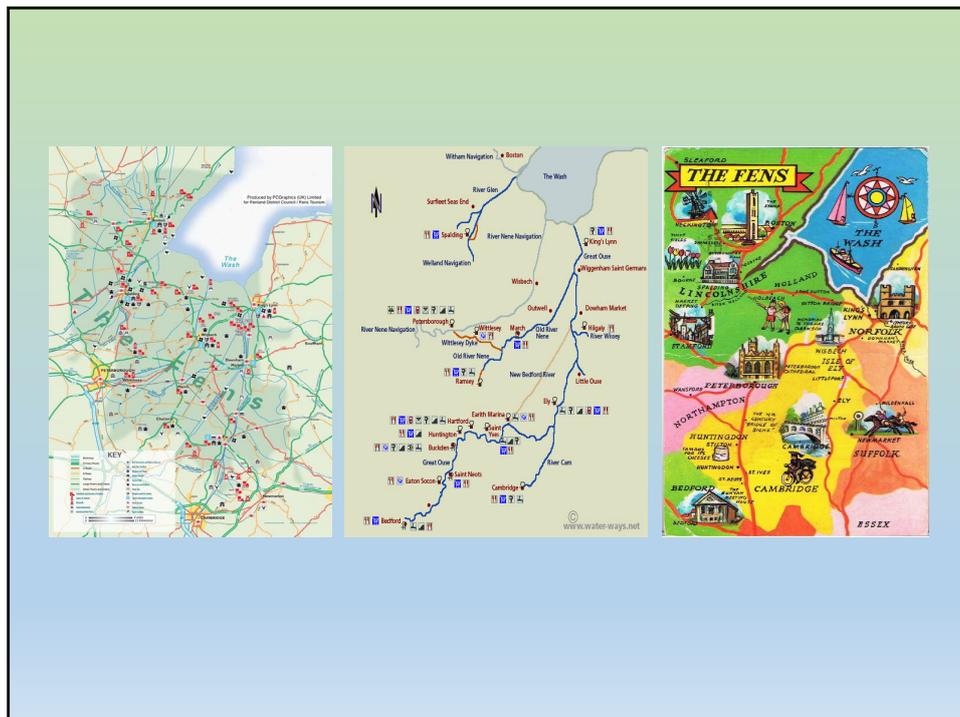


FCRM in the Great Ouse Fens

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Some key FCRM facts and figures for the Great Ouse Fens

- 370,000 ha of predominantly Grade 1 agricultural land protected in the Great Ouse Fens
- 57,000 properties protected in the areas of greatest flood risk, and a further 60,000 could become isolated if flood resilience measures fail
- £218m of investment needs identified over the next 15 years, just to retain the existing resilience and protection standards, not to improve them or respond to the Government's accepted climate change scenarios

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Key Challenges for FCRM in the Fens

- Climate and coastal change, including rising sea levels and weather events
- Peat loss, and silt gain
- An ageing infrastructure which won't last forever, in spite of frequent asset inspection and maintenance regimes
- Complexity of project delivery landscape
- FCRM v Other interests
- Raising Partnership Funding
- Complacency from lack of serious flooding events!
- Lack of a compelling Strategic Plan...

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Gathering the evidence for investment...

- Fens Tidal River Baseline Report (July 2017)
- Flood Risk Management for the Fens Project Technical Group (ongoing)
- Tactical Plans (currently in preparation) for three sub catchments
- Assessing costs and benefits of critical FRCM investments, with a view to identifying key sector contributors to Partnership Funding (necessary to unlocking Government GiA funding)
- But this will only be short to medium term strategy to deal with known asset conditions and localised investment needs, not longer term big ticket nationally significant investments.

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Four Big Questions

1. As a society what value do we place on safeguarding lowland agricultural land, (and using some of it sometimes for flood storage)?
2. Who should pay for future FCRM investment?
3. Do we need bigger, bolder solutions for FCRM in the Fens in the very long term, e.g. a Wash Barrier / Barrage?
4. Are the downstream impacts of the massive OxCam growth agenda in the Great Ouse upper catchment sufficiently well understood, and will there be sufficient FCRM infrastructure built in to new developments there?

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Thank you for listening



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