Flood Defences at Sussex Yacht Club, Shoreham-by-Sea

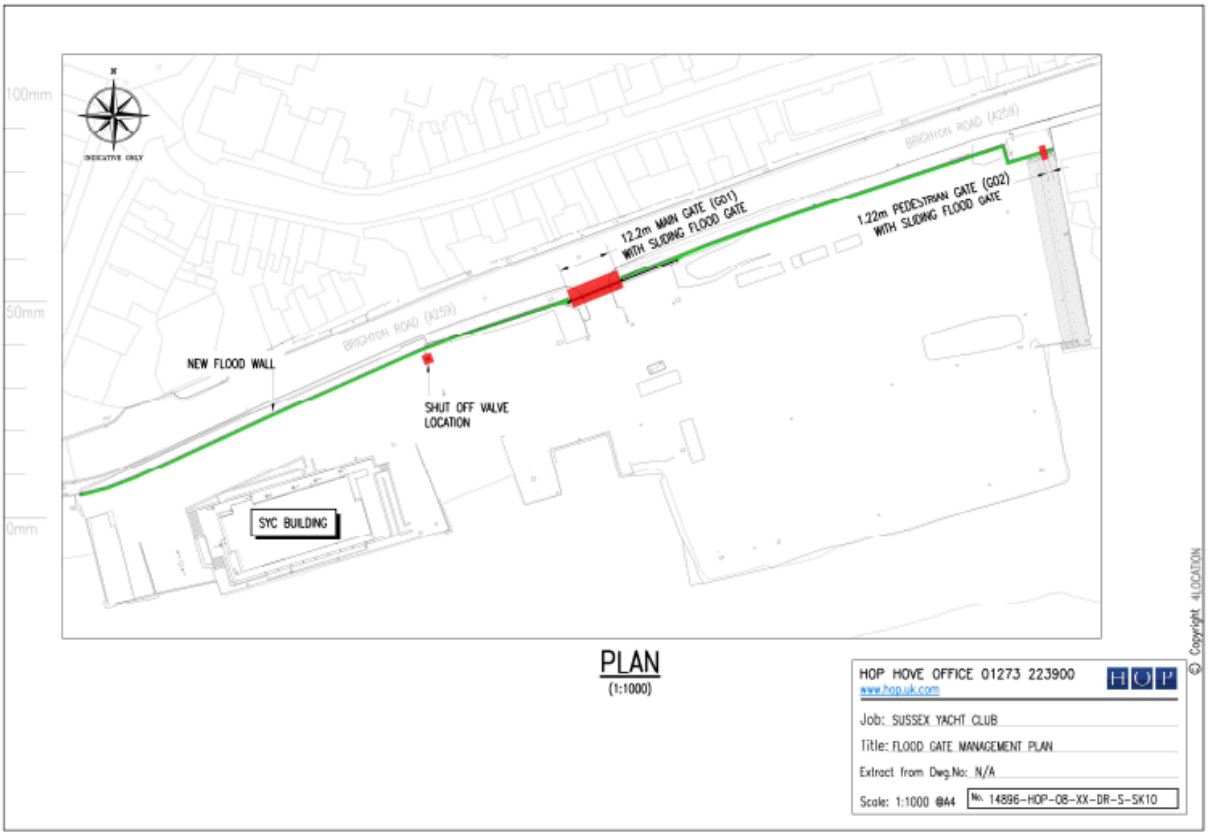
Flood Gates Management Plan

May 2026



1. Introduction and Scope

- **Location:** A259 Flood Defence Wall, Sussex Yacht Club (SYC), Shoreham-by-Sea.
- **Purpose:** This plan establishes the procedure for operating the Flood Defence Gates (FDG) to protect Shoreham-by-Sea from tidal flooding while maintaining access to the SYC.
- **Gate Specifications:** The defence includes two sliding gates.
- Gate G01 provides vehicular access with a 12.2-metre clear span.
- Gate G02 provides pedestrian access with a 1.22-metre clear span.
- Both gates provide watertight protection up to +5.46mOD.
- **Default State:** The gates will remain fully open at all times, except during Identified Spring Tide Flood Risk Periods (ISTFRP) or agreed maintenance.



Site Layout

ID	Purpose	Clear span of opening (m)	Flush threshold required	Frequency of use of access point (open)	Ground Level mOD	Flood Gate Top Level mOD	Gate Height (m)	Type
G01	*Vehicular access*	*12.2*	*Y*	*Frequent*	*+3.800*	*+5.460*	*1.660*	*Sliding*
G02	*Pedestrian access*	*1.22*	*Y*	*Frequent*	*+4.000*	*+5.460*	*1.460*	*Sliding*

Gate Requirements



Typical sliding (“rolling”) flood gate. Photograph from Flood Control International (manufacturer)

2. Ownership and Legal Responsibilities

- **Adur District Council (ADC):** ADC is the owner of the Flood Defence Wall and Gates, retaining full operational, legal, and maintenance liability.
- ADC monitors flood risks based on predicted spring tides and Environment Agency alerts.
- ADC retains the responsibility to issue formal instructions to close or open the gates.
- The operational agreement is designed to be future-proofed for any new unitary local authority structures.
- **Sussex Yacht Club (SYC):** SYC holds a legally binding right of access through the FDG.
- SYC acts as a local operational partner, providing a free volunteer service to close and open the gates on behalf of ADC.
- SYC is responsible for ensuring their community moves vehicles and evacuates the site before closure.

3. Communication Protocol

- **Primary Alert System:** A dedicated WhatsApp group, managed by stakeholders, will be used for quick and effective communication regarding flood warnings and gate operations.
- **Communication Standards:** Messages must remain concise, accurate, and purely instructional.
- Casual conversation and welfare checks are prohibited in this group to maintain urgency.
- **Escalation Process:** If a closure instruction is sent and no trained SYC volunteer responds within 30 minutes, ADC will trigger a fallback protocol to supply the necessary resources to shut the gate.

- **Emergency Incident Reporting:** Should a critical failure or emergency occur on-site, the M.E.T.H.A.N.E. reporting structure must be communicated to the Safety and Resilience Team.
- **M** - Has a major incident been declared?
- **E** - Exact Location of the incident.
- **T** - Type of incident.
- **H** - Any apparent hazards.
- **A** - Access or ingress availability.
- **N** - Number of casualties or persons on the site.
- **E** - Emergency Services in attendance.

4. Plan Activation Triggers

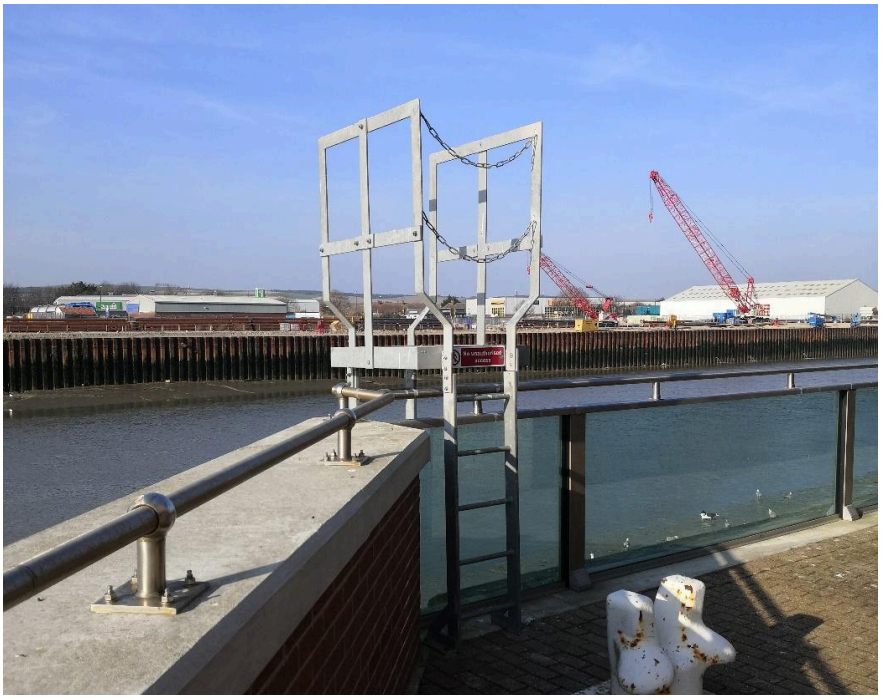
This plan will be activated in the event of:

- A flood warning / Severe flood warning for areas of Shoreham Harbour (Flood alert area 065WAC408) has been issued by the Environment Agency.
- A flood alert has been issued (Flood alert area 065WAC408) and upon advice of the Environment Agency and / or ADC's Safety and Resilience Team / Engineers it is considered prudent to close the barrier.
- If in doubt or in the absence of communication, close the gate as per the Gate Operation Procedure (in Section 5 of this document, below).

5. Gate Operation Procedure

- **Timing and Disruption:** To minimise disruption, gates shall be closed an absolute minimum of two hours before high tide and reopened approximately two hours after, or when it is self-evident that the receding tides no longer pose a risk.
- This restricts SYC access for a maximum of roughly five hours per event.
- **Pre-Closure Evacuation:** SYC must ensure all persons and vehicles within the site are evacuated to the northern side of the wall in accordance with their internal evacuation plan.
- Car parking within the gate opening is strictly prohibited, and SYC must remove any obstructions.
- **Closing the Gate:** Upon instruction via the WhatsApp group, designated SYC volunteers will confirm their availability.
- Volunteers will operate the gate controls, either electronically or via manual winch override if necessary, and ensure full closure and sealing.
- Specified South to North underground drainage pipes passing through the wall must be isolated to prevent sewerage systems from overrunning.
- Volunteers must close these drainage pipes using hand-operated penstock valves.
- Operators must record the time of closure and the names of the operators, along with taking photographs of both closed gates.
- **Emergency Escape:** An 'up-and-over' emergency ladder is located adjacent to the eastern pedestrian gate at Tarmount Hard.
- This is the only means of exiting the SYC site once the gates are closed.

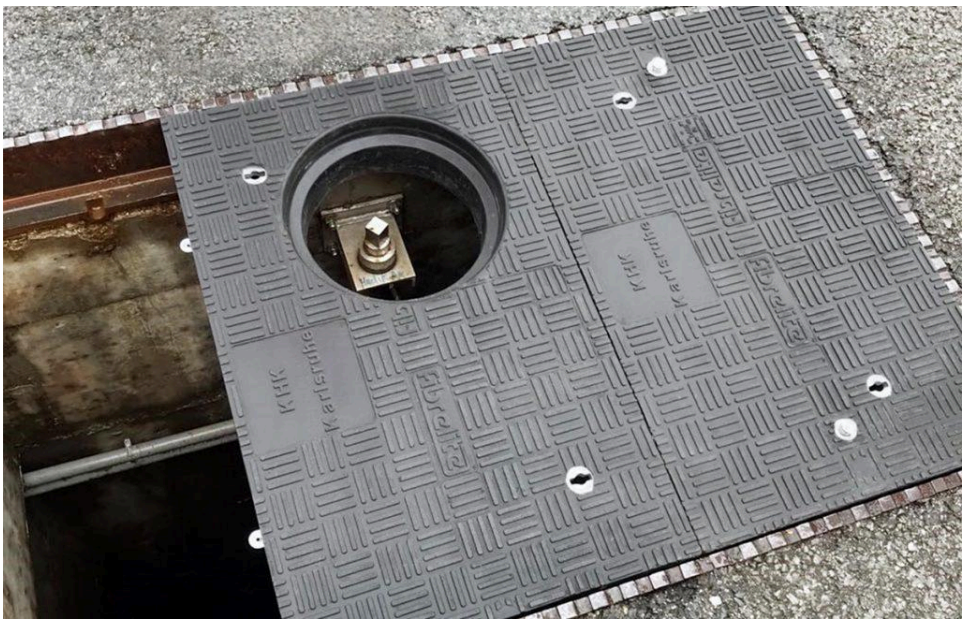
- This is strictly for emergency rescue only and must not be used as a standard means of access.
- Care must be taken as the ladder may become slippery during heavy rainfall.



Example of an up-and-over ladder in Shoreham-by-Sea



Example of a manhole ring fitted with a penstock shut-off-valve. A long handle can be attached to the vertical rod to operate the valve (this will be accessible through a man-hole)



Example of lightweight cover plate with separate panel for valve access

6. Training and Health & Safety

- ADC and the Contractor will provide formal, documented training and risk assessments for the designated SYC volunteers and relevant council staff - with refresher training being offered yearly.
- Training covers safe opening, closing, locking mechanisms, drainage shut-offs, and manual handling considerations to prevent injury.
- SYC is responsible for ensuring that only certified, trained individuals operate the two flood gates.
- Emergency services, such as the fire brigade, may dynamically assess and shut the gate themselves if an emergency dictates.

7. Maintenance, Testing, and Incident Logging

- **Routine Drills:** Regular test events, operating similarly to fire alarm drills, must be conducted to ensure the gates are functional and to practice the communication protocol. The frequency of these drills will be bi-montly and undertaken by SYC.
- **Inspections:** ADC is responsible for routine inspections, preventative maintenance, replacement of seals, and protective paint coatings.
- The gate seals are specified to have a minimum 15-year design life.
- **Debris Management:** A build-up of debris or stones within the sliding track can impede closure.
- SYC must clean the gate opening and gate path weekly to minimise this risk.
- **Event Logging:** All actions, decisions, fault reports, and operation times must be logged appropriately to aid coordination and recovery. Examples of incidents in need of logging include vehicles blocking the gates, or debris in the gate mechanism. These events will be logged by SYC.
- **Golden Thread:** There will be in place a robust electronic record system for all design, construction and operation/management details for the flood gates allied

with a schedule and logging system for all routine maintenance, inspection, repair and ad-hoc incidents affecting the flood gates. The system and information will be accessible to all relevant parties and will be subject to routine audit to ensure that all routine and ad-hoc items are completed. The records will be in a format/environment such that they cannot be erased by any individual and can be reviewed by any relevant party at any time.

8. Responsibility Matrix

Activity	SYC	ADC	Contractor	EA
Provide advice on flood alert level				✔
Issue instruction to close flood gates		✔		
Operate the flood gates	✔			
Unlock emergency ladders	✔	✔		
Close drainage shut-off valves	✔	✔		
Clean gate openings/gate path (to be included in the operational training)	✔			
Remove obstructions from gate openings/gate path following floods	✔			
Notify ADC of any damage or defects	✔			
Routine condition inspection		✔		
Keep the keys safe and accessible	✔	✔		
Flood gate installation			✔	
Provide training			✔	
Provide O&M Manual			✔	
Defects correction after 12 months			✔	
Carry out maintenance		✔		
Overall ownership responsibility		✔		

9. Insurance Considerations

All trained gate operators will be treated as volunteers acting on behalf of Adur District Council.

The insurance considerations for volunteers at Adur & Worthing Councils are summarised below:

- **Policy Extension**: The Council's insurance policy extends to include volunteers, provided they meet specific terms and conditions.
- **Classification**: For insurance purposes, volunteers are defined as "employees".
- **Coverage Areas**: The main areas of coverage relevance are Employers Liability (legal liability for injury to an employee) and Public Liability (legal liability for third-party injury or property damage).
- **Conditions for Coverage**: To be covered, volunteers must be:
    - Carrying out the "official activities" or "Business" of the public authority.
    - Acting at the "requirement" of the public authority.
    - Operating "under the control" of the public authority.
- **Management and Duty of Care**: Volunteers must be managed in the same way as any other employee to fulfil the Council's duty of care. This includes:
    - Providing an induction and relevant instruction regarding the management of risks.
    - Making volunteers aware of the Council's Health & Safety policy.
    - Informing volunteers of potential substances hazardous to health (COSHH).
    - Ensuring the use of correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
    - Ensuring Risk Assessments are in place for all tasks.
    - Providing a specific Council point of contact so decisions are not made in isolation.
- **Exclusions**: If volunteer groups do not meet these requirements, the Council's insurers are likely to decline claims, and the group would need their own liability insurance.

10. Version Control

This version: Version 4 (FINAL) - Matthew Heath, Adur District Council - 15/05/2026