

# 6 Summary of Management and Maintenance Plan

The Management and Maintenance Plan (MMP) is provided in full detail in the Appendix B. The MMP document has been developed in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Environment Agency and the Canal and River Trust. It provide an overarching high-level overview of the maintenance and management of the waterways through Taunton and some wider aspirations on the future maintenance and management of these systems over the next 30 years. The aim of the plan is to provide a more co-ordinated approach to enable key decisions to be made on the future development and evolution of the town without compromising on the needs of the waterways and their future maintenance and management.

The MMP five chapters:

- starting with roles and responsibilities (chapter 2)
- the Taunton Catchment Overview including the current maintenance regime and future maintenance opportunities in each Character Area (chapter 3)

- the Watercourse management approach (chapter 4)
- the Surface water management approach (chapter 5)

Policy context and other useful links for riparian owners can be found in the MMP Appendix.

As addressed in chapter 2, in Taunton, water management is divided across numerous organisations. The chapter clarifies the strategic role and powers of the Environment Agency, the LLFA and Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and other authorities and its regulatory context, as well as riparian responsibilities for maintenance of the watercourse. It highlights the need for a more integrated approach to river basin management (including surface water, subsurface water, and groundwater levels).

Chapter 3 addresses the Catchment Overview. The Taunton and Bridgewater canal is 23.33km (14.5 miles) in length, passes through the unique lowland areas of

Somerset, many parts of which have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Chapter 4 gives the overview of the current maintenance regime. It lists the current day to day maintenance actions required across all waterways and goes into more detail on specific recommended actions within each Character Areas for consideration, review, and future action. Maintenance opportunities are shown on basemaps per Character Area (refer to 3.4 Future Maintenance Opportunities).

The MMP emphasises that the development of Taunton must allow free, safe, and easy access to undertake maintenance for the waterways and SuDS features. It required new developments to retain an 8m buffer along the waterside. Any developments progressed in Taunton will require easements to ensure rights of access to maintain and manage the waterways.

The key maintenance and management issues that need to be addressed for future maintenance are:

1. Control the spread of Himalayan Balsam and other non-native invasive species.
2. Land use change and land management change to reduce sediment loss within Taunton and in the wider catchment.
3. Natural Flood Management Interventions to reduce trash screen blockages downstream.
4. Regular inspection and removal of blockages to outfalls and culverted watercourses.
5. Development of an integrated asset inspection and maintenance plan for Taunton utilising outputs from the Surface Water Management Plan and the Asset Database Project. Including identifying 'lost' assets, SuDS assets and assigning responsibilities for ongoing maintenance of these.
6. Education and promotion of riparian responsibilities through local community initiatives.
7. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) adoption for surety of long-term maintenance and management of new SuDS on new developments. SuDS to be inspected during construction and then maintained regularly upon completion.
8. Improved access for river maintenance/structure inspection and repair/culvert inspection and maintenance.

The section of the guidance in Chapter 4 deals with the watercourse management and is aimed at riparian owners rather than statutory organisations with flood risk management responsibilities. The section of the guide proposes to develop a programme to carry out maintenance work.

Chapter 5 summarises the surface water management approach. The guide concludes that SuDS offer an approach to drainage that mitigates the impact of new development on flood risk and builds our

resilience to flooding. The plan requires early pre-application engagement to ensure that drainage is considered properly in the design layout. This will maximise the opportunity for a more integrated multi-functional approach to SuDS.

Further SuDS guidance and background information can be found in Appendix C