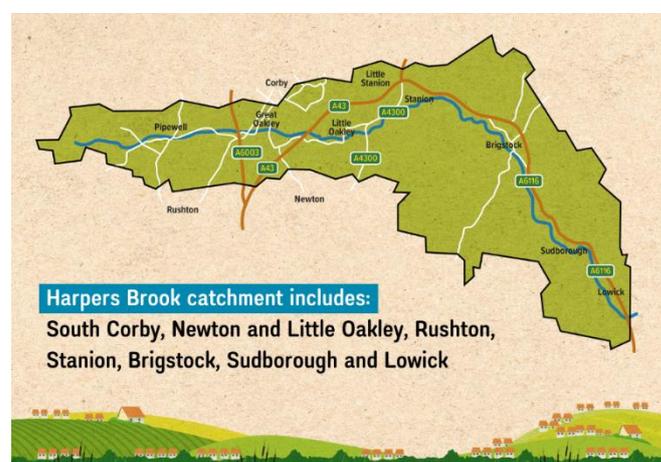
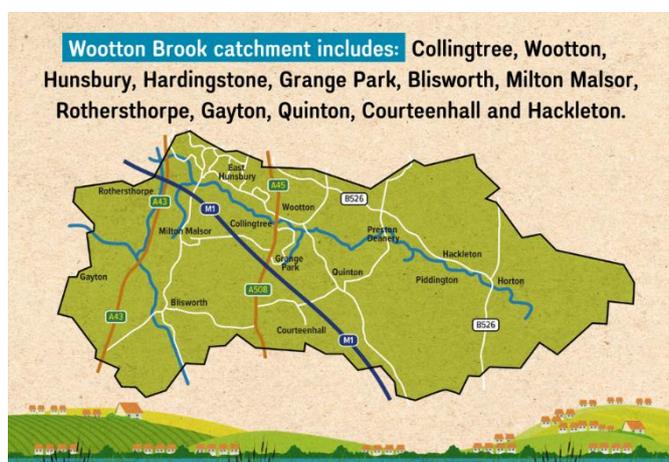




Since securing the funding in October 2022, we have been able to progress with the procurement of parts of the project and finally get 'boots on the ground'. The project is funded by Defra as part of the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP) stream of its [Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes](#). The RAIN project is innovative and distinctive because it takes a catchment-level approach and because it integrates work at several scales: the natural environment, communities and neighbourhoods, and individual households. We are working with communities in the Harpers Brook (West Northamptonshire) and the Wootton Brook (North Northamptonshire) river catchments.



What has the last year involved?

Over the last year we have continued to formally engage and build relationships with those based in the Harpers Brook and Wootton Brook catchments, including residents, parish councils, landowners and farmers. We have begun installing Natural Food Management measures and we have carried out property assessments as part of the Property Flood Resilience scheme.

Natural Flood Management / Nature-Based Solutions

Since the initial bid of the project, we have been working with the Nene River Trust to engage with local farmers, landowners and estates to discuss and fund natural flood management. NFM includes measures such as leaky dams, offline storage and cover cropping to improve attenuation, infiltration, evapotranspiration and overall slow the flow.

We are continuing to trial Landscape Enterprise Networks (LENs), an innovative funding mechanism for nature-based solutions. Currently, we have 9 Landowners who have submitted NFM projects through LENs and in February 2024 we will be going through another round of LENs to expand the amount of NFM we are funding.





Landowners come in all different shapes. East Hunsbury Parish Council and Wootton Parish Council have both received funding from the LENS process and will be installing NFM (including leaky dams, bunding and tree planting) on their land in the aim to slow the flow.

In the last few weeks we have seen work in Penvale Park, East Hunsbury, begin. While Tris from the Nene Rivers Trust has been droning areas where NFM installation will soon begin.



Community Resilience

After the stormy start to the year, and particularly with the effects of storm Henk, the need for community resilience and preparedness has been at the forefront of many conversations. We are taking a community led approach. Importantly we are taking the time to talk with local people about their local green spaces and community, and from this we can begin to understand the impact of changing water levels and extreme weather on these communities. We are listening to communities, including those who have flooded or are worried about extreme weather about their hopes and concerns for the future. With them, we can begin to map out how these communities can develop their preparedness and recoverability from flooding and storms.

We are currently in the early stages with several communities to build an emergency flood plan that works for them. This includes understanding the risks and vulnerabilities within the community, building





a group of volunteers and equipping communities with the plans and equipment that can be deployed during flood events.



Property Flood Resilience

The Property Flood Resilience Scheme officially began in Summer 2023. Since securing funding, we have procured JBA consultancy to carry out PFR surveys of houses that have previously flooded or are at high risk of flooding according to our modelling data. Across both catchments we have carried out surveys at 80 properties and with further surveys still to be carried out. The project team have been out in the communities door knocking to encourage uptake to this initial survey. It has been a great opportunity to speak directly to residents about the project and gather feedback and information about the local area.

Our main message right now is 'If you live within Harpers Brook Catchment and have flooded but have not received a letter from the RAIN project inviting you for a survey, please contact us'. We need to ensure everyone who is eligible to have a survey has had the option, but we realise that not everyone reports their flooding to the council.

Having this survey could lead to the project funding the installation of PFR products (such as flood doors, barriers, automatically closing airbricks) onto properties and this is a very rare funding opportunity. If there is anyone you personally know, or if there are any opportunities in your area to distribute communications, please let us know.





What are we currently working on?

Currently, we are undertaking procurement exercises to secure the installation of the property flood resilience measures. At the end of January, residents who have had surveys carried out will begin to receive their reports and we will continue to encourage those who are eligible to sign up for a survey.

We have had positive feedback and interactions with landowners, but we need to make sure we expand the numbers involved. We are continuing this work and over the next year we are excited to install more Natural Flood Management. For example, in February/March we will be working with North Northamptonshire Council's Grounds Team to plant a Tiny Forest in Oakley Vale, Corby. We are looking forward to getting the Scouts and local community to help tree planting.

How to get involved

The innovative focus of this fund gives us a real, exciting opportunity to improve the risk and resilience for residents and the environment, while also providing DEFRA with learning to guide future approaches to flood risk management across England. Please reach out to us, be curious and share any knowledge of previous flood incidents in your community and groups dedicated to building engaged communities.

Are you a landowner who has unproductive land that could be improved to hold and slow the flow of water?

Are you a Parish Councillor or member of the community who would be interested in developing a community plan? Or volunteering? Or creating a flood store of equipment for the community?

Do you live in the project area and have previously flooded but not been invited to have a survey of your home carried out as part of the Property Flood Resilience Scheme?

If you would like to contact us or learn more about the exciting RAIN project taking place in your area, please email RAIN@westnorthants.gov.uk

Keep up to date via our social media and website:

Facebook: RAIN Northamptonshire

Twitter: RAIN_Northants

Linkedin: RAIN_Northants

Website: www.rainnorthants.co.uk

