

Danvm Drainage Commissioners



2018 Environmental Position Statement

The work of an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) as a Flood Risk Authority is primarily undertaken to manage water levels within the District. As far as reasonably practicable, the Board will work with natural processes, maximise opportunities to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity through Board Policies, Strategies and plans, Board consents, projects and schemes.

IDB maintenance work delivering land drainage and flood risk management is detailed in its Water Level Management Strategy. Maintenance function comes with a statutory environmental responsibility under a variety of acts; the Danvm Drainage Commissioners ("the Board") will seek to identify opportunities to undertake actions that deliver greater environmental benefits to all ratepayers. This may be through maximising opportunities to achieve biodiversity gains through working with local landowners in environmental stewardship schemes or assisting Local Wildlife Trusts and Friends of groups where opportunities are available for environmental improvement.

Through promoting the use of berms in flood risk management work, the Board is making space for water, both for inundation conditions and for abstraction requirements. The Board requests provision of wide buffer access strips for maintenance adjacent to Priority watercourses, potentially increasing biodiversity. Creating a buffer to wind-blown soil being removed from the land assists with delivery of Water Framework objectives and may reduce Board maintenance activity by holding nitrates which would otherwise enter the watercourse.

The Board will consider day-lighting of culverts where evidence suggested it prudent to do so. The Board has adopted a non-culverting policy in line with the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority. Non-culverting and day-lighting by the Board is seen as sustainable use of green infrastructure, and sustainability indicators for determining the "common good".

As a Public Body the Board is obliged to implement government aims and objectives therefore the Board will consider ways of reducing its CO₂ emissions. This may be achieved through the installation of photovoltaic cells, use of booster wind pumps and ensuring each station pump is the correct size for the job of work.

Where the Board is contemplating a new depot, site location and proximity to existing transport infrastructure will be a consideration. This will obviate the requirement for new road and track installation whilst facilitating a reduction in CO₂ emissions through decreased transportation movement.

Board prioritization of drain maintenance (Watercourse Maintenance Statement 2018 <https://www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Danvm-Watercourse-Maintenance-Statement-v2Feb2018-1.pdf>), reduces the movement of mobile plant and machinery cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

In response to Government's 25-year environment plan and a high level of public interest, the Board will take a pragmatic approach to reducing plastic consumption, particularly single-use plastics. Where possible goods will be sourced sustainably, and it will promote a culture of personal plastic awareness within the Board Members, employees and contractors (e.g. use of flasks and sandwich containers or reusable coffee cups and straws)

To reduce paper consumption, Members agree being paperless excepting the Chairman and Vice-Chairman unless Members advise the Board Administrator to the contrary.

The Board is building on the first five years of its Biodiversity Action Plan and adopted a plan to assist with delivery of Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife by restoring or retaining Priority habitat to assist deliver outcomes. The Board will work with landowners to reduce potential adverse impacts of flood risk management works on biodiversity.

The Board will work with partnership groups such as the Humberhead Levels Partnership, River Don Catchment Partnership, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust through the Wild Went project, the Dearne Valley Partnership Group and others to improve the water quality, watercourse and adjacent habitats within the District for the benefit of wildlife and public wellbeing.

The Board will implement the Clean Check Dry campaign promoted by Defra for Biosecurity thus reducing the spread of Invasive Non-Native Species.

Danvm Drainage Commissioners, May 2018

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