

Wiltshire

Welcome to our new look flood warden newsletter! Storm Angus gave us some challenging weather in November. It was an early winter reminder that we need to make sure we are prepared for any further bad weather this year. Flood wardens are invaluable eyes and ears on the ground helping to prepare communities for this bad weather before, during and after a flood and also during 'peacetime'. Your continued efforts are greatly appreciated both by us, our partners and your communities.

Warmest regards from the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council

Is your community prepared for flooding?

There are some quick actions everyone can take to make sure they are as prepared as possible for flooding:

- Prepare a kit of essential items.
- Check insurance cover for flooding.
- Know how to turn off the gas, electricity and water mains supplies.
- Ensure your flood plans, both personal and community are up to date.
- Check that your flood warning service registration details are correct. Call Floodline on 0345 988 11 88 or visit www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings.
- Are you part of the Wiltshire Council Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme (PEAS)? Have you checked your stock? For more information please contact Wiltshire Council on 0300 456 0105.

Flood plans... have you and your community got one?

Flood plans are a way of deciding what practical actions your community can take before, during and after a flood. They also form a useful one-stop-shop for all of the contact details you could need if your community floods.

If you have a recently updated community flood/emergency plan please send a copy to both Wiltshire Council and the Environment Agency at the email addresses below.

If you would like some support with creating a plan, please email either Wiltshire Council or the Environment Agency at the email addresses below.

In addition further flood plan templates can be found by searching 'flood plan' on www.gov.uk. Other resources are available to view and download at: www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding/future-flooding.

Flood warden changes

It is important that our Wiltshire flood warden and community emergency volunteer database is up to date so that we can continue to keep in touch with you.

If there are any new flood wardens recruited in your community, or you have received this newsletter and are no longer a flood warden, please let us know via the email addresses below.

Contact details:

Wiltshire Council – renate.malton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Environment Agency – floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk

Flood warden training

Communities Prepared is a Big Lottery funded Project now operating across Wessex. The Project is a collaboration between environmental charity Groundwork and, amongst others, the Environment Agency. It provides support to communities at risk of flooding and other emergencies in the form of training and personal protective equipment for volunteer wardens.



Lynne Easton, Parish Councillor and Co-ordinator of the Chew Magna volunteer wardens said:



“The Communities Prepared training has been terrific and will help us ensure our volunteers are protected. It has also given us new knowledge into how the emergency services work and skills to tackle flooding. It has given us a lot of ideas of how we can work even better together in the future”

Flood Wardens in Salisbury are currently receiving the Communities Prepared training with support from Wiltshire Council, the Environment Agency and Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service.

If you know of a community or any flood wardens who could benefit from this training please contact Wiltshire Council or the Environment Agency.

Case Study: Bradford on Avon

The Bradford on Avon Town Council Community Emergency Volunteers (CEVs) are a group of locally recruited and trained volunteers who are there to assist the community at times of crisis and celebration. The group was formed after the community experienced flooding in 2014 and council resources were stretched.



Working in partnership with the emergency responder agencies and other voluntary organisations they are there as initial responders to assist the community during severe weather events i.e. floods and snow, utility outages, and public health emergencies, as well as assisting with local events as crowd marshals. They undertake training once a month at the Bradford on Avon Fire Station where guest speakers from local agencies are invited to come and speak to the volunteers.

Operational Flood Working Group

The Operational Flood Working Groups provide a forum for Parish Council representatives or flood wardens to meet with Flood Risk Management Authorities to discuss flooding and drainage concerns. The meetings are held once a month. To find out more visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/civil-emergencies-operational-flood-working-groups.

Does your community need financial support to increase resilience to flooding?

The **SSE Resilient Communities Fund** could help! SSE are offering grants of up to £20,000 to support community resilience projects in their network areas. Money has been won by communities including, Chitterne, Hindon and Salisbury.

To find out how other successful communities have spent their grants, visit www.ssepd.co.uk/Resiliencefund. Further information on how to apply will be available on the website in the New Year. If you would like help in applying for the grant please get in touch with Renate at Wiltshire Council.

Groundwater flood warnings

The winter of 2013-14 saw the worst groundwater flooding in Wiltshire for over 10 years, severe coastal storms and record rainfall amounts. This period of abnormally high rainfall resulted in the flooding of low lying areas and the emergence of groundwater, causing damage to property and infrastructure. The impact of groundwater levels across the chalk in Wessex in 2013-14 supported the need to warn and inform the communities of the potential risk of groundwater flooding.

Since 2013-14, we have been working alongside communities, using observations from telemetered boreholes, flood reconnaissance, flood wardens and Wiltshire Council in order to gather sufficient data. We have created 23 new groundwater flood warning areas. Following this successful pilot, we are continuing to work alongside communities to expand the service to areas that are vulnerable to groundwater throughout Wiltshire.

To view the latest groundwater situation report and to find out if your community is covered please visit www.gov.uk/government/statistics/wessex-dorset-and-south-wiltshire-groundwater-situation. If your community is not currently listed please contact Nicol Sellick at nicol.sellick@environment-agency.gov.uk. Alternatively to find out if you are at risk and to register to receive the flood alerts and warnings for groundwater, call Floodline 0345 988 118 (24 hour service) or go online at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings.

We are always seeking to improve this service and ask if you could monitor the groundwater activity in your town or parish. Things such as springs appearing or households pumping may give us an indication of changes in the groundwater. Additionally any historical information that is held by the town or parish council or individuals would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like any further information on the new groundwater service for your area please contact us by emailing floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk

Would you like to feature in our next newsletter?

Have you and your fellow flood wardens done some excellent work in your community which you would like to share with other flood wardens across Wiltshire? We would love to share your stories so please email floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk with an article of no more than 200 words and a photograph if you have one. Lets shout about your good work!

Do you know your flood warning codes?



FLOOD ALERT

**Flooding is possible.
Be prepared.**



FLOOD WARNING

**Flooding is expected.
Immediate action required.**



SEVERE FLOOD WARNING

**Severe flooding.
Danger to life.**

Warning no longer in force

No further flooding is currently expected in your area.

Where to find further information

- For local weather information and to sign up to severe weather warning email alerts visit the Met Office at www.metoffice.gov.uk
- For information on river levels visit <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/river-and-sea-levels>
- Flood Re has been set up to help those households who live in a flood risk area find affordable home insurance. For more information and to find out if you are eligible contact your insurer or visit www.floodre.co.uk
- The National Flood Forum provide further advice and support at www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk

Useful contacts

Contact **Floodline** on **0345 988 11 88** for up to date flood warning information or advice.

Contact the Environment Agency **incident hotline** on **0800 80 70 60** to report flooding, blockages in rivers or any other environmental incident.

Report blocked gullies, surface water and groundwater flooding by using **Wiltshire Council's Report It** service by visiting www.wiltshire.gov.uk/report.htm.