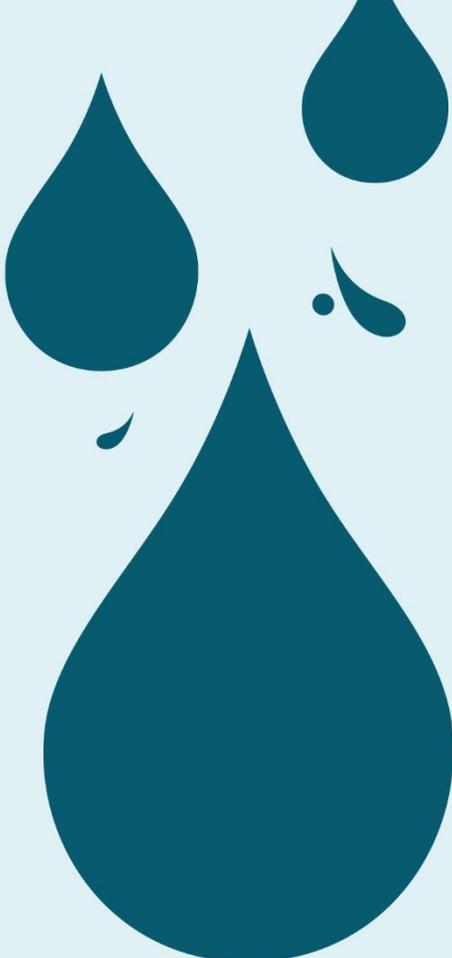


Community Toolkit



Hampshire County Council

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1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide additional information and resources for communities to help in planning, preparing and managing the risk of flooding. Flood water can come from rivers or the sea, surface water or groundwater, or more usually, a combination of the different sources. With so many different parties involved in the different types and mechanisms of flooding, it is intended to provide clarity on the most appropriate support available. **This is a live document and will be updated as required.**

Weather patterns are becoming increasingly unpredictable with summer downpours often having more severe impacts than the winter rainfall. Groundwater levels are also reacting with wetter summers leaving aquifers (natural underground water storage) at a higher level before the winter recharge season begins.

While those involved in flood risk management can and will undertake a variety of actions in relation to their remits, flooding is almost never due to a single source or factor and it can be extremely complicated to understand how and why it occurs. There is an increasing need for multiple bodies, including the community, to work together in understanding and managing the risk.

This is a live document and will be updated as required.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

There are a number of different bodies with roles and responsibilities with respect to flood risk, each governed by different legislative requirements and remits specific to the source of flooding. In addition to this, a wider variety of bodies or individuals may have responsibility for drainage assets which makes understanding roles and responsibilities in a specific area complex.

2.1. Risk Management Authorities

The key bodies with roles and responsibilities in relation to flood risk are detailed below:

- The **Environment Agency** have the strategic overview role for flood risk and co-ordinate the high-level strategic direction. In practise, they are responsible for managing the risk of flooding from **Main Rivers and the Sea**. Flooding that is directly attributable from these sources should be reported to them using their Environment Agency incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60
- The **Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** are responsible for managing the risk of flooding from **Surface Water, Groundwater and Ordinary Watercourses** i.e. those watercourses / ditches that are not classed as main rivers. Flooding that is directly attributable from these sources should be directed to them at: [Report flooding - Hampshire County Council](#)
- **Sewerage Authorities** are responsible for **Foul Water** and surface water flooding where it is linked to their drainage assets. You can find out your sewerage authority at [Find Your](#)

[Supplier - Water UK](#). Each sewerage authority will have their own form to allow you to report flooding to them.

- **Hampshire County Council Highways** are responsible for managing their **drainage assets** on all adopted roads (excluding those managed by National Highways) which are in place to manage water on the highway network. You can check whether your road is adopted at [Search for roads maintained at public expense | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council](#). Flooding on the highway or issues with highway drains should be directed to them at: [Report flooding | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)
- **National Highways** are responsible for managing their **drainage assets** on all adopted [motorways and trunk roads](#) which are in place to manage water on the highway network. Flooding on these roads should be directed to them at [National Highways Report a problem](#)

The following infographic helps to identify who the best point of contact is for the different sources of flooding.



2.2 Who is responsible for drainage features

Drainage can be complex to understand especially regarding responsibilities. The following table indicates some images of flooded features and who is likely to be responsible.

Drainage Asset	Likely owner
<p data-bbox="204 405 683 439">Public sewer, pipe or fresh water supply</p> 	<p data-bbox="1082 405 1273 439">Water company</p> <ul data-bbox="1129 450 1374 555" style="list-style-type: none"> • Wessex Water • Southern Water • Thames Water
<p data-bbox="204 763 411 797">Main river or sea</p> 	<p data-bbox="1082 763 1374 987">The Environment Agency regulates certain flood risk activities. Find out more at Flood risk activities: environmental permits</p>
<p data-bbox="204 1106 443 1140">Other watercourses</p> 	<p data-bbox="1082 1106 1366 1256">Varies – generally landowner responsibility with LLFA oversight</p>

Highway Assets



- Hampshire County Council Highways
- National Highways (Motorways and trunk roads)

In simplistic terms, responsibility is likely to be with who installed the drainage feature or the landowner. However, for a privately owned ditch next to a highway, the landowner usually has a common-law duty to maintain the ditch and prevent it causing a nuisance to road users.

However, not all drainage features are easily identified. In many locations, watercourses have been altered and culverted often running beneath properties and completely unknown until a blockage occurs. Historic maps and deeds may be helpful in identifying potential locations for watercourses however local knowledge is often the best source of information.

If you need support in identifying who is best to contact in relation to issues with drainage assets you can contact us using our report flooding form - [Report flooding | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#).

2.3 Guidance on watercourse maintenance for landowners

Ordinary watercourse or Main River?

- Confirm if watercourse you propose to work on is a main river or ordinary watercourse - visit [Statutory Main River Map](#).

You may need to apply for permission to do certain regulated flood risk activities. More information can be found here: [Flood risk activities: environmental permits](#). If you are not sure if your work is regulated and required a permit, contact the Environment Agency [Environment Agency - GOV.UK](#).

The importance of maintaining a watercourse

As with main rivers, it is important to keep the network of ditches and smaller watercourses (either open or piped) otherwise known as 'ordinary watercourse' (anything not recorded as a main river) clear. You can find the full list of what is considered an ordinary watercourse at [Owning a watercourse](#)

Do your part to manage flood risk

Keeping your watercourse clear from vegetation, debris and silt plays a huge and crucial part in managing flood risk. If regular maintenance is not carried out this could put properties, roads, infrastructure and land at risk of flooding. There is also a risk that by not carrying out riparian responsibilities the landowner could become liable for any damages incurred.

The Environment Agency have provided additional information on watercourses at [Your watercourse: rights and roles](#)

Removing vegetation and debris from watercourse

- Keep growth of vegetation regularly under control including grass, trees and reeds in and around the watercourse.
- Cutting should be left on the bank for a few days to allow organisms time to return to the watercourse. Then removal is essential to stop debris falling back into the watercourse causing blockages to form downstream.
- Not 100% of vegetation needs to be removed so long as there is a free flow of water. A small amount can actually be beneficial to wildlife and stop erosion occurring.

Be mindful of legislative requirements

- Do take care to observe the bird nesting season and not carry out any works that might be in breach of this law [RSPB England - Nesting birds and the law](#).
- Some trees adjacent to a watercourse may have a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). If you are unsure contact your local [District or Borough Council](#) before carrying out works to any trees – they hold a database with TPO information.

Removal of silt from watercourse

- Build-up of silt within the watercourse will need to be removed to a deep enough level so that water is flowing in the correct direction. Silt should be dug to the same level or just below the bottom edge of any pipes entering or leaving the watercourse.
- Silt should be deposited on the land directly next to watercourse (if contaminated refer to [D1 waste exemption: depositing waste from dredging inland waters](#)), this will allow organisms to move back into the watercourse. Silt removal on Main Rivers may also require a [Flood Risk Activity permit](#)
- Where possible and agreeable work together with adjoining neighbours that also have a watercourse to maintain. Working together jointly to get drainage assets cleared is likely to be more economical and ensure a consistent level to allow water to drain away more efficiently.
- Remove any other obstructions such as trees, branches, large rocks and other debris from the watercourse and banks.

Develop a maintenance schedule

- Develop a maintenance schedule to care for your watercourse. September/October can be a suitable time after vegetation is beginning to die back, water flows are at their lowest and before the increased water flows of the winter months.
- For continuous maintenance of small lengths of a watercourse the use of hand tools is generally more appropriate as this is less destructive to the habitat both in and surrounding the watercourse.
- For heavily congested or large lengths of watercourse that require maintenance major works requiring the use of machinery would be required.
- Where possible and agreeable work together with adjoining neighbours that also have a watercourse to maintain. Working together jointly to get drainage assets cleared is likely to be more economical and ensure a consistent watercourse bed level to allow water to drain away more effectively and efficiently.
- Regular spot checks are encouraged to check for problems such as fallen trees and other debris that needs removing.
- Regular checks of any trash screens/grilles are essential to spot and remove any accumulation of debris causing a blockage.
- The appropriate timing of checks will depend on local circumstances however it is likely to be required following storms and during autumn after the leaves have dropped.

Maintenance of piped watercourse

- Any piped watercourses, including headwalls will need to be included in your maintenance schedule. Check for any blockages and signs of collapse by rodding if possible.
- If rodding of a pipe isn't possible, or a blockage is located, you may need to employ a drainage company to undertake cleansing or checking for defects by carrying out a CCTV survey.
- You may need to speak to your neighbours if you don't have an access point within your property.

2.4 Sourcing contractors, what to ask for

Understandably finding a contractor to undertake drainage works can be overwhelming. Whilst we can't offer a list of recommended contractors, please see the following links and helpful tips.

- [Buy with confidence](#)
- [Checkatrade: Book A Guaranteed Tradesperson](#)
- [Blue Pages](#)
- [Find A Contractor - NAAC Membership](#)

Tips for finding a contractor:

- Get reference's;
- Look for contractor that offers a guarantee;
- Price is not always a guarantee of quality;
- Get recommendations from others who have had similar work done;

- Check that your contractor has considered whether any other permits / licences are needed i.e. traffic management, waste permits

3. How to prepare for flooding

Flooding can be unpredictable and can occur in unexpected locations. It can also happen very quickly. While it may not always be obvious that you are at risk, there are some simple measures that can be taken to check your risk and to be prepared. It is therefore useful to understand what you might do if a flood occurs and where you can go for information or support.

Some locations will have a more obvious source of flood risk in the vicinity such as a river or watercourse next to the property. In these locations, it can be straightforward to consider how flooding could impact you. In other areas flood risk is often directly related to the topography and likely routes that water would flow if it were not able to get into existing drainage systems.

3.1 Check your flood risk

The Environment Agency publish mapping showing areas at risk of flooding from rivers, sea, surface water and groundwater. You can check the flood risk in your area and see the mapping by using the check your long term flood risk service.

[Check the long term flood risk for an area in England - GOV.UK](#)

3.2 Flood alerts and flood warnings – are you affected and what does it mean

In some areas where there is a risk of flooding from rivers or the sea, and in some areas from groundwater, the Environment Agency provide a free flood warning service. You can sign up for the free service on gov.uk, or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188, to receive warning messages by email, text or telephone to your preferred contact details.

The EA issue warning messages using 3 different codes:



Flood Alert: Flooding is possible, be prepared. A flood alert is issued when flooding is possible, with the likely impacts expected to be flooding of low-lying land, footpaths, minor roads, near rivers, recreation areas, farmland and fields.



Flood Warning: Flooding is expected, immediate action required. A flood warning is issued when internal property flooding is expected. Other likely impacts could also include flooding of rail infrastructure, flooding to roads with major impacts and significant waves and spray on the coast.



Severe Flood Warning: Severe flooding, danger to life. A severe flood warning is issued when flooding poses a significant risk to life or significant disruption to communities. ‘

In some areas where groundwater flooding is known to lead to significant impacts, flood alerts may be issued. These will detail the rate that groundwater is rising and whether there is a risk of cellar or surface level impacts. Given the difficulty in forecasting groundwater issues, no flood warnings are available, so it is essential that the flood alert messages are read when issued.

Flooding can occur very quickly, so it is important that you check if you are in a flood warning area and be prepared to take action to protect yourself and your property if a warning is issued.

You can find further information on whether a flood warning covers your area by:

- [Check if you can get flood warnings for your address - Sign up for flood warnings - GOV.UK;](#)
[or](#)
- Sign up to flood warnings at [Sign up for flood warnings - GOV.UK](#)

3.3 How can you make yourself more resilient

While the flood alerts, warnings and mapping are a good indication of risk, flooding can occur anywhere and for a number of different reasons.

Intense thunderstorms can quickly overwhelm drainage systems and can lead to short term flooding. Pipes, culverts, ditches and any drainage feature could get blocked or damaged with water flows finding the easiest way to avoid the obstruction. In addition, the mapping is not definitive. Flooding is extremely complex and can occur in unexpected places.

As such, it is important that everyone considers what the potential risk is and what measures could be taken. This could be as simple as checking your household drainage is working, seeing if there is a step from the ground into the house that would stop water flowing through the door, or if you are at a higher level of risk, considering what measures could be installed to make your property more flood resilient.

Personal resilience

During a flooding event you may need to leave your home at short notice and be unable to return for some time. Or you may need to shelter in your home and not be able to leave to get food or medicine. As a result of flooding, you may lose your electricity, water or gas supply, and have difficulty preparing meals. By considering these in advance, and taking steps to prepare, you can reduce the impact of flooding on your home and family.

To become resilient, you should:

- **Create a grab bag**, in case you need to leave your property at short notice;
- **Create an [evacuation checklist](#)**, listing items which you may not keep in your grab bag, but should remember to bring if you are evacuated;
- **Move your family, vehicles, pets and important items to safety**, for example upstairs or to higher ground [What to do before or during a flood](#)
- Complete a [Household Emergency Action Plan](#);
- Ensure you have a **supply of non-perishable food** (like cans) and **bottled water**;
- **Understand your flood risk**, and invest in Property Level Flood Resilience and Resistant Measures [refer to [section 3](#)];
- Join your utility companies **Priority Service Register** (if you are eligible), which provides additional support to vulnerable customers in a utility outage. Find out how [here](#).

It is worth checking your insurance to see if flood risk is covered within your policy. If not, you may want to consider contacting [Flood Re](#) a joint initiative between government and insurers to provide affordable flood insurance

You can find advice on how to become resilient from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum, such as what to include in a grab bag, [here](#)

Property resilience

Resistance vs resilience

It is important to use a mixture of techniques that are both *flood resistant* and *flood resilient*:

Resistance: Direct protection against flooding – preventing and reducing floodwater entry.

For example, permanent internal/external tanking in the home, or temporary deployable flood barriers

Resilience: The ability to bounce back quickly after a flood – reducing the damage caused by floodwater entry.

For example, permanent water compatible floors (e.g. Hardwood or concrete), or temporarily relocating valuables or furniture to higher floors to reduce damage risk.

There are a variety of measures that can be considered and this link provides some examples: [Property Flood Resilience](#)

For more information on adapting your property to the effects of flooding, visit:

- [Adapting your home or business to the risk of flooding and / or](#)
- [Be Flood Smart | Flood Protection | Flood Re](#)

There are also additional measures that you can use alongside resistive and resilient measures to further protect your home in an emergency. For example, traditional/alternative sandbags, personal grab bags or emergency flood kits.

Although traditional sandbags are usually considered a suitable option in an emergency, there are alternatives available which can be far more effective.

Alternative Sandbags:

Alternative sandbags provide an environmentally friendly, and often cheaper, alternative to traditional sandbags. They can often be reused and will typically last longer than single-use sandbags. Examples of these include Hydrosnakes, Hydrosacks and Eco Blocks.

For information on alternative sandbags, visit:

[UK Flood Defence Alliance - The advantages of sandbag alternatives](#)

Flood Resilient Garden:

A flood resilient garden can help slow the flow of flood water and help absorb excess surface water. It can also help with moving around your property during a flood.

For any larger, permanent alterations to your rented property, please ask the landlord to gain permission first.

A flood resilient garden includes factors such as: Dense planting (shrubs and small trees) to slow the flow of water; steps and bridges for providing access and escape routes; heavy and water-resistant garden furniture; raising any edible plants in planters to avoid them being contaminated; and extra wide guttering to handle the large volumes of rainwater.

Rainwater planters can be an attractive and effective way to manage flood risk. By connecting your downpipes to feed into planters, it can slow the flow of water reaching the sewer, reducing flood risk and providing water for your plants that would have otherwise been wasted. There are readymade products available to purchase or you could make your own - [How to build a rain garden planter](#).

For more information on creating an effective flood resilient garden, visit:

[Flood Re: The flood resilient garden](#)

Dealing with sewage:

Sewage (known as foul water) is waste from sinks, baths and toilets. During a flood, sewage can contaminate flood waters. This is very dangerous to human health.

To reduce this risk, you can fit flood-resistant valves to drains and water pipes. These valves close under pressure and stop sewage coming back into your home. Handmade options such as using a plastic bag full of rags, or a deflated football, to block toilets can also be effective.

3.4 What to do if you don't own the property / land

Your landlord is responsible for repairing any damage to the property's structure and exterior and ensuring that the rented property is safe and free from health hazards (such as damp that has formed in the aftermath of flooding).

It is in their best interest to increase flood resistance and resilience of the property in order to prevent serious damage.

If you intend to purchase or install any permanent flood protection measures, please speak with your landlord first to gain permission.

For more information on landlord responsibilities, visit:

[Landlord Responsibilities for Property Flooding in the UK - Adleo Relocation](#)

[Renting out your property: Landlord responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)

Ways to adapt your rented property:

There are many ways that you can make your home more flood resistant and resilient without using permanent modifications which may require specific permission from landlords.

For example, to increase your resilience you could fix TV's and entertainment equipment higher up onto a wall, raise furniture onto platforms, or have equipment on hand to help when a flood hits such as storage boxes (preferably plastic or sealed) back-up lighting (e.g. torches), shovels and buckets.

You can also use temporary resistance products to help protect your home from flooding, as long as it aligns with your landlord's permissions such as demountable/temporary flood barriers or traditional and alternative sandbags, both of which can be highly effective.

4. What to do if flooding is imminent or during a flood

It is essential that you consider your own safety! If your life is at risk, call 999.

Flood waters often conceal hidden dangers such as obstructions and trip hazards. If it is essential to travel through flood waters, use a stick to check the ground in front of you before stepping forwards. Flood water can carry contaminants that can be harmful. Avoid direct contact with flood water by wearing waterproof gloves and boots and thoroughly wash your hands with warm water and soap after any contact.

Advice on flooding and health is available from [Flooding and health: advice for the public](#)

Guidance has been provided at gov.uk and also from the Met Office in relation to things you can do to keep yourself safe during storms and flooding:

- [What to do before or during a flood](#)
- [Travelling in storms, rain, and strong wind - Met Office](#)

4.1 As an individual

When flooding is possible (upon receiving a Flood Alert, or a Met Office rain or thunderstorm warning), you should:

- Check your personal flood plan (if you have prepared one);
- Create a grab bag - more information can be found on [Flooding - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum](#);
- Prepare to deploy flood protection equipment (understand which areas of your property are at risk, and where your airbricks are);
- Ensure watercourses on your property are flowing freely, in line with your riparian duties [Owning a watercourse - GOV.UK](#).

When flooding is expected (when receiving a Flood Warning, or witnessing impacts near your property) you should:

- Deploy flood protection equipment:
 - If you don't have flood protection equipment, consider homemade alternatives.
 - Use a bin liner filled with soil, on a tarp, as a sandbag
 - Use waterproof tape (like duct tape) to cover airbricks
 - Use a plastic bag full of rags and a weight (like a brick) to bung drains
 - Use a plastic bag full of rags, or a deflated football, to block toilets
- Move family, pets, livestock and valuables to safety. Consider moving your vehicle, if it is safe to do so;
- Move furniture upstairs or raise furniture in place. Consider putting table legs in wellies or buckets;
- If evacuating, turn off your gas, electricity and water supply;
- **Do not walk or drive through flood water.** Flood water can be contaminated by human waste, fuel, and bacteria. Also, you will be unable to see obstacles (such as manholes, which may have had covers removed by the force of the water).

- If you must walk through flood water, use a stick to check for obstacles, and (once safe to do so) remove contaminated clothing and wash with soap and water;
- For advice, call Floodline: 0345 988 1188.

If a **Severe Flood Warning** is issued, there is a risk to life - **TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY.** A severe flood warning means there is a risk to life. You should:

- Stay in a safe place;
- Do as the emergency services tell you;
- Dial 999 if you are in immediate danger.

4.2 As a community

When flooding is possible (upon receiving a Flood Alert, or a Met Office rain or thunderstorm warning), the community should:

- Share messaging – ensure members of your community understand the risk, are prepared, and are making sure watercourse on their property are flowing freely;
- Monitor and report blocked drains or water courses (if safe to do so) to the appropriate body as listed in [Section 2](#).
-

When flooding is expected (when receiving a Flood Warning, or witnessing impacts near your property), additional community actions may include:

- Check on known vulnerable people who may need help moving possessions, or deploying their property flood defences;
- Share messages about what individuals should do during a flood
- Continue to report blocked drains or water courses (if safe to do so) to the appropriate body as listed in [Section 2](#).
- If neighbours need to leave their property, consider opening a community space to provide shelter, emotional support and a warm drink until the emergency services or local authority can arrive to support them;
- **Do not walk or drive through flood water.** Flood water can be contaminated by human waste, fuel, and bacteria. Also, you will be unable to see obstacles (such as manholes, which may have had covers removed by the force of the water).
 - If you must walk through flood water, use a stick to check for obstacles, and (once safe to do so) remove contaminated clothing and wash with soap and water;
- For advice, call Floodline (for free): 0345 988 1188, and escalate concerns to your local [District or Borough Council](#).

If a **Severe Flood Warning** is issued, there is a risk to life - **TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY.** Communities should:

- A severe flood warning means there is a risk to life;
- Stay in a safe place;
- Do as the emergency services tell you;
- Dial 999 if you are in immediate danger.

5. What to do after flooding

If you have been flooded, the assessment of the impact and clean-up is generally the first thing to be undertaken.

5.1 The clean up

Following a flooding incident, there may be a need to remove furnishing contaminated with flood water. If sewerage flooding has occurred, then specialist disposal routes may need to be considered. Your local [District, Borough or City Council](#) will be able to provide advice on how this can be achieved.

Further information can also be found at: [What to do after a flood - GOV.UK](#).

Flooding is extremely traumatic and guidance is available on how to keep you and your family safe while cleaning up your home at [Flooding and health: advice for the public - GOV.UK](#).

5.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Experiencing a flood can be frightening, and it can disrupt your daily life activities. It is normal to experience tiredness, difficulty sleeping, and anxiety in these circumstances even if your home was not flooded. It's important not to underestimate the stress and strain of being flooded, having to move from your home, or cleaning up after a flood. Take the time to consider your and your loved ones' mental health and [wellbeing](#).

Events that occur after a flood can also be a source of stress, and there are several factors that can cause this feeling, such as:

- disruption to your GP clinic and accessing necessary healthcare services
- disruption to regular household activities
- interruption to school facilities
- damage to home and personal belongings

Experiencing any one of these factors can be distressing and can cause anxiety. It is normal to feel this way, even for a while after the event. If you are feeling this way, please get in touch with a local community support group, or neighbours to help you cope and recover.

- Find a range of free, trusted local and national support at [Mental Wellbeing Hampshire](#)
- Visit [Citizens Advice Hampshire](#) to find your local branch or call 0800 144 88 48
- [Havant and East Hants Mind](#), [Solent Mind](#) (covers Gosport, Fareham, Winchester, Eastleigh and New Forest), and [Andover Mind](#) (covers Test Valley, Basingstoke, Hart, Rushmoor) offer a range of free wellbeing services across Hampshire
- Contact your local branch of the [Samaritans](#) or call for free, 116123
- [Shout](#) provides a free 24/7 text crisis support service, to start a conversation, just text the word 'HANTS' to **85258**. It is a confidential, anonymous service

- For mental health crisis support including your nearest Safe Haven visit [Help in a Crisis](#)
- **You can contact [NHS 111](#) to seek medical or mental health help right now or, if your need is life threatening, please call 999**

Support and information for young people:

- [Kooth](#) is an online counselling and emotional wellbeing support service providing young people aged 11-25 years (up to 26th birthday) with a safe and secure means of accessing support with their emotional health and wellbeing needs from a professional team of qualified counsellors.
- Wessex Healthier Together <https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/health-for-young-people/mental-health-and-wellbeing>

If you're under 19, you can call 0800 1111 to talk to [Childline](#). The number will not appear on your phone bill and is available 24/7. Or use their online messaging option

5.3 The need to report flooding

It is essential that floods are reported to the appropriate authorities (refer to [Section 2](#)). Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) cover very large areas and may not be aware of localised incidents. Flooding can happen very quickly so it can be difficult to understand exactly how it occurred, what routes water took and how the situation developed.

Flooding can occur either due to the amount of water exceeding the capacity of the drainage systems and / or due to blockages or collapses in the existing infrastructure. Understanding how and when flooding occurs can help to inform whether repairs are needed.

The value of information

Given that RMAs are unlikely to witness the flooding first hand, any information that can be provided is extremely useful in compiling a complete understanding of an event. Photographs, videos and even descriptions of how and when help to inform the complete picture.

In addition, this information can be used to support any funding bids for flood alleviation schemes or drainage improvement works if it is considered that works are viable.

Ideally, the following information should be provided in as much detail as possible:

- Location – including the extent of the flooding;
- What has flooded – has water entered the property or is it just within the road;
- How the flooding occurred – did it come from a manhole or run off from surrounding areas;
- Depths and extents of the flooding;
- Timescales – when did water appear and how long did it take to go.

5.4 Who investigates and when

Following flooding, if RMAs are aware then investigation will be undertaken dependant on the severity and impacts of the event. Each authority will have different triggers for when investigation

will be undertaken and at what level. When flooding is reported, the relevant agency, as listed in [section 2](#) will be able to advise on expected actions and timeframes.

Hampshire County Council have published their criteria for investigation at: [Flood investigation guidance 1.1](#).

Following a flood event, initial actions are generally limited to inspecting and maintaining existing drainage features. Not all features are managed by RMAs and there is a need for individuals to undertake checks on their own drainage features. The majority of watercourses and ditches are owned by individual landowners. However, the Environment Agency and LLFA do have powers with which to approach landowners to require maintenance works to be undertaken. These enforcement powers are complex and are generally only utilised if there is a significant risk to internal property flooding.

What are the next steps

Improvements to drainage assets are considered by each asset owner depending on their individual requirements and processes. The need for improvements are generally based around the frequency and impact of issues being experienced which then defines the likelihood of obtaining funding to undertake improvements.

Where flooding affects a wide area, the LLFA will investigate and work with stakeholders and affecting parties to try to find suitable flood risk management options. This can be extremely challenging given technical and financial constraints and property flood protection may be the only option that can be considered.

In some locations, schemes to reduce flood risk can be most effectively driven by or supported by the community in terms of getting local support, liaising with landowners etc. Often these can be more cost-effective measures and there can be additional funding sources that are only open to communities such as the [SSEN Powering Communities Towards Net Zero Fund](#).

6. Community Resilience

During a flooding event, or any other crisis, the emergency services have to prioritise those in greatest need. Communities may need to rely on their own resources until professional help arrives.

Many communities spontaneously help one another in times of need. But communities who have prepared in advance are able to cope better and recover faster. If a community is prepared for [possible risks](#), you can reduce the impact on your homes and businesses.

You can become more resilient by forming an Community Emergency Group (or a Flood Action Group specifically). This can be done by local town and parish councils, or social/volunteering groups.

As a group, there are five steps you should follow to make your community resilient:

1) Understand [local risk](#)

Like areas in your community which are susceptible to flooding, and the impacts of that.

2) Make sure **you** are prepared

As a Community Emergency Responder, you (and other volunteers) should ensure your households are prepared and resilient. This will allow you to support your community in an emergency.

3) Get to know your community

Building relationships and social networks in your area is an important part of becoming resilient. You can understand who in your community made need support, and others who would be able to help.

4) Create a Community Emergency Plan

A [Community Emergency Plan](#) outlines how you, and other volunteers, will manage an emergency in your area. It will outline who can help, what resources they have, and where you will be most needed.

It is important you share your plan with us, by emailing it to emergency.planningteam@hants.gov.uk – that way we use your plan (and your volunteers) to support our response, share emergency briefings, and share opportunities for training, exercising, funding

5) Share risk and preparedness information

Let others in your community know how (and why) they should prepare, allowing them to reduce the impact of flooding on their household. You can share this resource [[link to AYER within document](#)].

You can find advice on how to become a resilient community from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum at their [website](#)

7. Further Support

Flood RE

Flood Re is a re-insurance Scheme available for households in areas of high flood risk. It makes flood cover more accessible and affordable as part of your home insurance and provides additional information about reducing your flood risk.

Every home insurance scheme in the UK must pay into the Flood Re Scheme. This Levy raises £135m every year that is used to cover flood risk in home insurance policies.

When you buy home insurance cover, your insurer chooses whether to pass the flood risk element of your policy to Flood Re, or whether to retain it.

If you make a valid claim for flooding, your insurer will pay the claim. Flood Re will then reimburse that insurer from the 'Flood Re Scheme'.

This helps to keep insurance costs lower and help keep you more resilient to flooding events.

To find out whether your property qualifies for Flood Re, visit Flood Re's guidance toolkit for eligibility: [Find an insurer - Flood Re](#)

Build back better

This can support households to install flood resilience measures up to the value of £10,000 when repairing their properties after a flooding event.

It was created to help reduce the impacts of recurring floods by including flood resilience measures in flood repair work. This means that if a future flood hits your home again you will be better prepared for it (and its aftermath).

To watch an informative video by Flood Re about the Build Back Better scheme, visit: [Build Back Better - YouTube](#)

National Flood Forum

The National Flood Forum are a charity that can provide advice and guidance to individuals both before, during and after a flood. They also operate the 'Blue Pages' which list contractors, insurance companies and other resources available here: [Blue Pages](#)

Further information is available at: [National Flood Forum – A charity to help, support and represent people at risk of flooding.](#)

Catchment Sensitive Farming

This is an organisation that can work with farmers and landowners to provide alternative options to manage their land. This is focussed on environmental stewardship but can also include flood risk management methods and may be able to access specific grants to support with this process.

Further information is available at: [Catchment Sensitive Farming: advice for farmers and land managers - GOV.UK](#)

Parish Pages

[Parish Pages | Hampshire County Council](#) provides support to Parish and Town Councils find information about rights of way, countryside management and potential funding opportunities.

SSEN Powering Communities Towards Net Zero Fund

This funding source is currently targeted at environmental resilience and low carbon technology. Although the 24/25 application window has passed, our understanding is that this is an annual fund that can be access by communities going forwards.

Further information can be found at: [Groups urged to apply for £3m SSEN Distribution community fund now as deadline nears - SSEN.](#)

Flood Resilience Grant

This grant is made available to flood hit areas following specific storms that are considered to have experienced exceptional localised flooding. County and Unitary Councils have to demonstrate they have the required number of flooded properties during the specified storm before funding is released.

Land Drainage Tribunal

This mechanism can be used if there are agricultural land and drainage disputes with a landlord, tenant or neighbour in relation to ditches or drainage work. It can be used if other authorities are unable to provide support.

Further information is available at: [Agricultural land and drainage disputes: apply to a tribunal - GOV.UK.](#)

Flood Plan Templates

Flood plans can be simple or complex depending on the nature of flooding in different areas and how the authors want to use them. If a community already has a Community Emergency Plan this will include the key contacts, vulnerable people and areas. Rather than duplicating information in a separate plan, an appendix can be developed to highlight critical areas in relation to flood risk and maintenance needs in relation to them. If a Community Flood Plan is not available, a more

comprehensive document may be appropriate. Examples of each type of document have been provided and can be customised to suit different locations These should be developed in consultation with the key authorities to ensure the actions identified are appropriate and all relevant items are identified.

These templates are available to download at [managing flood risk - Hampshire County Council](#)

8. Quick Reference Guides

The following documents are designed to be posters and leaflets providing key information on a variety of topics. They can be printed out and utilised as needed within the community or retained as a quick source of information.

- Where to Report a flood
- Storm Guidance
- Ordinary Watercourse Responsibilities
- Ordinary Watercourse Consenting
- Flood Advice for Individuals
- Flood Advice for Communities
- Are you Emergency Ready