

Tougher building regulations required to protect future communities, urges Know Your Flood Risk's Mary Dhonau OBE

Submitted by: Peptalk Communications

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With the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's (Efra) this week criticising Government for "missing opportunities to act on" Efra's Future Flood Prevention report that was published in November, Mary Dhonau OBE, chief executive of the Know Your Flood Risk campaign (<http://www.knowyourfloodrisk.co.uk/>) has publicly responded to urge Government to "toughen up on building regulations" so that flood resilient measures are automatically included in all new-build properties that are deemed to be within a flood risk zone.

Following Efra's formal response

(<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee>) on what it calls a "disjointed flood management system", Mary Dhonau said: "I think it is now a matter of urgency that the Government toughens up on its planning and building regulation processes to make sure that any new builds located in 'at risk' areas automatically include measures to make the property flood resilient.

My concern is that Flood Re does not cover new build properties and therefore we must stop building houses that are simply not covered or prepared for future flood events; it's not fair on the future generations who will have to deal with the dreadful aftermath that flood waters bring."

Landmark Information, the data partner for the Know Your Flood Risk campaign, has undertaken some cross-analysis of flood risk data from the Environment Agency (EA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and planning application data from Barbour ABI to determine the percentage of planning applications for new build properties (residential and commercial) that are deemed to be within an EA/NRW Flood Zone 3 (assessing sea or river flooding only), by county.

Between September 2015 and September 2016, 9 out of 10 new build applications in the City of Kingston upon Hull were deemed to be within an EA/NRW Flood Zone 3. This is followed by Thurrock in Essex at 48%, Casnewydd-Newport at 37% and North Somerset at 32%.*

Adds Mary Dhonau: "Having reviewed the data analysis from Landmark, it is clear that there are hundreds of applications submitted each year that fall in to a designated flood risk zone according to the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales' parameters. These stats don't even take into account groundwater or surface water risks and so I fear the volume is greater still. I therefore agree with Efra's call to Government to create far stronger planning rules, and penalties for those that breach them, to ensure future communities are not blighted by today's failure to act."

The Know Your Flood Risk Campaign's mission is to raise awareness of the risk of flooding from all sources. It is a well-regarded online resource for helping people find out the flood risk related to their current or future home and provides access to free-to-download information guides and a smartphone app.

To download a free copy of the Homeowners' Guide to Flood Resilience or the new supplement for

businesses, visit www.knowyourfloodrisk.co.uk. For more information, follow the Know Your Flood Risk campaign on Twitter. For more information regarding Landmark Information Group, visit www.landmark.co.uk

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Notes to Editors:

1. Mary Dhonau OBE is available for interviews – contact Peppa Sheridan on 01787 313822 to schedule an interview or Mary can be reached directly on 07754 592534.

2. Images are available on request.

* Data Analysis by Landmark Information:

- Environment Agency/Natural Resources Wales Flood Risk Zone 3
- Planning Applications (Both Pending & Granted)
- September 2015-September 2016

Note: If using/quoting this data, for copyright licensing rules you must reference the original data sources (Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and Barbour ABI):

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County/Borough // % of New Build Planning Apps in EA/NRW Flood Zone 3 (Sept15-16)

1. City Of Kingston Upon Hull (B) 91%
2. Thurrock (B) 48%
3. Casnewydd - Newport 37%
4. North Somerset 32%
5. North East Lincolnshire (B) 31%
6. Lincolnshire 30%
7. Conwy - Conwy 29%
8. North Lincolnshire (B) 27%
9. Tor-Faen - Torfaen 23%
10. Doncaster District (B) 22%
11. City Of Portsmouth (B) 22%
12. Sir Y Fflint - Flintshire 21%
13. Caerdydd - Cardiff 20%
14. East Riding Of Yorkshire 20%
15. Blaenau Gwent - Blaenau Gwent 20%
16. Sir Ddinbych - Denbighshire 20%
17. Medway (B) 18%
18. Greater London Authority 17%

- 19. Blackpool (B) 17%
- 20. Southend-On-Sea (B) 16%

Definition of Flood Zone 3:

Land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%) or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea (>0.5%) in any year. These flood zones refer to the probability of river and sea flooding, ignoring the presence of defences.

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About Know Your Flood Risk:

Know Your Flood Risk is a campaign raising awareness of the risk of flooding from all sources - not just from the river, sea, or a visible water course. The majority of flood insurance claims are for surface water flooding where there is no obvious water to alert a homeowner to the potential risk. The Know Your Flood Risk campaign provides essential practical guidance to enable homeowners and property professionals mitigate against and prepare for the risk of being flooded. The campaign supplies a property-specific flood report, which can be used by homeowners to help identify the potential risk. More information is available at www.knowyourfloodrisk.co.uk.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/flooduk> and <https://twitter.com/floodmary>

About Mary Dhonau OBE Hon DSc Hon RICS:

Since 2000, Mary Dhonau has championed flood awareness, protection and resilience and is a passionate advocate of empowering communities to recognise and take responsibility for minimising their collective flood risk. Mary was awarded an OBE for services to the environment in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in 2009. In December 2014, she was awarded Honorary RICS (HonRICS) status, in recognition of her high profile in standing-up for the public's interest regarding flooding. Mary was also given the 'Voice of the Customer' award and the CII Public Interest Awards 2015. She was also awarded with an Honorary Doctorate from the University of the West of England in July 2015 for outstanding national contribution to flood risk management.

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