

Spring 2023 Update

1. Flood Risk Reduction works – Pangbourne Water Treatment Works Site

I am delighted to say that the works that Thames Water have been undertaking in their Water Treatment Works site at Pangbourne, adjacent to the A340, are now complete.

In Jan 2021 the Flood wardens were contacted by a property owner in the Moors who had severe flooding in his garden. Water levels were very high and the River Pang had overtopped in a number of places in the Thames Water site and was flowing rapidly into the Moors stream which was unable to cope with this amount of water, and was itself overtopping and flooding in the property garden and threatening the house. The Flood Wardens worked with Thames Water to request access to the site to see what was happening and were then quick to place Floodsax on the ground in various locations to form bunds to hold the water back and prevent it flowing into the Moors Stream. Thames Water arranged a further delivery of sandbags and these were used to bolster the defences.

Fortunately, this stopped the flow of water and the flooding subsided. We then worked with Thames Water to see whether anything could be done to prevent this occurring again. Thames Water appointed Cain Bio Engineering – river restoration specialists - who undertook a full topographic and hydraulic survey of the site and came up with a number of recommendations which Thames have subsequently implemented. These include forming a permanent raised bund to replace the sandbags in two locations, some additional proactive tree work on the site and the raising of the bank of the Pang in one spot where it was particularly low and prone to overtopping. It has taken quite some time to achieve all of this as permits were required for some of the work and the costs had to be approved, but we are all hugely relieved that the work is finally finished. We are grateful to Thames Water for their co-operation with this project.

Bund along trackway



Bund on access road



5. Drawings

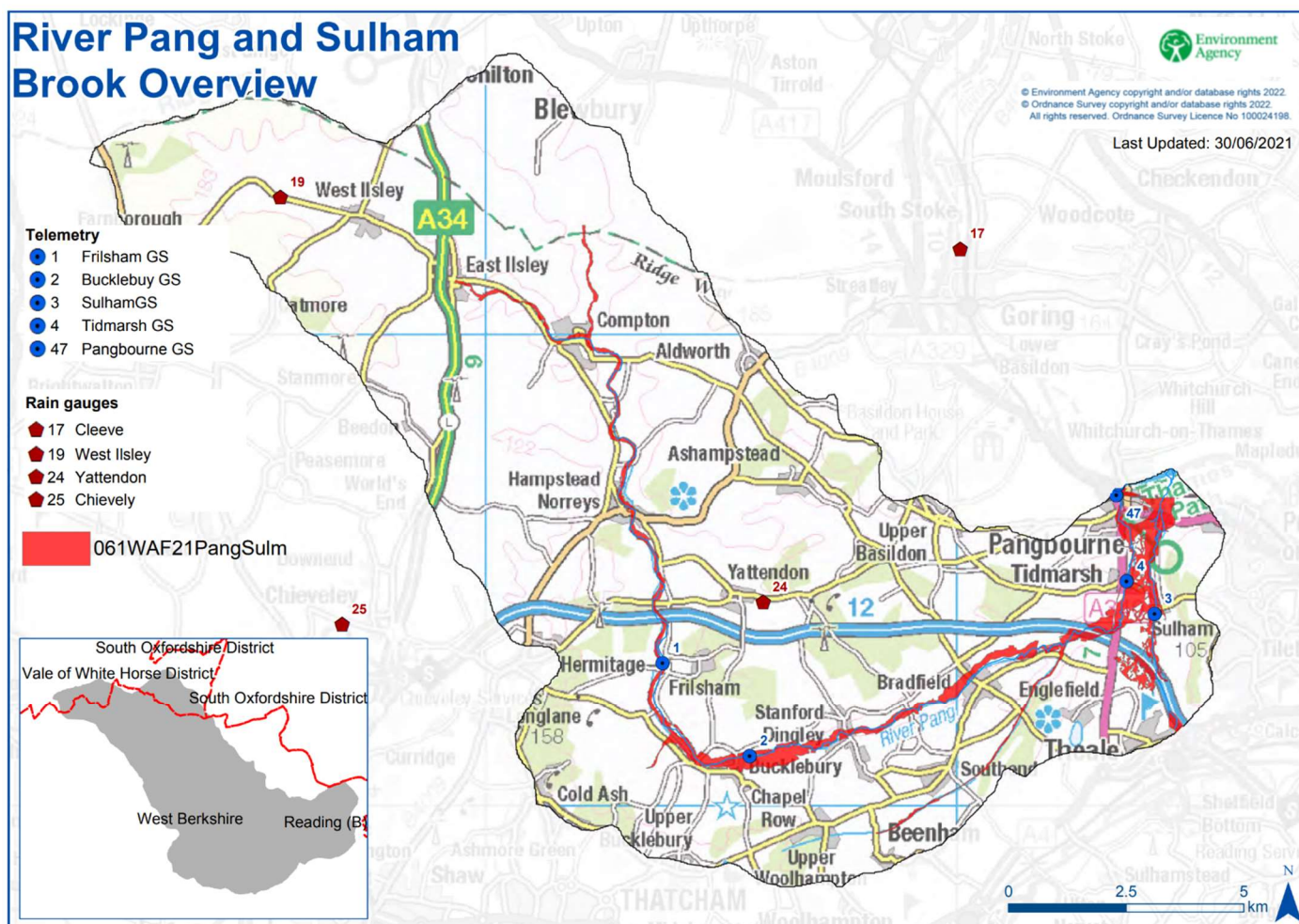


Figure 5. PR14533_103_wsc_Pang WTW - Site Plan & Recommendations V2.

2. Flood Warning Service

For some time we have been concerned that the Environment Agency (EA) Floodline warning system triggers Flood Alerts when there is no risk of flooding locally at all. This has meant that we have felt it necessary to send out messages subsequently to say that there is no cause for alarm. We raised this recently with the EA's Flood Resilience Officer.

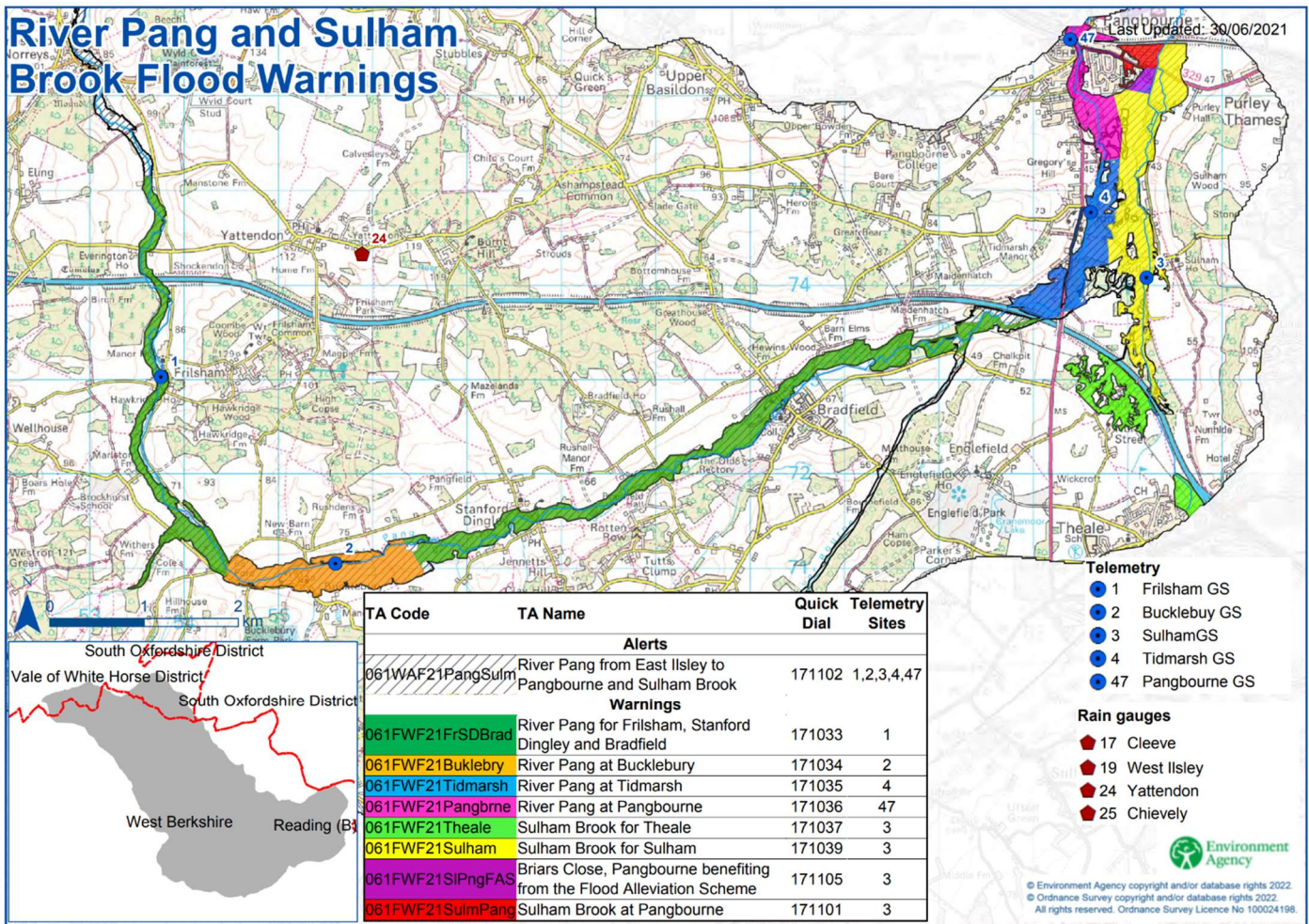
There are three levels of alert issued – Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning. The alerts are triggered when the level of the river goes above a certain threshold at the EA's gauges. We currently have one EA gauge on the Sulham Brook, in the fields south of Mill Lane, and four on the River Pang – at Pangbourne, Tidmarsh, Bucklebury and Frilsham. If any one of those gauges goes above the trigger level a Flood Alert will be triggered for anyone registered with Floodline anywhere on the whole of the Pang and Sulham Brook catchment.



This map shows the Flood Alert area which is for the whole of the Pang and Sulham Brook. It also shows you where the EA's gauges are stationed – blue dots numbered 1-4 and 47.

This is different for a Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning when specific reaches of the river only are covered. (See map below)

We felt this was not helpful as there were many occasions when, for example, the Tidmarsh gauge triggered the alert, but the high level of water had already passed through the villages above Tidmarsh with no incident, and the Sulham Brook was also not at a trigger level. Unfortunately, the EA's National Policy dictates that changes cannot be made to how the system works at present and that the Flood Alert itself is only meant to be a "Heads Up" for the general situation in the catchment. It doesn't indicate that property flooding is expected.



The above diagram shows the Flood warning alert areas and how they are divided up across the Pang and Sulham Brook. You will see that they are much more specific to each area. The map also shows the Quickdial number that relates to each area.

Flood Warning, however, is the alert that indicates that property flooding could be expected and, where possible, the EA will issue this approximately two hours prior to the anticipated event.

We have taken the opportunity to amend the messaging on the front page of our website – see below

EA Flood Warnings and Alerts

[Sign up for call/text/email alerts from the Environment Agency when they issue a Flood Warning or Alert for your area.](#)

Our [Dashboard](#) shows active Flood Warnings or Alerts.







Type	What it means	Who should pay attention
Severe Flood Warning	Severe flooding. Danger to life.	People living in or near flood risk areas
Flood Warning	Flooding of Properties is expected.	People living in flood risk areas
Flood Alert	Flooding of fields, minor roads is possible.	Flood wardens, farmers
Warnings Ended	No further flooding is expected.	

This table is a summary of the [Environment Agency's guidance](#).

The PVFF website also has a live feed of all the EA gauges in the Dashboard <https://www.floodalleviation.uk/dashboard/>

Flood Warnings and Alerts

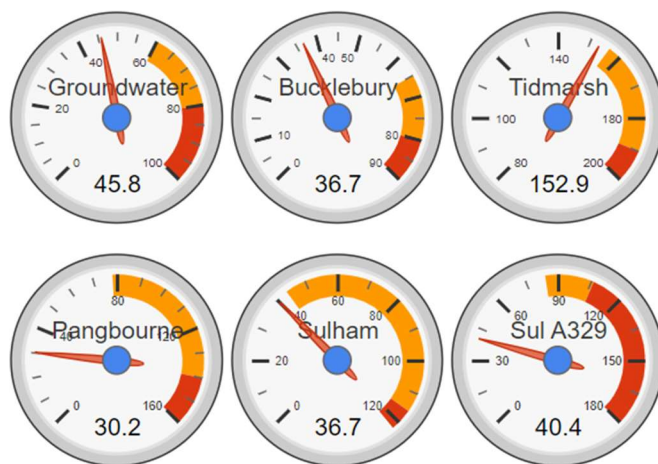
Flood warnings and alerts for the PVFF Catchments. Click the warning/alert for more information.

 Flood Alerts	 0 Severe Flood Warnings SEVERE FLOODING - DANGER TO LIFE	 0 Flood Warnings FLOODING OF HOUSES IS EXPECTED - IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED
 1 Flood Alerts FLOODING OF ROADS AND FIELDS IS POSSIBLE - BE PREPARED	 0 Warnings Ended WARNINGS REMOVED IN THE LAST 24 HOURS	 11 All Clear NO FLOOD WARNINGS AND ALERTS


Data from the [Flood Information Service](#)

Pang Valley gauge summary











Orange = EA trigger Flood Alert, Red = Flood Warning.



River gauges (cm) and calculated Upper Pang Groundwater (%)

In the River Levels box you can see the trend of the levels in the rivers and if you click on the blue  it will tell you at what level on each gauge the EA will issue a Flood Alert, Flood Warning etc.

EA River alert levels and definitions

Gauge / Alert	1	2	3	4
Fritsham  	44	48	59	62
Bucklebury  	55	65	72	80
Tidmarsh  	145	156	170	190
Pangbourne  	75	78	110	140
Sulham  	30	40	75	106

Values are in cm

Alert	Definition	Action
1	River levels are rising	Monitoring and Forecasting Duty Officer starts monitoring
2	River levels are at bankfull	Flood Alerts issued (for whole length of the river) if forecast is for this level to be exceeded.
3	River levels are getting near to flood warning	Consider issuing a Flood Warning (for just the Warning Area associated with the relevant gauge)
4	River level is at property level (first to Flood in Warning Area)	Flood Warning issued (for just the Warning Area associated with the relevant gauge) if forecast is for this level to be exceeded.

If you want to change your basis for receiving alerts to have only the ones for Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning, you can do this online through the gov.uk website <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> and follow the section **Update your details or flood warnings**. Or you can do this over the phone by calling the **Floodline number 0345 988 1188**. You can, of course, continue to receive Flood Alerts if you wish and regard them as an advisory for the general state of the catchment and a way of raising your level of awareness.

Preparation in advance of flooding is always the most useful defence you can have. If you have recently moved into a property and want to know whether it is at risk of flooding from rivers and surface water you

can check via the gov. uk website <https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk> and enter your postcode. You can also get the flooding history for a property via this link as well.

Kay Lacey

Chair – Pang Valley Flood Forum

April 2023