SUTTON BENGER
PARISH COUNCIL

Community Flood Response Plan

August 2026



Community Flood Response Plan: 12th August 2026

This document has been prepared by Sutton Benger Parish Council (SBPC). Its purpose is to describe the local river and surface water flooding points in the Parish and set out our actions and responses before, during and after a flooding event.

The Plan is designed to improve community preparedness and coordinate our local responses. It does not replace the responsibilities of Wiltshire Council (WC), the Environment Agency (EA), Wessex Water or the emergency services, nor does it assess the flood risk of individual properties.

Please note it remains the responsibility of individual homeowners to protect their property from flooding. SBPC can supply gel bags to support household efforts, contact the clerk to organise these.

The Plan has four objectives:

- To improve community communications and preparedness before periods of significant flooding.
- To coordinate a safe and effective local response.
- To support residents by working with the emergency services and partner organisations.
- To learn from significant flooding events and improve community preparedness

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1. Understanding Flooding in Sutton Benger

Sutton Benger is located alongside the River Avon and its surrounding floodplain. The river, its tributaries and the surrounding countryside are an important part of the parish's character, supporting wildlife, agriculture and the local landscape.

During periods of prolonged rainfall, the River Avon floodplain provides valuable natural storage for floodwater before river levels gradually return to normal. This natural process helps reduce flood impacts elsewhere within the wider river catchment.

From time to time, exceptional weather conditions can also affect local roads, drainage systems and watercourses. These events may result in temporary disruption to travel, particularly where roads cross low-lying ground or where surface water accumulates following heavy rainfall.

Understanding how river and surface water behaves within the parish allows the Flood Wardens, volunteers and Parish Council to prepare for any significant flooding events and provide timely information to residents.

Flooding location summary
(See the appendix for specific river and surface water flooding points)

What we need to monitor	Why it matters
River Avon floodplain	Natural flood water crosses the B4069 to the east of Sutton Benger
B4069	Surface and flood waters impact vehicle and pedestrian access and safety
High Street	Temporary surface water flooding with vehicle and pedestrian impacts
Seagry Road	Excess water from Sutton Brook accesses Seagry Road and travels south
Sutton Lane	Excess water from Stein Brook can cause flooding in Sutton Lane
Highway gullies	To organise preventative maintenance to ensure gullies are performing correctly.



The River Avon Floodplain: A view from a footpath east of Sutton Benger towards The Avon (Nov 2024)



B4069: A view along the road towards the Avon bridge over the river, on the floodplain (Nov 2024)

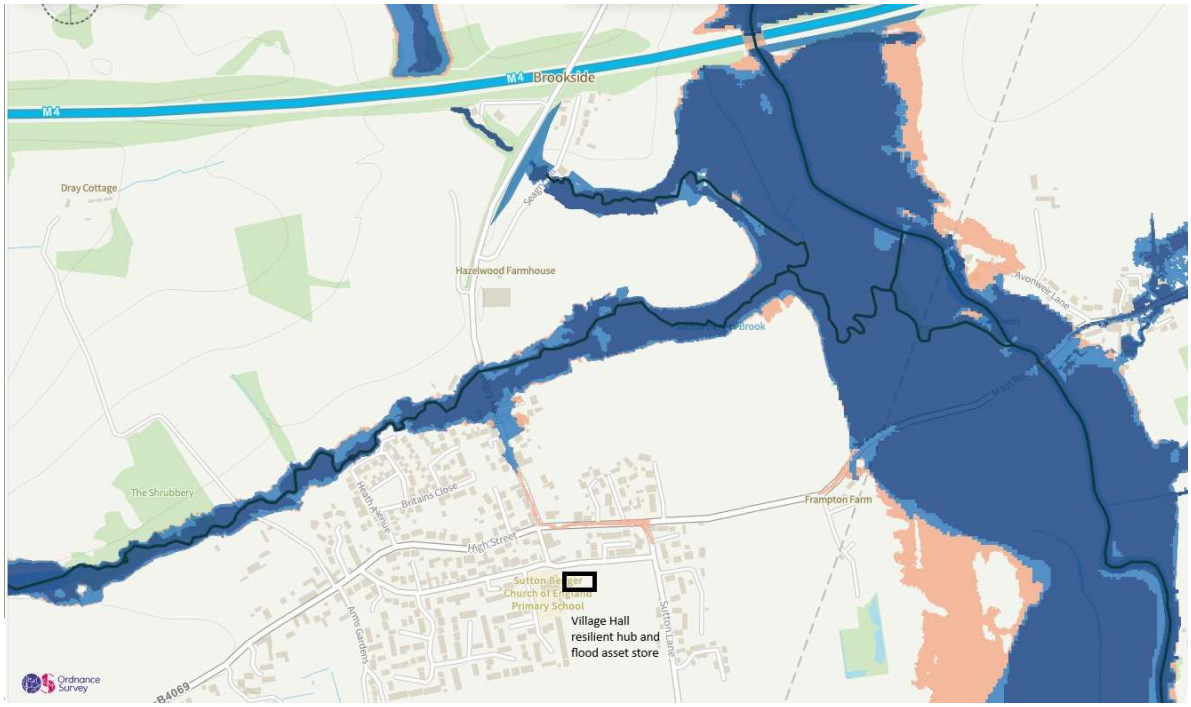
During periods of exceptionally high river levels, sections of the B4069 crossing the River Avon floodplain can be cut off by floodwater. The B4069 is an important transport route serving Sutton Benger and neighbouring communities. Road closures and traffic management remain the responsibility of The Environment Agency (EA) and the emergency services. SBPC flood wardens will communicate with the EA. Residents and visitors should never attempt to drive through floodwater and should always follow official road closure signs.



High Street – A view along the high street from west to east, just beyond Church Piece (Nov 2024)

Following prolonged rainfall, surface water may temporarily affect sections of the High Street. The Flood Wardens will monitor conditions and work with Wiltshire Council to report drainage issues where appropriate. Most rainfall is managed through the village's highway drainage network. However, during exceptionally heavy or prolonged rainfall, surface water may temporarily collect on parts of the High Street before drainage systems recover. Wiltshire Council will not deal with any dirty water from the sewage system, this must be reported to Wessex Water.

Environment Agency Flood Map (July 2026)



The EA flood map illustrates the extent of the River Avon floodplain adjacent to Sutton Benger. It also shows the volumes of water in Sutton Brook, Seagry Road and the High Street. For the purposes of this plan the map has also been used to identify the location of the Village Hall Community Hub and the principal locations monitored during periods of significant flooding.

The Flood Wardens and volunteer team will use EA flood information, Met Office forecasts together with local observations to monitor developing conditions across the parish.

In addition to this map, there are EA maps indicating numerous areas where surface water could create local floods, this is due to the water table only being 250mm below ground level. Therefore, when monitoring, residents and flood team volunteers should be aware there may be other locations affected by standing water.

2. Community Flood Response Team

SBPC is establishing a Community Flood Response Team to coordinate local support during periods of significant flooding. The team brings together the Parish Council, the Flood Warden, Deputy Flood Warden and volunteers with a wide range of practical skills and local knowledge. The Parish Council's role is to support the community, share reliable information and work alongside Wiltshire Council (WC), the Environment Agency (EA), Wessex Water and the emergency services. It does not replace the responsibilities of those organisations.

Community Flood Response Structure:

Role	Current Postholder
Flood Warden	Gareth Francis (garethfrancis@rocketmail.com) 07818 204 702
Deputy Flood Warden	Elaine Dony (edony@icloud.com) 07730 674 362
Parish Council Chair	Adam Carwardine (chair@suttonbengerparishcoucil.gov.uk) 07974416215
Parish Council Clerk	Sue Hart (Parishclerk@suttonbengerparishcouncuil.gov.uk) 07810 647183

Volunteer Team: Current experience within the team includes:

Area of Support	Lead Volunteer(s)
Village Hall & Community Hub	Pete Oldale
Drainage & Highway Gullies	Gillian Saunders
Medical Support	Richard & Ruth Gaunt
Agricultural Vehicles / 4×4 Access	Philip Greenhill
Chainsaw Operator	Mark Ellis
Local Flood Knowledge	Ben Carter

The volunteer team needs to be expanded. Should flooding occur in multiple locations we do not have enough volunteers to provide appropriate support. Please contact the clerk or Flood Warden if you are able volunteer and provide extra support, particularly if you have applicable skills or experience. Be part of your community and please get involved. The Flood Response Team communicate via a WhatsApp group. If you are not part of this group and should be, please contact the Flood Warden. The team will organise quarterly meetings to discuss progress, review action points, agree priorities and integrate new members.

A detailed contact list, including phone numbers and email addresses, will be maintained separately by the Parish Council Clerk and will be reviewed annually.

3. Flood Prevention, Monitoring and Maintenance

Effective flood response begins before floodwater reaches the parish. SBPC recognises that regular inspection of drainage infrastructure, good communication, local knowledge and engaging with third party organisations all contribute to reducing the impact of significant flooding.

Although flooding cannot always be prevented, early identification of drainage issues and routine maintenance can help reduce the effects of surface water on roads and public spaces.

Monitoring the Parish

Throughout the year, the Flood Wardens and volunteers will set up monitoring systems for locations where drainage performance may require attention. Routine observations help identify issues before they become more significant and provide valuable information during periods of prolonged rainfall. This includes:

- Highway gullies
- Roadside drainage channels
- Culverts
- Watercourses
- Low-lying sections of the high street
- Drain covers owned by Wessex Water
- River Avon floodplain access routes

Working with Wiltshire Council

Sutton Benger benefits from Wiltshire Council's Parish Steward Scheme, through which a Parish Steward visits the parish for approximately one and a half days each month.

The Parish Steward undertakes a range of highway maintenance tasks including drainage works, vegetation clearance, minor repairs and reporting defects. The Parish Council works closely with Wiltshire Council to identify local priorities before each visit.

Parish Steward Coordination: Routine maintenance requests are coordinated by: our local volunteer Daniel Errington, Parish Steward Coordinator. Daniel works to ensure local issues are tackled during each Parish Steward visit. Where more extensive drainage work is required, Wiltshire Council can be requested to supply specialist gully cleansing or for highway drainage teams to attend. The flood response team will liaise with Daniel.

Wiltshire Council have an inhouse team who focus on working with local parishes to ensure Parish Councils have an effective flood plan and the flood related assets required. We will keep in contact with these teams to ensure we are up to date.

Landowners' responsibilities: property owners and landowners have riparian responsibilities towards flooding. This includes maintaining watercourses, avoiding pollution, managing flood risks and obtaining necessary permissions. During our teams' reviews of the at-risk flood areas, should they discover issues that might lead to

unnecessary flooding the landowners responsible will be approached and officially requested to resolve these issues.

Drainage Monitoring

Routine observation of highway drainage and gullies will be coordinated by one of our volunteers. Working alongside the Flood Wardens, this role will monitor drainage performance and report issues requiring attention through the Parish Steward Scheme.

This proactive approach helps maintain the effectiveness of the highway drainage network and contributes to reducing the impact of surface water following prolonged rainfall.

Annual Review

Each August the Parish Council and flood response team will review its flood preparedness arrangements. The review will normally include:

- Inspection of community flood equipment
- Review of volunteer contact details
- Review of drainage observations
- Liaison with the Parish Steward Coordinator
- Confirmation of Village Hall arrangements
- Review of this Community Flood Response Plan
- Review of the list of vulnerable residents and their locations

4. Community Flood Response

When significant flooding is anticipated or occurring, the Flood Wardens will assess local conditions and determine what aspects of the Community Flood Response Plan should be activated.

The response will always be proportionate to the conditions being experienced and undertaken in cooperation with WC, the EA and the emergency services, supported by information available from the Met office.

Before Significant Flooding: The Flood Wardens and volunteers will:

- Monitor weather forecasts and EA flood information.
- Liaise with the Parish Council where appropriate.
- Monitor known locations requiring observation.
- Keep volunteers informed of developing conditions.
- Prepare community equipment for use if required.
- Identify vulnerable residents and properties who may require assistance.
- Communicate the risk of flooding via the communication channels with residents

During Significant Flooding: This is when monitoring changes to response actions:

- Share reliable information with residents – this will be communicated via SBPC and the community Facebook pages and the community WhatsApp group
- Review active flooding locations and decide upon the response actions required
- Support vulnerable residents where appropriate and possible, including dispensing gel bags to limit water ingress. Checking if these residents are safe and if they require services from other agencies
- Utilise community flood equipment such as gel bags, signage, rakes, shovels etc
- Inform the EA, liaise with Emergency Services and WC as required.
- Open the Village Hall Community Hub if required.

The safety of residents and volunteers will always remain the highest priority. Volunteers must only undertake activities that are safe and within their competence. No one should enter deep or fast flowing water where there is a health and safety risk. Rescue operations remain the responsibility of the emergency services.

After Significant Flooding: Following a flood event the Community Flood Response Team will:

- Support community recovery where appropriate.
- Re-stock and inspect community equipment.
- Record observations and lessons learned.
- Review the effectiveness of the Community Flood Response Plan.
- Update procedures and identify training needs where improvements are identified.
- Each flooding event provides an opportunity to improve future preparedness.

Community Resilience Hub: The Village Hall has been identified as the Parish's Community Flood Response Hub. The full specification of the form and function of this hub is being defined through the Parish Emergency plan.

However, for the time being, if required, it may be used as:

- a meeting point for volunteers.
- a communications centre.
- a welfare point for residents.
- the storage and distribution point for community flood equipment.

Community Flood Equipment: The Parish Council maintains flood response equipment at the Village Hall carpark store**.** Equipment currently includes:

- Flood warning signs x 2
- Please drive slowly signs x 2
- Gel bags (to maintain a stock of at least 25 items)
- High-visibility clothing in coat styles and sleeveless gilets.
- Waterproof gloves, in medium, large and XL sizes.
- Shovels x 2
- Rakes x 2
- Brooms x 2
- Traffic cones x 4
- Wheelbarrow x 1

The equipment inventory will be reviewed every August. Replacement items are ordered through the Wiltshire Council PEAS scheme (Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme) each August. Should other equipment be required beyond the current list, this will be considered formally by SBPC and ordered as required.

Responsibility: SBPC Chair and Flood Warden.

5. Working with Partner Organisations:

The Parish Council, flood wardens and volunteers will need to work closely with:

Wiltshire Council

Environment Agency

Emergency Services

Wiltshire Parish Steward Scheme

Local volunteers and residents

See the contact details in the Appendix.

These organisations each have distinct responsibilities. The Community Flood Response Plan is intended to complement, not replace, their statutory duties. Please see the appendix for contact details.

6. Next steps and communications plan

1. SBPC to review the Flood Response Plan at the August 2026 council meeting for adoption. Add the adopted plan to the SBPC web site and adjust the copy on this page accordingly
   Responsibility: SBPC Chair, Adam Carwardine

2. Complete the sign up of the volunteers to the SBPC volunteers' scheme and create a central database.
   Responsibility: Parish Clerk, Sue Hart

3. Create a residents one page summary of the plan with their responsibilities and relevant contact details.
   Responsibility: SBPC Chair, Adam Carwardine and Flood Warden; Gareth Francis.

4. Communicate the existence of the plan and supply the resident's summary during October 26
   Responsibility: SBPC Communications Councillor, Jo Watchman

5. Book and complete a kick off and training meeting with the Flood Wardens and volunteers. Recruiting new volunteers.
   Responsibility: SBPC Chair, Adam Carwardine and Flood Warden; Gareth Francis.

6. Create an operational check list for the Flood Wardens – An Action Card – to be used during floods
   Responsibility: SBPC Chair, Adam Carwardine and Flood Warden; Gareth Francis

7. Establish a process to carry out the physical location reviews and set up a review and outcome recording system with an event log recording system.
   Responsibility: Flood Warden and Flood Response Team, supported by Parish Clerk

8. Coordinate with the Parish Emergency Planning Team and Village Hall committee to ensure unity.
   Responsibility: SBPC Chair, Adam Carwardine

Once adopted, the Plan will be reviewed annually in August and following any significant flooding events to ensure it remains accurate, relevant and effective.

Community resilience depends upon partnership, preparation and a willingness to support one another. The Parish Council looks forward to working with residents and partner organisations through this plan to help protect and support the community during periods of significant flooding.

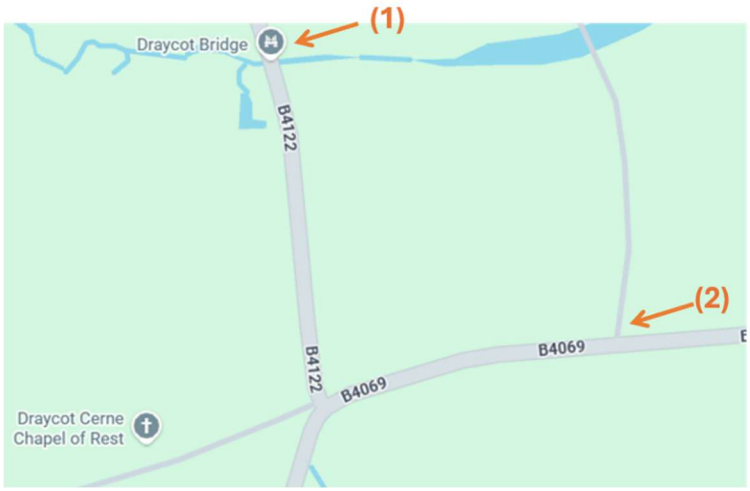
Sutton Benger Parish Council wishes to thank the Councillors, Flood Wardens, volunteers and residents whose experience and local knowledge have contributed to the preparation of this plan.

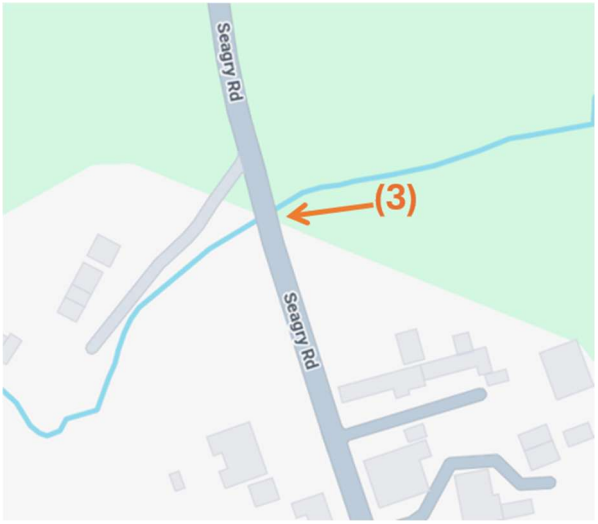
Adam Carwardine, SBPC Chair

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of the potential flooding locations in Sutton Benger 8.7.26

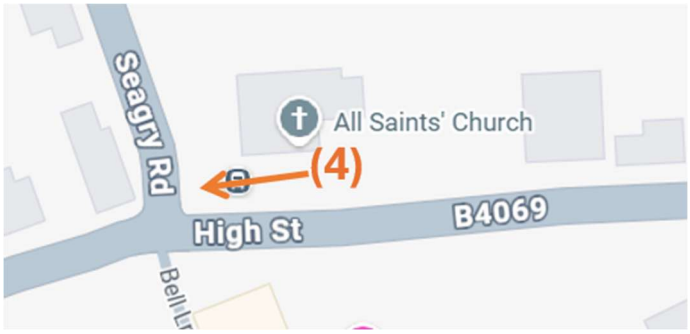
Location one and two: At Draycot Bridge **(1)** and at the entrance to The Draycot Estate **(2)** west of Sutton Benger





Location three: On Seagry road below where Sutton Brook crosses under Seagry Road **(3)**

Location four: The bottom of Seagry road where surface water can run into the High Street (4)



Location five: The High Street stretch from Seagry Road to beyond the entrance to Sutton Lane (5)



Location six: The B4069 between the entrance to Frampton's Farm and The Avon – across the floodplain (6)





Location seven: along Sutton Lane, beyond Sutton Lane Farm where Stein Brook crosses under the road (7)

Appendix 2: Location of Sutton Benger Drainage Gullies 4.06.26



Appendix 3: Third Party Organisations and contact details:

Environment Agency incident hotline: Call: 0800 80 70 60 (emergency, 24 hours a day) Contact the EA when there are collapsed or badly damaged riverbanks, flooding from main rivers or the sea, main rivers blocked by a vehicle or fallen tree causing risk of flooding, unusual changes in river flow
Wiltshire Council: non-emergency web site content: https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/drainage-and-flooding
Wessex Water – note Wiltshire Council will not deal with contaminated / dirty water. If surface or running water has or is being contaminated with sewage, contact Wessex Water immediately. https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/report-a-problem Call: 0345 600 4 600 (emergency, 24 hours a day)
Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. Always call 999 in an emergency For general enquires call 01722 691000 (during office hours) 0306 799 0019 (out of hours)
Electricity emergencies: 0800 404 090
Met Office web site to sign up for alerts: https://weather.metoffice.gov.uk/warnings-and-advice
Flood Warnings and Alerts for main river, sea and groundwater - make sure you sign up for both relevant alerts and warnings: https://www.gov.uk/get-flood-warnings **Government supplied advice for preparation for flooding**: https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding