



## **ENFORCING CURRENT LEGISLATION CRITICAL TO DRIVING THE ADOPTION OF SUDS**

As communities across the UK continue to be devastated by floods, Marshalls the UK's leading hard landscaping manufacturer asks why local authorities are not enforcing existing Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) legislation, and questions what is really causing the delays to the release of the National SuDS standards.

Inland flooding is occurring more often for two main reasons. Firstly, weather patterns are changing, meaning that rainfall events are happening more frequently, more intensely, and for longer periods of time. In addition, as we continue to pave over porous green landscapes, rainwater is prevented from soaking naturally into the ground at source and instead accumulates and flows at high speed into water courses and drainage systems that were not built to cope with this deluge.

In relation to the recent flooding Lord Smith, the chairman of the Environment Agency, was quoted as saying that we must make a difficult choice between protecting either "town or country" from the worst effects of flooding, as he claims that there is "no bottomless purse" to subsidise defences.

Chris Griffiths, Marshalls Water Management expert, said: "Lord Smith's position is not an unreasonable one. As members of the Flood Protection Association, Marshalls understands that protecting against the devastating effects of floods is a difficult and expensive undertaking.

"However, as the UK's largest landscaping manufacturer, we are acutely aware of the possibilities which exist to minimise the risk of inland flooding in the first place – largely through the installation of SuDS such as swales, rain gardens, green roofs and permeable paving. Legislation already exists to ensure that these practises are followed in both the building of new developments and the renovation of existing landscapes – but these regulations are rarely enforced in England and Wales, which means that the likelihood of flooding is growing rather than reducing.

"In addition, the introduction of the National SuDS Standards has been delayed yet again, leaving designers and contractors free to leave the drainage of their developments to standard, traditional means – which usually involve antiquated and limiting point drainage systems."

Mary Dhonau OBE, Chair of the Flood Protection Association and the UK's leading flood consultant, regularly appears on national TV and radio during major flood events. She said, "Flooding cannot be fixed solely by building more defences, or dredging rivers. Flooding can be reduced by a portfolio of solutions. When appearing in the media, I highlight the fact that that we have paved, asphalted and concreted over our country and as a consequence the rain has nowhere to go. It's now time to think of sustainable solutions to combat flooding. Permeable paving plays a huge part in reducing flood risk by allowing rain to soak naturally into the ground at source, slowing the flow – and ultimately preventing water from flooding our homes and businesses."

Chris concludes: "As a responsible landscaping manufacturer, Marshalls advocates good design to minimise flood risk in the first place. The 2010 Flood and Water Management Act has still yet to deliver any meaningful results, and the media focuses all too frequently on last-stand defences rather than the long term solutions of mitigating flood risk. We would like to understand why, when the news broadcasts the devastating effects of floods on a daily basis, existing SuDS planning legislation is not enforced. We would also like to know why the release of the National SuDS Standards, which seem to be welcomed by everyone within the water management community, continues to face delays after more than three years."

**-ENDS -**

**Notes to Editors:**

**Marshalls** is the UK's leading hard landscaping manufacturer and has supplied some of the most prestigious landmarks in the UK with hard landscaping solutions since the 1890s. Marshalls strives to improve environments for everyone by using its expertise to create integrated landscapes that promote well-being, from using fairly traded stone and providing products that alleviate flood risks, to creating innovative anti-terrorist street furniture.

**Marshalls Piora** is the best selling Concrete Block Permeable Paving in the UK. A correctly installed Piora system stores up to 96 litres of water per square metre safely beneath the surface in a specially prepared sub-base. This water is naturally cleansed before either infiltrating naturally into the ground, or being channelled safely into a receiving water course at a controlled rate. In addition, if installed correctly, Piora can support the heaviest loading requirements. [www.marshalls.co.uk](http://www.marshalls.co.uk)

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