

## **Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Board Paper**

### **Community Flood Action Fund update and top-up funding request**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Board is asked to:

1. Note the update on applications submitted to the Community Flood Action Fund.
2. Consider whether the Community Flood Action Fund should close for the year once the initial £200,000 funding allocation has been allocated.
3. Subject to the decision under Recommendation 2, the Board is asked to approve top-up funding of £80,000 to allow a fourth round of Community Flood Action Fund applications during 2025-26.

#### **Purpose of the item**

Part One shows the overall status of the Community Flood Action Fund (CFAF) that was launched in December 2024. Part Two provides an update on the outcome of the second round. Part Three sets out a request for top-up funding.

#### **Background and context**

In September 2024 the Board approved £200,000 being allocated to a new Community Flood Action Fund. The Fund is limited to requests of between £3,000 and £20,000 per grant.

The purpose of the Fund is to help people with good local knowledge of flooding problems take practical actions with obvious benefits that can be achieved quickly. The CFAF process is designed to have a 'light touch' approach to application and assessment compared to the SRA's main grant process.

At its launch, CFAF was intended to be open all year-round (2025-26) with applications reviewed and approved on a quarterly basis, enabling prompt action to be taken, but if – owing to the Fund's popularity – the Board's initial grant of £200,000 is fully allocated before the end of the financial year, the Fund may have to close to new applicants for the rest of the year (see Part Three of this paper).

#### **Part One: Current Status**

**Table 1: Number of applications received and awarded with balance of funds**

Type of Organisation	Count
Number of applications submitted	26

Total value of applications	£246,924
Number of grants awarded	12
Value of grants awarded	£138,419
Largest grant awarded	£19,510
Smallest grant awarded	£3,600

**Table 2: Types and numbers of organisations submitting applications since launch**

Type of Organisation	Count
Town or Parish Council or Parish Meeting	21
Registered charity / Community Interest Company	2
Other (School, Rotary Club, Flood Group)	3
Total	26

**Table 3: Application Types**

Type of Application	Count
Community Flood Equipment (e.g. workwear / signage/ sandbags)	3
Capital equipment (e.g. pump)	1
Investigation, inspection only	2
Highways maintenance of road drainage only	3
Road works to reduce flooding, e.g. refurbishment and raising	2
Vegetation and watercourse, drainage clearance, general maintenance	13
New surface water drainage	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>

## Part Two: Successful Applications – Round Two

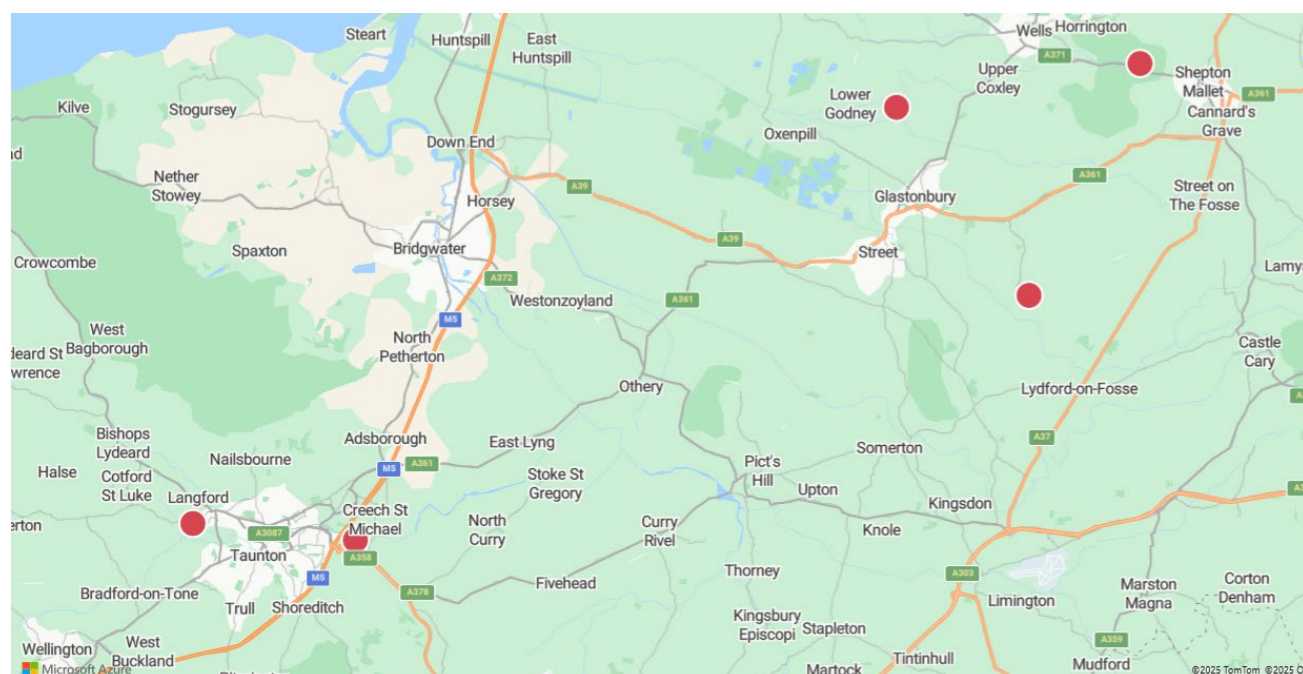
The closing date for the second round of applications to the Community Flood Action Fund was 26 May 2025. The Review Panel met on 1 July to consider the applications.

- Number of applications submitted: 6
- Total value of applications: £79,886
- Number of grants awarded: 5
- Value of grants awarded: £61,070
- Largest grant request: £19,510
- Smallest grant request: £3,600

Five applications were successful, receiving grants totalling £61,079. The Fund's remaining balance is therefore £61,581. See Table 4 and Figure 1 below.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Application Title</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Grant award</b>
Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council: Lower Henlade ditch clearance	£3,993	£3,993
Baltonsborough Parish Council: Coxbridge Brook weed clearing and flailing	£3,600	£3,600
Croscombe Parish Council: New Manhole in Sheppey River Culvert at Long Street, Croscombe	£21,069	£19,519
Godney Parish Council: Decoy Rhyne - bank stabilisation and maintenance	£19,510	£19,510
Norton Fitzwarren Parish Council: Norton Fitzwarren riparian maintenance	£14,448	£14,448
<b>Total</b>	<b>£62,620</b>	<b>£61,070</b>

**Figure 1: Round Two project locations**



### Part Three: Top-up funding for Round Four

The deadline for applications to Round 3 of the Community Flood Action Fund was 26 August. Six eligible applications (with a total value of £68,000) will be considered by the Review Panel on 30 September. While it is not known whether all applications will be successful, it is possible that the original £200,000 allocation for CFAF will be completely, or mostly, exhausted following Round 3.

When CFAF was being developed it was proposed that once the £200,000 allocation was exhausted the scheme should close for the year. The Board is asked to consider whether to close CFAF once the £200,000 is allocated or provide some additional funding to allow the CFAF to take applications for a full year.

If the Board wishes to provide additional funding, it is asked to consider an £80,000 top-up. The first two rounds averaged approximately £70,000 of allocation per round with the third round receiving applications to a value of £68,000. A top-up of £80,000 would allow for the maximum allocation in Round 3, should that be required, as well as sufficient funds to run a fourth round and complete the first full year of CFAF.

SRA Management Group recommends a review of the first year of CFAF (2025-26) before a final decision is taken on whether to re-run CFAF in 2026-27. This review will be undertaken and reported to the Board before a final decision is taken on allocation of funding to the 2026-27 SRA Enhanced Programme in March 2026.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Board is asked to:

1. Note the update on applications submitted to the Community Flood Action Fund.
2. Consider whether the Community Flood Action Fund should close for the year once the initial £200,000 funding allocation has been allocated.
3. Subject to the decision under 2 above the Board is asked to approved top-up funding of £80,000 to allow a fourth round of Community Flood Action Fund applications during 2025-26.

**Date:** 1 September 2025

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