

Adapt or Abandon?

Putting flood resilience at the heart of
on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill



#WeAreHere

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) presents a unique opportunity to place the long term safety of our communities at the heart of the planning process. Given inevitable and devastating impact climate change on communities and our economy it's vital we act now make flood protection a top priority for all planning decisions.

Communities up and down the country are facing the impacts of climate change. Hull is facing 1.5 metres of sea level rise in the next eighty years on the current trajectory of climate changing emissions caused by human activity. Skegness, the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk, Chichester, Portsmouth, and the Somerset Levels to name a few, also face irreversible sea level rise and increased risk of flooding that will simply devastate communities if nothing is done. Other places are threatened by flooding from surface runoff and rivers breaking their banks are places like Doncaster, Rotherham, York, the Derbyshire Dales and Cheltenham.

The country cannot afford the billions it will cost every time there is a flooding disaster because no effort was made to address the problem, nor should the suffering of people and communities as a consequence be acceptable. Predictions for expected severe flooding in February 2023 have already been announced by the Environment Agency and the Meteorological Office.

Emma Hardy MP has proposed a comprehensive package of amendments to fix the country's response to climate adaptation and flood risk. The new clauses, which are 14 to 18 in the latest amendment paper, achieve the following outcomes:

Create Minimum requirements for flood mitigation and protection

This amendment changes building regulations so that there is a minimum standard, and level playing field, across all builds with regard to ensuring that properties are resilient to flooding. It ensures that there is a new normal when it comes to building.

Create a Duty to make flooding data available

People must have access to the flood risk that they face. This will support the drive to take personal action, and build much more awareness about what actions need to be taken to reduce costs in the event of flooding.

Introduce flood prevention and mitigation certification and accreditation schemes . Working to safeguard properties and to maintain standards must be certified and regulated. The cladding scandal demonstrated what is at stake if there is a failure to properly address a risk. The consequences of a failure to adapt for flood risk and sea level rise will be highly damaging.

Extend the remite of the Flood Reinsurance scheme to better protect homes and business over the long terms

Summary

The amendments tabled as New Clauses 14-18 are a set of structured, practical changes that would fix the gaps in the system through a minimum standard, making data available to property owners, regulating schemes, and ensuring an insurance safety net is in place. We strongly urge Parliamentarians to support these clause at the reports stage of the Bill and to continue to press the Government for greater action to secure community safety to growing threat of flooding.