

Managing flood risk in the Wootton Brook catchment

February 2021

What is the risk of flooding here and how is it managed?



There are 83 properties in the Flood Warning Area for Wootton Brook - the purple hatched area on the map shows this alongside the Parish Council boundaries. Horton and Preston Deanery are covered by a separate Flood Warning Area which covers more than 100 properties in the Upper River Nene and its tributaries.

Wootton Brook is classed as a main river from where it joins the River Nene to a point upstream of Horton. This means the Environment Agency (EA) has permissive powers to carry out maintenance and manage flood risk between these locations. Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) has a responsibility to manage flood risk from surface water. Riverside (Riparian) landowners are responsible for undertaking maintenance of the land they own adjacent to the watercourse.

The catchment area is approximately 110km² of predominantly rural, agricultural land. There are several villages located in the upper section of Wootton Brook, namely Horton, Hackleton and Preston Deanery. The lower section, from Wootton down to the River Nene is characterised by a more developed catchment, with a number of large flow storage/balancing ponds.

Northampton was designated as a New Town by Government, to improve the economy and housing, in the late 1960s. A strategic approach to development was devised that meant new development would discharge surface water direct to the watercourse with mitigation provided in the form of strategic attenuation ponds at Shelfleys and Swan Lakes and in Duston Flood Storage Reservoir (FSR). The conveyance capacity of Wootton Brook from the canal culverts to the confluence with the River Nene was improved to accommodate these flows.

Following flooding in Northampton in 1998, the capacity of Duston FSR was increased. New developments are now required to control surface water to greenfield or pre-development runoff rates and a 0.5% plus climate change allowances which exceeds national standards (as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework).



Maintenance

- Desilting takes place every few years in key locations. Next month, a 210m² section of the Wootton Brook Canal Culverts - see image - will be desilted using an excavator to reduce weed growth, prevent debris blockages and allow water to flow more freely. The work is due to start on 1 March - if it is safe to do so, depending on river levels - and will take a week. You may see the site compound being set up.
- Last year a weed cut by hand took place along Wootton Brook, Wootton Brook Canal Culverts and Courtenhall Grange Arm. This will be reviewed following the desilting and repeated each year if needed.
- Every year the river banks/flood defences are inspected to ensure there has been no damage.
- Other activity takes place every few years if required e.g. dredging downstream of Hackleton in 2015/16 and removing bushes and vegetation from the channel between Banbury Lane and Shelfleys Lake in 2017/8. A bid to remove bushes and vegetation this year along Wootton Brook has been submitted for approval in our maintenance programme.
- Please be aware that if you own land next to a watercourse then you are responsible for its maintenance. See this link for more details: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>. The EA has permissive powers to carry out work on your land to reduce flood risk to property.



Flood risk reduction schemes



Two studies were commissioned in 2003 to look at the potential for a scheme to manage flood risk, following flooding affecting homes in Collingtree in 1992 and 1998, as well as homes in Horton and the village hall in Hackleton in 1998. The works that followed are shown on the attached maps.

As part of a new Natural Flood Management Scheme, there are now 39 woody structures and 5 water storage areas within the catchment that have been constructed since June last year to 'slow the flow' of the water naturally to reduce flood risk for those living in Collingtree and Wootton. This wouldn't have been possible without the support of landowners and other partner organisations. New gauge boards, flow meters and time lapse cameras are collecting evidence on the success of the

scheme, alongside visual observations and close monitoring of river flow and levels from gauging stations. Checks carried out on 24 December found that leaky dams upstream of Horton were working well, holding back water and slowing the flow within the channel, as shown in the photo. Furthermore, all leaky structures and storage areas checked within the catchment showed signs that they had been in use on 23 December.



Winter flooding 2020/2021

A review is always carried out after the EA issues any flood warnings to see if changes are needed to the Flood Warning Service. This can include a survey sent to the community to better understand the impact of any flooding to see if anything can improve the way flood risk is managed. If you have not received a survey yet, please call 03708 506 506 for a hard copy, or email fri.lincsandnorthants@environment-agency.gov.uk for an electronic version. It is important to capture all views, even if you were not directly affected.

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, one of the roles of NCC as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is to carry out investigations into flooding incidents if they meet set thresholds. To date the LLFA have received over 300 individual reports of flooding from the December flood event and have estimated over 150 properties (residential/business/community) have internally flooded. It is important that all incidents of internal flooding are reported on the NCC Flood Toolkit flood reporting page – click on 'Report a Flood': <https://www.floodtoolkit.com>

Flooding in the Wootton Brook catchment meets these thresholds, so a Section 19 flood investigation will be completed. David Smith Associates (DSA) undertake the formal investigations on behalf of the LLFA. DSA are progressing through the investigations and have already started to contact affected residents and arrange site visits. You can find out more about the flood investigation process here: <https://www.floodtoolkit.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/3.-Flooding-Flood-investigations.pdf>

How can I be prepared for flooding and reduce the risk to my home?

Flood risk can be reduced, but it can't be removed entirely. You can take steps to help reduce the impact:

- Go online here <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding> to check if you:
 - are in an area that is at risk from flooding
 - can sign up to the Flood Warning Service to get advance notice of when river flooding is expected. You can also do this by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.
- You can see templates to help you put together Flood Plans for your home, business or community here <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding>. Call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 for a hard copy.
- For information on Flood Products to help reduce the impact of flooding e.g. flood doors, airbrick covers, visit www.bluepages.org.uk. This Flood Guide for Homeowners may give you some ideas: https://knowyourfloodrisk.co.uk/sites/default/files/FloodGuide_ForHomeowners.pdf
- You could prepare an Emergency Bag of essential items. This might include spare glasses, waterproof coat, medication, water, food, insurance documents and pet food. You could consider hand sanitiser and a face covering too.
- Monitor local River and Sea Levels here <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/river-and-sea-levels> and see current flood warnings here <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings>
- Further useful information can be found at Northamptonshire County Council's Flood Toolkit page: <https://www.floodtoolkit.com>

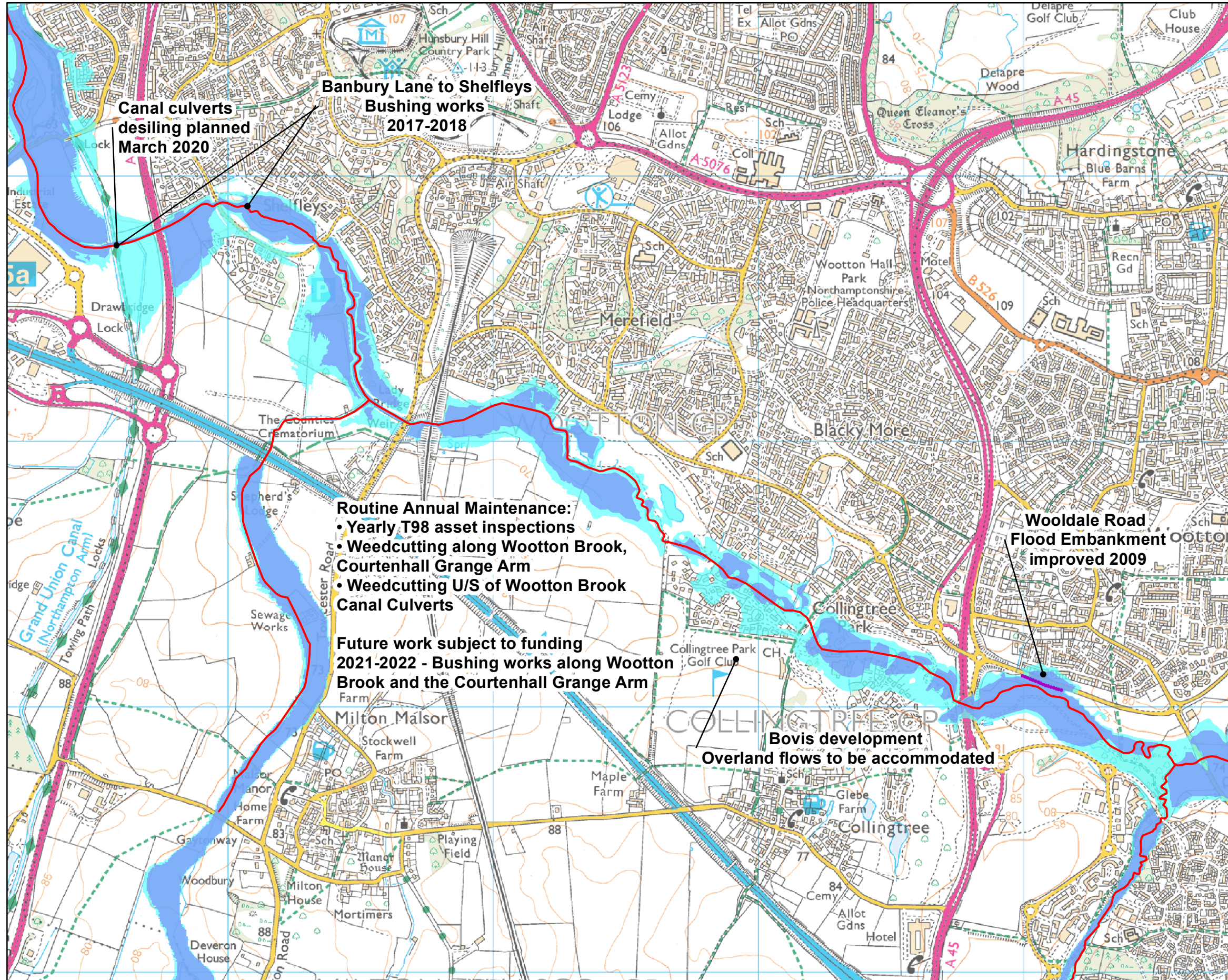
For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact the Flood Resilience Team for Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire by email or phone:

- LNenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
- 03708 506 506



Wootton Brook (Banbury Lane to Wootton Road) - Recent and Ongoing Maintenance and other works since 2008

Rev A created February 2021



Scale 1:15,000



Legend

- Main River
- Raised Defences
- Area at Risk of Flooding from Rivers or The Sea
- Extreme Flood Outline

Dark blue shows the area that could be affected by flooding, either from rivers or the sea, if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded:

- from the sea by a flood that has a 0.5% (1 in 200) or greater chance of happening each year.
- or from a river by a flood that has a 1% (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.

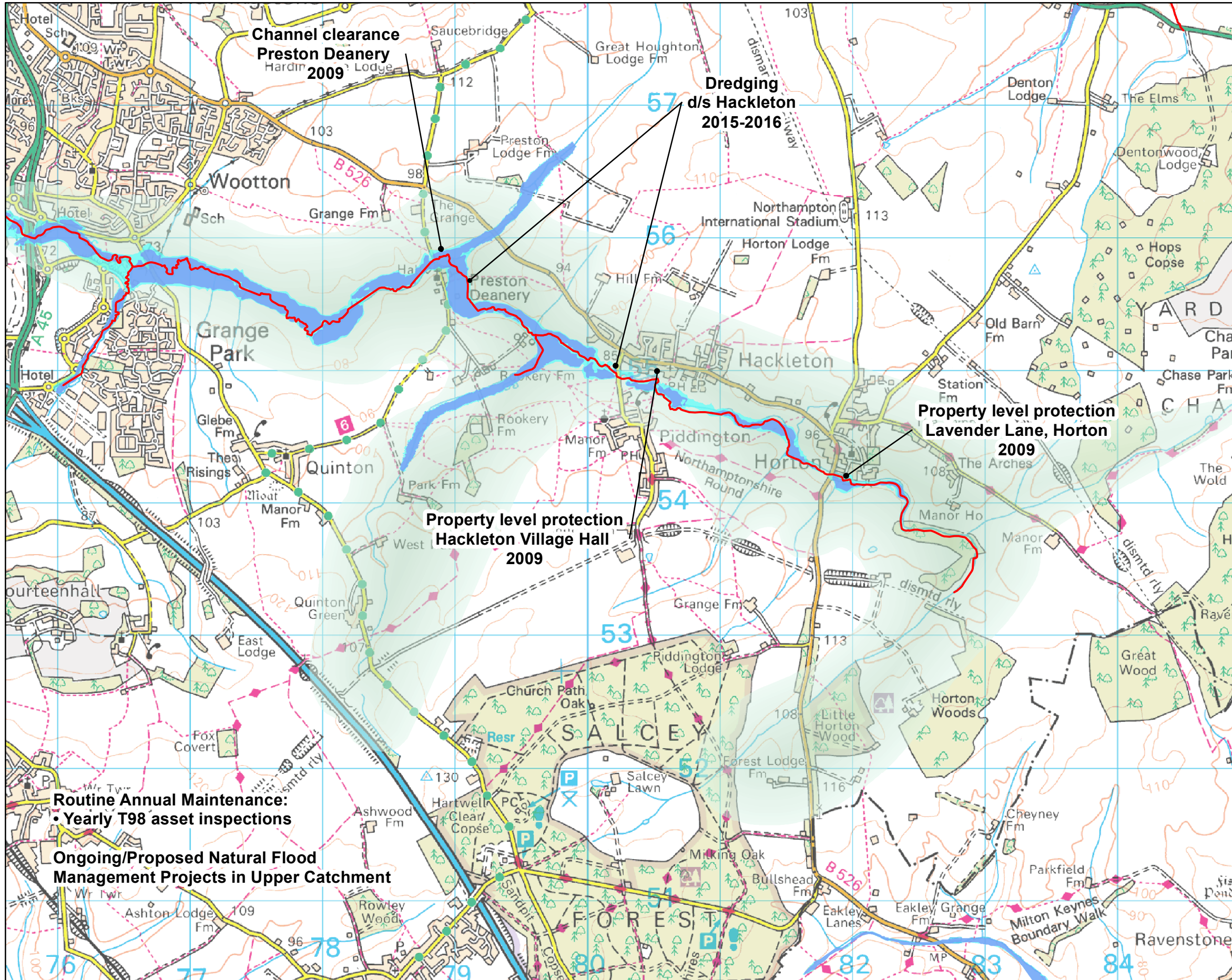
Light blue shows the extent of the Extreme Flood Outline, which represents the extent of a flood event with a 0.1% chance of occurring in any year, or the highest recorded historic extent if greater.

These two colours show the extent of the natural floodplain if there were no flood defences or certain other manmade structures and channel improvements. Sites outside the two extents, but behind raised defences, may be affected by flooding if the defences are overtopped or fail.

Created by the Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team, Kettering

Wootton Brook (Banbury Lane to Wootton Road) - Recent and Ongoing Maintenance and other works since 2008

Rev A created February 2021



Scale 1:30,000



Legend

- Main River
- Area at Risk of Flooding from Rivers or The Sea
- Extreme Flood Outline
- Natural Flood Management Catchments

Dark blue shows the area that could be affected by flooding, either from rivers or the sea, if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded:

- from the sea by a flood that has a 0.5% (1 in 200) or greater chance of happening each year.
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