



Fens 2100+

Summer 2025 Newsletter

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Welcome to the Summer edition of the Fens 2100+ programme newsletter!

This summer has been busy for the Fens 2100+ team as we continue to work towards publishing our first set of key deliverables in the Autumn. We have also been out and about visiting stakeholders, to gain insights and help underpin the work we are doing.

Project Update

Baseline reports

The final draft of the catchment baseline reports is due mid-July. Once issued there will be a review process undertaken with EA colleagues, IDBs and key stakeholders to ensure they are an accurate reflection of the current system and meet the objectives of Fens 2100+. Following the review process there will be a final period of refinement alongside the development of a system wide report, capturing the key elements from each catchment.

Case for Change

The team continue to develop the Case for Change alongside our partners with the completed first draft due in July. Building upon the evidence highlighted by the Baseline Reports the Case for Change explores the current and potential value of the Fens, sets out our case for continued and enhanced investment in the area and considers how we shift to a system wide approach to asset management. To support this a 10-step action plan has been developed which will be implemented by the Partnership over the next 2 years to ensure we set ourselves up for success.

Flood Resilience Strategy

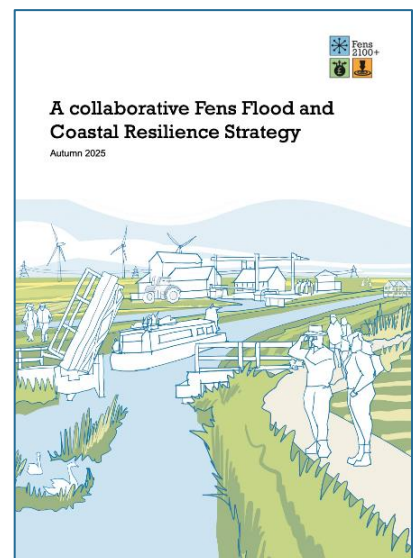
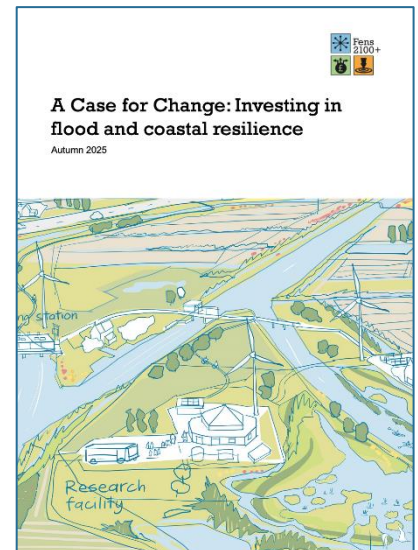
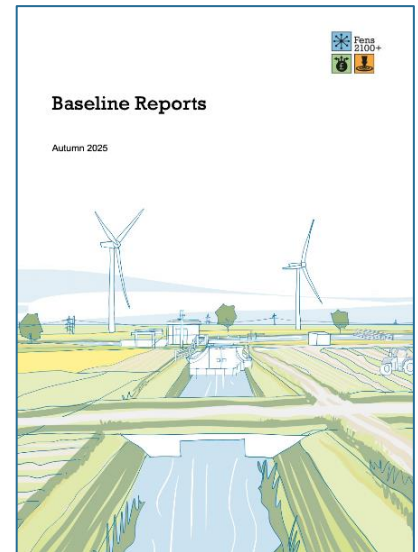
The work we have done to date has further highlighted the need for continued investment in our existing, ageing asset base to ensure we manage the inherited system that we currently have. In the autumn we will publish our approach to how we will develop a Flood and Coastal resilient Strategy which will be finalised in 2027. The strategy will include a costed 10-year pipeline of investment priorities with a focus on 'no regret' decisions as well as identifying potential transformational shifts. In addition, it will define a 'target end state' for the system at the end of 5, 10, 15 & 20 years to allow us to monitor success.

Contact and further information

Via our email address: Fens2100@environment-agency.gov.uk

Visit our information:

<https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/fens2100>



The Denver Complex

The Denver Complex video is part of a wider visualisation tool that will be launched in August, which is being developed to 'bring to life' the Great Ouse Baseline Report (2020) to facilitate engagement across the region.

The visualisation of Denver Complex was a 'proof of concept' to understand how we can adopt different approaches to engagement and education. The video was created using a combination of drone footage, 3D models, historical photos and a voiceover script to explain how the system works and contributes to the flood risk management of the Fens.

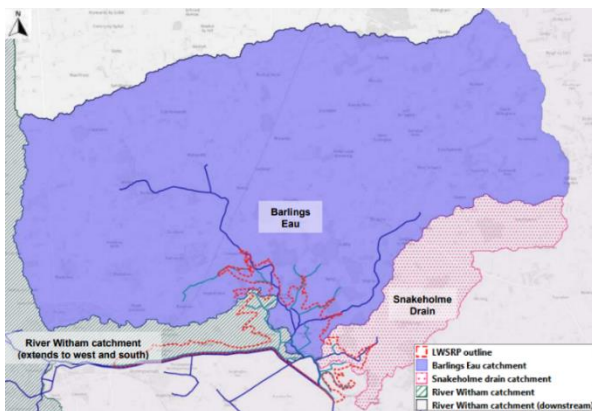
Please do share the video widely with your contacts to educate others on the importance of the Denver Complex, and we look forward to being able to share the Fens 2100 Great Ouse Baseline Visualisation interactive tool with you in the next few months.

Watch the video now!

<https://youtu.be/Vk1Kir8rJqw>



Lower Witham Sustainable Recovery pilot project



The Lower Witham Sustainable Recovery Pilot project is a Fens 2100+ pilot project focused on the Fiskerton and Barlings Eau area. After being impacted by flooding in 2019 and again during winter 2023/2024 farmers and landowners in this area approached the Environment Agency to explore different approaches to flood recovery. The aim of this is to work with partners and stakeholders to explore whether there is another way to manage flood risk and recover sustainably from flooding.

A 'Partnership Group' was established, that includes Witham Third Internal Drainage Board, Lincolnshire County Council, National Farmers Union and Natural England alongside a 'Stakeholder Group' that includes local landowners and land managers. A 'Terms of Reference' and 'Contingency Plan' have so far been created to help define the project goals and what will happen while the project is developing, should flooding happen again.

Recent meetings between the project team, farmers and landowners have helped to deepen the team's understanding of past flooding impacts, local priorities, and how the proposed measures could work within the landscape. Using these insights, Arup have been assessing a short list of potential measures against specific criteria. Their analysis aims to help us understand which measures are technically viable, how they could be implemented as part of a master plan, and whether they meet the partner & stakeholder objectives. A draft report has been shared with project partners for feedback before sharing this further with stakeholders for discussion.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust – Bourne Fen

We visited Bourne North Fen in June to learn more about Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust plans to restore over 50 hectares (128 acres) of former farmland into a wet fenland. Creating a healthy wetland will support a rich diversity of wildlife including rare species that once flourished in the Fens such as bittern, common crane, bearded tit, greater water parsnip, European eel and spined loach. The site will link up with Willow Tree Fen, the first place where cranes have nested in Lincolnshire for 400 years.



Bourne North Fen will help regulate water supply during shortages and absorb floodwaters in times of spate. A new system of reedbeds will improve the quality of the Bourne Eau river before it enters the River Glen and increasing amounts of carbon will be captured by the wetland soils and plant life.

The Wildlife Trust is leading the project as part of the South Lincolnshire Water Partnership (SLWP), which represents environment, public water supply, flood risk management, agriculture, business, tourism and leisure sectors.

Sainsburys & G's Farm

On 8th May the Fens 2100+ team visited G's farm in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk to better understand the operation and the value that the farm generates at a local and national level.

Through G's and Sainsburys existing partnership, a case study was developed for Fens 2100+ to help demonstrate the value and importance of the agricultural sector within the Fens landscape.

The findings from this case study will be included within the Case for Change.



"Between 2021 and 2024, Sainsbury's sourced 1.3 million tonnes of fresh produce from farms located in the Fens with an estimated value of £225m."

Fens 2100+ Stakeholder Forum and internal Environment Agency webinar

To support our proposed shift towards a system wide approach Fens 2100+ organised a cross catchment internal Environment Agency Webinar on 17th June to engage with colleagues and highlight the work the project is undertaking. Following this a series of roadshows were undertaken across local offices.

In addition to the internal webinar, the Fens team held our second stakeholder forum with stakeholders across the Fens who have a vested interest in the continued investment in the region. The aim of the forum was to gain feedback from stakeholders whilst also sharing our current progress and aims for the future of the Fens 2100+ programme.

RSPB Ouse Washes

In June we met with the RSPB at their Ouse Washes reserve site to learn more about the history of the reserve and how they currently manage it.

We heard about the species that are present on the site including Hooper Swans, Spoonbills and Bitterns. We also discussed the role of the Ouse Washes as both a flood storage reservoir and an important Environmental habitat and explored our different roles and responsibilities.

We learnt about the new Ouse Washes Landscape recovery project, an ambitious 20-year partnership project to deliver habitat creation across the Fens. DEFRA funding is currently supporting a two-year development phase under the Landscape Recovery Pilot. Over the next two years private landowners and Environmental NGO's (non-governmental organisations) including the RSPB are working in partnership to secure income for delivering nature-friendly land management across the Fens.



Flood and Coast 2025

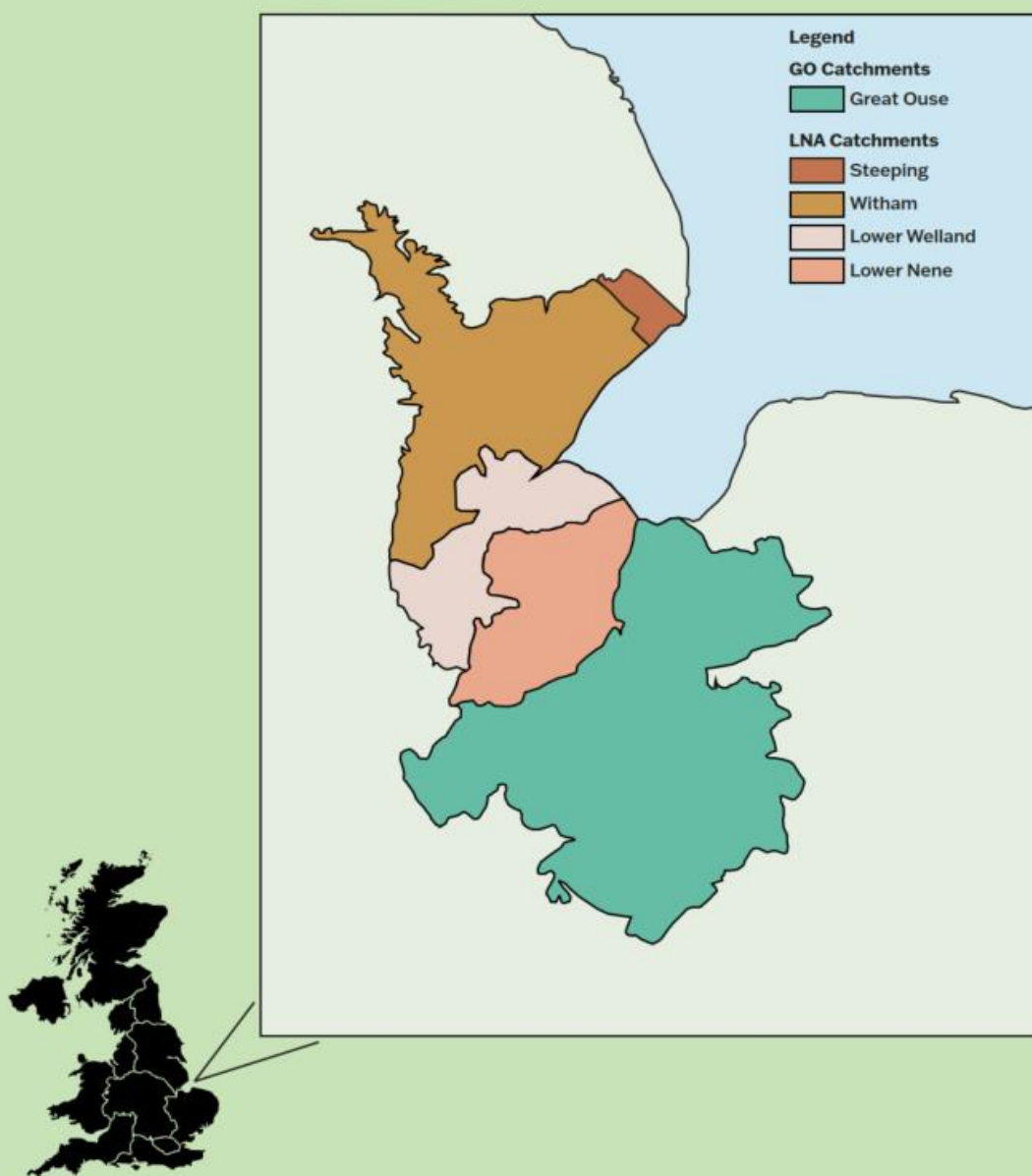
Fens 2100+ was in full force at Flood and Coast 2025!

The team had a busy few days! First Katie Teesdale-Ward (Anglian Water/FFIA) and Katie Jenkins (UEA/Tyndall Centre) presented the Fens Climate Change risk assessment. This was followed by a Fens 2100+ workshop where we undertook a lively debate on the opportunities and challenges that may arise if we were to consider moving the tidal limit on the Nene. Finally, Jennifer Laight (Arup) provided a fantastic overview of the work that Arup have developed on behalf of Fens 2100+ and the lessons learnt so far.



As a team we had 100's of conversations over the three days. We used this opportunity to raise awareness of our work and also learn from others.





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